

Responsible Land Policy in Burkina Faso



Context

Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world. In 2019, it ranked 182nd out of 189 countries on the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI). 70% of the population lives in rural areas and is highly dependent on agriculture.

However, almost no agricultural land is registered or legally recognized. This can threaten farmers' rights to use the land they cultivate and thus their entire livelihood. This situation is becoming increasingly problematic in the face of rising demand for land, caused not only by population growth, but also by the emergence of new players, such as agricultural investors, but also gold miners and real estate developers.

With Law 034/2009 on "rural land tenure", Burkina Faso has created a legal framework that regulates the procedures for registering and securing land. Yet the bodies envisioned in this law, often do not exist or are not functional, especially at the communal and village level. Moreover, the population is often not sufficiently aware of the need to register and legalize their land rights.

In addition, the traditional land tenure system disadvantages certain population groups, such as women, migrants and youth, and hampers their long-term access to land. This situation of insecurity and the resulting lack of prospects often makes it difficult for those groups to become self-reliant and inhibits investment.

Activities in Burkina Faso

In Burkina Faso, the project supports the political partners in the application of the law through the following fields of action:

- Field 1 works to strengthen the institutional framework and improve land security procedures in 8 municipalities in the South-West and Hauts-Bassins.
- Field of action 2 aims to involve civil society more in the implementation of responsible land policies and in the resolution of land conflicts.

- Through field 3, the project will raise the awareness of agricultural investors and other economic actors regarding the adoption of a responsible land policy.

Our objective

Legal protection of access to land, which is essential for reducing poverty and hunger in rural areas, has improved for certain population groups, especially women and migrants, in selected municipalities in the South-West and Hauts-Bassins regions.



Regions

8 municipalities in the South-West and Hauts-Bassins regions

Duration

July 2020 until March 2025

Budget

5.6 Million EUR

Lead executing agency

The General Directorate of Land and Organisation of Rural Areas (DGFOMR) of the Ministry of Agriculture

Implementing partners

The DGFOMR, the Regional Directorates of the Ministry of Agriculture, the cadastral services, the municipalities, NGOs and consultancy firms.

Target group

The population of 180 villages in the 8 municipalities concerned.



An example from the field

In Burkina Faso, there are many cooperatives which produce and process agricultural products. These cooperatives are often made up of women. Especially women producers of cassava, which is processed into couscous (attiéké), benefit from this division of labor, where some members are responsible for production, others for processing and still others for marketing the product.

These cooperatives usually work on land that men from their villages make available to them informally. However, this agricultural activity is accompanied by soil enrichment measures. Because of this enrichment, the land gains in value and is often taken over by the landowners after a few years of use by the women. Many women therefore regularly lose their production base.

Law 034/2009 offers several solutions for such cases: Certificates of Rural Land Ownership (the most formal scheme), Certificates of Rights of Use (land loans, rental or lease agreements, permission for temporary access to land) or Land Charters, which set the conditions for land use by certain groups.

In addition, the law also provides for the establishment of local bodies to settle such conflicts.

Examples of this are the Land Commissions, which support the registration of land certificates, and the Land Conciliation Commissions.

However, although these commissions often exist at the village level, their members are usually not aware of their role. The project therefore supports the commissions in better performing their tasks and sensitizes their members as well as the general public



Women's cooperative processing agricultural products

to the various possibilities offered by the law. It will also develop simplified templates for the various documents required. Finally, it will strengthen the capacities of civil society actors so that they can moderate land conflicts in their respective areas of activity.

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