VISON AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY FOR THE RECOVERY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF MALI

The Malien Civil Society Organizations along with the Malian National Civil Society Council (Conseil Nationale de la Société civile du Mali (CNSC)), the Forum of Civil Society Organizations (Forum des Organisations de la Société Civile (FOSC)), and the international NGO members of the Forum for the International NGOs in Mali (FONGIM) welcome the resumption of aid announced by a large majority of donors. The national and international civil society organizations wish to engage with the donors intervening in Mali and raise their concerns related to humanitarian and development aid in Mali.

VISON ON THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

Since early 2012, Mali has experienced a profound and multidimensional crisis affecting security and the politico-institutional, socio-political and cultural dimensions of the country. This politico-security crisis amid chronic food shortages has caused massive displacement of civilians and created a global humanitarian crisis in the country. Since January 2013, the Franco-Malian offensive allowed the re-taking of the major cities of the North, while the interim government adopted a roadmap for political transition that anticipates elections in July 2013. The UN Security Council (UNSC) is preparing to deploy a peacekeeping force to maintain peace and stability. The country faces many challenges, particularly in terms of political transition – the organization of the elections, reconciliation – and development.

The political crisis has led to a suspension of budget support resulting in the reduction of the State budget by 28%, at the expense of the basic social services. The crisis has also led to an economic recession. In 2012, Mali has experienced a contraction of 1.2% of GDP while initially forecasting a growth of over 5%. The socio-economic situation of Mali is worrying despite the substantial development assistance to the country in the last twenty years. The country fell seven places on the Human Development Index (HDI) compared to 2011 and ranks 182nd out of 187 countries (HDI 2012).
All this has affected the availability of and access to basic social services throughout the territory, mainly in the occupied zones of the country; women and children are the most affected. The Malian authorities have found it difficult to continue implementing development strategies integrated in the frameworks and platforms supported by donors (CSCRP 2012-2017, particularly sectoral programs such as PISE, PRODEC for education, and PRODESS for health, etc.). The expenditure allocated to sectors such as energy, water, health and education were particularly affected. Beyond the current conditions, the country (and the Sahel region in general) faces chronic vulnerability with multiple structural causes that must be taken into account in order to have a long term impact on poverty.

PRINCIPLES AND POSITIONS OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY FOR THE RECOVERY OF MALI:

For a sustainable exit out of the crisis and the recovery of the country, the civil society recommends that government and donors:

➢ Global Framework for interventions in Mali

1. **Draw lessons from the crisis to rethink development aid to Mali**
   - The crisis should bring all development actors to think about the factors leading to the crisis and **rethink their interventions** to ensure that development policies do not exacerbate the conflict, but **contribute to lasting peace and inclusive development**.
   - The donors, in an inclusive dialogue with other key stakeholders, including the Malian authorities, civil society, international NGOs, and the private sector, need to **evaluate their interventions in Mali during the last 20 years**, particularly in the north, in order to learn and to **measure the impact of their policies on development and governance**.
   - Donors and other development and humanitarian actors must commit to promote the sustainable development of Mali, **taking into account the situation of fragile countries in conflict (New Deal Busan)**, more so because it’s landlocked. They must ensure that a **conflict analysis** is carried out at the local, regional and national levels and develop a sensitive approach to the **risks of conflict** in their intervention strategies and implementation of programs or projects.
In the short term:

2- Increased funding to meet the immediate needs of those affected by the conflict and food insecurity
   • We call upon donors to increase their financing to key sectors, such as food security, water and sanitation, energy, protection, education, health and livelihood to the most vulnerable throughout the territory.
   • Aid, be it humanitarian or development, should be primarily based on the identified needs of people and their specific vulnerabilities, and involve local and national stakeholders, including community leaders, associations and civil society.
   • The food security of people in the coming months will depend mainly on the success of the 2013-2014 agricultural season starting in May 2013. We therefore call on donors to quickly unblock the funds related to the preparation of the agricultural season to prevent tilting municipalities at risk of food insecurity.

3- Support social dialogue and reconciliation:
   • We call on the Friends of Mali to support and accompany the process of dialogue and inter and intra community reconciliation, taking gender into account, at local, regional and national level with respect of human rights. The Paris Principles should be respected with regards to children affected and involved in the conflict.
   • Stakeholders must ensure support to the voluntary return of Internally Displaced People and Refugees to the North, in full compliance with international agreements.
   • Donors should support the Malian authorities in the organizing and holding transparent and inclusive elections.

In the medium and long term:

4- Support democratic governance reform to support development and poverty reduction:
   • The crisis has revealed many shortcomings in governance in Mali. Improved governance, greater transparency and a more effective fight against corruption and financial crimes as well as greater communication to the population must accompany development policies.
   • Donors can play an important role in improving the implementation of devolution and decentralization starting with an audit of the national decentralization policy, the quality of government services, the development of responsible citizenship and the strengthening of justice and fairness as important parameters for transparent and accountable governance.
   • The accountability of international assistance is essential to ensure its effectiveness in reducing poverty. Donors should engage in a process of control beyond the disbursement of aid and develop strong mechanisms to monitor the achievement of objectives by strongly involving the civil society.
   • Independent control mechanisms and ethical standards for public administration must be reinforced and followed up (Office of the General Auditor, Citizen Control) to effectively fight against impunity.
5- Strengthening the participation of the civil society in the definition, implementation and monitoring of development policies:

- The guiding principles of the Paris Declaration, the Accra Agenda for action, and the Busan Partnership document for effective development cooperation call upon Donors in Mali to effectively involve different stakeholders – authorities, civil society, international NGOs, the private sector – in decision making processes, management and monitoring of funds and its impact.

- Beyond the collaboration with national and local authorities, the interventions of donors must also rest upon the strong participation of civil society, whose national and local networks constitute a key player in economic and social development as well as in strengthening governance.

- The interventions of donors must therefore also contribute to strengthening the capacities of civil society to analyze, mobilize and take action so it may fully fulfill its role of citizen supervision (of government development policies).

6- Strengthening the resilience of communities for a sustainable development:

- There is a willingness among donors to work to strengthen the resilience of communities. We encourage this approach but draw attention to the need to take into account the structural dimension of vulnerabilities that people face.

- In the context of simultaneous recurrent chronic vulnerability and humanitarian needs, donor coordination of humanitarian and development interventions needs to be part of further reflection to assure coherent and complementary emergency and development activities. The donors need to adapt their intervention tools by adopting flexible finance mechanisms. This link between relief and development is a key factor of success and continuity of long term development approaches.

- Development assistance in the country must continue to support major infrastructure projects (the roads of Niono-Tombouctou, Tombouctou-Gao, Gao-Kidal and the Taoussa dam); support to the development of the agriculture and artisan sectors as well as the tourist sector, and support to economic recovery through the promotion of employment and vocational training.

Thank you for your attention.