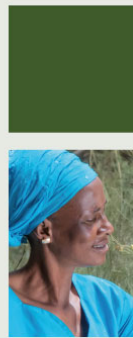




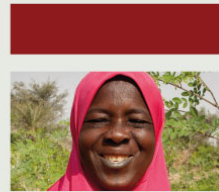
AFRICA DAYS 2022



AfricaDays.org



Joint mobilization for
the achievement of the Great Green Wall.
Let's invest in local initiatives!



Forum proceedings

May 16, 2022 – In Abidjan and virtually



Table of Contents

The Africa Days 2022	3
Introduction.....	3
Context of the Africa Days 2022.....	4
Restitution of the Forum	5
Panel 1 : How to develop Great Green Wall projects that will be impactful and interesting to investors ?.....	5
Panel 2 : Mechanisms to implement in order to connect project leaders with investors	8
The "Champions" of the Great Green Wall	10
Signing of a partnership agreement between SOS SAHEL and the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall (PAGGW)	12
Annexes	13
Annex 1 : GGW project Terms of Reference.....	13
Annex 2 : Videos of the GGW "Champions"	14
Annex 3 : Panelist Bios	14
Annex 4 : Media coverage.....	14



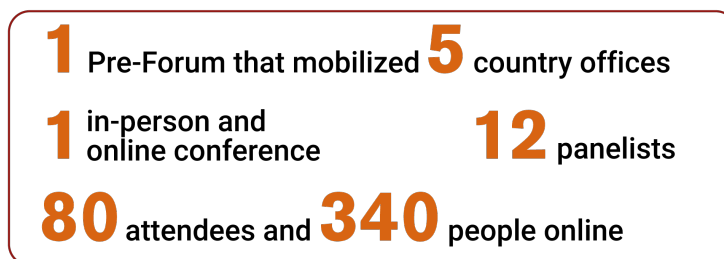
The Africa Days 2022

Introduction

Every year, SOS SAHEL hosts the Africa Days, an opportunity to exchange with different partners and amplify the voices of local stakeholders. Its goal is to promote sustainable solutions for food security, in a context in which agricultural systems face increasing challenges.

The Africa Days underlines SOS SAHEL's mission and spotlights the enormous potential of the Sahel. This event values local initiatives, fosters greater knowledge and skills, and results in concrete recommendations at the close.

In figures...



Activities conducted under the auspices of the Africa Days 2022:

- An in-person and online **Pre-Forum** on May 9 and 10, 2022

Five SOS SAHEL's country offices (Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Mali and Senegal) and their partners (NGOs, government representatives, institutions) participated in the Pre-Forum workshops. There were also online exchanges with other country offices. As part of an inclusive and collaborative approach, the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall (PAGGW), the GGW Accelerator as well as Novethic were also involved in the discussions. SOS SAHEL also consulted key actors of the "GGW ecosystem" to hear their recommendations prior to the workshops.

Based on case studies and successful experiences, participants discussed two key questions, which were then brought to the Africa Days Forum to develop recommendations:

- 1. How to develop Great Green Wall projects that will be impactful and interesting to investors?**
 - What would be the key criteria/points of a GGW project: in terms of social, institutional, economic dynamic...?
 - Which partnerships should be created with other stakeholders?
 - What are investors' expectations?
 - How to monitor and account the projects outcomes?
 - How to ensure the sustainability of investments?
- 2. What mechanisms to implement in order to connect project leaders with investors?**
 - What are the needs of actors who carry out initiatives and what are investors' expectations?
 - What tools are available for dialogue, knowledge sharing, funding, etc.? How can they be improved?

- How to enhance complementarity/coordination with the GGW ecosystem?
- An in-person and online **Forum** in Abidjan on May 16, 2022

The Forum brought together two panels of experts composed of representatives from civil society, GGW agencies, and investors (both public and private). The panelists shared their experiences and answered the 2 questions raised during the Pre-Forum.

Four “Champions” of the Great Green Wall were honored during the Forum to commend their initiatives and collect their testimonies.

The Forum ended with a signed partnership agreement between SOS SAHEL and the Pan-African Agency of the GGW.

Context of the Africa Days 2022

The 6th edition of the Africa Days aimed to accelerate the implementation of the Great Green Wall by connecting project leaders with investors. This edition, which focused on the Great Green Wall, took place in Abidjan in parallel with the Conference of the Parties (COP15) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

SOS SAHEL & the Great Green Wall

Created in 1976, SOS SAHEL is an international NGO operating in 11 Sahelian countries, from Senegal to Djibouti. SOS SAHEL is committed to developing the resources of the territories and thus to strengthening food security of communities and developing an environment adapted to the fragility of the Sahel's natural resources. SOS SAHEL has forged strong partnerships with a wide range of organizations, institutions, companies, committed communities, which represent a network of more than 1 000 partners. SOS SAHEL has over 400 engineers, technicians and experts working in the field.

The Great Green Wall (GGW) for the Sahara and the Sahel is the flagship initiative of the African continent, and more particularly Africa's drylands to restore ecosystems, transform degraded lands and restore their fertility, take advantage of natural resources in a sustainable way and thus guarantee better living conditions for Sahelian families.

SOS SAHEL's field and advocacy work aims at promoting the GGW Initiative and bringing together state institutions and non-state actors. As such, SOS SAHEL was mandated by CSOs and the GGW coordination at the African Union to build the GGW partners' platform: <https://www.panegmv.org>

At the One Planet Summit, financial partners stressed the need to accelerate the implementation of the Great Green Wall and made important financial commitments towards this goal. The implementation of the GGW requires a “multi-stakeholder” and coordinated approach supported by the communities in the form of decentralized initiatives and territorial projects. Non-state actors make an essential contribution and support states in achieving the GGW.

At the same time, technical and financial partners are increasingly attentive to the achievements of non-state actors. They express the desire to support field projects to accelerate the implementation of the GGW. Thus, to achieve the GGW objectives, and stimulate large-scale impacts, it is essential to:

- Build visibility and awareness around the Great Green Wall Initiative
- Support and develop local initiatives and projects that will impact communities and attract investors
- Strengthen the mechanisms that can connect project leaders and investors
- Strengthen the alliance of actors for the implementation of the GGW

Restitution of the Forum

Moderated by Ange Mboneye, responsible for SOS SAHEL's advocacy, the Forum focused on the theme: **“Together for the Great Green Wall: Let’s invest in local initiatives!”** and aimed to connect field actors with partners as well as to promote solutions.



Opening of the Forum

In his opening speech, Rémi Hémercyck, Executive Director of SOS SAHEL, recalled the objectives of the Africa Days and thanked the Forum partners, including the French Embassy in Burkina Faso, the French Institute in Cote d’Ivoire, the Pan-African Agency of the GGW, the African Union and the GGW Accelerator.

Houcine Dahmane, Regional Cooperation Advisor for West Africa at the French Embassy in Burkina Faso, stressed then the need for a strong commitment from Cooperation Departments of the embassies in the GGW countries. He mentioned briefly the actions that have been carried out and the Solidarity Fund for Innovative Projects (FSPI) to support green jobs creation in Niger for an amount of €1.5 million and €1 million in Burkina Faso.

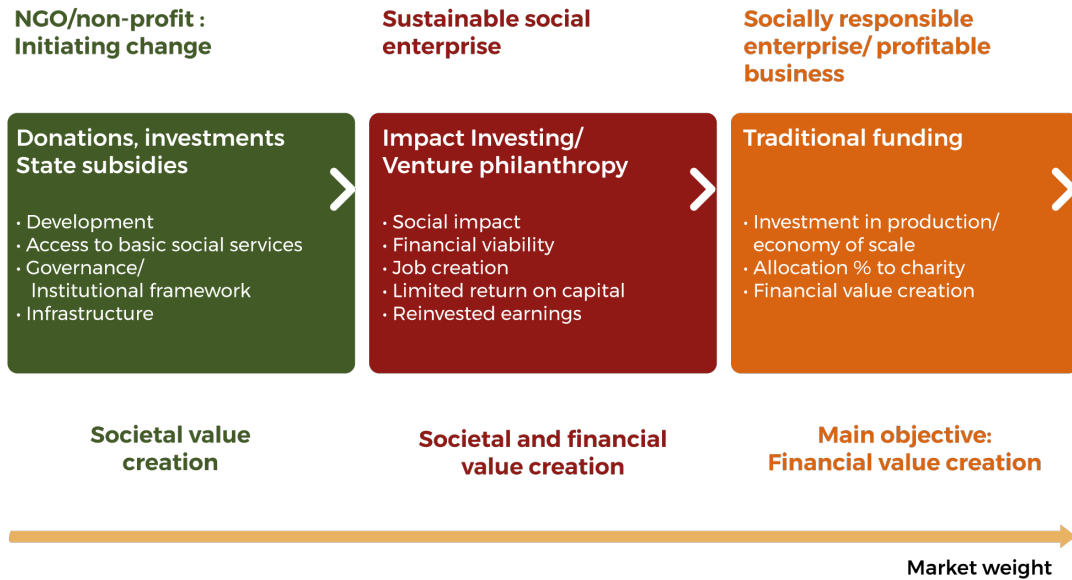
Panel 1 : How to develop Great Green Wall projects that will be impactful and interesting to investors ?

Moderated by Catherine Le Roy Dubreuil, Director of Development at SOS SAHEL, the outcomes of the Pre-Forum were first presented around the following points:

- What are the most significant requirements for a “GGW project”? At the Desertification Forum in 2019, SOS SAHEL worked closely with the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall to set out a GGW Project Terms of Reference.
- What economic model for this kind of project? Project leaders should better integrate the economic dimension into their initiatives so that they are sustainable and invest according to the impact of change, monitoring and evaluation.

- What is an attractive project? Projects should create change at the local level, bring a valuable contribution to regional and international agendas (SDGs) and generate benefits.

Economic model of a GW sustainable territory project



Impactful GW projects that interest investors are 3-dimensional complex operations



On the panel were:

- Mr. Abdou Aziz Diedhiou, Head of the Research and Strategy Department, **La Banque Agricole**
- Mrs. Rekia Foudel, Managing Partner & Founder, **Barka Fund**
- Mr. Gilles Martin, Decentralized Cooperation Advisor, **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**
- Mrs. Georgette Ouedraogo, Head of Sustainable Land Management Department, **Ministry of Agriculture and Animal and Fisheries Resources of Burkina Faso**

- Mr. Ahmed Aziz Diallo, Member of the Advisory Board of the **G5 Sahel Facility and President of C3 Sahel**
- Mrs. Sarah Toumi, Program Manager, **Great Green Wall Accelerator**

Adapting financing mechanisms and support instruments

Panelists underlined that investors must understand the social and economic background of projects as well as the territorial dimension of each project to provide the most appropriate financing mechanism. They must also take into account the national strategy in their financing priorities to balance interests of investors and projects leaders. Therefore, it is critical to adapt the financing mechanisms to social, economic and temporal dimensions.

Financing mechanisms can be considered at different timescales according to the targeted impact (immediate or delayed). A development project may only have visible impacts over 10 or 20 years. It is also critical to combine financing and capacity building of actors in order to implement fundable GGW projects, which are aligned with investor interests and GGW requirements. To that end, three examples of financing mechanisms and support instruments were presented:

- The FAO project **VIVRE** (“Green Cities to restore ecosystems in the Great Green Wall”) is designed to identify project leaders and to support future champions wishing to evaluate opportunities by facilitating contact with investors.
- **Barka Fund** is an impact investment fund, primarily focused on African entrepreneurs taking measures to address urgent climate and environmental challenges in their communities. The selected startups generate revenue, but they are not constrained to grow rapidly. Barka Fund's aim is not to create shareholder value over the long term: the startup repurchases the interests on a revenue-based repayment and pays commissions on the revenue.
- **Livelihoods Funds** is a €150 million carbon fund to finance ecosystem restoration and agricultural projects. Projects must be designed jointly and generate carbon credits. Their objective is capacity building of NGOs to leverage public funds and co-finance projects.

Bulding on local communities

Decentralization is a reality in the Sahel. The commune is the closest level of governance to the people that may address their needs. Therefore, focus should be on communes to develop and implement impactful GGW projects.

The **C3 Sahel** experience (decentralized cooperation unit for communities in the Sahel) shows the key role of local communities. The C3 Sahel includes the communes of Tera and Tillabéri in Niger, Gao and Timbuktu in Mali and the communes of Dori, Gorom Gorom, Djibo and Seba in Burkina Faso. It aims to implement cross-border cooperation actions for population and to address social and economic infrastructure needs. The C3 Sahel has set up an Integrated Cross-border Development Plan for landuse mapping and determining the responses to needs. On this basis, 30 priority projects were identified. Various technical and financial partners (Swiss Cooperation, G5 Sahel, French Development Agency, etc.) funded the first ones.



Working closely with Great Green Wall national agencies

GGW projects must be developed and/or implemented in partnership with national agencies involved in the GGW Initiative. The GGW Accelerator, hosted by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and designed to monitor the commitments of financial partners at the One Planet Summit, works with national agencies to develop national alliances. The GGW Accelerator seeks to facilitate the coordination between agencies, financial partners and non-state actors.

There are a number of collaboration opportunities ongoing on the ground. For example, the “Beog Puuto” project in Burkina Faso aims at restoring 30,000 ha of land for 50,000 families in cooperation with the GGW National Agency, a consortium of NGOs and the Ministry of Agriculture. A joint monitoring system has been also put in place to monitor and track progress. All project activities are supervised and planned with the National Agency and the Ministry of Agriculture in Burkina Faso.

“As a bank, if we want to revolutionize the financing mechanisms, climate change should open up opportunities and we have to implement financial products adapted to the needs of our customers and the areas of intervention.”

Mr. Abdou Aziz Diedhiou, Banque agricole

“We facilitate the linking between project leaders, local communities committed to territorial resilience and investors involved in implementing available credits for the sustainable development of territories.”

Mr. Gilles Martin, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

“Investors do not use the right channels. We are working to develop national coalitions led by national agencies so that GGW projects are carried out with the national agencies.”

Mrs. Sarah Toumi, Great Green Wall Accelerator

Panel 2 : Mechanisms to implement in order to connect project leaders with investors

The second panel, moderated by Jean-Marc Garreau, Technical Advisor at SOS SAHEL, aimed at identifying mechanisms and tools to connect field actors with investors. Opening this panel, Jean-Marc Garreau recalled the main conclusions of the Pre-Forum, in particular:

- Project leaders and investors have different views and are not directly “natural partners”.
- Territorial projects are not carried out in isolation. Many partners at different levels are involved.

On the second panel were:

- Dr. Abakar Mahamat Zougoulou, Scientific and Technical Director, **Pan-African Agency of the GGW**
- Mr. Rémi Hémerlyck, Executive Director, **SOS SAHEL**

- Mrs. Yoko Watanabe, Global Manager, **Small Grants Program**
- Mrs. Tillem Burlace, Lead 1t.org Sahel and Great Green Wall, **World Economic Forum**
- Mr. Sayouba Bonkougou, President of the **Association for the Protection of the Environment and Rural Development (APEDR)** and **member of the Permanent Secretariat of NGOs (SPONG)**

Closing the gap between project leaders and investors

There is an undeniable need to close the gap between project leaders and investors and to create nodes for a better interaction between these “worlds”. Investors at the global level are interested in field projects. To this end, intermediaries are needed to link international, national, regional and territorial networks. Below some examples:

- **The Global Environment Facility Small Grants Program (SGP)** operates in 128 countries and funds grants up to \$50,000 to CSOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) to undertake local projects that contribute to biodiversity, resilience to climate change and to fight land degradation for example.
- **1t.org** is a multi-stakeholder platform of the World Economic Forum mobilizing the private sector to support the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. It facilitates multi-stakeholder partnerships, supports ecopreneurship on the ground and promotes value chains in many regions of the world, including the Sahel.
- **NGOs, such as SOS SAHEL**, also play an important unifying role. In Chad, for example, SOS SAHEL mobilized the private sector involved in ensuring the durability of Acacia forests and maintaining the income of gum arabic producers. The “Acacia Fund” was created to meet the community’s needs and support the gum arabic branch.
- With its 47 years of existence, the **Permanent Secretariat of NGOs (SPONG)** provides a permanent framework for representation and promotion of civil society organizations in Burkina Faso and the sub-region. It is a collective of development organizations in Burkina Faso, which supports its members in resource mobilization and capacity building, and acts as an interface between its members and the government.

Joint mobilization for the Great Green Wall

The achievement of the Great Green Wall and its objectives constitute a major leverage effect for economic and social development in the Sahel. It requires a high level of involvement and coordination of all actors. Therefore, it is essential to have a better knowledge of partners' expectations and to implement mechanisms that favor collaboration and strengthen multi-stakeholder cooperation. To that end, national alliances are the key link between all levels, local, national, international and multi-sectoral.



“GGW countries should involve all actors, national and international partners and sector departments.”

Dr. Abakar Mahamat Zougoulou, Scientific and Technical Director, Pan-African Agency of the GGW

“The very close link between political dialogue and local communities’ empowerment should not be ignored. We supported a decentralized financing system to local communities. We develop links with the government and the private sector to scale up these innovative field projects and amplify them for better sustainability.”

Mrs. Yoko Watanabe, Global Manager, Small Grants Program

“The Permanent Secretariat of NGOs (SPONG) acts as an interface to federate and imposes rules on national NGOs. We also cooperate with the SPONG for resource mobilization. The SPONG is not directly involved in fieldwork; it facilitates the resources mobilization for its members.”

Mr. Sayouba Bonkougou, President of the Association for the Protection of the Environment and Rural Development (APEDR) and member of the Permanent Secretariat of NGOs (SPONG)

The "Champions" of the Great Green Wall

The Forum also highlighted four GGW “Champions” for their initiative and commitment towards their objective. They shared video testimonies and had the opportunity to speak at the Forum.

Annour Ali Tassi, ADIL Director (Association for the Development of Local Initiatives), Chad



« I would like to send a strong message to investors:

We as field actors strongly argue that investors should revise their rigid financing mechanisms that do not reach the poorest population such as women and youth. The implementation of more flexible financing mechanisms would promote local initiatives and their ownership.

To the Great Green Wall Accelerator and the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall:

We call for the establishment of an appropriate and coherent framework to measure, coordinate and monitor the sustainable implementation of actions undertaken by the public and private sectors in the context of the Great Green Wall.

In addition, information, education and communication tools must be developed to sufficiently inform the general public and involve people in all stages of project design and implementation.”

Kadio Niang, founder and Director of Solar Eco-Bat, Mauritania



“Young Africans, particularly those in the Sahel, have to struggle now against climate change and it is a matter of survival for families in town and in the villages;

We are facing effects of climate change after centuries of ill treatment. We all share one planet and the changes we make in one place can affect others far away.

Urgent action is needed to address this matter. I choose solar energy to provide my community appropriate solutions. Many young Sahelian people are working on the ground to change things and course.

Decision-makers have to recognize that the solution does not come from outside and we live in this continent that nobody loves more than we do. We must encourage local actors and promote initiatives of Sahelian people for effective and sustainable action. I pledge my full support.

Act quickly now. As we say in Mauritania, even the smallest of actions can get concrete results.”

Ouma Kaltoume, founder of ProNat, Niger



“We are midway through the SDGs, but unfortunately if I take the goal 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), we are still far from the expected results in view of the increases in heatwaves, droughts and floods.

Therefore, it is time to move from words to action. According to this vision, ProNat enhances the honey sector to help restore biodiversity with bees, which are the most important pollinators.

I make an urgent appeal to everyone to consume local products; small and micro businesses have to innovate through research. We all should take more action to safeguard our common good, Planet Earth. I call on investors to believe in the potential of small and micro businesses and support them. They are very close to communities and have a strong socio-economic and environmental impact.”

Seydou Kaboré, Director of the Guié pilot farm (TERRE VERTE), Burkina Faso



“For those who do not believe in the Great Green Wall Initiative, the Initiative does really exist. All bodies, organizations and associations involved in environmental protection and land recovery contribute to its achievement. It must be sustained and focused on structuring and long-term projects.

For 25 years, NGO Green Earth has been experimenting at the Guié pilot farm with techniques to refertilize soils, by creating bocage perimeters.

This technique is a means to control rainwater in fields and to revegetate rural landscapes in the Sahel.

To date, we have developed 1,580 ha of bocage perimeters, benefiting over 540 families. The bocage perimeters are now protected from the wanderings of livestock and wind erosion. The farmers can produce more on a sustainable basis.

The current challenge is to scale up the bocage model in the Sahel. The government should promote this model to create more development, benefiting farmers in the Sahel.

Signing of a partnership agreement between SOS SAHEL and the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall (PAGGW)

The Forum ended with a signed partnership agreement between SOS SAHEL and the Pan-African Agency of the GGW which aims to strengthen collaboration between States and civil society actors, particularly within the framework of the Great Green Wall countries. On that occasion, Dr. Brahim Saïd, Executive Secretary of the Pan African Agency of the GGW, stressed the need for building capacity of CSOs, as “a crucial link in the implementation of the GGW.” Rémi Hémercyck, Executive Director of SOS SAHEL, welcomed the formal structuring of relations between the two organizations and stressed its willingness to drive many actors on the GGW partners' platform (<https://www.panegmv.org>) to scale up and achieve the GGW objectives.

The Forum concluded with a speech of Dr. Paul Elvis Tangem, Coordinator for the Great Green Wall Initiative at the African Union Commission. He called on partners to be optimistic and underlined the progress made since the initiative was launched. He welcomed the increased support, visibility and interest in the GGW. In closing, he underscored the relevance of endogenous solutions such as the GGW in a world context characterized by many challenges.

Annexes

Annex 1: GGW project Terms of Reference



WHAT IS A GREAT GREEN WALL PROJECT?

Countries involved	11 countries: Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti
Geographic area	Area between isohyets 100 and 400 millimeters of average rainfall and priority geographic areas identified by the GGW countries at the national level
Scale of intervention	All (local, national or regional)
Actor who carries the GGW project	GGW agencies, technical services, CSOs, local authorities, private sector, research institutes, etc.
Pillars of intervention in accordance with the portfolios of the priority investment plan of the PAGGW (themes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pillar 1: Investment in small and medium-sized companies and strengthening of value chains, local markets, organization of exports • Pillar 2: Land restoration and sustainable management of ecosystems • Pillar 3: Climate-resilient infrastructure and access to renewable energy • Pillar 4: Conducive economic and institutional framework for effective governance and sustainable initiatives • Pillar 5: Capacity building
What kind of collaboration with national agencies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing of project outcomes (capitalization) • Joint project development • Joint projects implementation and monitoring • Communication on the GGW and initiatives
Other contractual partners	Local authorities, state technical services, producer organizations, research organizations, networks, private sector
Community involvement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information/awareness • Consulting • Partnership • Delegation (contributing to decision making) • Control
Targeted impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving populations' living conditions • Revenue and jobs creation • Value creation for local production • Carbon sequestration • Restoring soil fertility and ecosystems • Conservation of biodiversity • Increasing resilient energy infrastructure and domestic renewable energies • Stopping exodus and migration • Improving local governance • Increasing commitment of non-state actors • Enhancing knowledge • Strengthening women's leadership
GGW projects targets and beneficiaries	Local populations, local authorities, CBOs, umbrella organizations, private companies, research organizations, etc.

Annex 2: Videos of the GGW "Champions"

Videos of the GGW "Champions" are available on the [Africa Days website](#).

Annex 3: Panelist Bios

[Link](#) to panelist biographies

Annex 4: Media coverage

RFI, « C'est pas du vent » Anne-Cécile Bras
5 million listeners

[COP15 désertification: au Burkina Faso, la ferme de Guié restaure les sols dégradés](#)

France Inter, « Un jour dans le monde » Fabienne Sintès

First radio station in France, 6.9 million listeners per year and 1.6 million daily listeners

<https://www.franceinter.fr/emissions/un-jour-dans-le-monde/un-jour-dans-le-monde-du-mardi-10-mai-2022>

La Tribune de Genève : 2.5 million readers monthly

[Pourquoi est-ce si difficile de ralentir le désert ?](#)

AFRIKSOIR

[Côte d'Ivoire : L'Agence panafricaine et SOS SAHEL signent un partenariat pour la mise en œuvre de la Grande Muraille Verte](#)

ABIDJAN.NET

[Environnement : la problématique du financement des initiatives locales en matière de lutte contre la déforestation au centre de la 6eme édition du Forum Africa Days](#)

FRATERNITE MATIN

Des acteurs du développement prêts à financer le projet

SOIR INFO

Réalisation de la Grande Muraille Verte : Les initiatives locales encouragées