

CHAPTER 12

NEXT STEPS

The objective of this study is to identify appropriate measures for mitigating the anticipated indirect impacts of the Chad Export Project on the natural environment and the social and economic conditions in the region surrounding the oil fields. Most of the significant impacts are expected to result from the immigration of people seeking employment directly or indirectly related to the Project. The immediate purpose of the mitigation strategy is to ensure that the long-term economic benefits of the Project are not lost or diminished through the social and environmental costs associated with the indirect impact of immigration.

The present study has attempted to identify the likely impact of large-scale immigration on the natural resources of the region and outlines several strategies that will help conserve those resources and make them available to the population on an equitable and sustainable basis. It must be stressed that the objective of these mitigation measures is not to promote economic development in the region or improve social conditions. The sole purpose of the mitigation measures is to avoid economic and social hardship resulting from the indirect effects of the Project. In order to accomplish this it is essential that the mitigation measures themselves do not promote further immigration of unemployed people to the area by creating the promise of work or significantly reducing the cost of essential social and economic services. Longer-term development objectives and strategies for the region are described in a report on the elaboration of a regional development plan (Watson and Ngoidi, 1999). The additional goals of the present study are to provide some provisional estimates of the cost of appropriate mitigation activities, to prioritize and schedule their implementation, and to identify which institutions should be responsible for implementing the measures. Capacity building requirements for key executing agencies are also discussed. Finally, as a supplement to the illustrative indicators presented for the regional development plan, several performance and impact indicators for the mitigation plan are proposed.

In order to design an effective response to the possible influx of large numbers of unemployed people into the region, it is essential to attempt to gauge the numbers as accurately as possible. Moreover, it is also essential to adopt a strategy that acknowledges that there is a large degree of uncertainty in predicting the likely numbers. Appendix H provides an estimate of between 5 000 and 16 000 immigrants made up of people seeking work and dependents of people employed through the Project. Here we have added a worst case scenario based on experiences elsewhere in Africa that has up to 24 000 people moving to the region.

We have estimated that the most significant indirect impact of the Project will be effects that the immigrant population will have on the following: demand for shelter and for land; food security; water supply; firewood and other natural resources; waste management needs; public health and hygiene; transport and communications; and inflation in prices. In order to mitigate the potential negative impact, three general strategies are required. The first is to attempt to reduce the number of immigrants seeking work by informing the populace of the limited employment opportunities in the region before they decide to move. The provision of transport for unemployed immigrants wishing to move away from the region will be an important adjunct to this. The second strategy is to attempt to avert the potential negative impact of a large immigrant population especially on public health and hygiene by establishing health monitoring facilities and providing essential services. The third strategy is to mitigate those negative

impacts that cannot be prevented or averted if there is a significant population increase. In this category, the provision of energy, water and food and shelter are priorities.

Based on three immigration different scenarios of 5 000, 16 000, and 24 000 people, the respective costs of the urgent mitigation activities are estimated to be about FCFA 1 409 million, FCFA 2 544 million and FCFA 3 462 million. These figures do not include the operations costs of the CTNSC's Executive Secretariat that will coordinate and monitor a wide variety of mitigation activities and provide oversight for the whole Chadian component of the Chad Export Project. As can be seen in Volume 1 (Chapter 4) of this Environmental Management Plan, the cost of CTNSC capacity building is estimated to be about FCFA 3 942 million over three years. This three-year period covers the construction phase of the Project. After this phase it is anticipated that additional operating costs will be funded through oil revenues accruing to Government of Chad.

All of the recommended mitigation activities are essential and none is significantly more important than the others. This notwithstanding, it will be essential that certain activities are prioritized with regard to their implementation schedule. It is crucial that the current public awareness campaign is intensified to disseminate information about recruitment procedures for the Project and limited employment opportunities in the region. This should happen immediately. Other activities that should be implemented with all due haste are the creation of improved medical surveillance and essential health services in the region and better market facilities in Doba and Bébédjia that would improve public hygiene. Other mitigation activities need to be planned immediately but their implementation can be deferred for several months and perhaps until the Project's construction phase begins. At this time, it should be possible to estimate the likely number of immigrants with greater accuracy.

In addition to creating an Executive Secretariat that will undertake the operational responsibilities of the CTNSC, the capacity of several other Government agencies will have to be strengthened in order to ensure effective implementation of the mitigation plan. Key institutional actors include the Ministry of the Environment and Water, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Livestock. In addition, several NGOs including World Vision, BELACD and MSF will be important partners in the implementation of many activities in the health and water supply sectors. It is anticipated that additional financial support will be needed to ensure that these Government and non-Government organizations function efficiently in executing their responsibilities with respect to the urgent mitigation plan.

Next steps

In addition to the implementation of the urgent mitigation measures that have been identified and prioritized in this report, it is of the utmost importance that the elaboration of a regional development plan for the region is completed prior to the initiation of the construction phase of the Project. The accompanying report on the regional development plan outlines a strategy for ensuring that the elaboration process is highly participatory and efficient. A program is outlined that would complete the planning process over a period of six months at a cost of about FCFA 529 million. It will be essential to integrate the urgent mitigation activities that are envisioned with the proposed development initiatives.

The most immediate priority with regard to mitigation of the indirect impacts of the Project is the escalation of the public information and awareness campaign. It is crucial that the population of

Chad is made fully aware of the economic implications of the Project, the employment potential and the recruitment procedures. First and foremost, the public information and awareness campaigns should stress the economic hardship that unemployed immigrants are likely to experience. The region surrounding the oil fields is currently poorly served in terms of social services such as health and education and the Project will not generate the revenues needed to improve the situation for several years after the construction phase begins. The potential consequences of speculative immigration to the oil-producing region should be explained stressing the dire ramifications this might have not only on individual wellbeing but also the development potential of the region. In addition to publishing information about the Project in newspapers, information should be broadcast using national and local radio stations. In rural areas, especially within the broader region surrounding the oil fields, public awareness about the Project should be raised through communications strategies such as travelling video shows, informal talks, debates, and community theatre productions. A provisional budget for these initiatives is included in the pricing of the recommended mitigation activities.

In order to implement efficiently all of these diverse activities that span several different sectors from health to livestock and public works, effective coordination and rigorous monitoring will be essential. This is the ultimate responsibility of the CTNSC and its proposed Executive Secretariat. Recruitment of personal and capacity building initiatives should commence immediately. Furthermore, an immediate operational priority for the CTNSC's Executive Secretariat should be the design of a monitoring system that is founded on realistic indicators and cost-effective data collection, analysis and reporting. Without such a system in place in the very near future, it will be impossible to monitor the impact of the Project or the performance and effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures. Moreover, it will be these measures that will help ensure that broader regional development opportunities are realized to their fullest potential and that the benefits of the Project are distributed equitably. The CTNSC's Executive Secretariat must work hand-in-hand with partner organizations in order to design and implement the monitoring system and ensure that information is reported to decision makers in a timely manner and in a readily comprehensible form. A well-designed and executed monitoring system will facilitate efficient management and allow corrective actions to be made expeditiously and without undue disruption to ongoing operations.