

# D'a Désertif' actions

2026



6<sup>eme</sup> édition

**Terms of reference  
National workshops**



Nations Unies  
Convention sur la lutte  
contre la désertification



OBSERVATOIRE  
DU SAHARA  
ET DU SAHEL

## Context

The world's drylands account for 41% of the planet's land area and are home to almost 2 billion people. The soil and climate conditions of the ecosystems and agroecosystems found in these zones make them particularly sensitive to climate variability and extreme events such as drought. Rural and pastoral populations, heavily dependent on healthy soils and the availability of natural resources, are the first to suffer the effects of drought and land degradation. Their livelihoods are affected and their living conditions deteriorate, with cascading consequences including forced displacement, increased food insecurity and poverty.

The potential impacts of drought are assessed through the notion of risk, i.e. the possibility of impacts occurring.

$$\text{Impact risk} = \text{Hazard} \times \text{Exposure} \times \text{Vulnerability}$$

Knowing that  $\text{Vulnerability} = \text{Sensitivity} - \text{Resilience}$

Risk is a function of **hazard** (uncertainty and unpredictability), **exposure** and system **vulnerability**. The challenge for development operators and public policies lies in reducing the vulnerability of populations and territories, particularly with regard to agricultural and food production systems that are highly exposed to drought-related hazards. Preventing and reducing the impact of drought on agricultural and food production systems therefore means reducing the risk of losing one of the major means of subsistence for rural and pastoral populations.

**Désertif'actions 2026 aims to increase civil society's contribution to discussions on drought resilience, which is at the heart of the combat against desertification and land degradation agenda, by sharing and pooling the results of actions carried out by all operators involved in the sphere of territorial development and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).**

## A collaborative advocacy dynamic

This sixth edition of Désertif'actions will take place over the whole year 2025 and the first half of 2026, following a three-phase process, culminating in participation in COP17 in Mongolia. The aim of this formula is to gather the views and contributions of as many stakeholders as possible, and to create a legitimate participatory basis for influencing public decision-making on drought management.

### Phase 1: January - December 2025 in as many countries as possible, on a voluntary basis

#### ⇒ Preparation of a joint advocacy by international civil society on the resilience of territories to drought

- A preliminary online questionnaire widely distributed to gather preliminary arguments, enabling an initial framing of the advocacy dynamic thanks to the participation of a wide range of stakeholders.
- Preparatory national workshops organized by volunteer CSOs to detail the specific concerns of the different countries involved in the D'a26 approach and enable collaborative national productions.
- An international webinar organized by CARI to pool and consolidate the work carried out in different countries, in order to identify priority issues and the main arguments to be put forward at international level.
- The production by CARI of decoding notes to better understand the decisions negotiated at COP16 in Saudi Arabia on the subject of "droughts".

➔ **Expected outcome:** to identify the levers of territories' resilience in the face of drought, by characterizing the impacts of droughts and the strategies deployed to deal with them, but also by analyzing certain key issues concerning agriculture and food systems and resource management in territories. The information gathered, combined with a detailed understanding of what was at stake at COP16, should help lay the foundations for the arguments to be put forward at the summit.

## Phase 2: Désertif'actions 2026 summit, March 25 to 28, 2026, Djerba (Tunisia)

⇒ **A multi-stakeholder event open to the world, enabling international civil society to meet and deepen its advocacy.**

- Organization of the international summit Désertif'actions 2026, bringing together some 350 people during 4 days to prepare the contribution of civil society and other stakeholders to the decisions to be negotiated at COP17. The objective will be to build on the arguments produced in the preparatory phase (on the avenues to be explored to improve the resilience of territories), in order to identify the obstacles to be overcome and the levers to be activated, at the level of public policies and donors, to facilitate change.

➔ **Expected result:** following the advocacy work carried out in phase 1, set in motion an international civil society movement to place the resilience of territories to drought at the heart of policy implementation, by identifying common language to influence the direction of these policies.

## Phase 3: 2026 in Mongolia during UNCCD COP17

⇒ **Joint advocacy by civil society representatives at UNCCD COP17 in Mongolia to influence decision-making in favor of greater regional resilience to drought.**

- The production of decoding notes on the subjects to be negotiated at COP17, in order to identify the room for maneuver available in the work of influence.
- Structured civil society participation at COP17, around common messages, in close collaboration with existing networks and the UNCCD CSO panel, to invest all COP17 dialogue and negotiation spaces (open dialogue sessions, plenaries, high-level debates, thematic days and side events).

➔ **Expected result:** to encourage States, through the UNCCD, to adopt and support measures to help territories become more resilient to the risk of drought.



## Terms of reference for national workshops - preparatory phase

### Reminder:

Advocacy is not limited to international discussions. It also includes a collaborative process at local and national levels. National workshops offer a unique opportunity for civil society to take part in the elaboration of concrete solutions, notably by facilitating the active participation of local organizations, community actors and vulnerable groups in the formulation of argued policy recommendations and in dialogue with national authorities (in particular ministerial representatives in charge of negotiations within the UNCCD). This process will strengthen the role of civil society in decision-making and the implementation of public policies.

National workshops will also serve as a platform for creating synergies between local stakeholders, decision-makers and international organizations. The aim is to create strategic alliances to implement solutions adapted to local contexts while influencing global policies.

## The main topic

The central question to which the preparatory phase of D'a 26 seeks to contribute is:

### **How can we reduce the vulnerability of our territories to drought?**

Territorial planning and management, carried out in an inclusive and participatory way, is proving to be a crucial lever for strengthening the resilience of territories in the face of drought. By integrating the need to preserve ecosystems, food security and economic development, this approach makes it possible to restore ecological functions, manage conflicts and secure land and water resources. All these actions are part of a holistic vision that links environmental, social and economic issues, overcoming obstacles to the adoption of resilient practices. As a result, CARI and its partners have identified 4 possible areas of work, around 4 key questions, to help answer the central question:

### **1/ Transformation of sedentary farming and/or livestock systems**

Agricultural and livestock farming systems bear the full brunt of droughts, which compromise production, jeopardize food security and weaken local economies. These phenomena, exacerbated by climate change, accentuate disparities between regions, particularly in areas where infrastructures are inadequate and adaptive capacities are limited. In the face of these challenges, certain strategies based on the principles of agroecology have demonstrated their effectiveness in strengthening farm resilience. These solutions include integrated and diversified approaches that enable farms to better anticipate, adapt and respond sustainably to the challenges posed by drought. However, the transition to the adoption of these practices (technical, organizational, etc.) remains hampered by numerous structural and cyclical obstacles. Facilitating change is therefore a prerequisite for removing these barriers and fostering the transition of farming and livestock systems towards greater resilience.

*How can we support farms and livestock farms in their transition to greater resilience in the face of drought?*

### **2/ Support for mobile production systems (focus on pastoralism)**

**Why pastoralism?** The year 2026 has been designated by the United Nations as the Year of Pastoralism, in recognition of its key role in reconciling the preservation of fragile ecosystems, economic development and social

cohesion in arid and semi-arid zones. Its **resilience** and ability to maintain biodiversity make it one of the models to be considered for drought-resilient systems.

According to the UNCCD, pastoral and grazing lands account for 54% of the planet's total land area. These mobile modes of production play an essential role in the management of natural resources and the preservation of ecosystems. Pastoralism is considered to be a system intrinsically based on the principles of agroecology. When it respects herd mobility and sustainable rangeland management, it helps preserve soils, regulate water resources and maintain biodiversity, while reducing conflicts of use. Mobility is the key feature of pastoral systems, enabling them to adapt to climatic crises such as drought. But today, as interstate borders become increasingly regulated and subject to insecurity, and as agricultural fronts gradually move upwards, reducing available grazing areas, constraints on this mobility are intensifying.

***How can we preserve and facilitate the development of drought-relevant systems based on mobility strategies, in an increasingly constrained context?***

### **3/ Regional management of water resources**

Water resources, essential to the survival of agricultural and pastoral systems and local communities, are put to the test during droughts: the multiple uses of water even make it a resource under stress. It is therefore essential to rethink water management practices on a territorial scale. Technically, the natural conservation of water in soils, beyond improving humus content, can be strengthened by appropriate measures to slow runoff and encourage infiltration. However, the organizational challenge is crucial for groundwater management and coordination between public services and local players. Given the diversity of uses (drinking water - sanitation / agricultural water / environmental water) and increased constraints, participative governance, based on dialogue between stakeholders, plays a decisive role in harmonizing user needs and promoting sustainable management of the resource on a regional scale.

***How can we reconcile the different uses of water resources in order to anticipate and manage drought situations while limiting the risk of conflicts?***

### **4/ Territory management**

Recurrent droughts exacerbate tensions over natural resources (water, land), impacting agriculture, livestock farming, local populations and energy uses. Health, education and road development are also indirectly impacted, with possible longer-term effects. Faced with these challenges, territorial management, including planning, implementation of actions and management of resources and infrastructures, is a crucial element in ensuring the resilience of a territory in a drought situation. Similarly, the reception and integration of internally displaced people is a challenge to be overcome. In this context, local authorities, whether traditional (traditional and/or religious chieftaincies, etc.) or administrative (local authorities and associated services, etc.), have a major role to play in anticipating the effects of such crises and the measures to be considered to reduce the sensitivity of their territory and improve its resilience. However, the transfer of competencies has not always been accompanied by a reinforcement of capacities and financial resources to implement the targeted ambitions.

***How can we facilitate the role of local authorities so that they can anticipate and sustainably manage their territory in anticipation of drought crises?***

The national workshops are a crucial step towards understanding the complex impacts of drought on agricultural and pastoral systems and natural resource management, while identifying concrete levers for strengthening regional resilience. These workshops will reveal that droughts are not limited to a simple water deficit, but that they profoundly affect the environmental, economic and social dimensions of territories. Institutional, technical and financial obstacles are still holding back the adoption of sustainable and appropriate solutions.



## Modalities of animation

In each of the national workshops, organizations can choose to address one or more of the 4 proposed areas of work, depending on which seem most relevant and urgent to them, or those with which they feel most comfortable, as well as on the format, duration and profile of the workshop participants. So that the results of national workshops can be pooled and consolidated, and to develop a collective international argument, CARI proposes to work on each chosen axis according to 3 questions:

1. What actions have been taken to deal with drought?
  - Collect feedback on drought situations
  - Identify the actions implemented by a wide range of stakeholders.
2. What are the constraints and opportunities on community and regional resilience?
  - Identify difficulties encountered in implementing actions or scaling them up
  - Identify the levers for action (technical and/or organizational) to overcome them
3. What advocacy messages do you consider to be priorities?
  - Collectively draw up policy recommendations for the various targets potentially concerned.

Organizations volunteering to organize and run national workshops will need to adapt their facilitation methods to deal with these three steps, depending on the number and profiles of participants.



A final workshop report, including the content developed in these 3 steps, must be produced and sent to CARI by September 30, 2025. A sample format for this report will be provided. Please note that it should include a list of participants (name, function, structure and contact), to highlight the diversity of the stakeholders who took part in the Désertif'actions 2026 dynamic, and to keep them informed of the next steps.

As a reminder, a representative of the structure that organized the workshop may be supported by CARI to take part in the summit.

## Recommendations for organization

**Participants :** The preparatory workshops are intended primarily for civil society (associations, local authorities, grassroots community organizations, researchers, etc.), which will put forward positions and recommendations. The participation of institutional or political representatives is nevertheless highly recommended to enrich the multi-stakeholder dialogue, and initiate advocacy at national level. The objective is to build up a panel of participants that is relevant to the results we are seeking to achieve.

**Format:** The aim of the preparatory workshops is to produce position papers and recommendations. It is therefore best to avoid organizing these workshops in the form of a conference, in which participants are kept informed only of major concepts. Instead, they should be organized in sub-groups, with appropriate facilitation methods to enable as many people as possible to express their views, and to ensure that they are heard.

**Duration:** Preparatory workshops can last a day or more, depending on the resources available to your organization or project. If you don't have the resources, you can also imagine a 2 or 3-hour session as part of another activity you're organizing. In this case, it's better to choose a theme to cover in depth, rather than trying to cover too many different themes without going into them in depth.

## Support for the coordination of Désertif'actions 2026

CARI coordinates the Désertif'actions 2026 initiative. As such, CARI ensures that the results of all activities organized as part of this process are shared. If you are organizing a national workshop, you must inform CARI in advance so that the results of your consultation can be integrated, enhanced and made visible in the international advocacy process.

- **For each country, put yourself in contact with all the stakeholders potentially interested in organizing this workshop, so as to pool your efforts.** We recommend that you notify CARI in advance of the workshop, as we will put you in touch with other organizations potentially interested in organizing a workshop in your country, so that you can pool your efforts. In addition, we can help you communicate widely about the workshop you're organizing, to ensure your visibility among a wide range of stakeholders potentially motivated to take part. As a reminder, CARI has connections with numerous players in the networks and countries we work with (ReSaD, RADD0, Drynet, Minka International, Coalition Agroécologie, MEDAE etc.).
- **CARI and the D'a co-organizers will produce a synthesis of civil society's recommendations**, based on the written reports sent to them by September 30, 2025. This synthesis will be made available online, and will serve as the basis for the preparation of the webinar organized in December 2025 to actively prepare the organization of the international summit in the first quarter of 2026
- **CARI is at the disposal of any organization requiring methodological support for the organization of a preparatory workshop.** However, CARI does not provide financial support for the organization of national workshops.

Contact us: [contact@desertif-actions.org](mailto:contact@desertif-actions.org)



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For drought-resilient territories: act now!



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