

Terra-Verde Förderverein e.V.

Steine gegen die Wüste

Sponsoring Association for smallholders on the Plateau
Central in Burkina Faso Westafrica

Desertification: a threat to the Sahel

Desertification, in the words of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, is one of the world's most alarming processes of environmental degradation.

In fact, Desertification is about land degradation: the loss of the land's biological productivity, caused by human-induced factors and climate change. It affects one third of the earth's surface and over a billion people. Moreover it has potentially devastating consequences in terms of social and economic costs.

Desertification and draught cause an estimated loss of more than USD 40 billion a year from agricultural production, contribute to food insecurity, famine and poverty.

It can give rise to social, economic and political tensions that can cause conflicts, further impoverishment and land degradation.

Desertification: a threat to the Sahel

Its location in the tropics makes the Sahel naturally susceptible to the effects of Desertification. Droughts, a fast growing population and not appropriate practices of land use make

the region more vulnerable to Desertification than other parts of the world. The Sahelien drought and famine of 1968 to 1974 is a horrific reminder of drought's and desertification impact. More than 100.000 of people died and hundreds of thousands were forced to leave their home.

Desertification and poverty

Poverty and Desertification are closely linked. Forced to take as much as they can from the land for food, energy, housing and income, the poor are both the causes and the victims of Desertification.



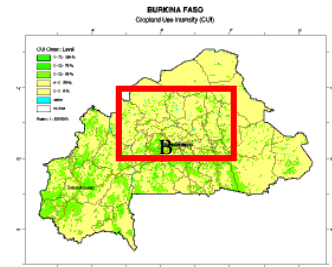
But farmers in Burkina Faso show us how to overcome this Vicious Circle !

The Central Plateau in Burkina Faso



Burkina Faso (BF) has an area of 274.000 km² and a population of 14 million inhabitants. More than 40% of the area are part of the arid and semi-arid zones where almost the half of the population lives.

The Plateau Central covers a quarter of the national area. Almost 50% of the rural population of Burkina Faso are living there. The Central Plateau is part of the arid and semi-arid zones. The high population density (up to 65 inhab./km²) accelerates the process of desertification.



Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) is the key to combat Desertification on the Central Plateau

The Central Plateau is widely known as an area of high population density, marginal to agriculture and subject to soil erosion and degradation. The consequences are: destruction of the vegetation, growing proportion of completely bare land, low and declining grain yields and the highly precarious food security. Such difficult conditions led many families to pack their scarce belongings and migrate to better-watered and more fertile regions in the west and southwest of Burkina Faso.

Many also migrated to Côte d'Ivoire where they settled and developed holdings of coffee and cocoa. Many of them are also exploited as cheap workers.

Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) is the key innovation for productivity and environmental protection

Soil and Water Conservation techniques to restore soil fertility are considered as a necessary condition to preserve the life basis of the majority of the rural population of the Central Plateau. There are different type of SWC measures: agronomic measures (contour cultivation, mulching et.), vegetative measures (grass strips, hedge barriers etc.), structural measures (terraces, contour stone lines etc.) and management measures (land use change, area closure etc.). **Farmers of the Central Plateau identified Stone lines as one of the most efficient measure of SWC.**



Stonelines: a simple but a very efficient technique

Many conservation techniques can be implemented but land users will implement those elements of a conservation strategy that make the best use of the time, labour and money that they have available. Farmers of the Central Plateau identified Stone-lines as one of the most efficient measure of SWC and as one of the best weapon to fight against Desertification..

A stone line is made of boulders and rocks that are lined together to form a contour or water barrier across the slope. The purpose thereof is to reduce the flow speed of run-off water and to trap eroded leaves and silt, hence preventing soil loss.

According to several impact studies there are various impacts induced by stone lines.

Impacts:

- better infiltration of water into the soil increases water availability and leads to higher yields;
- Reduced risks associated with low and erratic rainfall;
- Increase in household food security
- More trees in fields treated with stone lines;
- Locally rising water tables;
- Decrease in rural poverty;
- Group approaches to the construction of stone lines allow development of social and human capital

SWC measures and particularly the construction of stone lines are triggering and accelerating a rapid intensification of agriculture!

The construction of stone lines means much and heavy work:

The average size of a smallholder farm is four hectares of cultivated land. Based on the work capacity of the family, between one half and one hectare per year can be protected and improved by the construction of stone lines.

The construction for one hectare requires substantial inputs of labour and material :

*** 150 men day and**

*** 50 tons (ten truck loads) of stones and rocks.**

The work steps are: to crush stones and rocks in the quarry, loading the truck, and laying the stones in line.



Farmers need Partners: the Success Story of PATECORE

Many Anti-desertification Programs have failed:

Governmental and international involvement since 1977 in the Sahel has had in many cases a minimal, and often negative, effect on the region. It is estimated that many programs have spent only ten percent of their anti-desertification funding towards active combat measures like Soil and Water Conservation. The majority of funding has often been spent into remote sensing projects, other related studies and bureaucratic agencies for organizing anti-desertification campaigns.

A second constraint is that governments and donor agencies want quick results. The easiest way to achieve this is to use ample food-for-work supplies. Not much consideration was given whether activities can be sustained in the post-project phase or whether they can be applied by the land users without or a minimum of external support.

Based on these experiences new approaches have been developed:

A livelihood approach to soil and water conservation:

The livelihood approach places people at the centre of development and works to support people's efforts to achieve their own livelihood goals.

PATECORE has been implemented as bilateral project between Burkina Faso and Germany (1988–2006) and stands for "Projet d'Aménagement des Terroirs et de Conservation des Ressources dans le Plateau Central" (Land use and natural resources management project).

Already at the beginning PATECORE introduced the livelihood approach and the project was designed together with farmers. The project promoted as a main issue contour stone bunding, what is an improvement of existing stone lines. Thousands of farmers have been trained in using simple survey equipment based on water tube levels to determine contour lines and in basic rules of construction.



Contour stone bunds are constructed on cultivated fields, but they are also used on a considerable scale to rehabilitate degraded soils with a hard impenetrable crust. Yield increases are substantial. Farmers estimate that yields increase with about 40%.

No surprise that by farmers-demand for project assistance focused mainly on transport facilities for stones:

Providing sufficient transport facilities has induced a mass mobilization:

- Up to 20.000 farmers were mobilised every day during the dry season in order to improve their fields with the construction of contour stone bunds;
- Up to 500.000 metric tons of stones per year were crushed, loaded on the trucks and laid out in the fields;



- The annual rate of implementation increased from 500 ha to more than 10.000 ha

Step by step PATECORE transferred more planning and implementation responsibilities to farmers groups: Project staff could be reduced and their activities were limited to training, quality management and financial control.

PATECORE as a partner of more than 40.000 farming households facilitated a total implementation of approximately 70.000 ha. An impressive result!

Much has been achieved, but much more remains to be done.

PATECORE is phasing out: how does it go on?

Without partnership, no extensive implementation of SWC measures!

Farmers are highly motivated to continue SWC activities in order to protect their entire fields from erosion and to invest further in SWC measures.

Farmers are able to maintain already implemented SWC measures without any external support but they do not have the means to finance transporta-

tion costs (150 EUR per hectare) for the initial investment.

Without subsidies from the government or assistance from donor agencies, largescale implementation of SWC activities will come to a standstill!

Therefore political decision makers and donor agencies have to be convinced to increase financial assistance into active combat measures like Soil and Water Conservation.



Present Situation on the Central Plateau 2006

Need assessment on SWC measures:

- In order to prevent desertification of the entire area of the Central Plateau there is an additional need of more than 500.000 ha of SWC measures;
- The ideal time frame for implementation should not exceed 20 years and therefore the annual capacity should be at least 25.000 ha of completed SWC measures;
- **The total demand of rocks and stones (15 million m³) represents a volume of more than seven Cheops Pyramids!**
- Such an ambitious program requires several partners assisting farmers, mainly for transport facilities for this huge amount of stones and rocks.

- To finance transport facilities, to ensure good quality of implementation in the field and to monitor implementing agencies (NPOs) in Burkina Faso the external amount of money (as a grant) would be around 3,750 million EURO per year.

On going programs and projects:

The largest on going program is an governmental program implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and co-financed with loans of IFAD (International Fund for Agriculture and Development), ADB (African Development Bank), OPEC Fund and a grant from GEF (Global Environmental Facility). The total amount of

this external assistance for an 8 years period is 30 million USD.

The annual budget for combating desertification funded by this program can be estimated up to 500.000 USD. But only a small part of this amount is planned for direct combat measures like Soil and Water Conservation.

Conclusion:

Including other projects (mainly supported by NGOs) total funding towards active combat measures like SWC are below one million EURO per year. This amount is not sufficient and should be increased!



Contour stone bunds ensure food security for present and future generations



Even total degraded land can be rehabilitated with SWC measures!

The United Nations Convention to combat Desertification (UNCCD)

Earth Summit Rio

The international community has long recognized that desertification is a major economic, social and environmental problem of concern. The UN conference on environment and development, which was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, supported a new and integrated approach to the problem. The UN convention to combat desertification was born and it entered into force on December 1996.

The UNCCD identifies approaches and concrete measures to combat

desertification which are aimed at:

- **Prevention and/or reduction of land degradation;**
- **Rehabilitation of partly degraded land, and**
- **Reclamation of desertified land**

The convention shall be implemented mainly through National Action Programs.

Previous results of UNCCD in Burkina Faso:

The National Action Program was

elaborated very fast but never entered into a broader implementation phase. Poor coordination and not sufficient funding are the major reasons for rather poor results.

Most of the UNCCD related activities were supported through individual projects and programs financed by bilateral interventions and NGO support. With the closure of PATE-CORE, there are no more sufficient funds available for direct and active combat measures like SWC.

But farmers want to continue with SWC Activities: Self-Help Initiative ALCD

Foundation of a Nonprofit Organisation in Burkina Faso and a sponsoring association in Germany:

Association Lutte contre la Désertification (ALCD)

Six smallholders were selected by more than 850 farmers groups (partners of PATECORE) to create a Nonprofit Organisation. They are supported by four former employees of PATECORE. The purpose of ALCD is to continue with SWC measures on a large scale.

Mission of ALCD

Based on the PATECORE experience political decision makers and donor agencies place farmers at the centre of CCD related programs and make sufficient funds for them available.

The objectives of ALCD are:

1. Capacity building

The already existing 850 farmer groups strengthen their organisational and institutional capacity in order to defend more efficiently their interests vis-à-vis political decision makers and donor agencies.

2. Consolidation of already SWC improved soils

As long as there are no new funds mobilized to finance transport capacities ALCD's technical support to farmers will focus on the promotion of organic fertilizer. Many farmers have already introduced animal husbandry to support crop production. They keep their cattle, sheep and goats in a stable during the dry season so that they can collect their manure systematically.

To be able to feed their livestock efficiently, they have to build the large shed for storing fodder next to the stable. The two compost pits are next to the stable so that the manure can be diverted easily into the pits.

3. Fundraising to continue SWC activities

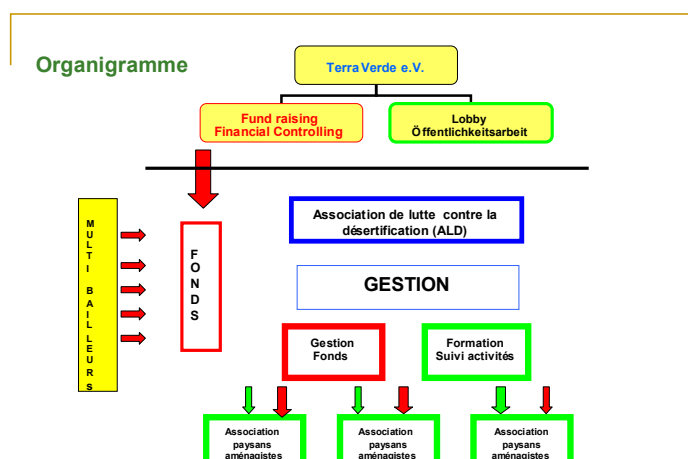
Twenty thousand well organised farmers supported by prominent and important persons shall mobilize new resources to finance transport facilities in order to boost SWC activities again as soon as possible.

ALCD needs a partner to set up professional fundraising and international networking.



Therefore the German sponsoring association Terra-Verde e.V. was founded

Organigramm of „Association de lutte contre la désertification“ ALCD



Presentation Terra-Verde e.V.

We are representing and supporting smallholders interests on the Central Plateau and are lobbying for strengthening the implementation of United Nations Convention to combat Desertification

Foundation

After smallholder representatives and former employees of PATECORE had founded ALCD the former Chief Technical Advisor of PATECORE Melchior LANDOLT has taken the initiative to found the Sponsoring Association **Terra-Verde e.V**

The UN Convention to Combat Desertification is a binding contract under international law and shall not be lost in the desert!

M. Landolt was working on behalf of the German Agency for Technical Assistance (GTZ) for a 4 years period and knows pretty well the socio-economical environment in Burkina Faso and how farmers on the Central Plateau take decisions to adapt to the changing environment.

VISION

The stone-volume of seven Cheops Pyramids shall be transformed into 200.000 km of stone lines in order to prevent 500.000 ha of land from desertification

How we want to achieve our vision

1. Improving policy framework

The "Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper" (PRSP) for Burkina Faso has a total budget for the period 2004 - 2006 of 3 billion EURO.

But only 57 million EURO or 1,9% of the budget are planned for direct-measures to combat desertification.

Political decision makers and donor agencies do not give sufficient importance that poverty and desertification are closely linked. There is a need to adjust the budget accordingly and increase funds towards SWC activities.

2. Mobilize funds for direct support of ALD and their farmers

Major funding for largescale SWC activities should be made available by the Government and donor agencies. They may be restricted to one purpose and linked to a project or specific target groups.

But as long as this is not the case, the Sponsoring Association is trying to mobilize sufficient resources from individual sponsors, corporations, foundations and companies.

Major tasks

1. Lobbying and Public Relation

The success-story of PATECORE is not only well documented but also very well visible: hundreds of villages can be visited to talk to farmers and to see thousands of hectares of SWC improved land. Even a look from the plane is self-explanatory and impressive.

The PATECORE-experience forms the basis of the know-how and competence of the two new organizations.

We want to share our experience with other relevant organizations. Networking and professional PR shall influence political decision makers and donor agencies positively that we can realise the "500.000 ha SWC Program"!

2. Capacity building for our partners in Burkina Faso

ALCD is an organization created by smallholders and former employees of PATECORE. They are very experienced and know pretty well all technical aspects how to combat desertification, in particular planning and implementation of SWC measures.

As active members of a newly created NPO they have to challenge new management tasks like: strategic planning, budgeting, cost accounting, ensuring financial viability, financial reporting, etc.

Therefore ALCD staff will be trained accordingly and supported to establish appropriate management structures.

3. Fundraising

Fundraising and grantwriting will have high priority and need professional support. A strong fundraising plan will be elaborated and implemented using experienced staff and appropriate techniques and methods.

4. Sponsoring

The UN Convention to combat desertification is one of three conventions (Climate, Biodiversity) securing a global common good: the natural environment. Humankind survival depends on environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources.

UNCCD implementation is so important that not only Governments and the Civil Society must be ready to realize a stronger commitment in promoting sustainable human development. It is also a challenge for companies to contribute their share in a environmental oriented globalization.

There is an unique opportunity to scale up the image of global players as well as for smaller companies by sponsoring large-scale SWC activities in one of the poorest countries.

5. Monitoring and Financial Controlling

Members of the Sponsoring Association have practical experience in project management and assure good use of funds made available to ALCD and the farmers groups.

Accounting, finance and reporting systems are based on PATECORE standards, introduced by GTZ and KfW (German Development Bank).

ALCD and Terra-Verde as service providers

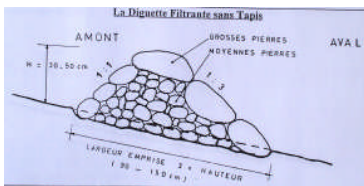
Job sharing and synergy effects

Quite a large number of NGOs are implementing projects also having a SWC component. Instead of setting up own SWC competence centres, our Sponsoring Association and ALCD can provide services in this field of activities. Such services can include need assessment on SWC, farmers training, transport-logistic for stones, monitoring and evaluation etc..



Implementing SWC projects on behalf of third parties

International sponsoring associations having no representatives in Burkina Faso can delegate entire SWC micro-projects to ALCD to be implemented on a non profit basis.



Evaluation and backstopping

On going projects sponsored by international NGOs can be evaluated (Project Progress Review) based on international standards. Facilitation in the form of technical and conceptual support (backstopping) can also be provided.



Constitution of Terra-Verde e.V.

Headquarters

D 73230 Kirchheim Teck, Germany

Character of Association

Charitable, non profit

Object

Support of smallholders combating against desertification on the Central Plateau in Burkina Faso

Membership

Open to all persons interested in environment protection and poverty reduction. Granted to any eligible individual, institution or corporation

Management

The affairs of the Association are handled by a management committee which includes an elected Chair, Secretary and Treasurer

Sources of funds

Membership fees, donations, foundations, legacy, public and private grants

Audit

The financial records shall be audited at least once each year by an external auditor

Initiator for founding the Association



Melchior LANDOLT

Date of birth: 27/02/51
from Basel, Switzerland
living in Germany
73230 Kirchheim Teck

Education:

B.Sc. In Tropical Agriculture

M.Sc. In Agricultural Economics

Key Qualifications:

- Design, planning and implementation of Rural development programs
- Soil and Water Conservation on large-scale
- Project management, monitoring and evaluation
- Agro business (cinchona, coffee, tea)

Overseas Duty Stations:

Democratic Republic of Congo
(1977 - 1979 and 1982-1986)

Liberia (1988-1990)

Sierra Leone (1991-1995)

Vietnam (1996-1999)

Burkina Faso (2000 - 2004)

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Stonelines against desertification

www.terra-verde.de

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