



POSITION PAPER

of pastoral civil society actors at the Nouakchott+10 Forum



ATELIER DE CONCERTATION ET DE VALIDATION DE LA NOTE DE POSITION DES ACTEURS DE LA SOCIÉTÉ CIVILE PASTORALE AU FORUM NOUAKCHOTT+10

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire 7 au 9 octobre 2024



**Consultation and validation workshop on the position paper of civil society actors for the high-level forum on pastoralism, ten years after the Nouakchott Declaration
« Nouakchott + 10 »**

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, October 7-9, 2024

WE, members of the pastoral, agro-pastoral, and agricultural civil society of West Africa and the Sahel, on the joint initiative of CILSS, ECOWAS, UEMOA, and the Regional Professional Organizations (RPOs), with the political support of the Government of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, gathered in Abidjan from October 7 to 9, 2024, for a consultation workshop. The aim of the meeting was to prepare the contribution of the RPOs to the assessment of the implementation of the Nouakchott Declaration between 2013 and 2024 (Nouakchott +10). Around one hundred leaders from pastoral, agro-pastoral, agricultural organizations, and inter-professional groups from 12 West and Central African countries focused on the achievements and existing challenges. This meeting marks a crucial step in the process of mobilizing National and Regional Professional Organizations to prepare in advance for the Nouakchott +10 meeting, through the initiation of a coordinated discussion and reflection process at different levels.

The purpose of the consultation was to allow pastoral and agro-pastoral civil society actors from West Africa and the Sahel to share their views on the operationalization of the Declaration adopted in Nouakchott in 2013, as well as on the persistent or emerging challenges and issues in the livestock and pastoralism subsector, with the aim of informing the debate at the high-level forum on pastoralism, which will be held from November 6 to 8, 2024, in Nouakchott, called "Nouakchott +10."

CONSIDERING THAT :

- Agro-pastoral campaigns are increasingly marked by rising tensions and the widespread questioning of what once constituted the foundation and common denominator of the region, which is the free movement of goods and people ;
- The regional RPOs gathered are mobilizing to actively contribute to this phase of evaluating the implementation of the 2013 Declaration and to forward-looking reflections for the new Nouakchott +10 Declaration ;
- Each RPO has undertaken solid preparatory work for the meeting with its members through various preparatory workshops at the cross-border level and in several Sahelian and coastal countries, which have enabled the sharing of assessment elements, achievements, lessons learned, and priority action perspectives.

UNANIMOUSLY, WE AFFIRM THAT :

- The Nouakchott Declaration, directly following the N'Djamena Declaration of May 2013, was a significant turning point in the support for pastoralism at the regional and Sahel levels. Several regional and national programs have since been developed and implemented over the past ten years ;
- Numerous achievements were highlighted in the assessments shared by the RPOs: construction of pastoral infrastructure such as water systems, health facilities, livestock markets, as well as capacity-building efforts for actors at the local, municipal, inter-municipal, national, and cross-border levels. Substantial funding also supported the implementation of livestock and pastoralism development policies and strategies at local, cross-border, and regional levels ;
- The RPOs and their members in the territories have been extensively involved in these achievements, facilitating responses to the needs of agro-pastoralists alongside states, NGOs, and regional organizations whenever called upon ;
- However, the assessment presented by the participants is mixed ;
- Despite numerous accomplishments in Sahelian countries and some coastal nations, the implementation of the commitments made by pastoral development actors (states, regional

organizations, NGOs, RPOs, and local authorities) has faced the reality of a continually deteriorating security context ;

- Sub-regional integration organizations, expected to play a key role in implementing the Nouakchott Declaration, have been unable to uphold the principle of free movement. In light of various threats, several coastal countries have imposed restrictions on transhumance, weakening pastoral and agro-pastoral systems and negatively impacting livestock trade routes.

WE CALL FOR AN AMBITIOUS COMMITMENT FROM ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN PREPARING THE NEW DECLARATION :

Participants note that livestock farming creates a fundamental link between Sahelian countries and coastal countries. This fundamental link must be strengthened through greater synergies and coherence in political action, particularly by addressing the needs of coastal countries within the framework of development based on the complementarity between sedentary livestock systems and pastoral systems in a peaceful relationship. Participants recommend designing an ambitious regional program, covering Sahelian and coastal countries, aligned with transhumance flows and livestock trade. In this perspective, several crucial actions are highlighted by participants for Nouakchott +10:

- **Strengthen the complementarity between farmers, agro-pastoralists, and pastoralists** at the territorial level by enhancing the contributions of each production system to the local economy.
- **Restore harmony** between communities, support initiatives that strengthen social and economic ties, and provide farmers and herders with tools to defend their rights (such as legal assistance).
- **Secure agro-pastoral land tenure in a sustainable** manner to protect the vocation of grazing areas, pastoral infrastructure, and their access, by improving the functioning of land governance bodies and implementing legal security tools.
- **Strengthen the citizenship of herders** (pastoralists and agro-pastoralists) and support the establishment of educational systems adapted to pastoral children and youth, through the development and implementation of national strategies for the education and vocational training of young herders.
- **Improve the perception** of pastoralism among decision-makers and the public as a system adapted to the ecological conditions of the Sahel-Saharan zone and as an economic driver for the territories and the entire region.
- **Strengthen the value chains of pastoral and agro-pastoral systems** to improve their contribution to the creation of decent jobs and income for young people (men and women).
- **Also promote cooperation and cross-border responses to better address the new challenges and issues of insecurity**, the pastoral economy, and the migration dynamics towards coastal countries. The goal is to promote the establishment of appropriate mechanisms for promoting peaceful pastoralism that takes into account security, economic, ecological, cultural, and sociological issues.
- **Develop collaborations among stakeholders to prevent the consequences of the crisis**, including registering and integrating refugee herders and transhumants within communities, as well as monitoring animals.
- **Renew participants' commitment to playing a major role in facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue for the rebuilding of the social contract between communities**, and their call to national and regional decision-makers, as well as to the international community, to support them.

The RPOs and their member organizations reaffirm their desire to fully participate in the preparation and implementation of such an ambitious Nouakchott +10 program, given their experience and network of grassroots organizations in the concerned territories.