



Investing in rural people

Burkina Faso

Community Investment Programme for Agricultural Fertility

Project Completion Report Digest

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Project No. 1220
West and Central Africa Division
Programme Management Department

Burkina Faso - Community Investment Programme for Agricultural Fertility

Item	Assessment Remarks	Rating
Country & Project Name	Burkina Faso - Community Investment Programme for Agricultural Fertility	
Loan No.:	611-BF	
Project Id.	1220	
Board Date	11 September 2003	
Effectiveness Date	22 October 2004	
Original Closing Date	30 June 2012	
Final Closing Date	31 December 2012	
Total Project Cost USD(M)	28.86 million	
IFAD loan US\$(M)	12.067 million	
Cofinanciers (if any)	BOAD: US\$1; Government (National): US\$ 3.2	
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Fishery	
Principal Components	The programme has 5 components: (i) strengthening of local capacity; (ii) support to and financing of micro-programme development; (iii) enhanced value of agriculture and livestock commodities, and development of income-generating activities; (iv) promotion of an institutional and economic environment conducive to sustainable development; and (v) programme management.	
Project Performance		
Relevance	Project design was aligned with the country's PRSP, the strategic thrusts of the country's Rural Development Strategy and with the IFAD COSOP of 1998. It is also in line with the new COSOP covering the period 2007-2012. The programme was highly relevant to the actual needs of the beneficiaries. By addressing the problems of land degradation and land productivity, it aimed to fill important gaps left by previous interventions, which focused more on the social and community infrastructure needs of the populations in the project area. Project design and implementation were participatory, though the PCR points at some flaws in the approach during implementation.	5
Effectiveness	Despite some good implementation results, effectiveness of programme interventions was mixed and altogether only partly satisfactory. The programme aimed at improving the living conditions and the incomes of the population in the eastern part of the country and at reducing land degradation while intensifying agricultural production. The programme was successful in the sense that it reached out to 165 villages, thus surpassing its initial target of 150. 65 village development committees were established and 40 village development plans developed. This is also due to the fact that other programmes started intervening in the same regions and included among their activities the setting up of the village development committees. In order to avoid repetition and waste of funds, PICOFA decided to focus its intervention on activities other than the creation of VDC and left this task to others (insight on non-duplication of activities provided by CPM). Regarding the first objective, it can be stated that the programme has contributed to improving the incomes and living conditions of the population, but to a lesser extent than expected. The successful implementation of the training programme has helped farmers increase their production, sales and incomes. The programme has also helped the beneficiaries to finance and implement 173 micro-projects. This is, however, less than the 243 initially foreseen. The microfinance sub-component was modified. The institutional support to the national credit union network was replaced by a line of credit implemented in 2009. This enabled mainly women to access a total of 1809 credits, but long-term access to RFS could not be guaranteed. The second objective was reached with the implementation of SWC and soil restoration techniques, the development of vegetables gardens, low land agriculture, and action/research activities. The programme has particularly benefited from various TAGs given to research centers, which have been highly instrumental in the implementation of action/research activities. New technical packages could be developed and yields of 5 important crops could be increased (maize, (+400), sorghum (+200), rice (+300), millet (+210) and cowpea (+143). These figures, however, refer to field tests only. Effectiveness of programme interventions were altogether hampered by weak administrative and financial management: weak cash flow management, untimely and inadequate submission of WAs and unauthorized bridging between donor resources. Other issues concern procurement delays and untimely submission of audit reports. Finally, the transition to IFAD DS was cumbersome and has negatively impacted on programme effectiveness. The lack of coordination between partner agencies (IFAD, BOAD, AFDB) was felt as an additional burden, in particular the incapacity of the 3 IFIs to organize joint supervision missions. With 5 components and 3 IFIs involved (IFAD, AFDB, BOAD), project implementation was perceived as a challenge. It is felt that altogether, the programme could have done better.	4
Efficiency	The PCR gives a mixed picture of programme efficiency. Programme efficiency has suffered from: (i) frequent changes of CPMs; (ii) lack of coordination between partner agencies; (iii) a difficult transition from CI supervision to IFAD direct supervision; and (iv) weak administrative and	4

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	financial management. With the shift to direct supervision in 2009, programme implementation lost its momentum. IFAD was partly made responsible for this as 9 payment requests/WAs remaining pending for several months together with a request for extension. The situation improved in 2011, with the appointment of a new CPM and as IFAD had gained more experience with direct supervision. Disbursement rates at completion were lower than the achievement rates (75% and 86% respectively) and can therefore be considered satisfactory: Comp 1: 70% vs 118%; Comp 2: 71% vs 94%; Comp 3: 35%/80%; Comp 4: 31% vs 78%. Conversely, the programme management component reached a disbursement rate of 203%. Two main reasons were mentioned: (i) a doubling of salary expenditures following their alignment with Government's salary scale, and (ii) a growing contribution to the administrative and management costs of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, following the early discontinuation of contracts with the Provincial Private Operators. In addition, the large geographical coverage of the Programme required extensive travel to reach out to the various villages. This, combined with the large hike in fuel prices during implementation affected recurrent costs. These cost increases were all inputted on the IFAD loan since only IFAD (and to a much lesser extent, the Government) financed salaries and recurrent costs of the whole Programme (BOAD and AfDB only financed investment costs). On the more positive side, the ERR calculated at completion reached 15% which is in line with appraisal expectations. Total costs by beneficiary are estimated at 116 USD of which USD 48 were provided by IFAD. IFAD resources have thus allowed mobilizing an additional 1.4 resources from other partners (GoBF, BAD, BOAD, Beneficiaries), which is considered satisfactory. The project was granted a six-month extension to complete critical activities.	
Project Performance		4
Partner Performance		
IFAD	IFAD was criticized for the frequent change of CPMs (5 in 8 years), which has led to an overall lack of continuity in policy dialogue and implementation support. This, combined with the transition to IFAD direct supervision (DS), has led to approval delays. In 2009, 9 requests for No Objections remained pending for six months together with a request for extension of the loan closing date. The latter was only addressed in 2011, upon the arrival of a new CPM. IFAD can also be deemed responsible for some design flaws, such as the underestimation of operating costs.	3
Cooperating Institution	BOAD's performance as CI is not assessed in the PCR.	n.a
Government	Government performance is not analysed in great detail. Counterpart funds were provided and topped up in order to cover the much higher than expected management and operating costs. At project completion, government contribution to management costs reached 797% of the initial amount. The PCR states that the PCU was instrumental in establishing operational partnerships with decentralized government entities, technical services and other government-led operations. On the negative side, serious administrative and financial management problems were identified when the programme came under direct supervision and Government can be criticized for not having adequately fulfilled its supervision and oversight responsibilities.	4
NGO/Other	Partnerships with non-public sector entities were mixed. The programme's close collaboration with research institutions such as INERA through different TAGs (ICRAF, IFDC) have been crucial for the successful implementation of the various action/research activities, which have allowed 9 relevant technical packages to be developed (100% adoption rate). These partnerships can therefore be considered as a strength of the programme. On the less positive side, the intended partnerships with POs for the distribution of inputs could not be established since the POs were not strong enough to deal with it independently and procedures to establish a revolving fund were cumbersome. Finally, the programme's relationship with the Provincial Private Operators has proven difficult throughout. Negotiations have been lengthy and cumbersome, start-up of operations was slow and overall efforts hampered by the reluctance of some villages to receive support from external operators.	4
Cofinancier(s)	Performance of co-financiers was uneven. It appears that interventions were poorly coordinated, both content-wise and over time. This led to uneven disbursement rates as well. AfDB funds were fully disbursed at completion while BOAD funds reached a disbursement rate of 30% only. The low disbursement rate of BOAD funds was partly caused by external factors. The PCR seems to indicate, however, that a better programming and coordination of interventions would have led to a better use of BOAD financial resources and would have increased efficiency and effectiveness of programme interventions. If the Government had played its crucial role of coordinator of the various cofinanciers, the results would likely have been quite different.	3
Combined Partner Performance	It seems that the combined performance of partners has suffered from a lack of coordination of interventions by Government and of supervision missions by the donors. Again, the (missing) role of the Government hampered coordination among the development partners.	
Rural Poverty Impact		

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Household Income and Net Assets	The programme aimed at stabilizing and increasing the incomes of the target population. To some extent this could be achieved and allowed the living conditions of the populations to be improved. Agricultural incomes could be improved through various activities aiming at land development and access to improved cropping technologies. Another important contributing factor has been the introduction of productive micro-programmes (MPAV). The direct involvement of the populations in the selection and implementation of MPAVs has enabled them to gain full ownership of this facility and to maximize long-term benefits. Ownership of livestock and tools could be improved too. Livestock increases were noted essentially for small livestock (chicken, sheep, goats). The number of large livestock remained unchanged. While the ownership of small livestock seemed to have increased across the area, this increase was more pronounced for beneficiaries than for non-beneficiaries, which seems to confirm the programme's impact in this area. There has also been a shift from hand tools to animal traction for field works. The ownership of other assets such as motorcycle, bicycle, radio has increased across the programme area while new and more expensive assets (TV, cars) have started to appear in isolated cases together with access to electricity. The extent to which the programme has contributed to this increase in household assets was not assessed. The programme has reached mixed results in terms of access to rural finance. A credit line was given to the Burkina Faso Credit Union Network in 2009, allowing temporary access to credits (2 cycles). Credits were used mainly by women for the purchase of mills (59), donkey carts (775) soap making kits (28) and beehives (47). Due to its nature, this credit line has, however, not allowed long-term access to RFS. It is worth noting that in the year before project completion, about 25% of the beneficiary households have accessed a credit through a local MFI and about 22% still hold a savings account with one of these institutions. Finally, the introduction of the warrantee credit system has allowed the beneficiaries to increase their incomes by starting IGAs activities and selling their crops at off-season prices.	5
Food Security	Land development, vegetable production and improved crop production and productivity have undoubtedly led to better food security. Figures to sustain these assumptions are few, however. The PCR states that farmers who have adopted the techniques promoted by the programme have at least 2 meals the day, which is considered as an improvement compared to non-beneficiaries. Also, the PCR states that about half of the households which have mentioned agricultural production increases have used these to improve their family diet. Furthermore, it can be assumed that the development of low land agricultural and vegetable production have helped improve and diversify households diets. The share of beneficiaries suffering from food shortage could be reduced from 71% in 2006 to 46% in 2009. More importantly, the percentage of the households facing 2 food shortage periods could be reduced from 12% in 2006 to 2% in 2012. The duration of food shortage period could, however, not be shortened. Child malnutrition has not significantly changed between 2006 and 2012. Chronic malnutrition has remained unchanged while acute malnutrition could be reduced from 20% to 13.3%.	4
Ag. Productivity	The programme has been quite successful in developing agricultural land and increasing agricultural productivity. The yields of five staples crops could be significantly improved through the combination of SWC techniques, distribution of improved seeds, improved production techniques and use of organic fertilizer: maize (+400), sorghum (+200), rice (+300), millet (+210) and cowpea (+143). These figures reflect, however, the result of field trials (FFS). It can be assumed that yields on farmers' fields are lower. Nevertheless, the survey carried out at the end of the programme has shown that around 72% of the beneficiaries could diversify their production and more than 85% have increased overall production by more than 25%. Also, 57% have noted a surplus production used either for consumption (48%) or for sale (25%). Of the beneficiaries who adopted the new technical packages, 96% have mentioned production increases. The programme has also facilitated the production of organic fertilizer which has allowed 26 234 ha of land to be improved. Both, the amount of organic fertilizer produced and the surface being manured are twice as high as the targets set at appraisal. Main beneficiaries were farmers with no or only small livestock. Productive micro-programmes have further helped develop 48 vegetable gardens, 150 ha of dry-land and 1010 ha of lowland. The programme has, however, failed to develop input supply chains to ensure long-term access to chemical fertilizers and other inputs. Appropriate institutional strengthening would have been needed to this effect.	5
Agricultural Productivity and Food Security		4.5
Natural Resources and Environment	No negative impact on the environment was noted. The programme has strongly supported the use of organic fertilizer, which has improved soil quality and structure. Other activities have contributed to reducing land degradation such as soil and water conservation, soil restoration techniques and agroforestry. The PCR has further concluded that the presence of a larger number of small livestock in the area of intervention has not increased the pressure on land. On the other	5

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	hand, the programme failed to implement important pastoralist infrastructure works (i.e. transhumant corridors), which has lessened the positive impacts of its interventions.	
Human, Social Capital and Empowerment	Capacity strengthening of beneficiaries was at the core of the programme's interventions. Four (4) permanent training centers were established and still operational at completion. In addition, 235 temporary centers were created during programme implementation. Around 4000 individuals have benefited from literacy training and 95% of the trained could be declared literate after an average 105 days of training (of which 69% women). As such, the programme has contributed to increasing the literacy rate of both men (from 18% in 2006 to 30% in 2012) and women (from 12% in 2006 to 22% in 2012). The programme has trained 65 technical staff at provincial level, who are now in a better positions to address the needs of farmers. It has also trained 29 137 farmers (36% women) in various technical areas. In terms of setting up VDCs, the targets were revised in the course of implementation as other projects began intervening in the same region (in particular the PNGT2 financed by the World Bank). These projects had amongst their tasks the setting up of the village development committees. Thus, in order to avoid repetition and waste of funds, PICOFA decided to focus its interventions on activities other than the creation of VDCs and VDPs and left these activities to others. Also, in terms of financing the activities included in the VDPs, the PICOFA, PNGT2 and others, jointly decided where each would intervene in order not to duplicate interventions. Regarding access to basic needs, access to safe water could be increased from 75% in 2006 to 87% in 2012. Of those who have access to potable water, 80% are using the infrastructure provided by the programme. Sanitation could not be improved.	5
Inst. & Policies	The programme's impact on institutions and policies is not explicitly assessed in the PCR. The programme intended to establish two revolving funds for the distribution of fertilizers and other inputs/equipment, to be managed by farmer's organizations (FOs). This activity, however, never materialized because: (i) administrative procedures were too cumbersome, (ii) FOs not sufficiently strengthened to deal with it, and (iii) costs altogether underestimated. The intended support to the Provincial Committees did not materialize either and funds were reallocated. On the more positive side, the programme helped to create and support the VDCs, which were important local institutions. The programme supported the creation of 3 socio-professional organizations against a target of 2. More importantly, it provided support to the creation of 5 well-functioning provincial micro-project committees. Members were adequately trained and a management plan was established for each committee.	4
Markets	The programme did not explicitly aim at developing local markets. Hence, there is little information about its impact in this area. It is only indicated that 25% of the beneficiary households could increase their incomes through the sale of production surpluses, induced by land development and productivity increases. On the other hand, the construction and rehabilitation of rural roads did not take place as planned.	4
Project Impact	Despite some implementation difficulties, the programme has had a positive impact on the living conditions of the populations in the region. It has helped more than 6000 households (or approx. 42 000 people) out of poverty. Between 2006 and 2012, poverty incidence was reduced from 67.7% to 62.2%, the percentage of households facing one food shortage period was reduced from 59% to 45% and those facing 2 food shortage periods have almost disappeared (reduction from 12 to 2%). Chronic malnutrition has remained unchanged but acute child malnutrition was reduced from 20% to 13.13%. Access to safe water has increased from 75% to 87% and the literacy rates could be dramatically improved from 18% to 30% for men and from 12% to 22% for women. Furthermore, the benchmark survey has shown that tangible results were reached with regard to access to improved land, agricultural production, productivity and sales. In all areas, benefits have been significant and much higher for beneficiaries than for non-beneficiaries. At the end of the programme, 57% of the beneficiaries confirm having higher incomes. The programme has further had an important impact with activities aimed at reducing land degradation and improving soil fertility, i.e. through the introduction of organic fertilizer, SWC techniques and other restoration and conservation efforts.	5
Overarching Factors		
Innovation	The programme was not designed to lead to innovations, but several approaches were identified as innovative in the existing context: (i) TAGs used as an instrument to support action/research; (ii) action/research in farmer's fields (innovation-testing-adaptation-replication-extension-upscaling); (iii) the self-targeting mechanism developed by the programme; and (iv) the management committees established for the implementation of micro-projects (MPAV) to be financed under the FIPAD (Investment fund for sustainable agricultural productivity).	5
Replicability and Scaling-up	Most of the innovations have the potential for replication and possibly also for scaling up. The local management committees established for the implementation of the MPAVs stand out as an instrument worth being replicated and scaled up within similar programmes. These committees in	5

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	charge of access, use and maintenance of collective productive assets are composed of members elected among the beneficiaries and respected in their function by the village leaders. Members have priority access to the assets. Member fees are partly used to cover maintenance costs. Another part is deposited in a bank account and used to leverage credits. All the soil and water conservation activities can be scaled-up as well as the technological packages developed with the support of the various research centers They have already been integrated into IFAD's new intervention. The inventory credit scheme can certainly be replicated as well.	
Innovation, Replicability and Scaling-up		5
Sustainability and Ownership	Despite the absence of an explicit exit strategy, programme sustainability is considered high. The participatory approach adopted by the programme combined with relevant training and capacity building efforts have contributed to maximizing beneficiary ownership of programme achievements. This concerns in particular achievements in the area of agricultural production and intensification (72% of the beneficiaries have benefited from the introduction of new varieties), land development including soil and water conservation- SWC- and soil protection & restoration (more than 80% of the beneficiaries still use the surfaces developed with the support of the programme) and IGAs. Particularly noteworthy are the programme's important investments in the recuperation of previously degraded lands through SWC and its support to the increase in soil fertility through technological packages, including the use of organic fertilizers which have been widely adopted by the beneficiaries. As a result, the Programme has had a major impact on the environmental sustainability which is crucial in the Sahel, particularly in the context of climate change. Chances for sustainability of these achievements are slightly lessened by the lack of access to inputs other than organic fertilizers and rural financial services, which the programme did not succeed in establishing.	5
Targeting	Programme interventions were focused on those villages that had established a village management plans under the PNGT and which had identified erosion control, restoration of soil fertility and agricultural intensification as main local development priorities to overcome the problems of soil degradation and temporary livestock overpopulation. In addition, the programme applied a self-targeting mechanism whereby local communities and technical services were directly involved in the identification of the most needy.	5
Gender	The design document states that specific measures would be implemented enabling women and the youth to participate in the planning and implementation of project activities, and to benefit directly from the project's investments. Women participation was satisfactory. High rates of participation could be reached in the areas of literacy training, technical training and access to productive micro-projects (MPAVs). The programme, however, did not succeed in increasing the share of women in decision-making bodies and hence, in empowering them. Also, the programme had no mechanism to specifically target the youth.	4
Overall Performance	Overall performance can be considered satisfactory, despite some implementation problems encountered (see effectiveness section) and lack of coordination among donors and programme interventions in general.	5
Estimated number of beneficiaries	Estimated at 723 350, with 207 000 direct beneficiaries (against an initial target of 150 000) and 516 350 indirect beneficiaries. This corresponds to 115 000 households. Of the total number of beneficiaries, 45% are women and 72% youth.	
PCR Quality		
Scope	The outline is respected but the Logframe is missing.	5
Quality	While very detailed, the PCR often does not establish important linkages or draw conclusions, making it difficult to understand causes and effects, and hence to assess performance and impact. Most results are presented in isolation. Figures mostly emanate from the RIMS survey carried out at the end of the programme. Some figures are not consistent across the report and needed to be cross-checked with other sources (ex 1: the % of the population facing food shortage could be reduced from either 71% or 59% in 2006 to 45% in 2009 - it was 59%; ex 2: the number of village development plans is sometimes 40, sometimes 52. The real figure is 40.	4
Lessons	The PCR seems to capture the main lessons. It identifies mistakes to be avoided, design weaknesses and good/bad experiences.	5