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FINAL REPORT

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN WEST AFRICA:

A Contribution to the regional integration process

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Association of European Border Regions
(AEBR)

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Abbreviations

ABN Autorité du Bassin du Niger (in English NBA)
ACP African, Caribbean and Pacific
ADB African Development Bank (in French BAD)
ADF African Development Fund (in French FAD)
AEIBR Association of European Border Regions
AEID Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo
ADF African Development Bank Group
ALG Autorité du Liptako-Gourma
(ALG Autorité de développement intégré de la région du Liptako-Gourma) (in English LGA)
APER Accords de Partenariat Économique Régionaux
ARFE Association des Régions Frontalières Européennes
AU African Union
AUBP African Union Border Programme
BAD Banque Africaine de Développement (in English ADB)
BALG Autorité de Développement de Liptako-Gourma
BCEAEC Banque Centrale des États de l’Afrique Equatoriale et du Cameroun
(Central Bank of Equatorial African States and Cameroon)
BCEAO Banque Centrale des États d’Afrique Occidentale (Central Bank of African States)
BEAC Banque des États de l’Afrique Centrale (Bank of Central African States)
BIS Boundary Information System
BOAD Banque Ouest Africaine de Développement (West African Development Bank)
CBE Cross-border co-operation
CCFD Comité Catholique contre la Faim et pour le développement
CDA Community of Development (African Australe)
CEDEAO Communauté Économique Des États de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (in English ECOWAS)
CEN-SAD Community of Sahel-Saharan States (Communauté des États Sahéliens-Sahariens)
CER Communautés Économiques Régionales africaines (in English REC)
CILSS Comité permanent inter-État de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel
CIP Cross-border Initiatives Programme
COMESA Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
(Marché Commun pour les États d’Afrique orientale et australe)
CRDI Centre de Recherches pour le Développement International (French name of IDRC)
CSAO Club du Sahel et de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (in French SWAC)
DBSA Development Bank of Southern Africa (Banque de Développement de l’Afrique australe)
DED Deutscher Entwicklungsdiest
DNF Direction Nationale des Frontières (Mali)
DSP Développement du secteur privé
EAC East African Community
EADB East African Development Bank (Banque de Développement d’Afrique Orientale)
ECAS Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States
EDF European Development Fund (in French FED)
ENDA Diapol Environnement et Développement - Prospectives et Dialogues Politiques
(Environment and Development – Policy Dialogue and Perspectives)
ERDF European Regional Development Fund (in French FEDER)
EU European Union
FAD Fond Africain de Développement (in English ADF)
FED Fonds européen de développement (in English EDF)
FEDER Fonds européen de développement régional (in English ERDF)
FOGAR Forum of Global Associations of Regions (Forum Global d’Associations de Régions)
FSON Fond Spécial du Nigéria
GIZ Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GRDR Groupe de recherche et de Réalisations pour le Développement rural
GTZ Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit
HDI Human Development Index
ICJ International Court of Justice
IDC
Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa
(Société de Développement Industriel de l’Afrique du Sud)

IDRC
International Development Research Centre (Canada)

IGAD
Intergovernmental Authority on Development

IWRM
Integrated Water Resources Management

LGA
Liptako–Gourma Authority (in French ALG)

MAC
Madeira-Açores-Canaries

MDG
Millennium Development Goals (in French OMD)

MKK (MK2)
Maradi-Katsina-Kano

MOT
Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière

MRU
Manu River Union

NBA
Niger Basin Authority (in French ABN)

NBC
National Boundary Commission (Nigeria) (Commission Nationale des Frontières du Nigéria)

NEPAD
New Partnership for Africa’s Development (Nouveau Partenariat pour le Développement de l’Afrique)

NGO
Non Governmental Organization

NPFL
National Patriotic Front of Liberia

NTF
Nigeria Trust Fund

OCBM
Organisation du Chemin de Fer Bénin-Niger (Benin-Niger railway organisation)

OCDE
Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques (in English OECD)

OECD
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (in French OCDE)

OIEAU
Office international de l’Eau

OMD
Objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement (in English MDG)

OMVG
Organisation pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Gambie

OMVS
Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Sénégal

ONG
Organisation non gouvernementale

PDM
Peace Dividend Marketplace

PDT
Peace Dividend Trust

PIT
Programme d’Initiatives Transfrontalières

PLATFORMA
Plateforme européenne des autorités locales et régionales pour le développement
(European Platform of Local and Regional Authorities)

PNUD
Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement (in English UNDP)

PSD
Private Sector Department

PTA Bank
Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank

RASD
République Arabie Sahraouie Démocratique (in English SADR)

RAOB
Réseau africain des organismes de bassin

REC
Regional Economic Community (in French CER)

RETRARC-GUISEGAM
Réseau TF de Radio Communautaire de Guinée-Bissau, Sénégal et Gambie

RIOB
Réseau international des organismes de bassin

RUF
Revolutionary United Front (SL)

SADC
Southern Africa Development Community

SADR
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (in French RASD)

SkBo
Sikasso (ML), Korhogo (CI), Bobo Dioulasso (BF)

SWAC
Sahel and West Africa Club (in French CSAO)

SWOT
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

TAH
Trans-African Highway

UE
Union européenne

UEMOA
Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (in English WAEMU)

UMA
Union du Maghreb Arabe (Union of Arabic Maghreb)

UNDP
United Nations’ Development Programme (in French PNUD)

UNECA
UN Economic Commission for Africa

UNOWA
United Nations’ Office for West Africa (Bureau des Nations Unies pour l’Afrique de l’Ouest)

WABI
West African Borders and Integration Initiative (Frontières et intégration en Afrique de l’Ouest)

WAEMU
West African Economic and Monetary Union (in French UEMOA)

WAMZ
West African Monetary Zone

WWAP
World Water Assessment Programme

ZMAO
Zone monétaire de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (in English WAMZ)
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Executive Summary

The EU Commission (DG Regio) has promoted the elaboration of this study within the framework of the European Parliament’s call for putting EU regional policy into a stronger international context and for more cooperation with third countries. The study is aimed to quantify main obstacles for Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) in West Africa, while highlighting several good opportunities, in order to propose a road map for the next years.

CBC has proven to increase the empowerment of the authorities more closely involved, promoting in this way decentralised governance. Africa is already fulfilling many tasks to achieve a sustained level of CBC and, apart from other major difficulties, many boundaries still need to be delimited and demarcated, a pre-requisite to launch sound CBC strategies. These strategies can add value and offer precious information for mainstreaming programmes implemented at local, national and international level in order to produce a sustainable impact in development processes. In the long term, the strengthening of CBC across (West) African boundaries will have contributed to human development in most dynamic areas.

In the course of the study, many CBC initiatives, projects and programmes have been found, with either a specific or a general purpose. In West Africa there is already a complex network of institutions and platforms that implement cross-border actions. They sometime overlap but, together and coordinated, including their partners within and outside the African continent, could make a very efficient use of available resources, and get even more funding to implement a West African Border Programme. In this sense, this study is particularly intended to offer a clear picture to the organisations promoting regional economic development in the area with a view to how best to allocate resources to promote regional integration and interregional cooperation.

CBC in Africa is a reality in many border areas, being promoted principally by supra-national organizations, but the implementation at national or sub-national level is still very weak in most of the cases. Most relevant actions are been made by the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The African Union has adopted several political and legal instruments to manage border issues, including the establishment of a Conference of Border Ministers and the implementation of the African Union Border Programme (AUBP) since 2007 with the support of the German cooperation. CBC is in their agenda, as it is the case of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which launched a Cross-border Initiatives Programme (CIP) and a Convention on CBC in 2006. Another actor in this complex West African network is the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA). There are also some key national contributions (Nigeria, Mali, Burkina) and some financial institutions which also play a role in the promotion of development and integration across borders, like the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) and the West African Development Bank (BOAD). There are also some transnational cooperation structures devoted mainly to the management of natural resources belonging to several countries (rivers Niger, Senegal, Mano or the Lake Chad). Others have a single purpose, like the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel; and there are even proper CBC structures, like the Liptako–Gourma Authority (LGA), a regional organization seeking to develop the contiguous areas of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger.
In this study, most relevant political initiatives, main studies elaborated by prestigious African scholars and organizations, and significant CBC cases have been analyzed. We have taken into account the EU-AU partnership and some concrete European-African contacts already made in this field. We have also explored the expertise developed by local (e.g. ENDA Diapol) and international (mainly French) NGOs, by national agencies, and by international organizations, including several UN agencies. It is particularly worth to mention the case of the Sahel and West Africa Club of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (SWAC/OECD), and the growing involvement of European networks like the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) and the Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT). All of them have periodical contacts with the African institutions and organizations involved, but the European Union is the most expected partner to definitely get involved in the launching of an ambitious, sustainable and effective Programme of CBC in Africa, including regulatory, training and financial support, in the framework of the African Union. The EU is the biggest provider of development aid in the world, and the strongest database on CBC practices, legislation and programming. A deep exchange between DG Regio and DG DevCo is very much recommended, with a view of including a territorial approach in the EDF regulation. This would make an enormous contribution to the African integration process; and their coordinated dialogue with the African Union and the RECs would produce a fruitful partnership which is being very strongly demanded by African politicians, experts and practitioners. The role of other European networks such as the European Platform of Regional and Local Authorities for Development (Platforma) or the Forum of Global Associations of Regions (FOGAR) is to be explored as well.

African border areas are at the same time promising areas with a great potential to develop practical integration, due to already developed trade and social networks across borders, in some cases since centuries; but they also are unstable scenarios facing many risks. In Africa we find some of the less developed countries in the world, and the barrier effect of borders is very evident due to their artificial condition, and thus conflicts, refugee flows, circulation of heterogeneous armed groups and illegal trafficking also play a role in cross-border dynamics. So, pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial issues are to be taken into account to appreciate in full the localized impact of the border: many cultural, linguistic and human relations exist across African borders; and they interact with local, national, continental and international conditions which also affect development processes.

Despite of the many efforts developed in the last years, there is no place-based approach to development in West Africa, but we can find some CBC areas which are cooperating actively and quite systematically. Amongst the most dynamic we have chosen the following cases for assessment (see chapter 3) in order to elaborate a SWOT analysis and develop a road map for CBC:

- The SKBo area: Sikasso (Mali) – Korhogo (Cote d’Ivoire) – Bobo Dioulasso (Burkina Faso), a “space of sub-national solidarity”, typically peripheral with extreme spatial and social mobility. Some very interesting initiatives already developed.

- The river boundary Senegal-Mauritania, and the Karakoro basin between Mali and Mauritania, wet border where the river can be a development factor if potentialities are properly exploited.
• Southern Senegambia-Guinea-Bissau (plus Guinea Conakry) is an interesting case of complex border area, where some other countries are necessarily involved (Mali). Yet very challenging area for systematic CBC.

• The “Development Corridor” Maradi-Katsina-Kano (Nigeria-Niger). The MKK or MK2 is one of the most densely populated areas in West Africa. A strong economic power meets one of the poorest countries in the world. A clear case of highly asymmetric, but feasible, CBC.

• The Western African seaboard, particularly Mauritania, Senegal and Cape Verde with the Canary Islands (Spain) and the Portuguese archipelagos of Azores and Madeira (Macaronesia). A net African-European interface.

Many of the activities planned in this study have not being carried out in the expected manner, due to different constraints, but most of the cases are documented and relevant actors have been contacted. Particularly fruitful were the exchanges with African representatives and experts, as well as the Workshop organized in Casa África (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, November 2011), to debate the preliminary findings of this study. The AEBR has decided to keep the follow up of CBC in Western African countries in particular as part of the Association’s global strategy to promote territorial cooperation in other continents. An agreement has been signed with the African Union Border Programme in this sense, and similar agreements are to be explored and eventually established with other institutions.

After thorough desk research, exchanges of information with relevant actors in Africa and Europe, implementation of the expected activities and processing of the outputs, a SWOT analysis was elaborated tackling CBC in Africa as a whole and in West Africa in particular (chapter 4). Most important obstacles identified for CBC are conflicts due to the pressure on land and natural resources, poor infrastructure, administrative procedures and national compartmentalisation. Furthermore, the lack of capacities and continuity in cross-border operations make them very weak. And, illegal activities (trafficking, terrorism) are main hindrances in some border areas.

Using this SWOT, an early set of objectives has been converted into a road map for CBC in West Africa, which constitutes the main recommendation of this study (chapter 6):

- **Short-term (2012-2013):**

  • EU support to supra-national efforts, including strategic definition and concrete actions (delimitation / demarcation of borders and transport networks)
  • Coordination of actions, implemented by a heterogeneous pool of actors within and outside Africa (“coordination dividend”)
  • Realisation of concrete cross-border pilot projects
  • Improvement of decentralised CBC through partnership between local, regional, national authorities and the supranational level. Stress on “inclusive governance”.
  • Start a process to increase capacities of national, regional and local actors (with EU advisory support and training)
- Mid-term (2014-2016):

- Targeted training (capacity building) and increasing CB initiatives and activities
- Development of multi-annual strategies/programmes, regulations, CBC administrative units, and project management skills to contribute to institutional strengthening
- Elaboration of a legal instrument for territorial cooperation and promotion of permanent structures for CBC
- A (West) African Cross-Border Association

- Long-term (2017-2020):

- Structural approach to the regional integration process (e.g. through a Western African Interreg) and the extension to other African RECs, including the strengthening of supra-national institutions, a supra-national financial and regulatory framework, a multi-level governance approach

Complementary to the road map there is a set of concrete initiatives recommended to be supported (section 6.1.1), based on the better examples found (sub-chapter 5.3) in the selected case studies (sub-chapter 3.3). These initiatives should be promoted in a first moment, while institutional processes take their time to produce some results. They are easy steps to strengthen CBC in the selected areas in West Africa, which can offer very valuable information on how to proceed in other border areas in the continent:

- Coordination and support to activities implemented in the SKBo area: decentralization process, trade networks, associational models, cross-border health centre, cereal bank, etc.

- Support to the management of the river boundary Senegal Mauritania, including the Karakoro Basin. Rationalization of water and infrastructure projects, using proved and feasible solutions already implemented/proposed by African and European actors.

- Development of a consultation network in the Southern Senegambia area, including Guinea-Bissau, Guinea (Conakry) and, eventually, Mali. It could begin with the rationalisation of the management of water resources and infrastructure planning.

- Coordination and support to activities implemented in the MK2 area.

- Keeping and enhancement of the West African orientation of the MAC Programme, particularly towards Cape Verde, Mauritania and Senegal.

Regarding the governance of future programmes, CBC in West Africa will be sustainable and its impact will be guaranteed through a stronger participation of the sub-national level and the civil society. Opening channels for cross-border exchange of information (and people-to-people projects) will lead to the finding of cross-border solutions to handle main general problems such as food security, extreme poverty, health care, etc.
Cross-border socioeconomic dynamics in West Africa have a potential for integration that is still underestimated, despite of the various obstacles faced. Joint management and preservation of natural resources, rationalization of trade networks and control of illegal trafficking, joint capitalization of export goods, coordination of security forces and emergency teams, support to local radio networks, handling of refugees and displaced people, etc. are just a few examples of fields in need of a cross-border approach at a ground level, and they have an extraordinary potential to increase sustainable human development in these areas. But also huge transnational projects are to be supported, like delimitation / demarcation of borders, or the implementation of transport networks, as well as the consolidation of current political initiatives to normalize and extend CBC all over the African continent. The inclusion of this approach within the European Development Fund would be a necessary input to make the proposed road map a reality.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

It must be considered that Africa has some main priorities other than cross-border cooperation (CBC). However, the specific transnational relevance of African CBC makes it a promising tool to promote African development, and particularly the fight against extreme poverty, food security and health promotion, as well as the backing of peace, security and good governance.

CBC in Africa is becoming a reality in many border areas. It is promoted principally by the supra-national organizations created by African nation-states in the last decades, being part of their current agendas, but the implementation at national or sub-national level is still very weak in most of the cases. The most relevant action has been made by the African Union with the implementation of a continental Border Programme since 2007, with the support of the German development agency GIZ (former GTZ). The African Union Border Programme (AUBP) is the most ambitious continental operation to promote CBC and has already produced very interesting results (see sub-chapter 3.1 for more information on the AUBP). African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have also developed several initiatives to promote cross-border issues. Particularly relevant is the case of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its Cross-border Initiatives Programme (CIP) and the Convention on CBC in the ECOWAS area (2006). The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) is also very active. But it is in West Africa where the stronger input is already being given by local actors. The West African Economic and Monetary Union (known as UEMOA from its name in French) also promotes CBC. Nevertheless, there also are some key national contributions like the National Boundary Commission of Nigeria (NBC) created in 1988 or the National Borders Directorate of Mali (DNF). In fact, West African CBC is the most developed process up to now, and has been the base for other initiatives in the continent.

Thus, a borderless West Africa is not a utopia anymore, and trade and free movement can be enhanced greatly through the generalization of CBC. Therefore, the EU Commission (DG Regio) has asked to elaborate this study in order to quantify the obstacles for CBC in West Africa, highlight the opportunities and offer a clear picture to the organisations promoting regional economic development in the area on how best to allocate resources to promote regional integration and interregional cooperation.

As in other parts of the world, citizens living in border areas face disparities between social and economic policies, particularly regarding essential public services like healthcare or education. But this is particularly challenging in Africa, as there we can find some of the less developed countries in the world. In fact, the Human Development Report 2011\(^2\) qualifies many of the countries included directly or indirectly in this study as “low human

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\(^1\) Since 1st January 2011, the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit has brought together the Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), the Deutsche Entwicklungsdienst (DED) and Invent into one organization.

human development", according to the widely acknowledged Human Development Index, an indicator designed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which not only informs about economics but also about health and education. In the following table, we can see the HDI and another main indicator, the Infant Mortality Rate under 5 years old per 1,000 live births. Both series give a clear overview about the challenges that these countries face:

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<th>Human Development Index 2011</th>
<th>Infant Mortality Rate (&lt; 5 /1,000) (2009)</th>
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The barrier effect of the border is very evident and, in some cases, conflicts add more challenges with the presence of refugee flows, circulation of heterogeneous armed groups and illegal trafficking.

So, border areas are at the same time promising areas with a great potential to develop practical integration and unstable scenarios facing many risks. As the European experience has largely demonstrated in the last half century, supporting CBC initiatives adds value to continental integration processes optimizing the potentialities and preventing the risks. At the same time, CBC increases the empowerment of the authorities more closely involved, promoting in this way decentralised governance. Africa is already fulfilling many tasks to achieve a sustained level of CBC, but many boundaries still need to be delimited and demarcated, a pre-requisite to launch sound CBC strategies.

Some scholars have studied African borders intensively and have produced a very interesting set of analyses and recommendations. Professor Anthony I. Asiwaju (University of Lagos, Nigeria), President of the African Regional Institute (Imeko, Nigeria) is one of the most prolific and relevant authors, and many of his contributions have been taken into
account in the present study 3,4,5. This is also the case of Mohamadou Abdoul 6 (Enda Diapol, Dakar, Senegal). Dr. John Ogunsola Igué 7,8 (Université Nationale du Bénin) should also be mentioned when studying African borders, but there are many other contributors whose work should be studied in the rich and complicated process to define current and future African CBC concepts.

Political assumption is crucial to start sustainable CBC. In this sense, a milestone is the year 2000, when Alpha Oumar Konaré, ex-President of Mali, formulates a quite innovative approach to African regional integration processes by putting forward the concept of African “cross-border areas”, sharing same geographical spaces that could not be divided by physical borders. CBC was defined by President Konaré as a “local initiative supported by the national governments involved and oriented to improve the living conditions of cross-border inhabitants”. This input triggered afterwards plenty of experts’ meetings and political summits, being the first one organized in Sikasso by the Government of Mali with the support of the Sahel and West Africa Club of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (SWAC/OECD), in order to define “cross-border areas as territories linked by socio-economic and cultural ties”. In May 2002, another meeting was organized in Accra “Towards a better regional approach to development in West Africa. In July 2003, Ouagadougou hosted the workshop “West African Borders and Integration”, where the West African Borders and Integration Initiative (WABI) was founded by the DNF of Mali, Enda-Diapol (an NGO based in Senegal) and the SWAC/OECD.

In all of these meetings border realities have been analysed, experiences have been exchanged and further actions have been proposed to make possible a better understanding of local border realities, and to share successful CBC practices. The early involvement of SWAC/OECD in this processes shows that the International Community is also paying a growing attention to the development of CBC in the African continent, particularly in West Africa. The SWAC has promoted very relevant initiatives and studies aimed at strengthening CBC to achieve regional integration, development and peace. Based on the concept of pays-frontière and after the identification of several areas with strong CBC potential, the ECOWAS Cross-Border Initiatives Programme (CIP) was elaborated with the support of the WABI and the SWAC. Then, the CIP launched four pilot projects in the region:

• Two pilot operations in **Sikasso** (ML) – **Bobo Dioulasso** (BF) and in **Southern Senegambia** in 2003, both defined by local actors with the support of the **Peace Dividend Marketplace** (PDM), the **UN Office for West Africa** (UNOWA), the **UN Development Programme** (UNDP) and the **Canadian** and **Austrian** co-operations. Another hint in this area was the launching of a regional programme in support of decentralised cross-border co-operation by the **Liptako-Gourma Region Development Authority** (ALG) in November 2006. The first pilot project was launched in the Sikasso region, in Mali, and in Bobo Dioulasso, in Burkina Faso, through a workshop that brought together local, private and public actors. In 2010, a workshop on Burkina Faso-Mali border experiences, held in Ouagadougou and based on the example of the mango industry in the regions of Sikasso and Bobo Dioulasso, focused on possibilities and constraints to cross-border development between both countries. The experiences of this operation lead to the elaboration of a **Practical Guide to CBC in the area** elaborated by the SWAC and the **Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière** (MOT), a French Inter-ministerial Committee and European network of CBC actors aimed at analyze and exchange good practices on CBC and provide operational assistance to projects and other networks. The practical guide is a very good tool for a deeper knowledge of this dynamic cooperation area.

• The second project, which is on-going since October 2005, is aimed at “replicating the Sikasso process” in **southern Senegambia** in a context where CBC is perceived as a panacea to the problems facing the region. **ENDA Diapol** is particularly active in CBC in this area.

• The third pilot operation was developed in the **Maradi-Katsina-Kano corridor** (MKK, MK2), between Niger and Nigeria, with the support of the **Groupe de recherche et de Réalisations pour le Développement rural** (GRDR), the EU, the **Comité Catholique contre la Faim et pour le développement** (CCFD), the UNDP and the SWAC Secretariat. It focuses on the prevention of food crises.

• And, the fourth in 2006 in the **Karakoro basin** between Mali and Mauritania

The **Association of European Border Regions** (AEBR) has been following these processes carefully and has made frequent contacts with very different stakeholders in Africa and Europe (public, private, NGOs, universities, enterprises). These contacts have been particularly strong with the African Union Border Programme (AUBP). This led to the signing an agreement protocol in the year 2011 between the AU Commission and the AEBR.

Looking at the European experience for more than fifty years, the growing awareness on CBC in Latin America, and the developments in Africa since the 1980’s, we can see that the dynamics of national borders have some common elements for every continent. However, pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial issues are to be especially taken into account when studying further enhancement of African border areas as bridges and not as ramparts. They have a cultural, historical and political background, as it is the case in other continents.

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9 The PDM is a project of the Peace Dividend Trust (PDT), an NGO working to make peace and humanitarian operations more effective, efficient and equitable (**www.peacedividendtrust.com**).

Relationships in this area developed over several millennia by the indigenous civilizations, later by the European colonial powers (in some cases until very recently) and, in the last decades, by the African states and their supranational organizations after their independence processes. All of these circumstances have led to the current situation in which many cultural, linguistic and human relations exist across African borders, being particularly relevant in some areas. As Prof. Asiwaju has demonstrated in his works, to appreciate in full the localized impact of the border, a good knowledge of the culture areas prior to the partition of the continent by European colonial powers is necessary. Therefore, when studying borders to show the contingency and historicism of these limits, this does not mean just emphasizing their porosity and their crossings, but also power struggles, persistent stigmas and new forms of nationalism.

There are some special cases as well, such as Ceuta and Melilla (Spanish Autonomous Cities in Northern Africa, with boundaries to Morocco), or the maritime borders between the Canary Islands (Spain-EU) and Africa, with a very special relationship with Cape Verde and the Portuguese archipelagos of Azores and Madeira (Macaronesia). The EU has already identified the particular opportunities for West African countries like Senegal, Mauritania and Cape Verde. They can play a relevant role in CBC actions, producing a number of benefits from them due to their proximity to the Canary Islands, Azores and Madeira. In the programming period 2000-2006 (Interreg IIIB), the transnational cooperation zone Azores-Madeira-Canaries proved to be very useful and effective, so it has been kept in the current period 2007-2013 with the MAC Programme, being one of the priorities the cooperation with third countries in their geographical and cultural context, as it was the case with North-West Africa and Latin America in the previous period (Please refer to Case Study 5 “MAC Programme and West Africa” for more information).

In general, many studies on European, African, American or Asian borders have shown that they are very heterogeneous and difficult to compare. Inter-state relationships are diverse, but the links between border societies and their nation states as well. Everyone has a particular link with nation, territory and population. All of these particular socio-cultural frameworks meet at the borders. As it happens in Latin America, some experts advice of a first bias in studying border territories: developing field work and analyses within comparative perspectives and using concepts originally developed for a specific case and even for other parts of the world (European or US-Mexico borders). They also advice that sometimes state and nation do not match, and border areas are spaces where transnational identities take place, as well as conflicts and stigmatizations between national groups.

1.2. Border conflicts in West Africa

Interstate conflict over boundaries has been relatively frequent. These disputes have sometimes escalated, and in some cases reached full-scale war. There are many aspects in

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11 Asiwaju, A.I., 1990 (op. cit.).
the origin of these conflicts; some factors have made them difficult to be solved after years; and others have contributed to their lower potential for open conflict.

The development of democracy and supra-national integration processes have improved the prospects for territorial dispute settlement in some cases, but in other instances democratic practices and procedures have intensified bilateral conflicts between states over boundaries or territorial issues. In any case, supranational institutions (the African Union and the RECs especially) and some countries’ commitment (Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, etc.) are contributing to generate an environment prone to solve the conflicts.

- **Niger** and **Benin**: inherited dispute from colonial times concerning *inter alia* Lete Island in the River Niger. Finally solved by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 2005 to Niger’s advantage.

- **Mali** faces the effects of the ups and downs in **Côte d’Ivoire**, but it is very involved and experienced in controlling and resolving regional conflicts. General insecurity along borders in the north, including cross-border banditry and terrorism, remain troubling issues in regional relations.

- **Burkina Faso**: relations with **Ghana**, in particular, have warmed up to the point of beginning discussions about uniting Ghana and Burkina in the manner of the defunct Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union. Burkina mediated a political crisis in **Togo** and helped to resolve the **Tuareg** conflict in Niger. A territorial dispute with **Mali** and a border war over the allegedly mineral-rich Agacher Strip\(^\text{14}\) in 1985 was mediated by **Ghana** and **Nigeria** and led to lessening of tensions between the two nations. **Côte d’Ivoire** made accusations of Burkinabé support for rebels and Burkina claims of mistreatment of Burkinabé workers. In September 2007, ECOWAS intervened to attempt to resolve the dispute over two villages along the **Benin**-Burkina Faso border that remain from a 2005 ICJ decision.

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\(^{14}\) As quoted by Asiwaju, A.I. (1990), *op. cit.*
• **Mauritania**: since 1976 Spanish withdrawal from the **Western Sahara**, Mauritania was involved in this unsolved conflict, together with **Algeria** and **Morocco**. Mauritania and Algeria recognize the **Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)** but Morocco still occupies the “Southern provinces” and claims Algerian and Mauritanian support to the Frente Polisario (Popular Liberation Front of Shaguiat-el-Hamra and Río de Oro). Mauritania has declared neutrality in the dispute, seeking a peaceful and expedient end to the conflict, and diplomatic relations with Algeria and Morocco have resumed. The completion of a sixth berm by Morocco just north of Mauritania’s crucial rail link along the border with the Western Sahara, between Nouadhibou and the iron ore mines, further complicated bilateral relations. Very friendly relations with **Senegal** after independence were followed by complications due to the split between blacks and Maures in Mauritania, seeing Senegal itself as championing the rights of Mauritania’s black minority. Estimated 30,000 Afro-Mauritanian refugees live in Senegal.

• **Senegal** enjoys mostly cordial relations with its neighbours. Clear progress on other fronts with **Mauritania** (border security, resource management, economic integration, etc.). A short section of boundary with **The Gambia** is indefinite.

• **The Gambia** signed a Treaty of Confederation in 1982 with **Senegal**. The goal of the Senegambia Confederation was to combine the armed forces of the two states and to unify their economies and currencies. After just a short stretch of years, Gambia permanently withdrew from this confederation in 1989.

• **Guinea-Bissau**: The multitude of small offshore islands and a military able to sidestep government with impunity has made it a favourite trans-shipment point for drugs to Europe.

• **Guinea (Conakry)**: conflicts among rebel groups, warlords, and youth gangs in neighbouring states have spilled over into Guinea resulting in domestic instability. Guinea is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purposes of forced labour and sexual exploitation; the majority of victims are children, and internal trafficking is more prevalent than transnational trafficking\(^1\).

• **Sierra Leone**: as domestic fighting among disparate ethnic groups, rebel groups, warlords, and youth gangs in **Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia**, and **Sierra Leone** gradually abates, the number of refugees in border areas has begun to drop slowly. Sierra Leone considers excessive Guinea’s definition of the flood plain limits to define the left bank boundary of the Makona and Moa rivers and protests Guinea’s continued occupation of these lands including the hamlet of Yenga occupied since 1998.

• **Liberia**: The First Liberian Civil War, instigated by Charles Taylor and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) on December 24, 1989, eventually spread to neighbouring **Sierra Leone** in 1991 when dissidents of the Revolutionary United

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\(^{15}\) Information related to trafficking and other illegal activities is taken from the CIA’s World Factbook ([https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/))
Front (RUF) began using Liberia as a staging ground for NPFL backed military assaults on border towns in Sierra Leone. In 2001, Liberian forces along with the RUF began attacking and burning refugee camps and Guinean villages along the border, and this subsequently led to a large number of attacks, beatings, rapes, and abductions of refugees by Guinean police and military forces. Liberia is a source, transit, and destination country, principally for young women and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Victims of cross-border trafficking come to Liberia from Sierra Leone, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, and Nigeria and are subjected to the same types of exploitation as internally trafficked victims. It is also a transhipment point for Southeast and Southwest Asian heroin and South American cocaine for the European and US markets. Corruption, criminal activity, arms-dealing, and diamond trade provide significant potential for money laundering, but the lack of a well-developed financial system limits the country's utility as a major money-laundering center.

- **Cote d'Ivoire**: in 1989, after fifteen years of no progress, the Ghana-Côte d'Ivoire border re-demarcation commission finally agreed on the definition of the 640-kilometer border between the two countries. Recent civil war and related conflicts added tension to the restless dynamics in the Northern border area between shepherds and farmers.

- **Ghana**: Transportation and communication links with both Côte d'Ivoire and Togo have improved, despite problems with both countries. By 1992 Ghana's relations with Côte d'Ivoire were relatively good, but ugly incidents in late 1993 and early 1994 developed following a championship soccer match in Kumasi, Ghana, that had resulted in the elimination of Côte d'Ivoire from competition. Ghanaian immigrants in Côte d'Ivoire were violently attacked, and as many as forty or more Ghanaians were killed.

- **Togo**: After 1918, following the defeat of Germany, the League of Nations divided the German colony of Togoland from north to south, a decision that divided the Ewe people among the Gold Coast, British Togoland, and French Togoland. After 1945, the UN took over the Togoland mandates. During the 1950s, when the independence of Ghana was in sight, demands grew for a separate Ewe state. Following a UN plebiscite in May 1956, in which a majority of the Ewe voted for union with Ghana, British Togoland became part of the Gold Coast. After Togolese independence in 1960, relations between Togo and Ghana deteriorated, aggravated by political differences and incidents such as smuggling across their common border. At times, relations have verged on open aggression. The result of the transfer of Togoland to Ghana has meant that many Togolese keep one foot on either side of the border, living in Ghana by night and working in the markets of the capital, Lomé, by day.

- **Chad**: since 2003, Janjawid armed militia and the Sudanese military have driven hundreds of thousands of Darfur residents into Chad. Chad remained an important mediator in the Sudanese civil conflict, reducing tensions with Sudan arising from cross-border banditry. Chadian Aozou rebels reside in southern Libya. Only Nigeria and Cameroon have heeded the Lake Chad Commission's admonition to ratify the delimitation treaty, which also includes the Chad-Niger and Niger-Nigeria boundaries.
Chad is a source, transit, and destination country for children trafficked for the purposes of forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation. To a lesser extent, Chadian children are also trafficked to Cameroon, the Central African Republic, and Nigeria for cattle herding.

In other parts of Africa, the Apartheid regime in South Africa provoked many disturbances in the normal relationships between African countries until the nineties. There were also times of uprising and tyranny. The crisis in the region of the Great Lakes in 1994 challenged enormously the international community and left their scars in African borders as well. Enormous movement of refugees to the camps of Goma, Darfur, and many others like the Sahrawi camps in Tindouf (in the extreme *Hamada of Algeria*) were several generations live since the mid-seventies. Famine and droughts hit regularly wide areas of the continent. But border conflicts like the exchange of fire between Kenyan and Ugandan security forces in 1989 are already forgotten and a new spirit of integration prevails. On the other hand, religious conflicts affecting border areas, as the one in Kano (Northern Nigeria) in the moment of finishing this report can have a very negative impact in cross-border dynamics.

African countries have made a good use of international aid and now face new development challenges including governance and democracy, strengthening of supranational mechanisms and more South-South cooperation. This spirit is also perceived when talking about international boundaries, but not that much on the ground. Local trends prevail, as well as centralistic approaches, with very few exceptions. On the other hand, ancient cultures still are present in some border areas, overcoming the dictates of the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) and further international conferences, and opening another suggesting field to build cross-border concepts over pre-colonial entities. The territories covered by the Yoruba groups, or societies “on the move” like the Touareg and Maurí paint very interesting pictures to tackle cross-border cooperation.

1.3 Structures active in CBC

1.3.1 Supranational and multilateral institutions

It is very important to analyse main-streaming initiatives that can be vehicles or triggers for CBC. As it is the case in other parts of the world, the tasks to implement an integrated and sustained activity to promote and develop CBC initiatives in Africa should be done by institutions at national, regional and local level (multi-level governance and subsidiarity), as well as by other non-public actors (partnership), like non-governmental organisations and enterprises.

It can be stated that most visible actions in favour of cross-border cooperation (CBC) are those included in main African integration agendas. In this framework, it is very challenging to analyse most relevant efforts to promote CBC, paying special attention to the gradually

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16 In the time of writing this Report (October 2011), a huge famine devastates the Horn of Africa.
17 In mid-January 2012 a wave of coordinated attacks, vindicated by the Islamic group *Boko Haram*, has caused dozens of victims in Kano. More than 500 people died in 2011 in attacks against the Christian community.
involvement of the sub-national level and the growing supranational endeavour (multilateral, continental and/or international). The main role up to now corresponds to supra-national institutions, as it is the case of the African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The AU has constituted a Conference of Ministers in charge of Border Issues, implements the African Union Border Programme (AUBP) since 2007 and establishes a normative framework for the facilitation of CBC in the continent as a main tool for integration. In 2011, the AU has designated the 7th June as the African Borders’s Day. Amb. Ramtane Lamamra, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, has given an enormous input to the AUBP, coordinated by Amb. Aguibou Diarrah, a pioneer of African CBC. A very good overview of current implementation of the AUBP can be found in the documentary film *African Borders: From Barriers to Bridges*, produce by the AU and the GIZ in 2011.

The RECs are groupings of African individual countries by sub-regions with the objective of achieving greater economic integration. They are considered the bricks of the AU and are main actors in the implementation of the strategy “New Partnership for Africa’s Development” (NEPAD). Eight RECs are recognised by the AU, each constituted under a particular regional treaty:

- The Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD, 1998)
- The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA, 1994)
- The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS, 1983)
- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS, 1975)
- The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD, 1996)
- The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC, 1992)
- The Arab Maghreb Union (UMA, 1989)

18 An ongoing initiative is aimed to designate this same day in Europe and in other continents as a World Borders Day.
19 NEPAD was adopted at the 37th session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2001 in Lusaka, Zambia. NEPAD aims to provide an overarching vision and policy framework for accelerating economic co-operation and integration among African countries.
For the purpose of this report, it has been very appropriate to analyse the activities of the ECOWAS (CEDEAO in French) to promote CBC. It was founded by the Treaty of Lagos on 28th May 1975 with the mission to promote economic integration across the region. It is a grouping of 15 West African countries where a few members have come and gone over the years. Current members are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. In 1976 Cape Verde joined ECOWAS, and in December 2000 Mauritania withdrew. Niger was suspended in 2009 after the auto-coup and Côte d’Ivoire after the 2010 elections, but it came back in April 2011.

Furthermore, in 2005, ECOWAS prepared a draft convention on cross-border cooperation, which was tabled before a meeting of experts from member States in November 2006. The “Convention on cross-border co-operation in the ECOWAS area” was approved and these efforts have had a snowball effect in that the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), the Inter-States Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the Liptako-Gourma Development Authority (ALG) have all launched cross-border cooperation initiatives.

To ensure the sustainability of the cross-border programme, the ECOWAS Commission integrated CBC issues in its organization structure within its Free Movement of Persons Department. Then, the AU Commission expressed interest in learning from the West African experience to facilitate CBC at the continental level. A Steering Committee and a West African Experts Working Group were set-up. In May 2009, a stakeholders meeting of the ECOWAS CBC Programme took place in Abuja (Nigeria), where cross-border actors discussed next steps and priority actions. The Programme’s aim is to bring regional integration and local populations closer together by empowering border areas.

A very interesting initiative in the area is the ECOWAS rail, a Trans-ECOWAS project, established in 2007, with plans to upgrade railways in the area, including Ghana. All of this can support the strengthening of cross-border links.

The West African Economic and Monetary Union (usually known as UEMOA from its name in French), is a customs and currency union between eight members of ECOWAS (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo; Guinea-Bissau, lusophone, became the 8th member on 2nd May 1997). It was established by a Treaty in Dakar on 10th January 1994 to promote economic integration among countries that share the CFA franc as a common currency, issued by the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO).

The West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) is a group of 6 countries (Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone) within ECOWAS that plan to introduce a common currency, the Eco, by the year 2015. Nigeria, the Africa’s largest oil producer and most populous country, leads the WAMZ since its foundation in 2000. All members are English-speaking countries apart from Guinea (Conakry, Francophone). Along with Mauritania, Guinea opted out of the CFA franc currency, shared by all other former French colonies in West and Central Africa. A future goal is for the CFA franc and Eco to merge into a common and stable currency for all of West and Central Africa. The launch of this new currency is being developed by the West African Monetary Institute, based in Accra (Ghana). However,
several of the WAMZ’s countries currently suffer from weak currencies and chronic budget deficits. Unfortunately, their attempts to close this economic gap by printing more currency as further encouraged inflation.

Map of ECOWAS with member states in dark green and states with suspended membership in light green
(GNU Free Documentation License)

There are some other transnational cooperation structures, which are worth to mention for the purpose of this study, due to their relevance in promoting efforts for the joint management of natural resources belonging to several countries. As in other parts of the world, rivers are ancient communication ways and attraction centres for people for many reasons.

Several authorities are active in West Africa to promote joint management of river Niger, Senegal and Mano, amongst others, or the Lake Chad:

- The **Niger Basin Authority** (NBA) (French: *Autorité du Bassin du Niger, ABN*) is an inter-governmental organisation in West Africa aiming to foster co-operation in managing and developing the resources of the basin. Nine nations are members: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Nigeria. While a small area of Algeria falls within the Niger Basin, it is not a member of the NBA. It is based in Niamey and works in both French and English. Support to the management of the river can be offered by the extension of already initiated projects by NGOs and foreign enterprises.
Senegal and Mauritania have cooperated successfully with Mali under the **Organization for the Development of the Senegal River** (Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Sénégal, OMVS), which was formed in 1972 as a flood control, irrigation, and agricultural development project. Please refer to Case Study 2 for more information on the activities of the OMVS to manage the river and to promote CBC in the area.

The **Gambia River Development Organization** (Organisation pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Gambie, OMVG) was created in 1978 between Gambia and Senegal with the objective to manage the river Gambia as a natural resource. In 1980 Guinea joined the OMVG, and Guinea-Bissau is also a member, even if it is not riparian of the Gambia, but lies in its basin (114,000 km²). A major project outline to build a dam-bridge between the Gambian towns of Farafenni and Soma has been tried since 1994, but little progress happened.

The **Mano River Union** (MRU) was established in 1973 between Liberia and Sierra Leone. In 1980, Guinea joined. The goal was to foster economic cooperation among the countries. It is named for the Mano River which begins in the Guinea highlands and forms a border between Liberia and Sierra Leone. Due to conflicts involving the countries the objectives of the Union could not be achieved (Sierra Leone Civil War, First and Second Liberian Civil Wars). However, on May 20, 2004, the Union was reactivated at a summit of the three leaders of the Mano River Union states. On April 1, 2008, Cote d’Ivoire agreed to join the union during a state visit by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, being the current chair of the MRU.


Other specific-purpose structures can be found in a complex network of bodies in West Africa, like the **Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel** (French: Comité permanent inter-État de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel, abbreviated as CILSS) is an international organization consisting of countries in the Sahel region of Africa.
The organization's mandate is to invest in research for food security and the fight against the effects of drought and desertification for a new ecological balance in the Sahel. The CILSS was created in 1973 during the first great drought in the region with the aim of mobilizing the population in the Sahel and the international community to facilitate urgent need and the organization of works in various domains i.e. rainfed and irrigated agriculture, environment, transport, and communication. In 1995 it centered its activities on basic food security and the use of natural resources. The executive office is located in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso). Member countries: Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Chad.

Regarding proper cross-border structures, the Liptako–Gourma Authority (LGA) is a regional organization seeking to develop the contiguous areas of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. Created in December 1970, the zone covered corresponds to the border regions of the three countries (370,000 km², including 19 provinces of Burkina Faso, 4 administrative regions of Mali, and 2 departments and an urban community of Niger).

There are also some joint commissions of cooperation and demarcation committees, such as the ones between Ghana and Burkina. Several development projects are also organized in a bi- or trilateral basis, such as the previously mentioned OMVS, or the plan to improve roads between Nouakchott (Mauritania) and Bamako.(Mali).

1.3.2 Financial Institutions

Financial institutions also play a leading role to promote development and integration in Africa:

- The African Development Bank Group (AfDB) is an international financial institution created to promote the economic and social development of its member African countries. It includes the African Development Bank (ADB), the African Development Fund (ADF), the Nigeria Trust Fund (NTF), and the Private Sector Department (PSD).

- Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) is the common central bank of the eight member states which form the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU, UEMOA in French). BCEAO headquarters is located in Dakar, Senegal. Membership: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

- The West African Development Bank (BOAD) was established by an Agreement signed by the Member States of the WAEMU in 1973. The aim of the BOAD is to promote balanced development of the States of the Union and to achieve West African economic integration.

- Bank of Central African States (BEAC). In 1972 the Governments of the five countries that were members of the Central Bank of Equatorial African States and Cameroon (Banque Centrale des États de l'Afrique Equatoriale et du Cameroun (BCEAEC)) signed a new Convention of Monetary Cooperation with France which established the BEAC (Banque des États de l'Afrique Centrale) to succeed the
BCEAEC. Its members include Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea. BEAC is declared a "Multinational African institution in the management and control of which France participates in return for the guarantee she provides for its currency."

- In the active Southern Africa sub-region we can also find the Committee of Central Bank Governors of the Southern African Development Community (established in 1995 as part of the Finance and Investment Sector of SADC), the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA, established in 1983), the Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa (IDC, a self-financing state-owned development finance institution).

- The East African Development Bank (EADB) provides financial and technical assistance for the promotion of industrial development and projects to promote regional cooperation in the member countries of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

- Established in 1985, the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (PTA Bank) has been transformed into the Common Market for Eastern and Southern African States (COMESA), as a financial arm of the integration arrangement.

We can see an enormous set of supranational efforts, though sometimes overlap.

1.3.3 The sub-national level and the non-governmental sector

However, despite this complex network of supranational structures, the process to perform CBC in West Africa could be very slowly developed without the participation of sub-national and non-governmental actors. The empowerment of sub-national levels in the implementation of CBC programmes and projects, and their ownership of the outputs, enhance the impact of CBC strategies and their sustainability. As many experts and institutions have already stated, CBC can be the best example of South-South cooperation for territorial integration, putting border areas more central and promoting the cohesion of African territories.

As it is the case in Latin America, and even in many European border areas, until now there has not been an African place-based approach for CBC with functioning structures like those developed in the EU during the last twenty years. At present this cooperation takes mainly place on an informal level, or at very high supranational ones.

But in the last years a growing political will to develop, strengthen and support cross-border cooperation in Africa can be stated. There is no doubt that African local and regional authorities as well as NGOs are playing a growing role in many cross-border fields. National governments are also focusing and strengthening this role, though in many countries the sub-national level is underdeveloped or practically irrelevant.
Amongst many studies and initiatives to study and promote CBC in Africa, there are not enough involving European partners. It should be mentioned that European national agencies for international cooperation, with a extraordinary amount of projects implemented in Africa, involving local and regional governments as well as NGOs, have not dealt very much with territorial cooperation initiatives. This is an aspect of international cooperation with a lot of potentialities, but very slowly developed. Only GIZ (former GTZ) and the European Union can certify actions in this sense, particularly supporting the African Union Border Programme, but they are mostly concentrated in delimitation and demarcation tasks (a prerequisite to build sustainable CBC afterwards). However, the AUBP has intensively dealt with further needs regarding health services, promotion of CB trade, capacity building, structures and specific programmes for CBC, where the participation of EU institutions and organizations, as well as other financial organisations is required (see chapter 3.1). French, Italian and Austrian official cooperation and NGOs have also taken part in some concrete initiatives. Nevertheless, in the case of France, it is particularly relevant the role of decentralised cooperation.

It is important to insist in the need of studying thoroughly some transnational areas corresponding to ancient African cultures, as has been reported by Prof. Asiwaju. A lot of potential for CBC lies in this areas, as processes for CBC have never been interrupted completely. Many cases are well documented, but it is very rarely taken into account in development processes (too biased by narrow national approaches either by nation-states or by financial institutions).

### 1.4 Role of the EU

This study has been implemented in the framework of the European Parliament’s call for putting EU regional policy into a stronger international context and for more cooperation with third countries. In this sense, the EU-AU partnership has been explored, as well as other agreements with relevant organizations and related countries. The innovative focus of the European Commission (Directorate General for Regional Policy, DG REGIO) on the territorial aspects of the strategic partnership between the European Union and other parts of the world means a strong step forward to achieve a certain level of territorial cohesion in other continents, but there is a need to involve other Commission’s departments, particularly the Directorate General for Development and Cooperation-EuropeAid, DG DEVCO.

The growing interest in CBC and the information about the results in many European border areas make stakeholders in the South extremely willing to know better what is going on in Europe. In some Western African countries, authorities at different governmental levels have already begun a process of exchange of information with the EU (and with other global actors like the OECD, or European networks for CBC) to develop the concept of border areas with shared/delegated competences between national and sub-national governments. There are many examples in the area (not very much coordinated, but enthusiastic); but the sub-national level still needs to grow in relevance in the whole development cycle of these initiatives.

One specific European experience is that territorial cooperation actions are fundamental for the development of the territories directly involved, but also for regional integration.
processes, territorial cohesion, peace and protection of minorities. The irreversible aspects of CBC within the processes of supranational integration and territorial cohesion in the EU also makes it very attractive for African actors. They have enormously demanded some initiatives to promote the exchange of practises with Europe, and it is necessary at this stage the evaluation of already existing and potential CBC processes in several African areas.

Again the development of CBC is linked to supranational and sub-national processes, where multi-level governance and subsidiarity are key issues. In Europe, we have a long experience on what to do, and what not to do in the practise of the CBC process. And European border and cross border regions (Euroregions and similar structures developed during decades, and lately the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation, the EGTCs) cumulate an enormous expertise on it.

In any case, as in any other development process, long-lasting, proved and successful European best practice cannot be directly implemented in other continents just like that. CBC, as it is understood in Europe, could only be implemented in other parts of the world within comparable processes of supranational integration, where adapted EU-like solutions for specific problems can be explored. As already mentioned in the terms of reference for this study, “there is a particular opportunity for West African countries like Senegal and Cape Verde, which could play a part in CBC actions, and derive a number of benefits from them, due to their proximity to the Canary Islands, Azores and Madeira”.

In fact, the African Union and the European Union have developed a strong cooperation process after the first Africa-EU Summit in Cairo on 3-4 April 2000. At the second Summit in Lisbon (2007) a Joint Africa-EU Strategy was adopted in order to redefine the relationship between the two continents for tackling global challenges together. A first Action Plan 2008-2010 was structured around eight strategic partnerships:

1. Peace and security
2. Democratic governance and human rights
3. Trade, regional integration and infrastructure
4. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
5. Energy
6. Climate Change
7. Migration, mobility and employment
8. Science, information society and space

Another instrument to take into account is the Cotonou Agreement, signed between the EU and 78 ACP countries in June 2000. It entered into force in 2003, replacing the Lomé Convention (1975), being much broader in scope and including a stronger political foundation.

Anyway, looking at the studies carried out by the EU20, territorial cooperation issues are not identified by the various partners involved in the cooperation between the EU and Africa as main cooperation areas, as poverty and hunger remain the most immediate challenges in

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many parts of Africa. On the other hand, African is increasingly speaking with one voice at the global level and the African Union is emerging as a key partner for the EU. Nowadays, EU-Africa relations have moved from a simple donor-recipient relationship towards a true partnership where problems are tackled together, taking into account the interest of both parties, and territorial cooperation issues have been put on table most strongly by the AU since 2007. The growing awareness by DG Regio in this dialogue with the African partners has opened the gate for deeper analyses of cooperation possibilities and a strengthened Euro-African partnership.

1.5 Purpose and objectives of the study

In this study we have analysed the different border areas which are cooperating actively in Western Africa, despite of the many obstacles faced. African institutions and organizations dealing with CBC have been consulted and main documents, reports and declarations have been reviewed. A selection of several cross-border areas have been made to elaborate a SWOT analysis in order to improve CBC through the assessment of their socio-economic standing, the impact of territorial divides and common challenges (e.g. environmental concerns, migration flows, linguistic divisions, transport, etc.), as well as to offer recommendations to organizations actively promoting regional economic development in the area in order to best allocate resources to promote development and interregional cooperation. Internal and external factors favourable and unfavourable to promote CBC have also been identified.

Most dynamic CB areas haven been identified and analyzed, paying particular attention to the Western seaboard.

An analysis of participation (a study of the involvement of active and potential actors) have also been carried out, as well as the instruments used to facilitate CBC.

Many of the activities planned have not being carried out in the expected manner, due to different constraints: time, budget available and difficulties to contact some of the key players. However, the AEBR has decided to include the follow up of CBC in Western African countries in particular (and in the whole African continent in general) as part of the Association’s global strategy to promote territorial cooperation (particularly CBC) in other continents. The AEBR will keep on amplifying the scope and elements of this study even after its conclusion through standing collaboration with main actors. To this end, an agreement has been signed with the African Union’s Commission with the purpose of:

- Informing the AU on the development (and improvements) of CBC in the EU.
- The AU will report the AEBR about CBC initiatives in Africa.
- AEBR support to the AU Borders Programme through the exchange of experiences, the support to publications and the elaboration of legislative proposals.
- Invitation to events organized by both parties and organization of common events.
- Participation in training activities.
- Participation in consultation processes.
Similar agreements are to be explored and eventually established with the RECs, particularly with the ECOWAS and UEMOA.

This is an early set of objectives defined to guide the different activities implemented during the elaboration of this study, including expected outputs:

- **Short-term objectives:**
  
  - Support to supra-national efforts, including border delimitation / demarcation and transport networks
  - Recommendations to improve decentralised cross-border cooperation through coordination and partnership between the respective local, regional, national authorities and the supranational level.
  - Start a process to increase capacities of national, regional and local actors, as well as private partners in the design, implementation and evaluation of cross-border cooperation.

- **Mid-term objectives:**
  
  - Establishment of a series of steps to increase national, regional and local capacities for cross-border cooperation.
  - Development of multi-annual strategy/programme and project management skills to contribute to institutional strengthening.

- **Long-term objective:**
  
  - Structural approach to the regional integration process (e.g. through a Western African Interreg) and the extension to other African RECs

As a result of the SWOT analysis and overall result of the study, a road map has been elaborated including the next steps to strengthen cross-border cooperation in the selected border areas in West Africa and how to proceed in other border areas in Africa.

In order to perform this study in a better way, senior experts in the field of cross-border cooperation were engaged, as well as NGOs, enterprises and institutions like *Casa África* in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, which offered a definitive support to organize a workshop and a public event on “Opportunities for CBC in West Africa” in the framework of the present study: [http://www.casafrica.es/agenda_europa_africa.jsp?DS28.PROID=530013](http://www.casafrica.es/agenda_europa_africa.jsp?DS28.PROID=530013). As Annex IV you can find the programme and the list of participant experts. AEBR staff was involved in the development of this study, too.

### 1.6 Tasks

Please refer to the technical part of the AEBR offer to see a short description of the AEBR and a general profile of the main team members directly involved in all activities related to this study.
The following distribution of tasks was designed:

- **Martín Guillermo Ramírez**: Overall coordination and organisation of the study, literature and desk research, interviews, meetings, first analytical report for West Africa.
- **Jens Gabbe**: Interview guide, preparation of reports (including SWOT and road map), interviews and meetings.
- **Haris Martínos**: Literature and desk research, contributions to the reports (including SWOT and road map), interviews and meetings.
- **Charles Ricq**: scientific assistance.
- **Hans-Günter Clev**: technical assistance.
- **Chibuzo Opara**: technical assistance.
- **Other partner institutions**: technical assistance, interviews and meetings.

Related to the methodology, it was agreed on a variety of measures, including:

- desk research, literature and legislative review;
- data collection (see also key questions);
- interview guide;
- interviews with relevant actors in the field of cross-border cooperation;
- specific meetings with representatives of institutions, NGOS, universities and research centres active in this field,
- meetings and targeted training and exchange in “mini-workshops”.

2 WORKING METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

2.1 Inception meetings, experts and desk research

Inception meetings

Various contacts have been made with African local, national and supranational stakeholders, with experts from universities and research institutions, cooperation agencies and embassies from European countries, enterprises and the third sector (NOGs), both in Africa and in Europe, to explain the European experience in CBC, as well as to get to know different initiatives carried out in the African countries to promote CBC in very variable circumstances. These contacts have developed over the years and have led to a systematic exchange of information between African and European experts and organizations dealing with CBC from the point of view of the Academy, the Politics and International Cooperation for Development. The same can be said of other European institutions and networks: researchers in Paris, Gorizia, Switzerland or Scandinavia; Euroregions, particularly along the Rhine; NGOs and some national agencies for international cooperation and development (concrete projects / programmes have been identified by the AEBR with the involvement of agencies / NGOs in Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Ireland and Scandinavia). The OECD through the Club du Sahel has made an enormous improvement in the promotion and enhancement of African CBC. Several UN agencies have also supported many on-going initiatives, namely those proposed by African institutions. But it is the European Union the most expected partner to definitely launch an ambitious, sustainable and effective Programme of CBC in Africa, under the leadership of the African Union. The EU is the biggest provider of development aid in the world, and the strongest database on CBC practices, legislation, programming, etc.

Already in the eighties of the last century, the AEBR gained knowledge of African early efforts to promote CBC as a main tool to overcome the difficulties to achieve a certain degree of continental integration. Dr. Viktor Frhr. von Malchus, one of the European pioneers of CBC met Prof. Anthony I. Asiwaju (his African peer), and a first transfer of practices was then made. Contacts with Prof. Asiwaju has been kept over the time, and some exchanges have taken place between the AEBR and him in the course of this study, while taking good note of his recommendations. The AEBR has been following the efforts of the African Union and has also been invited to the different meetings organized since the launching of the AU Border Programme (AUBP) in 2007, and has signed an Agreement with the AU Commission for mutual exchange of information, participation in activities and support the AUBP in 2011. Other stakeholders have also been contacted in the framework of the AEBR participation in different platforms and networks (Platforma and FOGAR).

Since 2008 there has been an intensive advocacy at the European Parliament in favour of including a territorial dimension in EU cooperation policies, conducted by MEP Lambert van Nistelrooij (at that time President of the AEBR). As a result, specific funds were earmarked for this purpose, and the EU Commission has intensified the contacts, has influenced EU-African dialogues and has promoted a better knowledge of current practices and perspectives to implement solid territorial cooperation in Africa.
In 2009 first exchanges took place between DG Regio and various stakeholders (including the AEBR), with the result of very fruitful conclusions over key interventions to be implemented. DG Development (today DG DevCo) has also been contacted, in several occasions directly by the AEBR or through the participation in networks such as the European Platform of Regional and Local Authorities for Development (Platforma) or the Forum of Global Associations of Regions (FOGAR); but the possibilities of a stronger territorial input in European cooperation are still in a very early stage. Nevertheless, this is one of the main targets for the overall objective of this study: to offer relevant information about obstacles and opportunities for CBC in West Africa “so that organisations actively promoting regional economic development in the area have a clear picture of how to best to allocate resources to promote regional integration and interregional cooperation”. Apart from DG Regio and DG DevCo, direct targets of this study are the UEMOA, ECOWAS and the AU.

In December 2010 a first exchange of ideas took place within the AEBR structure on how to implement the study and which methodology would be necessary. So, it could be possible to start the project activities immediately after the signature of the contract. On 28 January 2011 the project proposal has been intensively discussed in the AEBR Advisory Committee. Special attention was given to the SWOT analysis, the methodology, the types of actions, the key questions and the structure of the meetings foreseen.

In close cooperation with the other experts the Chairman of the AEBR Advisory Committee drafted the key questions, and a set of kick-off and inception meetings took place at DG Regio premises, where main aspects of the study were discussed. At the meeting on 26 January 2011 in the DG Regio in Brussels (the DG Regio was represented by Charles White and the AEBR by Secretary General Martin Guillermo Ramirez), an extensive exchange of views concentrated on the Inception Report, the key questions and the interview guide, some key stakeholders to be contacted, as well as the selection of cross-border areas for research. Please find as Annex I to this report the “key research questions”.

Desk research

Using traditional techniques, as literature and legislation review, as well as desk research and modern means as electronic search, the quantity and quality of available information is diverse. The AEBR uses triangulation as much as possible to increase the credibility and validity of the results. Subsequently, desk research had already started based on previous AEBR tasks on this regards. In order to provide a substantial “backing” further review of available material and a thorough update of information was carried out. Related activities mainly focused on:

1. Identifying existing documents / publications,
2. Analysing this documentation according to the draft “key research questions”, and
3. Elaborating a preview with respect to the state-of-the-art of CBC in the areas under research.

Main sources taken into account were:
• EU Institutions’ communications and agreements.
• EU priorities in the area (through EC Delegations)
• EU Member States initiatives: German (GIZ), French, Spanish (AECID and Casa África), Irish, Austrian and Italian cooperation amongst others.
• Other European networks like the MOT; and new specific platforms to promote decentralize international cooperation like Platforma or FOGAR
• AU programmes
• ECOWAS and UEMOA programmes, initiatives and proposals
• Other international initiatives, as the OECD’s Sahel and West Africa Club
• NGOs, universities and others institutions and enterprises working in the field

Many documents and other sources of information have been taken into account to elaborate this report, and they are properly quoted within the text.

Ongoing desk-research gathered additional documents and other sources of information on CBC initiatives existing in the case study areas; and provided elements for background analysis, supported afterwards through the realisation of interviews / questionnaire surveys, addressing key stakeholders involved in CBC at the selected areas.

To deepen / fine-tune the research framework elaborated in the context of this study, the AEBR elaborated a structured set of “key research questions” in order to achieve a clear and scientifically sound framework for all desk-research activities.

The Inception Report (Deliverable 1) established the following methodology:

• description of the purposes and objectives of the study;
• the role of the EU;
• the sources to study current situation of cross- border cooperation in Africa in general, and West African in particular;
• presents a proposal for cross-border capacity building;
• selects 2-3 case studies from border areas in West Africa;
• gives an overview on the senior experts to be involved and on the distribution of tasks;
• expected outputs; and
• a time table.

2.2 Key research questions and Interview Guide

Main questions to answer are:

• Which are main obstacles and opportunities for CBC?
• Are there formal CBC initiatives? Why and why not?
• If yes, up to which level?
• Main actors and main activities that take place in border areas
• Future prospects, including recommendations for funding institutions on how best to allocate resources to promote regional integration and interregional cooperation.
In order to further deepen / fine-tune the provisional research framework as elaborated in the context of this study, a structured set of “key research questions” (see Annex I to this report) have been elaborated in order to achieve a clear and scientifically sound framework for desk-research and field-related activities. Draft “key research questions” were discussed with DG Regio in order to prepare the field work, the mini-workshops, the interviews and finally the SWOT analysis.

The draft questionnaire concentrates on two main chapters:

1. quantitative factors,
2. qualitative factors.

The quantitative factors include data on the geographical conditions, basic statistics of the cross-border area, infrastructural conditions, economic structure and development indicators.

The qualitative factors focus on existing cross-border agreements and procedures, the role of public authorities and private stakeholders, as well as traditional authorities and religious communities, different types of commuters (if any), economic, social and cultural cross-border relations, touristic potentials, consumer / trader behaviour, customs clearance, etc.

The strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats have been elaborated related to the key questions. Generally, the opportunities and threats can be derived from the answers to both chapters, as well as of the additional remarks and assessments from the interviews. Nevertheless, some additional aspects have to be considered:

- cross-border risk factors/threats (accessibility, security, illegal activities, social conditions, ...);
- cross-border favouring factors/sectors, existing economic potential with special dynamic of growth;
- border problems due to the different legal systems and procedures;
- cross-border differences in income;

The interview guide (see Annex II) was built upon the key questions elaborated by the AEBR for general assessment of border areas, being adapted to the Western African reality. This guide is the basis for the interviews with key actors, offering to prepare themselves for the interviews and understand by means of the explanations the whole purpose of the questions. As there are different interviewers, a common standard is assured, subsequently allowing a SWOT analysis and elaboration of the Final Report on a solid basis. Furthermore, it is ensured that all interviewees are answering the same questions. This does not exclude scope for additional information.

After the realisation of desk research, using the recommendations of the kick-off meeting, discussed and decided the “key research questions”, a questionnaire was elaborated to serve as a basis for direct interviews with the authorities and key stakeholders, as well as an interview guide to get maximum information on all relevant aspects. These interviews were planned as direct as possible, but in some cases the information has arrived rather by indirect ways. In fact, it is necessary to improve communication practices in this field, as it
does not flow fluently. In any case, we have had access to most of the work developed by African supranational institutions, African nations, organizations and experts, as far as they have left written record of their activities. And this is the case in most of the occasions.

In any case, answers to our previous contacts have been arriving at the moment of writing this Draft Final Report, and more contributions are announced. In this sense, we have proposed to produce an updated version of this Report after the formal delivery of the study on 31st October 2011. Due to the celebration of the main workshop on 7th and 8th November 2011 in Casa África, in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, and due to the high quality of the discussions, a new version is being produced to be circulated amongst stakeholders for comments. An updated Final Report will be produced integrating all relevant contributions to be submitted to the European Commission (DG Regio) by the end of 2011.

Communication with EU delegations in African countries failed because of changing jobs for key persons (and the on-going process to build the European External Action Service), and this was also the case with some African organizations. On the other hand, we have found a great collaboration at the African Union Border Programme and most related partners, having access to very interesting information on current activities and pilot projects. Particularly relevant has been the information provided by the German GIZ, and the Senegalese ENDA DIAPOL, as well as by Prof. Anthony I. Asiwaju.

In Europe, the information has flowed with other CBC networks, and we have gained access to the valuable contributions of the Club du Sahel (OECD) and the Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT). We have also made use of the information available at the EU institutions, the Council of Europe and the archives of the Association of European Border Regions.

2.3 Mini-Workshops and meetings on the ground

After the realisation of desk research, using the recommendations of the kick-off meeting, discussed and decided the “key research questions”, the questionnaire served as a basis for direct interviews with key stakeholders. The questionnaire was accompanied by an interview guide, to get maximum information on all relevant aspects. As already mentioned, it was not easy to contact some stakeholders, due to the time and resources available, but also due to political situation or communication possibilities. In this sense, email or phone contacts were (and are still being) used in order to get maximum information on all relevant data and aspects.

A first mini-workshop was organized at the African Union Border Programme premises in Addis Ababa on 8 June 2011, with the participation of the AUBP, Prof. Asiwaju, the African Union Office of the German Agency GIZ and the MOT in order to better analyse the situation and conditions of cross-border cooperation in the areas under study.

A workshop has been organized on 7-8 November 2011 in Casa África (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria). Casa África was constituted by the Spanish Government and Canarian institutions in 2006 in order to promote Spanish-African dialogue and cooperation, as well as the Euro-African relationship. In this workshop, composed by two technical meetings and an
open session with the public, took part the EU Commission (DG Regio), Casa África, the Government of the Canary Islands, the AEBR, the African Union Border Programme, institutional representatives and experts from several West African countries, NGOs and enterprises involved in cross-border cooperation and integration in West Africa. Other actors have been invited but declined for agenda reasons (MOT, Club du Sahel, ENDA Diapol). Other failed due to personal reasons (Coeur, ECOWAS). However, all of them have declared their will to react to the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop. If necessary, bilateral meetings with these organizations will also be organized. Most relevant conclusions and recommendations and any other contribution addressed directly to this Workshop or indirectly to its outputs are being taken into account in an updated draft of this Final Report to be recirculated amongst main stakeholders and a definitive version is to be submitted to the European Commission (DG Regio) before the end of 2011.

All participants stressed the explicit mention of their thankfulness to Casa África for their warm welcome and excellent organization, as well as their commitment on the organization of this activity.

On the other hand, contacts have been made in different meetings with the German Embassy in Addis Ababa, the UN Liaison Office with the African Union, the UN Cartographic Section, the EU Delegation to the African Union, the Senegalese NGO ENDA Diapol and various African national organisations and institutions. Different European networks, NGOs and some enterprises working in the areas under study have also been contacted.

After the realisation of desk research and following the recommendations of the kick-off meeting, the questionnaire as well as the interview guide served as a basis for authorities and key stakeholders, with the aim to get maximum information on all relevant aspects.

Along the elaboration of this study, some very active networks have been identified and many stakeholders have been registered (see annex III). Most of these stakeholders have been debriefed following the questionnaire. Not many replies arrived in compliance with the questionnaire. Instead, studies, reports and seminar presentations were sent. The questions were also referred to other sources; or only some information was given. Some of the information was already registered in the AEBR before performing the tasks described in this document, and an important update has taken place during the preparation of the study, as CBC is an on-going process in Africa; and some other very relevant information is still arriving. Therefore, it was extremely difficult and time-consuming to evaluate all these information and to integrate it up to certain extent into the timetable of the study. All of these circumstances have made an extension of the programmed time inevitable.

Where possible, the strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats detected have been processed and checked by the AEBR team in relation with the key questions (depending on the information available). Additional remarks and assessments from the interviews and workshops have been taken into account as well:

1. Current developments situation;
2. prevailing conflicts and prejudices;
3. cross-border risk factors and threats e.g. conflicts, sectors under special threat, refugees flows, labour market problems, illegal activities, trafficking, etc.;
4. cross-border favouring factors/sectors, existing economic potential with special dynamic of growth (particularly certain agricultural activities oriented to export) and innovation potential (opportunities);
5. the role of different stakeholders, including traditional authorities and religious communities; especial attention to the role of trade networks;
6. daily border problems due to the different legal systems and procedures;
7. cross-border differences in income and foreign exchange differentials;
8. importance of city twinning (or twinning-like) as laboratories for future CBC.

2.4 Cross-border areas under study in West Africa (political-geographical situation and key indicators)

In addition to the Western African seaboard (as mentioned in the terms of reference), particularly Senegal and Mauritania, with related islands (the African Cape Verde, and the EU Canary, Azores and Madeira), where maritime cooperation can be explored even in relationship with EU territories; the following border areas have been considered to be taken into account for a detailed study:

- **The SKBo zone (Sikasso, Korhogo and Bobo Dioulasso), Mali-Côte d'Ivoire-Burkina Faso**, an area of mixing and integration, typically peripheral with extreme spatial and social mobility. It has been called a “space of sub-national solidarity”.

- **The River Boundary Senegal Mauritania**, wet border where the river can be a development factor if potentialities are properly exploited. Special case of the Cross-Border Karakoro basin.

- **Southern Senegambia-Guinea-Bissau** is an interesting case of complex border area, where some other countries are necessarily involved (Mali, Guinea Conakry).

- **The “Development Corridor” Maradi-Katsina-Kano (Niger-Nigeria)**. One of the most densely populated areas in West Africa. A strong economical power meets one of the poorest countries in the world.

Along the study, some more in-depth information has appeared on other cross-border territories. **Annex V** includes a map of “hot” CBC areas, accompanied by a description of cross-border structures (if any), cross-border specific measures, and an overview of the overall administrative political division, cross-border river basins, and other relevant data.

It has been very difficult to get direct information through interviews with West African institutions, but channels are opened in order to check preliminary analyses. Updated and more accurate information is awaited about main cross-border cooperation areas.
3 CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN WEST AFRICA

3.1 Current situation of Cross-Border Cooperation in Africa

Borders in Africa are very artificial in most cases. Most of current borders were the result of the Berlin West African Conference of 15 November 1884 through 26 February 1885, made to divide the African territory according to the interest of the European colonial powers, and further conferences to negotiate particular demarcations. Despite of the controversy generated by many historians when assessing the Berlin Conference, one point seems reasonably clear, as very appropriately pointed out by Prof. Asiwaju: “it was at Berlin that the theoretical foundations were laid for the subsequent balkanisation of the Blackman’s continent”. The rule about “effective occupation” resulted in a demand for definitive boundaries and visible administrations, a new world of sharply bound territorial states on the model of European nation-states. In fact, it was the initiation of the delimitation.

Therefore, cultural, historical and political backgrounds have to be taken into account. The colonial demarcation lines coexist with cultural, linguistic and human relations across borders in many cases, making very difficult to understand these processes without a sound knowledge of the antecedents.

Asiwaju, A. I. (1990), op. cit.
African sub-national authorities are not playing such a growing role promoting CBC like their equivalents in other continents, but some national governments, and particularly supra-national structures, are focusing and somehow strengthening this tool for integration. Until now in Africa there is no place-based approach in cross-border cooperation with functioning structures like in the EU. But there are initiatives to promote a continental programme and a legal instrument for CBC. The cooperation is weak in general, and only some areas seem to have undertaken a sustained process of CBC. In these areas we have looked for cases to be studied in depth. However, in the last years a growing political will to develop, encourage and support cross-border cooperation in Africa can be stated. There is no doubt that local and regional authorities as well as NGOs are playing a growing role in many cross-border fields. Some national governments are also focusing and strengthening this role, even in countries where the sub-national level is underdeveloped or practically irrelevant.

The AEBR has been in contact with some of the institutions involved, in particular with the African Union (AU) since the very beginning of its Border Programme (AUBP), following this process and taking part in several meetings in order to make some contributions on its design and implementation. Particularly relevant was the participation in the Preparatory Experts Meetings for the two Conferences of African Ministers in Charge of Border Issues held in Addis Ababa on June 2007 (launching of the AUBP), with the presence of AEBR Vice-President François Maïtia (Aquitaine) and March 2010 (mid-term review of the AUBP) attended by AEBR Secretary General, Martín Guillermo Ramírez. Vice-president Maïtia and the Chairman of the AEBR Advisory Committee, Mr. Jens Gabbe, also attended respective experts meeting of the AUBP in Bamako (Mali) in 2007 and 2008.

AU’s Members States have adopted a certain number of political and legal instruments to support their efforts to manage border issues. Amongst them:

- The principle of the respect of borders;
- the principle of negotiated settlement of border disputes;
- the Memorandum of Understanding on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa, which foresees the delineation and demarcation of inter-African borders by 2012 with the assistance of the UN Cartographic Unit

It is widely agreed by the AU’s Member states that CBC should be fixed in their agendas, in order to:

- promote and consolidate peace security and stability;
- strengthen and develop good neighbourhood relationship;
- speed up integration, opening up of border areas and socio-economic development of cross-border areas; and
- contribute to improve policy coherence at community level.

As it has already been mentioned, the African Union Border Programme (AUBP) was launched in 2007, with the following aims:
• **Border delimitation and demarcation**, as a main consequence of the establishment of African border lines in the Conference of Berlin (1884) by European colonial powers, and further decolonization processes. There are around 80,000 km of land borders in Africa, being duly demarcated only one quarter of them. Therefore, there are disputes because of gaps and imprecisions in the archives provided by the former colonizers, particularly regarding intra-colonial segments (42 border cases producing latent tensions or open conflicts since 1964). To facilitate this, a Pan-African survey of borders has been launched for all Member States; and they foresee the establishment of a Boundary Information System (BIS), a data bank of information on African boundaries (with the support of the German GIZ and the UN Cartographic Unit).

• **Development of cross-border integration dynamics** sustained by local stakeholders. One first step is the identification of pilot regions or initiatives for a faster development of regional support programmes for CBC (and the establishment of regional funds for local CBC). The GIZ and the AUBP, in close cooperation with experts from different fields are currently developing an Atlas of CBC which can constitute a very helpful tool to plan concrete actions over well prepared territories.

• **Preparation of an African Legal Instrument for CBC**. There is a strong need of legislative basis to sustain community policies in border areas, with the participation of local authorities, border communities, etc. (all stakeholders should be identified and empowered to be active part of these processes).

• **Capacity building**: a related assessment has been initiated and efforts are being made to achieve sustained partnership (and a resource mobilisation process) with experienced bodies outside Africa. There are also several publications aimed to promote and extend the knowledge about border issues in Africa (“From Barriers to Bridges”, “Good Practice Handbook on Delimitation of African Boundaries”), made by the AUBP in cooperation with the German Agency GIZ.

• **Incorporation of CBC to regional integration processes**, some RECs have already included CBC in their agendas, as it is the case of ECOWAS or SADC, but there is a need of a more systematic approach in the eight RECs.

According to the reports of the AU, in the last years, efforts to mobilize local initiatives have been made; atlas and handbooks have been elaborated; some initiatives to promote free movement of persons and goods have been implemented; CB projects and programmes have been formulated; community radio networks have been established to inform and communicate about CB issues; some federations of associations from both sides of some border areas have been established under a CB label, and they have produced some joint action plans.

In any case, most of the related actions and initiatives to develop the AUPB have to do with a more “transnational” approach, and the sub-national level is hardly involved. In fact, African Ministers in charge of Border Issues have agreed that the “implementation of the AUBP
should be effected at national, regional and continental level” (understanding “regional” in the sense of “continental regions”). However, they have also requested the necessary coordination of the AUBP through “inclusive governance” (involving not only Member states and RECs, but also parliamentarians, local elected representatives and civil society). Therefore, there are many evidences that national governments and supra-national processes have clearly acknowledged the importance of involving local and regional governments to promote good governance, especially in border territories.

On the other hand, there are strong difficulties to mobilize resources and partnerships, being many actions and initiatives taken on board with the solely external support of the German agency for international development GIZ, plus some initiatives supported by Italian, French or Austrian aid agencies. Therefore, to extend the depth and scope of the AUBP, other European and national institutions should be involved in this process. The AU has already discussed with the EU the need to incorporate territorial cooperation in the bilateral agenda EU-AU, and has stressed the need of active partnership with the European border movement, in particular with the AEBR, but also with other European CBC networks.

3.2 General overview in West Africa

It is in West Africa where Cross-Border Cooperation has been taken on board more strongly by some governments, in particular the boundary between Mali and Burkina Faso, where the border line (450 km) has been completely demarcated by the German African Border Project (GTZ)\(^{22}\). In this same framework, Mali and Burkina Faso are the scenario of a CBC programme for border villages, mainly related to conflict mediation and the elaboration of joint project proposals\(^{23}\). There we can find issues like a cross-border health centre or a cereal bank\(^{24}\). Many things are happening at the borders of West African countries, and there are various studies going through this cooperation in depth, analysing the situation, its causes, and proposing measures to overcome difficulties\(^ {25,26}\). These and similar studies in other border areas have also been taken into account, as the information and recommendations provided fulfill very well the questions formulated to elaborate this study.

These Western African border areas seem to be the most active for CBC in the continent, with a reasonable and increasing participation of local authorities. In most border areas, people can cross without visa and there is a fluent and multi-purpose cross-border exchange. At the same time, there is a strong presence of EU national and sub-national development agencies in Western Africa, some of them working in border areas of Senegal, Mali, Burkina, Mauritania, etc. With the possible coordination of these multiple European actors within the framework of the initiatives carried out by ECOWAS, OECD and others, some CBC actions

\(^{22}\) Other areas being delimitated and demarcated within this project are located in Eastern and Southern Africa (Mozambique’s borders with Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia; and Zambia-Malawi), with more than 400 km already demarcated.

\(^{23}\) The same experience is being implemented in COMESA, particularly the region of the Great Lakes, where a simplified trade regime is being developed together with conflict prevention and resolution.


\(^{25}\) ENDA Diapol-IDRC/CRDI (2009), *op. cit.*

\(^{26}\) SWAC (OECD)-MOT (2010), *op. cit.*
empowering local actors in this regard could be included. In any case, other circumstances should be taken into account to study these complex and sometimes unstable areas.

However, border disputes will remain in many African territories. As in other parts of the world, cross-border areas are sometimes the playground for conflicts, trafficking and related crime. There are many examples of African conflicts involving direct- or indirectly borders, from established armed conflicts to sustained low-intensity fights. But probably the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, or the complex case of Western Sahara are the most known examples of the difficulties to normalize CBC in some areas. In any case, as already explained, many conflicts have already been solved and the AUBP will probably close others in the coming years. To illustrate how things are developing in some African areas, a long lasting conflict in Sudan has evolved to the creation of a new state in Summer 2011, the Republic of South Sudan with capital in Juba, adding 2,100 km of border to the African picture, which still faces serious challenges. The AU and the international community are following very closely this process in order to promote the border area as a space of integration and not of fragmentation.

![Map of South Sudan](Map of South Sudan, [www.worldatlas.com](http://www.worldatlas.com))

![Oil and Gas concessions in Sudan](Oil and Gas concessions in Sudan, Michael Till-Lambrecht, German Wikipedia, 2004)

### 3.3 Case studies in West Africa

In addition to the Western African seaboard (as mentioned in the terms of reference), particularly Senegal and Mauritania, with related islands (the African Cabo Verde, and the EU Canary, Azores and Madeira), where maritime cooperation can be explored even in relationship with EU territories and some programmes are already being implemented; the following border areas have been proposed to be taken into account for a detailed study:
CBC opportunities and threats in West Africa
Source: AEBR (2011), own elaboration

- The SKBo zone (Sikasso, Korhogo and Bobo Dioulasso), Mali-Côte d’Ivoire-Burkina Faso, an area of mixing and integration, typically peripheral with extreme spatial and social mobility. It has been called a “space of sub-national solidarity”.

- The River Boundary Senegal Mauritania, wet border where the river can be a development factor if potentialities are properly exploited.

- Southern Senegambia-Guinea-Bissau (plus Guinea Conakry) is an interesting case of complex border area, where some other countries are necessarily involved (Gambia, Mali). Some global challenges are very present (drugs, trafficking, ...).

- The “Development Corridor” Maradi-Katsina-Kano (Niger-Nigeria). One of the most densely populated areas in West Africa, where a strong economic power meets one of the poorest countries in the world.

Through the desk research, some more in-depth information has appeared on other cross-border territories. A map of “hot” CBC areas can be found in this chapter, as well as a description of infrastructures that are relevant for CBC (The importance of transport development in West Africa, at the end of the chapter). The description of the cases includes cross-border structures (if any), cross-border specific measures, and an overview of the overall administrative political division, cross-border river basins, and other relevant data. These cases are also used in chapter 5 (Conclusions), indicating some good (or bad) examples. Chapter 6 (Recommendations) also uses these cases to indicate some concrete initiatives to support.
Description of case 1: The SKBo zone (Sikasso, Korhogo and Bobo Dioulasso), Mali-Côte d’Ivoire-Burkina Faso, an area of mixing and integration, typically peripheral with extreme spatial and social mobility. A main analysis to understand the dynamics of this border area was made in 2002 in the study Border spaces and regional integration: the case of SKBo27.

It has been called a “space of sub-regional solidarity” and it certainly has a lot of potential for that. Distinctive aspects are its geography and the history of its societies, marked by a extreme spatial mobility. A complex CB area where periodical crises in Côte d’Ivoire decrease awareness about the special relationship between national and sub-national authorities, and between “national institutions” and “cultural minorities” in West Africa. The relevance of Mali and Burkina as main actors (even pioneers) for African CBC is quite evident in the SKBo and other parts of their common boundary.

SKBo is part of the “endemic Sudanian” zone, a relatively narrow latitudinal strip from the coast of Senegal to the foot of the high Ethiopian plateaux, characterized by a deciduous forest which increasingly disappears from farmed areas.

Its evolution has been studied attending to the pre-colonial and colonial Kénédougou kingdom, the building of nation-states after independence processes, and contemporary developments.

A unique identity has been built here: homogeneity of its peoples, its agriculture, and its systems of production and exchange. This territory has traditionally attracted peoples and created a culture of mobility and trade, while promoting mixing. Associating an ethnic group with a State is extremely difficult here, as in many other African areas, since different peoples located in either side of the borders have become interconnected through old and renewed alliances (Dioula, Senoufo, Bambara, Bobo, Fulani, Peulh, Samo, Mossi, Maka peoples, amongst others). The share of mutual belonging is fostered by the Islam, matrimonial and customary ties, economic activities and trade. In fact, trade is the foundation for the prosperity of SKBo, but the creation of borders first (even more than during the colonial period) and more recent factors (the emergence of Côte d’Ivoire as a new growth hotspot in the region and its crises) have modified its regional structure.

The tensions between nation-building and cross-border dynamics come particularly from:

• the overlapping of sub-regional, and national local and customary rules on the same territory;
• a permanent reset of social relationships between populations that are simultaneously relatives and competitors, affecting land tenure in a space of migration;
• and also affects production chains that cut across various levels;
• traders, main beneficiaries of these processes, contributing to the disarticulation of the space, but being main vectors of its polarisation.

Three different countries, with different political-territorial construct according to national governmental choice, economic activity and migration dynamics. The cities of Sikasso, Korhogo and Bobo Dioulasso are typical secondary Sudanian cities that are very important on the regional scale, sharing a model based on a rural-urban continuum. SKBo is both consumer and redistributor of fruits and vegetables. Mango, citrus and potato crops have replaced bananas and pineapple, due to greater resistance and more convenient for export.

There are many opportunities already in place. Animal traction, increasing use of agricultural inputs and thorough coaching are improving the subsistence conditions of family farms, the norm in areas which are associated with a broader system of trade. There are also cross-border farmers, involving flows of inputs according to trends in price differential and productive systems. The Ivorian crisis pushed many migrants/farmers towards the northern borders of the country, forming a new pioneer frontier and thus accentuating land pressures in the SKBo zone, which already combines various models of development, sometime antagonistic. A good example is the competition between cash crops (cotton), plantation crops (cashew, mango) and subsistence crops (especially cereals).

Differences in climatic and eco-geographic gradient between zones have led to the development of transhumant herding, with mobility picks in January and June. ECOWAS regulations govern the circulation of livestock within the sub-region. Growing animal traction has led to a considerable increase in the number of cattle, and this has also produce conflicts regarding the use of the land and the shrinking number of waterholes.

In this context, borders (bias in competition, divergences in macroeconomic policies and price differentials) are factors of asymmetry contributing to sub-regional migration and trade.

A main issue is land pressure. In this area, there are farmers from Mali with working lands in Burkina, and vice-versa. Recent reforms in Burkina and Côte d’Ivoire, laying down the principle of private management of the land and decentralized regulation of land tenure, are empowering local authorities in the allocation of land plots and the settlement of conflicts. However, they have been implemented at different speeds in urban and rural environments. In rural areas, land management committees have been created to include all local authorities legitimized by administrative or customary hierarchies in order to facilitate agreements on land tenure, but it its success is still unclear. Actually, there are increased conflicts between village chiefs and land chiefs over land issues in a context of land pressure.

Migrations and speculation are main features of the land issue at the borders of Burkina. A vague legality of land allotment and the overlapping of different methods of direct ownership
and exploitation may lead to conflicts between producers and land owners. The role of customary and appointed authorities in taking advantage of land jurisdiction to consolidate their powers and fortunes is to be analyzed. In general, the border zone is faced with acute land insecurity as a consequence of complex regulations and the confrontation of user and property rights. This increases the conflict between natives and non-natives.

Côte d’Ivoire was long characterized by the public ownership of land, with a stable relationship between the “masters of the land” and non-native entrepreneurs with a view to developing farms. The establishment of private land ownership in early 1990s weakened these relationships and determined numerous conflicts due to different perceptions of the reforms, and lack of clarification by the authorities. On the other hand, herders in the Korhogo transhumant zone face many obstacles to complete their routes and to get access to waterholes and problems with farmers are frequent. New administrative rules have complicated the movement across the border, whereas customary rules made it possible to settle differences amicably. The situation became more uncertain during the civil war after suspension of local governments. In the current moment (December 2011) a period of stabilization begins and some powers seem to be devolved to local communities. The role of neighbouring countries and supranational institutions is crucial and this process could even overcome some previous difficulties due to the experience and information gained.

In Mali, land issues take shape around the revitalization of the chieftainship with the confirmation of neo-traditional power by decentralization laws. Land grants are subject to several types of local and state authorities, and procedures are complex. Main feature is the existence of several land purchase pipelines and the risk of patronage networks.

Regarding production sectors, large-scale cotton production expanded in West Africa with the support of European Funds, the World Bank and the French Government. In SKBo, income from cotton increased the use of animal traction and promoted diversification of the primary sector through associated crops and rotation. Intensification spread from cotton growing to cereal farming (millet, sorghum, cowpeas and especially maize). Major cotton producers became herders and cereal growers, integrating their economic activities in an agro-pastoral system. But these cotton systems face some paradoxes: its development has been an integration factor in the region, but its sale has projected the crop out of its hinterland; the states have fragmented the SKBo basin, creating regulatory and price differentials that compromise the integration; and the different categories of actors interacting in the cotton system (including contraband networks, haven frequently crossed borders to take advantage of its paradoxes. It remains to be seen the impact of the liberalization of the cotton sectors, the development of rail transport and the organization of producers at international level.

Most farming systems are organized around cotton and cereal growing combined with herding. Livestock sector is very dynamic because of the progression of animal traction, but also due to the urban demand in Côte d’Ivoire. The sector seems to be well organized and manages to get around the multiple custom barriers and rackets across the routes. During the Ivorian crisis, producer also tried to develop networks in Ghana and Benin, but currency convertibility issues increase transaction costs.
Cereal farming followed cotton but developed very fast. Public financing and favourable conditions, particularly for maize (thus decreasing relatively the farming of millet and sorghum, less profitable), has developed into a very important speculation. It serves urban areas in SKBo and also Niger. Rice growing is significant in Sikasso. There is considerable cereal trading within the area and with other regions through both formal and informal trading networks, which could easily coordinate to bring their prices down.

The market gardening sector and the arboriculture are expanding in SKBo as well, but the valorisation of produce is difficult because the production is high, but the processing is very limited. Potatoes are a very dynamic CB sector (mostly in Sikasso), as well as the mango sector in Bobo Dioulasso and Sikasso. A very interesting study has been developed in this particular sector by the SWAC and the MOT, producing a valuable Practical Guide to highlight the CB potential and needs, provide policy recommendations, and help design regional strategies on the basis of sample pilot projects. Cashews develop very rapidly in Korhogo. This industry is entirely private and is highly profitable.

The craft industry, very dynamic in most West African cities, is also very present in SKBo, serving both rural and urban regions of all countries, and contributing to its homogeneity:

- Ironwork is highly demanded for farming equipment,
- metalwork and woodwork are driven by urbanization processes;
- dyeing and sewing of local and imported fabrics are quite successful;
- tanning of skins and leather, as well as fancy leather work.

When tackling cross-border trade, parallel trade should be examined, as it produces very different (and narrow) judgments. But it is very important to examine these dynamics in countries within the same monetary zone. Furthermore, macroeconomic analyses do not take into account some of the dimensions playing a role in its development: geography, socio-anthropology and culture, or historicity of trade. Major trade routes have traditionally been linked to those of the hadj, and this recomposes identities in the region. Chains are still controlled by major merchants who control credit and access to merchandise, but there is a proliferation of retail sales, while small contraband enterprises-smugglers seem to be stuck on the lowest rung of CB trade ladder. However, certain contraband networks include imported fabrics from Europe and Japan, as well as textiles produced by neighbouring countries. In addition, imitations are growing, particularly Asian imitations. It could be thought that the relative prices of certain products constitute speculative earnings enough to warrant the practice of risky trade, but after deducting costs of transportation, religious protection and tributary levy, border income is barely more profitable than the margins made in the official economy. Therefore, the choice of such complicated channel is due to the high number of intermediaries operating in the parallel sector. Bulk markets are under reset after a model based in European businesses and related shops creating clear social differentiation. On the other side, African businesses addressed population categories such as young people, non-natives, foreigners and the illiterate. These select their customers according to personal dependence, birth, proximity, etc.

In this border area there are many examples of cooperation between municipalities from Mali and Burkina. For instance, Tominian (ML) and Kossi (BF) cooperate regularly, but a

28 SWAC-MOT (2010), op.cit.
particular CBC case which is worth to mention is Wanian (ML) and Ouarokuy (BF). There was a strong conflict in 2006 originated in land tenure and access to food. According to the local population, the youngsters saved the situation. Now they are developing some of the most innovative CBC initiatives in Africa: a cross-border health centre is under construction between the two villages, which will offer healthcare to the cross-border area. Another post-conflict project is a CB Cereal Bank, a strong measure for food security in the area.

With the support of ECOWAS through its CIP, the Kurumba CB Radio Network was documented in 2007 to have coordinated community radio stations of Mali and Burkina Faso to broadcast, co-produce and disseminate broadly several joint programmes.

**Description of case 2**

The **River Boundary Senegal-Mauritania-Mali**, wet border where the river can be a development factor if potentialities are properly exploited. Here there is an interesting cooperation between Senegal, Mauritania, Mali and Guinea through the **Organization for the Development of the Senegal River** (*Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Sénégal*, OMVS), constituted in 1972. This organization has been subjected to many interventions and has received a strong support from international institutions as well as from the French and Canadian cooperation agencies.

![Map of Senegal River drainage basin](Kmusser, 2010, Wikimedia Commons)

The OMVS has the aim to promote self-sufficiency in food, to improve the income of the local populations, and to preserve the natural ecosystems, but it has concentrated very much on the provision of energy through the promotion of dams. The OMVS High Commission is the only administrative structure common to the three countries. It plays an important role in the management of the river water resources by coordinating economic development policies in

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29 SWAC-OECD, *Kurumba, one year already: almost fully operational*. Cross-Border Diaries, number 6, June 2007, 40-46
the valley and monitoring their impact on the environment. In 1994, the donors of the “Energy” project, together with OMVS, analysed the conditions necessary for the management of hydropower infrastructures and proposed stringent institutional reforms. The implementation of these reforms implies the provision of additional technical means, and one main objective was to focus the High Commission on supranational assignments.

The OMVS has provided the impetus for the building of two dams, Manantali and Diama, that have partly regulated the river since 1988. An ambitious project, using the Manantali dam for providing energy to the three countries, is under way, though there have been ups and downs, political crises, re-definition of the project, etc., which subsequently led to not accomplishment of deadlines and constant modifications. It has been also studied as a case for poor planning, not taking into account side and direct effects on the environment, the agriculture and the health of individuals. The dam has created also benefits: consistent navigation downstream of the dam, use of for irrigation of surrounding land, and a source for commercial fishing. The dam itself provides hydroelectric power through much of the region, but problems persist.

The Senegal River Basin is one of the seven case studies of the UN World Water Assessment Programme (WWAD) of the UNESCO. On the other hand, the OMVS is a member of the International Network of Basin Organizations (RIOB30), present in 45 countries, and chairs the International Network of Trans-boundary Basin Organizations (RIOBT31), both hosted in Paris by the International Office for Water (OIEAU32). The OMVS hosts the permanent technical secretariat of the African Network of Basin Organizations (RAOB33). Here we have another main actor in the management of water resources across borders. The International Office for Water (IOWater) is a French NGO (L’Office International de l’Eau, OIEAU) in charge of general interest missions and very relevant in the promotion of water resources as sources of development. OIEAU is also very active in West Africa.

Communication with this French NGO, as it is the case with other very relevant actors identified in the course of this study, are very much recommended to follow up the road map for CBC in West Africa.

A particular area, with its own character in the map of CBC areas in West Africa, is the Karakoro Basin, where many studies have been made, particularly by the governments involved, the ECOWAS, and the Sahel and West Africa Club (OECD)34. Following recommendations of the African Union, we have followed the information and analyses made by the SWAC in close coordination with the main actors in this area.

The sources of the Karakoro, the "great lake" in Soninké, lies in the foothills south of Assaba and flows into the Senegal River in Guidimakha (Mauritania). Along 150 km (3/4 of its length), the river is a natural border between Mauritania and Mali. The basin extends over 25,000 km² (with 250 000 inhabitants).

30 Réseau International des Organismes de Bassin (RIOB) (www.riob.fr)  
31 Réseau international des organismes de bassin transfrontière (RIOBT)  
32 L’Office International de l’Eau (OIEAU) (www.oieau.fr)  
33 Réseau africain des organismes de bassin (RAOB)  
Situated in the pre-Saharan zone, its high rainfall is favourable to agro-pastoralism. Streaked with numerous watercourses, moving around is difficult during the rainy season, notwithstanding the constant human mobility (Fulas, Soninkés and Maures) which has always characterised this area. Economic trade across the three borders (including Senegal) is centred on cattle, agricultural or manufactured products. It is a basin of natural resources (sorghum, corn, jujube, gum Arabic, ...), traditionally abundant. It is also important to take into account the role of transhumance in the Karakoro basin is a main CBC issue, facing important challenges (harmonisation of rules across borders, sustainability). These dynamics are intensified with the decentralisation and consultation processes underway on the joint management of the Karakoro basin.

One of the four pilot operations proposed by ECOWAS in the framework of the Cross-Border Initiatives Programme (CIP) approved in 2007 was this CB Land Planning Programme. It was the result of extensive lobbying carried out by the GRDR (Groupe de recherché et de Réalisations pour le Développement rural) in the Senegal River Basin for more than thirty years. It is based on various CBC agreements and conventions linking Mali and Mauritania since independence. It also contributes to new African sub-regional and regional local integration dynamics. The decentralisation policies over the last few years, particularly in Mali but also in Mauritania, encouraged operational, including political, implementation by local populations. The dynamism of some Karakoro communes has thus drawn attention to the potential land planning of this river basin. Daily conflicts between farmers and livestock breeders, particularly transhumant, are recurrent and also regulate border management.

Authorities often appeal to villages and local prominent personalities in order to manage them. The GRDR has also organised regular meetings. As a result of these exchanges, often with local and regional authorities, it was decided to introduce and share the problems as well as the potentials of this cross-border basin to central and political administrations of both countries (DNF of Mali and the DATAR in Mauritania). The official launching meeting in Nouakchott (Mauritania) coordinated by the GRDR in September 2006 was co-financed by...
the Comité Catholique contre la Faim et pour le Développement (CCFD), the SWAC, the European Commission Delegation in Mauritania and ENDA-Diapol, with the aim to bring together regional planning services of Mali and Mauritania responsible for cross-border issues, validate an institutional conception and implementation mechanism for this initiative, and develop a concerted cross-border planning programme for the Karakoro basin.

There is a directory of decentralised authorities in the zone available, and several studies were carried out on infrastructures (public, agriculture, economy, communications, de-compartmentalisation, energy), natural resources management and local economic dynamics.

A second operational meeting organised in Kayes (Mali) from 7 to 9 February 2007 enabled a concerted action plan to be defined and validated by locally-elected officials, and civil society organisations from both countries. As next steps it was planned the validation of the programme’s logistical framework and a meeting in Bamako to present the programme to decision-makers and government officials to get mobilised and involved in this initiative. Then, a main meeting took place in 2008 in Bamako to validate the draft document “concerted management of the Karakoro Basin”, sponsored by General Kafougouna Koné, Malian Minister of Territorial Administration and Local Communities and Yahya Ould Kebd, Mauritanian Minister of Decentralisation and Territorial Planning. The Malian Minister of Internal Security and Civil Protection, the Mauritanian Ambassador to Mali and a representative of the Malian Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also present. The strong political representation illustrated the official nature of the project’s launch. This official launching provided the opportunity to bring information up to date on this project and gave the initiators the chance to open up the project to criticism and encourage its adoption by all.

This project requires large scale appropriation because the CIP basically involves local actors: populations, locally-elected officials, governments, and governors. The project has been recognized by both governments as very suitable for the promotion of good neighbour relations, local development, peace and lasting security all along their common border, encouraging solidarity and trade. The concerted management programme of the Karakoro Basin can be a tool for economic and social development and thus integration. In fact, this project, requiring sectorial policy coherence between the two countries, can lead to other initiatives within the Basin along the border between Mali and Mauritania: one step towards realizing regional integration. The launching of the CIP in the Karakoro Basin affirmed the willingness to make this small-scale integration part of a broader scale: the demonstration in particular that integration is not new in this part of West Africa. It just needs to be revealed.

Mali and Mauritania have been linked since independence by cross-border cooperation frameworks. The problem is that the numerous legal instruments that underpin these agreements are little, indeed unknown by local communities. Attesting to this is the “legal cooperation framework between the two countries and direct areas of cooperation between administrative authorities, local communities and civil society”.

In these meetings it was also stressed that CBC as a “tool” is a major goal and a political vision as well as being strategic in the construction of the West African region. The programme should be supported by three pillars:

i) “financing” for which it shall work on establishing a regional fund for CBC;
ii) “regional West African capacities” as CBC is stimulated by active and committed human resources;

iii) a new Afro-European “partnership” including the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR).

A next step is to make this programme an operational, successful “convergence of sectorial policies of both countries, in particular policies related to the economy, local development and legislation, etc.”:

i) “capitalising on the subsidiarity principle, in particular in the area of peace and security;

ii) strengthening of territorial competitiveness”; and

iii) “sharing infrastructures, services, resources, etc.”

Taking advantage of this momentum, Malian and Mauritanian government representatives promised direct budgetary commitments and contributions to national indicative programmes of the 10\textsuperscript{th} EDF. The Basin’s concerted management project has counted on actors from the Kayes region (governors and local communities), the French cooperation and decentralised Nord Pas de Calais cooperation, which showed their will to be included. This was also the case of UNDP Mali, as well as the promoters SWAC and GRDR.

The GRDR developed a four-year programme on the basis of a participative approach, which seems to be supported by CCFD and the European Commission, focusing on four areas:

i) local coordination and concerted management of natural resources;

ii) improvement of the border area’s infrastructure;

iv) strengthening CB economic dynamics; and

v) capitalising on and producing methodological tools.

Mr. Arezki Harkouk, GRDR Africa Director, identified that dynamic CBC supported by strong political willingness and an adequate institutional framework is still a challenge to meet while striving to substantially alleviate the border’s complexity in the lives of populations. Numerous obstacles and constraints must be overcome and major problems need to be resolved in order to make the Karakoro Basin a living Basin. Field realities indeed the daily lives of populations and border users are full of frustrations and hassles: despite the willingness expressed by ECOWAS States and Mauritania, borders remain areas for harassment and corruption. More security posts, which are in fact control posts, provide opportunities for “official” levies, fines and other infractions which are impediments greatly affecting border populations. State’s responsibility, within the framework of regional integration policies with the support of bilateral and multilateral partners, depends on all the concerted conflict and resources management mechanisms, opening up, improving commercial trade circuits, territorial development. Local actors, genuine providers of cross-border dynamics, implement this cooperation. Mr. Harkouk based his optimism on community links going far back in history between populations on both Karakoro river banks: “there is CBC in the Karakoro Basin. Populations trade and interact daily in various sectors such as health, education, trade, livestock, conflict management the sharing of natural resources, etc.” “Homogeneity, solidarity, trade and complementarities which underpin life in the basin go beyond the border.
However, it has been very difficult to find available information about the implementation of this initiative since 2009. Further exchanges with the actors are to be developed in order to analyse current situation and possibilities to promote it.

In any case, there are many initiatives developed at local level, for example:

- In Sélibély (ML), animals from Mali and Mauritania, either transhumant or domestic, can pasture freely. On the other hand, there are people that come to take the straw and sell it in Mauritania, and this creates problems. Anyway, local population have agreed some measures to restrict straw taking.
- People in Sélibély and in Bokédiambi (ML) have jointly agreed on some joint measures to control the picking of baobab leaves from June to August (months with very scarce water). All parts of the baobab are used for very different purposes: drinks, flavour for couscous, ropes, etc.
- In Melgue (MR) an Association for Collective Local Management (AGLC) has been created to manage natural resources, which informs regularly citizens in Mali with any stake in these resources.
Description of case 3: Southern Senegambia and Guinea-Bissau is an interesting case of complex border area, where some other countries are necessarily involved (Mali, Guinea Conakry).

While the initiatives of Gambia, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau are usually obstructed by administrative burdens and recurrent crises, the Senegambian region has continued to strengthen its ties. Specific progress is difficult to identify because of informal and diverse dynamics involved.

This border area was analysed in 2003 by the study Southern Senegambia: dynamics of a space of integration between three States (The Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Senegal). It comprises two very different but complementary territories: landscapes under maritime influence to the west, marked by river mouths and estuaries; and plateaux to the east, with red, beige and ochre and grey soils, providing favourable conditions to agricultural developments. Populations in this area have developed a “spontaneous” integration process greatly contributing to the economic stability and the development of the territories involved.

This cross-border area is characterized by the significant mobility of its inhabitants. The settlements of the Bainouks, Diolas, Mandinkas, Fulani, Toucouleurs, Balantes, Mandjacks, Mancagnes and Pepels have taken either the form of a continuum or of divided populations. The Gabou and the Fouladou empires where the two main political entities prior to the colony, but relations between the various ethnic groups (intermarriage and conflict, expulsions and exchanges) have led to the formation of sub-territories such as Balantacounda, Cabada, le Blouf, Fogny, Kombo, etc.

These groups have inherited from pre-colonial days shared religious beliefs and similar cultural traditions and development techniques. Colonial and post-colonial periods were marked by the union of the Casamance and Senegal, and by the foundation of the Guinea-Bissau and Gambia states. Conflicts and exchange characterised a dynamic cross-border territory. In fact, current borders are the result of colonial and post-colonial administrative methods, but they haven’t disrupted the continuity of ethnic allegiance. Differences in linguistic heritage are largely attenuated by the creation and development of languages of integration such as Mandinka, Diola, Balanta, Wolof, Puular and Creole. The inhabitants are often polyglot and, as it is the case in most of these territories, there are several vehicle languages very useful for CBC.

Methods of exchange are derived from disparity, e.g. the movement of livestock makes use of roads linking the agro-sylvan-pastoral systems of the interior with the coast, and this route is followed in reverse by rice, mangrove and fishery products.

Urbanisation has been an important resource for the growth of primary sector in southern Senegambia, particularly in the big centres of consumption in coastal metropolises, but also in the interior, reinforcing the regional territorial network, while it has increased pressure on natural resources to the point of threatening certain socio-ecological equilibriums.

The majority of primary activities give rise to conflict linked not only to political instability but also to difficulties encountered in gaining access to land and resources. Major land allocation problems affect all areas, as well as the pressure from migration, intensification of monetary exchanges and conflicts between shepherds and farmers. The expansion of fishing areas also gives rise to tensions poisoning relationships between the countries. The shrinkage and drying out of mangroves have also threatened to destroy social relationship. The pressure on natural resources is responsive to CB influences with lead to local conflicts.

Trade in local products, supported by the complementarities of their production systems and spurred on by the dynamic of urbanisation, irrigates southern Senegambia and links the area to other areas and other basins of integration such as the Mano river regions. This trade exploits a certain number of differentials (in exchange rates, supply of products, price) which weave together complex networks supported by familial, ethnic, religious and professional affinities. It is a life of very intense relationships which, in southern Senegambia, are organised around a combination of several families of actors in relationships of complementarity, competition, cooperation and conflict. The focus of these dynamics is the weekly markets which give structure to and dictate the currents and flows of trade.

The different areas and basins of integration in West Africa are interconnected and form, step by step, the basis upon which a sub-regional system of trade in food products is created and consolidated. The strengthening and enlargement of sub-regional trade in food goods takes on even greater importance given the new stakes and short-term prospects with the Accords de Partenariat Economique Régionaux (APER), which will open West Africa up to greater competition in a context in which sub-regional products are still relatively uncompetitive.
ECOWAS supports another radio project in this area through its CIP. RETRARC-GUISENGAMB is the Cross-Border Community Radio Network of Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and the Gambia. In 2007 this network documented to have coordinated already 11 community radio stations of the three countries to strengthen cultural and economic integration and to promote CBC. An organization to take into account when studying this area is the Gambia River Development Organization (French name: Organisation pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Gambie (OMVG) was created in 1978 between Gambia and Senegal with the objective to manage the river Gambia as a natural resource. In 1980 Guinea joined the OMVG, and Guinea-Bissau is also a member, even if it is not riparian of the Gambia, but lies in its basin (114,000 km²). A major project outline was the construction of a dam-bridge to substitute the road between the Gambian towns of Farafenni and Soma. The plans began in 1994, but since 1996 it has not achieved the project status. When the Trans-Gambia motorway got into conflict with Senegal in August 2005, the construction of the bridge was taken back into consideration. It began the actualization of the feasibility and the search for financing partners in order to begin the works in 2007, but little information remains and the project has not been implemented. In any case, the need still exists, as the road between Farafenni and Soma is so crowded as the one between Banjul (the capital) and Barra, in the mouth of the river.

A main issue to address here is the harmonisation of policies for exploitation and preservation of forest resources. Cashew production for export is a growing sector which would also benefit very much from a stronger CB coordination of producers.

36 SWAC-OECD, RETRARC-GUISENGAMB. The Creation of a CB Radio Stations Network. Cross-Border Diaries, number 6, June 2007, 6-11
Description of case 4: The “Development Corridor” Maradi-Katsina-Kano (Niger-Nigeria) (MKK or MK2). One of the most densely populated areas in West Africa. A strong economic power meets one of the poorest countries in the world. The study Maradi-Katsina-Kano: A development corridor? was performed in 2004 on the Nigeria-Niger transboundary area. As in cases 1 and 3, a very fruitful partnership between ENDA Diapol (Senegal), the IDRC/CRDI (Canada) and the SWAC (OECD) have produced a very valuable analysis of this border area. The study focused on the Nigerian states of Kano and Katsina and the district of Maradi in Niger. 83,000 km² and 19 million people, one of the most densely populated zones of West Africa.

This is the heart of the Hausa lands, a vast and populous area of economic activity straddling northern Nigeria and southern Niger. Its industrial centre, one of the most important in Nigeria, is arranged around Kano, Zaria, Kaduna and Jos. An intensive commerce drives here in agricultural goods, particularly livestock and manufactured goods from Nigeria and, above all, products re-exported to Nigeria via Benin/Togo and Niger.

This is the hub of a solidarity area, the Hausa Kasar – or “Hausa land” – on both sides of the Nigeria/Niger boundary. As a result of planning and concerted action implemented by both countries, this area can certainly be presented as a “border land”: health personnel organise joint vaccination campaigns, local services meet together within joint commissions, municipal heads and governors get together periodically. In addition to this, the complementarity of production systems between the livestock-rearing north and the arable south of the Hausa Kasar have long defined the two-way exchange flows which are common to all areas of geographically coherent infrastructure. Maradi-Katsina-Kano constitutes perhaps the most important and the oldest development corridor in West Africa, for centuries an access route to the Gulf of Guinea as well as to North Africa and the Middle East.

There are significant possibilities for agricultural development in the north of Nigeria, where water tables are close to the surface. The region also has the highest demographic density indices of inland Sahel, the reason why it has been urbanised for so long and has become an area ripe for industrialisation. Processing industries, particularly in the agro-food sector, are numerous.

Today the development of the Hausa Kasar is compromised by the existence of a powerful contraband trading network to which disparities in economic policy between Nigeria and its neighbours can only serve to support. While Togo, Benin and Niger all follow relatively liberal import strategies, since their fiscal revenues depend so much upon re-exporting goods to Nigeria, Nigeria itself has difficulties protecting its booming production sectors.

This is a further example of the problems that West Africa will continue to experience to face international competition while its borders continue to symbolise the breakdown in strategic dialogue and cooperation between its leaders. The future of the Hausa Kasar, as it fluctuates between boom and stagnation, seems to be dependent upon the progress (or delaying) of regional integration and to set the scene for integration in the rest of the sub-region.

ENDA Diapol has stressed this finding of the WALTPS study as a perfect model for the MK2 area: the role of agricultural exchanges and urban demand, as urbanisation stimulates growth in rural incomes and agricultural intensification thanks to a correlation between:

- Strong cultural demand
- Functional connections between market towns and areas of production
- Favourable external trade policies and macro-economic environment

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If this model is applied to the MK2 area, the first two conditions are in their way to be met. Demographic growth in secondary towns along this part of the border is strong enough to stimulate agricultural activity among the local rural populations, including those over the border in Niger. The urban-rural overlap is assured by networks of perfectly coordinated economic actors from the level of producer up to the wholesaler. Accepting the validity of this hypothesis, the major challenge lies in the macro-economic policy which is not applied up to now.

The MK2 axis, located half-way between the Sahel and the forest, is the heart of a region of significant agricultural potential, and this has influenced the location of ancient fortified towns and city states, as it has been the case in the whole Sudano-Sahelian belt, with a long tradition of urbanisation. The towns located in this area are also very ancient stops on the trans-Saharan trading routes. Religious and market towns, places of meeting and of confrontation, have always attracted merchants, pilgrims and warriors. Islam has also contributed to bring together the different populations in the region. Sokoto, Kano, Katsina, and we should add Zaria, Abuja and Kaduna, have historically placed the centre of gravity of the Hausa Kasar in urban, agricultural, political, religious and commercial terms within Nigeria. Because of his historic status as a trading town, densities in Kano have always been high, but its population grew rapidly from the 1960s onwards, being the second most populous state in Nigeria, and thus facing the effects of urbanisations, plus recurrent conflicts between communities.

![Urbanisation of the Sudano-Sahelian belt](image)


The state of Katsina is also very populated. In the Niger side, 75% of the population is concentrated in the south of the country (Niamey-Zinder axis), but the Maradi district is closely linked to the development of the Hausa towns in north Nigeria. Here it is evidenced that urbanisation is probably the most significant process of change affecting the West African economy. It is progressing according to a pre-industrial model, in the sense that the migration towards the towns is not a reflection of the need for an industrial workforce in the urban settings, but of strategies of division of labour within the popular economy of the towns. While the urban continuum of the Gulf of Guinea is inescapable and has been the
subject of multiple comments, secondary urbanisation along the Sudano-Sahelian belt has passed almost unnoticed. In the MK2 case, the development of a very dense network of secondary towns is not linked only to coastal urbanisation, but to the existence of a relatively ancient urban network and the presence of a major metropolis, Kano, the engine of local economic development and the focus of regional and international trade, agricultural production and livestock farming. On the other hand, new modes of production are being established, particularly in Nigeria, on the basis of demographic growth and urbanisation, which underpins as well the development of local processing industries: food processing, tanneries, textile, plastic products and packages, sugar refineries or metallurgical plants).

Kano is an interface of exchange between North Africa and the Gulf of Guinea, indeed the whole of Central Africa, being the centre of distribution for the north of Nigeria and beyond. This fact is more remarkable because Kano remains the Nigerian epicentre of primary production and industrial processing. It can be considered this area as a place for agricultural revolution and industrial boom, according to the stimulation of production by population density and urbanisation. In fact, agro-food industries have boomed in Kano, prompting traders to complete their range of existing activities (from storage and speculation to preserving, packing and processing). There are also many textile factories built upon the cotton output. Groundnuts are also processed in oil processing plants. Horticulture development is accompanied by efforts to package products more effectively. Production of drinks and tea in bags is an old industry in the regions, but the production of noodles and pastas is more recent. Industrial processing units are also proliferating in the fields of tanneries, cosmetics and toiletries. There are assembly plants, including one to produce trucks. The video and DVD industry is also prospering here. Despite of the diversity of production, the most important industrial specialization is still in petroleum derivatives, namely plastic goods, attracting foreign investment from China, as it is the case in many areas and sectors in Africa. Several Chinese companies have established plants here en equipped them with Chinese machinery. The area is leading producer and exporter for West Africa of many products.

The structures of parallel trade in the Hausa Kasar play a crucial role. In fact, the system for moving across borders relies on a network organised both vertically and horizontally. Vertical structures links participants in the various decision-making levels in Niger and Nigeria, and the sections of the sales chain beginning in Europe and Asia converge in Nigeria (passing through Benin, Togo and Niger). Permeable customs monitoring systems (cultural solidarity and complicity between Hausa groups, and the pressure on federal government by large traders) enable traders to overcome the difficulties to cross borders (due to overlapping of legitimacies and multi-layered decision-making). A few large traders specialized in staples have organize the market as an oligopoly dominated by few families or individuals. A handle of big importers control most of the flows between the international market and the huge Nigerian one. At the end of the chain large traders have regular contacts in Asia or Europe, occasionally in the US. At the other end, the semi-wholesalers or retailers are responsible for selling the merchandise.

ENDA Diapol concludes about the future hold for this border continuum, that there is a certain romantic notion of parallel trade as no more than a little marketing of contraband carried out away from the main roads in order to elude corrupt governments and petty regulation to serve the interests of monopolies subjugated by the authorities in power. Most
of the parallel trade along the Maradi-Katsina-Kano axis is not carried out by road as much as along official routes. Traffic in second hand vehicles is very common, and they have little trouble crossing the border illegally thanks to the skill of their seasoned drivers. Many smugglers take advantage of the presence of a long border strip to bring banned imports into Nigeria or to bypass tariff regulations. For many inhabitants of the border zones, defrauding excise regulations is a custom as old as the imposition of borders, with own specialist professions – partners, informers and other smugglers – and initiation rites. In parallel, many householders from Niger make the journey to Nigeria daily to stock up on cheaper goods, with certain tolerance by Nigerian authorities. The reality of small-scale contraband and attempts by the customs authorities to suppress it should not to distract from the institutionalized trafficking which involves far greater quantities of goods.

Each year, the border is closed for three or four months. These repeated closures reflect the fierce competition between Nigeria’s industrialists and its importers, as well as the threats to enforce customs regulations. In order to protect its domestic producers, the government has also increased the import tariff and then reinforced checks on the Lomé-Lagos route. The Maradi-Katsina-Kano road, on the other hand, has long been an access route for parallel imports. This “unfairness” led the “wronged” party to use all its powers within the federal government to demand – successfully – the closure of the border with Niger. Border closures are also a signal to the government of Niger to cooperate in respecting Nigeria’s legislation. Although “institutional” contraband is fuelled by complicity at central government as well as at local levels in Nigeria, it benefits equally from the support offered more or less actively by neighbouring countries. In fact, the Nigerian market, through its sheer size and dynamism, is able largely to fund all the financing requirements of Togo, Benin and Niger. It is this dependence upon their great Anglophone neighbour that has prompted various official organs to endorse parallel trade (and the defrauding of customs) in connection with goods heading for Nigeria. This explains why so many goods prohibited from entering Nigeria feature in transit documents administered by the authorities in Niger.

While the population density and urbanisation of the Kasar Hausa may appear to guarantee its extensive future development, such development may be limited by the capacity of its producers to withstand competition from abroad. Whatever the variants employed in tackling this, questions over the future of the region constantly evokes the same response: either the Kasar Hausa succeeds in supporting and increasing its agricultural production, while consolidating the meteoric rise of its industry, or it will have to resign itself to stagnation and ultimately to decline. The size of the Nigerian market and the possession of oil reserves, though these are significant strengths, will be of little benefit in achieving those ends. The shifting of responsibility and risk linked to the implementation of a supply policy only serves to underline the difficulties faced by West African producers. Once it begins to affect the creation of wealth, it also threatens the foundations upon which the re-export businesses in the entrepôt states are built. The Kasar Hausa must choose between perpetuating a system of institutionalised contraband, supported by the disparity in economic policy between Nigeria and its neighbours, and wholehearted commitment to a green revolution and thriving industry. By setting such a precedent, it is quite believable that the Hausa Kasar will, for better or worse, influence the whole future of the sub-region.

The authors of the study carried out by ENDA Diapol stress the role of the Hausa Kasar and of territorial unity and cohesion despite successive conquests, with a long tradition of
influence in international networks, which cannot be avoided when planning any intervention in the area, with a huge potential of cross-border development, on the other hand.

However, as already explained, there are frequent conflicts between communities. In particular, when reviewing the final version of this report\(^{39}\), a new rise of religious-driven violence has broken out in Northern Nigeria. A series of attacks by the radical Islamic group *Boko Haram* has caused more than 160 deaths on 20-21 January 2011 and, in 2011, more than 500 people died in Kano in attacks against the Christian community. Nigeria is divided between the South (majority Christian) and the North (poorer and mostly Muslim). These attacks also cause victims amongst the Muslim community and many Islamic organizations have distance themselves from these actions. We have to take into account also the effects of the economic crisis (e.g. the rise in the price of fuels) in the escalation of conflicts in the area.

**Description of case 5: MAC Programme and West Africa**

European Territorial Cooperation is one of the three objectives of Structural Funds 2007-2013, strengthening what it was called the Community Initiative INTERREG. There are three levels of cooperation (cross-border, trans-national and inter-regional). Cross-border cooperation has the biggest share of this Objective, and even trans-national and inter-regional cooperation can include a certain level of CBC. In this sense, at the level of trans-national cooperation, the Commission assessed the usefulness and effectiveness of the INTERREG IIIB Açores-Madeira-Canaries transnational cooperation zone, based in the previous programming period (2000-2006) and decided to keep this cooperation area for the period 2007-2013, due to the coherence and possibilities developed.

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\(^{39}\) Mid-January 2012
Therefore, the eligible cooperation area of the MAC Programme 2007-2013 comprises the Portuguese Autonomous Regions of Açores and Madeira, and the Spanish Autonomous Community of the Canaries. Furthermore, this programme includes a priority area to cooperate with third countries in their geographical and cultural neighbourhood, as it was the case with North-West Africa and Latin America in the programming period 2000-2006.

The main goal of the MAC Programme is increasing the development and socio-economic integration of these archipelagos. Axis number three “Third countries co-operation and Great Neighbourhood”, has the following objectives:

- Development of a common area for growth and economic, social and cultural integration between the ultra-peripheral regions of the Macaronesia and neighbouring third countries.
- Strengthening stable institutional cooperation.
- Serve as pilot experience of territorial cooperation between the EU and third countries, through effective operational coordination formulas between ERDF and EDF.
- Strengthening the role of ultra-peripheral regions as platforms for territorial cooperation between the EU and neighbouring countries.

There have been many projects selected through different calls developed under this programme since the year 2000 in Interreg III-B (2000-2006) and within the current Territorial Cooperation Objective (2007-2013). These projects cover many fields, and it is very relevant to mention the strong efforts made by the authorities of the Canary Islands, as well as many other public, private and non-profit institutions in the islands to involve African partners, particularly from Cape Verde, but also from Morocco, Mauritania and Senegal.

In this area it is very important to take into account the conflict in Western Sahara. Most of the territory is occupied by Morocco despite UN and other international organizations’ resolutions. The Sahrawi population is divided between those living in the two “Southern Provinces” of Morocco and those living in the refugee camps of Tindouf, in the hard Algerian hamada, since the 1970’s. This conflict is a source of tensions between Morocco and international organizations like the African Union, the United Nations, and even with the European institutions. The latest was last 13th December 2011, when the European Parliament rejected the one-year extension of the fisheries protocol between the EU and Morocco that expires on 27th February 2012. With this vote, the protocol in force ceased to apply immediately. In a separate resolution, MEPs ask the European Commission to renegotiate an agreement rapidly that “should benefit both parties (...) and take account of the interests of the Sahrawi population”.

On the other hand, the Government of Spain has a CBC Programme Spain-External borders. The current one (2008-2013), which is supported by the European Commission, has as one out of three priorities the “Atlantic CBC Area”. However, despite its alignment with the European Territorial Cooperation Objective, has been concentrated mainly in the relationships between the Canaries and Morocco.
In any case, there is a strong commitment by many actors within the MAC Programme in order to integrate its efforts in a wider EU-West Africa Cooperation Programme, promoting particularly cross-border and trans-national cooperation.

3.4 The importance of transport development in West Africa

3.4.1. Highways

International cooperation for road building in Africa has a relatively poor history. Colonial powers, competing superpowers and regional powers, did not encourage road links except where absolutely necessary. In newly independent states, border restrictions were often tightened to protect internal trade, as a weapon in border disputes, and to increase the opportunities for official corruption. Poverty affects development of international highways when scarce financial resources have to be directed towards internal rather than external priorities. Agencies developing this network think that road infrastructure stimulates trade and so alleviates poverty, as well as benefitting health and education allowing medical and educational services to be distributed to previously inaccessible areas.

Several transcontinental road projects in Africa developed by UNECA, ADB and the AU, in conjunction with the RECS, have led to the Trans-African Highway (TAH) network, aimed to promote trade and alleviate poverty through highway infrastructure development and the management or road-based trade corridors. Total length of the 9 highways is 56,683 km. In some documents they are referred to as 'Trans-African Corridors' or 'Road Corridors' rather than highways. More than half of the network has been paved, though maintenance is a problem on much of that. There are still numerous 'missing links' in the network where tracks are impassable after rain or hazardous due to rocks, sand and sandstorms. In a few cases, there has never been a road of any sort. The missing links arise mainly because the section does not have a high national priority as opposed to a regional or transcontinental priority.

These are the most relevant TAH for West Africa:

- The Trans-African Highway 1 (TAH 1) Cairo-Dakar (8,636 km) is a mainly coastal route along the Mediterranean coast of North Africa, continuing down the Atlantic coast of North-West Africa; substantially complete, although the border between Algeria and Morocco is closed. TAH 1 joins with TAH 7 to form an additional north-south route around the western extremity of the continent.
- TAH 5, Dakar-Ndjamena (4,496 km), also known as the Trans-Sahelian Highway, linking West African countries of the Sahel, about 80% complete.
- TAH 7, Dakar-Lagos (4,010 km), also known as the Trans–West African Coastal Road, about 80% complete. This highway joins with TAH 1 to form an additional north-south route around the western extremity of the continent.
- TAH 2, Algiers-Lagos (4,504 km), also known as the Trans-Sahara Highway: substantially complete, only 200 km of desert track remains to be paved, but border and security controls restrict usage.

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Regional international communities are heavily involved in trans-African highway development and work in conjunction with the ADB and UNECA. For example, the ECOWAS drives the development of and maintenance of TAH 5 and 7.

3.4.2 Railways

There have been several proposals to establish an African railways network, being the most relevant for the purposes of this study the following:

- From West to East, in 2010, a proposal emerged to link Dakar to Port Sudan. Thirteen countries are on the main route, while another six would be served by branches.
- A North-South transcontinental railroad had been proposed by Cecil Rhodes: the Cape-Cairo railway. This system was seen as the backbone for the African possessions of the British Empire, and was not completed. During its development, a competing French colonial project for a Trany line from Algiers or Dakar to Abidjan was abandoned after the Fashoda incident. This line would have four gauge islands in three gauges.
- Lybia proposed a Trans-Saharan Railway connecting possibly to Nigeria which would connect with the proposed AfricaRail network.
- The African Union of Railways has ambitious plans to connect the various railways of Africa including the Dakar-Port Sudan Railway.
There are other regional railways which are relevant for CBC in West Africa:

In **Senegal**:

- Railway **Dakar-Bamako**, crossing point between Nayé (SN) and Kayes (ML)
- Another railway goes up to Saint-Louis, at the border with Mauritania

In **Nigeria**:

- Railway **Abidjan- Ouagadougou**: crossing point between Ouangolodougou (CI) and Niangoloko (BF) (it also crosses Banfora and Bobo Dioulasso (BF)

In **Benin**:

- A railway goes from the coast to the north, running close to the border with Nigeria.

In **Togo**:

- A railway goes from the capital Lomé to Kpalimé, very close to the border with Ghana.

In **Liberia**:

- A railway goes from the coastal city of Buchanan to Yekepa, in the triple border with Guinea (Conakry) and Côte de Ivoire.
- Another railway goes from the capital Monrovia to the city of Kongo, close to the border with Sierra Leone.

In the rest of the cases, very few countries with an incipient railways network, without border crossings.

### 3.4.3 Airports

Small border aerodromes in the **Senegal-Mauritania** border (most of them just at the border):

- Senegalese airports: Saint-Louis, Richard Toll, Podor, Matam, Gabou;
- Mauritanian airports: Kaédi and Aleg.

At the **Senegal-Mali** border, only one airport in Kayes.

Also in **Senegal**, some aerodromes close to Guinea-Bissau (Ziguinchor, Kolda) and Kédougou close to Guinea.

In **Burkina Faso**: airport in Bobo Dioulasso
In Nigeria: airports in Lagos (close to the border with Benin) and Kano (close to Niger).

In Côte de Ivoire, the aerodrome of Odienné is close to the border with Guinea.

In Guinea-Bissau: aerodromes in Catió, Quebo, Gabú and Pitche, close to the border with Guinea (Conakry).

In Sierra Leone, several aerodromes close to Liberia (Kenema and Bomi), and also to Guinea (Yengema and Kabala).

In Guinea, the airport in Conakry is close to Sierra Leone (as well as the airport in Freetown is close to Guinea). In the interior, the aerodrome in Farana is close to Sierra Leone as well, and Nzérékoré is in the triple border with Liberia and Côte de Ivoire. Boké is close to Guinea-Bissau.

In the rest of cases, only the airports in the capitals are relevant.
4 SWOT-ANALYSIS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN WEST AFRICA

The inception report established the methodology to follow in the case studies from the selected border areas in West Africa. With the results of desk research, key questions and interviews, a participative SWOT analysis has been carried out based on quantitative facts, as far as available; and also a qualitative analysis addressing the socio-economic standing, its territorial divide and common challenges. Internal and external factors which favour or hinder these processes have also been identified in order to draft a road map for CBC in those areas, with concrete actions and measures.

This SWOT analysis is extremely helpful to elaborate a feasible road map for CBC in Western Africa, taking into account most internal and external factors affecting these processes and including the next steps to strengthen cross-border cooperation in the selected border areas and how to proceed in other border areas in Africa.

However, most experts have recommended establishing a general SWOT on CBC in Africa, with an adapted version for West Africa. The reason is the need to define first a strategy for CBC in Africa, strengthening diversity, promoting complementarity and subsidiarity, and lying on mutual trust across African boundaries. SWOT analyses in most of the selected case areas have already been made by previous studies. These have been consulted, as well as the authors, in order to explore further improvement of these case areas.

4.1 Overall analysis

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<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<td>• growing awareness of the importance of cross-border areas for African integration process</td>
<td>• borders mostly artificially established</td>
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<td>• borders keep somehow their role of separation and military areas</td>
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<td>• national peripheral location of border areas</td>
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<td>• a set of political declarations, laws and instruments for cooperation (bilateral/trilateral treaties, agreements, organizations)</td>
<td>• too many different instruments proposed (overlap)</td>
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<td>• implementation rather weak</td>
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<td>• lack of financing</td>
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<td>• numerous studies, publications, and other papers on cross-border cooperation (CBC)</td>
<td>• mainly national approaches</td>
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<td>• multi-national approaches lack viability and financial options</td>
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<td>• mostly rural areas with a dominating agricultural sector</td>
<td>• weak economic structures</td>
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<tr>
<td>• several big cities develop and a growing network of secondary cities</td>
<td>• danger of mono-structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• informal (and illegal activities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• development of SMEs and small businesses linked to trade systems</td>
<td>• often strong dependence on traditional/informal activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• importance of twin cities (exceptional cases)</td>
<td>• positive single effects are too small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• places of illegal activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• capitalization of differences along the border</td>
<td>• borders only poorly (and arbitrarily) controlled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• several cross-border areas cooperate</td>
<td>• no common definition of a cross-border area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>Threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>• numerous “one-off activities” to establish contacts for cooperation</td>
<td>• no coordinated activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• various single cross-border projects</td>
<td>• too much depending on concrete individuals/organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• economic and social partners active in CBC (informal cooperation)</td>
<td>• no coordinated activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• some groups and national authorities dominate the process</td>
<td>• potentials for CBC hardly exploited in economic and social terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• economic and social partners active in CBC (informal cooperation)</td>
<td>• no coordinated activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• some groups and national authorities dominate the process</td>
<td>• regional/local authorities depending on the national level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• increasing favourable framework conditions for CBC</td>
<td>• long distances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• favourable AU + RECs rules for free trade</td>
<td>• weak infrastructure (or absent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• growing export of agricultural products</td>
<td>• conflicts and illegal activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• growing diversification</td>
<td>• transport still difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• twin cities as laboratories for CBC</td>
<td>• long waiting time at the border (and other obstacles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• some positive developments on the labour market due to big firms</td>
<td>• pending on large enterprises, big farms or trade networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a common bank and common currency</td>
<td>• taking profit from low wage level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• strong will for integration funds</td>
<td>• up to now twin cities often places of informal (and illegal) activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• raising awareness of the need for local development</td>
<td>• national governments in favour of implementation of sensitive projects in border areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• strong feeling, that CBC needs to add a bottom-up approach</td>
<td>• no specific funds for CBC or transnational activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• support of national governments (and RECs) to encourage CBC at regional and local levels</td>
<td>• depending very much on political developments, weak subsidiarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• starting dialogue between national and sub-national levels</td>
<td>• lacking knowledge capacity at regional and local levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• economic and social partners ready to cooperate</td>
<td>• conditions very different in political, historical, economic and geographical terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• strong interest in a more strategic and sustainable approach</td>
<td>• national governments playing a dominating role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• strong interest in a more strategic and sustainable approach</td>
<td>• decentralisation of financial resources rather weak/absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• growing awareness of the need of cross-border structures</td>
<td>• border regions not at the top of the political agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• networks and permanent cooperation structures missing</td>
<td>• politicians hardly involved on a regular basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Growing bilateral/trilateral treaties and agreements</td>
<td>• implementation up to now rather weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Traditional/cultural/religious cooperation (important role of traditional authorities functioning across borders)</td>
<td>• lack of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• long and large rivers</td>
<td>• extreme climate in some areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• growing border crossings</td>
<td>• no bridges, but traditional crossing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• some international and local airports</td>
<td>• difficult border crossings and poor infrastructures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• regional roads</td>
<td>• no international connections enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• important transport on roads</td>
<td>• no highways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• simplified system for export (including traditional and informal)</td>
<td>• no railways (very few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• some important cities on both sides of the border</td>
<td>• long waiting time at border crossings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• city-centres are improving, as well as secondary cities</td>
<td>• separate border facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• growing accommodation capacity in large cities (also improved quality)</td>
<td>• mostly large rural areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• strong agricultural sector as a source for export</td>
<td>• low attractiveness of many cities and villages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SMEs and innovation sector developing</td>
<td>• business and touristic travel still weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• interaction between decentralised CBC and the national/multi-national level</td>
<td>• exports depending on one sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• many cross-border activities</td>
<td>• difficulties for export/import (customs clearance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• relatively strong cooperation at project level</td>
<td>• weak service sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• regional/local level and social partners involved in CBC on the ground</td>
<td>• mainly one-off activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• tourism development</td>
<td>• mainly informal CB networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• good consultancy</td>
<td>• isolated activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• no long term approach/strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• no permanent structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• voluntary structures doubled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• missing legal instruments for cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• lack of own knowledge at regional/local level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• potentials of regional/local actors poorly developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 West African CBC
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• a test case for successful CBC in West Africa</td>
<td>• crime across borders: smuggling (weapons, goods), trafficking (persons, drugs), terrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• growing role of ECOWAS</td>
<td>• few national investments in border areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• free trade zone / single currency</td>
<td>• asymmetric benefits for both sides of the border</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• railway projects under planning (?)</td>
<td>• still weak border control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• starting up joint border controls (training programmes, veterinarian control) (?)</td>
<td>• illegal activities (drugs, smuggle, crime-related, illegal migration, trafficking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• great efficiency in dealing with priority problems in a CB basis (eg, common grain storage facilities, disease eradication programmes, etc.)</td>
<td>• negative attitude amongst locally based State officials (eg customs officers) towards cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• twin cities with a gateway function, and connecting metropolis trade routes</td>
<td>• development limited to the border</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• growing economic and technical knowledge, particularly from agro-industries</td>
<td>• strong dependency on mono-agricultural and agriculture and livestock (tensions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• dynamic cross-border labour market</td>
<td>• slow implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• strong feeling of the need of CBC</td>
<td>• (weak) frequent labour migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• attractive touristic conditions in some areas (pilgrimage routes, …)</td>
<td>• long distances (very much time-consuming) for CBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• strong feeling in politicians</td>
<td>• cross-border education mostly absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• cross-border health</td>
<td>• health system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• growing industry</td>
<td>• special institutions involved, but strategic approach rather weak (national focus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• open labour market</td>
<td>• poor working conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• potential for cross-border tourism</td>
<td>• informal mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• development of twin-cities to commercial gateways</td>
<td>• cross-border touristic infrastructure rather weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• growing CB projects</td>
<td>• improvements only in the border area and not in the whole region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bi- (and multi-) national Committees,</td>
<td>• no systematic/strategic involvement in cross-border development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 CONCLUSIONS

The topic-related conclusions on the workshops and the aggregated conclusions and recommendations reflect the best evidence available based on the results of tasks and the best African practise, and compared with best tested European practice, to offer clear and applicable recommendations for involved authorities and international partners. This report will be available on line, as well as a comprehensive and well-structured collection of all relevant documents gathered and/or presented during the research project and the contact databases developed and used by the AEBR.

5.1 Lessons learned

CBC has to be built over a certain period of time, using previous historical, socio-economic and cultural relations. From the national point of view, one of the pioneers was Nigeria, with its National Boundary Commission; or Mali, whose former President Alpha Oumar Konaré, was the first to refer to CBC within the African Union. Today, many bilateral border conflicts are solved (or on their way), following the examples of these pioneers of CBC and being supported by the African integration efforts. Bilateral commissions to tackle common problems and/or opportunities have been constituted, and a growing amount of pilot projects are rendering very interesting information to further build solid CBC programmes (see AUBP Atlas of CBC).

A strong need and a growing political will reveal that, despite of the difficulties, there are many opportunities for these territories to develop cross-border cooperation (CBC). There are already cross-border social and economic structures in some areas, some promising national supporting approaches and supranational integration processes (continental or regional) closing the circle of multi-level governance, a precondition for successful cross-border cooperation.

The participation of the sub-national level can become a main factor for the definitive take-off of CBC in West Africa. On the other hand, local border authorities still need to strengthen public services and their responses to main challenges such as extreme poverty, the incidence of certain health problems, etc. In any case, national programmes, should include border areas as priorities, taking into account their development potential and the added value of a sound CBC, through the creation of bi- or trilateral committees to evaluate the potential handling of problems in a cross-border manner.

It is also very necessary to support supranational efforts, and the AUBP is a main actor to consolidate CBC in the whole continent. However, the role of the RECs is crucial from the operational point of view. In this sense, the transfer of European know-how in the area of the ECOWAS, where some supranational integration processes have already been successful, seem to be a very good option to deepen CBC practices. This is one of the main conclusions in all studies, reports and policy recommendations consulted.

As all institutions involved have underlined, there is a great working field in knowledge and training, as well as in the implementation of permanent structures for CBC. There is a need
of genuine cross-border projects, programmes and structures to strengthen social and economic cohesion, without duplication of objectives and functions between new and already existing initiatives and institutions. Therefore, it is also needed to combine rationally horizontal and vertical policies, following the logics of subsidiarity.

Providing services to local population, rationalizing structures across borders; intervention in traditional and informal processes across the borders, particularly trade; development of associations (or strengthening current ones) across the borders with the participation of all stakeholders; exploration of new fields for job creation (competitive export products and efficient commercial organization, renewable energies, depuration of water and food security, etc.);... There are many fields to explore and the task is huge, but the benefits to obtain will definitely be worth the invested efforts. A strong coordination of many domestic, African and international programmes would avoid overlapping. The resulting rationalization of expenditure would render a “coordination dividend” that can be invested in more coordination. A demonstrated tool for the best coordination of local, national and international efforts in border areas is Cross-Border Cooperation with a Multi-level Governance approach.

An issue that traditionally has been source of tensions, but also the first occasion for neighbouring communities to agree since ever (even before the creation of modern states) is the distribution of tasks and the preservation of shared natural resources. As they can also be main sources of economic development, there is always a risk of over-exploitation, exhaustion and strong pollution. This is a field to explore thoroughly as well, the joint environmental management and preservation of natural resources. There are some structures already implemented to manage river and lake basins. They can be the source of more complex CBC processes, as already existing structures can be the basis of further strategies for the sustainable development of these territories. Clear cases in this regards are the River Niger and the Lake Chad basins, but efficient joint management is still missing. CBC helps to reduce the vulnerability of the populations and allows the negotiated use of resources. Though some initiatives in this sense have already been implemented by supranational structures, the problem lies in the proliferation of structures, sometimes overlapping, and the irregular level of achievements. Climate change is another aspect to be taken into account when planning a wide agreement to promote CBC in this area.

**Trade** plays a very important role in CBC, and is a main economic activity in Africa, as in other parts of the world. Commercial exchange based on local production and imported goods is a major vehicle for the dynamism of local CBC. Networking local traditional markets and networks is an increasing initiative in some border areas. A main difficulty remains on the informal networks across borders, which can go from traditional exchange to more sophisticated and organized international smuggling. Therefore, attention is to be paid to illegal trade, which is a tradition in many areas (and one of the few income possibilities for many families). Smuggling and informal trade of local products are very much influenced by foreign exchange differentials.

And **demography** is another issue to explore: movements of people, refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, victims of trafficking, etc. The control of illegal activities affecting persons, particularly children and young women, is a must to begin a serious process of long-lasting cooperation. Illegal trafficking of merchandises is to be prosecuted, and the role of tradition should be taken into account, but the trafficking of persons is absolutely not acceptable, and
local authorities and societies should take the main stake to combat them. CBC can also support the coordination of regular security forces and emergency services (and this is the case en some Western African borders), but main action has to move forward beyond formal declarations.

Nowadays, it is very relevant to mention that joint patrols have been organized to ensure border security, to prevent conflicts or to combat criminal activities. Governors in border areas have established **CBC mechanisms to accompany peace processes**, reinforce the security of populations and facilitate the movement of persons and goods across border areas. Some civil society organisations and traditional authorities also perform awareness-building, watchdog and collaboration activities to promote peace and good neighbourhood between communities and countries, in particular when refugees and displaced people are involved. The role of community radio networks is very relevant in many of these border areas, e.g. the Kurumba network of community radio stations in the SKBo⁴¹ or RETRARC-GUISENGAM, between Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and the Gambia⁴².

As it was already indicated in chapters 1.2 and 3.2, we cannot forget that **border disputes** will remain in many African territories. And another added difficulty is, as in other parts of the world, the fact that cross-border areas are sometimes the playground for conflicts, trafficking and related crime.

It goes without saying that, in West Africa, the geographical, historical and political preconditions for regional development and cross-border cooperation (CBC) differ strongly from European experiences. With some exceptions, the economic centres in West Africa are settled in the coastal regions. Important ports and metropolis at the seaside are far away from the borders in many occasions, some countries are completely inner lands, and huge extensions of them are deserts. In Europe some important economic centres are located close to the border, being some of them already established cross-border metropolitan areas. Compared with Europe, distances are much longer, while transport infrastructure needs a lot of development. Most common transport means are animals, cars, trucks, and then ships and aircrafts. Railways exist only incidentally. So, travelling from one point to another is very time-consuming. In general, this has an impact on the mobility of citizens, workers and transport of goods. This affects mostly border areas and CBC, because border regions in the respective areas are usually less developed than more central (or coastal) regions; and border controls need hours and, sometimes, days, above all for goods. Nevertheless, people are familiar with these realities and accept even long distances and travel time, when it comes to CBC.

The obstacles and constraints identified can only be removed through dialogue on integration and socioeconomic development issues including the various types of actors involved in each country. In this sense, ENDA Diapol⁴³ has outlined four issues which provide genuine

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⁴² SWAC-OECD, *Creation of a cross-border radio stations network in Southern Senegambia*, Cross-Border Diaries number 6, June 2007, 6-11
⁴³ ENDA Diapol (2009), op.cit.
leverage for already active CBC areas in West Africa and to enhance regional integration and development:

- Anchoring public policy in existing integration dynamics
- Supporting the development of decentralised CBC
- Promoting productive local investments
- Evolving towards transnational policies on land use planning and natural resource management

It can be concluded that geographical areas for CBC are much larger than in Europe, mostly rural with a low population density and a weak economy, except in some particular cases. The sub-national level is playing an increasingly important but insufficient role. Relevant statistical and political levels are departments (Niger), states (Nigeria), and regions (Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Niger, Côte d’Ivoire, Mauritania). The regions are divided in most cases into departments, though Burkina Faso also have provinces. The regions in Mauritania are named wilayas.

Due to historical developments, national governments in Mali, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Senegal are the most important political players in CBC up to now. Regions, states and departments depend on national governments in political, financial and planning terms. This top-down approach is hardly shifting to a bottom-up one, including elements of South-South cooperation. Regionalisation and CBC are more and more on the political agenda of all countries. But integration processes are running informal and not well structured. However, there is a clear need and political will for change.

The development of CBC is linked to supranational, as well as to national and sub-national processes, where multi-level governance and subsidiarity are key issues. The role of regional and local authorities and other actors on the ground is growing. City twinning could play a major role in this process.

In the EU, the creation of the Single Market was very important for the development of CBC. Border regions are considered to fulfil a bridge function, to create added value and to contribute significantly to European integration. At the same time, several processes of national integration have begun in West Africa, also with the objective to integrate peripheral border areas in national and supranational markets.

As a consequence, in the course of modernisation and improving the situation of border areas, from a national point of view, informal cross-border activities were strongly “disturbed”. The reasons lied, in many cases, in the fact that, suddenly, national governments were present in peripheral border areas and tried to control the (often illegal) cross-border activities.

Like in the EU, it can also be observed that national governments tend to support the implementation of sensitive infrastructural and economic projects in border areas. But currently the tendency (with the support of the African Union and the RECs) is more to change national development policies (and international programmes in border areas) in favour of supporting genuine CBC.
5.2 Obstacles identified

Apart from the necessary efforts for development in general, the provision of essential services to the populations, the control of transmission diseases, and the fight against poverty, that’s to say the Development Millennium Goals (quite far from being achieved), some of these territories still face conflicts and illegal activities developed especially across national boundaries. So, the priorities for national governments fall in most of cases within the limits of national possibilities and challenges. In this sense, external support is very much needed, either from the African supra-national level or from the international community.

Regarding the sustainability of spontaneous integration dynamics, ENDA Diapol and partners\textsuperscript{44} have found in their systematic and intensive studies on the ground that CB socioeconomic dynamics in West Africa have a potential for integration that is still too often underestimated. Nevertheless, they are subject to a certain number of constraints that leave them relatively vulnerable. There are various risks factors showing the instability and vulnerability in economic, social, environmental and political terms. These are to be examine in order to outline opportunities and challenges. Amongst the latter:

- Pressure on space and resources: a potential source of conflicts because of the problematic intensification of land pressure and the accelerated degradation of natural resources.
- Obstacles to the development of commercial flows: poor infrastructure, high costs of transport, administrative procedures, custom formalities (and “informalities”), currency differentials and transaction costs, etc.
- Low levels of investment and unequal sharing of capital gains
- Compartmentalisation of national regulatory frameworks
- Decentralisation and overlapping regulations

A main element identified systematically by most of the studies consulted is the need of a stronger Euro-African dialogue on CBC, and the implementation of a huge capacity building programme.

Up to now there is no targeted staff training for CBC in national and local authorities to develop common programmes or strategies, to organise permanent cooperation, to establish cross-border institutions/structures for cooperation and, in this way, create necessary added value for the citizens living along the border.

With the view to targeted training, the AEBR has identified a series of challenges to be addressed:

- to avoid the terms “administration level“ and “competences“ for a cross-border structure. It is only about “practicable instruments“ to cooperate and the “execution of necessary cross-border tasks”;

\textsuperscript{44} ENDA Diapol (2009), op. cit.
• not to compare structures, competences, legislation, etc., on both sides of a border (they will never be or become comparable);
• to overcome the lack of experiences and skills of the regional/local administrations and relevant organisations in the field of cross-border cooperation;
• to build up communication and exchange mechanisms based on a system of trust and to contribute to changing people’s attitudes, perceptions and approaches;
• to encourage a bottom-up approach in regional/local development (in close partnership with the respective national authorities), involving all key actors and taking into account the targeted regional specific conditions (geographic, economic, social, cultural and political).

The colonial heritage and the consideration of borders as lines of separation and militarized areas, European-like national policies and the generally peripheral location within national frameworks, have impeded many border areas to become meeting places, even when there are very favourable pre-colonial conditions. Instead, in most of the cases people were living “back to back”.

As already explained, long distances, the lack of common border control facilities, weak infrastructures (compared with European standards) as well as the fragile economies would have a strong impact on the development of a sustainable CBC which has to be strengthened in the future. Using national funds for cross-border activities seems to be a major problem (national funds are devoted to national projects only). Up to now there is no common bilateral funding without external contributions/co-financing. As in many other fields, some particular countries could play a leading role in the preparation of Regional Development, Subsidiarity and Territorial Cohesion in West Africa, thus creating favourable framework conditions for CBC.

Despite the processes promoted by the African Union and the RECs (particularly ECOWAS in West Africa) cross-border transport remain difficult (e.g. export to Europe seems to be easier than from some neighbouring countries: excessive waiting time at border controls and other difficulties).

In some parts large international enterprises in the agricultural sector and landowners are dominating the economic situation, while in other parts (twin cities along borders) only some small businesses are settled up to now, depending on the existence of the border and its services. Illegal immigration, smuggling, drug and persons trafficking, and related crime are part of daily life and somehow considered as a source of income. In the last years there is a growing activity of terrorist groups, particularly in the Sahel area, being kidnapping a main activity. Conflicts (at big or small scale) also pose important obstacles for CBC.

While CBC is increasingly present on national political agendas, a clear strategy, specific or common financial resources and a distribution of tasks and responsibilities are missing. One-off activities, which in principle are welcome, depend too much on the commitment of individuals, organisations or institutions (there is a danger that these activities will finish if persons leave). They are not part of a regional development or even an overall cross-border development concept or strategy, and sometimes compete against each other. Permanent
cross-border institutions or structures, which could channel the cooperation in a more strategic and permanent way, are missing as well.

While politicians are in principle in favour of CBC, a strong political support at every level is not the rule. The reason could be that politicians usually need concrete proposals on how barriers can be overcome and problems can be solved in practice. This knowledge (especially on practical solutions without time consuming agreements or treaties) can hardly be found at national level (it is not the task of a ministry to think in cross-border terms), but should be available at regional and local level in the border regions themselves or at supranational level, which is the most efficient case up to now.

The role of traditional authorities should not be missed.

On the other hand, international organisations and NGOs are playing an increasingly crucial role in border areas, offering services mainly for one-off activities.

As it has been stressed in other parts of this report, African cross-border cooperation also faces multiple challenges:

- Post-colonial border issues,
- the traditional concept of sovereignty,
- own national priorities,
- lack of subsidiarity,
- the consideration of border areas as marginal,
- long-lasting border disputes,
- need to increase autonomy of territorial authorities,
- the need to ameliorate citizens’ life conditions,
- low local capacities,
- permanent and temporary migrations control,
- need to protect natural and cultural heritage,
- lack of security, terrorism,
- illegal activities across borders.

And global challenges affect African territories as well as in the whole globe, being border regions particularly affected due to their most fragile conditions.

5.3 Good examples

We have found very good cases of CBC in Africa. Apart from West Africa, the area between Zambia, Tanzania, Malawi and Mozambique, where the AU is promoting full delimitation and demarcation, CB training and some specific CB projects on commerce, tourism and management of natural resources.

The case studies identified in West Africa are characterised by differentials, which may be factors of integration if they are exploited as complementarities, or can be sources of tensions in the absence of satisfactory regulation. They include normative differentials (e.g.
currency exchange), eco-geographical differentials and/or differentials due to biases in competition (price differentials). These differentials have been intensively studied by ENDA Diapol45.

**Case 1**

The Triple Border Mali-Burkina Faso-Cote d’Ivoire: the SKBo zone (Sikasso, Korhogo and Bobo Dioulasso), an area of mixing and integration, typically peripheral with extreme spatial and social mobility.

This is one of the most studied areas and many interventions have taken place. There is a strong potential for CBC, while challenges prevail due to tensions and conflicts that appear periodically.

The support to the coordination of the mango sector is vital, and several CB projects are aimed to capitalize further possibilities. A CBC programme for border villages has developed new services and facilities, e.g. a CB health centre and a cereal bank. The CB radio network is another splendid instrument to promote CBC.

**Case 2**

The River Boundary Senegal Mauritania, wet border where the river can be a development factor if potentialities are properly exploited.

With a good management of the Senegal Basin River, the OMVS can make sure that the management of these dams will ensure electric energy production, agricultural development and river navigation in the long-term, while minimizing the adverse impacts on the environment. This organization is a great good tool for cooperation, with a stable legal and institutional framework and practical results benefiting from a strong political commitment. It has proven its capacity to mobilize partners to design and carry out projects on a great scale that no state could have implemented alone, and it also has the potential to face new challenges such as the integration of Guinea, the implementation of the Declaration of Nouakchott, of the Water Charter and of true Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), as well as the development of navigation and new hydropower projects of second generation.

Over the last few years, OMVS High Commission almost exclusively dealt with the furthering of two important projects: the preparation of the “Energy” project and the building of levees for Diama dam and main headworks. This priority, given to studies and construction works, led to a decline in the other functions.

There is an on-going proposal for an institutional reform with financing from the World Bank and IOWater, which is worth to be followed up.

In this same area, the CBC in the Karakoro Basin is very promising. However, a strong input given some years ago seems to have been slowed down in the last three years.

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45 ENDA Diapol (2009), op.cit.
Case 3

Southern Senegambia and Guinea-Bissau is another interesting case of complex border area, where some other countries are necessarily involved (Mali, Guinea Conakry).

As the authors of the studies consulted have stressed, the strategies and practices of populations are de facto cross-border. And, just like many other population and production basins in West Africa, the southern Senegambia area appears promising if the infrastructural, organisational and political constraints which it faces are eased. One of the ways to achieve this is by promoting concerted management and development of a cross-border territory which would cover all the families of agents and which would articulate the cross-border cooperation and the community policies promulgated by the ECOWAS and the WAEMU. The CB radio network seems also to be a suitable instrument in this area.

The Gambia River Development Organization has been concentrated in some failed infrastructure projects, but the established partnership is to be consolidated by supporting measures.

Case 4

The “Development Corridor” Maradi-Katsina-Kano (Niger-Nigeria). One of the most densely populated areas in West Africa. A strong economic power meets one of the poorest countries in the world.

Also very intensive studies and interventions in this dynamic area have been taken into account. The coordination and cooperation with the many agents involved in this area make it a perfect playground for a strong CBC programme. However, periodic conflicts between communities, the effects of the crisis, and enormous unbalances between the countries and within them, should be addressed with an integral approach.

Case 5

The MAC (Madeira, Açores, Canaries) Programme and West Africa. This programme has promoted many projects in the surrounding area, particularly with Cape Verde and Mauritania, and there is a growing dynamic towards West Africa with a view to channel EU-African cooperation.

Others

Water depuration and sustainable development in Tacharan (Niger). Initiated by Aquaphytex, a private company from Puebla de Alcocer (Spain), the NGO MPDL-Extremadura and the decentralised cooperation of the Spanish region of Extremadura. This project is aimed to be extended to other parts of the Niger and to other basins in Africa.
5.4 Relevance of the European Experience

In Europe, there is a long experience on what to do, and what not to do in the practice of cross-border cooperation (CBC) processes. European border and cross border regions (Euroregions and similar structures) cumulate an enormous expertise on it. The European experience has taken decades to develop a number of measures and programmes, and especially permanent structures for cooperation amongst local and regional authorities.

In West Africa the European experience in cross-border and interregional cooperation is becoming particularly relevant. African stakeholders wish to use all of this unique set of experiences in order to take profit of the best practise available to develop real CBC amongst most of the countries involved. This concerns above all the border areas between Mali and Burkina Faso; Niger-Nigeria, Senegal with The Gambia, Mali and Guinea-Bissau, and the coastal border with the EU Canary, Azores and Madeira islands, with a strong cooperation with Cape Verde.

One specific European experience is that territorial cooperation actions are fundamental for the development of regional integration processes and progress.

Some national and supra-national authorities have already begun a process of regionalisation and exchange of information with the EU, developing the concept of border areas with shared competences between national and sub-national governments.

But, as described before, political, historical, geographical, social and economic framework conditions in West Africa are different, sometimes even much more different, than European ones. The relevance of European experience is explained in this chapter from the point of view of best practice, while key messages, adapted to the needs and capacities in West Africa, are included in the recommendations.

In Europe, inside and outside the European Union, successful CBC is based on:

- a step by step development (first the tasks, then the structure);
- a strategic/programmatic approach;
- real joint projects;
- permanent working structures (joint decision making bodies, joint secretariat and staff);
- own financial resources.

In Europe it turned out, that the regional/local level is the most suitable to implement CBC (in partnership with the national authorities on both sides of a border and the EU), because:

- the actors on site are the most familiar with the cultural, social, geographical, economic and political conditions as well as with obstacles and problems for cooperation;
- they do not only know about barriers and problems, but are also able to offer very practical solutions;
• they have the strongest interest in successful CBC, as their daily life is concerned;
• they are more interested in practical cooperation based on partnership than in clarification of questions of competence (always on table when the national level is involved);
• step-by-step development of CBC.

One-off activities are found at the beginning of each type of cooperation. They pave the way for networks, which can be used to establish contacts between the actors benefiting from cooperation in a cross-border area (entrepreneurs, trade unions, universities, tourism agencies, public sector). Networks as platforms to promote generalised CBC have a multiplier effect.

In a second step, a more strategically and development oriented cooperation occurred in Europe. This requires a long term approach, based upon analysing the existing situation and the potentials for social and economic development. Objectives, priorities, key issues and activity fields have to be defined, resulting in a cross-border strategy/programme.

**Advantages of a cross-border strategy/programme**

It will become very clear for the actors what they want to achieve in the next 10-15 years. Furthermore, the added value of cross-border cooperation will be visible.

Based on the cross-border strategy/programme, it has to be decided which part of the regional development objectives have to be done with national/regional/local resources and which part will be supported by supranational funds (this is much easier in the EU thanks to INTERREG and the Territorial Cooperation Objective).

**Particular role of the EU-Programme INTERREG**

The EU-Program INTERREG, established in 1990, introduced for the first time in Europe the possibility to cooperate with a long term perspective. It is divided in three strands: A = cross-border cooperation, B = transnational cooperation, C = interregional cooperation. Also in the EU, the main focus is on national development with the result that only 3% of the total ERDF funds are allocated to territorial cooperation. Despite these small financial resources, good and even excellent results have been achieved with regard to European integration, regional development of peripheral areas and decentralisation of regional policy.

The key advantages of INTERREG from the regional/local point of view are:

• CBC is defined as a political objective of the EU;
• within the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), a fixed percentage is devoted to territorial cooperation, but with a clear priority for CBC;
• a programming period with about 60 operational programmes covers along 6-7 years, guaranteeing for the same time the financial contribution of the EU;
- each programme has to be co-financed (20-25%); this has to be guaranteed by the Member States concerned;
- in practice this rate of co-financing is out of the political debate on annual budgets at national or regional level over 6-7 years;
- CBC is not depending anymore from the political situation in a member state or a single ministry.

The conditions for successful INTERREG-Programmes and genuine cross-border impact and results can be described as follows:

- a joint programme does not mean two national programmes “stuck together” or drawn up on one side of the border and then submitted to the partner for comments;
- cross-border programmes have to develop together right from the outset, this is the only way to avoid legal, financial and psychological barriers from the beginning;
- joint implementation/management requires partnership. All partners within the cross-border area and at national level have to be taken on board;
- joint monitoring/steering committees have to be established for each programme taking joint decisions;
- a joint bank account for the EU-funds (in most advanced cases even for the national/regional co-financing rate) guarantees genuine cross-border projects;
- in fact, genuine cross-border projects require joint development, joint implementation/management (Lead Partner Principle), joint staff and joint financing.

**Advantage and role of a cross-border structure (Euroregion-like or similar structure)**

To establish a cross-border structure is not an objective by its own. A structure should always follow the task identified before and not vice versa.

The need of a cross-border structure becomes evident because:

- sovereignty rights of two neighbouring states meet at the border;
- but no state has a cross-border sovereignty;
- different competences, structures, laws, social systems, spatial planning remain to exist, and collide at the borders;
- no state will ever change its competences, structures etc. only on behalf of border regions or continental integration (asymmetries will remain);
- even if a state wants to do so, it will not be able to succeed (even if everything is harmonised with one neighbour, this does not mean this solution can be adopted by other neighbours).
It can be concluded that it makes no sense to compare competences, structures etc., or trying to harmonise them. Actors would only loose years without concrete results. Because there is a need to cooperate, this has to be done despite those barriers that continue to exist.

The advantage of a cross-border structure is to be an instrument responsible for cooperation with a single objective “cross-border cooperation”. This structure is able to take joint decisions and serves as a platform to offer solutions for all partners on both sides of a border. It is equipped with more administrative and legal capacity as well as liability (important to implement EU-programmes in a decentralised way) than any organisation based on private law.

One mistake which can be encountered in the EU very often is to consider such a cross-border structure from a national point of view and to compare it with an administration with competences. A cross-border structure is not a new administrative level, but only an instrument to cooperate, a catalyst to balance different competences and structures on both sides of the border. And CBC is not a question of competences. Its aim is to perform necessary cross-border tasks (in close partnership with the national authorities concerned) for the benefit of the people living in the border regions. This understanding of CBC is a great help to avoid misunderstandings on the role of a cross-border structure and to overcome legal barriers.

The establishment of a legal cross-border structure can hardly be achieved in a short time period. In Europe bilateral/trilateral treaties for CBC needed 5-7 years, especially if they allow cooperation based on public law. The whole process to develop a legal instrument applicable in all states like in the European Union (the case of the EGTC, the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation) lasted almost 30 years.

So, practical arrangements are needed for cross-border structures. They can be concluded in a short time based on private law. This is possible by setting up two associations (with regional and/or local authorities as members) on both sides of the border following public law, with their registered offices in the states concerned. These two associations can conclude a cross-border agreement in line with private law to allow CBC.

The role of cross-border structures (whether based on private or public law) can be described as follows:

- they serve as a platform, turntable, and motor for all cross-border tasks and contacts, keeping cooperation alive in a permanent way;
- they advocate all cross-border issues and daily border problems;
- they offer solutions for cross-border problems;
- they focus on cross-border services for citizens, public services, economic and social partners;
- they mobilise and strongly involve all politicians at all levels;
- they are responsible to implement cross-border strategies/programmes;
• they have to look for the necessary joint financial resources to implement programmes and projects.

Taking joint decisions (whether in a private or public structure) means, in practice, that these decisions have to be implemented by the partners within their respective already existing national competences and structures on both sides of a border.

This working method always depends on a functional partnership. Partnership within a decentralised structure requires:

• A great dose of mutual trust.
• External partnership with the national governments on both sides of the border, because of political, strategic and financial reasons. National plans/programmes have to be taken into account. Political and financial support is needed.
• Internal partnership in order to involve all actors within a cross-border area (economic, social, cultural actors, public authorities and equivalent bodies, NGOs) to mobilise already available knowledge at national level for CBC.

Handling partnership in this way will avoid any conflict of competences and will not build up new bureaucratic structures.

The definition of a cross-border area is not purely depending on administrative and geographical factors. In Europe most partners cooperate because they have identified joint interests/concerns, joint issues and problems.
6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations (to organizations actively promoting regional economic development in the area) on how best to allocate resources to promote development and interregional cooperation in West Africa have to be addressed, in the first instance, to the EU in general, and DG Regio and DG DevCo in particular.

The European Commission tries to strengthen the contents of its agreements with Western Africa, bilaterally or in the framework of already existing integration structures, with the consolidation of strong governance initiatives, like the promotion of CBC. But the process of cross-border cooperation could be very slowly developed without the participation of sub-national and non-governmental actors. European experiences clearly demonstrate the regional and local level to be the most appropriate ones to implement cross-border projects and programmes, if they act in close partnership with the national authorities on both sides of the border. This is a key issue in a really multi-level process of governance, as it is the case of CBC.

It would be essential, that public authorities involve from the very beginning all stakeholders, non-governmental organisations, etc. while developing cross-border projects and strategies/programmes. All actors of all sectors on both sides of the border have to become engaged in cross-border cooperation. This is the best way to use the existing knowledge of these actors and to give them an important role while creating a sustainable platform for cross-border cooperation, as well as to inform and mobilise them for national strategic policies in favour of border areas.

The empowerment of sub-national levels in the implementation of cross-border cooperation projects and programmes, and their ownership of the outputs, would be helpful to enhance the impact of cross-border cooperation strategies and their sustainability. Cross-border cooperation can be the best example of South-South cooperation, putting border areas more central. Based on this outline, the key cross-border actors should be selected for a first approach.

In any case, a multi-level cross-border partnership is to be consolidated, including:

- national and sub-national government levels
- traditional authorities and established informal networks (civil society, business, education)

Due to the fact that a provisional selection of case study areas was already suggested in the application, the AEBR made contacts amongst qualified practitioners in these areas and reviewed main related documents, representing the empirical cases that could complete a feasible, consistent and qualified “target group” for the analysis of “African hot areas for CBC”. There are many stakeholders identified as “target group”. A list with those contacted during this study has been drawn up as Annex III.
Key cross-border actors

- Supranational, national, and sub-national authorities;
- universities and research institutes,
- enterprises from selected economic sectors,
- social and cultural organisations (local NGOs),
- European institutions and NGOs.

A stronger input of the European Commission to promote regional policies in Africa would play a crucial role. The efforts of DG REGIO are very much encouraging, but a stronger involvement of other relevant EC departments, e.g. the European External Action Service (EEAS) and EuropeAid, is very much needed. In this sense, the experts who met in Casa África (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 7-8 November 2011) agreed to ask the EU to better coordinate EDF and ERDF EU funding to make a sustainable contribution to the African integration process. A stronger exchange between DG Regio and DG DevCo is very much needed (and with them and the AU). An aspect to explore is the “coordination dividend” resulting from a better coordinated and more efficient use of funds, including:

- Raise limit of how much of ERDF can be spent in Africa
- Recognise “cross-border cooperation” as a category of actions under EDF
- Allow preparatory actions (e.g. contacts, studies) to be funded under one fund and implementation under the other.

Territorial actions implemented through the EDF could also profit from instruments like the Impact Assessment Toolkit, to determine whether a CB approach is the appropriate level of intervention and to identify the added value of CBC.

In this case it is very important to establish good monitoring mechanisms, in an ongoing approach, in order to better evaluate the impact.

Modern tools like the Internet or videoconference facilitate enormously the contacts, but not everywhere there are technology and skills enough to perform correct electronic communication practices. It is very much recommended to establish political contacts, face to face, between European politicians and experts engaged in CBC and the competent authorities of the target countries. This would pave the way for the exchange of information and staff. The meeting of experts from both sides in order to identify, articulate, implement and monitor successful CB activities often need to take the form of person-to-person contact, especially in early stages.

The participation of the AEBR and other European regional associations, as well as their partners in developing countries, can offer expertise and good practises in the process of capacity building in these areas of the world, where sustainable and systematic territorial cooperation has not yet been achieved. Actually, there is great working field in knowledge and training, and in the implementation of permanent structures for CBC.

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Here there is a set of objectives defined to guide the different activities and the expected outputs:

- **Short-term objectives:**
  
  - EU support to supra-national efforts, including strategic definition and concrete actions (delimitation / demarcation of borders and transport networks), incorporating territorial cooperation in the bilateral agenda EU-AU. The African Union Border Programme and the ECOWAS and related projects need further support.
  
  - Coordination of actions, implemented by a heterogeneous pool of actors within and outside Africa. Rationalization of expenditure would render a “coordination dividend”.
  
  - Realisation of concrete cross-border pilot projects.
  
  - Recommendations to improve decentralised cross-border cooperation through partnership between the respective local, regional, national authorities and the supranational level. Stress on “inclusive governance”.
  
  - Start a process to increase capacities of national, regional and local actors (with EU advisory support and training), as well as private partners in the design, implementation and evaluation of cross-border cooperation.

- **Mid-term objectives:**
  
  - Establishment of a series of steps to increase national, regional and local capacities for cross-border cooperation (targeted training).
  
  - Development of multi-annual strategies/programmes, regulations, CBC administrative units, and project management skills to contribute to institutional strengthening.
  
  - Elaboration of a legal instrument for territorial cooperation and promotion of permanent structures for CBC.

- **Long-term objective:**
  
  - Structural approach to the regional integration process (e.g. through a Western African Interreg) and the extension to other African RECs.

Cross-border cooperation (CBC) will create sustainable added value and contribute to (West) African integration becoming therefore the cement of a “African House”. In order to succeed, existing back-to-back situations in this process of integration must be transformed into a “face to face” relationship, while respecting the national sovereignties. Barriers have to be overcome and prejudices too.

Decentralised CBC at regional/local level in partnership with national governments and supra-national organisations is the most suitable instrument to pave the way for a new quality of borders as meeting places offering a wide range of opportunities. At the same time there is a chance to transform the national peripheral situation of border areas in West Africa into a more favourable internal position within the continent. CBC is not about abolishing borders, but reducing them to administrative limits like those between provinces and departments.
Based on this background, in the recommendations short-term objectives (concrete projects, need of decentralised cooperation, establishment of partnerships, informal structures for CBC in general); mid-term objectives (to increase local/regional/national capacities for sustainable CBC, to elaborate joint strategies/programmes and projects, as well as strengthening cross-border institutions); and long-term objectives (with a view to a regional integration process throughout Africa) are developed.

Many current and potential key actors in the process have been identified:

- National, regional and local authorities, from both side of the (selected) borders;
- supranational structures;
- universities and research institutes,
- enterprises from selected economic sectors,
- social and cultural organisations,
- trade unions and employers organisations (as feasible),
- third sector organisations in concrete cases;
- organisations responsible for infrastructures.

CBC depends many times on individuals who can belong to the groups listed above, but they can also act on behalf of other entities, or even on an individual basis, to promote concrete CBC activities. In annex III there is a comprehensive list of contacted individuals.

6.1 Action plan specific for the case studies

The relevance of the European expertise in cross-border cooperation has been used for an action plan with concrete proposals concerning:

- capacity building needs and targeted training;
- the creation or activation of working groups in selected border areas in order to establish permanent structures for cross-border cooperation;
- the development of common strategies/programmes and projects;
- the promotion of partnership and subsidiarity (bottom-up approach and multilevel governance);
- the exchange of best practices in Africa and with the EU.

The SWOT analysis has provided the basis to elaborate a road map for CBC in the territories under study, using main results, outcomes and conclusions.

The recommendations given in this chapter can be implemented in the short-, mid- as well as in the long-term.

6.1.1 Concrete initiatives

Case 1 Intervention in the Triple Border Mali-Burkina Faso-Cote d'Ivoire (following the recommendations and identifications by ENDA-Diapol):
Decentralisations processes remain very abstract. Applying national reforms in cross-border areas does not solve development issues which extend beyond borders. The harmonisation of local, national and supranational regulations could reduce situations of unbalance that can contribute to resource waste. Coordination of heterogeneous regulations remains a central issue in border spaces, especially since there are multiple informal rules.

On cross-border trade, differentials between regulation or prices are to be examined, but also the strategies of spatial occupation or control through clan or religious solidarity networks. Trade developing is multifaceted: regular trade in legal merchandise and unofficial parallel channels for same merchandise, plus totally illegal activities such as drugs, persons and child trafficking. Here it is again the issue of overlapping regulations of diverse origins and the simultaneous positioning of actors in different trade circuits.

And, a main issue, looking at a wider territory, is that West African zones of solidarity cannot be reduced to national peripheries. Other spaces are under development. There are cities or regions quite distant from each other that keep important relationships with permanent exchange of people and merchandises, and civilization values are shared, particularly religious and cultural. Both processes often overlap and the actors in the different spaces combine micro- and macro-spatial strategies, local and regional scales. Diverging strategies of different actors should converge on several levels. Interaction between interest groups should mobilise major political interventions. ENDA Diapol has proposed that associational models emerging in SKBo should be better defined: modern cooperatives, legal associations, customary associations or mixed forms.

As already mentioned in this study, there a need to support national programmes, like the CB programme for border villages (to be highlighted the examples of a CB health centre and a CB cereal bank), the radios network, and CB productive activities, as it is the case of the mango sector. The studies made by ENDA Diapol, the SWAC and the MOT should be taken into account and the actors identified should be contacted when planning an integral intervention in the area.

**Case 2**

The River Boundary Senegal Mauritania, and the Karakoro basin, wet border where the river can be a development factor if potentialities are properly exploited.

It is very much recommended to explore fields of action with some key actors in the area, as well as with some European institutions, as it is the case of the French NGO OIEAU, which is also very active in West Africa. Communication with this French NGO, as it is the case with other very relevant actors identified in the course of this study, are very much recommended to follow up the road map for CBC in West Africa.

This is another case to plan an integral intervention. For instance, the following set of actions could be planned:

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47 ENDA Diapol (2009), *op.cit.*
• People to people (small) projects. Easy to start, while framework conditions are evaluated and prepared;
• water, linked to eradication of transmissible diseases;
• health (common) facilities;
• management of natural resources, e.g. rivers, natural parks; linked to production, transport, tourism
• livelihoods / value adding common facilities (e.g. storage, processing, packaging);
• trade (formal and informal);
• border delimitation and demarcation.

Case 3

Southern Senegambia and Guinea-Bissau is an interesting case of complex border area, where some other countries are necessarily involved (Mali, Guinea Conakry).

Main recommendations are:
• Development of consultation networks to facilitate regulation of mechanisms of regional and national development and public policies.
• Encouragement of CB management of natural resources, particularly water, including the harmonisation of policies to exploit and preserve forest resources.
• Foster the integration of territories by defining “concentric circles” to bring the countries in this region together to manage shared interests and spaces, taking into account infrastructural needs.
• Harmonisation of rules and coordination of activities related to the production of goods for exports (e.g. cashew).
• Support to existing programmes (e.g. the CB radio network).

A main issue to address here is the harmonisation of policies for exploitation and preservation of forest resources. Cashew production for export is a growing sector which would also benefit very much from a stronger CB coordination of producers.

Case 4

The “Development Corridor” Maradi-Katsina-Kano (Niger-Nigeria). One of the most densely populated areas in West Africa. A strong economic power meets one of the poorest countries in the world.

As it has been described in chapter 3, interventions in this area should be coordinated with the ECOWAS, local authorities and other agents, as well as with different international partners. The area is complex and conflicts should be addressed, but it has a strong potentiality due to a long tradition of CBC in various fields.
**Case 5**

It is very important to strengthen the **West African aspects of the MAC Programme** as a vehicle for the transfer of European expertise to CBC initiatives in West Africa.

**Others**

Collaboration with the **Niger Basin Authority** (NBA) by initiatives already initiated by NGOs and foreign enterprises, like the project on water depuration for human use implemented by Aquaphytex in Tacharan (Niger). This model, sustainable and environmentally very friendly, can also be transferred to other CB river areas.

### 6.1.2 Short-term and mid-term action plan

A first step to develop is the establishment of a working plan with the African Union and with ECOWAS in order to produce a CBC strategy that includes all aspects identified as crucial, i.e. capacity building, design and implementation of a legal instrument for CBC, generation of a CBC multiannual programme and the intervention in selected pilot areas. The growing interest in cross-border cooperation (CBC) in West Africa and the information about the prior results achieved in many European border areas pave the way along some border areas. The main objective is to enhance CBC in this area by exchanging information and staff and securing the transit from individual cross-border activities to a more strategic programmatic approach (sustainability). The tasks to implement an integrated and sustained activity in order to protect and develop cross-border initiatives in this area should be done by institutions at local and national level (multi-level governance and subsidiarity), but they need the support of supra-national organisations as well as other non-public actors (partnership). The stronger involvement of sub-national and non-governmental actors will speed up the process in a favourable way, because the potentials of border regions are far away from being fully used, neither in socio-cultural or socio-economic terms.

While giving advice based on the European experience, it has to be taken into account that the framework conditions in West Africa differ in political, historical, economic, bilateral, social and geographical terms. But there are key elements for successful CBC in Europe that can be adapted to the needs on the ground and can also be used in the area of the case studies:

- Step-by-step development (first the tasks, then the structure).
- Strengthening of regional and local tasks and responsibilities.
- Strategic/programmatic approach.
- Real joint projects.
- A permanent working structure per cross-border area (informal, later formal) as the main player (with joint decision making bodies, joint secretariat and staff).
- Own joint financial resources.
This requires the following framework conditions and steps:

- The political will of all states concerned.
- Bottom-up approach, where local actors are playing the main role in partnership with the national governments (external partnership, avoiding conflicts of competences) and supra-national institutions.
- Involvement of politicians at all levels from both sides of the border to build up lobby in favour of CBC.
- Hands-on participation of all actors in both sides of the border (public/private and public-equivalent bodies, NGOs, etc.) in order to create a solid basis for CBC by using already existing knowledge on both sides of the border (internal partnership, avoiding conflicts of competences).
- The awareness that socio-cultural cooperation is as important as economic cooperation (and often a precondition for successful CBC as a whole).
- In the starting phase, informal cooperation based on private law.
- At the end, creation of permanent cross-border structures based on public law.

By introducing these key elements and establishing the framework conditions, it has to be underlined again that a cross-border structure is not a new administrative level, but only an instrument for CBC to balance existing and remaining differences at national level along a border (laws, competences, structures, etc.). And CBC is not a question of competence but of implementing necessary cross-border tasks for the benefit of the population living at the border area and, at the end, for the benefit of the national governments concerned as well.

The idea to harmonise existing differences at national level has to be rejected, because like in the EU, also in West Africa this will not be possible, and it will only produce frustration and loss of time to start with the CBC process.

The AEBR recommends using the following instruments:

- permanent advisory support and training (capacity building);
- exchange of experiences on best practices and information;
- workshops/seminars, including targeted training;
- international conferences.

**Permanent advisory support and training** should last over 3-5 years. It has to be secured by a team of experts with European-wide practical and strategic expertise in CBC (drafting and implementing joint cross-border programmes and projects, cross-border legal aspects and structures, evaluation) together with West African experts. There is already a pool of experts in Europe with a lot of expertise in studying and identifying CBC practices in West Africa, and a growing pool of African experts has also been identified in the course of the studies mentioned in this report. Without this practical and European-wide experience the aim “to help actors at regional/local level to help themselves” cannot be achieved and consultants will remain the main actors in the field of CBC.
A multi-annual approach is needed as well. The experience in Europe shows that, in the “old” EU, CBC developed quite fast with targeted training by qualified experts over more than one decade. Under the regulation of PHARE-CBC and TACIS-CBC programmes in the new member states and third countries, the period for training and advice lasted only a few months, while the need for support was much stronger. And many different experts with strong varying ideas for CBC have been involved. As a result advice and training were not consistent, stopped after one year at most, and were not completed. People on the ground contributed with some new expertise, but also very different practices, and were always expecting a new contract. Most of them finally left to other jobs where they could capitalise their knowledge. And, when advice and training started up again after the break, they have to be implemented from zero.

In the following text, a consistent training programme to enhance regional and local competences and to achieve a more strategic approach in CBC involving all partners from both sides of the border is described.

**Priorities**

- Short missions to the individual border regions in order to work out a Position Paper with an Action Plan for the individual border areas as soon as possible.
- Short-term creation of bilateral/trilateral Working Groups in every border area.
- Training of the working groups in basic CBC questions using best European practice.
- Systematic training of working groups to develop common projects and applications.
- Training of working groups with regard to the elaboration of common strategies and programmes.
- Development of common cross-border structures as well as a joint secretariat.
- Creation of vertical and horizontal partnerships, i.e. with national governments and social partners on both sides and across the border.

**Activities**

- The main activities are to be developed by the border regions themselves. The objective is to establish CBC based in cross-border structures and working groups, which is able to become active permanently. Own activities are a precondition to obtain external assistance.
- Work concentrated on the needs of the regional and local partners on the ground.
- During the period 1990–2001, the AEBR advised and trained practically all partners in INTERREG-, PHARE-CBC- and TACIS-CBC-programmes with the support of EU Funds. Therefore, specialists with a unique knowledge of CBC are available. Furthermore, practitioners from border regions could be mobilised in special cases.
- Working groups and structures should stay active themselves in those periods when external experts are absent. External experts need to be on the ground especially at the starting period for a systematic training during several days.
- The coordination with other partners will be secured in a Steering Committee.
- Association(s) for Cross-Border Cooperation should be promoted in Africa, like the well as their cooperation with other related platforms, national associations of municipalities and regions, and similar structures in other continents.
**Brief description of the instruments:**

- **Networking**: range of activities with practitioners, experts, social partners at local and regional level and other representatives of border regions actively exchanging experience. This includes feedback from the border regions concerning strategies, programmes, financial engineering, projects and cross-border structures/organisations; and information advice to the border regions regarding good practice.

- **Information**, training activities and technical assistance: transfer of know-how, advisory missions, workshops, seminars, annual conferences, publications (e.g. handbooks, practical guides, info-sheets) concerning development of actions (e.g. cross-border concepts, structures, projects).

- **Management**: could be done by the AEBR in close consultation and partnership with the partners involved and other stakeholders. The management functions include work planning, coordination, monitoring, etc.

Besides, capacity building at regional/local level and a more sustainable and strategic CBC the following practical results can be achieved step by step:

- stronger bottom-up approach;
- better distribution of tasks and responsibilities,;
- genuine cross-border programmes and projects;
- solutions for daily border problems;
- solutions for social problems;
- improving CBC of SMEs;
- development of new CBC between manufacturers and suppliers;
- intensified cooperation in sectors like health, environment, innovation and research; and tourism;
- improved cooperation in education, especially bilingual schools in some border areas;
- stronger role of universities through cooperation in targeted analyses and studies (cross-border infrastructure, environment, diversification of economy, service sector, development of city centres, spatial planning);
- creation of a network for a cross-border labour market through cooperation between workers, trade unions and public authorities;
- promotion of cross-border vocational training and the mutual acknowledgement of national qualifications;
- creation of cross-border commercial sites;
- long-term cross-border development plans taken into account in national programmes;
- CBC between police, customs and border police departments.

In the first phase it is recommended to initiate a parallel process, because targeted training and the elaboration of cross-border strategies/programmes takes time. In the meantime, concrete cross-border projects (see 6.1.1) and other actions coming out from the SWOT analysis can be drafted and implemented. Otherwise nothing will happen in this phase and as a result there would be a strong frustration of actors and citizens on the ground coming with high expectations.
The whole process has to be accompanied by a range of concrete steps to be taken at local/regional, national and supra-national level.

In selected areas and along the wet borders cross-border organisations/associations (having as members authorities from both sides) have to be established for each area in order to avoid duplication of structures. It will be responsible for managing and coordinating all cross-border activities (political responsibility). The objective will be not to do everything by oneself, but to establish a strong external and internal partnership, to build up a political lobby and to mobilise all actors (and their knowledge) from both sides of the border in favour of CBC (e.g. forming bilateral working groups in all fields of activities where private actors are playing a major role).

These CBC structures should be:
- light, broad and permanent (not only for a specific project or sector)
- able to facilitate exchange, build understanding/trust, promote cooperation
- not replace state structures or taking over their responsibilities

In each province/department being a member of such a cross-border organisation/association, one full time person has to be responsible exclusively for CBC.

At national level one department should be the overall responsible body for territorial cooperation with the main focus on CBC (this is already the case in some countries like Mali, Burkina Faso, but it should be developed in other countries with a stronger impact on the ground). Also, in this department one person has to be designated to deal exclusively with CBC and coordinate all cross-border activities within the government. National funds earmarked for border and cross-border activities have to be provided on a multi-annual basis.

The departments responsible for customs and border control have to secure, together with the respective ministry in the neighbouring country, a joint training programme for staff, to provide the necessary electronic equipment, to allow joint border facilities, etc.

The role of the EU is to encourage and facilitate the whole process through intensifying political contacts and allocation of some financial resources enabling the implementation of the recommendations. In a first step the EU-activities will be concentrated on providing advice, training, exchange of staff and politicians. But, in the long run, advice and training will not be enough to cover the high expectations placed in Europe.

### 6.2 Road map for the development of cross-border cooperation in West Africa

Main lessons learned and best European practice (dynamics of territorial cooperation through EU Regional Policy support and national/regional/local co-financing) have been used to draft a road map, with concrete proposals regarding:

- Creation or activation of working groups in the selected border areas, with strong institutional support, in order to establish permanent structures for CBC
• Addressing capacity building needs, with concrete measures regarding exchange of best practices in Africa, with the EU and with other parts of the world, e.g. with Latin America.
• Development of common concepts, strategies, programmes and projects, through appropriate training of key stakeholders
• Focus on the governance and coordination model (promoting a multi-level approach)

**Legal framework and capacity building**

One of the main tasks to be accomplished by international institutions is the support to African continental and sub-continental (regional) integration processes. Within them there are very promising CBC initiatives, particularly in the case of the African Union, ECOWAS or UEMOA. A concrete mission should be the support to the establishment of a (West) African legal framework for CBC in the sense of the Madrid Outline Convention48. In fact, many are asking for such an instrument in Africa for more the times of the Madrid Outline Convention. The AU is also determined to launch an African legal instrument for CBC. These supranational institutions and other organizations, think-tanks and NGOs, both from Africa and from Europe, have produced very valuable analyses with very similar conclusions in most of the cases: the need to implement a concrete African-European partnership to promote territorial cooperation, particularly cross-border, focused on capacity building. The EU institutions and CBC networks can design, together with African actors, a strategic framework to implement legal regulations for CBC and a capacity building programme to fulfil main needs. European border and cross-border regions can also offer a great support in this task due to their knowledge and expertise in defining, implementing and evaluating CBC practices. European experts can take part, together with their African peers, in a huge capacity building programme to be supported by the EU’s and the Members states’ official aid.

**Delimitation and Demarcation**

Meanwhile, another main task in African borders, which still is to take considerable time, debate and resources, is delimitation and demarcation, a pre-requisite to launch sound CBC strategies. Many efforts have been implemented already and the number of delimited and demarcated borderlines increased dramatically in the last years, but still less than 25% of African borders are properly demarcated. Some financial contribution from European aid agencies would be very convenient, as well as technological support to use the possibilities offer by satellite systems and the building of accessible communication networks.

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48 The European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities and Authorities was approved by the Council of Europe on 21st May 1980 in Madrid and is commonly known as the Madrid Outline Convention. Its three Additional Protocols complete a historical hint for CBC in the wide territory covered by the Council’s 47 Member states.
Integration

This is one of the main objectives of many supra-national organisations and associations existing in West Africa. It goes without saying that integration needs regional development taking into account social and economic conditions. And integration is closely connected to cross-border cooperation (CBC), a laboratory for integration at continental level, and the instrument to implement development along borders. At the same time, the development of CBC is closely linked to supra-national, national and sub-national processes in West Africa where Multi-level Governance and Subsidiarity are key issues.

CBC in West Africa should be implemented at local, regional, and national level with the support of supra-national organisations as well as by the participation of the economic sector (e.g. Chambers of Commerce) and non-public actors (civil society) following the Principle of Partnership. But the relevance of the sub-national level still needs to grow within the whole development cycle of this regional integration process (bottom-up approach).

There is a need of genuine cross-border programmes, projects and structures to strengthen social and economic cohesion without affecting sovereignty rights. Actually, West and Southern Africa are great working fields in knowledge and training, as well as in the implementation of permanent structures for CBC. Europe has cumulated an enormous experience in this regard (EU institutions, Member States, participating border and cross-border regions, EGTCs, associations, etc.), therefore a stronger process of cooperation in territorial development between the EU and the African Union (and RECs) would be very helpful.

The process of consolidation and formalisation of CBC in Europe is found by African stakeholders as having similarities with that of West Africa. This is another reason to promote a dynamic Euro-African dialogue on CBC, including technical expertise and exchange of experiences.

As in many other fields, some countries can play a leading role in the promotion of Territorial Cohesion and Subsidiarity by CBC in the continent. The dialogue between national and EU authorities should be followed by some practical implementation.

This road map needs a wide EU-African partnership, including all stakeholders, based on mutual trust, with a territorial vision to enhance (West) African integration and regional development by CBC. A main issue is the definitive inclusion of territorial aspects in the programmes financed by the EU through the EDF and the coordination of this support with the ERDF, in a model that is also growing in its acception for the Eastern and Southern EU Partnerships.

The following road map describes step-by-step how to proceed with CBC in West Africa through short-, mid-, and long-term activities.
**Short-term (by the end of 2012 and 2013)**

- Establishment of support mechanisms for the African Union efforts through the AUBP (border delimitation and demarcation, pilot projects, legal instrument, etc.).

- At the very beginning concentration on the area of ECOWAS and its members having already regional development and cross-border cooperation (CBC) in their agendas (and in their governmental structures), to elaborate a CBC Strategy including all crucial aspects. Participation of local actors and civil society.

- Realisation of concrete cross-border pilot projects (with external assistance) following the priorities indicated by local stakeholders (regarding location and field of intervention):
  - Completion of the African CBC catalogue
  - Strengthening of the West African aspects of the MAC Programme as a vehicle for the transfer of European expertise to CBC initiatives in West Africa.
  - Intervention in the Triple Border Mali-Burkina Faso-Cote d’Ivoire.
  - Extension of current interventions in fields like water management, reduction of poverty, food security in the Senegal, Karakoro, Gambia and Niger river basins. Projects like *Aquaphytex* in Tacharan (Niger) can be transferred to other CB river areas.
  - Support to ongoing processes to strengthen CB in some specific border areas, such as the Nigerian borders, particularly in the Northern regions bordering Niger.

- Exchange of politicians and staff.

- Establishment of a cross-border organisation/association with working groups and institutional support in order to get the maximum of coordination; and targeted training programmes in the areas of the case studies (see chapter 6.1.2 for a proposed way to proceed).

- In parallel, stronger bilateral relations between the EU (Commission, Parliament, Committee of the Regions) are to be established with the African Union, ECOWAS and some members (Mali, Burkina, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal) in order to prepare the ground for further implementation of regional development and CBC in West Africa.

- First (or follow-up) seminars and conferences in missing areas, offering quite favourable conditions for CBC among themselves and also with more experienced countries, focussing on information, initial capacity building, European experiences and best practice coming from the two case studies.

- Elaboration of cross-border statutes based on private law to promote CBC structures.

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River and Lake basins needs a specific approach, as it develops an own integration process. Some long-lasting conflicts are in their way to be solved, with the intervention of the International Court of Justice, but other obstacles do not (trafficking). In any case, there is a general feeling that CBC will generate sustainable benefits for people living in border areas, with the added value of joint protection of natural resources, and subsequent benefits for participating countries. There are already bilateral and multi-lateral agreements, showing a strong institutional commitment at national level, but the participation of the sub-national level is still too reduced. A stronger support to ongoing processes of local development, stressing decentralization and CBC interventions, is needed within their main development strategies.
**Mid-term (2014-2016)**

- A wide performance of a targeted training programme (see chapter 6.1.2) to be organised in selected areas:

- Generalisation of cross-border initiatives and activities, in the framework of multiannual strategies/programmes for selected areas of the case studies and:
  - in regions where the preconditions for CBC from the geographic point of view and regarding the population density are rather unfavourable: particularly the river basins

- The legislation of border activities and the constitution of border units (if not yet) in all countries has to be ensured.

- Bi- and trilateral treaties between national governments concerned in favour of territorial cooperation.

- Strengthening of a “(West) African Cross-Border Association” as a platform and lobby for all border regions.

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**Long-term (2017-2020)**

- Further strengthening of the role of the AU, ECOWAS and other RECs on the implementation of free trade and free movement of persons, goods, services and knowledge.

- A supra-national financial framework for territorial cooperation in different RECs with an structural view and a main focus on CBC (like INTERREG), assuring multi-annual implementation of territorial programmes, and a wide participation of all stakeholders, with a multi-level governance approach.

- Implementation of a legal instrument for territorial cooperation, applicable throughout (West) Africa (voluntary, not obligatory).

- Building of sub-national authorities’ capacities to manage cross-border programmes and projects by themselves.
Key Questions for a SWOT analysis in West Africa

Annex I

1. Quantitative factors (if possible please indicate “strength” and “weakness”)

- Geographical conditions, e.g. mountains, lakes, rivers, deserts, and their influence on the border.

- Basic statistics of the border area (on both sides) like surface, inhabitants, urban/rural structure, length of the border, number of border crossings.

- Development indicators (Literacy, Infant Mortality Rate, GDP per capita, Human Development Index, etc.).

- Infrastructural conditions especially related to the border: roads, railways, airports, communication patterns (phone, Internet).

- Economic structure (agriculture, industry, service sector) and labour market (formal and informal).

2. Qualitative factors

- Existing bilateral and multilateral agreements on cross-border relations.

- Role of public authorities (national, regional, local) in cross-border cooperation and distribution of tasks (not competences!): Examples for existing cross-border contacts / cooperation.

- Role of traditional authorities and religious communities.

- Role of private actors, NGOs, etc. on both sides of the border.

- Competitiveness and sustainability of the economy and economic cross-border relations.

- Development potential on both sides of the border and already existing forms of cooperation (trade, labour, tourism).

- Amount of cross-border commuters (local workers, expatriates, tourists, local private travellers).

- Buyer / trader behaviour on both sides of the border and the effects of different currencies and purchasing power.

- Plans to improve the cross-border infrastructure (roads, railways, touristic routes, new border crossings).

- Quality of customs clearance (Are there special regulations for inhabitants in the border area?).
3. Threats and Opportunities

Generally, the opportunities and threats can be derived from the answers under 1. and 2. as well as of the additional remarks and assessments from the interviews. Nevertheless, some additional remarks and suggestions are given below:

- Cross-border differences in income.
- Daily border problems due to the different legal systems and procedures.
- Cross-Border Risk Factors/Threats e.g. smuggling, drug and person trafficking, armed groups, bandits, environmental risks and border “sensitive” issues; and special sectors with low growth potential.
- Cross-Border Favouring Factors/Sectors, existing economic potential with special dynamic of growth, e.g. agricultural production for export, energy and water supply, handcraft, tourism, etc. Innovation potential for R&D (opportunities).

4. Areas under Study

Active West African border areas:

- The SKBo zone (Sikasso, Korhogo and Bobo Dioulasso), Mali-Ivory Coast-Burkina Faso, an area of mixing and integration, typically peripheral with extreme spatial and social mobility. It has been called a “space of sub-national solidarity”.

- The River Boundary Senegal Mauritania, wet border where the river can be a development factor if potentialities are properly exploited.

- Southern Senegambia-Guinea-Bissau (plus Guinea Conakry) is an interesting case of complex border area, where some other countries are necessarily involved (Gambia, Mali).

- The “Development Corridor” Maradi-Katsina-Kano (Niger-Nigeria). One of the most densely populated areas in West Africa. A strong economic power meets one of the poorest countries in the world.

- Burkina-Mali-Niger

- The Canary Islands and Azores (Macaronesia) with Cape Verde and Senegal.
INTerview Guide

Opportunities for Cross-Border Cooperation in West Africa:

A Contribution to the Regional Integration Process

Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)

1 March 2011
Interview Guide

This interview guide is based on the “AEBR Interview Guide for Cross-Border Actors”, which is constantly updated, and adapted to the areas under study. It has been used with successful findings in many European border areas (within and outside the EU) and in Latin America. Now it will be used in Africa.

The interview guide is the basis for the interviews with the key actors, offering the partners to prepare themselves for the interviews and understand by means of the explanations the whole purpose of the questions.

The interview guide ensures that all interviewers are asking the same questions and the explanations are consistent. As there are different interviewers, a common standard is assured, subsequently allowing a SWOT analysis and elaboration of the Final Report on a solid and statistically correct basis.

There is scope for additional information to be provided and this should be noted separately.

Explanations to the key questions for the SWOT analysis for West Africa

Please give to each of the following points not only the data requested, but indicate if possible also strengths and weaknesses.

No studies or long papers are helpful! Just give the data in a very brief overview per border/cross-border area, if possible in a table summarising the information.

The data are needed for each administrative unit involved in cross-border cooperation on both sides of the border. Please provide also information on the respective national data, so we will be able to put them in the right relation.

In any case, the lowest sub-national level available would be the better.

1. Quantitative factors

Geographical conditions

Please provide information on geographical features important for cross-border cooperation, like mountains, lakes, rivers, deserts, etc.; and their practical influence on the border.
**Basic statistics of the border area**

The main data requested are
- surface,
- inhabitants,
- urban structure (if it is a more rural area, please describe),
- length of the border,
- number and type of border crossings.

Please add also any additional data which could be of importance.

**Development indicators**

Please provide information on
- GDP per capita,
- demographic/human development index,
- literacy,
- infant mortality rate.

Please provide also any additional data which is considered to be of importance.

**Infrastructural conditions related to the border**

The main data requested are
- roads (highways, interregional and regional roads),
- railways,
- airports (international, national, regional),
- communication patterns (phone, Internet).

Please provide also any additional data which is considered to be of importance.

**Economic structure**

The main data requested are (percentage of total employment by sector)
- agriculture,
- industrial sector,
- service sector (including tourism and culture),
- labour market (per main sector, formal and informal, unemployment rate).

Please provide also any additional data which is considered to be of importance.
2. Qualitative factors

**Existing bilateral and multilateral agreements**

Please list existing bilateral and/or multilateral agreements.  
At what level have they been concluded (national, regional, local)?  
Related to national agreements, has there been any information before?  
If there are no agreements at regional or local level, are they desirable or even needed in the future?

**Role of public authorities**

Please describe briefly the regional/local authorities’ structures.  
Explain the legal and practical role of national, regional and local authorities in cross-border cooperation.  
Are there any legal or practical obstacles for regional/local authorities to conclude agreements across the border?  
If yes, which one?  
Can you give an example of distribution of tasks between national, regional or local authorities (voluntary or even based on agreements)?  
Please list examples of existing cross-border cooperation/contacts and name the key actors.  
Please also comment on what is running well and why, and what could be improved.

**Role of traditional authorities and religious communities**

Please describe briefly the structures.  
Explain their scope and practice as well as their role in cross-border cooperation.  
Are there any legal or practical obstacles for them to conclude agreements across the border?  
If yes, which one?  
Can you give an example of successful involvement of traditional authorities in cross-border cooperation?

**Role of private actors, NGOs, etc.**

Private actors, NGOs, etc., can be  
- associations of employers and employees,  
- chambers of commerce,  
- associations of specific business sectors,  
- social associations,
• cultural institutions,
• churches
• foreign organisations active in the area

Please give an indication of the involvement of these actors in the process of cross-border cooperation.
What could be improved in the future, why and how?

Other groups crossing or active at the border?

Smugglers, drug and person traffickers, armed groups, bandits,…

Competitiveness and sustainability of the economy

Please compare the economic situation in the border regions with the national level.
Is the existing economic structure at regional level prepared to meet the new challenges (e.g. globalisation, climate change)?
Please give an overview, based on facts and personal experiences.

Please list existing cross-border economic relations, if possible per sector (both between business/trade organisations, e.g. chambers of commerce, and individual enterprises, e.g. cross-border selling of sourcing of materials or labour)
What could be improved for the future, why and how?

Trade

This probably a major cross-border activity. Please describe main features.

Touristic potential

Please describe the existing and future touristic potential on both sides of the border (only key messages).
Is there any cooperation in this field? If yes, which one? If not, why?
What could be the cross-border perspective and potential impact of the future touristic potential on both sides of the border?

Amount of cross-border commuters
If possible, please distinguish between professional and local private commuters within the cross-border area as well as expatriates and tourists.
What are the reasons for cross-border travel? Is there a special impact of cross-border illegal activity?

**Consumer behaviour (related to trade as well)**

Please explain the situation on both sides of the border.
What are the effects of different currencies and purchasing power?
Are there any cultural or family reasons for cross-border activity?

**Plans to improve the cross-border infrastructure**

Based on the data on existing state of infrastructure in the different border areas, what are the main needs for improving the situation from the point of view of a border/cross-border region (in the short-, mid- and long-term)?
Can you indicate priorities per type of infrastructure (road, railways, waterways, phone and Internet availability, touristic routes, new border crossings)?

**Quality of customs clearance**

Due to the importance of customs clearance for the overall mobility of the citizens in border regions, what is the current situation? Are there relevant migration/refugee issues?
Are there common customs facilities (facilitating and accelerating transports and individual travel)?
Are there special regulations for citizens or tourists in a border region (e.g. to cross the border during daylight also at non official border crossings, if they have a passport and do not smuggle)?
What should or must be improved to strengthen mobility?

**Other cross-border activities or opportunities**

Are there any other cross-border contacts or activities, e.g. in the fields of culture, education, health, environment, emergency and rescue services?

Are there any major opportunities for cross-border initiatives in the above sectors (e.g. agricultural production for export, energy and water supply, environmental monitoring of cross-border rivers/lakes/natural parks/..., access to hospital or university facilities on the other side of the border, handcraft, tourism, etc.).
### Annex III

#### Table of contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Country</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abdoul, Mohamadou</td>
<td>ENDA Diapol</td>
<td>Dakar, Senegal</td>
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<td>Arvelo, Verónica</td>
<td>Casa África</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asciutti, Elena</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assiwaju, Anthony I.</td>
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<td>Baines, Timothy</td>
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<td>Addis Abeba (Ethiopia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Batchassi, Yawovi</td>
<td>EU Delegation</td>
<td>Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)</td>
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<td>Bello, Irene</td>
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<td>Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Spain)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biontino, Irene</td>
<td>German Embassy</td>
<td>Addis Abeba (Ethiopia)</td>
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<td>Bossard, Laurent</td>
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<td>Paris (France)</td>
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<td>Cárdenes, Ana</td>
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<td>Cárdenes, Juan</td>
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<td>Diarrassouba, Mamadou</td>
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<td>El Hassen Ould Boukheiss, Mohamed</td>
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<td>Moukrim, Abdellatif</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruiz de Casas, José Antonio</td>
<td>European Commission, DG Regio</td>
<td>Brussels (Belgium)</td>
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<td>Sánchez-Pinto, Ico</td>
<td>Casa África</td>
<td>Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Spain)</td>
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<td>Selke, Welf</td>
<td>AEBR Scientific Committee</td>
<td>Berlin (Germany)</td>
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<td>Tremolières, Marie</td>
<td>SWAC (OECD)</td>
<td>Paris (France)</td>
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<tr>
<td>White, Charles</td>
<td>European Commission, DG Regio</td>
<td>Brussels (Belgium)</td>
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Annex IV

Workshop “Opportunities for Cross-Border Cooperation in West Africa”

Casa África, 7-8 November 2011
Alfonso XIII St., 5 ; E-35003 Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Canary Islands, Spain)
Phone: +34 928 432 800. Fax: +34 928 380 683
Web: www.casafrica.es Email: info@casafrica.es

Programme

Sunday, 6th November
Arrival of foreign guests and accommodation

Monday, 7 November:

10.00-10.30 Institutional opening:

- José Antonio Ruiz de Casas, Programme Manager, EU policies of the European Transnational and Interregional Cooperation, DG Regio, European Commission.
- Pablo Martín Carbajal, Director General of Relations with Africa, Regional Government of the Canary Islands
- Aiguibou Diarrah, Head of Division, African Union Border Program, African Union Commission
- Martín Guillermo Ramírez, Secretary-General, Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)
- Luis Padilla Macabeo, Secretary General of Casa África

10.30-14.00 Technical working session with the experts: review of the AEBR Draft Report for the European Commission “Opportunities for Cross-Border Cooperation in West Africa”

Lunch break

18.00-20.00 Public event in Casa África
Roundtable with experts
Projection of the documentary film African Borders: From Barriers to Bridges, produced by the African Union and the GIZ (Germany)
Debate with the public
Conclusions

20.00 End of the public event

20.30 Dinner

**Tuesday, 8 November:**

10.00-13.00 Technical session II

14.00 Lunch

End of meeting

Departure of participants
Map of “hot” CBC areas in West Africa

- Great Neighbourhood
- Western Sahara / SADR
- Terrorism
- Liptako-Gourma
- Dev’t corridor Maradi-Katsina-Kano (MK2)
- CBC in West Africa
- Southern Mediterranean processes
- Challenges, conflicts, ...
- CBC processes
- Trafficking
- Periodic conflicts