



CONTRIBUTIONS OF CORET, APESS, ROPPA AND RBM NETWORKS TO THE MEETING ON TRANSHUMANCE

Abuja, 26 – 28 April 2018

I. Introduction

CORET, APESS, ROPPA and RBM decided to bring a common view on the issue that is being discussed today in ECOWAS: that of transhumance. Because, in fine, the only victims of these conflicts are the farmers and breeders who are members of our various PO networks (deaths of pastoralists and farmers, loss of livestock and harvest, time spent on administrative and judicial procedures for conflict resolution, etc., at the expense of time spent on production activities.

It is this shared vision of the issue of transhumance that prompted these networks to come together to propose to the present meeting a diagnosis of the transhumance situation (causes and consequences) as well as proposals for solutions towards facing the issue.

Note that these four networks comprise all categories of agrosilvopastoral and fishery stakeholders in West and Central Africa.

II. Fighting wrong ideas received

2.1. Any conflict occurring in rural areas is a farmer / breeder based conflict: this idea is false since there are intra-community or religious conflicts that frequently turn into drama.

2.2. Transhumants are the only ones to hold small arms of small calibers. Like all other rural actors, transhumants can carry small arms and small calibers in a context of insecurity to protect themselves and their property.

2.3. Community conflicts are caused by transhumants: generally, some people with bad intentions or who have a hidden agenda (political, social, economic) take advantage of the transhumant presence to create a false sense of defense of property and community sovereignty and create conflicts. In this case, pastoralists and indigenous peoples are all victims of a conspiracy to serve personal interests of a few individuals.

III. Diagnosis of the practice of transhumance

3.1. Causes of transhumance

a. The loss by pastoralists of a large part of their land

In some West African countries, the spread idea is that farmers have no land, but they enjoy a right of priority use on land considered as "ancestral". The right of priority use does not guarantee the breeder or his descendants a definitive right of use on the land. Livestock policies have unfortunately been built on this belief. Decades of pastoral land have gradually shrunk, resulting in fewer grazing areas (pastoral areas and enclaves), narrowing, if not disappearing, corridors of passage, the occupation of pastoral water points by crop fields or villages.

b. The grabbing of pastoral lands by some categories of better-off actors and in connection with the milieus of power is explained not only by the vagueness of pastoralists' control over land but also by the idea that pastoral land cannot be optimally valued by the practice of transhumant livestock farming.

c. For more than two (2) years, there has been a specific phenomenon that is happening in Adamaoua in Cameroon, the animal breeding region by excellence in Cameroon where pastoralists own their land. It is about the kidnapping of breeders and sometimes of their families by groups of bandits armed against ransom.

d. In Nigeria, the Federal State has granted land management to the federated states. In each federated state, land management is different. It is by virtue of this concession that some federated States have voted against the practice of transhumance, thus going against the ECOWAS decision A / DEC / 5/98 on transhumance.

2. Drought and climate change: constitute real threats to the availability and permanence of other pastoral resources (water, pasture).

In transhumant countries or areas of departure, almost all the ponds dry up a few months after the rainy season. As for the production of useful pastures, it is very small and insufficient to cover the needs of animals in the relic of the areas conceded for grazing.

3. State failure: Most States in West Africa and even in Central Africa have been notable for their inability to address land issues in accordance with the provisions of land laws. However, the imperatives of social justice commanded it to the benefit of pastoral pastoralists whose contribution to the national economy and the fight against food and nutritional insecurity is positively appreciated by all.

Driven by constraints of feeding and watering their livestock, transhumants start very early transhumance towards southern areas that are generally more provided with fodder and hydraulic resources (coastal countries)

3.2. Impacts of transhumance

It is true that transhumance is experienced as a difficult moment by both parties and firstly generates latent conflicts of first degree between host populations (farmers) and transhumant populations (herders) and that these latent conflicts can become violent and lead to (i) deaths

of men on each side, (ii) loss of crops and (iii) loss of animals. This image is unfortunately the one that comes in the collective mind. It is very often maintained and amplified by the media within the population through stigmatizing articles against pastoralists. However, transhumance is at the root of cultural mixing and exchange of economic goods that are beneficial to all parties (supply of milk, meat, organic manure, draft oxen versus provision of fodder / grazing and water) and can lead to acceptances of each other's cultures. On the environmental front, transhumance is an important element in maintaining soil fertility and spreading biodiversity through the spread of vegetation cover, even if these effects are not immediately noticeable.

IV. Solutions and proposals

4. 1. Provide the region with an integrated natural resource management policy as part of a comprehensive strategy to promote all livestock systems.

The aim is to address the problem of pastoralism in the context of the future of extensive livestock and agriculture systems in the context of the demographic boom, the effects of climate change and the depletion of natural resources. The implementation of such a policy will improve the contribution of pastoralists - including transhumant pastoralists - in mitigating the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) as well as encouraging the planting of fodder trees during the realization of the great green wall.

4. 2. Proposals for actions on pastoral land

- respect the pastoral land and agricultural land statuses. In the same way that the private ownership of the land (cultivated field) is guaranteed and respected, in the same way the lands and other transhumance infrastructures (corridors of passage, pastoral water points) must have a status of public good community recognized and protected by the State, then respected by all other actors in rural areas.
- In coastal countries, transhumance corridors must also be set up as community public goods governed by well-enforced national legislation, which will enable investments to be made in order to ensure a peaceful transhumance.
- In the case of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the group recommends a takeover of land management by the Federal Government taking into account all production systems related to population growth, as well as the application of the animal disease control law (which defines the routes and routes of transhumance at the national level) in the spirit of decision ADEC / 98 of ECOWAS on transhumance.
- Improve animal feed productivity and the provision of water points in pastoral areas: these are long-term actions whose purpose is to alleviate pastoral crises linked to fodder deficits

4. 3. Proposals for livestock financing:

- PO networks recommend that the livestock financing portion (address the livestock portfolio at the policy level) be clearly specified in the overall volume for financing agriculture to prevent the sector from continuing to suffer from a funding gap.
- Take into account livestock insurance that will cover aspects related to natural disasters (diseases, droughts, floods) as well as thefts of livestock as well as possible compensations in such cases.

4. 4. Proposals for the processing of livestock:

- In the short and medium term, it is not possible to stop transhumance. On the other hand, a process of support and financial support based on initiatives related to the development of value chains can be initiated. In this perspective, the networks want the support of ECOWAS, States and Technical and Financial Partners.

4. 5. Communication and Information

- The networks are convinced of the importance of communication and information in the development of the agropastoral sector in West Africa because they allow to disseminate messages of peace between farmers and herders, disseminate information on markets, provide information on the availability of pastoral resources. Networks therefore invite media managers to be more professional and fair in disseminating information at all levels
- The networks seek support from ECOWAS, States and technical and financial partners for the implementation of a mass education program through the media to deconstruct inter-community prejudices.

4. 6. Proposals on the registration of animals

- The networks have understood that registration is a new tool for compiling information on livestock, their breeding conditions. That's why more time is needed to better understand this tool.

4.7. Implement decision ADEC / 5/98 and the transhumance protocol of ECOWAS

- The non-application of the provisions of this Community Decision on transhumance is not likely to favor the practice of transhumant transhumance at cross-border level and even within countries. Therefore, they express the wish that this decision be applied by all ECOWAS Member States.
- The networks recommend an evaluation of this decision, which will allow to review it if necessary.