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WEST AFRICAN BORDERS AND INTEGRATION

CROSS-BORDER DIARIES

BULLETIN ON WEST AFRICAN LOCAL-REGIONAL REALITIES
With the support of the Sahel and West Africa Club

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HERE,

THERE,

ELSEWHERE...

MIGRANTS



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This publication's content only represents its authors' views.



A World Cup without Borders

- *"Football-lager-TV-country !" the magical World Cup combination*, p.35



A SOCIETY UNDERGOING DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION

Just as the “migration issue” is at the centre of European-African dialogue, it is important to remember that there is a relationship between the progress recorded over the past decades and the mobility of the population within the West African region. West Africans are three times more mobile within their own region than Europeans are. Furthermore, 56% of the West African population is under 20 years of age, 66% are under 25 years of age, as compared to 12% and 15% respectively. Education has made incredible progress; literacy has increased 10-fold among adults since 1970 and women are increasingly benefiting from this evolution. The youthfulness of the population and mobility are natural characteristics of a society undergoing a demographic transition.

Alongside this momentum investments are needed as well as the capitalization on agriculture with great development and capacity potential, town planning and urban-rural development, business facilities, coherent trade promotion and regional market protection in order to better compete internationally.

It seems simplistic to say that the “migration issue” is limited only to irregular flows towards Europe and migrants’ financial transfers seems simplistic. Whatever the migratory policies of northern countries, the challenge facing West Africa is that of maintaining free circulation of people, goods and services within the regional area. During the last decades intra-regional migration has played a regulatory and development role disproportionate with the tensions that it has provoked. Border zones and cross-border cooperation are at the core of this challenge. ●

Laurent Bossard, SWAC



THE ARAB-AFRICAIN MIGRATORY REGION

The Arab-African migratory region not only responds to the schism between the offensive factors of the South and attractive factors of the North, but to the revival of old trade routes and traditional trading actors throughout the African continent.

Within these new trade and migratory configurations, the Sahara plays a particular role: far from being an impassable rampart, it is the meeting and mixing place of populations situated at its northern and southern extremities.

The Sahara, once a transitory area to North Africa and Europe now tends also to become a migratory area “by default” due to the tightening of migratory policies in European and North African countries.

The region of Agadez and Libyan Fezzan: a preferred migratory zone

The pair formed by Fezzan in Libya and the Agadez region of Niger is a significant

Since the beginning of the 1990s a dynamic migration flow has been underway from Sub-Saharan Africa towards North Africa. On one hand, the intense political upheavals, the humanitarian crises and the internal crises that have battered the countries south of the Sahara over the last decade partly explain the movement of populations seeking a better future.

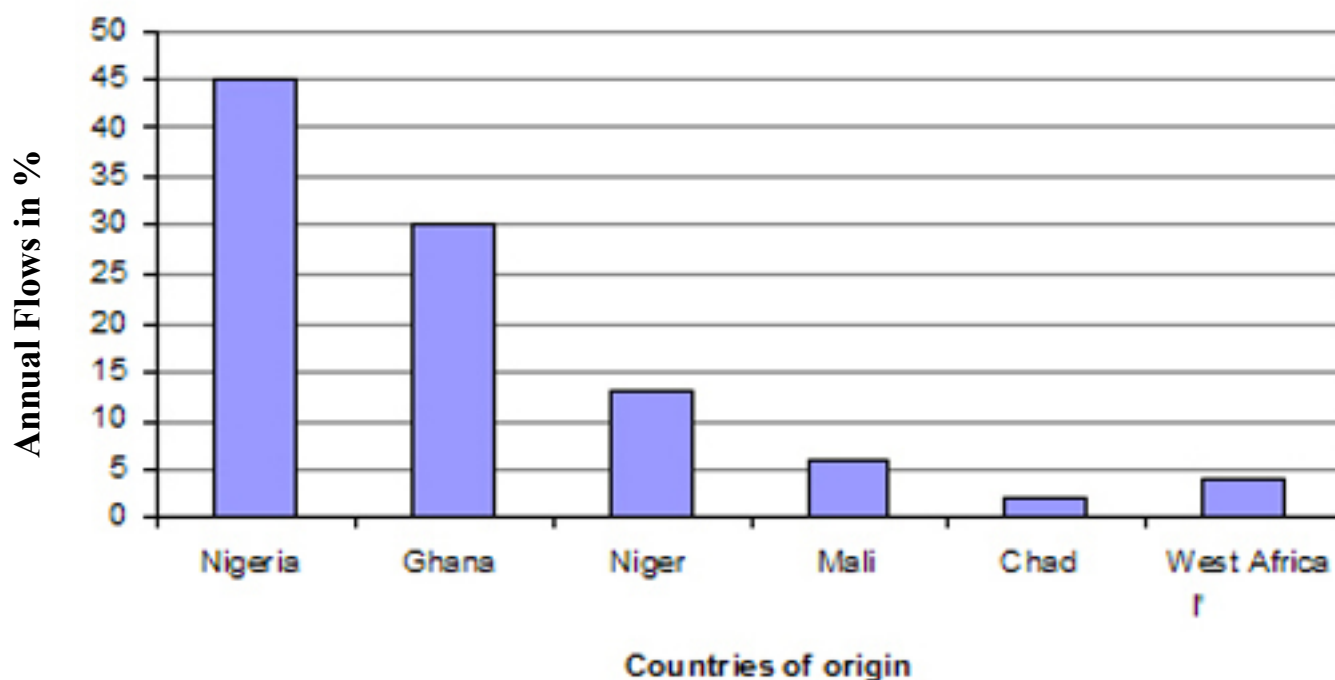
On the other hand, the economic imbalance between North Africa and the Sahel has been temporary and local labour migration which has progressively revived trans-Saharan routes and trade outlining a migratory area is currently taking root up to Central Africa.

example of, on one hand, regional integration “from the bottom up” which takes form between the North African and Sahelian rivers, and on the other hand, the urban dynamic that shapes the Saharan towns.

Since 1969, with Colonel Kadhafi’s revolutionary government coming to power, Libya, an independently wealthy and

sparsely populated State, has regularly required an immigrant workforce in order to respond to the needs of its economy.

Even if Arabs still represent the majority of migrants living on Libyan soil, over the last fifteen years, a significant increase in migration flows from Sub-Saharan Africa has been observed.



Annual Migratory Flows passing through Agadez towards Libya in 2001
Source: Results of surveys carried out by A. Bensaâd in 2001.

This migratory revival enables the town of Agadez to return to its former prestige¹ by capturing a large part of the Nigerian and West African migratory flows of which most are then reoriented towards Libyan Fezzan following the historic trans-Saharan trade routes.

Saharan trade over the long term

Trans-Saharan trade peaked between the 15th and 16th centuries: Arab traders being the principal partners while the Tuaregs transported the merchandise.

North to South trade provided manufactured objects (fabric, silk, knick-knacks, sugar, arms, Touât tobacco, perfumes, etc.). In the opposite direction, traders provided ostrich feathers and hides, tanned hides, gold powder, ivory, cotton blankets, African pharmacopoeia medicines and also slaves².

In the 19th century, the expeditions of Clapperton, René Caillé and Heinrich Barth were the first European intrusions within the interior of continental Africa³.

The penetration of the French into the Sahara and the Sahara's partition between Algeria, French West Africa [l'Afrique Occidentale française (AOF)] and French Central Africa [l'Afrique équatoriale française (AEF)] led to the decline of trans-Saharan trade.

This decline degenerated with the economic measures taken by France and Great Britain which intended to favour maritime trade between Europe, the Mediterranean and the Gulf of Guinea.

Colonisation led to sustainably weakening the links between the Arab world and black Africa but not to their complete elimination.

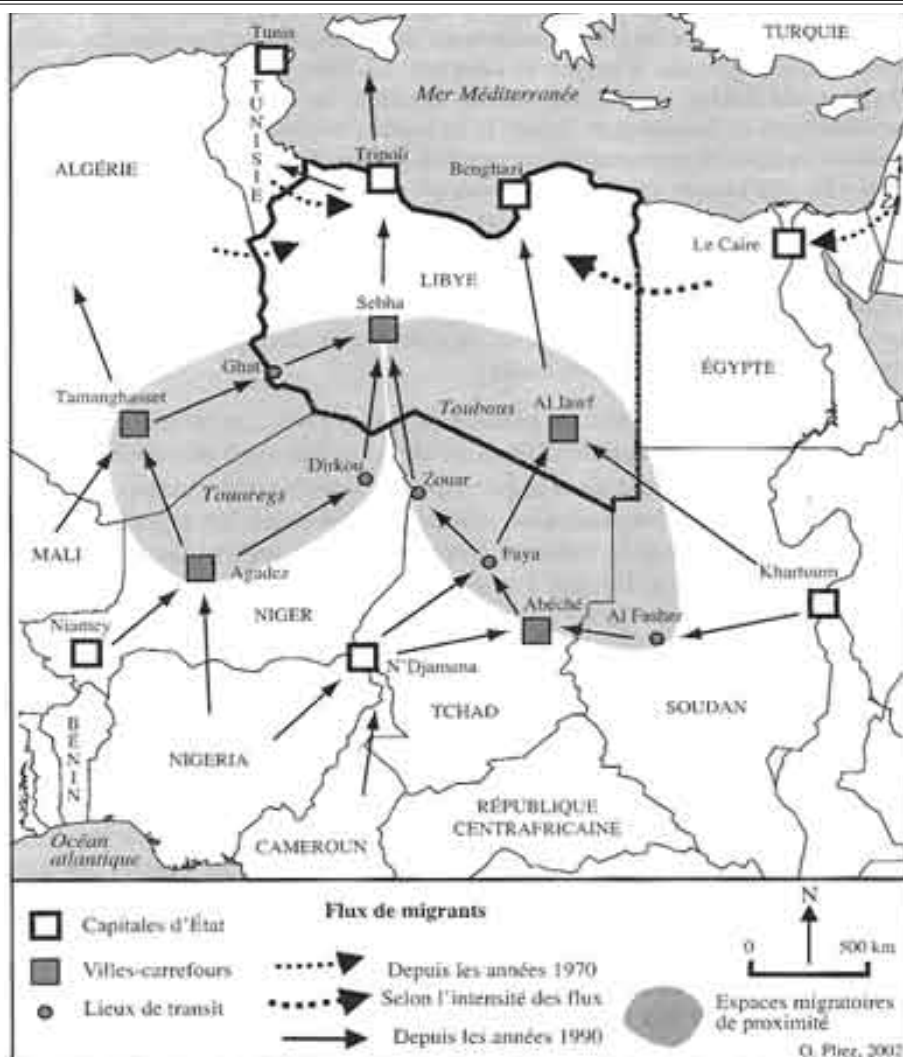
Also, after the Second World War and up to the end of the 1960s, the Agadez-Libyan Fezzan region did not have economic actors who were likely to revive a trans-Saharan trade capable of competing with the trade set up by the "colonial project".

Therefore, "trade remained marginal because it continued to be handicapped by a hostile environment: crossing Ténéré turned out to be difficult for poorly-performing vehicles.

Also, (...) some goods that are traded between Niger and Libya go through Algeria, trucks try to bypass Ténéré"⁴.

Renewing trans-Saharan trade

In the 1970s, the exploitation of uranium in Niger's Arlit region and the integration



The Libyan migratory cross-roads (O. Pliez 2002)

of Fezzan into Libyan national territory⁵ marked a turn in the Sahara's economic evolution. The accumulation of wealth of Agadez traders, combined with improved access to Agadez and Fezzan's urbanization, encouraged the emergence of economic actors capable of modernizing trans-Saharan transport and benefiting from the economic complementarities, but also the customs disparities between Northern Africa and the Arab world.

During the 1980s, and initially, the revival of trans-Saharan commercial trade between Agadez and Fezzan was based on the exportation of livestock with Libya being an important importer⁶, notably for Aïd el-Kebir⁷.

Secondly, "livestock exports were in exchange for compensatory merchandise provided to Libyan traders' agents who returned to Agadez as soon as diplomatic relations with Libya were re-established"⁸.

These agents provided their clients with warehouses, representation with customs

administration, and assistance in finding clients for their goods and suppliers of black African products so that their trucks would not return empty.

These Libyan imports offered, and continue to offer, very worthwhile business opportunities because they involve food products⁹ which are inexpensive as they are subsidised by Libya.

Besides these products, some all-terrain vehicles and six-by-six trucks were re-sold: traffic of stolen Libyan administrative vehicles has developed through Arab and Touba channels into Niger, Mali and even Mauritania.

Also to be noted, since the end of the 1980s, Niger earns substantial income from the fraudulent re-exportation of cigarettes coming from Cotonou and destined for Libya where the importation of cigarettes is prohibited in order to protect the national industry¹⁰.

The inconvertibility of the Dinar and the refusal of the Libyan Central Bank to provide lines of credit to importers encourages

fraudulent practices which increased after the official embargo was imposed on Tripoli in 1992.

Agadez plays an important role in this trade because it is a hub and a discharge point for containers which are unloaded in warehouses before being redirected to Algeria and especially Libya (85%).

Economic opportunities offered by the revival of trans-Saharan trade as well as the various crises which have affected the region during the 1980s to 1990 have generated numerous migration flows from the local to the continental level.

Initially, Tuareg populations, for which the nomad region extended significantly beyond State borders, were naturally dispersed between Air and Southern Libya as was the same for the Toubous population.

The droughts in Niger in 1976 and 1984 and the repeated pleas by Colonel Kadhafi to rejoin the Islamic legion and the Tuareg rebellion at the beginning of the 1990s largely contributed to the displacement of nomads in the Agadez region and their installation in Libyan Fezzan.

At the same time, internal migration of the Haussas in the Maradi region to Agadez, motivated by the economic consequences linked to the exploitation of mining resources in the Arlit region and the construction of the "uranium route" added to the dispersal of this population on either side of the Niger/Nigeria border undeniably strengthened and revived trade and economic dependency between the Kano and Agadez regions.

Another migratory phenomenon, less well-known but nevertheless determining in the structuring of the migratory area between Sub-Saharan Africa and Libya is that of the return of Libyans who were opposed to the Italian colonisation essentially affiliated with the Senoussiya brotherhood. They had left Libya gradually with the advancement of the Italian troops towards the South, setting up in the neighbouring States, in particular Chad.

With independence and then Colonel Kadhafi's coming to power, a significant repatriation movement was underway as from the 1970s, mainly towards the Sahara and Cyrenaic.

During their exile, these families had created, in a space of two generations, a trade network with Chad, Nigeria, Cameroon and the Central African Republic which spread to Libya with the return of the repatriates.

Sub-Saharan migratory flows linked to trade flows

The main outcome from the revival of informal trade between Libyan Fezzan and the Agadez region initiated in the 1980s was the re-establishment of contact and movement of the populations of the Arab world and that of black Africa within the Sahara.

The greatest migratory movement of Sub-Saharan Africans to Libya was made possible by the recuperation of this migratory and trade zone. Furthermore the 1990s was marked by Tripoli's redefined African foreign policy, consequences of the United Nations Security Council's embargo in 1992.

This redefining and in particular insistent appeals by Colonel Kadhafi to open up to southern Sahara and border crossings gave way to a great migratory movement from black Africa towards Libya.

In 2000, the number of Sub-Saharan Africans on Libyan soil was estimated at one to two million of a total population of five million.

Sub-Saharan migratory flows which were linked to commercial flows created their own economic and urban dynamic which shaped trade flows and the towns which were traversed.

"Bottom up" regional integration along the revived trans-Saharan routes in the Sahara was established approximately fifteen years ago.

The size of these flows (several hundreds of thousands of migrants per year) has veritably created a town-specialization in Agadez in the transit of migrants, many of the town's economic actors specializing henceforth in this "trade".

Adam, a Tuareg truck driver for an Arab of Niger, recounts how over fifteen years his "truck" carried millet from Agadez to Bilma and Dirkou, bringing back salt on the return trip.

Since the 1990s, his boss, like many others, turned towards trade with Libya and the transportation of migrants.

*"In fifteen years, assures Adam, I transported more men than grains of salt in my truck"*¹¹. Since the end of the rebellion, five official Libya-destined "travel agencies" have been established, and are duly registered with the authorities of Niger.

Entire city neighbourhoods are devoted to the parking and maintenance of vehicles and trade with migrants.

The "bus terminal" neighbourhood and the

central market are bustling with a multitude of migrants returning from Libya.

They have formed networks and based on their own experiences provide their compatriots with their know-how, and manage cheap restaurants, dormitory housing, accessory goods (water bottles, flashlights, blankets, etc.) or other hair "salons".

An Account from Agadez to Dirkou

"Every day, in the paths of the old caravans, trucks filled with men and goods leave the Agadez bus terminal towards Dirkou, an oasis situated in North-East Ténéré and the last stop before the Libyan border.

On 1 August 2004, the day of our departure, the temperature is close to 45°. No one knows precisely how long it is going to take us to cross: two days, three days, maybe more.

The only certainty is that there are only two watering points along the 700 km journey and Bahari, a young Nigerian sitting next to me, has only a four-litre water container.

Soon, we are jostling about, shoulder to shoulder, at a rapid pace in our "32 Libyan" truck which our driver says is in perfect condition. The hours pass, night falls, but the truck does not stop.

At this time of the year, the trip is made during the night so as to take advantage of the "cooler" temperature and preserve the engine.

Around four in the morning, there is a glimmer on the horizon. It is the "Well of Hope 400" work site which has just been completed.

A few minutes later, water spurts from the well, everyone offers advice, insults too! Rushed, the driver honks the horn rounding up all of the passengers for immediate departure.

It is ten o'clock in the morning, Bahari's face is covered in dust, we didn't get a wink of sleep and the sun is already beating down on us. The driver decides to stop.

Immediately the hundred or so passengers rush to the ground and jockey to get in the shadow of the truck or under the tent.

A thick dust cloud covers the sky and gives it a yellow tint. Small groups form and begin to cook. Bahari hands me a cup of tea: "*I am from the Plateau State of North Nigeria*" he tells me, "*more specifically from Joss*". He has decided to join his sister who has

been working in Libya for a few years. He did not have anymore money to continue his studies, so he preferred to leave, "looking for adventure" as the migrants say.

At the end of the 4th day, the oasis of Dirkou appears on the horizon. A group of Nigerians and Ghanaians welcomes us. Many of them live in the cross-road towns where they play the role of "agent" between their "brothers" on route for Libya and the transporters for whom they work.

Numerous legal and illegal activities flourish in the so-called "Anglophone" neighbourhoods where the majority of disreputable bars and hotels are concentrated.

Bahari prefers the shadow of a tree close to the bus terminal. He wants to leave as quickly as possible, rumours circulate that Libya could soon turn back migrants...

Several tens of thousands of Sub-Saharan pass through Niger every year. They

represent a great financial blessing for the country.

From the departure in Agadez to the arrival in Dirkou, the migrants are shaken down at every road block.

Some of them lose everything on this journey, which is Ferdinand's case, a Central African who once worked in a diamond mine.

He says that he is "embarking on a rural exodus to forget about the past after a few hard knocks".

Leaving with 290 000 CFA Francs in his pocket (440 Euros), 200 000 CFA Francs (305 Euros) were stolen from him in Lagos, Nigeria but for him "it is getting through the roadblock from Niger" where he faced the most difficulties.

Obligated to "rent" from a customs official the bench on which he spent the first night, today he is "stuck" in Dirkou without money.

The Kawarien oasis, 700 km from Agadez and 400 km from the Libyan border, is an

open air prison office for many migrants. However, for them, as for Ferdinand and Bahari, there is no question of turning around and "shaming" their families.

Whatever the cost, they will get to Libya. There they will perhaps find a job and after two or three years they will have saved a thousand or two thousand Euros.

Then will come the time to choose to return to their country or cross the great blue ...¹²

NOTES

1- In the 16th century, Agadez was the village at the crossroads of two major caravan routes which passed through Aïr. The first route links Mali to Fezzan and Egypt, the second route links the Hausa countries to Southern Algeria (Tamanghasset) and to Tripoli.

2- An estimated 65 000 black Africans were traded in Algeria between 1700 and 1880 as compared to 400 000 in Libya.

See R.A Austen, "The Transsaharan Slave Trade: a Tentative Sensus" in J. Hogendorn, H. Gemery (eds), *The Uncommon Market: Essay in the Economic History of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, New York Academic Press: 23-76.

3- Clapperton, left Tripoli reaching Chad in 1823 then Niger in 1825-1827. René Caillé traveled, on foot, from Dakar to Tanager passing through Timbuktu.

Barth traveled for more than five years in the Sudan and compiled information which would contribute to the subsequent colonial conquest military missions.

4- E. Grégoire, "Les relations politiques et économiques mouvementées du Niger et de la

Libye", *La nouvelle Libye*, Karthala-Iremam 2004, cit., p 97.

5- Fezzan's integration into Libyan territory would actually become effective with Colonel Kadhafi's coming to power in 1969.

A road network was progressively established, relinking Fezzan with Northern Libya.

The building of hospitals, universities, and government buildings aimed to integrate the region within the national territory and led to significant migration flows towards Fezzan.

6- At the end of the 1980s, these annual imports are estimated at more than 1700 tonnes of meat per year and approximately 500 000 living sheep, which is approximately four million Dinars or seven billion CFA Francs.

See G. Georgy, *Kadhafi, le berger des Syrtes*, Flammarion, Paris, 1996, 317 p.

7- Their sale price increases from 220 Dinars to 300 even 400 Dinars as the holiday nears (or 35 000 CFA F to 45 000 even 65 000 CFA F, which is two or three times the price paid in Niger).

8- E. Grégoire, "Les relations mouvementées du Niger et de la Libye", *La nouvelle Libye*, O. Pliez (dir), 2004, cit, p 105.

9- Pasta (macas), semolina, rice from Asia, wheat flour, soy oil, powdered milk, household appliances, and automobile parts, etc.

10- During 1995, the cigarette trade in Libya provided Niger with five to six billion CFA Francs of customs duties, the equivalent of one and half month's of a civil servant's salary. By March 1998, civil servants had not been paid in six months.

11- A. Bensaâd, "Voyage au bout de la peur avec les clandestins du Sahel", *Le Monde diplomatique*, Sept 2001, p 16.

12- Report by V. Staub, "La route de l'espoir", *Continental Magazine*, February 2005, p. 54-56.

**CROSS BORDER
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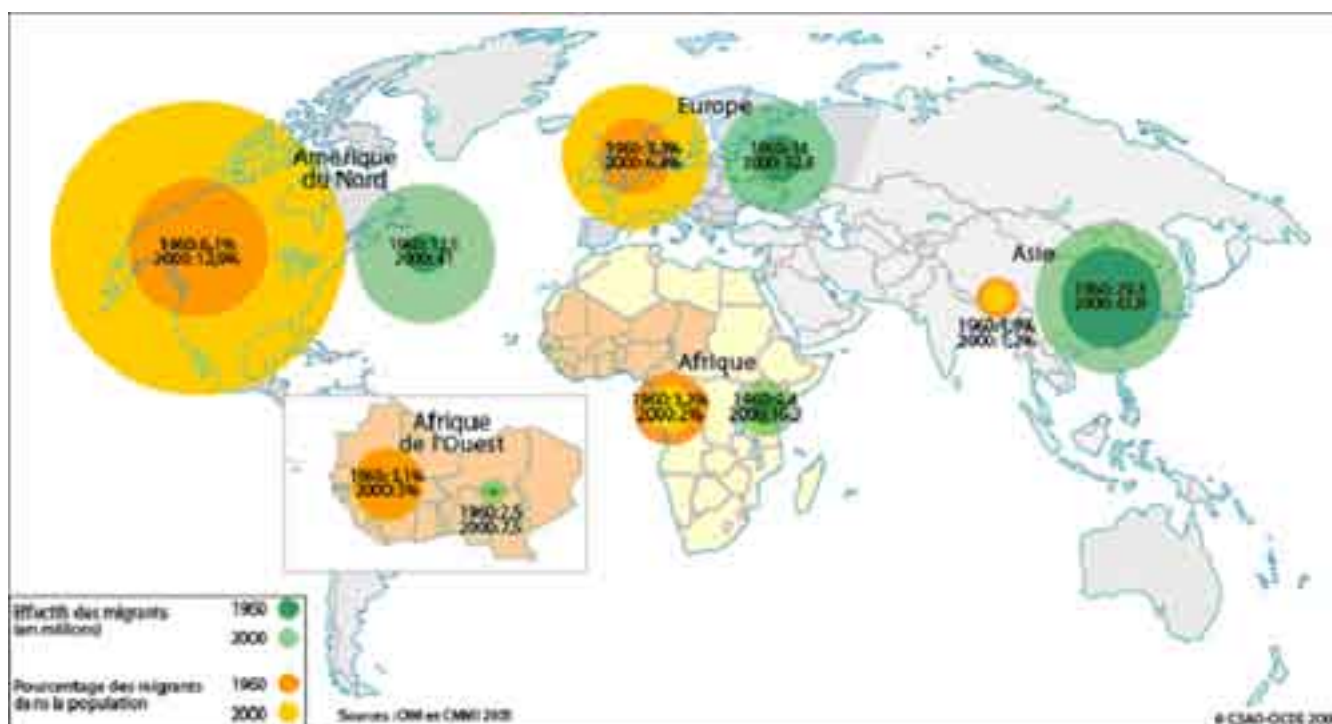
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MIGRATION

By Donata Gnisci and Marie Trémoières

OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION FROM THE GLOBAL TO THE AFRICAN LEVEL

In 2005, there were 200 million migrants, which represented 3% of the world population. The number of migrants has more than doubled since 1970. The 1980s were marked by a significant increase in the number of migrants (100 million in 1980, 150 million in 1990). Since then the growth rate has returned to levels comparable with those of the 1960s and 1970s.



Number of migrants by continent

Receiving regions in descending order are currently: Asia (44 million), North America (41 million), Europe (33 million), the territories of the former USSR (30 million) and Africa (16 million).

Over half of all migrants are concentrated in 15 receiving countries. The United States is at the top of this list.

Only three other G7 members appear on the list of principal immigration countries alongside less developed countries which are nevertheless regional economic centres (Côte d'Ivoire ranks 14th, with 2.4 million migrants).

African migration represents a very small part of migration towards developed countries.

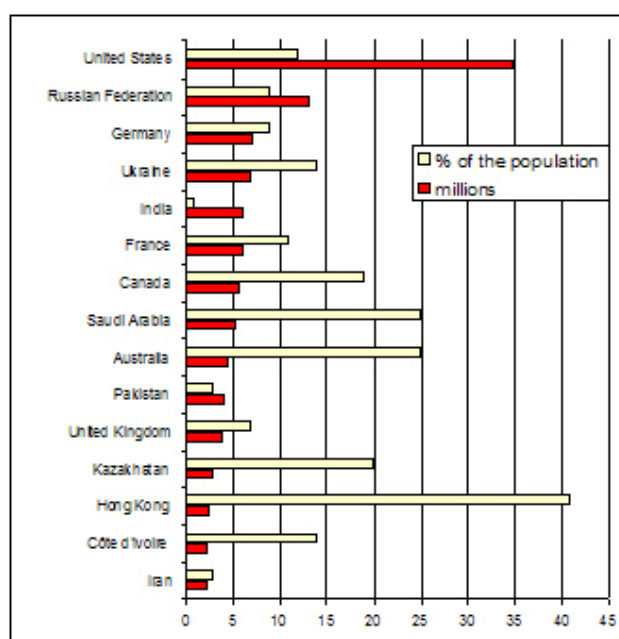
In the 2000s, there were 7.2 million African immigrants officially recorded in OECD

Member countries of which 13% of immigrants were from non-member countries: they include 3.8 million North Africans and 3.4 million sub-Saharan African¹.

This immigration is highly concentrated: nine OECD Member countries receive 90% of African expatriates.

15 principal immigration countries (in millions and % of the population) in 2000

Source: IOM 2005



WEST AFRICAN MIGRATORY TRENDS

Towards OECD countries

In the early 2000s, OECD Member countries officially received 1.2 million West Africans.

Despite the geographical proximity between Europe and Africa, North America is in fact the main destination for West African nationals.

This is due to the immigration of Nigerians and nationals of former British colonies. The link between the former French colonies and France continues, as does the link between Portugal and its former West African territories.

Although initially temporary, largely low-skilled and masculine, West African emigration became more long-term due to the family reunification policies implemented by some European countries in the 1970s and 1980s.

It was later amended by new models: more women, students and qualified workers.

Following the emergence of tougher migration policies in traditional receiving countries, a process of destination diversification was instigated from 1990 onwards towards the Mediterranean countries (Italy, Spain) and North America (United States, Canada).

Recently, new tension concerning European migration policies has led to the development of "transit migration" via North Africa, establishing this region as a "buffer zone" between Europe and sub-Saharan Africa.

THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR QUALIFIED MIGRANTS GHANAIAN DOCTORS AT THE BEDSIDES OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN PATIENTS

The British Medical Journal estimates that between 1993 and 2002, 410 pharmacists, 630 doctors, 87 laboratory assistants and 11,325 Ghanaian nurses left their countries for the United Kingdom. This seems to be an increasing trend.

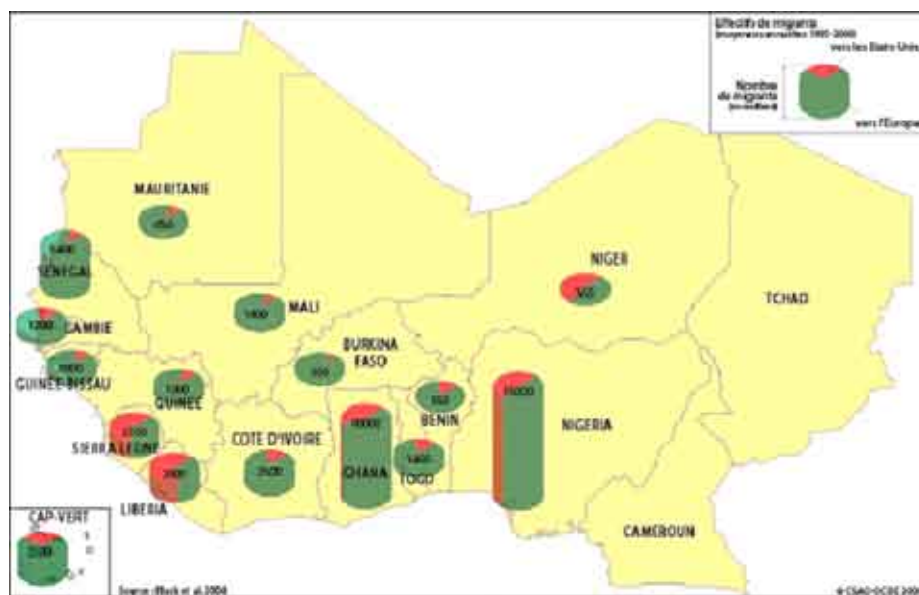
Of the 3,000 doctors trained in Ghana, half are now abroad (in the United Kingdom as far as doctors are concerned, and in the United States for nurses).

However, a certain number of Ghanaian doctors hold under-qualified positions in British medical services. Retired workers returning to Ghana open private practices, abandoning public establishments. The results of a survey of medical students show that 65% wish to leave their country.

A dialogue was recently opened between Ghana and the United Kingdom concerning the possibility of creating a visa to provide certain professions with the right to circular migration, thus encouraging temporary returns to their countries of origin for special operations or to train staff.

This would help make up for the lack of medical workers in the country. It is worth noting the presence of Cuban workers in Ghanaian establishments.●

Source: Interviews with ISSER experts, University of Legon, Accra, Ghana



West African migration towards Europe and the United States

	Afrique de l'Ouest	Bénin	Burkina	Caméroun	Cap-vert	Côte d'Ivoire	Gambie	Ghana	Guinée	Guinée-Bissau	Libéria	Mali	Mauritanie	Niger	Nigeria	Sénégal	Sierra Leone	Tchad	Togo
USA	351	1.1	0.7	12.4	27.1	7.6	6.0	67.2	5.2	0.5	40.9	2.8	2.2	1.1	140	10.9	21.3	0.4	3.0
France	288	12.0	4.7	36.0	12.4	45.2	1.0	4.4	7.8	7.6	0.7	40.2	9.6	3.4	3	82.1	0.7	4.4	12.8
UK	176	0.2	0.1	3.2	0.3	2.8	3.9	56.1	0.3	0.4	1.6	0.1	0.0	0.1	88	0.7	17.0	0.2	0.6
Italie	82	0.8	2.5	2.3	3.3	7.2	0.3	17.5	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	15	29.4	0.5	0.1	0.8
Portugal	68	0.0	0.0	0.1	44.9	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.3	21.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Canada	41	0.4	0.4	2.4	0.3	1.9	0.2	17.1	1.4	0.1	0.7	0.9	0.2	0.2	11	1.9	1.0	0.6	0.8
Belgique	14	0.4	0.4	2.4	0.4	1.4	0.2	2.7	0.8	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	2	1.5	0.4	0.2	1.0
Suisse	12	0.2	0.2	2.5	1.2	1.1	0.2	1.7	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	1	1.0	0.5	0.2	0.5
Total	1031	15	9	61	90	67	12	167	17	30	45	45	13	5	260	128	42	6	19

Main receiving OECD countries excluding Germany (2000s, in thousands) / Source : Base de données DELSA/OCDE 2000

MIGRATION

Via and towards North Africa

The links between West and North Africa have long been punctuated by the trans-Saharan caravan trade.

This trade involves gold, cola, cloth, copper, salt, ivory, European manufactured goods and also slaves.

From the 1960s, the development of agricultural pioneer frontiers (Office du Niger, Senegal's peanut basin, cacao and coffee tree basin in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire) drew populations towards the south.

During the last quarter of the 20th century, new events revived trans-Saharan trade and flows of workers towards North Africa.

The development of the oil-producing sector in Libya and Algeria gave rise to circular movements of mainly West African and Sudanese workers.

Today, Libya is probably the North African country with the largest number of sub-Saharan (nearly 300,000 according to the 1995 survey; undoubtedly more today²).

Data from censuses conducted in the 2000s in other countries (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt) record a total of 20,000 West African migrants³.

It is very difficult to have a clear view of the true situation confronted with the circular and often illegal population movements.

It appears that in recent years, sub-Saharan migration to North Africa has been on the increase. These trends do not concern only "transit migration": the vast majority of sub-Saharan migrants settle on a long-term basis, while only a minority continue towards Europe⁴.

Faced with the increasing difficulty of travelling via North Africa, certain migrants now attempt to travel by sea (pirogues from Mauritania and Senegal to the Canary Islands).

West African intra-regional migration

World history demonstrates that the phase of demographic transition corresponds to a period of high population mobility.

It is in fact when the population increases at a rapid pace that the need to change places (from urban to rural areas, from poor to richer areas) becomes most evident.

West Africa⁵, like the whole of sub-Saharan Africa, is experiencing this phase of transition and mobility.

Over the last 45 years, the number of people in West Africa has risen from 88 million to 290 million (in other words it has been multiplied by 3.3), while the urban population has gone from 13 million to 128 million (in other words it has grown ten-fold).

Calculations based on population surveys indicate that the countries of the region are currently home to around 7.5 million migrants⁶ from other West African countries, which constitutes about 3% of the regional population.

This percentage, which has been increasing since 1990, is higher than the African average (2%) and significantly exceeds that of the European Union, which stands at 0.5%.

Long-term spatial analysis shows that to date, coastal regions attract migrants the most, due to three factors: the development of cash crops, urbanisation around ports and the destruction of the natural environment in the region's Sahel belt.

This migration corresponds to the pursuit of economic opportunities and to the diversification of risk and poverty reduction strategies.

Over the last 50 years, intra-regional

migration has played a role in aligning populations, natural resources and job opportunities. Two key aspects of intra-West African migration stand out:

- Over a short period, the flows are likely to be redirected or reversed. This demonstrates the regional population's remarkable ability to adapt.

- In the long term, reactions to migration (rejection and/or expulsion of "foreigners") do not appear to have sustainably restricted the structural tendency for regional mobility.

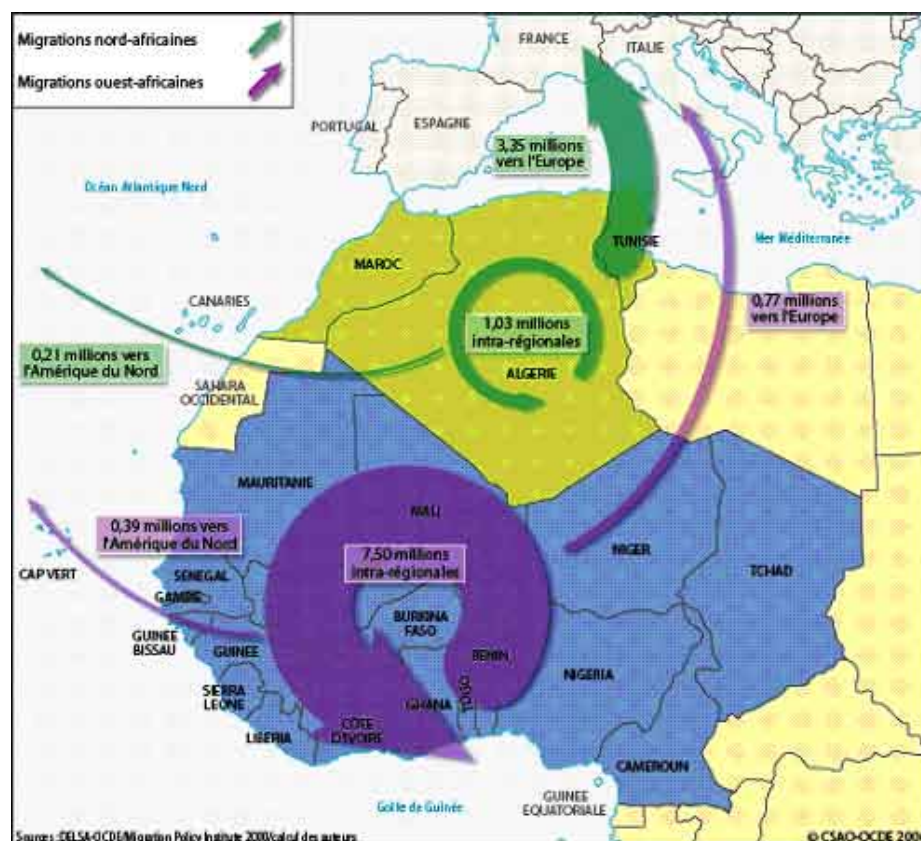
Some questions about the future

Could emigration counterbalance demographic decline in Europe ?

Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa, is a continent whose population is growing. Its population was half that of Europe⁷ in 1960, but now there are 1.2 times more inhabitants.

In 25 years' time, it will be twice as populated as the European continent. Africa is also a continent of young people. In 2005, 60% of the sub-Saharan population was under 25 years of age compared to 30% in Europe.

Conversely, many developed countries



A comparison of flows of North and West African migrants

are experiencing depopulation, and the European Union is no exception.

According to Eurostat, none of the EU member States (except Ireland) reach the fertility rate of 2.1 children per woman necessary for population replacement. Assuming zero immigration, the EU would lose 3% of its population by 2030, or 15 million inhabitants⁸.

The United Nations, on the other hand, makes predictions that take into account

participation rate of 70% of the working-age population by 2010.

Mid-term Lisbon Strategy assessments show that these objectives will not be reached in many Member States.

In order to make up for an estimated lack of 13 million workers to meet the objectives for 2010, 43 million migrants would be needed¹¹.

While experts continue to debate as to the exact number of workers needed in Europe (according to the United Nations, 160 million immigrants are needed for the European continent), it is now commonly accepted that Europe must face the challenge of a rapidly declining population and the need for an active workforce from outside Europe.

West Africa-North Africa Europe dialogue

Among the seven European countries where African immigration is quantitatively significant (Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom), North African nationals are by far the most numerous, except in the United Kingdom.

Emigrant Moroccan communities are dominant in Italy, Belgium and Spain and, to a lesser extent, in France and the Netherlands. Five per cent of

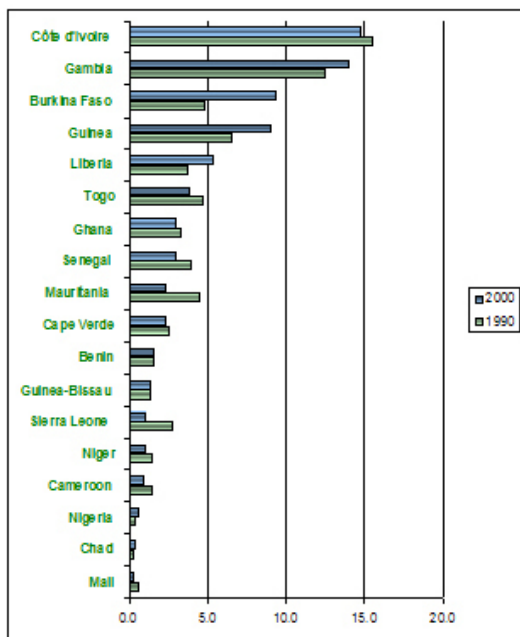
the Moroccan population currently lives in Europe.

Algeria and Tunisia maintain historic migratory links with France. The geographic proximity between Europe and North Africa is strengthened indeed confirmed by “migratory proximity”, with the three major European countries bordering the Mediterranean (Spain, France and Italy) being the principal receiving countries.

A number of initiatives, whether EU (the Barcelona Declaration aiming to establish a Euro-Mediterranean partnership), bilateral (Spanish aid to Morocco and Italian aid to Libya for border surveillance) or multilateral (the 5 plus 5 Forum, associating the North African countries with the five European Mediterranean countries)¹², have been set up to address the migratory links between North Africa and Europe.

Expanding this Euro-Mediterranean dialogue to include the ECOWAS zone is a logical and necessary step, since it would make it possible to bring together West African emigration countries, the region’s emigration and transit countries (especially Senegal and Mauritania) as well as North African emigration and transit countries.

This dialogue is even more important in view of the fact that the EU and ECOWAS, joined by Mauritania, have begun to implement an



Changes in the percentage of migrants in West African countries / Source: Migration Policy Institute 2000

immigration rates comparable with those recorded today.

These calculations show that if the EU population were to increase by 1.5% in 2030 (8 million more people), Italy would lose 2.6 million people, Poland 2.3 million and Germany 1.2 million, etc. Some countries, such as Ireland, the United Kingdom and France are an exception to this rule. However, for all countries the ageing population raises the problem of maintaining the active population at an acceptable level.

Some scenarios are worrying: the EU’s 25 countries could in fact lose 48 million workers between 2020 and 2050⁹.

This median scenario shows that the potential active EU population would decline after 2015. The working population replacement rate would fall from the current 1.1 to 0.76 by 2020.

With this in mind, the European Union meeting in Lisbon in 2000¹⁰ began a process of maximising the value of the potential active population of member States. These States set the objective of reaching a

SENEGAL, AN EXAMPLE OF A MIGRATORY CROSSROADS BETWEEN THE ECOWAS ZONE AND OECD COUNTRIES

Dakar has one of the region’s most active airports for destinations in Europe, North America and Arab countries. Senegal is also a crossroads of land and sea migration routes, via Kidira, Bamako (Mali) for Libya and via Rosso, Nouakchott (Mauritania) for Morocco, Spain or the Canary Islands. For some time, Senegal has had to ensure an effective enforcement of ICAO laws regulating air transport.

Thus, Annex 9 of the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation states that “operators shall take precautions at the point of embarkation to ensure that passengers are in possession of the documents prescribed by the States of transit and destination for control purposes¹⁵”.

In addition to this international regulation, a bilateral decision made by France established an airport transit visa (VTA – visa de transit aéroportuaire) for those leaving Senegal. Senegalese authorities are responsible for checking the validity of the VTA.

These two laws, which some see as a “transfer of the application of Schengen area control measures to the borders of Southern countries”, attempt to control international migration without truly taking into account the pressure of the countries themselves within an area of free movement.

Senegal finds itself in a position of checking departures from the country, while arrivals, which are principally by land, are free. Will decisions such as the creation of the VTA risk leaving certain West African countries in an awkward position in the integrated area in which they are evolving? Will the increasingly restrictive measures of the North influence the mobility so long defended by ECOWAS treaties? ●

Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) anticipating the eventual creation of a free-trade zone between the two entities.

What is the future for regional mobility in West Africa?

In 1979 ECOWAS member States adopted a Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons and the Right of Residence and Establishment¹³. These measures entered partly into force in 1980. They included the establishment of an ECOWAS passport¹⁴, with the identity card remaining sufficient for WAEMU nationals.

Despite persistent problems, ECOWAS is

NOTES

1- Statistics obtained after processing DELSA-OECD data for the 2000s, excluding Germany.

2- Newspaper articles give the figure of one million or more in 2000/2001, including 500,000 Chadians.

3- Lahlou 2004.

4- Bredeloup and Pliez 2005.

5- Defined here as the group made up of the 15 ECOWAS member countries, Mauritania, Chad and Cameroon.

6- Migration Policy Institute 2000.

7- United Nations definition of Europe: 47 countries including the Russian Federation, but not Turkey.

8- For example: Spain (-1.6 million people), Italy (-5 million), Germany (-7.5 million). No country achieves a veritable demographic dynamic, although some do better than others, especially Ireland and France.

9- Median scenario of the 2004 United Nations Population Division.

10- Special European Council of Heads of State and Government held on 23 and 24 March 2000, concerning "Employment, economic reform and social cohesion, towards a society of innovation and knowledge".

11- Feld 2004.

12- Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, France, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain.

13- Protocol A/P1/5/79 on the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment.

14- Uniform format adopted at the Conference of Heads of State and Government in 2000. This passport was put into circulation in Benin and Senegal in 2003.

15- Eleventh edition, July 2002, ICAO.

establishing itself at an institutional level as an area of free movement.

Migration mainly takes place by land across more than 15,000 km of borders between ECOWAS countries, with an additional 8,500 km between these countries and their neighbours, Mauritania, North Africa, Chad and Cameroon. The human geography of West Africa has significantly evolved over the last few decades.

Mobility has led to the creation of a network of towns that did not exist in 1960, populated empty regions and attracting the Sahelian populations nearest the desert southwards. Intra-regional migration and, moreover, urbanisation, have played a major role in the reconstitution of the population.

Migration strategies respond to the pursuit of economic opportunities and are able to adapt to markets by diversifying destinations or activities.

The historic and traditional mobility accompanying demographic transitions in the region, a rich and extraordinarily flexible movement, is a dimension that must be included in predictions for regulating migration as conceived by Northern countries.

This is why, beyond bilateral negotiations, the ECOWAS zone of free movement ought to encourage a regional dialogue in the prospect of the ECOWAS Community mandate for regional integration. ●

"In managing our borders, we can miss a lot of things"

Colonel Mahamane Koraou, *Permanent Secretary National Borders Commission of Niger*



What is the role of the Commission in border management?

We are a National Commission responsible for managing our borders, and mainly demarcation, because the colonial powers left us with undemarcated borders at independence. The demarcation was only in the texts, without any indicators on the ground. Now we are working on this at the bilateral level.

If we agree, it will be easy, or else arbitration will be needed as was the case earlier this year with Benin.

Have you succeeded in placing indicators on some of the borders?

That was done with Algeria in 1982. It took about ten years to demarcate 950 km in the desert area.

The 1500 km border with Nigeria had been demarcated by the two colonial powers since 1906.

However, the installations are now old; the indicators have disappeared or deteriorated. We are trying to rehabilitate them with Nigeria.

Everywhere else, with the other countries,

we are negotiating the demarcation of the borders. And we always face the same problem: the sheer length of the border and the lack of equipment.

How do you then ensure surveillance of the borders?

Border surveillance is the responsibility of the Border Police, as well as the Defence and Security Forces. The main task of the National Borders Commission is demarcation.

And Niger remains a favorite passage corridor...

It is well known that the town of Agadez is the gateway to the desert. Agadez is the regrouping centre for people who want to go to Northern countries.

It is in Agadez that they prepare themselves morally, physically and financially before the adventure, which begins with crossing the desert.

Ferryman make a fortune there, it's a real profession. However, every deal is concluded illegally, in silence, and people come from all over, from Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Mali, from all over West Africa, and also from Cameroon and other Central African countries.

Niger is known to be the largest corridor of clandestine migration to Northern countries. How do you explain this?

Three major reasons account for this situation: the immensity of the country, its landlocked position, and poverty. Niger is an enormous country covering 1 265 000 km², with 5 650 km of artificial borders.

It is landlocked or bordered by 7 countries: Algeria to the North, Libya to the North-East, Mali to the North-West, Chad to East, Nigeria to the South-East, Benin to the South and Burkina Faso to the West.

To make matters worse, the economic situation is not that bright. Immensity, landlocked position, artificial borders, poverty - the handicaps are many.

This means that in managing our borders, we can miss a lot of things, particularly in the control of clandestine migration, which is the talk of the day.

And which are the passage routes?

There are two main routes: through Libya and through Algeria. The Libyan route passes through Dirkou, which is a military garrison with guard posts since the colonial

era, but which has become, by the force of circumstances, a village.

The Algerian route passes through Arlit and Assamala. All these localities are areas of insecurity, and that is why the ferrymen choose them.

Interview carried out by M. Bolouvi



“Migration is neither a criminal nor punishable activity in Niger”

Souley Dioffo, Police Captain, Director of Local Surveillance (Niger)



Faced with presumed disadvantages such as the immensity of the territory, quasi-artificial borders and limited resources, can we talk about border surveillance?

Following our attributions, local surveillance has been imposed on us and

we cannot sit by using the pretext that there is a lack of means. On the other hand, our local surveillance mission not only involves migration but generally border crime and internal security.

Certainly, we cannot supervise everything, but we do what is needed.

West African Migration

Daouda Cissé, a “mai nama” in Kadiolo (Mali)

From Filingué in the North-East of Niger to Kadiolo in the South of Mali, Niger’s talents in grilling meat are being exported; so also are scars of a difficult life that can rid you of any desire to return to your native land.

Don’t ask him when he entered Mali. Daouda Cissé, a “mai nama” (“butcher” in Hausa), is not just a vendor of fresh meat but he is rather one of those who know not only how to sell meat, but also how to turn it over and over again on hot charcoal, season it for the true culinary experience. He remembers how, one fine morning, he left his native town of Filingué, seeking a better life. That was 18 years ago, and he was 38. His adventure led him to naturalize as a Malian in the first year.

This neo-Malian always talks with reverence of his luck: “On leaving Niger, I knew only how

Is there actually in Agadez a clandestine migration organisation which has a reputation as a door to the desert?

Agadez is indeed a cross-roads between the Maghreb and the southern Sahara and there we have identified many smuggling networks.

The networks are well-organised and are not only Nigeriens but also nationals from Nigeria and other countries, obviously Libyans and Algerians too.

Why, having identified them, do you let them continue to operate?

Migration is neither a criminal nor punishable activity in Niger. On the other hand, within the ECOWAS framework, we are linked by agreements of free circulation of persons and goods.

There are no laws to curb this activity in Niger but laws are being drafted to regulate migration since it has now become a phenomenon.

What can you say about the passage routes?

The dessert is strewn with passage corridors and paths, but there are mainly two migrant routes. Indeed the crossing of the desert is defined by watering points.

The first route is that which goes from Agadez to Assamaka and Tamanrasset to get to Algeria. The second one goes from Agadez to Kirkou and Sebhat or Ghat to get to Libya.

Do you maintain cooperation relationships for supervising borders with your counterparts in neighbouring countries?

There is cooperation at this level because it is not only migration with which the police are concerned.

There are also other issues such as security at the borders, cattle theft and organised crime.

With Nigeria and Mali, for example, we have set up a joint patrol system along our borders.

With European Funds, Niger and Libya are working on setting up a project to reduce clandestine migration. ●

Interview carried out by M. Bolouvi

to be a butcher, an occupation which, like many others, depends on luck”.

He chose Mali at a time when most people from his region preferred to go to Nigeria, Ghana and, more generally, the neighbouring coastal countries. Indeed, he is not afraid at all: *“When a man is looking for money, he needs a strong will and determination. He must be ready to endure any hardship, face all difficulties”.*

In his own case, however, he was going to join a brother who had left *“21 years ago”*, and never came back to his country, a *“mai nama in the beginning, but later entered the business of selling motorcycles”.*

Daouda Cissé, who has pleased people in Kadiolo for 2 years, began his Malian rebirth in the town of Niono, in Mali’s 4th administrative region, Ségou Region, where he arrived with Idi Souley, *“a butcher friend of mine from Belleyara”*. He settled in Niono for 16 years, which was more than a host town to him.

He left Filingué, in the North-East of Niger, leaving behind his wife, re-married *“just 3 months after I arrived, to another Niger woman whose parents have been in Mali for the past 56 years”.*

At the same time, he has integrated well professionally since he says *“My father-in-law is also a mai nama”*. There are no other people from Filingué in Niono, but he feels at home, *“There are many people from Maradi and Zinder”.*

His new wife, who was born in Niger and is of Niger nationality like him, obtained Malian nationality the first year she was in Mali; she has given birth to two girls. He is happy, but this fertility has not trickled over to his business activities.

Yet Daouda Cissé does not intend to go back to Filingué: *“I am of Niger nationality, but there is nothing to do in that country, one cannot remain there. Can you tell me what type of job I could do there?”* Rather, he opted to discover other Malian markets, *“especially during the rainy season when business is really slack in Niono”.*

He thus explored towns like Bamako, Sikasso, and Zégoua in the extreme south of Mali, on the border with Côte d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso. He discovered Kadiolo in the Sikasso region, a town bordering with Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire. He then moved there.

For the past two years, he has been the only person of Niger nationality in Kadiolo, which is the main town of a Prefecture of 6 640 Km² with 136,000 inhabitants where the major activities are farming, livestock breeding, and harvesting shea and *“néré”* (African locust beans”).

Daouda Cissé thus chose to settle in Kadiolo, and brought along two fellow countrymen, who are butchers like him. His friend Idi, whom he had met again in Zégoua during his journey, went back to his country a year ago.

They keep him company, because he does not intend to return to Filingué. He says he is not homesick, but *“sometimes he would like to see his parents”*. No nostalgia in particular. *“Boule”* (millet paste)? *“My wife makes it for me all the time”.*

His only link with his native country seems to be people of Niger nationality who pass through this border area. Since Kadiolo has a big hospital centre, Daouda Cissé always sees *“foreigners”*, and almost always provides accommodation for his compatriots: *“People of Niger nationality who come mainly from Côte d’Ivoire for treatment here at the health centre, stay with me. Most of them come from Korhogo, Tendrela, Bouaké (Côte d’Ivoire) and Massiogo, a Malian gold washing site. Butchers, fabric vendors, gold washers all come here because medical expenses are lower. I have ended up renting a second house to meet their accommodation needs”.*

After 18 years of being out of his country, he has come up with a reason: *“I like my native land, but it offers me nothing, I can’t live there”.* ●



M.B.



This billboard in the middle of Agadez bus terminal is just an illusion.

SHORT AND LONG TRIPS



The subject is causing concern in Europe and exasperation in Africa. But it is nothing new. It has, however, become a disturbing trend, with its tragic peak in summer, when the nets tightened drastically around the Italian, Spanish and Maltese coastlines, and cries of “intruder alert!” began to be heard. Consequently, the issue of illegal immigration is treated differently depending on from which side it is approached.

For the administrative authorities on the sub-Saharan side, and especially in transit towns such as Agadez in Niger and Gao in Mali, it is not a major concern. They are barely troubled by the management of deportees, who they leave to fend for themselves. At best, they are still waiting for the West to provide a means for keeping migrants at home. Here and there, one hears it said that “travelling is a human right”. The good point about the way in which the issue is handled is that people are finally speaking out against the lure of migration and its conditions.

In Gao and Agadez, the authorities are astonished by the proportions the illegal immigration controversy has taken on. Both towns have always been a stopping point for migrants on their way to Libya or Algeria, themselves ports of call on the way to the coasts of Europe.

In Mali, says Abdoulaye M. Diarra, Director of the Private Office of the Gao region Governorate, “the concept of foreigner does

not exist. Malians are keen travellers and travelling is not a crime”. He nevertheless reproves the “conditions in which this takes place”.

In Gao and Agadez, the authorities admit their powerlessness in the face of this growing problem, which is largely due to “poverty”.

This has been happening for so long that it has had time to “take shape at all levels, with

Tuaregs turning to people smuggling”, from the river to Europe, for those who travel via Gao, and from the Aïr mountains to Europe for those who pass through Agadez.

The issue reveals a whole host of problems: the difficulties countries have in assuring border surveillance; the distress and the energy of young Africans; the terrible conditions in which illegal migrants make the “big trip”; and the development of a

criminal economy around illegal and Mafia networks.

With regard to the problems African countries have controlling their borders, especially Mali, Niger and Mauritania – the most concerned since their countries are stopping points for migrants –, the response is simple: *“How can countries as vast as ours watch the entire territory, when Europe cannot manage this with far more significant policing capacities?”*

An equally vast project is finding a solution to the worries and uncertainties over the present day and tomorrow that leave young Africans convinced their future is elsewhere, and especially in Northern countries.

Anyone that has met candidates for

emigration to Europe will have been struck by their empty, lifeless expression, a look that expresses suffering matched only by the sheer determination to flee poverty, to die if necessary in the search for a better life.

They feel as if they had been invested with a crucial and noble mission; a mission if not for happiness, at least for something better than what they are leaving behind, a better life that is awaiting them in Europe.

A well-off Europe that scoffs at them in films, offends them with the often insulting affluence of Europeans living among them, and eyes them scornfully with the superior and emancipated attitude of emigrants *“on holiday”*.

This “beautiful” Europe is the negation of

their “ugly” Africa, the absolution of their despair, though the African continent is a reservoir of untapped resources.

For these young people, there is no doubt that Europe and North America have jobs to offer. True, these jobs are usually underpaid, undeclared and precarious; they nevertheless represent a source of income.

Moreover, young West Africans are galvanized by information such as, *“the West African economy depends to a large extent on the manna represented by the diaspora”*. *“Over 200 billion CFA francs (300 million euros) are sent back to Mali every year and, officially, 309 billion to Senegal, via banks”*.

The villas built by emigrants, the taxis they put on the roads and the self-importance they exude each time they return to the fold put the final touches to this fabulous elsewhere.

The omerta of migrants

Since planes are a luxury they cannot afford, and the skies are the realm of the visa, the young have opted for the road, the desert and the sea as a means of reaching North African countries, which are only separated from the coast of Europe by a narrow stretch of sea.

They have also banked on patience and, unwittingly, laid the foundations for a vast trade that has sucked them in. *“Since the 1990s,”* says Raliou Hamed Assaleh, director of the Sahara FM radio station and RFI correspondent in Agadez, *“Agadez has seen an uninterrupted onslaught of migrants heading to Libya to work there, earn some money and possibly carry on. Most of them arrive in Agadez penniless and have to stay there, willing to do anything to get money and continue their journey. This stopover can last a year or more, and some are even reduced to begging for food”*.

Others arrive with enough to pay to cross the desert to get to the next stage, but are taken in and nailed by the numerous con men operating in illegal migration networks to Europe.

This is the case of a young 17 year old Ivorian, in difficulty in Agadez. Having left home without his parents *“knowledge”*, he had planned to travel through Gao, but in Bamako met *“someone from Agadez who told me that the Agadez route was the best and that he was willing to guide me”*.

This man did in fact take him as far as Agadez, then *“he took my money to organise the journey and disappeared. I’ve been swindled out of all my money and I don’t know anyone here. If I can get the money, I’m going home”*.



THE UNFORTUNATE DEPORTEES FROM LIBYA, OR HOW NORTHERN POLICIES INFLUENCE MOVEMENT IN THE SOUTH

(Source: Air Info n°41 of 1 to 15 June 2006)

Libya arrests illegal immigrants, offers them a stay in prison and then organises their return to the Niger desert from whence they came. This operation is conducted without consulting the Niger side regarding the reception of deportees.

A Togolese man newly deported from Libya after a spell in jail and saved in the Ténéré by a Niger patrol is still in shock: *“I always thought Libya was a land that welcomed newcomers, where people of all nationalities, and especially Muslims, could come and go as they pleased. But sadly, human dignity is being abandoned. I will never forget this experience of Libyan jails”*.

“More than a thousand Africans are grouped in Al Qatrun, 150 km from the border post of Toumo, waiting to be sent back to Niger. They will be put into groups of 30 to 35 people and crammed into Toyota 4x4 Pickups, driven by Toubou drivers to the vicinity of Dirkou (a Niger garrison town about 400 km from Toumo)”. These drivers earn 500,000 CFA francs, paid in two instalments: 200,000 francs on leaving with a full vehicle, and 300,000 francs more on returning with an empty one.

On 21 May 2006, a Niger patrol intercepted a vehicle carrying 25 Nigerians around 50 km from Dirkou. On 30 May, the body of another young Nigerian was found, again near Dirkou, *“dead from thirst, abandoned by the drivers”*.

Four Toyota Pickups were stopped in Dirkou in early June, awaiting judicial proceedings. In response, Niger organised a return journey: on 31 May, a military escort left Dirkou with 121 people deported from Libya (57 Ghanaians and 64 Nigerians) in order to hand them over to the Libyan authorities in Toumo.●

MIGRATION

Candidates rarely become disheartened, explains Raliou H. Assaleh, as “*there are always touts who are often former migrants – their own fellow citizens – who have now become service providers, especially for accommodation and dealings with people smugglers*”.

As soon as migrants arrive in the transit towns, in this case Agadez and Gao, the touts “*give chase*”.

Everyone knows about this activity, but no one dares talk about it.

In Gao, people just mention the existence of regroupment camps, simple residences where touts “*lodge*” their travellers, known as ghettos.

In Gao, the ghetto owners are “*travel agencies without offices*”, working in liaison with smugglers, more specifically “*Arabs and Tuaregs, former rebels who*

by locals. Without consulting its Niger neighbours about the possibility of creating reception facilities, Libya sends migrants back there, whatever their nationality. (See box: *The unfortunate deportees from Libya...*)

Smugglers are consequently turning to the Agadez-Djanet (Algeria) route, meaning a four- to five-day trip in a pickup truck. In this mountainous region, under the supervision of guides, a game of hide-and-seek with Algerian patrols begins in order to reach Libya on foot, at night, after two or even three days’ walking: a veritable game of cat and mouse.

Just as the profession of tout has provided an opening for the thwarted candidates for emigration, predominantly Nigerians, Ghanaians and Senegalese, that of people-smuggler has provided an opportunity for

socio-professional reintegration for ex-rebels, in both Mali and Niger.

“*Illegal migrants are loaded into vehicles beyond police control points, preferably at night*”.

So illegal migration does not begin at the gates to Europe. Networks start operating as soon as migrants arrive in transit towns and take over from one another all along the route, up until the coasts of Europe: from Gao to Tessalit or Ti-n-Zaouâtene in the Adrar des Iforhas mountains, then Oujda on the border between Algeria and Morocco; from Agadez to Dirkou then Al Qatron in Libya; or from Agadez to Djanet in the mountainous region of Algeria, then to Ghat in Libya. ●



know the desert by heart”. Some are well established, with the following names mentioned in this category: “*Elhadj ghetto, Mama Fadé ghetto, Elhadj Abdoulaye ghetto, Mohammed ghetto, Karim ghetto, the Senegalese ghetto...*”

However, apparently in Gao “*the rate of arrivals has recently slowed down and some ghettos have closed. Before, there were five or ten departures per day and the streets of Gao were taken over, with people even sleeping outside...*”

The ghettos still operating count more “*deportees*” than new candidates and, significantly, “*vehicles are doing the return trip in vain, having been turned back at the Algerian border*”.

Ill-fortune is also befalling Agadez, where it seems “*the Dirkou road is used less and less*”.

Libyans have stepped up their surveillance and are systematically sending illegal migrants back into the Niger desert, sometimes with a violence condemned

FIGURES THAT SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

(Source: Jeune Afrique n°2381 of 27 August to 2 September)

France: 4.9 million immigrants

The population of foreigners living in France increased 18% between 1990 and 2004 at a similar pace to population growth which indicates a slight increase as regards proportions. According to a study published by INSEE (French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies), between these two dates the number of immigrants rose from 4.2 million to 4.9 million (8.1% of the French population). Some 40% of these immigrants – around 2 million people – have acquired French nationality through naturalisation or marriage. Half are female. The Paris region alone is home to 40% of the total number. Despite an increasing influx of people from Eastern European non-EU member countries (+37% compared to 1999), the share of Europeans is decreasing rapidly. They represented 40% in 2004, compared to 57% in 1975 – the Portuguese come first (565,000) ahead of the Italians (342,000) and the Spanish (280,000). The number of Asians, on the other hand, is increasing rapidly – there are currently almost 100,000 Chinese people –, as is the number of Africans. Again, in 2004, 570,000 people born in sub-Saharan Africa were registered (70% of whom came from former French colonial territories), representing 45% increase in less than 15 years. But North African countries remain the principal community, with 1.5 million immigrants, including 677,000 from Algeria, 619,000 from Morocco and 220,000 from Tunisia. For the last 25 years, the level of education of migrants has risen considerably. Today almost 24% are higher education graduates – a figure only slightly below the rest of the French population (30%) – compared to only 6% in 1982. ●

**THE MAIN POINTS
OF THE FRANCE/SENEGAL AGREEMENT ON IMMIGRATION**

(Source: AFP)

Below are the main points of the agreement, described as “historic” and signed on Saturday 21 September 2006 in Dakar, on the “*joint management of migration flows*” between France and Senegal:

- **Circulation visa:** “France and Senegal shall continue their efforts aimed at simplifying the issue of circulation visas to nationals of the other party, including businesspeople, intellectuals, academics, scientists, tradespeople, lawyers, high-level sportspeople and artists, who actively participate in economic, commercial, professional, scientific, academic, cultural and sporting activities between the two countries.

These people, who must be able to move without formalities between Senegal and France, may be granted a uniform visa authorising visits of up to three months per semester and valid from one to five years depending on the quality of the application made, the duration of planned activities in France and the duration of the validity of the passport”.

- **Border surveillance:** “At the operational level, the French forces (based in Senegal) shall contribute, insofar as they are able, within the competence defined in this respect by the agreements reached between the two countries, and according to their operational constraints, to gathering information liable to contribute to the surveillance of Senegalese coasts.

These initiatives (...) shall be carried out on a case-by-case basis according to methods to be defined in close consultation”.

- **Return of illegal immigrants:** “France and Senegal commit to accepting and jointly organising, with due regard to dignity and fundamental human rights (...), the return to their territory for those nationals found in an irregular situation on the territory of the other party.

By 30 September 2006, France will provide Senegal with a proposal for a draft agreement on the application of measures”.

- **Development:** “France and Senegal will examine the best means of mobilising the skills and resources of Senegalese migrants in France with a view to contributing to the development of Senegal, taking their personal situations into account (...), supporting their initiatives aimed at creating or assisting the creation of productive activities in Senegal, and especially by assisting the mobilisation of their savings for investment purposes in Senegal.

Senegal and France commit to implementing joint strategies aimed at the reintegration of Senegalese doctors and other health professionals working in France and willing to return to Senegal.

France will mobilise the means for its cooperation to enable these doctors and other professionals to benefit in Senegal from the best possible conditions for carrying out their work, whether in the public and hospital sector or in the private sector”.

- **Employment:** “Senegal and France agree on a reciprocal basis to regularly exchange information on those jobs in each of the two countries that are experiencing sustained recruitment difficulties and could give rise to recruitment abroad, without crowding out local job seekers”.

- **Creation of a general Observatory for migration flows:** “The objectives, composition, operating rules and means of the Observatory shall be determined by common accord” ●



MIGRATION

AGADEZ, SAHARAN TOWN IN NIGER, SOUTH OF THE AIR HIGHLANDS



The Agadez oasis extends to the foot of the first southern foothills of the Air highlands. Inhabited by the Tuaregs and their former black captives, it remains an important caravan stop, particularly for salt, and it has a large market for dates, cattle and handicraft products (jewellery, camel saddles, etc.).

The Agadez region, where copper has been processed for over 4000 years, was inhabited by the Tuaregs towards the 11th century AD.

They established a Sultanate in the

15th century and controlled the caravan traffic between Kairouan, Tripoli and Cairo in the north, and the big cities of the Sudanese empires: Gao, Hausa City States and the Kanem-Bornou Empire.

The geographical location of the oasis was of much interest to its powerful neighbours. In 1515, after fifteen years of war against the Tuaregs, Agadez fell to Askia Mohammed, King of Songhai.

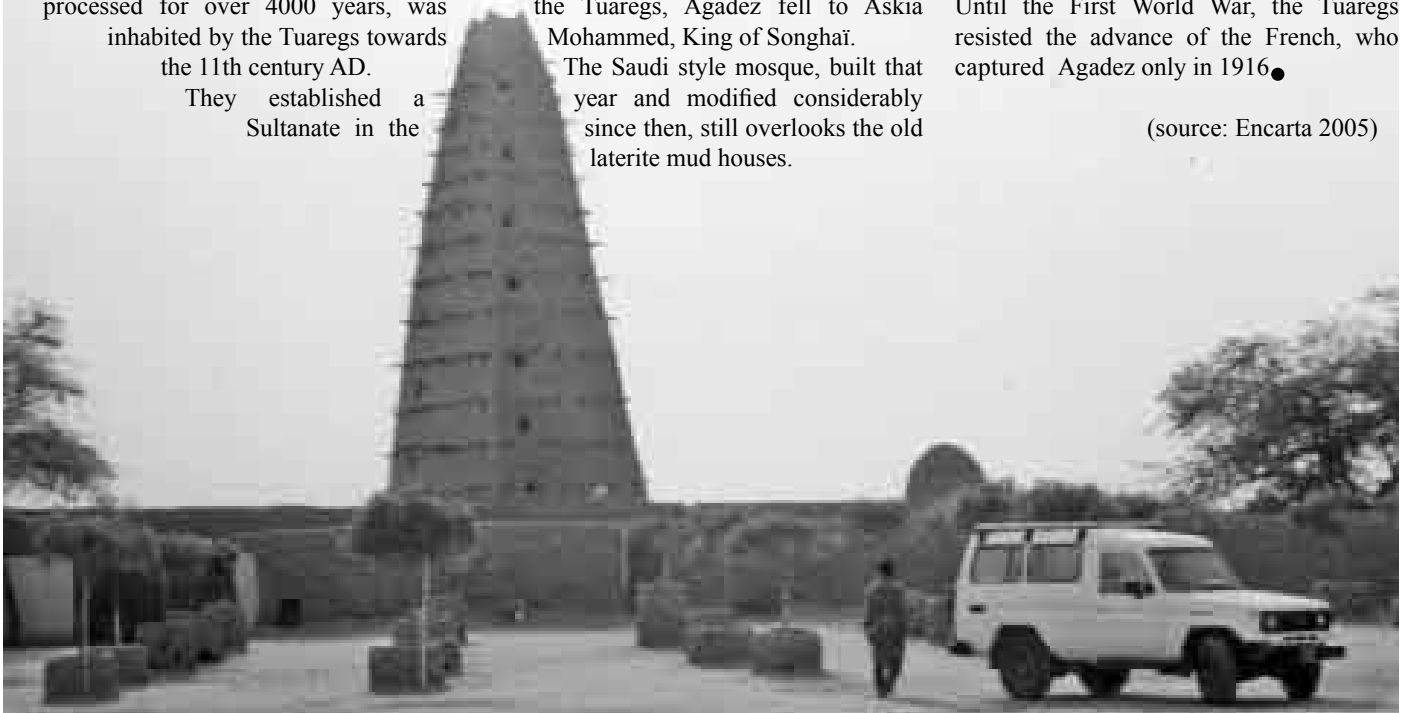
The Saudi style mosque, built that year and modified considerably since then, still overlooks the old laterite mud houses.

After a relative decline at the end of the 18th century, as a result of famine-provoked massive emigration, Agadez witnessed a new increase in trade facilitated by the establishment of the Sokoto Empire in the south.

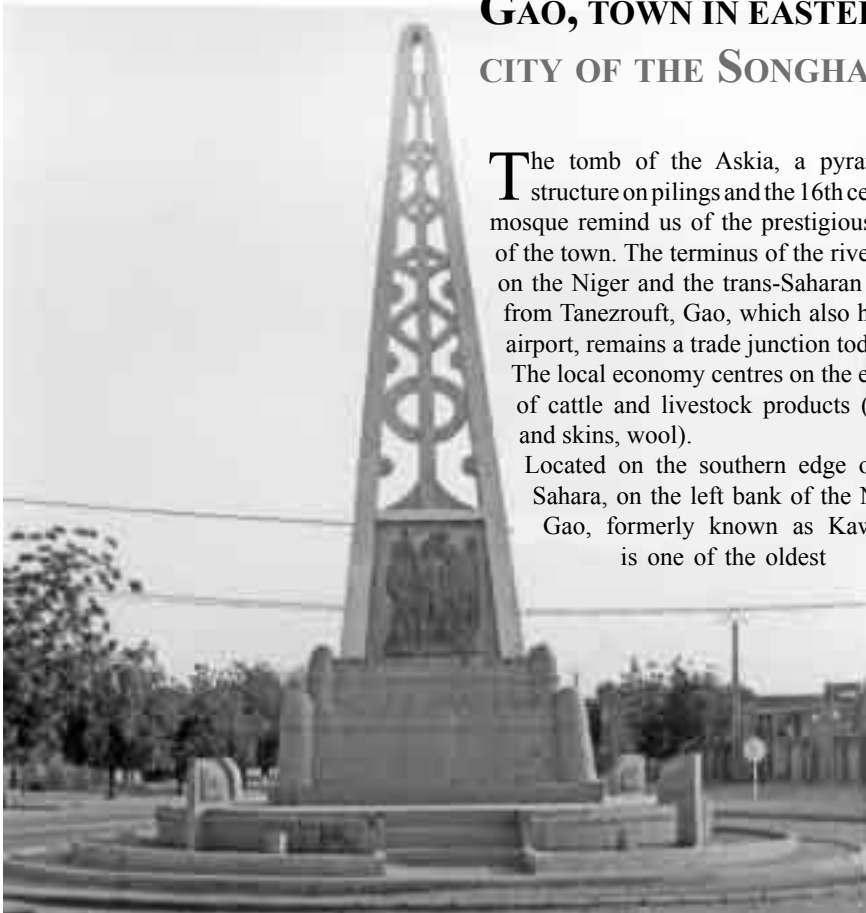
This prosperity continued until the end of the 19th century and the arrival of the Europeans.

Until the First World War, the Tuaregs resisted the advance of the French, who captured Agadez only in 1916.

(source: Encarta 2005)



GAO, TOWN IN EASTERN MALI, A HISTORIC CAPITAL CITY OF THE SONGHAÏ EMPIRE



The tomb of the Askia, a pyramidal structure on pilings and the 16th century mosque remind us of the prestigious past of the town. The terminus of the river line on the Niger and the trans-Saharan route from Tanezrouft, Gao, which also has an airport, remains a trade junction today.

The local economy centres on the export of cattle and livestock products (hides and skins, wool).

Located on the southern edge of the Sahara, on the left bank of the Niger, Gao, formerly known as Kawkaw, is one of the oldest West

African caravan cities. Founded around the 7th century by Sorko fishermen, Gao is one of the trans-Saharan trade centres for goods from North Africa (Morocco, Tripoli region) and Sudanese countries, such as gold, salt, copper and slaves.

It became the capital city of Songhaï Kingdom in the 11th century, then fell under the domination of the Malian Empire in the 14th century. Towards 1337, two princes kept as hostages by Kankan Moussa, managed to flee and liberate Gao.

The town once again became the capital of a powerful Songhaï Empire, formed under the reign of Sonni Ali Ber (1464-1493).

Under the Askia dynasty which followed, the Songhaï Empire was of interest to Morocco whose sultans wanted to control the salt mines of the Sahara.

In 1591, the Songhaï army was defeated in Tondibi near Gao by the Moroccans, and conquered the following year. The city fell to the Tuaregs towards 1750, and continued to decline during French colonization.

(source: Encarta 2005)



ARTIFICIAL PARADISE OF GAO AND AGADEZ

What can be the legal limits in an environment where clandestine activities are clinical prescriptions rather than crimes? Agadez and Gao, cities for transitory migrants have developed socio-professional sectors which, although part of the informal sector, punctuate their daily activities.

Alongside the lucrative job of “pimp”, “ghetto master” or “smuggler”, prostitution ranks highly among transit jobs, and is by far the most visible, because although criticized it is nonetheless prosperous.

Once practiced by widowed or divorced women who were mainly “foreigners”, prostitution has gone through many changes in Agadez and Gao, largely attracting women from all social and age groups, including barely pubescent girls.

During the day, Agadez and Gao are just resourceful cities, like all secondary towns in West African countries. More than other towns, however, at night, Agadez and Gao bustle with their alluring artificial paradise activities.

It is said that tourism, in its time of dignity, had kneaded the dough. Migrants, it is

whispered, have brought the yeast. Indeed, since the early 1990s, uninterrupted waves of migrants have resettled Agadez and Gao, at more than one strategic level, as trans-Saharan junction towns. Mainly because French consulates have decided to carefully scrutinize visa applications, there has been more traffic on the desert routes to Maghrebian countries linked to Europe. On the other hand, because migrants have not always had the necessary funds or have lost part of their money on the way, Agadez and Gao have become a tactical stop.

Lastly, loopholes in Niger and Mali in the management of armed rebellions through



the socio-professional reintegration of ex-combatants have provided opportunities for “smuggling”.

The appearance of related occupations of “pimp” and “ghetto master” (those who bring migrants together and those who provide them accommodation), was just a formality.

These are the ingredients that give Agadez and Gao the reputation of antechambers for clandestine emigration candidates to Europe. They are respectively the last Niger town to Libya and Algeria, and last Malian town to Algeria, through the Sahara.

The huge numbers of migrants have encouraged certain quarters of the towns to specialize in services for transitory migrants: food stalls, dormitory homes, selling of accessories (blankets, sleeping bags, cans, flashlights, etc.) or other small occupations (hair dresser, cobbler, tailor, etc).

Of course, prostitution has gained a foothold, with girls working partly for themselves and partly for their supportive “boyfriends”.

Because people live in constant fear of the police, and because the law of silence is strictly obeyed, respect for anonymity alone leads to confidence.

Maggy, from a village in south Nigeria, confides that she has been in Agadez for 7 months, trying to gather enough money to attempt to enter into Europe through Libya, with her boyfriend who has been a hairdresser since they came to town. “My story is that of a girl who believed that



everything in life was beautiful, but soon found out the contrary. I was married off at the age of 13 to a cousin older than me. This man, whom I had never loved, raped me regularly, and against my will I gave him two children.

He used to beat me every night. My parents kept quiet as I suffered for five long years. When my father died, I decided to act, and



fled with my childhood friend. Now, I am helping him gather enough money for us to continue to Europe”.

Her compatriot, Vicky, barely 18 years old, went through almost the same torment: “I was supposed to marry a young man who, unfortunately, had no regular income. My paternal uncle, who had been my guardian since the death of my parents, married me off to a polygamous neighbour. Since I was fiercely opposed to this marriage, he threw me out.

In desperation, I sought refuge with my friend who dragged me into drugs. I thought I was making the right choice when I followed a friend of mine who had decided to try her luck in Europe, but here we are, stranded in Agadez”.

The story is the same for all of them: an extremely difficult start, the dream of Europe, fending for themselves in Gao or Agadez, a crucial stop.

Nigerians and Ghanaians make up the largest number of sex professionals in these transit towns, but there are also a good number of Cameroonians and Congolese. They transform their accommodations into brothels, but they also go out to the hot spots, bars and night clubs where they liven up the atmosphere and sell.

The bars and night clubs are favorite spots for Cameroonians and Congolese, who are more at ease with French than the Nigerians and Ghanaians that communicate only through gestures and are glued to stools in the darkness of small streets, offices “occupied by women who stay up at night and sleep during the day”.

A visit to one of the bars and a round of drinks to loosen tongues, and despite the promise of a night if they chat, Apolline and Rachel are reluctant to talk. However, after a few glasses and half a packet of cigarettes, they soon loosen up. Both of them are Cameroonians.

Apolline was a student in accounting in Douala. Her father lost his job and could no longer pay her for her studies. Her mother had no source of income. Apolline has a sister who lives in Italy. Her sister sent her money to come join her. A man in her

neighbourhood promised to take her to her destination.

When they arrived in Agadez, a Nigerian stole their money and disappeared. That’s why, “I go out to earn a little money and save to pay for my trip to Libya. I never thought that I’d one day be forced to be a prostitute”. She could hardly hide the tears which her voice had managed to conceal.

Rachel describes herself as “a born adventurer”. One day, her boyfriend, who had always shared her desire to go to Europe, proposed that they go to Spain through Nigeria, Niger (Zinder, Agadez, and Arlit), Algeria and Morocco.

Everything went well, until they reached Agadez. Her friend left her “for a girl of his village whom he found here. I had nothing

on me, and so I was forced to be a prostitute to survive and earn some money to return home. I can’t continue living like this,” Rachel confessed.

In Agadez and Gao, prostitution is in the customs as a worm in a fruit. It is widely practised and disapproved but, as a bar manager in Gao said, “those who criticize it during the day are customers at night”.

Consequently, people try to understand the situation, as the Director of the Regional Social Development Service in Agadez: “Prostitution takes hundreds of our sisters. It is one of the easiest jobs to do; it requires only a little moral indecency. However, what shocks me are these little girls who plunge head first into this dirty profession.”

For Malam Kadri, who lives in Amarewat quarter in Agadez: “Some parents have abdicated their responsibilities, and are sometimes accomplices and live on the money from this juvenile prostitution. These girls pay for their families’ expenses”.

The consequence in Agadez is the increasing rate of “accidental” pregnancies and unwanted new-born babies. Sordid stories are increasing in the town.

The maternity ward of the Regional Hospital in Agadez is increasingly attending to young mothers.

Amina Ibrahim Djimrao, a senior obstetrics technician, explains that “assisting them during delivery is frightening for the nurses because of the risk of fistula. They go through long and difficult labour with fetal distress. Psychologically, the little girls refuse to accept their future role as mothers”.

Prostitution is badly thought of in these migrant transit towns, but it is only the hidden part of a world in which people try to fend for themselves, fight for survival.●

Michel Bolouvi

ITA, THE UNSHAKABLE AND SHAKA OLUMESE “TOLA”

Tola and Ita are two young men from Benin City in Nigeria. Both of them left their families for the European adventure through Gao in Mali, which finally adopted them. Beyond these two similarities, they are different in every way.

Tola now considers the adventure as utopia; for Ita, however, it is his goal in life. His destiny, as people would say here. Tola has built a life for himself in Gao, while Ita is still looking around, dreaming of Europe.

He has not been lucky in his attempt to go to Europe, but for him, it's just a matter of time. His only achievement, after wandering for 6 years in francophone countries, is that he now speaks French fairly well.

Around thirty years old, though looking much older, his misfortunes started in 2000. For stubborn Ita, it is either Europe or nothing. His first attempt sapped him both morally and physically.

Those who know him in Gao consider him mentally deranged. And, of course, a crazy person hardly believes that he is crazy.

However, the only thing that is certain, after talking with Ita, is that if he is crazy, he is crazy for Europe.

He says he comes from Benin City, Edo State in Nigeria. He had managed to put together enough money to go to Conakry, where his “older brother” runs a motorcycle and vehicle spare parts shop. After spending a few months with this brother, who shares his European dream, he had enough money to embark on his adventure.

In 2001, he felt he was ready, and left for Gao in Mali from where, without stopping because he had “600 euros”, he jumped into another vehicle to cross the desert to Algeria. He reached Tangier in Morocco, and “was deported by sea to Ouchda a border zone with Algeria”.

Then Ita had a difficult time: “I spent 2 to 3 years in Ouchda, without a job. It's difficult for blacks to find jobs there, especially those in my situation without any papers”.

Indeed, he eventually had to swallow his pride, and beg to survive.

In 2004, he returned to Gao, through which he traveled only 3 years earlier, and found a little “comfort” among the Nigerian community. However, since he was still bent on going to Europe, he started looking for money to make another attempt.

He worked small jobs, and finally settled for jobs as a bricklayer. It wasn't easy to find something permanent. As time went on, his clothes and shoes were wearing thin. However, his yearning for Europe remained.

Ita continued to call his brother regularly in Guinea; from time to time, his brother sent him money. In mid-September last year, his brother promised him money to pay his way back to Guinea. However, Ita does not want to return home indefinitely: “I'll go

back and prepare and leave again”.

Ita is convinced that he failed in his first attempt due to poor preparation. He points out that “when you have money to pay the police, you can't be sent back”. For him, this is enough reason to believe that Europe is still accessible. Better still, he now has a more concrete reference: “my older and younger sisters are in Holland”. Ita is determined to find himself in Europe one day. However, he intends to change the itinerary: “it's difficult by road; I'm going to get my papers, and go by plane; that's why I have to return to my country.”

With this tactical fall back, Ita feels that his knowledge of French acquired during his dark migrant years will be an advantage. Europe is calling for him; nothing will stop him from attaining this dream. ●

M.B.

Shaka Olumese also known as “Tola” Chairman and Managing Director of “Camping Euro”

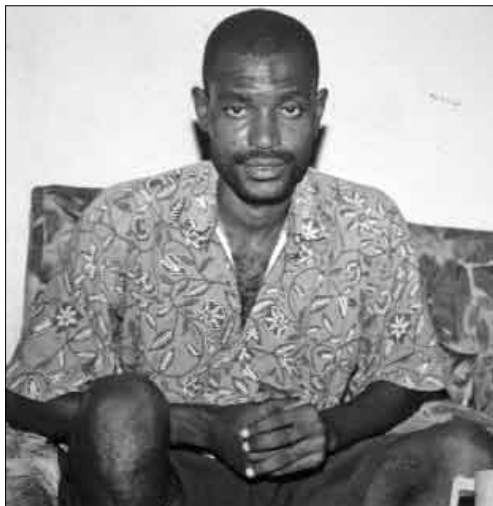


He swaps Europe for a Club

Formerly a serious candidate for Europe, Shaka is today one of those who advise against clandestine emigration.

After coming to Gao in January 2001 under very difficult circumstances, Shaka Olumese is today, 5 years later, a very prosperous man. The young Nigerian, from Benin City and headed for Europe, has become a prosperous and highly respected businessman in Gao. He was first accepted because of his name. For everyone in this old historic town of the Askia, he is “Tola”, a phonetic transformation of his nickname “Tallest” because of his height. The man, around thirty years old, is affable, fussy and rigorous like all businessmen. His European

Ita, the unshakable





dream vanished when he got in a vehicle and crossed the desert, and his desire to travel stopped in Gao.

Tola says he was “saved” by the intense fear that gripped him when he had to get into a vehicle to cross the Malian desert to Algeria: “When I saw the arrangements being made for the journey to Algeria through the desert, I was petrified. We had to travel to a place called Khaled, with our luggage, about 30 of us in a pick-up truck that could take only about ten people”.

“I couldn’t risk my life that way, especially as I was asked to pay 150,000 CFA Frs. (about 230 €), for the fare from Gao to the Adrar highlands in Algeria”.

“I know a smuggler who charges 150,000 CFA francs for each passenger. That’s really horrible, because he knows very well that most of them will die.”

Now the owner of a club, “a bar-restaurant-rooms complex”, he follows up what happens to those who leave for Europe. Even though the number of people coming has decreased, Gao is never completely without youths burning with the desire for a better future.

Tola invested his savings from the journey in crates of beer. He stayed in the room he was renting in Aljanabandja quarter, and also used it as a bar. Alcohol must sell well in Gao because little by little he gathered enough money three years later to buy a small piece of land of about 25m² and built a small but very functional complex: a bar, a kitchen, an inner courtyard serving as a terrace surrounded by rooms.

He is now the Manager of “Camping Euro”. Why Euro? “In memory of the frenzy that pulled me out of my native land and gave me my opportunity. It was my attempt to go

to Europe that has given me what I have today; that’s why I gave my camp the name “Camping Euro”.

As mentioned on the sign on the wall of “Camping” and on Tola’s business card, Camping Euro is a restaurant-bar which offers: “European and African dishes and drinks” and in addition “rooms and relaxation”. And that’s what is appealing to customers. His intention is not to go to Europe but “to return one day to my country, buy a piece of land and continue my business”.

He has realized that “wealth is also possible in Africa”. This is what he tells young candidates for Europe who come to him: “There’s money in Africa; you only need to be enterprising”. As he goes on: “Some young people have taken my advice and returned home, others left but were sent back; indeed, for those sent back, all they saw of Europe was the harshness of the desert and the mountains”.



Tola is categorical: “Going by road is impossible”. And Tola talks of a companion with whom he left Nigeria. “In Gao, he refused to listen to me when I told him that going to Europe by road under these conditions was a crazy idea. He left, and came back after 4 years of wandering in the desert. During that time, I set up a business and prospered. He lost 4 years, while I was busy building my life.” Tola even had enough time to start a home and family, and even celebrated the birth of small Isoa, his first child on 25 July last year.

During his 2006 vacation, Tola even became a star, after launching the first Shaka Olumese Cup, a football tournament initially for youths in his quarter, but now expanded to the entire town. Sponsored by the local authorities, as well as NGOs and civil society leaders, the tournament ended with the victory of “Juventus” Club by 2-0 over “Santos” at the finals played on 3 September.

With that event, Tola was again successful in his efforts to integrate into society, to the great satisfaction of the Mayor of Gao, Sabane Alassane Maiga: “I’m just starting my second term in office, and he has never been involved in any problem in the village. By offering this competition to the youth of Gao, he has proved his love for this town that has welcomed him. He is a good example of integration that should be followed by all economic operators. He is not one of us, but he loves this country, and he proves it”.

Tola is today a different person; he has not said that he will never go to Europe, but he is categorical: “If I have to go to Europe one day, I won’t be going to look for a job”●

M.B.

SECURITY AND BORDERS IN CASAMANCE

The security situation in Casamance affects not only Senegal but also neighbouring countries, and more particularly the southern part of The Gambia and the northern end of Guinea Bissau.

The separatist intentions of the “Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance” (MFDC), in armed conflict against the Senegalese Government since 1982, are a source of instability for the entire sub-region, causing the displacement of civilians fleeing from the conflict.

Some civilians, after losing all their property, are obliged to seek refuge on the other side of the border. Others, often ex-combatants of armed factions, decide to flee to avoid any reprisals.

In 2002, the High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR) Delegation in Senegal estimated that there are 7300 Senegalese refugees in Guinea Bissau.

Settling mainly in rural areas, some of them live in refugee camps, like that of Jolmète some 40 kilometres from the northern border of Guinea Bissau, where thousands of people have settled since 1996.

“The search for a cross-border solution is crucial to any peace strategy in Casamance.” Benedict Lambal / Mayor of Oussouye

In view of the large numbers of displaced/refugee Senegalese in The Gambia and Guinea Bissau and the security problems at the borders, the return to peace in Casamance seems to depend greatly on seeking a cross-border solution.

What do you think?

Indeed, I am quite convinced that the search for a cross-border solution is crucial to any peace strategy in Casamance.

Without the involvement of The Gambia and Guinea Bissau, any search for peace will be limited to declarations of good intention.

I feel that by adopting a cross-border approach to settle the conflict, consultation and participation mechanisms will go a long way because they will associate border communities and consider a number of challenges raised by the cross-border approach.

These include the circulation of light weapons, securing the borders bearing

In 2005 and 2006, many Senegalese refugees returned from Guinea Bissau and The Gambia.

These streams of displaced Senegalese are coupled with just as many Bissau Guinean populations.

During the Presidential elections organised in Guinea Bissau in June 2005, international observers feared that there would be massive flows of people to the Kolda and Ziguinchor regions (Senegal).

However, it was only with the resumption of bombings in March 2006, following the official declaration of war by the Army Chief of Staff of Guinea Bissau, General Tag Na Way, to the Casamance war lord, Salif Sadio, that a new wave of people started fleeing by road, paths and river.

Oio and Cacheu regions, bordering the Ziguinchor region and Sédhiou Department (Kolda region), were bombed (Sao Domingo, in particular), leading to the flight of displaced Bissau Guineans and Senegalese.

On 3 April 2006, according to estimates by humanitarian services staff in the Cacheu region, nearly 2,000 displaced persons from Varela and Zusanna – very isolated towns

in mind the immense work done by the cross-border surveillance committees, collaboration between administrative authorities on both sides of the border, the reintegration of refugee/displaced populations, etc.

Indeed, today we cannot solve the problem of the return of refugees without taking into account the fact that they were hosted by their Gambian and Bissau Guinean brothers for many years.

For example, it is by knowing the conditions under which the refugees lived, the support they received, and the training they underwent, that we can assist them towards sustainable socio-professional reintegration into their communities of origin.

We all know that it is necessary to collaborate – The Gambians, Senegalese and Bissau Guineans alike. As the saying goes: “When my neighbour’s hut is burning and the fire is not put out, it can spread and burn surrounding huts”.

after the bombings around Sao Domingo – took refuge in Cacheu, and some 1,500 others in Ingore.

Furthermore, unofficial sources estimate that about 2,500 displaced persons sought refuge in Ziguinchor in mid-March 2006.

Most of them settled in Bourgadié market, a quarter in Mpack, a border post about ten kilometres from Ziguinchor.

Benedict Lambal, Mayor of Oussouye (Oussouye Department–Ziguinchor region), President of the “Association des présidents and maires du département d’Oussouye” (APMO) and Chairman of the Security and Return to Peace Committee making preparations for the Peace Conference in Foundiougne II, gives us his opinion on the experience and future of the border populations.

He also shares with us how his recent collaboration with the Prefect of Domingo facilitated the return of displaced Senegalese to their villages of origin.●

However, with the willingness to transform this into concrete action, development partners should support this approach, and policy makers at different levels in the three countries should seek to collaborate systematically.

We see similar cases every day. For example, in Oussouye Department, and more particularly in Santhiaba Mandjack Rural Community, the infrastructure and public utilities constructed by government agencies or development partners are used by all the border populations. Today this type of experience should simply be multiplied by ten or twenty.

During the workshop launching the operation to support cross-border cooperation between Guinea Bissau, Senegal and The Gambia organized in October 2005, you met RUIS Cardoso, the Prefect of Sao Domingo. Could you tell us how, together, you managed to plan the

return of displaced/refugee Senegalese from Guinea Bissau to their areas of origin, and how your services collaborated?

First of all, I wish to draw attention to the fact that before becoming Mayor of Oussouye, I had been fighting for the defence of human rights in “Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l’Homme (RADDHO)”.

My membership in such a structure enabled me to acquire experience and contacts that I rely on whenever people need my assistance. However, I was invited to the launching workshop in Ziguinchor as Mayor and President of the “Association des maires du département d’Oussouye” (APMO).

It was during this workshop that I met several Gambian and Bissau Guinean personalities. I was then convinced that I could count on their collaboration if one day one of my fellow citizens needed assistance. After the workshop, when I was contacted by the daughter of a volunteer (teacher), I didn’t hesitate to advise her to tell her father to contact Sao Domingo Prefecture for the required formalities.

After everything has been done, we went with his daughter to Sao Domingo to get him. It should be noted that before leaving, we went to the Prefecture and the Assistant Prefect issued all the documents required for traveling through Guinea without any problem.

Since there is a big gap between political statements that encourage refugees to return (“Come back, everything’s fine”) and the actual situation where there are still many risks, to which refugees/displaced people do you give priority? What is the role of associations and NGOs in this initiative?

In the “Association des Présidents et des Maires du département d’Oussouye” (APMO), one conviction guides our choice: it’s by solving the problem of Senegalese refugees in The Gambia or Guinea Bissau first that we will be able to convince the displaced populations, that is those who live somewhere in the region or in the country, to “return home”.

Apart from that, at the moment, we have recorded a large number of people who have returned to Effock and Youtou villages in Santhiaba Mandjack Rural Community, with the assistance of NGOs and especially two supervisory structures in the department, namely AJAEDO and FADDO, which during difficult times, assisted the populations.

Sao Domingo and Oussouye form part of the old Diola Kingdom of Kassa. The communities are the same and they collaborate in secular matters. Some of the displaced people have settled in Guinea Bissau for the last 20 years.

What are the challenges posed by the return of these Diola populations to Oussouye?

To what extent can that create tensions between these displaced people and the populations of their land of origin?

The return of the populations that have settled in Guinea for many years is, of course, desired by the great majority of the population, but we should know that reintegration can create some problems.

If some people left their localities and sought refuge in Guinea Bissau, it is simply because they had been denounced by other people as being affiliated to or sympathizing with MFDC.

These denunciations were made for reasons best known only to the persons concerned. The return of refugees under these circumstances could create problems of cohabitation.

However, we belong to the same community, and we have conflict resolution mechanisms which, when applied, would be binding to all and become law.

In other localities, there is also the problem of land occupied by villagers who remained behind, but who now refuse to leave this land when the owners come back.

In the Department, it could be said that expropriation of land when the rightful owner is known, is prohibited; it is a sort of “organic” law which is a pillar of our form of social organization.

There is also another social practice which will come into play when the refugees return; the practice could result in appeasement and harmony.

I am referring here to discretion, humility. A refugee who returns should not brag about having done this or that in front of people who remained behind. This avoids escalation in statements and actions.

Distraction

THE SHEPHERDESSES,
THE BUSTARD AND THE JACKAL



One day, the jackal discovered a way to capture a bustard. He knew that the bird loved gum arabic, so he buried himself under a tree until just one eye was showing, which he coated with gum arabic. A passing bustard wanted to try the gum arabic. All at once, the jackal’s jaw closed on his leg. In a panic, the bustard flew off with his predator hanging on. They flew over a group of shepherdesses who were grazing their animals. They spotted the jackal, and cried out: “*Oh, master Muhammad is learning to fly!*” And so the jackal very proudly shouted: “*There’s nothing amazing about it!*”. In so doing, the jackal fell, mouth open, among the shepherdesses, who seized him.

THE JACKAL AND THE EWE

A ewe perched on a camel was going for a walk. Passing under a tree, the camel trod on a jackal who was enjoying the shade.

The jackal cried: “*Hem, hem! Ewe, is it you who dares to tread on me?*” The frightened ewe replied: “*No ! It isn’t me, it’s the camel.*” The jackal said: “*It’s your weight on the camel that is squashing me.*”



TUAREG RIDDLE : What is the thread that has tied the whole country?
(Answer : *dæəŋs*).

THREE DAYS TO COVER 400 KM



Niamey to Gao is approximately 400 km by road. Just a leisurely excursion? Make no mistake. Getting from the capital of Niger to the city of the Askia in the east of Mali is a never-ending journey.

After some 180 km of asphalt road between Niamey and Ayorou, the last Niger village on the road to Mali, the road is a nightmare. The colonisers had marked out a road, however, and their roadmenders surfaced it with laterite and then gravel, and built a number of reinforced concrete sills to negotiate the countless backwaters that cross the route on their way to the river on its west side.

Once the colonists left, the Ayorou-Gao section, and specifically the Ayorou-Yassane loop (the Niger border crossing), was left to brave the bad weather. The road has become an obstacle course for stuntmen. At best, it takes two days to get from Niamey to Gao. At worst, it takes longer than this, and only 4x4s, Land Rovers, Toyotas, Land Cruisers and 10-wheeled trucks (the kind that can cope with deserts) come across each other here.

Even with such all-terrain vehicles, passengers are required nearly every 10 km to get out and push or to help pull the vehicle



out of mud or sand. A cart is still the safest means of transport on this road.

Asphalting work has been taking place on this frightening section since the end of September.

This is, at last, the realisation of a project that will bring Niamey and Bamako closer together

and consolidate cross-border relations between Zarma western Niger and Sonrai eastern Mali : two languages with a common root; two peoples with the same dialect; two communities with a great deal in common.

The road will again play an important part in integration. ●



Attraction

EMISKININE, THE MOSQUE AT AGADEZ

Built in the 14th century by the famous Zakaria, the great mosque at Agadez is known locally as “Emiskinine”, a Tamashek word that literally means “the one who shows”. It is intertwined with the town’s religious history.

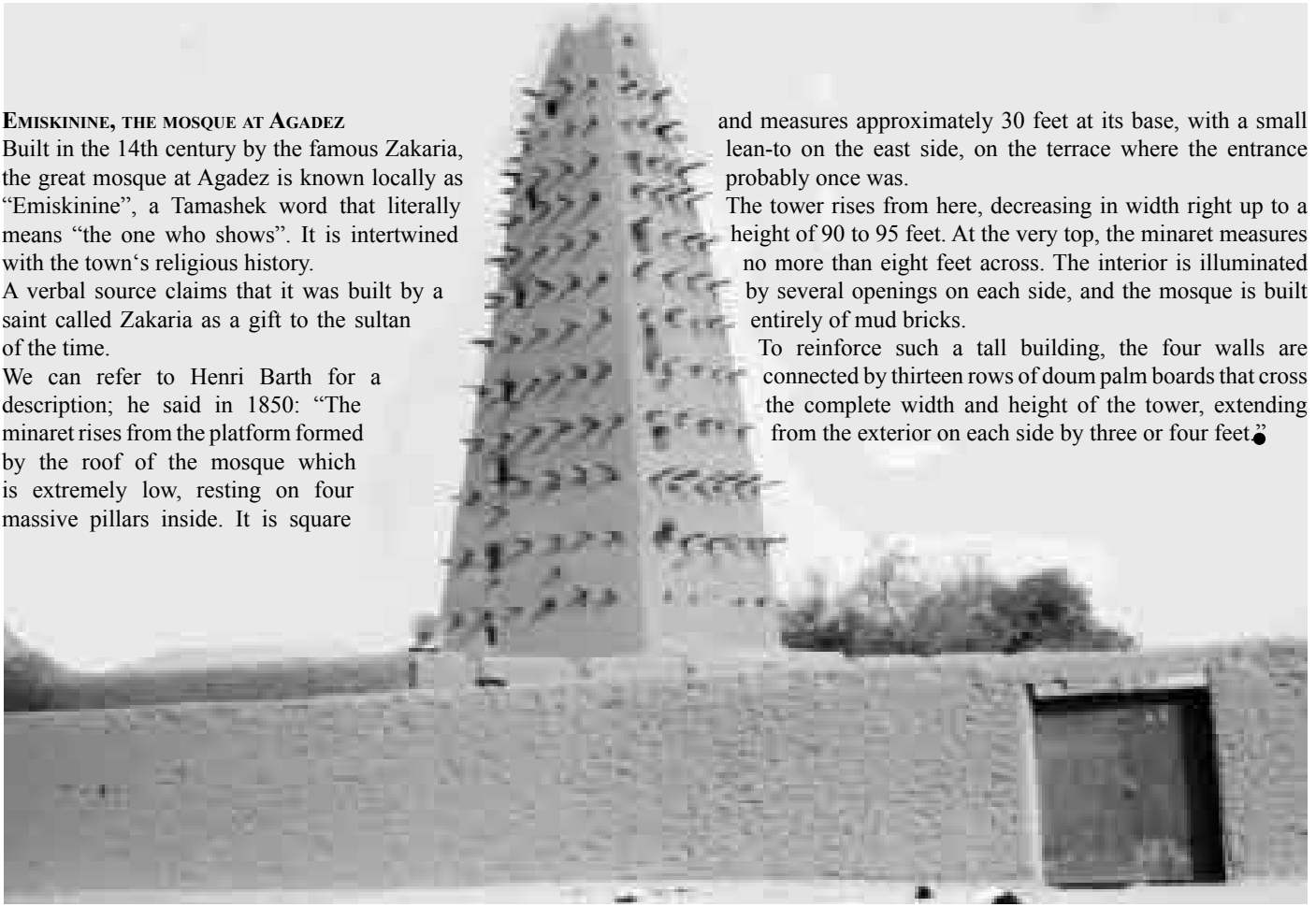
A verbal source claims that it was built by a saint called Zakaria as a gift to the sultan of the time.

We can refer to Henri Barth for a description; he said in 1850: “The minaret rises from the platform formed by the roof of the mosque which is extremely low, resting on four massive pillars inside. It is square

and measures approximately 30 feet at its base, with a small lean-to on the east side, on the terrace where the entrance probably once was.

The tower rises from here, decreasing in width right up to a height of 90 to 95 feet. At the very top, the minaret measures no more than eight feet across. The interior is illuminated by several openings on each side, and the mosque is built entirely of mud bricks.

To reinforce such a tall building, the four walls are connected by thirteen rows of doum palm boards that cross the complete width and height of the tower, extending from the exterior on each side by three or four feet.”



HEALTH SHOP

The health shop in Gao town centre deals with a particular aspect of health, namely that of the stomach.

The health shop is nothing other than a dibiterie (a shop selling grilled meat) combined with a bistro: an establishment that treats your hunger and thirst. It is also the most visited shop in town.●



A NOSE FOR BUSINESS: Around particularly difficult routes, merchants arrive by bicycle

to conduct occasional business. Inevitably, all trucks will spend an hour or two there and one or two will stay there for the night before being able to continue.

Their makeshift displays contain basic goods such as gari (manioc flour), sugar, tea, dates, nut grass, peanuts, cigarettes, aspirin, Nivaquine, and luxury items such as mats and blankets for hire.

An initiative that pays.●



By Michel Bolouvi

THE KURUMBA OR “STEPLADDER” NETWORK OF RADIO STATIONS IN THE SIKASSO-KORHOGO-DIOULASSO (S.K.Bo) ZONE

Cross-border Initiative Programme/S.K.Bo Area

Turning borders into areas of unity and not disunity – since the end of May 2006, this concept has taken shape within the media sector in the S.K.Bo area, a border, or rather cross-border area, situated between Mali and Burkina Faso, and is awaiting a more favourable climate to include Côte d’Ivoire.

A network of community radio stations has been created in Mali and Burkina Faso in the Sikasso-Korhogo-Bobo Dioulasso triangle. Using the Bambara name Kurumba (stepladder), five community radios have been the driving forces behind a network of cross-border radio stations.

Radio Munyu in Banfora, Kéné Dougou in

Sikasso, Yeelen and Folona in Kadiolo and Danaya in Zegoua have, perhaps without realising it, started implementing the Cross-border Initiative Programme (CIP), confirming the coming of age of the concept of a border area.

The Kurumba network of community radio stations in the Sikasso-Korhogo-Bobo Dioulasso area has opened a new chapter in

the history of cross-border cooperation in West Africa, the operational chapter of which was written in January 2005, when the Council of Ministers and the conference of Heads

THE FIVE STANDARD-BEARERS

The 5 radios of the network

Mali

1) Radio Folona, “La voix du Folona” the voice of Folona, in Kadiolo in South Sikasso, Southwest Bobo Dioulasso and North Korhogo. Address : PO Box 57 Kadiolo (Republic of Mali). Telephone : +223 2 66 01 42 / Email: radiofolona@yahoo.fr / Rural radio station broadcasting on FM 94.1 MHz, covering the villages of Baguéra, Loumana, Ouléni and Kolokoni in Burkina Faso. Creation date: 12 April 1994 with the support of the ACCT (currently AIF). Broadcast languages in order of airtime: Bambara, Senoufo, Fulani, Samogo, Bwa, Sonrai, French. Main broadcast topics: Farming and animal breeding, environment and forestry, health, culture.

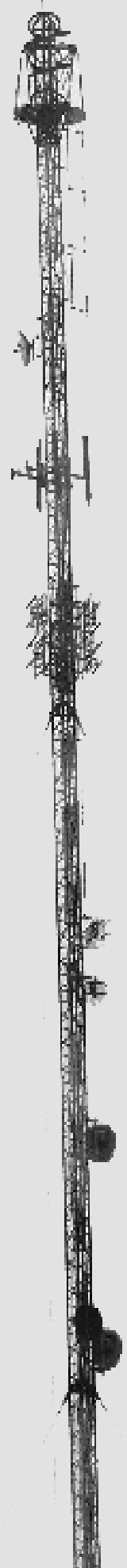
2) Radio Yeelen in Kadiolo. Address: B.P. 47 Kadiolo (Republic of Mali). Telephone : +223 2 66 00 76 / Email: soumdagnoko@yahoo.fr / Independent religious association-run radio broadcasting on FM 92.5 MHz, covering the villages of Baguéra and Kolokoni in Burkina Faso and the villages of Bengué, Diawala, Ouangolodougou and Tengrela in Côte d’Ivoire. Creation date: 1 December 1997 by the “Pain de vie” Mission. Broadcast languages in order of airtime: Bambara, Senoufo, Samogo, Fulani, French. Main broadcast topics: Farming and animal breeding, environment and forestry, health, child trafficking.

3) Radio Danaya, in Zegoua, a town bordering Côte d’Ivoire, situated South of Sikasso, South-West of Bobo Dioulasso and North of Korhogo. Address : B.P. 49 Zegoua (Republic of Mali). Telephone : +223 2 66 60 94 / Local station broadcasting on FM 105.5 MHz, covering the villages of Niélé and Diawala in Côte d’Ivoire and the sub-prefectures of Loumana and Baguéra in Burkina Faso. Creation date: 11 July 2001 Broadcast languages in order of airtime: Bambara, Senoufo, Fulani, Samogo, Dogon, French. Main broadcast topics: Environment and forestry, health, education, child trafficking, society, economy, women.

4) Radio Kéné Dougou, “La voix du Kéné Dougou” the voice of Kenedougou, in Sikasso, West of Bobo Dioulasso and North of Korhogo. Address : B.P. 139 Place du marché, Sikasso (Republic of Mali) Telephone : +223 2 62 05 11 / Email: radiokene@afribone.net.ml / Association-run radio station broadcasting on FM 100 MHz, covering the Cercle de Sikasso, a part of Western Burkina Faso, the South of the Cercle de Kadiolo and the South-West of Yorosso. Creation date: 17 October 1992. Broadcast languages in order of airtime: Bambara, Senoufo, Fulani, Minianka, French. Main broadcast topics: Rural development, environment, health, education, culture.

Burkina Faso

Radio Munyu “La voix de la femme” the voice of Women in Banfora, South-West of Bobo Dioulasso, South-East of Sikasso and North-East of Korhogo. Address : B.P. 298, Banfora (Republic of Burkina Faso) Telephone : +226 20 91 08 08 / Email: ass_munyu@yahoo.fr / Association-run radio broadcasting on FM 95.2 MHz, covering the provinces of Comoé and Léraba (Sindou) in Burkina Faso, a part of the provinces of Houet and Kéné Dougou, Sikasso in Mali and Ouangolodougou in Côte d’Ivoire. Creation date: authorised on 14 July 1999, first broadcast on 6 June 2000. Supported by Oxfam GB and membership fees. Broadcast languages in order of airtime: Jula, Cerma, Kara, Turka, Senoufo, French, Fulfulde, Moore. Main broadcast topics: Women’s, children’s and human rights, child trafficking, health and development, education, culture and youth, environment and rural development●



of ECOWAS Member States officially established cross-border cooperation. The modus operandi of this community policy, the CIP process, has since had complete freedom to encourage more and more specific projects led by organisations promoting social dialogue and action in all border areas in the West African community.

There are two pilot areas: Sikasso-Korhogo-Bobo Dioulasso and Southern Senegambia. Local actors from these areas met in Sikasso (Mali) in September and in Ziguinchor (Senegal) in October 2005 to draw up concrete action plans.

All that was missing was the implementation stage, which was to be taken care of first by staff at community radio stations in the Sikasso-Korhogo-Bobo Dioulasso area, supported by the Municipal Development Partnership (MDP).

The CIP has been functioning since then

and is waiting for peace to return to Côte d'Ivoire so that the stepladder can regain its third leg in the Sikasso-Korhogo-Bobo Dioulasso area.

The CIP challenge was thus taken up in the S.K.Bo area with the pilot project of "creating a cross-border network of S.K.Bo community radio stations", proposed at the Sikasso (Mali) workshop in September 2005.

Staff at radio stations in the area, who attended the workshop, introduced and supported the relevance of this initiative, which was the eighth proposal of the action plan. The proposal was: "The S.K.Bo zone is covered by a number of FM community radio stations playing a key role in broadcasting local news.

Local populations find their bearings through these radio stations. The creation of one or two technical broadcast production centres

in the S.K.Bo zone would allow these radio stations to become partners and would set them up as a network to help local regional integration and maintain good neighbourly relations."

During the workshop, one of the co-organisers, the Municipal Development Partnership, pledged to support the start-up of this media sector project broadcasting in the cross-border area covering the Malian town Sikasso, Bobo, in Burkina Faso, and Korhogo, in Côte d'Ivoire, known collectively as the S.K.Bo zone.

The project involved the joint production of broadcasts aired on community radios broadcasting beyond their national borders in the S.K.Bo area. This local news service was a perfect match for the role of cross-border cooperation in assisting regional integration.

Set-up

On 12 and 13 April 2006, in Banfora in Burkina Faso, the MDP organised a meeting between the managers, journalists, presenters and technicians of five radio stations - one from each of Sikasso, Zegoua and Banfora, and two from Kadiolo.

This first event, with the various actors of this "network under construction", acted as a general meeting, laid the foundations for the network, and led to the creation of an operational body.

The Banfora meeting was ultimately decisive; it established a Production Committee (Comité de Production) PC for the network, which was made up of six journalists, including a coordinator, Mr Soumaïla Dagnoko, the manager of Radio Yeelen, and a chief editor, Mr Ouattara Nabilaye Issa, a journalist at Radio Folona.

Two production centres for the network were also selected, one at Radio Yeelen in Kadiolo, Mali, and the other at Radio Munyu in Banfora, Burkina Faso, and the network's action plan was outlined.

Encouraged by the renewed willingness of radio station staff to implement their network project, the MDP strengthened the existing human and technical resources available at this core of five radio stations by contributing production materials and personnel training.

The MDP provided the network with sound recording and digital editing equipment for its studios in Kadiolo and Banfora.

The first production conference was scheduled from 17 to 30 May in Kadiolo, Mali; this was the first meeting of the Production Committee (PC), the network's executive body. The end of May 2006 was highly significant for cross-border

THE MEMBERS OF THE CP

Soumaila Dagnoko, Ouattara Nabilaye Issa and journalists Issouf Koné (Radio Danaya, Zegoua, Mali), Mamadou Ousseini Barry (Radio Yeelen, Kadiolo, Mali), Boubacar Cissé (Radio Kéné Dougou, Sikasso, Mali), Father Jean-Baptiste Traoré and his assistant Marie-Yvonne Zerbo (Radio Munyu, Banfora, Burkina Faso).



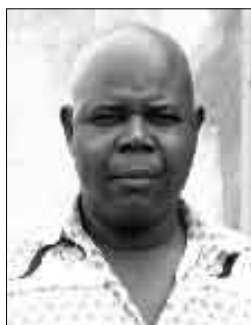
Soumaila Dagnoko



Traoré Jean-Baptiste



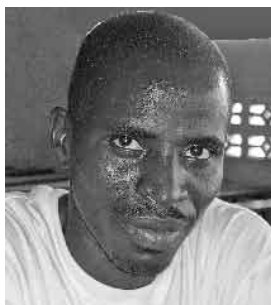
Ouattara Nabilaye Issa



Boubacar Cissé



Mamadou Ousseini Barry



Issouf Koné



Marie-Yvonne Zerbo

cooperation because at the same time as the PC was holding its meeting, the town of Kayes in eastern Mali was hosting an integration week (with border cooperation as a central theme), celebrated jointly by Mali, Senegal and Mauritania.

The six members of the PC, Soumaila Dagnoko, Ouattara Nabilaye Issa and journalists Issouf Koné (Radio Danaya, Zegoua, Mali), Mamadou Ousseini Barry (Radio Yeelen, Kadiolo, Mali), Boubacar Cissé (Radio Kéné Dougou, Sikasso, Mali), Father Jean-Baptiste Traoré and his assistant Marie-Yvonne Zerbo (Radio Munyu, Banfora, Burkina Faso), met at the Radio Yeelen building in Kadiolo in order to create an action plan and, more importantly, produce the Kurumba network's first broadcast.

Integration magazine

The end of May 2006 was thus a period of very hard work for the Production Committee; first there was the production meeting in Kadiolo, then each journalist returned to their locale to launch a campaign with reports, interviews and previews of sound clips, before returning to the studio in Kadiolo for sleepless nights in production.

The challenge was huge but was met; the Production Committee put onto CD two launch broadcasts of the "Magazine de l'intégration" (Integration Magazine) and then onto the airwaves in the S.K.Bo zone. First, was a broadcast presenting the network and Act I of a two-part episode on the S.K.B.o area and its population.

This two-part production, entitled "*La zone S.K.Bo, Communauté de destin I et II*" ("*The S.K.Bo zone: Community of Fate I and II*"), is the first in a series of broadcasts about cross-border news. The Kurumba network is now established and is an active partner in developing cross-border cooperation between people living within a common geographic and economic area.

What were the boundaries of this territory? Who were its first residents? What were their relationships like before the borders were demarcated? "*Communauté de destin I*", the first integration magazine programme, offered an initiatory journey into the S.K.Bo area by exploring the history of this empire of former warriors. The Production Committee recommended a monthly production campaign. Each production campaign requires a minimum of meeting and travel costs to be met. The Pdm, the project's sponsor since September 2005, has covered costs thus far.

Both the PC and MDP are aware that this support was only meant to cover the start-up stage. The issue of follow-up management seems not to have been considered when the action plan was drawn up. The experiment

is nonetheless an achievement and today the Kurumba network is built up around a core of five radio stations and is expected to grow. ●

M. B.

ON BEHALF OF TERRITORIAL COHESION

Three questions for Christel Alvergne and Edmond Sougué of the MDP.



Out of all the groups who committed themselves in Sikasso to supporting a draft action plan, the MDP is one of the very few to have

taken an active role in creating a directory for the S.K.Bo zone and setting up the radio station network. Christel Alvergne and Edmond Sougué, both members of the MDP, and respectively the technical advisor and the territorial development programme officer, told us what they thought about the initiative.

In what way has the MDP benefited from getting involved in the creation of the S.K.Bo radio network to the extent of financing the programme?

The MDP saw an opportunity in this project to allow local actors to share common information with a view to strengthening the feeling of belonging to the S.K.Bo zone. This network is a tool which allows actors to cooperate beyond their borders, for example on economic activities specific to the S.K.Bo zone, local produce, etc.

It will promote the sharing of experiences between media professionals and will develop relations between community radio stations.

For the MDP, it is a concrete action strengthening the realities of territorial cohesion in the area and this could be further extended by institutional policies.

How can the creation of the network help integration and cross-border cooperation in the SKBo zone?

Cross-border areas are often forgotten by regional integration policies and are regions of potential conflict. The benefit of this programme for cross-border areas lies in enabling them to resolve their issues and highlight their importance in view of public policy.

We believe that this network can encourage integration through broadcasts aimed at a specific cross-border audience living the realities of integration, for example broadcasts on the free movement of people and animals, concerning the prevention and fight against certain illnesses, such as meningitis and the transmission of HIV/AIDS.

Given the difficulties of creating the network, do you think the organisation has a future and what obstacles must it avoid?

The organisation has a future insofar as this initiative relies on pre-existing realities. The meeting held in Sikasso in September 2005 confirmed the existence of these realities. As for the obstacles, the network can avoid them by obtaining a specific legal status and becoming self-financed. ●

A network member with something to celebrate

“LA VOIX DE LA FEMME” CELEBRATES 5 YEARS

Interview with Juliette Sougué, manager of Radio Munyu, Banfora

The Munyu Association dominated the news for a week in Banfora celebrates the 5th anniversary of its radio station, “La voix de la femme” (The Voice of Women). An information week was held from 5-11 June with the mass marriage of 65 couple on Saturday 10 June, a happy ending to a week of open house events, conferences, quiz programmes, educational chats, etc.

Munyu, which means “patience” in Bambara, is a women’s association with approximately 10,000 members from the provinces of Comoé, Léraba, Kéné Dougou and Houet. Created in 1992, the association has set itself specific targets, and one of the tools used to achieve those targets has included the creation of an FM radio station, The Voice of Women, which has been broadcasting since 2001 on 95.2 MHz from the Kossra hill in Banfora. Let’s take a look at the event with Juliette Sougué, the station manager of Radio Munyu, The Voice of Women.



How important is the fifth anniversary of Radio Munyu to you?

This fifth anniversary is very important to us, all the more so because it comes straight after receiving an honour on 11 December last year during the national holiday celebrations in Burkina Faso.

We were looking forward to June to this fifth anniversary to celebrate and drink to Radio Munyu having been awarded the Burkina Faso national merit, Chevalier de l’Ordre du Mérite Burkinabé, last December. This award is a significant honour for us and shows that our activities in our sub-region are of great importance to the national authorities.

In December, we also received a certificate, the third prize in the “Ondes de Liberté” (Waves of Liberty) competition, which we were awarded in Bamako, Mali. All this shows that in 5 years we have gained experience and there is something positive in our activities.

Five years is quite a long time. Would you say that the targets set for the radio station have been met?

Yes, but there are still many more to be met. At the outset, the radio station’s objective was to pass information on to our members because we struggled to communicate with them. Lots of awareness-raising activities

had to be carried out here in Banfora. These were hindered because all members had to travel to them; this was impossible as they did not receive the invitation or received it after the date of the meeting.

We needed a radio station to reach everyone and to lead our fight effectively for the well-being of women and children. Radio has become a reality but we are still waiting for new listeners to join.

You have achieved much success, national and regional recognition, yet you still have very high expectations. What are your views after a busy 5 years?

As regards the fight against poverty, we haven’t done enough. Take literacy for example, the idea was that all women should be literate but they haven’t understood this message yet. We need to improve the literacy rate and work more with rural communities.

As for loans, we have to help women gain access to them and manage them well. The association wants to lead this fight with its radio station.

Our visits to villages have shown us that poverty is a major obstacle to any activity. Poverty prevents women from liberating themselves, even as concerns learning.

They don’t have anything against literacy but they will tell you that their priority is to go to pick shea nuts or collect firewood.

Some women are willing to go to literacy classes but because others are not committed, they don’t go either. Their argument is that while some women are out working and earning money, they are going to be stuck in class learning to read and write.

This is very ambitious for an association as well as for the radio station - can you afford it?

We have the will and highly responsible people in charge who are ready to work hard for the well-being of women. That in itself is an asset.

You’ve been the manager of the radio station since February 2004; do your duties leave you enough time to do other things?

This is my full-time job but I also take part in some of the association’s activities, such as going out on awareness-raising campaigns with members of the executive office.

But I must admit that my responsibilities as the station manager have put a hold on my family and social life. It’s a highly restrictive job but I get great satisfaction from doing it and I am increasingly involved and prepared to lead the fight. I have no regrets.

The SKBo network of radio stations came into existence here, in Banfora, in April. What do you think of this initiative?

It’s a very good initiative. Nowadays, no radio station, no service can work independently of others, you need to lend a hand to others to succeed.

The fight in the sub-region is the same; it’s about the same community facing the same problems.

This initiative will allow us to improve ourselves and better serve our communities, particularly border communities.●



Soumaïla Dagnoko interviewing Juliette Sougué. Media Cross-border cooperation is underway.

Interview carried out by M. Bolouvi

“THE S.K.Bo NETWORK IS FOSTERING AND FACILITATING INTEGRATION RELATIONS”

Soumaila Dagnoko, Director of Radio Yeelen in Kadiolo, South Mali, and Coordinator of the S.K.Bo, “Kurumba” Radio Network

How can the creation of the network help promote integration in the S.K.Bo zone?

The creation of the network is a response to a need expressed by the community. At the Sikasso meeting in September 2005, participants expressed the need to increase communication in order to promote integration. Local radio stations along the border are directly involved in this process. Radio Folona in Kadiolo in the Republic of Mali, was the first step of a close collaboration between the neighbouring towns of Baguèra in Burkina Faso and Kadiolo in Mali.

These two towns intend to twin together, and that will be a good example of decentralized South-South cooperation if the authorities follow the movement of populations.

The S.K.Bo Network is fostering and facilitating these relations towards integration. The first programmes were prepared, and are being broadcast. We have already started receiving reactions from listeners; let’s wait and see. I’m optimistic.

In view of the difficulties encountered in creating the network, do you think the organization has a future?

Difficulties stimulate any ambitious person. When you succeed in overcoming difficulties in a business, you are taken seriously by observers and partners. I believe in the network, despite the difficulties it encountered at the initial stages. The network

consists of a core of 5 radio stations, which proved worthy in the S.K.Bo zone, and have had collaborative experience, especially Radio Sud in Sikasso.

We are simply requesting partners and structures interested in regional integration to support us in this adventure, just like the Municipal Development Partnership (MDP) is doing.

Meanwhile, we are trying to adopt texts to govern its functioning and give it legal status. The next step will be to raise its visibility among authorities and partners.

What are the obstacles that the network must avoid?

We will need to avoid creating a network to serve purposes other than those that had been chosen freely. We need to ensure that the network is not just another organization, and therefore work to avoid division. The essence of a network is to work as a team.

What can the network bring to its members? Especially at the professional level and in the development of radio activities?

We have a lot to gain. In addition to the integration of radio stations and people, the network is a framework for mutual exchange between member radio stations and communities at the technical, writing and programming levels.

The MDP’s support has helped strengthen



PC membres interviewing the Zégoua chief

our technical facilities with digital equipment: computers, recorders, etc.

Radios are moving from the analogue to the digital, thereby improving production quality. This will certainly have an impact on the listening quality, and this is really an added value.●

Carried out by M. Bolouvi

COMMUNITY RADIO HAS BECOME A DRIVING FORCE FOR SOCIAL BONDING

Interview of Ibrahima Soly Mandian and Mamadu Silla, Senegalese and Gambian journalists.

What role can border zone community radio stations play in sub-regional integration and in post-conflict situations as is the case in the Ségambien zone?

Ibrahima Soly Mandian: In this zone, community radio has become a social bonding factor because it brings people together, it smoothes over the social mores through music, folklore that they broadcast over the air waves.

It is a cohesive element between the people who share the same cultural values. It speaks to the population; it compiles their ailments, and transposes the security and economic concerns through the radio.

Mamadu Silla: Community radio begins by the dissemination of important messages like the radio host from Guinea-Bissau covering the big Senegalese religious event like Gamou.

That’s a freedom that community radio has that the national radios are not often able to do. When an event like Gamou is covered by the radio, many people are listening.

Here is a very opportune moment to pass short five minute messages on peace and culture which link border populations.

The second argument is that everyone from Guinea-Bissau or Senegal would rather listen to the radio rather than read the newspaper. Many are illiterate and share the price of the radio.

A packet of batteries costs 200 CFA Francs, the same price as a national newspaper. 10 people can listen to a radio programme at the same time. There is a saying here “the news crosses the river but never takes a canoe”.

What risks are linked to being a radio host or journalist on a community cross-border local radio station within a post-conflict zone?

I.S.M.: There are numerous, but first there is a lack of professionalism among radio hosts as well as financial and technical means.

A drama unfolds rapidly when messages are poorly transmitted, thus information is poorly interpreted.

The radio, and through the radio, journalists and radio hosts must learn to deal with the information complacently but objectively.

This requires having the time for in-depth investigation, to relate the context in which the incident occurred while keeping in mind that a journalist should never take sides.

What do you expect from a cross-border meeting like the one you attended today and which is based on one of the proposals of the action plan from the CIP pilot operation launching workshop (set up community radio into network in the S n gambie m ridionale zone)?

I.S.M.: Setting up community radio into networks is a very important tool, first to have a better understanding and an exchange of views between us on the new know-how in order to be more professional. It is too bad that this comes a bit late.

It is without a doubt due to the fact that Senegalese community radio only has 10 years of experience behind it which is not the case in many of the neighbouring countries.

This will enable them over the next few days to work on radio programmes of Ziguinchor's Kassoumay FM and give it a more cross-border content.

In the short-term, by promoting these constant exchanges between Gambian, Senegalese and Guinea-Bissau radios, the personnel as well as the programmes, joint productions and editorial synergy could be assured.

M.S.: This workshop has provided a good opportunity for various actors to meet and have an exchange of views. I am satisfied because we are beginning to recognise and make known the work that we have accomplished.

I am happy if over time, Radio Djalicunda is not the only station to go into foreign territory to cover events.

Setting up radio stations into network enables systematic exchanges between journalists.

In any case, if the radio station, which is in the process of being set up in Dioulacoulon with the MJPI and with the support of GTZ Procas, seeks to exchange with the Radio Djalicunda, we are ready to welcome them.●

Carried out by E. Saliot

A World Cup without Borders “FOOTBALL-LAGER-TV-COUNTRY!”

THE MAGICAL WORLD CUP COMBINATION

“Football-lager-TV-country!” This combination sold well in all small areas for relaxation and recreation in West Africa.

For two weeks Togo, C te d’Ivoire and Ghana sabotaged themselves in the quest for the World Cup; it was a time for West Africans to see if they form a “country”, that is, if they are relatives, brothers and sisters, a single people with almost everything in common.

Highly represented by three continental teams out of five in the World Cup competitions, West Africans realized, as they watched World Cup matches on magical large screens, that they were bound together by a common destiny.

Everywhere in West Africa, the World Cup created a sensation.

After regretting the elimination of their national teams in the run-up to the World Cup, the citizens strongly backed the selected teams: C te d’Ivoire, Ghana and Togo. Indeed, during the World Cup, the nationals of these countries, everywhere within the West African region, felt like a community, truly integrated.

A pre-eminently social phenomenon, football has always been a major event in Africa. You only need to visit a West African capital city during the month of the African Cup or World Cup competition.

During the matches, the streets are empty, the city becomes a ghost town, and people are glued to the screens of their TV sets in their homes, in shops selling TVs, in reception halls of inns and hotels, and even in some offices.

However, the favorite meeting places are bars and food stalls. There, in front of a “lager” (the name given to beer), the atmosphere crowded with customers, the passion is alive like that in a stadium.

Usually, in front of a TV in a bar or food stalls, customers sit in groups depending on the teams they support: like in a stadium, where supporters sit in groups by affinity.

Anyone who finds himself in the wrong group is rebuffed at the first indication of supporting the other team. When a customer is rooting for Germany, he does not sit with those rooting for France or Italy, Argentina, England or Brazil.

These six teams are the favourites: France, because it is the motherland, along with England, while Brazil is for their expertise, and Germany, Italy and Argentina for their rigour and regularity.

zero when a representative of the continent, particularly West Africa, is playing.

Support is unconditional for the “country” and, like in the stadium; people swear, hurl abuse at one another, jump up or collapse.

Of course, managers of bars and food stalls are pleased by such passion. Some of them carefully prepare for the event, and even pay for radio and TV ads to attract a lot of people.

Hamadou Abdoulaye, the manager of two large bars/food stalls in Niamey (Niger), is one of those. The finals of the African Cup competition, which took place a few months earlier, served as a testing ground.

To attract and keep his customers, he bought, for each of his establishments, four 27 X 29 cm TV sets, which he placed in the four corners of the hall: “*this way, customers need not go home or move when the matches are on*”.

At Hamadou Abdoulaye’s bar the World Cup requires that he reorganize the reception and services: “*I hold meetings with my barmaids and workers regularly to ensure that they make customers comfortable, and I even join them to make sure that everything goes smoothly*”. However, he adds, *no music during the matches; the sound system is connected to the TV sets to improve the sound quality of the matches*”.

“*During the matches, people drink a lot, because they often make bets*”. Drink provisions are doubled: “*especially on days when West African teams are playing; as well as Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, Argentina and England*”.

Among the customers, there are Germans or French, Brazilians or English, etc. However, “*there is no Ghanaian, Ivorian or Togolese. When Ghana, C te d’Ivoire or Togo is playing, it is Africa that is playing; they are our neighbours, our brothers, and we are the ones playing*”.

On such evenings, he says, “*the bar vibrates, along with Africa*”●

However, the preference scale tips back to

M. B.

CROSS-BORDER TELEVISION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION MARKET IMPACT AND SELECTED LEGAL ASPECTS

Prevalence and market impact

- **As of January 2004**, the European Audiovisual Observatory estimates that a total of 1,100 national or transnational television channels were available or originated in the European Union. More than 200 of these channels target non-national markets. In addition there are around 1,900 regional and local channels of which almost 70 are carried by satellites.

- **Channel numbers** have risen steeply from 103 in 1990 to more than 1,100 in 2003 (excluding local channels) - movie and sports themed channels are those showing the fastest increase in numbers.

- **Five types of channels** involved in cross-border broadcasting can be identified:

1. *Single-language pan-European channels* BBC World, TV5 Europe CNN International.

2. *Pan-European channels with distinct language* versions Euronews TV1000 Discovery Channel.

3. *“Delocalised channels” established in country A and targeting country B* RTL9, TV3 (targeting Scandinavian countries).

4. *Channels serving country of origin A but with advertising windows targeting country B* Pro7, the future Irish version of Sky News.

5. *Channels established outside Europe* but relayed through European satellites TV Globo International.

- **The impact of cross-border television** varies widely in terms of audience share, from marginal in the larger markets to a significant impact in smaller markets:

- **Less than 1%** of total audience in the UK, France, Italy, Spain in 2002.

- **But 84%** of total audience in Luxembourg.

- **46% of total audience in Ireland.**

- **and more than 30%** in Austria, the French Community of Belgium, and Sweden.

- **Estimating the economic impact** of cross-border television on national markets remains difficult if not impossible, as companies operating cross-border channels publish no geographical breakdown of their revenues.

- **From a methodological point of view**, the Observatory faces increasing problems in reliably tracking the number of TV channels in existence in Europe and in ascertaining the country of establishment of a certain number of channel providers.

Jurisdictional expertise relative to broadcasters, Community regulations, jurisprudence and an ever-changing audiovisual landscape

- **The balance** between the states interest in regulating broadcasting within its territory (including organisational and content-related issues), and the fundamental freedom to disseminate and receive information is at the very core of jurisdictional expertise affecting broadcasters.

Should a broadcaster perceive this as unbalanced to its detriment it will try to find a more hospitable environment for conducting its business.

- **The freedom of services and freedom of establishment** guaranteed under the EC Treaty, as well as secondary law translating these freedoms into legislation of specialized areas have facilitated decisions by broadcasters in favour of non-national establishment.

Moreover, the “Television without Borders” Directive ensures that television broadcasts can circulate freely between Member States and that broadcasters can offer their services throughout the European Union, regardless of the Member State from which they operate.

- **Consequently**, the issue as to which Member State has jurisdiction over which broadcaster becomes highly relevant. The document describes the basic principles by which the “*Television without Borders*” Directive regulates jurisdiction and summarises the most relevant case law. Due to the complexity of the issue, the enormous growth of the broadcasting sector over the last years, and the impact of new technology on television services, open questions remain and these are highlighted in the document.

Available on :

http://www.obs.coe.int/online_publication/transfrontier_tv.pdf.fr

Summary based in a working document produced by the European Audiovisual Observatory for the Ministerial Conference on broadcasting. (Dublin and Drogheda, March 2004).

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