

Stakeholder Workshop Report
Consultation, Participation and Stakeholder Engagement on
the "Ouémé Basin Climate-Resilience Initiative (OCRI) -
Benin.

Cotonou Bird Song, 04 November 2021

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Introduction

The project "Initiative for climate resilience in the Ouémé basin"¹ is in its final formulation phase before its last submission to the Green Climate Fund (GCF / GCF) Board scheduled for February 2022.

Aware of the importance of the participation and ownership of project activities by the various stakeholders that are on the one hand, the 5 project intervention communes (Copargo, Djougou, Glazoué, Zagnanado, Zogbodomey), and on the other hand, the sectoral ministries involved as well as the actors of civil society and the private sector, FAO has initiated an additional phase of consultation and stakeholder engagement which is intended to be an interactive process and which will continue throughout the life cycle of the project. The purpose of this stakeholder consultation and engagement session is to ensure that the project vision is in line with the expectations and aspirations of the Government and beneficiary communities.

This exchange session with stakeholders took place both face-to-face and virtual, and in strict compliance with and respect for the COVID-19 protocols as recommended by the FAO / CGF but also by the Government of Benin. While virtually, everyone intervened from home, the face-to-face demanded strict compliance with barrier measures: social distancing, the wearing of face masks, and systematic hand washing.

This report takes stock of the rich exchanges between the stakeholders of the OCRI project during the consultation and engagement workshop held yesterday (Thursday, November 04, 2021) at Bird Song in Cotonou. The workshop saw the strong participation of government, municipal, producers' associations, civil society associations and the FAO team. The full list of participants is appended to this report.

1. Agenda and communications

The workshop started at 9:30 am and following the established and adopted program, as presented in the annex part of the report below.

After a tour de table for the presentation of the participants, the discussions then focused on: (i) the presentation of the OCRI project and (ii) the potential risks, impacts and opportunities of the OCRI project.

1.1. Presentation of the OCRI project

The OCRI project was presented by starting with the contextual elements of natural, bioecological and human systems, the climatic logics which justified the need for this project to be formulated. The presentation then led to the overall intervention strategy related to the elements of the theory of change, namely: objectives, components, products, activities, , expected impact and sustainable development goals expected at the end of this project.

The targeted municipalities (Copargo, Djougou, Glazoué, Zagnanado and Zogbodomey); the duration of the project which is six (06) years as well as the total budget (GCF, FAO and IFAD co-financing and the Government of Benin) of 35 million US dollars were specified by the communicator.

¹ Ouémé Basin Climate-Resilience Initiative (OCRI) Benin.

1.2. Presentation of Risks, Impacts and Opportunities / potentials of the OCRI project

The presentation addressed in a comprehensive manner the elements relating to the environmental and social compliance of the project, the related safeguard instruments and consultation and engagement of stakeholders, in particular vulnerable groups including the Peulhs and Fulani.

In fact, participants were made aware of the fact that the pre-selection process for OCRI project activities revealed that the project would present environmental and social risks and would generate impacts generally considered to be moderate. As such, the OCRI project is then classified as a category "B" project. Indeed, these risks are individually and / or cumulatively few in number, generally localizable, site-specific, largely reversible, and easily treatable by mitigation measures which are already provided for in the two safeguard instruments recommended and prepared by the project, namely (i) the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and Social Assessment (ES) taking into account the social, economic and environmental inclusion of local populations, notably the Fulani and the Peulhs. The environmental and social compliance of the project was measured according to an assessment of the following five (05) relevant environmental and social (SES) policies / standards: SES2, SES3, SES7, SES8 and SES9. The results on the assessment of environmental and social risks and impacts were presented as well as the opportunities that this project aims to bring to the beneficiaries.

2. Discussions and recommendations

2.1. Discussions

At the end of the various presentations comments, concerns and expectations were raised by the participants. In sum, these concerns relate to the following points:

- **vulnerable groups:** a participant urged not to limit oneself only to the Fulani and Peulh peoples and proposes instead to extend the vulnerability to the peoples who face constraints of access to factors of production such as access to land and water. Thus, for example for soil restoration actions planned by OCRI, the farming Lopa people located in the upper Ouémé and the Holli people in the Moyen Ouémé, both tributaries of the Ouémé basin, should be eligible and therefore considered as vulnerable. Clarifications were provided and confirmed the inclusion of these communities in the project.
- **a cartographic and ecological monitoring system for all the results and impacts of the project:** one participant said he had not heard of the project setting up such a system and therefore wanted the project to include it in its results. In the light of the answers provided by the communicators, it appears that cartographic monitoring is well taken into account in the OCRI project.
- **agroforestry:** a participant mentioned that in addition to Shea which is planned by OCRI it will also be useful to promote *Pentadesma butyracea* which is a species that grows very quickly and gives the same product (butter), if not even better than Shea. Not only is this species very productive, it is also very resistant to climate change. This action must be carried out at the forest gallery level;

- **on what theme does the project plan to draw up regional and community / local development plans?** A participant suggested to see, more closely, the activities of the Energy Services Improvement Project (PASE) which develops territorial / community development plans, and which is interested in the Ouémé valley for a synergy of actions;
- **on the issue of synergy of the OCRI project with existing projects:** the answer was given that the achievements of existing projects were valued and capitalized during the formulation of the OCRI project, and that they will be more throughout its implementation of the project;
- **land tenure security:** Given that the project provides for the promotion of certain agricultural products, a participant drew attention to the need to integrate land tenure security to ensure the achievement of OCRI results in relation to the promotion of agricultural products. In response to this concern, communicators said the project plans to align with the state's land tenure security mechanisms. Better still, the project will intervene on lands belonging to the communities and not new lands. That is to say, lands free from any conflict;
- **transhumance:** a participant drew attention to the need to make transhumance a concern of the project in order to secure the planned investments. As part of the answer to this query it was said that this important question has been taken into account since the beginning of the design of the project. Precisely, the project pays particular attention to this issue which particularly affects vulnerable groups, namely the Peulhs, the Foulani and any other local people practicing livestock farming as their main subsistence activity; but also agriculture and market gardening. A source of social conflict, this phenomenon is the subject of special attention by the Government. Of course, the OCRI project does not intend to exacerbate these conflicts, on the contrary,
- **resilient seeds:** one participant observed that it is important to consider this issue if the project is to promote climate resilient agriculture. He continued his intervention by stressing that the seed sector faces many problems both at the level of pre-basic and basic seeds produced by the National Institute of Agricultural Research of Benin (INRAB) and commercial seeds produced by private individuals. . He therefore hopes that the project will plan to build the capacities of these state and private actors. The communicators underlined that the issue of seeds resilience is taken into account in the activities of the OCRI project (Component 2).
- **employability of young people:** a participant urges to integrate the promotion of youth employment especially in the municipality of Djougou which experiences a high rate of rural exodus of young people where 80% of the Beninese immigrant returnees from Europe come from there. The presenters stressed that the OCRI project will not only generate new jobs for young people but also improve the income of farmers as well as the living conditions of the recipient communities.
- **durability :** to this question of sustainability raised, the answer is given that the OCRI platform represents a means of perpetuating achievements. Indeed, the efforts that the project will influence will help to establish a certain degree of ownership of the activities and the vision of the project by the various stakeholders and instill a certain social responsibility which are the two pillars to ensure the sustainability of the infrastructures that the project will be implemented during its life cycle in the participating municipalities;

- **the institutional / steering mechanism of the project:** FAO, the Ministry of the Living Environment and Sustainable Development (MCVDD), the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP), the beneficiary municipalities and then a national coordination are an integral part of the institutional framework implementation of the project. In terms of safeguard compliance, it was recalled that the planned monitoring scheme for this issue will be organized as follows: a central unit located in Cotonou at FAO headquarters will host an E&S Safeguards Specialist with a good understanding of gender issues. and vulnerability. This will be assisted, at the regional level of OCRI execution, by two groups of experts 1 Social, 1 Environmentalist and 1 GV Specialty who will work in tandem with their counterparts from each of the 2 implementation regions of the OCRI project. Thereby,

It emerges from this interaction and exchange workshop, during which the participants learned about the content of the social assessment with a focus on vulnerable groups, that there was a fairly good representation of the different socio-layers. -economic benefits of beneficiary communities, in particular representatives of vulnerable groups, who were consulted according to the basic principles of FPIC (Free, Prior and Informed Consent). Thus, through these representatives, these vulnerable groups responded and participated freely and without embarrassment or constraint and were able to express themselves freely in a constructive and clear spirit.

At the end, the Assembly of participants are unanimously adopted the activities of the OCRI project.

2.2. Recommendations

At the end of the discussions, the points presented in the following table were retained as recommendations.

No.	Points retained
01	Take into account the Lopa and Holli ethnic groups in the constituency of vulnerable groups
02	Integrate a cartographic and ecological monitoring system for the results and impacts of the project
03	Promote <i>Pentadesma butyracea</i> in gallery forests alongside shea cultivation
04	Take into account the security of land in the implementation of the project
05	Promote the employability of young people, especially in the municipality of Djougou which is experiencing a high rate of rural exodus of young people
06	Take into account the activities of the PASE project for more synergy
07	Integrate agricultural product processing activities for the creation of added value and better consideration of women
08	Avoid linking vulnerability to ethnicity to prevent stigmatization, but rather by taking into account modes of existence or means of existence
09	Advocacy to integrate, if still possible, activities related to livestock and transhumance management in the implementation of the project

10	Take into account the districts of Kpédékpo and Dovi (in the Municipality of Zagnanado) which are often the victim of flooding by the Ouémé river
11	Establish an inclusive institutional framework that takes into account all stakeholders
12	Install a system for the sustainability of the project's infrastructures and achievements
13	Provide for the production of local seeds that are resilient to climate change, in particular in market gardening

Conclusion

The workshop ended on a note of satisfaction from all the participants who wish to see the project succeed and to start its activities as soon as possible for the well-being of the target populations.

Appendices

***Annex 1: Terms of reference of the stakeholder consultation workshop of the
"Initiative for climate resilience in the Ouémé basin" project***

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultation workshop for stakeholders of the "Initiative for climate resilience in the Ouémé basin" project

Cotonou Bird Song, November 04, 2021

1. Context and rationale

The project "*Initiative for climate resilience in the Ouémé basin*" is in its final phase of preparation before its submission to the Green Climate Fund Board.

Aware of the importance of the participation and ownership of project activities by the various stakeholders that are on the one hand, the 5 project intervention communes (Copargo, Djougou, Glazoué, Zagnanado, Zogbodomey), and on the other hand the sectoral ministries involved, a final phase of consultation is necessary to ensure that the vision of the project is fully in line with the expectations and aspirations of the Government and of the communities benefiting from the project, more particularly the vulnerable groups including the Peulh and the Fulani.

2. Objective of the workshop

The objective of the workshop is to be able to exchange widely with the various stakeholders (beneficiary communities of the five intervention communes, sector ministries, NGOs, civil society, etc.) for a better ownership of the project.

3. Expected results

The expected results are that

- The views (concerns, suggestions for improvement, opportunities, etc.) of the stakeholders consulted are taken into account in the final version of the project documents;
- Stakeholders have a better understanding of the development vision of the project, a better ownership of the project and above all, a better participation of these through a more obvious social responsibility throughout the life cycle of the project.

4. Date, place and participants

The workshop will take place on Thursday 04 November 2021 at INFOSEC in Cotonou from 9:00 a.m. (Cotonou time). The people expected to take part in this workshop are listed in the table below. The logistics of the workshop will be provided by FAO-Benin.

In accordance with the directives of the Government of Benin within the framework of the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic, physical participation in the workshop is conditioned by the presentation of a vaccination card.

Participants, who for various reasons will not be able to make the trip, can also take part in the Workshop virtually using the link that will be sent on Wednesday 03 November 2021 at the latest.

Board : List of participants

No	Last name and first names	Structure	Quality	Origin
1	Teacher. AINA glitch	Ministry of the Living Environment and Sustainable Development	Director General of Environment and Climate	Cotonou
2	Delphin AIDJI	Ministry of the Living Environment and Sustainable Development	Director of Programming and Foresight	Cotonou
3	Fiacre AHONONGA	Ministry of the Living Environment and Sustainable Development	Directorate General of Water, Forests and Hunting	Cotonou
4	Dr Félicien D. CHEDE	Ministry of the Living Environment and Sustainable Development	Director General of the National Agency of Meteorology (METEO BENIN)	Cotonou
5	Marius S. AÏNA	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	Director of Programming and Foresight	Cotonou
6	Patrick AKINOCHO	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	Director of Rural Engineering	Porto-Novo
7	Macarius FABOSSOU	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	MAEP / DCAIF Director	Cotonou
8	Dr Armel CG MENSAH	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	National Institute of Agricultural Research of Benin	Cotonou
9	Hadarou SOULEMANA	Ministry of State in charge of Development and Coordination of Government Action	Framework	Cotonou
10	Justine DOSSA	Ministry of State in charge of the Economy and Finance	Framework	Cotonou
11	Teacher. Euloge OGOUWALE	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research	Agro-climatologist	Cotonou
12	Lionel CHABI CHINA	National Chamber of Agriculture of Benin	General secretary	Cotonou
13	Bernadin TOTO	PNOPPA-Benin	Permanent Secretary	Cotonou
14	Ernest PEDRO	Platform of Civil Society Actors in Benin (PASCiB)	Permanent Secretary	Cotonou
15		Town Hall of the Municipality of Copargo	Secretary General of the Mayor	Copargo
16		Town Hall of the Municipality of Djougou	Secretary General of the Mayor	Djougou
17		Town Hall of the Municipality of Glazoué	Secretary General of the Mayor	Glazed
18		Town Hall of the Municipality of Zagnanado	Secretary General of the Mayor	Zagnanado
19		Town Hall of the Municipality of Zogbodomey	Secretary General of the Mayor	Zogbodomey

No .	Last name and first names	Structure	Quality	Origin
20	Jean ADANGUIDI	FAO Benin	Program Officer	Cotonou
21	Muhaman ORGANIC YERIMA	FAO Benin	Deputy Program Officer	Cotonou
22	Carine ATCHIA	FAO Benin	Gender Focal Point	Cotonou
23	Marie-Ange BAUDOUIN	FAO Benin / OCRI	Consultant	South Africa
24	Teacher. Irenikatche AKPONIKPE	FAO Benin / OCRI	Consultant	Parakou
25	Sheikh SAGNA	FAO Benin / OCRI	Consultant	USA
26	Albert NIKIEMA	FAO Benin	LTO	Accra
27	Sukati MPHUMUZI	FAO Benin	FAOR have	Accra

INDICATIVE AGENDA OF THE WORKSHOP'S WORKSHOP

Hourly	Summary	Responsible
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Arrival and installation of participants	FAO
9:00 a.m. - 9:05 a.m.	Welcome speech	FAOR have
9:05 am - 9:15 am	Presentation of the participants	Moderator
9:15 am - 9:45 am	Presentation of the OCRI Project	PTL
9:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Presentation of Risks, Impacts and Opportunities / potentials of the OCRI project	ESMS consultant
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	General discussion	Moderator
11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Presentation and adoption of the Workshop report	Reporter
11:30 am - 11:35 am	Closing of the workshop	FAO
11.35 a.m. - 12.00 p.m.	Departure formalities	FAO
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Coffee break departure	FAO
Departure of participants		

Annex 2: Workshop attendance list

A. List of participants physically present

ATELIER DE CONSULTATION DES PARTIES PRENANTES DU PROJET "INITIATIVE POUR LA RESILIENCE CLIMATIQUE DANS LE BASSIN DE L'OUEME

04 novembre 2021 au Chant d'Oiseau

Liste de présence

N°	Nom et Prénom	Structure	Fonction	Provenance	Contact	Emargement
1	EHOUMI G. Constant	PASCI B	Expert en Communication et Plaidoyer	Porto-Novo	ehoumige@yahoo.fr	
2	FARASSAY Macaire	AKAIFE / MAEP	AKAIFE	Atome	97239657 farassay@yahoo.fr	
3	AROUNA Abdoulouassidou	Mairie DJOUGOU	SG Mairie	DJOUGOU	97541019 abdoulouassidou@gmail.com	
4	TOTO TCHEGOUN Pierre Béatrice	PNOPPA-B	Spécialiste Nutrition	Ab-calavi	67269009 pierre.tchegoun@gmail.com	
5	WOLOU Olawole	DE/MAEP	Personne Ressource (Expert)	Ab-Calavi	97099490 wolu.olawole@yahoo.fr	

6	LAHAMI Sanata Elisabeth	Mairie de Zagnanado	SG/Mairie	Zagnanado	67312211	
7	ASSAN AUGOU Moutawakile	Mairie de Copargo	SG/Mairie	Copargo	96133498	
8	ADAMGUI Jean	FAO Cotonou	FAO	Cotonou	96945618	
9	BIO YERIMA Sanni	FAO-Bénin		Cotonou	96090992	
10	AKOUN N Naurie	FAO Bénin	Com FAO	Cotonou	91335840	
11	ABASSOTTO Mido Maurilone Rosalie	Mairie Zogbodomey	SG/Mairie	Zogbodomey	66455998	

B. List of participants who followed the work of the Workshop from the Teams link sent

No.	Last name and first names	Structure	Quality	Origin
1	Colonel Doctor Fiacre AHONONGA	Ministry of the Living Environment and Sustainable Development	Directorate General of Water, Forests and Hunting	Cotonou
2	Marius S. AÏNA	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	Director of Programming and Foresight	Cotonou
3	Dr Armel CG MENSAH	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	National Institute of Agricultural Research of Benin	Cotonou
4	Teacher. Irenikatche AKPONIKPE	FAO Benin / OCRI	Consultant	Parakou
5	Sheikh SAGNA	FAO Benin / OCRI	Consultant	USA
6	Albert NIKIEMA	FAO Benin	LTO	Accra
7	Sukati MPHUMUZI	FAO Benin	FAOR have	Accra
8	Marie-Ange BAUDOUIN	FAO Benin / OCRI	Consultant	South Africa
9	Rosalie LEHEL	OCB	GCF projects specialist	Rome
10	Stefano MONDOVI	DK	Consultant	Rome
11	Christian GOMEZ	FAO Benin	AFAOR ADM	Cotonou
12	Cinthia KIKISSAGBE	FAO Benin	ADM Assistant	Cotonou
13	Pacome KPOTO	FAO Benin	Procurement Assistant	Cotonou
14	Carine ATCHIA	FAO Benin	Gender Focal Point	Cotonou

Annex 3: Some pictures of the workshop



Fig1: Family photo



Fig2: picture of the participants in the room