

WATER FOR PEACE IN THE VOLTA RIVER BASIN

MARCH 2003, DRAFT REPORT



THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE WATER FOR PEACE IN THE VOLTA PROJECT IS THE PREVENTION OF CONFLICTS AND THE PROMOTION OF DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION ON THE WATER AND LAND RESOURCES OF THE VOLTA BASIN. THE PROJECT FOCUSES ON ENSURING THE FULLER INVOLVEMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY BASIN MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS, INSTITUTIONS AND STRATEGIES.

The choice of the Volta Basin by Green Cross International was not made at random. Like the majority of transboundary river basins, the Volta Basin experiences a number of recurrent conflicts between the riparian populations and States. As the conflicts between the five basin States are being addressed at the international level, it is high time that conflict prevention mechanisms which involve all actors in the management of the water resources of the basin were sought and implemented. Actions should be taken to ensure shared water resources are no longer a source of conflicts but rather bring about the potential for cooperation and engage the public in the water decisions that so vitally affect their lives. Such is the key concern of Green Cross International/Burkina Faso in carrying out this project.

For efficient implementation of the Project, a Steering Committee and a supporting Team have been set up under the responsibility of the Coordinator of the Water for Peace Volta Project, *Mr. Ousséni DIALLO*, President of Green Cross Burkina Faso.

The present report covers the period of April 01, 2002 to September 30, 2002 and hinges upon the following two main activities which characterised this period:

- I.** Development of the Strategy of Information of Communication and Sensitisation on Water Related Conflicts Prevention in the Volta Basin;
- II. a)** Consultation for and drafting of the Basin Declaration;
b) Holding of a Regional Consultative Workshop for Civil Society on water-related conflict prevention in the Volta Basin in Accra, Ghana.

The official launching of the Water for Peace Volta project was done on March 22, 2002 on the occasion of the celebration of World Water Day.

I. DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND SENSITISATION ON WATER RELATED CONFLICTS PREVENTION IN THE VOLTA BASIN

To carry out the research needed to prepare this Strategy, the Project Team worked in early April 2002 on the Terms of Reference (TOR) for applicants interested in the study. The TOR privileged technical references (competence in particular) and the availability of applicants for securing quality work.

Recruitment of consultants

A consultant recruited under the terms of a restricted call for tender carried out this study. Considering the applicant's skills and availability, the Project Team gave the development of the studies to an independent consultant under the supervision of a Ghanaian water resources consultancy firm, **Nii Consult**.

The study on the Strategy of Information, Communication and Sensitisation was given to **Rasmané OUEDRAOGO**, consultant.

(For the complete Strategy document, please see Annex I)

The study was carried out from June 1-30 2002. The work was then submitted to **Nii Consult** on July 10, 2002 within the framework of a contract of collaboration signed on 19 June 2002 between the two structures. Within the framework of its mission of supervision, Nii Consult examined the document and made the necessary amendments and suggestions, which were integrated in the study by the consultant.

The draft was then sent to participants of the workshop in printed form and by e-mail before the workshop.



II. REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ON WATER RELATED CONFLICTS PREVENTION IN THE VOLTA BASIN

There were three stages in the preparation of the workshop: the development of the Basin Declaration, a preparatory mission in Accra, Ghana and the holding of the workshop itself.

a) The Basin Declaration

A Basin Declaration was prepared by *Dr. Amidou GARANE*, consultant, following research and consultation with a wide number of people in Burkina Faso, Ghana and Togo.

(For the full text of the Basin Declaration, please see Annex II)

b) The Preparatory Mission

A mission of Green Cross International/Burkina Faso (GCI/BF) was sent to Accra, Ghana from June 13-20 2002 within the framework of the implementation of the Volta Project entitled "From Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential: Water for Peace". The mission delegates were as follows:

Amidou GARANE, Project Manager
Moussa SANGARE, Project Assistant
Francis DABIRE, Project Assistant
Rasmanè OUEDRAOGO, Consultant

The mission also received the support of Mr. *Ousséni DIALLO*, Coordinator of Water for Peace/Volta Project, who was also on mission in Ghana to attend the 7th Annual Meeting of Consulting Partners of the Global Water Partnership (GWP).

The objective of the mission was primarily the preparation of the August workshop and secondarily the participation at the 7th annual meeting of Consulting Partners of the GWP that was held during the same period in Accra, Ghana.

Meetings

The mission in Ghana enabled GCI/BF to meet the persons in charge of structures directly involved in water resources management in Ghana: The Embassy of Burkina Faso in Ghana, governmental and private structures of Ghana and associations of the Civil Society based in Ghana and Togo.

(The list of people met in Ghana and Togo is shown in Annex III.)

Embassy of Burkina Faso in Ghana

Upon their arrival, GCI/BF delegates spoke with his Excellency the Ambassador of Burkina in Ghana, *Oubkiri Marc YAO*, the Economic Adviser and the Attaché of the Embassy. In this meeting, his Excellency the Ambassador of Burkina Faso recalled the periods of tensions resulting from disagreements about the respective use of the basin waters by Ghana and Burkina Faso, especially in 1998. He also insisted on the need for a consultation framework between the basin States to reduce open and potential conflicts. He welcomed and supported

the GCI/BF initiative, which consists in promoting dialogue among the basin actors for the peaceful management of water related conflicts. He also assured the GCI/BF delegation of his availability to contribute to Water for Peace initiatives to alleviate the tensions related to water resources and to contribute to the development of friendly and peaceful relations between the two States.

Ghana Water Resources Commission

The Ghana Water Resources Commission represents the central body of water resources management in Ghana. As a matter of fact, it constitutes a significant, if not a strategic interlocutor, in all initiatives as regards water resources of West Africa, especially in Ghana. Accordingly, the mission met the Executive Secretary of this institution, *Dr. Daniel Adom* who supported the GCI/BF initiative while insisting on the complementarity of all the ongoing initiatives in the Volta Basin for a better synergy for the benefit of the riparian States and populations. He agreed strongly with the idea to jointly organise the Water for Peace / Volta Project workshop and the third meeting of the Volta River Basin Project (VRBP) in August 2002.

GCI/BF found in the Executive Secretary of the Water Resources Commission an attentive interlocutor who is open and ready to not only bring invaluable support to the workshop in Accra but also, in the long run, facilitate an advantageous partnership between the two institutions.

Volta River Basin Project (VRBP)

The meeting with the Regional Coordinator of this Project, *Dr. Yaw Opokou-Ankomah*, was a major priority of the mission. In fact, GCI/BF had always planned to organise the August workshop jointly with the VRBP third meeting. Such an approach would make it possible to develop the synergy so crucially required between public/State initiatives and those of Civil Society respectively materialised here by the VRBP and Water for Peace/Volta Project.

The GCI/BF delegation met the Regional Coordinator of the VRBP within this framework. He did not find any problem with this proposal. On the contrary, he made some proposals for the refitting of his programme in order to take into account this new dimension of a joint organisation of the VRBP / Water for Peace Volta Project activities. The following points of agreement were obtained at the end of the discussions:

- Agreement for a joint organisation of the VRBP and the Water for Peace Project meetings in August 2002 in Accra;
- Two days (August 9-10) were chosen for the Water for Peace Volta workshop. The Water for Peace / Volta meeting would take place immediately after the meeting of Country Coordinators and Regional Coordinator of the VRBP which was planned from August 4-8 2002;
- GCI/BF workshop would gather forty participants or so, including the Country Coordinators and the Regional Coordinator of the VRBP.

Centre for African Wetlands

This Centre has been identified as a strategic partner and even a representative of the Water for Peace/Volta Project in Ghana during the organisation of the Accra workshop. In this respect, it was an interlocutor of primary importance for GCI/BF. The mission delegates therefore met with the Director of the Centre, *Pr Chris Gordon*. According to him, the Centre offers facilities for the organisation of meetings, as it is able to accommodate thirty (30) persons. Besides, he said he was ready to put these facilities at the disposal of GCI/BF for its workshop at the University of Legon as well as his support to all practical questions related to the workshop organisation (accommodation, conference room, transport, etc).

Pr Chris GORDON requested the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions as soon as possible in order to implement this partnership. This agreement would establish a legal framework of co-operation between the University of Legon and GCI/BF.

Nii Consult

The mission had profitable exchanges with the Director of Nii Consult Firm, *Mr. Nii Boi Ayibotele*, specialised in water resources and the environment. Nii Consult committed to contributing to the development of the two studies which respectively relate to:

- A Strategy of Information, Communication and Sensitisation on water related conflicts in the Volta Basin,
- A Basin Declaration (see above)

Agreements were concluded within this framework between GCI/BF and Nii Consult.

Identification of partners to be invited to the workshop

During its stay in Accra, the mission identified participants to be invited to the August Workshop. It prospected in national bodies, international institutions and NGOs based in Ghana who play an active role in water resources management. Twenty strategic State, international or civil society institutions involved in water management were selected and invited to the Accra Workshop.

Working Visit in Lomé, Togo (18 June 2002)

Mr. Rasmanè OUEDRAOGO and *Mr. Francis DABIRE* went to Lomé, Togo, a neighbouring country of Ghana, so as to discuss with other water actors in the perspective of the elaboration of the draft project of Information, Communication and Sensitisation. Key persons from the Ministries of Water, Environment and Health, national representatives of the VRBP and journalists, were met and gave their support to the Water for Peace project.

The 7th Annual Meeting of the Global Water Partnership

GCI/BF mission delegates took part in the 7th Annual Meeting of Consulting Partners of the Global Water Partnership which was held in Accra from 15 to 18 June 2002.

This participation enabled better promotion of the GCI/BF initiative in regard to international waters management and development of new partnerships in the fringe of the meeting, the ultimate purpose being the synergy of initiatives in the Volta Basin.

Promotion of the Water for Peace Volta Initiative

The Annual Meetings of the GWP are occasions for the International Community to present ongoing initiatives in water resources management and plan the actions to be undertaken for the years to come. They are therefore an opportunity for each water actor to make their actions known. Following the example of other participating structures, GCI/BF expressed its water vision according to the main trends of GCI. GCI/BF insisted on the need for synergy between the various initiatives, especially in the Volta Basin, which should not be seen as competitive but rather complementary and profitable for the basin populations. These are major questions for which each actor can operate without either opposing or obstructing the initiatives of others.

GCI/BF delegates took advantage of this GWP annual meeting to distribute the water petition on "***a call to everyone, water, life: 1,5 billion human beings still do not have access to water***" for signature. Participants welcomed this.

Development of new partnerships

The second objective of the mission to Ghana was to establish new contacts in view of the future initiatives of GCI/BF. Indeed, beyond the ongoing activities towards a Basin Declaration to be presented at the Third World Water Forum in Japan in 2003, the Water for Peace/Volta initiative is a permanent and major process, which intends to take on new dimensions in the years to come. GCI/BF must reinforce and extend its partnership in order to be able to handle possible obstacles to new developments.

GCI/BF delegates had to take advantage of the annual meeting of the GWP to meet important actors in the field of water.

The mission therefore made and reinforced contacts with State representatives, international organisations and influential NGOs involved in water management.

The partners met within this framework, welcomed the initiative of Civil Society through GCI/BF and expressed their availability to cooperate in the future with GCI for the management of water related conflicts within the framework of the Water for Peace Volta Initiative.

Considering the Terms of Reference of the mission, the mission delegates met all assigned expectations and carried out the groundwork and consultations essential to the continuation of the preparation of the Workshop and therefore the success of the Water for Peace/Volta Project as a whole.

c) ***Holding of the regional consultative workshop for Civil Society on the Prevention of Water-Related Conflicts in the Volta Basin***

General framework of the workshop

The Regional Consultative Workshop of the Civil Society on the prevention of water-related conflicts in the Volta basin is the first workshop organised within the framework of the implementation of the Water for Peace Volta Project. It was held on August 9, 2002 at Bay View Hotel, Accra, Ghana. Bay View Hotel was preferred to the Centre for African Wetlands for financial reasons; it offered less expensive facilities for the holding of the workshop.

Initially planned to be jointly held with the third meeting of country coordinators of the VRBP, the workshop was finally organised separately but with the participation of Regional and Country Coordinators of the VRBP because of the unforeseen postponement of the VRBP meeting.

Thirty participants from the six countries of the Volta Basin attended the workshop. Participants came from governmental structures, diplomatic missions and international organisations based in Accra and in the region as well as civil society organisations from the countries concerned, country and regional coordinators of the VRBP, media representatives, etc.

Besides, the organising committee received contributions from resource persons from various national and international diplomatic structures as well as universities that sent their comments and amendments by email. These contributions helped enrich the (work) deliberations and outcomes of the workshop.

The workshop

At the beginning of the workshop, two opening speeches were delivered: the speech of the President of Green Cross Burkina Faso and the opening speech pronounced by the Deputy Minister of Works and Housing of Ghana, the Ministry in charge of water resources.



The first speaker was **Mr. Ousséni DIALLO**, President of GCBF and Coordinator of the Water for Peace Volta Project. In his welcoming address, he presented the context of the workshop before insisting on the importance and the opportunity which it offers for governmental actors as well as for organisations of Civil Society operating in the sector of water-related conflict prevention. In this context, he recalled the joint initiative of GCI/UNESCO in the launching of the From Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential:

Water for Peace Programme, which promotes the development of a framework of good governance for the prevention of shared water resources related conflicts around the world. He stressed the importance of a Strategy of Information, Communication and Sensitisation in country programs of sustainable development as well as that of a Basin Declaration as a minimum framework for action with regard to shared water resources. Mr Diallo concluded by warmly welcoming the fact that this major initiative of Civil Society had been encouraged by governmental actors and was now part of a synergy of actions in regard to the management of water related conflicts in the Volta basin.

The Deputy Minister of Works and Housing of Ghana (also a Member of Parliament), *Mrs. Theresa A. TAGOE* delivered the opening speech of the workshop. She first underlined conflict risks related to the use of shared water resources of the basin. She then welcomed this initiative of Civil Society for the Volta basin and particularly the significant initiatives of GCI/GCBF, which showed dynamism and highlighted the necessity for such civil society action. She underscored the interest of her country and other countries of the Basin in this workshop and assured that they would spare no efforts to facilitate the implementation of the Communication Strategy and the adoption of a Basin Declaration.

The proceedings of the workshop began under the following chairmanship:

Facilitators: *Pr. Clement DORM-Adzobu*, President of Ghana Water Resources Commission (WRC), and *Dr. Daniel Adom*, Executive Secretary of WRC, Member of the Steering Committee of the Global Water Partnership

Rapporteurs: *Dr Amidou GARANE*, Francophone reporter
Mr. Kwamé Odame-Ababio, Anglophone reporter

Two communications were planned for the workshop:

Dr. Yaw OPOKU-ANKOMAH, Regional Coordinator of the Volta River Basin Project (VRBP) made a presentation on "*The experience of the Volta River Basin Project*".

The second communication on "*The management of shared water resources related conflicts in Africa*" was to be presented by *Dr. Innocent BUTARE* from the International Development and Research Centre (CRDI, Dakar), but could not be given in person, since the presenter could not travel to Ghana due to last minute difficulties. His presentation was distributed.

After these communications, the Green Cross consultants respectively presented the studies related to the Strategy of Information, Communication and Sensitisation on one hand and the Basin Declaration on the other hand. These two documents were discussed and participants made constructive comments and amendments.

Many participants appreciated the efforts of consultants for the work done. They stressed the quality of the studies, the relevance of hypotheses and proposals made in the documents. The documents were seen as a great contribution to the activities of the prevention of water related conflicts in the Volta basin.

Discussions and amendments

Discussions and amendments related to the presentation on “*the experience of the Volta River Basin Project as regards shared land and water resources management in the Volta River Basin*”:

Dr. Yaw Opokou-Ankomah, Regional Coordinator of the VRBP, presented this communication, which was part of the introductory exposés. He presented his project, its origin, achievements (mainly the numerous studies conducted) and its perspectives before focusing on the dimension of water-related conflicts. According to Dr **Opokou-Ankomah**, this dimension is very important for the project for it constitutes a starting point for other initiatives. The VRBP is being finalised and awaits negotiations with financial backers. The presentation was followed by constructive discussions.

Discussions and amendments related to the presentation of the “*Strategy of Information, Communication and Sensitisation on the prevention of water related conflicts in the Volta Basin*”:

A) *Need* of integration of all other initiatives on the Volta Basin mainly those involving States and international organisations.

B) *Budget*: need to elaborate a strategy for the mobilisation of resources for the implementation of the Strategy of Information, Communication and Sensitisation by closely involving the States.

Considering that it would be hard for one donor to finance the proposed strategy budget, some recommendations were made to split it into different programmes and spread it over longer periods so as to facilitate fundraising.

C) *Need* to link water related conflicts to the fight against poverty.

D) *Precision* of the role of the stakeholders within the strategy.

Discussions and amendments related to the “*Basin Declaration*”:

Like the Strategy document, the Declaration has not been subject to major amendments at this workshop. Participants only made suggestions to improve the document for its adoption by the Volta Basin States.

After general discussions, the two documents were adopted by acclamation by the participants, pending a number of corrections. These documents are now those of Civil Society that will address governmental structures to either adopt them or facilitate their implementation.

Participants also made three recommendations and a thank you motion as follows:

Recommendation n°1 called for the support of the Basin States for the implementation of the Strategy of Information, Communication and Sensitisation as regards the prevention of water conflicts in the Volta Basin.

Recommendation n°2 invited the Basin States to adopt by consensus the Basin Declaration.

Recommendation n°3 supported the continuation of the role of facilitator of Green Cross International / Burkina Faso on behalf of Civil Society as regards the prevention of water-related conflicts in the Volta Basin.

The Thank You Motion went to the Ghanaian authorities, Country and Regional coordinators of the Volta River Basin Project, Civil Society organisations and the Ghanaian people for the constant support and hospitality they brought to the organisation and success of the workshop.

A special motion of thanks was given to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands, for their financial support for the Water for Peace in the Volta project.

(For the complete recommendations and the list of participants, please see Annexes IV and V)



CONCLUSION

With the adoption of the two documents, without major amendments, the workshop reached its assigned objectives. It also enabled Green Cross International / Burkina Faso to promote and enhance its dynamism and credibility as regards water related conflicts prevention in the Volta Basin and also position itself now as a key partner of Civil Society in future initiatives on the Volta Basin.

The strong synergy of the initiatives of the VRBP and Green Cross International / Burkina Faso in the Volta Basin was clearly demonstrated by:

- The fact that the Volta River Basin Project has involved Green Cross International / Burkina Faso in all its regional consultations, especially the first and second meetings of Regional and Country Coordinators
- The strong and active participation of the highest Ghanaian authorities and the VRBP Country Coordinators in the Water for Peace Volta Project workshop of the Civil Society
- The fact that the President of Ghana Water Resources Commission directed the chairmanship of the workshop.

But there still remains the second step of the Water for Peace Volta Project to be undertaken as soon as possible (planned for November): the preparation of the second workshop with the objective of appropriation of the strategy of communication and the Basin Declaration documents by the Volta Member States.

ANNEXES

Annex I: Information, Communication and Sensitisation Strategy for the Prevention of Water-Related Conflicts in the Volta Basin

Annex II: Volta Basin Declaration

Annex III: People met in Ghana and Togo

Annex IV: Accra Recommendations

Annex V: List of Accra Workshop Participants