Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Project Evaluation Series
12/2020

Evaluation of the project "Integrating climate resilience into agricultural and pastoral production for food security in vulnerable rural areas through the farmers field school approach"

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Contents

Boxes, figures and tables

Boxes

Figures

Tables

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AGPM	Plant Production and Protection Division (Management)
ANR	Assisted natural regeneration
APFS	Agro-pastoral field school
CB	Capacity building
CCA	Climate change adaptation
CDP	Community Development Plans
CI	Climate information
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS	Farmer field school
GAP	Good Agro-sylvo-pastoral Practices
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IGA	Income-generating activities
INERA	Environment and Agricultural Research Institute
LAA	Local activity advisors
LCCA	Local Investment Fund for Climate Change Adaptation
MAAH	Ministry of Agriculture and Hydro-agricultural Development
MEEVCC	Ministry of Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change
MRAH	Ministry of Animal and Fisheries Resources
MT	Master trainer
NAAS	National Agricultural Advisory Strategy
NAP	Burkina Faso's National Climate Change Adaptation Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OED	FAO Office of Evaluation
PNDES	National Plan for Economic and Social Development
PNSR	National Rural Sector Programme
PNSR II	Second National Rural Sector Programme
PNVACA	National Agricultural Extension and Advisory Programme
PP	Peasant practices
SHARP	Self-evaluation and Holistic Assessment of climate Resilience of farmers and Pastoralists
SNVACA	National Agricultural Extension and Advisory System
SNVACE	National Livestock Extension and Advisory System
ToC	Theory of change
TP	Technological practices
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association

Executive summary

Introduction

1. This final evaluation concerns the project "Integrating Climate Resilience into Agricultural and Pastoral Production for Food Security in Vulnerable Rural Areas through the Farmers Field School Approach", which is financed by the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project was executed by FAO and implemented by the Government of Burkina Faso from 1 May 2015 to 31 August 2020. The aim of this project is to "enhance the capacity of Burkina Faso's agricultural and pastoral sectors to cope with climate change, by mainstreaming climate change adaptation (CCA) practices and strategies into on-going agricultural development initiatives and agricultural policies and programming and upscaling of farmers adoption of CCA technologies and practices through a network of already established farmer field schools (FFS)".

2. The purpose of the final evaluation is to inform all stakeholders on the performance of the project, make recommendations to promote sustainability of the outcomes, and draw appropriate lessons to improve the design of future projects. The final evaluation used a participatory and systemic approach of inquiry, observation and analysis to answer the evaluation questions (EQs) as described below.

Main findings

EQ1: To what extent does the project in its design meet the capacity building needs of Burkina Faso stakeholders to address climate change and how does it contribute to FAO and GEF's strategic objectives?

3. The project is relevant and coherent to meet the climate change adaptation needs of Burkina Faso. Its objectives are consistent with the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS), and the general principles and orientations for promoting a green economy in Burkina Faso. The project is aligned with the Government's strategic priorities for agricultural development, CCA as well as with FAO and GEF's strategic and operational policies and priorities with respect to capacity building and environmental protection. By design, the project complies well with GEF policies and requirements for co-financing, public participation, stakeholder engagement, monitoring and evaluation, application of the incremental cost principle, gender equality, and GEF environmental and social safeguards.

4. The capacity building (CB) approach targets the three recommended levels of intervention (individual, organizational and project enabling environment). The project is structured around three complementary operational components that take gender issues into account. These components are deemed relevant and coherent in view of the planned activities and the targeted effects and impacts. The implementation arrangements and the chain of project outcomes are globally coherent and realistic in relation to the final impact sought.

5. The theory of change (ToC) is consistent and relevant, although some risks have not been adequately addressed. The ToC was undermined by a limited budget that required a revision of the budget and insufficient project targets at the very beginning of the project, but without affecting the overall ambition of the project.

EQ2: To what extent have the resilience capacities of Burkina Faso's agricultural and pastoral sectors and populations been strengthened to cope with climate change in a sustainable manner?

6. The project has contributed sufficiently to building the capacities for climate change adaptation (CB-CCA) of the agricultural and pastoral sectors and populations in vulnerable areas of Burkina Faso. With regard to its overall objective, the project has highly contributed to the sustainable management of 20 432.75 ha of land (target achieved at 136 percent), including 15 632.75 ha of cultivated land and 4 800 ha of pasture, mainly through co-financing activities. The project also built the capacities of 29 201 final beneficiaries, including: 10 528 (57 percent women) in the farmer field schools/agro-pastoral field schools (FFS/APFS) directly subsidised by GEF and 18 673 producers in APFS set up with funds from co-financing partners. These good results are however watered-down by the fact that the project lacked anticipation in formalising the collaboration with the co-financing partners involved in these activities. Consequently, the accounting and capitalisation of achievements only started after the co-financing workshop was organised in November 2017.

7. Initially, the project laid the necessary foundations to enable the awareness-raising of stakeholders, the design, implementation and monitoring of tools for testing/learning/disseminating CCA technologies (APFS) and for strengthening the resilience of communities, especially through Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) and Local Investment Fund for Climate Change Adaptation (LCCA) micro-projects. Thus, the three expected outputs have been well achieved, and Outcome 1 is rated as satisfactory.

8. Secondly, the project effectively built the capacities of master trainers (MTs), facilitators and producers. The LCCA set up around APFS (VSLA groups and micro-projects) has been strongly supported by the populations. It has helped to energise VSLAs and strengthen social ties and means of resilience within the community. Indeed, VSLA members could make savings or receive loans in order to carry out income-generating activities (IGAs). At local level, these VSLAs are an alternative to the loan services of Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) whose access conditions are unsuitable for the majority of producers. The project has contributed to land tenure security and the use of climatic and meteorological information to plan and manage the agricultural season. However, challenges such as delays in the availability of inputs, materials and equipment somewhat reduced the performance of FFS/APFS and considerably reduced the implementation of LCCA micro-projects. Despite these challenges, eight of the nine expected outputs were effectively achieved, this Outcome 2 is rated as satisfactory.

9. The project was sufficiently ambitious and proactive in achieving its objectives at the policy and strategic level. It also used a *participatory partnership approach that mobilised all stakeholders in its implementation*. Memoranda were signed with the General and Regional Directorates of the Ministries concerned to give them responsibility for building the capacity of key stakeholders in the implementation, planning, supervision, implementation and monitoring-evaluation of activities in the field, etc. Some local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were also mobilised for the implementation of field activities (setting up and facilitation of FFS/APFS, VSLAs, and micro-projects) through memoranda of understanding. The Governors of the regions were deeply involved and participated in project meetings. They were leading selection and orientation committees for micro-projects at regional level.

10. The project succeeded in establishing an inter-ministerial mechanism to promote the APFS approach and CCA practice, in order to coordinate CCA and extend integrated systems. However, there is still a high risk that each ministry continues to use its own approach without integrating all of the requirements and principles of the APFS approach; and this requires the consolidation of the achievements made. The project has taken outstanding actions to strengthen the incorporation and positioning of the APFS approach as a major tool in national agricultural extension and advisory systems. Despite insufficient resources and time to see the revising process of Community Development Plans (CDPs) through to completion, the project has been realistic in its efforts to analyse CDPs, develop a methodological guide for communal leaders and take the necessary actions to promote the integration of climate resilience, and nutrition and disaster risk management into CDPs. Despite the challenges encountered, the outputs of Outcome 3 were satisfactorily achieved.

11. The positive outcomes observed could have been better if there had not been significant delays in the availability of resources and equipment for the implementation of APFS and LCCA micro-projects. Moreover, the objectives and targets set for Component 3 were too ambitious considering the limited duration of the project. The Regional Directorates and the facilitators developed strategies to mitigate/balance these delays at the level of APFS.

EQ3: To what extent did the project implementation and management mechanisms affect the effectiveness and quality of outcomes?

12. In general, the project was managed in an adaptive manner and resources were used well. Consequently, the efficiency of the project is rated as Moderately Satisfactory, despite some difficulties and challenges encountered. The project implementation strategy was effective thanks to the actual involvement of partners, the work of the supervisory bodies (Steering Committee, FAO Technical Division and GEF Unit) and the support of the Country Representation. This work made it possible to ensure an efficient technical and financial execution of the annual work plan and budget (AWPB). In spite of a relatively slow process, two revisions that solved important problems, in a relevant and satisfactory manner, were: the inadequacy of resources in relation to the planned activities and objectives; and the early departure of some key experts, including the International Project Technical Advisor. This departure led to the re-mobilisation and reassignment of national experts.

13. Another positive aspect is the good functioning of the project implementation and supervisory bodies. The project benefited from: the dynamism and proactivity of the project coordination unit (PCU); the support of the country office; a very committed participation by the implementing partners; and supervision by the Government and FAO. Monitoring and evaluation of the project worked well and made it possible to make recommendations, guide the planning of activities, and develop the various project reports. Sessions of the Steering Committee were held regularly, they functioned well and saw the participation of senior government and FAO officials. This gave more visibility and importance to the project and eased the implementation of its recommendations.

14. However, the project encountered several challenges, which were more or less successfully addressed. The project kicked off late due to delays in the provision of funds by the donor, the lack of premises for the PCU and the delay in organising the 1st session of the 2016 project Steering Committee. Besides, the project had to adapt to the frequent changes of the lead technical officer (LTO) at FAO.

15. Delays in the acquisition of inputs, materials and equipment for FFS/APFS and LCCA micro-projects, the non-compliance with the activities implementation schedule by some partners (consultants and technical services), the slowness observed in the budget review, and heightened insecurity in some project areas, reduced the effectiveness and efficiency of the project. Consequently, the facilitation of second generation APFS, the monitoring of the second cycle of VSLAs and the End line study, were not yet completed at the time of the final evaluation.

16. The project experienced major difficulties from its inception in mobilising co-financing partners and making co-financing resources operational. In response, the PCU took initiatives and supported their implementation, especially the resumption of the financing agreement that enabled the country's funds to be paid out and made available. Besides, the project organised 2 workshops which allowed to (re)mobilise the co-financing partners and capitalise on the achievements. Overall, in-kind co-financing amounted to USD 61 668 842, bringing the total co-financing of the country to USD 61 914 297 against USD 19 435 000 foreseen at the design stage. However, the ex post capitalisation approach to co-financing activities is not the most efficient, since it takes into account achievements that have not benefited from joint or concerted planning with these co-financing partners. It does not stimulate and generate all the synergies sought by the GEF co-financing principle.

17. *Communication efforts and knowledge management* were regular and of high quality. The various training workshops were covered by the media and press releases were issued. Similarly, the catalogue of climate resilient Good Agro-sylvo-pastoral Practices (GAPs) was distributed to all stakeholders. The agro-climatic information was disseminated through local radio in the project intervention areas and also contributed to a better visibility of the project. In December 2018, the project organised a sub-regional training and experience-sharing workshop on climate-resilient APFS. The results of the course on agricultural innovations were shared at the Origin, Diversity and Territories forum in September 2018 in Turin, Italy. A report on the capitalisation of APFS experiences in Burkina Faso was drafted, and 1 000 catalogues of good practices were produced and distributed. However, the project web page was still not functional.

EQ4: To what extent have sustainability conditions as well as financial, socio-economic, environmental, institutional and governance risks that may affect sustainability been identified and managed?

18. Despite the presence of risks that could threaten the sustainability of the project and deserve the attention of the Government and its partners, the sustainability of the project is overall rated as Likely (L).

19. APFS and VSLA tools, as well as LCCA micro-projects promoted by the project, have met the interests of decision-makers and populations and are means of concrete a sustainable response to their needs. The APFS approach is taken into account in the National Agricultural Extension and Advisory System (SNVACA) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Hydro-agricultural Development (MAAH), in the National Livestock Extension and Advisory System (SNVACE) of the Ministry of Animal and Fisheries Resources (MRAH), and in the intervention mechanism of the Ministry of Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change (MEEVCC) as one of the advisory tools. Awareness-raising and advocacy actions

deserve to continue after project completion to help consolidate the achievements and progress towards the institutionalisation of the APFS approach.

20. The project has integrated several factors of sustainability such as: the deep involvement of the central, regional and provincial directorates of MAAH, MRAH, MEEVCC and local NGOs, and the capacity building of agents in charge of developing and operationalising agricultural advisory strategies. Technical managers, MTs and facilitators are likely to ensure knowledge sharing and cascade training of other advisory agents for better adoption and dissemination of the APFS approach. The same applies to endogenous facilitators and members of APFS and VSLA groups who have been successfully trained.

EQ5: To what extent have the issues related to gender, vulnerable or marginalised groups and environmental sustainability been effectively taken into account during project implementation?

21. The project did take gender into account from the design stage, and transversally, for all activities. Specifically, output activities were planned with gender-specific indicator targets. Gender mainstreaming in the achievement of project activities and objectives is a real cause for project satisfaction. Indeed, out of 29 201 direct final beneficiaries of the FFS/APFS approach, 10 528 were women, i.e. 36.07 percent. The project enabled women to improve their knowledge. It was also a framework for expressing and asserting their leadership and learning entrepreneurial capacities. The project offered a gender-sensitive guide for the development of CDPs integrating climate change in the municipalities.

22. The project's implementation of gender objectives has revealed the existence of weak components to be strengthened in the gender mainstreaming and women's capacity building mechanism. Despite the proactive and coherent strategy put in place, the project did not succeed in reaching its targets for trained MTs (14 percent women out of a target of 30 percent) and facilitators (20 percent women out of a target of 40 percent).

23. This project has had a positive effect on safeguarding natural resources, strengthening the resilience of ecosystems and communities and reinforcing social cohesion among members. By contrast, there was no actual or potential negative effects during implementation or highlighted by the final evaluation.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1. Project implementation has helped to further clarify the manifestations, facets and effects of climate change in Burkina Faso in general and in particular in the regions, communities and populations targeted by the project. It has highlighted the Government's priorities and strategic frameworks for intervention, as well as their shortcomings, and has proposed corrective actions.

24. Most rural households are aware of climate change, but the adoption rates for technologies disseminated by conventional tools remain low. The lack of a holistic agricultural advisory approach favoured by compartmentalisation and the lack of coordination among the sectoral extension and advisory systems of the three main ministries in charge of rural development, are obvious realities of the Burkina Faso context. The APFS approach was implemented to these by the project and proven to be one of the appropriate means of response. The improved collaboration between the various local technical services for agriculture, livestock and the environment is one of the proofs that the APFS approach is relevant.

Conclusion 2. The project has succeeded in strengthening climate change adaptation and resilience capacities of the agricultural and pastoral sectors in Burkina Faso and has made significant progress towards institutionalising the approach.

25. The implementation of the project's processes has actually strengthened the knowledge of decision-makers on the APFS approach and CCA practices. CCA practices and technologies tested in APFS and the associated tools (VSLA, LCCA micro-projects) were well accepted by decision-makers and populations and were effectively adopted as a means of strengthening the resilience of populations. Thanks to the project, a committee in charge of promoting the APFS approach and CCA practices was established through an inter-ministerial decree, the approach was included in the SNVACE and SNVACA, and a tool was suggested for integrating gender in the development of CDPs. These helped to make outstanding progress towards adopting this approach as a major tool for agricultural extension and advice to address climate change in Burkina Faso.

Conclusion 3. Despite the challenges encountered at the level of budgeting and co-financing, the changes in key resources (LTO, international project technical advisor [PTA], Self-evaluation and Holistic Assessment of climate Resilience of farmers and Pastoralists [SHARP] expert, etc.) and the delay in mobilising co-financing and implementing LCCA micro-projects, the project has adequately mobilised the mechanisms and processes to ensure adaptive management and achieve its objectives.

26. The project rightly carried out the necessary budget revisions, the (re)mobilisation of co-financing partners, and the formalisation of the implementation and supervision arrangements for field activities. The project Steering Committee functioned well and provided informed and useful advice and guidance. FAO, through its Country Representation and the project supervision team based in Rome, provided outstanding support. These supervision actions have enabled budget revisions and the mobilisation of co-financing. They have also accelerated the mobilisation of implementation partners at the central level (training MTs and decision-makers, supervising the implementation of the APFS approach); the regional level (training facilitators, supervising the implementation of activities); and the municipal level (training producers, identifying second generation facilitators, raising the awareness of municipal authorities). The main dissatisfaction that reduced the efficiency of the project is found in the shortcomings observed at the level of the mobilisation of co-financing partners and the implementation of LCCA micro-projects.

Conclusion 4. The sustainability factors and conditions put in place by the project are satisfactory, despite the presence of some risks that could negatively affect the sustainability of the achievements.

27. Factors promoting the sustainability of the project include capacity building of all stakeholders in the agricultural advisory system in Burkina Faso and their involvement in the experimentation of the APFS approach as well as the integration of endogenous facilitators in the process. This is also the case for technologies, good agro-sylvo-pastoral practices and tools proposed (APFS, VSLA, LCCA micro-projects, gender mainstreaming guide in the CDPs) which are not only a concrete response to the needs of decision-makers, communities and producers but also factors of social cohesion, assertion of women's capacities, development of income-generating activities and improvement of people's livelihoods. Positive signs of the potential adoption and sustainability of the APFS approach include the signing of an inter-ministerial decree to promote the APFS approach and

integrate the APFS tool among SNVACA and SNVACE tools and the ongoing adoption of the national agricultural advisory strategy. The institutionalisation of this approach remains subject to the budgeting of CCA measures in policies, projects and programmes. Advocacy by FAO and the Government (the SP/CPSA) is likely to attract other technical and financial partners (TFPs) for wider dissemination/adoption of the approach. Besides, the national agricultural advisory strategy technically validated in 2017 and awaiting adoption by the Council of Ministers, calls for better coordination of advisory systems. The project has developed strategies to adapt to the country's insecurity situation by deploying adapted security plans. It has also proposed tools that serve not only to build resilience to climate change but also to address other humanitarian risks and disasters.

Conclusion 5. The project has successfully integrated gender and environmental safeguard into its activities and achieved its objectives in these areas. It has also highlighted gender gaps that exist in Burkina's agricultural advisory processes and need to be improved.

28. Gender and environmental sustainability were well integrated into the project design with clear objectives and resource allocations, most of which were achieved. Due to the low representation of women among the technical managers, the project did not succeed in achieving its gender objectives regarding the training of MTs and FFS/APFS facilitators. However, it was able to deploy adequate strategies to meet its gender objectives at the level of the final beneficiaries. Women represent more than half of the final beneficiaries. Thus, the proposed resilience tools and resources (APFS and GAP, VSLA, LCCA micro-projects, gene bank, rehabilitation of degraded lands, methodological guide for gender mainstreaming in CDPs, etc.) responded well to their needs, provided a framework for expressing and strengthening women's leadership and entrepreneurship, and contributed to environmental and social safeguard.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Considering the updated strategic and operational challenges and the positive results achieved by the project, a new phase of the project should be envisaged to consolidate the achievements and institutionalise the APFS approach.

29. The project has highlighted the benefits and opportunities of the APFS approach in terms of improving the frameworks and processes for building the capacity of stakeholders and organisations involved in the extension and agricultural advisory process in Burkina Faso, ranging from decision-makers to populations and advisory agents. The progress achieved in the experimentation and adoption of the APFS approach, in the adoption of associated tools by development partners (VSLA, LCCA micro-projects, gender and CCA mainstreaming guide in CDPs) and in the adoption of the proposed GAPs, deserve to be consolidated, disseminated more widely and institutionalised by the Government with the support of FAO and the inter-ministerial committee set up.

30. The project through VSLAs has enabled people to strengthen social connections and women to develop IGAs to improve their livelihoods. This momentum needs to be supported in the future not only by other well-targeted support mobilised in a timely manner (supply of equipment and inputs, water supply infrastructure via co-financing partners, etc.) but also by the Government to strengthen women's participation in vocational training schools for agricultural sector agents, with a view to eventually improving the representation of women among technical managers in the rural sector.

Recommendation 2. The modalities and mechanisms for mobilising co-financing (cash and non-cash) for future projects need to be improved both at the design and start-up stages.

31. This project was one of the first TFPs to receive a cash contribution from the state. In spite of the difficulties encountered in its mobilisation, the existence of this cash counterpart fund demonstrates the very proactive commitment of the State to this project and is a significant step forward in State co-financing. The mobilisation of this fund, added to the monitoring and supervision resources provided for in the Memorandum of Understanding between MAAH and FAO, made it possible to: organise SC activities, organise certain supervision missions, pay the regional focal points, acquire small office equipment and rehabilitate the offices of local branches. In short, it compensated for several shortcomings that often limit monitoring and supervision by the Government of certain projects financed by TFPs.

32. In order to improve the effectiveness of co-financing in future projects, it is necessary at the design stage to evaluate and quantify this co-financing from the Government by linking it to activities and expected outcomes. Secondly, at the start-up stage, it is worth organising a co-financing workshop early enough and drafting memoranda of understanding and concerted planning to increase synergies.

Recommendation 3. Reflections should be carried out and actions taken to make the Task Force more operational in future projects.

33. The functioning of the task force is often undermined by changes of the LTO and by the fact that the latter is simultaneously involved in several other projects. The LTO of the project was changed several times, consequently, the task force mechanism did not work well. This somewhat reduced the visibility of the project at FAO level.

Lessons

34. Several factors inherent in the project's execution and implementation arrangements and mechanisms had positive effects on its performance. The involvement of FAO and sectoral government authorities at the highest level – in particular the physical participation of senior officials (the FAO Representative in Burkina Faso, the Secretary General of MAAH, etc.) in the Steering Committees and project monitoring – have a stimulating effect on the greater commitment of stakeholders at different levels. The regularity and quality of the PSCs made it possible to identify and analyse some implementation challenges — including budgeting and co-financing issues — and to propose solutions such as: revising the budget and the targets of certain indicators, resuming the State financing agreement, organising a workshop on co-financing, adjusting the intervention strategy, etc. Factors likely to improve project performance include decentralisation of project implementation by mobilising and engaging regional directorates through memoranda of understanding and local NGOs.

35. The concept of co-financing applied to GEF projects needs to be made explicit and explained to stakeholders including the Government and other partner projects, to avoid any misinterpretation that limits or hinders their commitment. In view of the significant time lag between the approval and actual start-up of GEF-financed projects, the closing dates of co-financing partner projects should be taken into account during the identification of co-financing partners. Moreover, the project document should provide an entry point for new co-financing partners during start-up. Formalising co-financing

partnerships through Memoranda of Understanding or Letters of Understanding, which clearly specify the objectives and targets and the responsibilities of each party, is very important firstly to stimulate and guide the commitment of the various stakeholders and secondly, to promote results-based management of the project concerned and co-financing partner projects. Such an approach makes ownership by co-financing partners of relevant outcomes more credible or legitimate.

GEF Rating Table

GEF criteria and sub criteria	Rating[1]	Notes[2]
A. Strategic relevance		
A1. Alignment with GEF and FAO Strategic Priorities	HS	See 3.1.2 Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and GEF and FAO strategic frameworks
A2. Relevance to national, regional and global priorities	HS	See 3.1.1. Alignment with Burkina Faso's priority sustainable development and climate change adaptation goals
A3. Complementarity with existing interventions	HS	See 3.1.1.
A4. Overall strategic relevance	HS	See 3.1.1, 3.1.2
B. Effectiveness		
B1. Overall evaluation of project outcomes	S	See 3.2. Effectiveness
B1.1 Output delivery	HS	See 3.2.
B1.2 Progress towards project outcomes and objectives	S	See 3.2.1; 3.2.2; 3.2.3.
B1.3 Probability of impact	L	See 3.2. Effectiveness See 3.3. Adaptive management and efficiency
C. Efficiency		
C1. Efficiency[3]	MS	See 3.3. Adaptive management and efficiency
D. Sustainability of project outcomes		
D1. Overall probability of sustainability	L	See 3.4. Sustainability
D2. Sustainability in relation to financial risks	ML	See 3.4 (paragraph on financial risks).
D3. Sustainability in relation to socio-economic risks	L	See 3.4 (paragraph on socio-economic risks).
D4. Sustainability in relation to institutional and governance risks	L	See 3.4 (paragraph on institutional and governance risks).
D5. Sustainability in relation to environmental risks	L	See 3.4 (paragraph on environmental risks).
D6. Catalysis and replication	L	See 3.4 (paragraph on replication)
E. Factors affecting performance		
E1. Project design and preparation4	S	3.1.3 Strengths and weaknesses of the project's theory of change
E2. Quality of project implementation	S	3.3.1 Implementation strategy and partner involvement
E2.1 Supervision of the project (FAO, Steering Committee)	S-HS	3.3.2 Project Steering Committee (HS) 3.3.3 FAO's technical assistance (S)
E3. Quality of project execution	S	3.3.3 FAO's technical assistance (S) 3.3.4 Planning (MS) 3.3.5 Risk management (S)
E3.1 Project management and execution arrangements (PCU, Financial Management, etc.)	S	3.3.1 Implementation strategy and partner involvement
E4. Co-financing	MS	3.3.6 Co-financing
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder involvement	S	3.3.1 Implementation strategy and partner involvement
E6. Communication and knowledge management	S-MS	3.3.8 Communication: Internal communication (S) External communication (MS)

[1] See rating scheme at the end of the document.

[2] Includes reference to the relevant sections in the report.

[3] Includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

[4] Refers to factors affecting the project's ability to start as expected, such as the presence of sufficient capacity among executing partners at the project's launch.

E7. Overall quality of monitoring and evaluation (M&E)	S	3.3.7 Monitoring and evaluation
E7.1 Design of M&E	S	3.3.7 Monitoring and evaluation
E7.2 Implementation of the M&E plan (including financial and human resources)	S	3.3.7 Monitoring and evaluation
E8. Overall evaluation of factors affecting performance	S	3.3 Adaptive management and efficiency
F. Cross-cutting concerns		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	S	3.5 Cross-cutting themes
F2. Human rights issues	HS	3.5 Cross-cutting themes
F3. Environmental and Social Safeguards	HS	3.5 Cross-cutting themes 3.2.2 Adoption of resilient practices and technologies.
Overall evaluation of the project	S	

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the evaluation

1. This final evaluation concerns the project "Integrating Climate Resilience into Agricultural and Pastoral Production for Food Security in Vulnerable Rural Areas through the Farmers Field School Approach", which is financed by the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) managed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project was executed by FAO and implemented by the Government of Burkina Faso from 1 May 2015 see to 31 August 2020. The final evaluation is required by GEF to determine the performance of the project, to make recommendations in order to promote sustainability of the outcomes, and to draw appropriate lessons with the view to improving the design of future projects.

Box 1: Background information on the project

GEF Project ID: 5014
GEF Executing Agency: FAO
GEF focal area: Climate change adaptation (CCA)
GEF Strategic Objectives: CC-A 1; CC-A 2; CC-A 3
Date of approval of the Project Identification Form (PIF): 13 September 2012
Date of approval of the Project Preparation Grant (PPG): 31 July 2014
Date of approval of the Project and Programme Review Committee (PPRC): 13 October 2014
Expected start date: 13 September 2014
Effective start date: 1 May 2015
Expected closing date: 30 April 2019
Revised closing date: 30 April 2020
Further extension of the closing date following COVID-19: 31 August 2020
Date of the mid-term evaluation: September 2017

2. The purpose of project final evaluation is to inform the Government of Burkina Faso, GEF, FAO, co-financing partners, the Steering Committee, the project coordination unit, implementing partners, beneficiaries and other interested parties on the project outcomes, the orientations to be considered and the conditions to be put in place in order to consolidate the achievements of the project, promote their sustainability and the achievement of impacts.

1.2 Target Audience

3. The results of this final evaluation are intended for stakeholders involved in climate change adaptation (CCA) capacity building in Burkina Faso, and in particular for:

   i. FAO – especially its Representation in Burkina Faso, the FAO Plant Production and Protection Division (AGPM), the GEF Coordination Unit, the Project Working Group and the project coordination unit (PCU) – to enable it assess its performance and improve the implementation of future projects.

   ii. GEF – to assess project performance and draw useful lessons for future support.

   iii. The co-financing partners – to assess the results obtained and identify the actions to be carried out in order to consolidate the achievements and strengthen their sustainability.

iv. The Government of Burkina Faso – to assess the added value of the project approach and promote the dissemination and adoption of tools and technologies that have been successfully tested.

v. The National Authorities (from central to local level) – to better appreciate the roles they have to play in facilitating the integration of CCA in rural development strategies, programmes and projects and in Community Development Plans (CDPs).

1.3 Scope and objective of the evaluation

4. The final evaluation covers the project implementation period (1 May 2015 - 31 August 2020) and covers all project components, intervention areas and stakeholders. The final evaluation aims at identifying and assessing the outcomes achieved by the project, the effects and changes generated on the beneficiaries, and the crucial issues and lessons that deserve to be considered during the design and implementation of future projects. To this end, it answers the evaluation questions (EQs) presented in Box 2 and explained in the evaluation matrix. The final evaluation also analyzes the extent to which the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation of the project carried out in September 2017 have been taken into account.

5. This evaluation itself is based on criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)[5] Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and integrates cross-cutting themes related to gender, environmental sustainability, co-financing, stakeholder involvement, and other specific concerns of partners. In line with the new FAO and GEF project cycle, it also verifies compliance with the UN Common Country Programming Principles namely: Human Rights Based Approaches (HRBA), the right to food and the right to decent work, gender mainstreaming, sustainability (financial, socio-political, institutional and environmental), capacity building and results-based management.

[5] OECD. 2019. Better criteria for better evaluations. Adapted definitions and principles of use. OECD-DAC Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet). Adopted by DAC at its meeting on 10 December 2019.

Box 2: Evaluation questions

Evaluation Question 1: To what extent does the project in its design meet the capacity building needs of Burkina Faso stakeholders to address climate change and how does it contribute to FAO and GEF's strategic objectives?

Evaluation Question 2: To what extent have the capacities of Burkina Faso's agricultural and pastoral sectors been strengthened to cope with climate change in a sustainable manner?

Evaluation Question 3: To what extent have the project implementation and management mechanisms, including activity planning, financing and co-financing, monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder involvement and reporting affected the effectiveness of the project and the quality of the outcomes?

Evaluation Question 4: To what extent have sustainability conditions as well as financial, socio-economic, environmental, institutional and governance risks that may affect sustainability been identified and managed?

Evaluation Question 5: To what extent have the issues related to gender, vulnerable or marginalised groups and environmental sustainability been effectively taken into account during project implementation?

1.4 Methodology

6. The final evaluation process complied with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) *Norms and Standards for Evaluation* (2016) as well as the Terms of Reference (ToR). It used a systemic and participatory approach during the different stages. The evaluation had to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic by giving priority to remote interviews for implementing stakeholders and by organising interviews and field visits only for facilitators and final beneficiaries, in strict compliance with the prevention measures prescribed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Government of Burkina Faso.

1.4.1 Preparation of the mission

7. The preparatory phase took place from mid-February to mid-March 2020. Virtual meetings were organised between the international consultant in charge of the final evaluation, the final evaluation supervisor based in Rome and the PCU based in Ouagadougou to specify the objectives of the mission, collect documentation, discuss the methodology of the final evaluation and plan the survey phase. The international consultant analysed the main documents relevant for the final evaluation, namely: the project document (Prodoc); policy documents and strategic frameworks of the Government, GEF and FAO; annual activity reports; project progress reports (PPR); mid-term evaluation report; internal project implementation reports (PIRs); Project Steering Committee (PSC) reports; annual work plans and budget, financial reports and partners' activity reports. The international consultant reconstructed the project's theory of change (Figure 2) and developed the evaluation matrix to specify the evaluation questions (EQ), sub-questions and indicators.

1.4.2 Data collection and field observations

8. The investigation phase of the final evaluation, affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, was exceptionally long and took place from March to July 2020 with the facilitation of the project coordination unit. It took place in two stages. A first series of surveys was carried out virtually from 12 March to 22 May 2020 by the international consultant of the final

evaluation. Then, a second series of surveys was carried out by the national consultant in July. One part of the surveys was carried out virtually with the first generation facilitators and the other part was carried out directly with the second generation (endogenous) facilitators, the mayors and the final beneficiaries during the field visits (13 to 18 July). The sites visited were chosen based on the following criteria: security situation in the region; accessibility and types of FFS/APFS (agriculture, livestock, environment, technologies tested, representativeness of women); and constraints related to COVID-19.

9. The first series of virtual interviews was carried out by the international consultant with 43 project resource persons at FAO and in the national and regional directorates of the ministries concerned. The second series of virtual interviews was carried out by the national consultant with 17 first-generation facilitators, 18 endogenous project facilitators, and 7 communal leaders. As concerns virtual meetings, one or more people from the same organisation were interviewed in a 1-2 hour meeting (via Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp or telephone).

10. Field interviews were conducted by the national consultant in 10 communities including 200 direct beneficiaries of agro-pastoral field school (APFS), Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs), and local investments for climate change adaptation (FILA) micro-projects. These interviews were conducted as discussion groups involving the categories of beneficiaries concerned. Face-to-face interviews were also conducted with first-generation and endogenous facilitators and representatives of the mayors concerned.

Table 1: Categories of stakeholders interviewed

Type of stakeholders	Organisations and stakeholders concerned
Implementing partners	Project supervision team at FAO headquarters: lead technical officer (LTO), funding liaison officer (FLO) at the GEF Coordination Unit. FAO Representation in Burkina Faso: Forest expert. PCU: National project coordinator (NPC), monitoring and evaluation expert (M&E expert), local activity advisors (LAAs).
Supervisory bodies and Implementing partners	Project Steering Committee (PSC). General Secretariats, General Directorates, Regional Directorates of the Ministry of Agriculture and Hydro-agricultural Development (MAAH), the Ministry of Animal and Fisheries Resources (MRAH) and the Ministry of Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change (MEEVCC). National Agency for Research Valuation (ANVAR). Environment and Agricultural Research Institute (INERA). National Weather Agency (Agence Nationale de la Météo [ANAM]). Regional and municipal authorities. NGOs and local providers: ARFA, AMUS.
Co-financing partners	National Agricultural Extension and Advisory Programme (PNVACA). National Biodigester Program (NBP).
Intermediate and final beneficiaries	Central and regional executives of Ministries, municipal authorities. Master trainers (MAAH, MRAH, MEEVCC). Facilitators (MAAH, MRAH, MEEVCC, ARFA and AMUS) and endogenous facilitators. Members of the APFS, VSLA and LCCA micro-project beneficiaries groups.

1.4.3 Data analysis and report writing

11. Data analysis and report writing took place from May to July 2020. The analysis was structured around five key points corresponding to the evaluation questions (EQ): (i) Project strategy; (ii) Achievement of objectives; (iii) Quality of implementation; (iv) Cross-cutting themes; (v) Sustainability.

12. The analysis of the project strategy focused on the quality of the project design, the results framework and the theory of change. The quality of the design was assessed by analysing the soundness of the problem targeted by the project, the realism of the basic assumptions and the alignment of the project with country priorities. Similarly, the quality of the results framework and the theory of change (ToC) was assessed by questioning the soundness and feasibility of the planned activities, the quality and role of the stakeholders involved, the quality of the decision-making and operational processes, and the quality of indicators and targets.

13. The achievement of project objectives was analysed by comparing the outcomes obtained with those expected. The results achievement rating was based on GEF's six-level rating scale: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U) and High Unsatisfactory (HU). The achievement of the indicator targets was assessed following the "traffic lights" principle: green (achieved), yellow (in progress), red (not in progress). Factors likely to affect the consolidation of outcomes and progress towards the achievement of impacts after the end of the project were identified.

14. The quality of project implementation was analysed by assessing the effective use of financing, co-financing, supervision, management, planning, stakeholder participation, monitoring and evaluation, and internal and external communication mechanisms. The analysis of project supervision focused on the quality of support provided to the project by FAO (AGPM, GEF Coordination Unit, and Country Representation) and the PSC.

15. The analysis of cross-cutting themes focused on the quality and effectiveness of the integration of concerns related to gender, vulnerable groups and environmental protection. This analysis relied on FAO and GEF policies in this area.

16. The sustainability analysis consisted in assessing the conditions of sustainability put in place by the project and identifying financial, socio-economic, environmental, institutional, and governance risks likely to threaten the consolidation and sustainability of the project outcomes. The measures put in place by the project to prevent or mitigate these risks were also analysed. A four-level scale was used to rate this sustainability: (Likely (L), Moderately likely (ML), Moderately Unlikely (MU), and Unlikely (U).

17. At the end of the analysis process, this final evaluation report was drawn up. This report presents the project outcomes, the strengths and weaknesses of its implementation, the conclusions of the final evaluation, as well as recommendations for stakeholders and lessons to be considered in the design and implementation of future GEF and FAO projects.

18. The final evaluation team was made up of two consultants: an international consultant specialised in Project evaluation and Research & Development on integrated agriculture / livestock /environment systems; and a national consultant experienced in the management of agricultural advisory and extension systems in Burkina Faso. The final evaluation team was supervised by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED).

1.5 Limitations

19. The final evaluation covered the entire project intervention area but the field visits took place in only two regions out of four project beneficiaries (Centre-North and Centre-West) because of the security risks. To solve this limitation, the Final evaluation deepened discussions during virtual interviews with key resource persons in the two regions not visited (Sahel, East). The final evaluation was also disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which led the Evaluation Team to extend the evaluation period and adapt its work planning.

2. Background and context of the project

2.1 General context

20. Burkina Faso is a landlocked country in West Africa covering 274 222 km^2 divided into three climatic zones (Figure 1). Its population was estimated at 20 244 000 inhabitants in 2018, with a population growth rate of 3.05 per cent.

21. In terms of development, Burkina Faso ranks 182nd out of 189 countries in 2018 according to the Human Development Index (HDI: 0,434). The average contribution of the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors is estimated at 30.5 per cent, 18.7 per cent and 50.8 per cent of GDP respectively (INSD, 2018).[6] GDP per capita is estimated at USD 731 in 2018. In 2014,[7] the poverty rate[8] was 40.1 per cent (47.5 per cent in rural areas), and the food poverty rate[9] also remained very high (57.7 per cent in 2014 compared with 59.4 per cent in 2003). The extreme poverty rate[10] is 11.1 per cent and almost all (94.4 per cent) of these extremely poor people live in rural areas. One third of children under 5 years of age (27.3 per cent) and 19.2 per cent are underweight.[11] The 2014 literacy rate is 34.5 per cent.

22. On the security front, Burkina Faso is experiencing a difficult situation marked by increasingly frequent terrorist attacks, especially in the north, near the border with Mali and Niger, and in the east of the country. Burkina Faso is a member of the G5-Sahel created in 2014 by five Sahelian states directly threatened by jihadist organisations in the region. These countries are Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad.

23. The country's physical, socio-economic and security characteristics and geographical location make it vulnerable[12] to disasters in general and climate change in particular. This vulnerability particularly concerns the agricultural sector, which provides livelihoods for more than 80 per cent of Burkina Faso's population. The country is experiencing a downward trend in the number of rainy days and an upward trend in the number of consecutive days without rain, the number of hot days and hot nights, high variability in rainfall from one year to the next and increased surface water evaporation and potential evapotranspiration (PET).

24. According to the country's projections,[13] climate change will lead to: a decrease in groundwater recharge; the disappearance of certain surface watercourses and forest tributaries; disruptions in the plant growth cycle as well as in crop, livestock and natural resource management systems; an acceleration in the degradation of plant cover and pastures; a decrease in the regenerative capacity of forest formations; etc.

25. In such a context, one of the major challenges for the Government is to strengthen the adaptive and resilience capacities of the agricultural sector by promoting the adoption of

[6] INSD. 2018. Tableau de Bord de la Gouvernance (TBG). 2018 Edition.
[7] INSD. 2014. Enquête multisectorielle continue (EMC) - Profil de pauvreté et d'inégalités 2014. November 2014.
[8] Proportion of poor people in relation to the total population.
[9] Proportion of individuals whose food expenditure is below food threshold.
[10] Proportion of individuals whose total expenditures (food and non-food) do not meet the minimum caloric needs if they would have to spend it all on food items.
[11] National Nutrition Survey 2016.
[12] Burkina Faso's National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (NAP). Main volume. June 2015. Pp 33-60.
[13] LAME. 2012. Cited by NAP, 2015.

climate-smart crop, livestock and natural resource management systems. However, the National Agricultural Extension and Advisory System (SNVACA) adopted in 2010 and implemented through the National Agricultural Extension and Advisory Programme (PNVACA) until 2016 and then extended until 2022, has not sufficiently integrated MRAH and MEEVCC, nor climate change adaptation. In 2017, MAAH evaluated SNVACA and developed a National Agricultural Advisory Strategy for 2025 which is in the process of being adopted to replace SNVACA. In 2019, MRAH on its part developed the National Livestock Extension and Advisory System (SNVACE[14]) to reduce the difficulties encountered and meet its needs. On the other hand, MEEVCC does not have a structured system for extension and advice on environmental management, and relies solely on its decentralised structures to carry out its interventions.

2.2 Project description

26. Project GCP/BKF/054/LDF "Integrating Climate Resilience into Agricultural and Pastoral Production for Food Security in Vulnerable Rural Areas through the Farmers Field School Approach" is a Government, FAO and GEF joint effort to strengthen the capacity of the agricultural and pastoral sectors, rural producers, and communities to cope with climate change. The project is based on the agro-pastoral field school (APFS) approach and is integrated into FAO and GEF interventions in Mali and in the sub-region, to contribute to building the adaptation and resilience capacities of countries and populations to climate change.

27. The project started on 1 May 2015 and its closing date initially set for 30 April 2019 was extended until 30 April 2020 and finally because of COVID-19; until 31 August. The total project budget estimated at the design stage was USD 23 245 000, of which USD 3 810 000 was funded by GEF and USD 19 435 000 was co-funded as follows: USD 4 075 000 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Hydro-agricultural Development (MAAH); USD 1 300 000 by the Ministry of Animal and Fisheries Resources (MRAH); USD 14 000 000 by FAO; and USD 60 000 by Biodiversity International.

28. The project is executed by FAO and implemented by MAAH in partnership with other Ministries: MRAH; the Ministry of Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change (MEEVCC); the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation (MESRI); the Ministry of Transport, Urban Mobility and Road Safety; the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Development. The other implementing partners are the Government's projects and programmes, the Regional Governorates in charge of sustainable development, the Regional and Provincial Technical Directorates of the ministries, NGOs and associations.

29. The project proposes a holistic approach to achieve its objective, which is to "enhance the capacity of Burkina Faso's agricultural and pastoral sectors to cope with climate change, by mainstreaming climate change adaptation (CCA) practices and strategies into on-going agricultural development initiatives and agricultural policies and programming and upscaling of farmers adoption of CCA technologies and practices through a network of already established FFS".

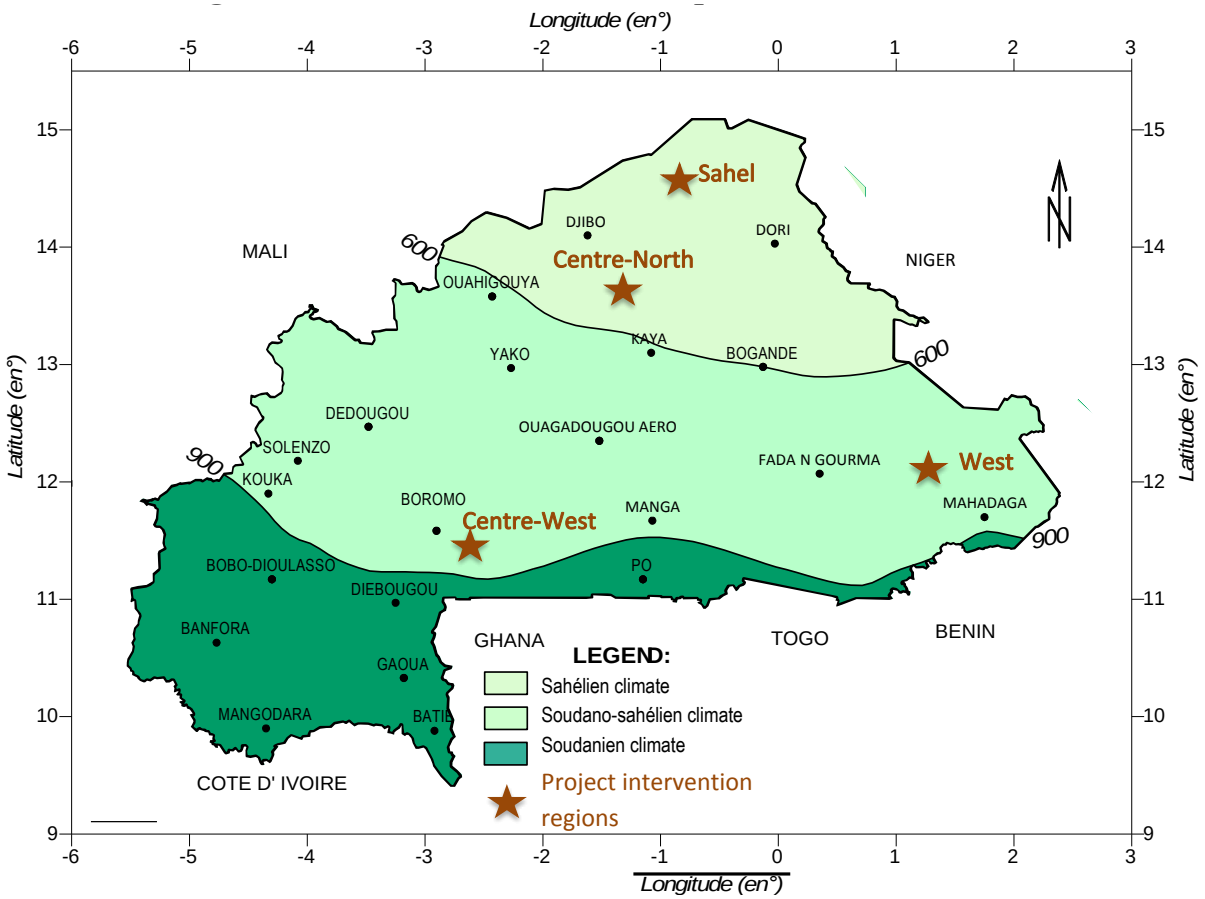
[14] MRAH. 2019. Système National de Vulgarisation et d'Appui-Conseil en Elevage (SNVACE). Final version. December 2009.

30. The Project has been implemented in 4 regions of Burkina Faso (Figure 1) through three technical components. Component 1 - "Introduction of improved climate resilient agro-pastoral practices within the framework of the National Adaptation Plan (PNA) and the National Rural Sector Programme (PNSR)". Component 1 addresses issues such as awareness raising, training of high-level people, partnership strengthening, strategy development and the development of basic technical and academic documents for advisory support, to guide and support the technical activities mentioned in the other components. The focus is mainly at national level as well as at the level of the four regions concerned.

31. Whereas, Component 2 - "Improving agro-pastoral practices through Farmer Field Schools in the framework of ongoing projects supported by FAO and other "umbrella projects" of MRAH, MAAH and MEEVCC" focuses on the community level. At this level, innovative APFS have been developed, tested and promoted with a view to achieving results for the benefit of hundreds of poor and marginalised communities in the four regions.

32. Component 3 - "Integrate climate-resilient agricultural and agro-pastoral systems into sectoral policies and local development plans in line with the NAP and PNSR" aims at institutionalising the APFS approach through national/sub-regional policies, programmes, institutions, budgets and coordination mechanisms. The aim is to ensure the sustainability of project impacts at all levels.

Figure 1: Climatic zones of Burkina Faso and project intervention regions



Source: Direction Générale de la Météorologie (DGM).
Conforms to Map No. 4230 Rev.1, UNITED NATIONS (August 2018).

3. Findings

33. The assessment of project performance is presented below for each evaluation criterion and a summary is provided in the GEF Rating Table.

3.1 Relevance – Coherence: To what extent does the project in its design meet the capacity building needs of Burkina Faso stakeholders to address climate change and how does it contribute to FAO and GEF's strategic objectives?

i. *The project is consistent with the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS), and the general principles and orientations for promoting a green economy in Burkina Faso.*

ii. *The project is aligned with the Government's strategic priorities for agricultural development, climate change adaptation as well as with FAO and GEF's strategic and operational policies and priorities with respect to capacity building and environmental protection.*

iii. *The project design complies well with GEF policies and requirements for co-financing, public participation, stakeholder engagement, monitoring and evaluation, application of the incremental cost principle, gender equality, and GEF environmental and social safeguards.*

iv. *The capacity building approach targets three main levels (individual, organisational and project enabling environment). The project is structured around three complementary operational components that take gender issues into account. These components are deemed relevant and coherent in view of the planned activities and the targeted effects and impacts. The implementation arrangements and the chain of project outcomes are globally coherent and realistic in relation to the final impact sought.*

v. *The theory of change (ToC) is consistent and relevant although it was confronted with a limited budget that needed a budget review from the onset of the project. Another shortcoming of the ToC is a failure to take into account the risks frequently encountered in similar projects. Likewise, at the level of the results framework, a shortcoming is noted on the indicators and targets of the project's general objective.*

vi. *In spite of the shortcomings noted, the project design is rated as satisfactory in terms of meeting Burkina Faso's climate change adaptation needs.*

3.1.1 Alignment with Burkina Faso's priority sustainable development and climate change adaptation goals

34. The project is well aligned with the National Plan for Economic and Social Development (PNDES), which is the strategic reference framework for interventions by the State and its partners over the 2016-2020 period. It specifically targets four effects of the PNDES which concern: strengthening the contribution of the primary sector to food security by respecting the principles of sustainable development; strengthening household resilience to risks; sustainably managing environment and natural resources; and building capacity

to mitigate and adapt to the adverse effects of climate change with a view to transitioning to the green economy.

35. The project targets the actions foreseen in Axis 1 "Strengthening food and nutritional security" and Axis 3 "Sustainable development and management of natural resources" of the Rural Development Strategy[15] (RDS). The latter is the reference framework for all public interventions in favour of rural development in Burkina Faso for the period 2016-2025. It is therefore in line with the vision of RDS: "By 2025, Burkina Faso's agriculture will be modern, competitive, sustainable and a driver of economic growth. It will be based on family farms and efficient agricultural companies, ensuring that all the people of Burkina Faso have access to the food they need for a healthy and active life".

36. The project contributes to the implementation of Burkina Faso's National Rural Sector Programme (PNSR II: 2016-2020), which is the framework for the operationalisation of RDS and the rural development component of the National Plan for Economic and Social Development (PNDES) for the 2016-2020 period. Its objective is to ensure food and nutritional security through the sustainable development of a productive and resilient agro-sylvo-pastoral, fisheries and wildlife sector that is more market-oriented. Thus, the project targets five specific actions including: Action 3 of Sub-programme 1.1 on improving the level of adoption of popularised techniques and technologies through the promotion of good practices and capacity building of stakeholders; and Action 3 of Sub-programme 1.2 on support to production in vulnerable areas through the provision of improved seeds, poultry and small ruminants, support for the development of micro-projects carried by vulnerable groups. It also targets the following actions: Action 1 of Sub-programme 2.2 on the promotion of balanced livestock nutrition by increasing the availability of feed; Actions 1 and 3 of Sub-programme 3.1 on the development of tools and instruments and the strengthening of stakeholders' capacities to take better account of environmental and sustainable development issues in sectoral policies and local development plans, and the enhancement of local know-how while promoting the sharing of climate technologies. Finally, it targets Actions 1 and 2 of Sub-programme 5.3, which concern the identification of technologies, inventions and innovations likely to be transferred to the rural sector and the training and awareness-raising of stakeholders to the mechanisms for the ownership of technologies, inventions and innovations and the increase and acceleration of their dissemination and adoption.

37. The project is aligned with the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (NAP) adopted in 2015 by Burkina Faso. The latter aimed at meeting urgent adaptation needs, promoting the integration climate change in development policies and strategies and facilitating the adherence of donors involved in financing adaptation to climate change. The project's objectives fit well with NAP's specific objectives (SOs) related to sub-sectors and cross-cutting themes of the rural sector. Thus, for the Environment sub-sector, the project contributes to increasing the productivity and resilience of ecosystems (SO1) and improving biodiversity conservation (SO2).

38. As concerns the Agriculture sub-sector, the project targets the following specific objectives: recovering and restoring degraded land fertility (SO1), improving access of agricultural producers to quality production factors (SO2), strengthening the resilience of stakeholders

[15] Burkina Faso. 2015. Stratégie de Développement Rural à l'horizon 2016-2025. Final version, December 2015.

to climate change (SO3); developing early warning systems for efficient management of climate variability and change (SO4).

39. The project also targets the cross-cutting themes included in the NAP. These concern improving women's control of environmental and climate change issues (SO1), improving women's resilience through income-generating activities (SO2), developing adaptation technologies that take into account the conditions of women's associations based on traditional knowledge (SO3), and improving the participation of populations in the process of reflection, analysis and decision-making in terms of climate change adaptation (SO6).

40. The project is consistent with several ongoing projects in the ministries in charge of rural development. The project has planned close collaboration with several of them and has integrated them into the Prodoc as co-financing partners.

3.1.2 Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and FAO-GEF strategic frameworks for agricultural development and environmental management

41. The project continues to contribute to the pursuit of SDGs 1 and 13, in particular targets and goals 1.5, "By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and the vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters"; 13.1, "Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries"; 13.2, "Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning".

42. **The project is well aligned with FAO Strategic Objectives 2,** "Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable" and 5, "Increase the resilience of livelihoods to disasters" and with the three priority areas of the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF 2017- 2020) in Burkina Faso. These priority areas are as follows: Strengthening food security and nutrition, and vulnerable people's resilience to climate change; Increasing rural communities' incomes through sustainable and efficient agricultural food systems; Improving governance of the rural sector (food and nutrition security environment). More specifically, the project targets 8 outputs (1.1. 1.1; 1.2; 1.4; 2.1; 2.4; 3.9; 3.10; 3.12) and 15 CPF indicators.

43. **The project's strategy is in line with FAO's capacity building strategy.** Indeed, the project aims at promoting long-term change, with an emphasis on dialogue with national partners and stakeholders as well as the sustainability of interventions by encouraging ownership by national authorities. The project uses an integrated approach, bringing together the capacities of individuals and organisations and the enabling environment as well as technical and functional capacities. The project is based on the basic principles and guidelines of the "farmer field school" approach developed and experimented for 25 years by FAO and its partners. **It particularly targets the APFS model, which takes better account of the concerns of farmers, agro-pastoralists and breeders and the issues of climate change adaptation.** The project integrates recommendations from FAO gender policy.

44. **The project is aligned with 3 GEF strategic objectives** on climate change adaptation: CCA-1 - "Reduce vulnerability to adverse impacts of climate change, including variability, at local, national, regional, global level"; CCA-2 - "Increase adaptive capacity to respond to

CC impacts, including variability, at local, national, regional, global level"; and CCA-3 - "Promote transfer and adoption of adaptation technologies".

45. **The project complied with the requirements and guidelines of GEF policies and requirements for co-financing** (Policy: FI/PL/01; GEF/C.31/12), public participation, stakeholder engagement, monitoring and evaluation, application of the incremental cost principle, gender equality, and GEF environmental and social safeguards. With regard to co-financing, indicative information on the amounts, sources and types of co-financing expected was provided in the approved project document. The latter serves as a basis for assessing the level of mobilisation of this co-financing.

46. The Government, FAO, and implementing partners, ensure specific responsibilities regarding the mobilisation and participation of the public and in strengthening the social, environmental and financial sustainability aspects of the project. The project proposes, through the agro-pastoral field school (APFS) approach, a method and activities that raise the interest of the populations and promote their adhesion and participation.

47. In general, the project complied with the requirements of the operational guidelines for the application of incremental cost[16]. The project identified and presented the baselines for each expected output and effect and set the indicators and targets to be achieved. Moreover, each baseline indicates environmental problems, threats and obstacles fairly well. The adaptation objectives are well perceived through the planned activities.

3.1.3 Strengths and weaknesses of the project's theory of change

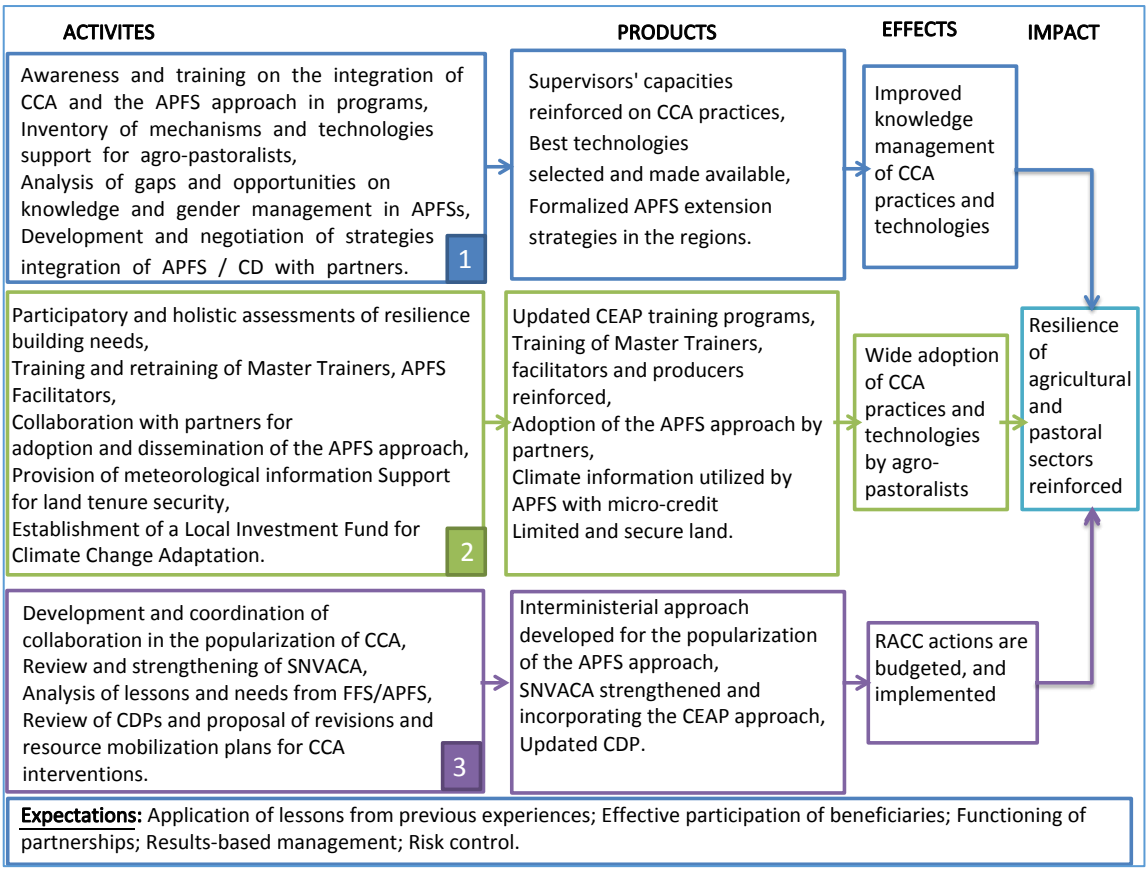
48. The project's theory of change (ToC) was reconstructed by the evaluation team on the basis of information from the project document and interviews with stakeholders on the project's implementation arrangements and the risks that were likely to affect this implementation and the achievement of objectives (Figure 2).

49. The results chain of the project is very satisfactory in relation to the expected effects and the final impact sought. The three operational components of the project are complementary, they prove to be relevant and coherent in relation to the expected impact of the project, i.e. the strengthening of the resilience of the agricultural and pastoral sectors in Burkina Faso. Gender is efficiently mainstreamed in this chain of results. The activities of each component are also relevant and coherent with the expected outputs. Component 1 deals with the identification and management of knowledge (practices, technologies and strategies) that it makes available to the project to strengthen the capacities of final beneficiaries to adapt to climate change within the framework of Component 2. In Component 2, gender issues are at the heart of the activities and objectives of Output 2.1. Besides, gender indicators are well taken into account in Outputs 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5. Component 3 intervenes at the level of the project's enabling environment. It aims at activating the necessary levers (regulations, strategies and resources) for the institutionalisation and wider dissemination of approaches and technologies, which have been previously tested, experimented and adopted in Component 2 by the direct beneficiaries of the project. The project has planned and carried out a baseline situation and an end line study which will allow to assess the effects and changes generated by the project. Further grounds for satisfaction are the good involvement of women in the project.

[16] Operational Guidelines for the application of the incremental cost principle. GEF Council June 12-15, 2007.

50. In spite of the good range of activities and the implementation approach, the ToC was confronted with an inadequacy budget for some planned activities and needed a budget review from the onset of the project. With this budget review, it was possible: to include the training of facilitators; to extend the training of MTs; to take into account the equipment necessary for the start-up of FFS and APFS; to include the mission expenses (DSA) of the facilitators in the contracts line of the service providers, i.e. their parent ministries and local development partners; and to transform some staff positions from part-time to full-time. This budget review also allowed for the reduction of targets for some activities. For example, the number of facilitators trained to set up the FFS/APFS was reduced from 500 to 250, before finally being maintained at 500, taking into account the endogenous facilitators who will be trained[17]. The number of FFS/APFS to be establish was set at 500, but the number of targeted beneficiaries (26 000) was maintained. The project focused its strategy on mobilising co-financing partners and other activities to reach this target.

Figure 2: Theory of change of the project



Source: evaluation team

[17] The Prodoc presented inconsistencies on the number of facilitators to be trained and the number of FFS/APFS. In the main text, it sometimes reads 1 000 and in the results matrix 500 as the target. This last figure was halved during the budget review. The budget review took place when the training of the FFS facilitators (118 in total) had already been completed. Considering the available budget, the project first set the number of APFS facilitators to be trained at 137. Since the project strategy provided that one facilitator should set up to FFS/APFS, the project set the total number of facilitators needed to set up 500 FFS/APFS at 250. Ultimately, the initial target of 500 facilitators was maintained, considering that facilitators from the environment will not install APFS, thus counting the endogenous facilitators who will be trained.

51. In addition, concerning the ToC, the project has identified the challenges to be taken up, hypotheses and risks to be controlled at the level of the project's enabling environment. The achievement of this ToC requires that stakeholders actively involved in the implementation of the project, and that the challenges and risks identified in the project's enabling environment are managed. **However, certain risks frequently encountered in the implementation of similar projects have not been deemed significant for the project, which is a reason for dissatisfaction.** These risks concern: late start up; weak planning of activities; weak mobilisation of co-financing; low interest of stakeholders in capacity building projects.

52. Another shortcoming concerns the indicator for the overall project objective in the Prodoc, which focuses exclusively on land degradation, whereas the overall project objective is to reduce the vulnerability of people, livelihoods, physical assets and natural systems to the adverse effects of climate change. The indicator for the overall objective in the Prodoc mertied to be complemented by two relevant indicators of the GEF Results Framework, namely Indicator 1: "number of direct beneficiaries (percentage of women)" and/or Indicator 4: "Extent of adoption of climate resilient technology/practice (measured in number of users [percentage of whom are women]; or geographical area). However, the final evaluation was pleased to note that the first of these proposed indicators has been repositioned as an indicator for Specific Objective 2 in the Annual Implementation Review (2018 PIR) and also as an indicator for Output 2.5. Indicator 4 of the GEF Results Framework has been reflected in Indicator 2.1 (GEF Climate Change Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool: AMAT Indicator 3.1.1) of Result 2 in the results matrix.

53. Project implementation arrangements are coherent and relevant. They involve on one hand FAO for supervision and technical advisory support, procurement, and provision of financial services and human resources, and the Government on the other hand for technical execution. The project is implemented by MAAH, in close collaboration with the other rural development ministries and under the supervision of the Steering Committee. The project has the support of the co-financing partners and that of the representatives of the Governorate of each of the 4 regions. To promote the quality of implementation, the project has organised Steering Committees responsible for providing technical support, coordination and supervision of all activities and stakeholders.

3.2 Effectiveness – To what extent have the resilience capacities of Burkina Faso's agricultural and pastoral sectors and populations been strengthened to cope with climate change in a sustainable manner?

3.2.1 Increased awareness and knowledge of climate resilient agro-pastoral practices at national and regional levels

i. *The project has laid the necessary foundations to enable the design, implementation and monitoring of tools for test/learning/dissemination of CCA technologies (APFS) and community resilience building (VSLA, LCCA micro-projects).*

ii. *The 3 outputs dealing with capacity building (CB), stakeholders' awareness raising, provision of good practices and the development of APFS extension strategy, were all achieved in such a way that Outcome 1 of the project is rated as satisfactory.*

3.2.1.1 Capacity building of supervisors on CCA practices

54. The project has strengthened the capacities of 65 supervisors, including 5 women, on the APFS approach and climate change adaptation through two training sessions. One was organised in Kaya on 1 and 2 June 2017 for provincial directors in charge of agriculture, livestock and the environment in the four project intervention regions and the other in Ouagadougou on 5 and 6 June 2017 for supervisors of partner projects and programmes. The training was based on two modules: one on climate change and climate change adaptation strategies and the other on the agro-pastoral field school (APFS) approach. Concerning the APFS, emphasis was laid on clarifying the concept of Field Schools and on the process of implementing an APFS.

55. As concerns beneficiaries' self-evaluation at the end of the training, 95 percent of them considered that the expectations were well met, though 80 percent of them found the training time very short. According to the officials of the ministries concerned, the trained stakeholders were well engaged in promoting the APFS approach within their own structures and integrating the approach and its principles in their interventions within the project and other relevant projects and programmes.

3.2.1.2 Selection and provision of the best technologies

56. Through INERA, the project has carried out an inventory of 42 good agro-sylvo-pastoral practices (GAP), which has enabled the selection of seven climate-resilient GAPs and their capitalisation in a catalogue. The latter has been disseminated in electronic and paper form (1000 copies distributed) to regional and provincial directorates, MTs, facilitators and project beneficiaries. These GAPs concern the production and use of organic manure, the use of improved seed varieties, strategic feed supplementation for livestock in the dry season, scarification and sowing of fodder species, assisted natural regeneration (ANR), reforestation with agroforestry species, and the use of improved fireplaces. Six new livestock technologies have been introduced, namely: fodder crops, storage of crop residues, use of agro-industrial by-products for livestock feed, poultry feed manufacture, ruminant lickstones manufacture, and animal health management.

57. The real challenge was to get these GAPs[18] adopted. Indeed, most of the good practices inventoried are not commonly used by stakeholders for various reasons, with the main reason being the weakness of the dissemination link. For example, soil restoration practices are well known in Burkina Faso, but their use for rapid effects is tedious and inefficient because it done using a daba (hoe). The same applies to adopting improved seed varieties, animal breeds or plants. According to INERA researchers, improving the adoption rates of these GAPs involves increasing the number of APFS. Indeed, these field schools are proving to be an appropriate tool for raising awareness among producers, building their capacities and supporting innovation processes.

3.2.1.3 Formalisation of the strategy for extending APFS in the regions

58. The project has defined and formalised a clear strategy for the extension of APFS. This APFS implementation strategy was developed and validated during a national validation workshop held on 17 January 2017 in Koudougou. This workshop brought together the

[18] Good agro-sylvo-pastoral practices (GAPs) are appropriate practices used to meet current needs and improve livelihoods, while preserving the environment in a sustainable manner.

regional and provincial directors and MTs of the structures involved in the implementation of the project.

59. The strategy provided that each agriculture-oriented APFS will be established by a facilitator from the ministry in charge of agriculture. This person shall be the main facilitator, systematically assisted by two other facilitators, one from the ministry in charge of livestock and the other from the ministry in charge of the environment. The same goes for the installation of a livestock-oriented APFS. The said strategy also provided that each facilitator in agriculture or livestock will establish and monitor a total of two APFS. Each established APFS will benefit from the joint facilitation from the three Ministries of Rural Development.

3.2.2 Adoption of climate-resilient, financially sustainable, gender-sensitive practices and technologies

i. *The project has indeed built the capacity of MTs, facilitators and producers, promoted the testing and dissemination of the APFS approach and the adoption of GAPs and CCA.*

ii. *The LCCA set up around APFS (VSLA groups and micro-projects) has been strongly supported by the populations. It has helped to energise VSLAs and strengthen social ties and means of resilience within the community.*

iii. *Indeed, VSLA members could make savings or receive loans in order to carry out income-generating activities (IGAs). Besides, these VSLAs are an alternative to the loan services of Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) whose access conditions are unsuitable for the majority of producers.*

iv. *The project has contributed to land tenure security and the use of climatic and meteorological information to plan and manage the agricultural season.*

v. *However, challenges such as delays in the availability of inputs, materials and equipment somewhat reduced the performance of FFS/APFS and considerably reduced the implementation of LCCA micro-projects.*

vi. *Despite the dissatisfaction observed in the implementation of LCCA micro-projects, eight of the nine expected outputs were achieved in a satisfactory to very satisfactory manner, thus contributing to a satisfactory achievement of Outcome 2.*

3.2.2.1 Identification of intervention areas, partners and partner communities

60. Oriented towards supporting vulnerable populations, the project has satisfactorily identified intervention areas by involving the technical services and NGOs operating in the regions concerned. In total, 236 and 168 communities were identified to put in place FFS and APFS respectively. In addition, 64 APFS were established by the OSRO/605/BEL project (funding from Belgium) in two regions also covered by the GEF project (in the Centre-North and Sahel regions in co-financing) bringing the total number of APFS to 232 and thus, the total number of FFS/APFS to 468.

61. The project also carried out a baseline survey of 608 households to identify factors of vulnerability to CC and ways of building resilience and to inform indicators. A farmer self-evaluation study of resilience using the SHARP tool was also carried out at the beginning of the project to measure the level of resilience of the beneficiary communities. However, at the time of the final evaluation, the classic and the SHARP End line study had not yet

been carried out. For this reason, it was impossible to measure changes in households' conditions.

62. As the project started with the establishment of FFS before migrating to APFS, the choice of APFS to be established was based on several criteria. Priority was given to selecting the most competent field staff. The latter then each identified and selected the most motivated and accessible communities. The participatory diagnosis was then carried out, followed by an analysis of the priority constraints, the exploration of possible solutions, the development of training curricula and the testing of the solutions in APFS. The participation of producers from villages neighbouring those that had benefited from APFS, was facilitated through the organisation of guided tours conducted by the producers themselves, in order to raise awareness about CCA technologies among a large number of producers.

3.2.2.2 Training of master trainers

63. The APFS approach is based on a cascade training and learning system in which MTs and facilitators are key players who provide the link with producers and are responsible for ensuring the quality of their learning/training. Thus, in 2016 for 45 days, the project has retrained 17 FFS MTs, including one woman (5.88 per cent), and trained 25 MTs, including five women (20 per cent) on the APFS tool. The target of 20 MTs was achieved, but the target of 30 per cent of training beneficiaries set for women was not reached because women were very poorly represented among the staff of the various ministries in charge of rural development.

64. The MTs then benefited from refresher sessions (March 2018) on new themes namely: the legionary caterpillar, ethnic veterinary medicine, the development of business plans, the OHADA Uniform Act on Cooperatives, gender mainstreaming, and the establishment and running of VSLAs.

3.2.2.3 Integration of CCA and GAP in the training programme of FFS/APFS

65. The training programme for the APFS participants and the input and equipment needs of the FFS/APFS were established after the diagnostics carried out by the facilitators, with the support of the MTs. The curricula were proposed by the members of each FFS/APFS for its training. The capacities of the facilitators have been strengthened on different themes.

66. The modules developed were based on the best practices of resilience/adaptation to climate change and were supplemented by about ten modules including new themes learned during the refresher course in May 2018. Overall, it appears that the concerns of activities beneficial to women have been integrated into these modules, particularly through VSLAs. APFS facilitators have also been trained and 124 FFS/APFS have been equipped with tools on the use of agro-meteorological information.

3.2.2.4 Training of FFS/APFS facilitators

67. The project successively trained 118 FFS facilitators (17.8 per cent of whom were women) and 136 APFS facilitators (22.8 per cent of whom were women). Among the APFS facilitators, 32 (25 per cent of whom were women) were trained through the implementation of partner project OSRO/605/BEL. The FFS facilitators established 236 FFS, while the APFS facilitators established 232 APFS, out of which 64 were established on behalf of the OSRO/605 project.

68. It is worth recalling that the project set up FFS in 2016 because the training of MTs on the APFS approach was still ongoing. The actual implementation of APFS started in January 2017 and continued until November 2018. Some of the former FFS were converted into APFS and the rest continued as FFS benefiting from MAAH's facilitation in the framework of its regalia missions. Not all FFS were converted into APFS because of the insufficient number of facilitators trained on the APFS approach. One trained facilitator takes care of two APFS.

69. In total, the project trained not only 254 FFS/APFS facilitators on the revised target of 255 facilitators[19] that was approved by GEF, but also an additional 167 endogenous facilitators. The project has established 468 FFS/APFS on the target of 500 FFS/APFS.

70. The project trained endogenous facilitators with a view to providing cascade training and multiplying APFS. Thus, in 2019, in each APFS, 2 best learners were identified among the beneficiaries of the 18-month training cycle on APFS and trained to become endogenous facilitators. A total of 167 endogenous facilitators were recruited and trained on the APFS and VSLA approach and good CCA practices. The trainings were organised in two sessions of five days each. These endogenous facilitators will continue and expand the establishment of second generation APFS in their respective communities.

71. Despite the general success in building the capacity of the endogenous facilitators, it was noted that some of them were not able to carry out all the activities and still needed the support of the lead facilitators. The main challenge encountered by these lead facilitators was the difficulty in translating documents from French to Mooré.

72. The facilitators' self-assessment (N=35) revealed that 71 per cent of them are very satisfied and 29 per cent are satisfied with the skills acquired during the training provided by the MTs. Moreover, respectively 86 and 14 per cent of the respondents are very satisfied and satisfied with the quality of the skills they imparted to the beneficiaries during the experiments and demonstrations in the FFS/APFS.

73. They acknowledge that having trainers from the three (3) ministries – in charge of agriculture, livestock and environment – enabled them to understand and adhere to the themes of sustainable agricultural production. Consequently, they now understand that resilience and sustainable food security require the implementation of climate change adaptation actions. The beneficiaries interviewed also recognise that the integration of the three areas (agriculture, livestock, and environment) promoted by APFS, is the best tool for disseminating the new vision of sustainable agricultural production.

3.2.2.5 Beneficiary capacity building and adoption of GAPs or APFS results

74. While learning GAP and CCA technologies based on improved and local varieties (millet, sorghum, maize, cowpea, sesame, etc.), APFS groups have successfully experimented Soil and Water Conservation/Soil Defence and Restoration (SWC/SDR) practices, environmental protection practices (ANR, nursery, reforestation, improved fireplaces, etc.), improved poultry and small ruminant husbandry systems and fattening. These tested technologies and GAPs proved to be more productive than peasant practices and were adopted by the beneficiaries.

[19] The project initially targeted the training of 500 FFS/APFS facilitators (40 percent of whom were women).

75. The project has satisfactorily strengthened the capacities of 29,201 beneficiaries, including: 10 528 (with 57 per cent of whom are women) in the FFS/APFS financed by the GEF grant and 18 673 in co-financing projects.[20] Learner attendance at FFS/APFS was very satisfactory. For example, out of 5,969 producers (61 per cent of whom were women) who enrolled at the beginning of the rainy season (June), 5 604 producers (61 per cent of whom were women) successfully completed the 6-month training cycle, representing an attendance rate of 94 per cent. Among these beneficiaries, 1 622 producers were deemed capable of carrying out the task of endogenous FFS facilitator. As for APFS, 6 162 producers (50 per cent of whom were women) were trained for 18 months.

76. In addition to topics related to crops, herds and the environment, APFS dealt with themes related to Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) in the framework of the operationalisation of the Local Investment Fund for Climate Change Adaptation (LCCA), ethno-veterinary medicine, gene bank management, etc. Moreover, on the issue of the promotion of non-timber forest products (NTFPs), 24 stakeholders from 21 POs in the Centre-West and 24 members of 12 groups in the East have received support for their participation respectively in the 11 December 2017 fair in Léo and the 21-23 December 2017 environmental week in Fada N'Gourma.

77. **The Good Agro-sylvo-pastoral Practices (GAP) or technological practices (TP) tested in APFS** proved to be significantly more productive than the peasant practices (PP) and brought significant socio-economic benefits (see Box 3). Nearly all the beneficiaries interviewed in the field are convinced of the effectiveness of GAPs/TPs in increasing productivity.

78. Facilitators and endogenous facilitators confirmed the good level of returns obtained in FFS/APFS. Overall, beneficiaries are very satisfied with the results achieved. This is the case for APFS women in Imasgo (Centre-West region) and Louda (Centre-North region) who, after a first year of demonstration, set up individual and collective cowpea fields almost everywhere in the area, applying the good practices demonstrated in their APFS. Those in Louda have become producers of improved cowpea seed in their area, and they market it.

79. Also, according to the stakeholders met in the field, the majority of the experiments taking into account Water and Soil Conservation (WSC) techniques (stony bunds, zaï, half-moons) were successful. The treated plots were more resistant to pockets of drought by better conserving water, while favouring its good infiltration.

80. Experiments on quality manure production techniques have demonstrated the importance of this fertiliser for both endogenous facilitators and beneficiaries. The use of this manure has shown a clear difference in terms of yields of treated speculations compared to the manure usually used by producers. The results of the agroforestry experiments are considered positive by the beneficiaries and contribute to improving their conviction on the benefits of trees in protecting land capital and integrating "agriculture/livestock/environment".

81. All stakeholders and beneficiaries also appreciate the success of the experiments in the field of livestock through the following effects: high animal weight, especially cattle and sheep fattening animals; reduced animal mortality; rapid numerical and weight increase of

[20] CB of 1,600, 11,284, 5,538 and 251 producers respectively by OSRO/605/BEL, Neer-Tamba, PAFASP and AZAWAK projects.

pigs; better quality of fodder produced or mowed and preserved. Guided tours to FFS and APFS have been organised and have mobilised communities.[21]

82. The opinion of the beneficiaries confirms their strong adherence to the GAPs tested. The GAPs whose adoption is more perceptible in agriculture are related to: the use of improved seed varieties, sowing in rows with respect for the distances between rows and holes, the production of good quality organic manure, the treatment of cowpea crops with organic pesticides, the use of SWC techniques, especially stony bunds with their vegetation. In animal husbandry, they concern: the techniques of sheep fattening – in particular, feeding and veterinary care, the preparation of poultry feed based on local products, the manufacture of lickstones. While in the environment, they are related to the construction and use of improved fireplaces, the techniques of assisted natural regeneration (ANR), nurseries and utility tree plantations. The project has also increased awareness and the use of registered phytosanitary products.

83. The final evaluation found in the field that the vast majority of farms in the communities concerned have not yet adopted these GAPs (which is understandable given the objective of the project and its duration) and also that many herds are still raving and causing damage to crops and tree plantations. According to FFS/APFS beneficiaries, this low uptake is due to the fact that many producers do not have the minimum financial resources required to acquire the necessary equipment and inputs and to put into practice the techniques tested.

84. These observations underline the need for the government to take ownership of the innovation model experimented by the project and to disseminate it to the greatest number of people using appropriate means.

[21] In the 2016 FFS, guided tours were organised in the middle and at the end of the season, i.e. a total of 87, 100, 104 and 147 guided tours respectively in the Sahel, Centre-West, Centre-North and East. These guided tours in FFS were beneficial to 4 628 listeners (55 per cent women) in the Centre-West, 5 706 listeners (63 per cent women) in the Centre-North, and 8 466 listeners in the East. According to DRAAH reports, GTs were organised in APFS as follows: 31 guided tours in the Centre-North for the benefit of 2 277 listeners including 1 367 women; 32 guided tours in the Centre-West for the benefit of 2 129 visitors including 1 519 women; 24 GTs in the Sahel including 04 for the first season and 20 for the second agricultural season.

Box 1: Comparative yields of peasant practices and technological practices

In the APFS[22] conducted by DRAAH in the Centre-North (CN) in 2017, peasant practice (PP) yields of cowpea, sorghum and millet (respectively 440; 366; 326 kg/ha of grain and 4,320; 910; 641 kg/ha of straw) were improved by technological practices (TPs) by 135 percent, 92 percent and 86 percent for grain and 72 percent, 72 percent and 4 percent for straw, respectively. In 2018 at CN, these PP yields of cowpea, sorghum, millet and sesame (260, 587, 976 and 1 170 kg/ha of grain and 500, 806, 1 778, 1 674 kg/ha of straw respectively) were improved by TPs by 162 percent, 87 percent, 44 percent and 16 percent for grain and 200 percent 68 percent; 60 percent; 16 percent for straw respectively. The increase in the gross margin per hectare in CFA francs following the adoption of the technology package is as follows: Millet (10 250); Sorghum (55,780); Cowpea (134 150); Sesame (289 800).

Also, in the Centre West (CW), the yields obtained in APFS[23] with TPs exceeded those with PPs for all speculations regardless of variety. This increase was 100.00 percent, 152.86 percent, 100.00 percent, 144.00 percent, 50.00 percent, 45.45 percent, 81.82 percent and 96.67 percent respectively for Rice, Maize, Sorghum, Cowpea, Groundnut, Sesame, Onion and Millet.

In the Sahel, the yields[24] of TPs are higher than those of PPs, respectively by 102.31 percent, 143.31 percent, 65.87 percent and 84.04 percent on average for millet, cowpea, sesame and sorghum.

In the Centre North (CN), 16 APFS installed by DRRAH have grown from an initial flock of 154 sheep, 12 goats and 12 pigs to a flock of 309 sheep, 30 goats and 72 pigs thanks to births and a mortality rate of 4 percent. These APFS have also produced 164 wheelbarrows of organic manure. As regards poultry farming, APFS (16) kept 518 hens and 1364 hatched chicks (including 215 guineafowl). They sold 647 birds and produced 268 wheelbarrows of manure (report of February 2019).

3.2.2.6 Partnership for the adoption and dissemination of the APFS and FFS approaches

85. Aimed at getting at least eight major partner projects to adopt the approach in order to promote wider dissemination of GAPs, this product was moderately unsatisfactory. Indeed, at the start of the evaluated project, the majority of the 14 partner projects identified in the project document had been completed.

86. Through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, the project formalised a partnership with PNVACA for the adoption and dissemination of the APFS approach. On the other hand, the project established collaboration with eight co-financing partner projects for the same objective, but did not succeed in formalising this partnership.

87. In order to overcome these shortcomings, the project signed 33 memoranda of understanding with the general and regional directorates in charge of Agriculture, Livestock and Environment and NGOs (AMUS & ARFA) for the implementation and facilitation of APFS, VSLA and LCCA micro-projects.

[22] DRAAH Final report for Centre North, February 2019.
[23] DRAAH Final report for Centre West, February 2019.
[24] Average calculated from data in the DRAAH Final Technical Report of activities for Sahel, February 2019.

3.2.2.7 Improvement and provision of climate information

88. Climate information (CI) has been improved and made available to local agro-pastoral communities. In general, the seasonal forecast indicates deficit or surplus years and provides information with advice on good practices and strategic choices. During the season, decadal bulletins are provided and contain a variety of information (date of events and rainfall amounts, etc.). Towards the end of the season, advice is also given on the end of the season to enable producers to make decisions on certain activities related to the said season.

89. Thanks to the project, the seasonal forecast was done for the regions and advice was communicated: provision of basic information (physical support); update of the CI in July; broadcast of the CI by local radios. Seasonal forecast was done for three project regions, the fourth being already well covered by other projects. Actually, this seasonal forecast is done at the sub-regional level with the other countries. Back in the country, National Weather Agency (ANAM) experts make an adaptation at the local level. This seasonal forecast has helped supervisory staff to provide advice on the agricultural season and also producers to make strategic production choices. Also, the decadal forecast worked well; CI and advice made available to the beneficiaries were appreciated and enabled them to better plan activities and take the necessary precautions in the face of announced weather events. In the weekly bulletin, the dates of the different events were given, as well as the advice. A service provider was mobilised in June 2018 to broadcast the information in French and in local languages on six local radio stations in the project area (from June to October 2018). Thus, on the basis of the bulletin prepared by the meteorological expert, the service provider prepares briefs (processed information) which are broadcasted by the radios every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. In total, the service provider produced and broadcasted ten weekly briefs per region, sent 5 549 SMS alerts, and produced interactive programmes.

90. In general, producers in the project area had access to this CI and used it. The main challenge in making CI available to producers is related to its translation at the local level. Indeed, it takes additional time and may create delays in producers obtaining final information.

91. In order to further the dissemination and use of CI in Burkina Faso, the Government and its partners will have to put in place conditions to allow their proper flow to producers. Indeed, in Burkina Faso, there are few producers who are regularly informed about forecasts. Most of them are well-educated producers who are mainly involved in cash crops such as cotton. Technical agents who live in municipalities and other localities far from large urban centres do not regularly have CI to pass on to the producers in the villages/communities they supervise.

3.2.2.8 Support for land tenure security

92. Another support of the project for the dissemination of CCA GAPs concerned land tenure security. In this regard, the project supported[25] the implementation of advocacy actions with landowners in the communities concerned and the awareness raising of APFS members on land tenure by the facilitators. Awareness sessions on land tenure security

[25] Two experts including one in Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Diagnosis (PNTD) and one in gender issues, were recruited in December 2017 to support the implementation of the activities of this output.

were conducted in the regions between July and August 2018. The information collected in the field indicates that these sessions has enabled APFS beneficiary communities to understand the need to secure their sites in order to carry out sustainable actions. As a result of this awareness raising, landowners and APFS members of the project signed 48 local land pacts covering 28.4 ha. The co-financing projects and programmes also facilitated the signing of 36 land agreements for an area of 591.5 ha, 25 land agreements for an undetermined area and ten records of the handing over of sites for an area of 314.37 ha. The approval of the land delimitation measures being a long process, the finalisation will only take place after project completion, through actions initiated in co-financing with partner projects.

3.2.2.9 Implementation and operation of the Local Investment Fund for Climate Change Adaptation

93. The Local Investment Fund for Climate Change Adaptation (LCCA) amounting to USD 200 000 has been set up as a revolving fund at the regional level to finance community action plans. This fund has financed 50 micro-projects and strengthened the capacities of MTs, facilitators and APFS members in financial education and micro-project management.

94. LCCA has also enabled the establishment of 153 VSLAs with 3 903 members – 58 per cent of whom are women – which mobilise a sharing fund of CFAF 45 012 669 with a credit fund of CFAF 37 393 531. These VSLAs have strengthened the enthusiasm of APFS groups and energised them. For example, out of the 40 APFS in the Centre-North region, 37 are using the VSLA approach.

95. A total of 111 developed micro-projects have been received by the project team and 50 have been selected for funding. They deal with poultry farming, sheep and cattle fattening, production and marketing of cowpea and millet, soap manufacturing, compost and sumbala production.

96. Each micro-project received in-kind support (seeds, inputs, equipment, feed and animals, veterinary products, etc.) from LCCA to start an income generating activity (IGA).[26] During its field visit, the final evaluation noted the effectiveness of some of these IGAs, namely: sheep fattening, which is an activity dominated by women; small-scale trade in agricultural products such as cowpeas, sesame, market gardening (tomatoes, onions, carrots, etc.); improved local poultry; preparation of various dishes, etc. Beneficiaries' capacities have been strengthened in micro-project management to improve the sustainability of activities. Thus, 100 members, i.e. 02 members per beneficiary APFS, were trained to supervise the APFS groups benefiting from LCCA support.

97. The producers showed great enthusiasm and involvement in these LCCA micro-projects. As an example, the beneficiaries of a micro-project supervised by ARFA NGO, have built individual henhouses and intend to hatch eggs in groups to supply these henhouses. Local poultry was chosen because one hen can produce five chicks and poultry farming provides

[26] Thus, at the time of the final evaluation, the project had already mobilised: 1 682 kg of seeds; 66 breeding chickens (local); two cattle ploughs; eight donkey ploughs; nine donkey carts; 75 empty PPP packages of 100 kg; 185 packages (PICS bags); 26,245 kg of animal feed (SPAI); 4 630 kg of organic fertiliser replacing NPK fertiliser; 1 615 kg of organic fertiliser replacing Urea fertiliser; 4 820 kg of poultry feed (chick/chicken); 40 sheep; 10 goats; 96 corrugated sheets.

a good profit margin as its products sell very well. At the moment, other equipment is awaiting delivery, including an incubator with a capacity of 700 chicks.

98. The micro-projects have however had a difficult start and are experiencing a considerable delay in implementation; this is mainly due to the late and/or incomplete supply of inputs and construction materials for animal shelters. Until July 2020 (field mission), several beneficiaries were still waiting for the allocations of the products necessary for the implementation of their micro-projects. Of all the APFS micro-project beneficiary groups interviewed, none of them have yet completed the implementation of their micro-project, under the normal conditions required by good practice. Faced with the difficulties related to the unavailability of expected resources for the implementation of micro-projects, some beneficiaries continue the work by taking internal initiatives. This is the case of the Bonyolo APFS members in the Centre-West who, after the mortality of all their chicks received from FAO, continue the breeding process with their own means. This mortality was due to the non-respect of the vaccination calendar and hygiene conditions caused by the late arrival of veterinary products and the delay in the construction and equipment of the barn. The barn was still under construction at the time of the ET field visit and the expected equipment had not yet arrived several months after the arrival of the chicks. Several other groups of micro-project beneficiaries are continuing the work by themselves ensuring the supply of the necessary inputs planned while waiting for the supply by FAO. This situation does not guarantee better results. In view of all these shortcomings, the functioning of the micro-projects is rated as Unsatisfactory.

3.2.3 Implementation of sectoral and local development plans that contribute to climate change resilience for agro-pastoral communities

i. *The project was sufficiently ambitious and proactive in achieving its objectives at the policy and strategic level. However, within the limited timeframe of the project, it was very ambitious to achieve the targeted policy objective.*

ii. *The project succeeded in establishing an inter-ministerial mechanism to promote the APFS approach and CCA practice, in order to coordinate climate change adaptation and extend integrated systems.*

iii. *The project has taken outstanding actions to strengthen the incorporation and positioning of the APFS approach as a major tool in national agricultural extension and advisory systems.*

iv. *Despite insufficient resources and time to see the revising process of CDPs through to completion, the project has been realistic in its efforts to: analyse CDPs, develop a methodological guide for communal leaders and take the necessary actions to promote the integration of climate resilience, nutrition and disaster risk management into CDPs.*

v. *Despite the challenges encountered, the expected outputs and targets of Outcome 3 were satisfactorily achieved.*

3.2.3.1 Establishment of an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism to popularise CCA approaches, technologies and good practices

99. By conducting an exploratory assessment of climate change policies in the agro-sylvo-pastoral sector, the project demonstrated that the expected impacts in terms of

strengthening climate resilience on a large scale are not yet being achieved in Burkina Faso[27]. Indeed, generally when resources are limited: large-scale actions cannot be carried out; the areas and duration of projects are often limited; and adequate knowledge management mechanisms that can allow the large-scale dissemination of good practices developed or promoted in the framework of these projects, are often lacking.

100. The project carried out awareness raising among the managers of the structures in charge of implementing SNVACA. An inter-ministerial working group composed of representatives of structures in charge of extension – i.e. MAAH, MRAH, MEEVCC and MESRI – was set up. It held its first meeting on 18 May 2018 and proposed a draft inter-ministerial decree on the creation, attribution and functioning of a coordination committee in charge of promoting the APFS approach and climate change adaptation (CCA) practices. The decree was signed on 21 January 2019 by the four ministers in charge of rural development and the inter-ministerial committee held its second session in Koudougou on 7 November under the auspices of the Permanent Secretariat for the Coordination of Agricultural Sectoral Policies (SP/CPSA).

101. The signing of the inter-ministerial decree for the promotion of the APFS approach and CCA practices is a real reason for satisfaction with the project. Indeed, it shows that the Government acknowledges the relevance and effectiveness of this approach in supporting sustainable innovation processes and approves the dissemination of CCA practices in family farms in Burkina Faso. It is a major step towards the institutionalisation of the APFS approach and CCA practices, according to rural sector stakeholders.

102. Despite this progress, there are questions about the effective functioning of this committee after project completion. Indeed, according to the decree, "the costs of the inter-ministerial committee will be covered by the FAO budget throughout the project." and "the committee's work covers the period of the project implementation". However, this provision is justified by the fact that the Government and particularly the ministries concerned could not easily commit themselves to take charge of the functioning of the committee as long as the related resources are not budgeted. It appears that the project bore the committee's operating costs to encourage the Government to take over at the end of the project. The committee did not manage to meet twice a year as planned to continue the reflection on the institutionalisation of the approach.

103. In this perspective, it is necessary through FAO to continue awareness raisin, dialogue and advocacy at the highest level of the ministries of Rural Development and the Government. Advocacy for the adoption and institutionalisation of the APFS approach and CCA practices could be carried out via the sectoral dialogue and consultation frameworks to target the next phase of the development of national reference frameworks, including the PNDES. It could also be done via the Agricultural Advisory Working Group (AAWG) within the policy framework for the agro-sylvo-pastoral sector provided for in the National Agricultural Advisory Strategy (NAAS)[28]. Indeed, this working group will play the role of Steering Committee for agricultural advisory programmes and activities.

104. The move towards the institutionalisation of the APFS approach and CCA practices at the highest level requires mobilising and federating the efforts, contributions and tools of all

[27] Report by Consultant Patrice Djamen.

[28] Technically, the NAAS was validated in 2017 and is awaiting adoption at the political level.

sectoral stakeholders. The NAAS, which is transversal, multisectoral and inter-ministerial in nature, presents itself as an adequate framework for operationalising the sub-sectoral strategies of the ministries of the rural sector (MAAH's SNVACA and PNVACA, MRAH's SNVACE and Action Plan, MEEVCC's Strategy and Action Plan for the valorisation and promotion of NTFPs, National Agency for Research Valuation (ANVAR)'s National Strategy and Action Plan for the Valorisation of Technologies, Inventions and Innovations [SNVTII]). These strategies and sub-sectoral plans deserve to be updated to better integrate the APFS approach and CCA practices and to make them consistent with the NAAS. This update must integrate the support tools for FFS such as FAO's VSLAs and other tools for strengthening resilience such as FAO's MA&D (Market Analysis and Development) and DC (Dimitra Club), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Farmers Business School.

105. Most of the tools required by the APFS approach are taken into account in the NAAS, though in a segmented way: participatory diagnosis (PD), FFS, guided tours, demonstration test, demonstration herd, fodder plot, multi-stakeholder innovation platform, Participatory Technology Development (PTD), product-specific sector approach, extension documents, training documents, technical and economic benchmarks (TEB), etc.

3.2.3.2 Reinforcement of SNVACA and SNVACE incorporating the APFS approach and CCA practices

106. The project has multiple initiatives to integrate the APFS approach into national agricultural extension and advisory systems. Thus, a workshop was organised on 9 November 2017 in Ouagadougou to conduct a reflection with a view to formulating recommendations for the institutionalisation of the APFS approach in the Agricultural Extension and Advisory Strategy in Burkina Faso. Participants suggested, in relation to Output 3.1, the establishment of an inter-ministerial committee to reflect on the integration of the APFS approach into the different extension systems. This inter-ministerial committee was set up by inter-ministerial decree as already presented above. A workshop was held with the members of the inter-ministerial committee for the promotion of the APFS approach and CCA practices.

107. Under the impetus of the FAO Representative, the project undertook in June 2018 an action with MAAH to review the SNVACA with a view to incorporating the APFS approach and CCA. In response, the project had been informed of a new document entitled "National Agricultural Advisory Strategy in Burkina Faso". This document is awaiting adoption to replace the SNVACA and address its weaknesses including the weak involvement of MRAH and MEEVCC. The project has therefore integrated the review of the PNVACA 2016-2020 document and its monitoring-evaluation manual into the annual work plan and budget (AWPB 2018). This review was carried over in the AWPB 2020 but the COVID-19 pandemic did not allow for the organisation of the workshop.

108. The APFS is already integrated – though insufficiently – in the 2016-2020 National Agricultural Extension and Advisory Programme (PNVACA), as one of the tools for disseminating extension techniques and technologies (see R1.2 of the PNVACA) and for improving the quality of initial training for conducting agricultural extension and advisory services (see R2.3 of the PNVACA). The other tools include FFS, the demonstration plot, the producers' showcase plot, etc. However, it is unfortunate that the practical component of

climate change adaptation – which is one of the key components of the APFS approach – is not well highlighted.

109. The APFS approach is of particular importance for MRAH given the quality of the results it has generated on the field and through its integrative action in relation to production systems. MRAH is currently considering how to take the APFS approach into account in the implementation of the National Livestock Extension and Advisory System (SNVACE). The pilot phase of the SNVACE, funded by FAO through Project TCP/BKF/3605, has integrated the APFS approach into its activities and has led to the proposal to include APFS in the SNVACE document. The APFS approach is well taken into account in Axis 4 of the SNVACE which advocates the development of partnership in livestock extension and advisory services.

110. According to regional and central government officials, the APFS approach is very efficient, but its adoption as a common extension tool remains a major challenge that must be addressed in a concerted manner. Its adoption could lead to overall time savings in the extension process for both the producer and the extension worker/adviser, as extension will no longer take place at different times, but only once and in a grouped manner. The investment cost of setting up an APFS is three times higher than that of an FFS because three sectoral facilitators need to be mobilised and coordinated. In contrast, the overall gain of the APFS is obvious if one makes a comparative overall calculation of the coordinated and multidisciplinary intervention on the one hand and the separate interventions of these different sectoral agents on the other hand.

3.2.3.3 Updating of 50 Community Development Plans to integrate climate-resilient agro-pastoral activities

111. All Community Development Plans (CDPs) are engaged in the process of aligning with Burkina's PNDES (2016-2020). The co-financing partners have updated 15 CDPs; the project, using its own funds, carried out a study of 50 CDPs in 2017, which showed that all of the 2nd generation CDPs currently underway in Burkina Faso integrate climate change (CC) concepts. However, this consideration of CC is not done in a global way and does not allow for the integration of specific actions in the agro-sylvo-pastoral field. The process of updating CDPs is relatively long and costly compared to the resources and means provided by the project. However, in May 2018, the project developed and proposed a methodological guide to integrate climate resilience for the attention of communal leaders. The project also participated in a workshop on integrating nutrition and disaster risk management into the Pama CDP in the East region. The project contributed in multiplying and disseminating the final versions of the plans for Gorgagui and Sampelga municipalities in the Sahel region and Pama in the East region.

3.2.4 Synthesis and conclusion on the achievement of the overall objective

112. The project has contributed satisfactorily to building the capacities for climate change adaptation (CB-CCA) of the agricultural and pastoral sectors and populations in vulnerable areas of Burkina Faso.

113. With regard to its overall objective, the project has contributed highly to the sustainable management of 20 432.75 ha of land (target achieved at 136 percent), including 15 632.75 ha of cultivated land and 4 800 ha of pasture, mainly through co-financing activities. However, this very good result is watered-down by the fact that the project lacked

anticipation in formalising the collaboration with the co-financing partners involved in these activities. Consequently, the accounting and capitalisation of achievements only started after the co-financing workshop was organised in November 2017. Consequently, the effectiveness of the achievement of the first specific objective, which at first glance appears "Highly Satisfactory", is finally rated as "Satisfactory". Moreover, as already mentioned in the relevance analysis, this indicator focusing on sustainable land management was not sufficient to measure the overall objective of the project.

114. The final evaluation was pleased to note that the project in the 2018 PIR has raised the indicator of Output 2.5 on final beneficiaries to a project objective indicator. This complements well the above-mentioned initial objective indicator and allows a better measurement of the achievement of the overall objective. With regard to this indicator, the project built the capacities of 29 201 final beneficiaries, including: 10 528 (57 percent women) in the FFS/APFS directly subsidised by GEF and 18 673 producers in APFS set up with funds from co-financing partners. For the same reasons mentioned above, effectiveness is somewhat diminished and thus rated as Satisfactory.

115. Despite the satisfactory results observed, the project's effectiveness was watered down by several factors. The project experienced huge delays in the availability of resources and equipment for the implementation of APFS and LCCA micro-projects. The Regional Directorates and the facilitators developed strategies to mitigate/balance these delays at the level of APFS. On the other hand, with regard to LCCA micro-projects, some are being continued thanks to pre-financing from members and others are at a standstill or abandoned. Another factor that reduced the effectiveness of the project is linked to the fact that the objectives and targets set for Component 3 were too ambitious considering the limited duration of the project. These factors prevented the project from achieving the highest level of satisfaction as far as the effectiveness criterion is concerned.

116. With regard to the institutionalisation of the APFS approach and CCA, although significant progress has been made, there is still a significant risk that each ministry of Rural Development will continue to use its approach without incorporating all the requirements and principles of the APFS approach. In this perspective, MAAH for example will continue to favour the cheapest FFS through its PNVACA, if the ministries in charge of rural development (MRAH, MEEVCC, and MESRI) do not have specific resources or substantial projects to run their own extension system in a coordinated manner with the SNVACA. FAO, as the lead agency of the TFPs of the rural sector, must continue to accompany and support the government in the promotion and institutionalisation of the APFS approach. The same applies to the mobilisation of resources and partnerships to integrate CCA and nutrition in CDPs and the implementation of the measures concerned.

3.3 Adaptive management and efficiency: To what extent did the project implementation and management mechanisms affect the effectiveness and quality of outcomes?

3.3.1 Implementation strategy and partner involvement

i. *The project has a participatory partnership approach that mobilised all stakeholders in its implementation.*

ii. *However, difficulties were encountered and delays were experienced in the procurement and delivery of agricultural inputs and equipment, in service provision by some consultants and partners, and in the mobilisation of co-financing.*

iii. *Despite these shortcomings, the implementation strategy at the country level was satisfactory.*

117. The PCU consisted of a permanent team that was resized during the budget review: a National Project Coordinator, a Monitoring and Evaluation Expert, an Organisational Capacity Building Expert until 16 October 2018, an Administrative Assistant, four local activity advisors (LAAs), and five drivers. Given that the APFS expert was also mobilised in other projects of the sub-region, he was partially present on the project and intervened punctually to organise training, capitalise on results and supervise APFS.

118. The PCU received good support from the country office, which mobilised additional internal expertise (programme, administration, procurement unit, FAO experts) in a timely manner. LAAs were also well involved in the implementation of activities in the 4 regions, despite rapid changes caused by uncompetitive salaries. The project team established and maintained close collaboration with similar ongoing projects in Niger (GCP/NER/043/LDF), Mali (GCP/MLI/038/LDF) and Senegal (GCP/SEN/065/LDF). The PCU invited the coordinators of these projects in Burkina Faso to share experiences and capitalise on them at the national and regional levels.

119. The PCU has satisfactorily carried out its main missions, namely: the timely recruitment of human resources; the acquisition of seeds, inputs, equipment, animals and veterinary products for the implementation of the FFS/APFS, VSLAs and LCCA micro-projects; the regular organisation of meetings between the coordination and exchange unit and partners; the organisation of Steering Committees; the preparation and submission of AWPBs and various technical and financial reports of the project, etc. It has been particularly proactive in: proposing and monitoring the budget review process; monitoring the resumption of the financing agreement with the Ministry of Economy and Finance, which allowed the mobilisation of CFAF 135 000 000 as the State's financial cash contribution over the remaining duration of the project; organising co-financing mobilisation workshops.

120. Memoranda were signed with the General (DGESS/MEEVCC, Directorate General of Plant Production [DGPV]/MAAH, DGPA/MRAH) and Regional (DRAAH, DREEVCC, DRAH) Directorates of the Ministries concerned to give them responsibility for building the capacity of key stakeholders in the implementation, planning, supervision, implementation and monitoring-evaluation of activities in the field, active participation in consultations between the relevant stakeholders in the intervention area, communication with the PCU, etc. Local NGOs (ARFA, AMUS) were also mobilised for the implementation of field activities (setting up and facilitation of FFS/APFS, VSLAs, and LCCA micro-projects) through memoranda of understanding. The Governors of the regions were deeply involved and participated in the project meetings. They were leading selection and orientation committees for LCCA micro-projects at the regional level. The feedback was so positive that the other Governors in the region wish to be involved in a potential next phase of the project. The implementation of the micro-projects was finally supported by a regional committee placed under the responsibility of the Governors.

121. The project mobilised diversified national and international expertise well aligned with the needs. The national expertise focused on the following areas: implementation of APFS, updating of CDPs, agro meteorology; participatory and negotiated territorial diagnosis; gender; baseline study, SHARP Baseline and SHARP End line; investment plans, microcredit and financial education; final evaluation (office). International experts were mobilised to support either national expertise or project implementation in the following areas: Project implementation (PTA; organisational capacity building; good practices; resilience assessment; agricultural policy; APFS approach. Some consultants delivered their reports late; this probably limited the effectiveness of implementation.

122. At the local level, the project saw the mobilisation of municipal officials and especially final beneficiaries, as evidenced by the rate of learners' attendance at APFS and VSLAs and the interest generated by the micro-projects. The proposed tools (APFS, VSLA, LCCA micro-projects) were very well received by the beneficiaries and the topics covered took into account the problems raised by the population. The beneficiaries were happy and satisfied with the participatory approach carried out by the project.

3.3.2 Project Steering Committee meetings

i. *The Project Steering Committee (PSC) functioned in a very satisfactory manner, in compliance with Order 2015-175/MARAHSA-CAB of 26 October 2015 and the provisions of the Prodoc.*

ii. *PSC sessions were held regularly, with the participation of senior government and FAO officials. This gave more visibility and importance to the project and eased the implementation of its recommendations.*

123. Thus, 5 PSC sessions were held (30 October 2015, 21 June 2016, 10 March 2017, 14 December 2017 and 28 May 2018). Since the end of 2018, texts regulating the projects in Burkina Faso have been amended. The projects have been organised in a budget programme and the GEF/FAO project has been included in budget programme 078 "Sustainable development of agricultural productions" led by the Directorate General of Plant Production (DGPV). The review committees set up in place of PSCs were only organised for projects that were experiencing implementation difficulties.

124. Thanks to PSC sessions, it was possible on the one hand to examine and adopt the minutes of the previous PSCs, the activity reports and Annual Work Plans & Budgets of the project and on the other hand to formulate recommendations. PSC's work – through the quality of the recommendations made and the monitoring of the implementation – helped to guide the implementation and remarkably fostered a better performance of the project. The effective presence of senior officials from the Government (Secretary General of MAAH, Technical Advisor of MAAH, Governors, Directors General) and FAO (FAO Representative, FLO of the project in the GEF Coordination Unit) at PSC sessions reaffirmed and enhanced the interest of the project among stakeholders and encouraged greater investment and commitment from the project focal points at the central and deconcentrated levels of the ministries of Rural Development.

125. The first PSC held on 30 October 2015 provided an opportunity to examine the proposals of the major budget review undergone by the project. Also, the principles, mechanisms and procedures for project financing and co-financing as well as the monitoring and

evaluation of GEF-funded projects were recalled by FAO. FAO's anticipation efforts regarding procurement were highlighted with satisfaction.

126. The various PSC sessions helped in: making the financial execution clear, improving the realism of AWPBs, examining and discussing the detailed proposals for the budget review including the reduction of certain indicator targets on the basis of available resources, the conversion of certain initially part-time positions into full-time positions (national project coordinator, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) expert). PSC's work also made it possible to: obtain the signature of the financing agreement by the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Development on 9 September 2016; get approval by GEF of the revised budget on 5 December 2016; confirm the Government's commitment to contribute CFAF 135 000 000 for the project implementation; speed up the formalisation of the partnership and the signing of memoranda of understanding with certain departments, etc.

127. The PSC also recommended: clarifying the actions to be carried out within the framework of CDPs and land tenure; carrying out the baseline study; organising a national workshop with the support of MAAH to capitalise on the co-financing of partner projects/programmes; drawing up a document to guide the inclusion of climate change adaptation actions in Community Development Plans (CDPs).

3.3.3 FAO technical assistance

i. *The quality of the support provided by FAO Representation, the close monitoring of the project by the FAO Representative in Burkina Faso and his personal participation in PSC sessions, increased the interest and commitment of senior government officials to the project.*

ii. *The supervision team provided the necessary support to the project, but the technical assistance was diminished due to constraints linked to the mobility of technical resources (PTA, LTO).*

iii. *All in all, FAO technical assistance is rated as satisfactory.*

128. The supervision team provided the necessary support in the preparation, review and approval of the project's progress reports, annual implementation reports (PIRs), financial reports and budget reviews. The FLO carried out 3 missions including: one in October 2015 at the beginning of the project; another one in December 2018 for the sub-regional training and experience sharing workshop on climate-sensitive APFS; and a last one in December 2019 for the final project workshop. During the 2018 mission, the FLO visited the project intervention areas to see the achievements and to collect the opinions of the project beneficiaries. The project also received the support of the GEF finance expert in 2016 for the budget review. The coordination unit regularly prepared bi-annual project reports containing recommendations that were useful in improving project implementation.

129. The choice to mobilise the PTA for Mali and Burkina Faso did not work well in the first year. With the departure of the PTA in 2016, a remobilisation of national experts was made to support project implementation, particularly the training component, leading to a budget review. The Ecosystem Management Team of the Production and Plant Protection Division (AGPM) based in Rome somewhat lacked anticipation and adaptation to this situation, as it continued to monitor the project in the traditional way. There was no evidence of a more intense mobilisation of the LTO on the project to compensate for the gap. The project also suffered from frequent changes in the LTO, who is also involved in other projects – this is

not exclusive to FAO or this project. Also, the project task force (LTO, FLO, BH, and project coordinator) which is an internal mechanism within FAO was not very active; this limited project visibility at the national and regional level.

3.3.4 Planning

i. *The project developed and implemented AWPBs but planning was confronted with many of the difficulties already mentioned (insufficient budget, delays in mobilising co-financing, establishing memoranda, etc.).*

ii. *Planning is rated as Moderately Satisfactory.*

130. The project developed and implemented AWPBs, whose activity reports were examined and validated in the bodies concerned (PSC, GEF Unit, and AGPM) and whose results were used to improve implementation through the resolution and prevention of problems and non-conformities. The activities were implemented with the involvement and support of technical and operational partners as well as consultants, through service contracts and memoranda of understanding. Partners worked on the basis of the work plans previously elaborated and submitted to the PCU for approval.

131. Despite the above mentioned positive points, planning was faced with many challenges. As mentioned earlier, the project in its design had shortcomings in terms of budgeting, which required a major review. This led to a revision of the initial plan and AWPBs. There were delays in preparing the memoranda of understanding and contracts of some partners. The project made considerable efforts to adapt its strategy and work plan to the situation but experienced delays that affected the start-up and implementation of activities. Some partners and consultants did not comply with the timetable for the implementation of activities. Inputs and resources for the implementation of APFS, VSLAs and LCCA micro-projects, were delayed but the Regional Directorates made arrangements to borrow inputs from the Government's stock and also to pre-finance the missions of MTs and facilitators in the field. At the time of the evaluation several LCCA micro-projects had not yet received all the equipment and inputs planned. Some were at a standstill and others were abandoned. The increasing insecurity in the areas affected the implementation of activities, but the project adapted by mobilising local organisation agents.

3.3.5 Risk management

i. *The project identified significant risks but omitted certain risks that are recurrent in similar projects*

ii. *These unforeseen risks occurred during implementation, thus reducing the efficiency of the project.*

132. Risks likely to affect the project have been identified and classified according to their importance. During implementation, the measures planned to prevent and mitigate these risks were applied: formalisation of partnerships with the state services in charge of agriculture, livestock, environment and NGOs; participation of provincial and communal structures; involvement and awareness raising of the community on activities and risks; dissemination of agro-climatic information to producers to prevent climate risks; application of FAO security plans; etc.

133. Three of the four project intervention areas are plunged in insecurity, making access to the sites and the facilitation of APFS difficult. The project team involved local development

stakeholders who are better able to assess the security situation prior to any intervention. Given the dysfunction of markets and the inaccessibility of certain areas, producers have had difficulty obtaining seeds. The project provided seeds for APFS and developed a specific activity in the Sahel to collect seeds and build a gene bank to ensure their conservation and management.

134. As said earlier, some risks not identified during the design occurred during implementation (late start; low mobilisation of co-financing; low interest of some stakeholders). The project took adequate measures to mitigate them, but was not able to fully catch up with the delay in the implementation of activities. This resulted in a one-year extension of the project without additional costs. At the time of its closure, the project was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in a second extension of 4 months still without costs.

3.3.6 Co-financing

i. *The project encountered major difficulties in mobilising co-financing partners and making cash, non-cash and in-kind co-financing resources operational.*

ii. *The workshop on the capitalisation of the project's co-financing made it possible to correct this insufficiency but without allowing the project to respect all the principles of co-financing.*

iii. *The management of co-financing by the project is rated as Moderately Satisfactory.*

135. The project was one of the very first for which the State's cash contribution was required. The mobilisation of this State's cash contribution required the resumption of the financing agreement with the Ministry of Economy, Finance in September 2016 and allowed the mobilisation of CFAF 135 000 000.[29] This resource was managed by DGESS/MAAH and used for the organisation of PSCs, the acquisition of equipment and fuel, the monitoring of activities in the field by DGESS/MAAH and the organisation of two workshops on the mobilisation and validation of project co-financing data. In 2017, about CFAF 25 million were indeed disbursed and used for the acquisition of furniture, the organisation of PSCs and the monitoring of activities. In 2018, the amount of CFAF 105 million was budgeted and included in the finance law, but increased resource requirements to manage security issues limited its disbursement. Thus, the project disbursed less than CFAF 40 million.

136. Another difficulty concerned the capitalisation of non-cash co-financing from the State through the projects and programmes cited as funding partners in the project document. This shortcoming was noted by the mid-term review of the project and by various PSCs, including the one of March 2017 which recommended the organisation of a workshop with the partner projects and programmes to capitalise the co-financing. Following the capitalisation workshop, eight out of the fourteen partner projects and programmes identified in the project, effectively contributed to the accounting for the activities carried out under the project co-financing. Then a validation workshop of these data was organised in October 2018 to evaluate the capitalisation made and to correct the shortcomings. Overall, in-kind co-financing amounted to USD 61 668 842, bringing the total co-financing of the country to USD 61 914 297 against USD 19 435 000 foreseen at the design stage.

[29] Approximately USD 245 455.

137. **However, this huge amount of co-financing conceals shortcomings and limitations that need to be addressed in the design and implementation of future projects.** Several factors explain these shortcomings: the concept of co-financing applied to GEF projects was misunderstood/misinterpreted by most stakeholders; several co-financing projects were not directly informed of their involvement in the project co-financing; some co-financing projects identified at the design stage of the FAO/GEF project were already closed before it started; some co-financing amounts indicated were not sufficiently objective and were therefore unrealistic. Another shortcoming include the reluctance of co-financing partner projects to provide data on their achievements under co-financing. Also, new projects in the same field and not listed in the Prodoc have been reluctant to collaborate with the project as co-financing partner, given that they were not listed in the Prodoc. Besides, the Prodoc in its formulation did not open the possibility to integrate future projects not listed.

138. **In order to prevent or limit these shortcomings in the future,** the contribution of the identified co-financing partners should be specified in detail from the project design stage. Also, during the design or at the start of the project, it is necessary to formalise the new partnerships, to identify the activities that should contribute to co-financing, and to quantify these activities and the expected added value.

3.3.7 Monitoring and evaluation

i. *The monitoring and evaluation of the project worked well and mobilised FAO and the Government.*

ii. *The project carried out a baseline study, but the End line study was not yet completed at the time of the final evaluation.*

139. The project had a monitoring and evaluation expert who facilitated the monitoring and evaluation mechanism involving the implementing partners at different levels. Several products (baseline studies) and tools (scoreboard; framework; etc.) were developed and used for monitoring and evaluation.

140. The project carried out a baseline study with a sample of 608 households and planned an End line study which was not yet carried out at the time of the final evaluation. However, this study should provide details on the effects and impacts of the project on the beneficiaries. The SHARP analysis fostered a better integration of gender and vulnerable populations into the project. Gender indicators were regularly monitored and actions were taken to achieve the targets. The project has taken into account the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation by implementing appropriate actions.

141. The monitoring/supervision missions were carried out on average quarterly. The overall monitoring of the project activities in the field was ensured by the technical and operational partners under the Memoranda of Understanding, in collaboration with the LAAs and the M&E expert. Some PCU monitoring missions were jointly organised by FAO and DGESS/MAAH which managed the cash budget of the national counterpart and financed the Steering Committee sessions. In 2019, the lack of means (non-disbursement of the government's contribution) did not allow MAAH to participate in these monitoring missions. Also, the project had a focal point in each Regional Directorate of the three ministries. These FPs ensured the monitoring-evaluation of activities and the communication of data under the supervision of the Regional Director.

142. Supervision missions were also organised by the FAO Representative and the Project Coordinator to prepare the mid-term evaluation in September 2017. The APFS expert and the capacity building expert supervised the trainings and followed up on the knowledge application by the MTs/facilitators and beneficiaries.

143. All FFS/APFS sites were visited by project stakeholders (either by the partners or by FAO). However, the FAO team could not monitor the APFS sites located in insecure areas.

3.3.8 Communication

i. *The data was regularly reported and the content was of high quality*.

ii. *External communication was well conducted through various relevant tools and media. However, the project web page was still not functional*.

144. The quarterly and final technical and financial reports of each regional partner were properly prepared according to the FAO framework. They supported and documented the annual activity reports and the semi-annual progress reports (PIR) of the project. They were elaborated and presented to the different supervisory bodies of the project, where they also served as decision-making tools.

145. As concerns external communication, the various training workshops were covered by the media and press releases were issued. Similarly, the catalogue of climate resilient GAPs was distributed to all stakeholders. The agro-climatic information was disseminated through local radios in the project intervention areas and also contributed to a better visibility of the project. Tours were also organised at the middle and at the end of the season to raise beneficiaries' awareness and communicate about the project. Thus, in 2016, 87, 100, 104 and 147 guided tours were respectively organised in the FFS located in the Sahel, Centre-West, Centre-North and East. These GTs were beneficial to 4 628 listeners (55 per cent women) in the Centre-West, 5 706 listeners (63 per cent women) in the Centre-North, and 8,466 listeners in the East.

146. The project mobilised the media (radio and television) during the events, and produced a documentary film to communicate the activities carried out and the outcomes achieved. Visibility materials were produced and distributed (300 T-shirts; 300 caps; 1000 leaflets; 1000 catalogues of good practices; 2 scroller posters; 3 posters). The equipment distributed by the project carried the GEF and FAO logos. In December 2018, the project organised a sub-regional training and experience- sharing workshop on climate-resilient APFS. The results of the course on agricultural innovations were shared at the Origin, Diversity and Territories forum from 19 to 21 September 2018 in Turin, Italy. A report on the capitalisation of APFS experiences in Burkina Faso was prepared. However, the project web page that was supposed to be hosted on the FAO Burkina Faso website is still not functional due to delays in the development of the website. Negotiations have been initiated to have it hosted on the MAAH website but to no avail.

3.3.9 Synthesis and conclusion on adaptive management and project efficiency

147. Overall, the project was managed in an adaptive manner and resources were well used. The project implementation strategy was effective thanks to the actual involvement of partners, the work of the supervisory bodies (Steering Committee, AGPM and FAO-GEF Unit) and the support of the Country Representation. This work made it possible to ensure an efficient technical and financial execution of AWPBs.

148. In spite of a relatively slow process, the project carried out, in a relevant and satisfactory manner, two revisions that solved important problems, namely: the inadequacy of resources in relation to the planned activities and objectives; and the early departure of some key experts, including the PTA. This departure led to the re-mobilisation and reassignment of national experts.

149. Another positive aspect is the good functioning of the project implementation and supervisory bodies. The project benefited from: the dynamism and proactivity of the PCU; the support of the country office; a very committed participation of the implementing partners; and supervision by the Government and FAO. Monitoring and evaluation of the project worked well and made it possible to make recommendations, guide the planning of activities, and develop the various project reports.

150. Besides, the project more or less successfully addressed many other challenges encountered. The project kicked off late due to delays in the provision of funds by the donor, the lack of premises for the PCU and the delay in organising the 1st session of the 2016 project Steering Committee. Moreover, the project had to adapt to the frequent changes of technical project supervisor at FAO (the project had two LTOs).

151. Delays in the acquisition of inputs, materials and equipment for FFS/APFS and LCCA micro-projects, the non-compliance with the activities implementation schedule by some partners (consultants and technical services), the slowness observed in the budget review, and heightened insecurity in some project intervention areas, reduced the effectiveness and efficiency of the project. Consequently, the facilitation of second generation APFS, the monitoring of the second cycle of VSLAs and the End line study, were not yet completed at the time of the final evaluation.

152. The project experienced major difficulties from its inception in mobilising co-financing partners and making co-financing resources operational. In response, the PCU took initiatives and supported their implementation, especially the resumption of the financing agreement which enabled the country's funds to be paid out and made available. Besides, the project organised two workshops which allowed to (re)mobilise the co-financing partners and capitalise on the achievements. However, the final evaluation considers that the ex post capitalisation approach to co-financing activities is not the most efficient, since it takes into account achievements that have not benefited from joint or concerted planning with these co-financing partners. The lack of concerted planning does not make it possible to generate all the synergies sought by the GEF co-financing principle.

153. Although several management factors have mitigated the difficulties encountered by the project, the efficiency of the project is rated as Moderately Satisfactory.

3.4 Sustainability: To what extent have sustainability conditions as well as financial, socio-economic, environmental, institutional and governance risks that may affect sustainability been identified and managed?

i. *APFS and VSLA tools as well as LCCA micro-projects promoted by the project have met the interests of decision-makers and populations and are means of concrete and sustainable response to their needs.*

ii. *The APFS approach is taken into account in MAAH's SNVACA, in MRAH's SNVACE, and in MEEVCC's intervention mechanism as one of the advisory tools.*

iii. *Awareness-raising and advocacy actions deserve to continue after project completion to help consolidate the achievements and progress towards the institutionalisation of the APFS approach.*

iv. *The project has integrated several factors of sustainability such as: the deep involvement of the central, regional and provincial directorates of MAAH, MRAH, MEEVCC and local NGOs, and the capacity building of agents in charge of developing and operationalising agricultural advisory strategies.*

v. *Technical managers, MTs and facilitators are likely to ensure knowledge sharing and cascade training of other advisory agents for better adoption and dissemination of the APFS approach. The same applies to endogenous facilitators and members of APFS and VSLA groups who have been successfully trained.*

vi. *Despite the presence of risks that could threaten the sustainability of the project and deserve the attention of the Government and its partners, the sustainability of the project is overall rated as Likely (L).*

3.4.1 Sustainability conditions put in place

154. The APFS approach has been strengthened with the VSLA tool, which has made the groups much more dynamic, enabling members to access credit, benefit from a solidarity fund and develop IGAs. These VSLAs have strengthened social cohesion around APFS. In addition, the second generation facilitators trained by the project are community members and are an essential link to ensure the replication of the APFS approach at the local level. They can achieve this by creating new APFS and VSLAs, involving and raising the awareness of producers and local authorities. The APFS and VSLA groups were formed on the basis of the interests of their members, who are mainly women and young people. The involvement of the populations in APFS, VSLAs and micro-projects, shows their interest in the project and the positive outcomes obtained are favourable to the sustainability of the project. Producers have replicated the good agro-sylvo-pastoral practices learned in APFS on their own farms. The late start and the difficulties encountered in their implementation may have reduced the sustainability of the achievements.

155. The project has raised awareness at different levels on the benefits of the APFS approach for the government, communities and people. It also increased the knowledge of key decision-makers and planners on the APFS approach and CCA strategies. It fostered the establishment of an inter-ministerial committee to promote the APFS approach and CCA practices. These different stakeholders are willing to integrate and budget for CCA measures in policies, projects and programmes, and to contribute to their implementation. For example, the Regional Directors would like all projects to include the training of endogenous facilitators, even in a difficult security context. The positive project outcomes as well as the advocacy of FAO (leader of TFPs for the rural sector) and the Government are likely to attract other TFPs, other projects and NGOs, and individual stakeholders at different levels of the Government to promote the wider dissemination of the approach.

156. The APFS approach is taken into account in MAAH's SNVACA, in MRAH's SNVACE, and in MEEVCC's intervention mechanism as one of the advisory tools. APFS-related actions have been integrated into the strategy (in connection with MAAH's planned activities). **Besides, the national agricultural advisory strategy technically validated in 2017 and awaiting**

adoption by the Council of Ministers, calls for better coordination of the advisory systems of the ministries of rural development, which is an **important factor in the sustainability of the APFS approach**. Continued advocacy and the promotion of the APFS approach by FAO – which is the leader of TFPs for rural development – as well as the inter-ministerial committee housed at the SP/CPSA[30] are necessary to foster the institutionalisation of the APFS approach and CCA practices as a major agricultural advisory approach. To this end, a team should be set up within the inter-ministerial committee housed at the SP/CPSA to map all the extension tools that exist and are used at sector level and to assess their effectiveness and efficiency and create synergies between them in relation to the APFS approach.

157. Other factors of sustainability and replicability of GAP that have been integrated in the project concern: the relevance of the selected themes, the strengthening of the technical capacities of endogenous facilitators and beneficiaries, the adherence of these beneficiaries to the approaches implemented, and the involvement of state technical services. Some beneficiaries have promoted the techniques/innovations through their scaling up. For example, large cowpea farms run mainly by women have been established, while some FFS/APFS beneficiaries have immediately resumed sheep fattening without waiting for external interventions.

158. Although they are more costly and require good coordination for their implementation, the APFS approach and its complementary tools (VSLA, LCCA project) are proving to be more efficient than separate advisory interventions by the three ministries concerned.

3.4.2 Risks affecting sustainability

159. Although they are manageable, there are risks that could threaten the sustainability of the project outcomes. On the other hand, no environmental risks linked to the project that could threaten its sustainability have been identified.

160. At the financial level, there is a risk that, due to lack of resources, the inter-ministerial committee will not function properly after the end of the project. Dissemination of the APFS approach and GAPs requires that measures and actions be budgeted in development strategies, plans and programmes at national, regional and communal levels. Even if such budgeting cannot be achieved immediately after the end of the project, the interest shown by government authorities at the highest level and the commitment shown during project implementation suggest good prospects for the institutionalisation and budgeting of the APFS approach and CCA in the short to medium term. In view of the above and the financial situation of the country, which is particularly fragile due to socio-political and health crises, financial sustainability is rated as Moderately Likely.

161. At the institutional and governance level, factors conducive to sustainability exist at the government level as already described in the previous paragraphs. The institutionalisation of the APFS approach requires the adoption of the approach by the government as a major extension tool and its budgeting in programmes and plans as explained above. Risks that may threaten sustainability include the mobility of facilitators attached to local public

[30] The Permanent Secretariat for the Coordination of Agricultural Sectoral Policies (SP/CPSA) is an inter-ministerial structure in charge of coordinating agricultural sectoral policies that bring together the following sub-sectors: crop production, livestock, agricultural and pastoral hydraulics, forestry, wildlife, fisheries and research on crop, animal and environmental production.

technical services who are often assigned or admitted to professional competitions. They are generally replaced by people who have not received any training on the FFS/APFS approach. If properly supported, this mobility of facilitators can foster the dissemination of the approach at national level. In sum, institutional and governance sustainability is rated as likely.

162. At the socio-economic level, the main social factor likely to threaten the sustainability of the achievements is the land tenure insecurity that exists in some communities. This is likely to make the owner withdraw the land, thus forcing FFS/APFS groups to change the experimental sites. The project has carried out land negotiation processes in some areas that can serve as a model for mitigating this risk where it exists. The arduous nature of the work and the lack of suitable equipment can limit the application of good practices in water and soil conservation, assisted regeneration and agroforestry. At the VSLA level, a fewer meeting are organised due to insecurity and the COVID-19 pandemic. All in all, the GAP and innovations proposed to producers – including VSLAs – are generally well accepted by beneficiaries, who are interested in them. Apart from a few fairly limited experiments that have experienced major difficulties such as the failure of half-moon practices in some areas, droughts or floods in some plots, accidental destruction by animals, attacks on crops by certain pests (caterpillars on maize, granivorous birds, etc.) despite the treatments carried out – all those that have been completed have yielded positive outcomes that have convinced the beneficiaries. In sum, the socio-economic sustainability of the project is rated as likely.

163. With regard to the socio-political risks that could threaten sustainability, it should be noted that the implementation of the project took place in the context of a security crisis in Burkina Faso to which the project adapted well by mobilising security plans and specific implementation strategies.

164. In environmental terms, the project proposed tools and GAPs that serve to build resilience to CC and to other humanitarian risks/disasters. For example, the project established a gene bank in the Sahel and proposed response approaches to adapt to the crisis during implementation. No environmental risks linked to the project that could threaten its sustainability have been identified.

3.5 Cross-cutting themes: To what extent have the issues related to gender, vulnerable or marginalised groups and environmental sustainability, been effectively taken into account during project implementation?

i. *The project did take gender into account from the design stage, and transversally, for all activities. Specifically, activities of Outputs 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 were planned with gender-specific indicator targets.*

ii. *Gender mainstreaming in the achievement of project activities and objectives is a real cause for the project satisfaction. Indeed, out of 29 201 direct final beneficiaries of the FFS/APFS approach, 10 528 were women, i.e. 36.07 percent.*

iii. *The project enabled women to improve their knowledge. It was also a framework for expressing and asserting their leadership, learning and entrepreneurial capacities. The*

project offered a gender-sensitive guide for the development of CDPs integrating climate change in the municipalities.

iv. *The project's implementation of gender objectives has revealed the existence of weak components to be strengthened in the gender mainstreaming and women's capacity building mechanism. Despite the proactive and coherent strategy put in place, the project did not succeed in reaching its targets for trained MTs (14 percent women out of a target of 30 percent) and facilitators (20 percent women out of a target of 40 percent).*

v. *This project has had a positive effect on safeguarding natural resources, strengthening the resilience of ecosystems and communities and reinforcing social cohesion among members. By contrast, there was no actual or potential negative effects during implementation or highlighted by the final evaluation.*

3.5.1 Mainstreaming of gender concerns

165. **The project targeted populations in vulnerable areas to set up the FFS/APFS, and conducted a baseline survey in 608 households selected in 16 provinces** to establish the baseline situation based on 50 socio-economic indicators integrating household livelihoods. Gender was mainstreamed by seeking female-headed households in each village so that at least 1/10th of the respondents were women. The actual average percentage of female respondents reached was 23 percent for the 4 regions ranging from 11 percent in Komandjoari Province in the East to 40 percent in Namentenga Province in the Centre-North.

166. **In 2017, the project supported the evaluation of the implementation strategy of the APFS approach, with a special focus on gender mainstreaming.** To this end, a survey of 156 producers, 96 of whom (61.5 per cent) were women, highlighted the factors that have contributed to gender mainstreaming in FFS/APFS. APFS training targeted people who were members of an existing group. Men encouraged the participation of their wives in APFS, considering the potential for knowledge and skills offered and the potential positive impact on the entire family. Similarly, the functions of group leader (treasurer, president, secretary and counsellor), are generally attributed to women.

167. The various meetings with the beneficiaries mainly involved mixed and women's groups. At the level of APFS, beneficiaries indicated that several women are leaders of mixed groups but they are less numerous than men in this case. However, with regard to VSLAs, there are more women acting as group leaders than men. Indeed, according to the explanations from the beneficiaries themselves, this is because most men recognise that women are the best financial managers. It should be noted that there are several women's groups at both APFS and VSLA levels. It is worth noting that during the final evaluation women were dominant in the lists of participants in field discussions with the national consultant. All these examples of women's involvement in the project activities demonstrate that this project is gender sensitive and this is well recognised in the field by all the male and female beneficiaries.

168. **The project mobilised a gender expert (120 days worked) to assess the level of gender mainstreaming in the project.** To compensate for the slowness of the recruitment process, and in order not to affect the progress of the activities, the national coordinator, also an expert in Gender and Development, took on this role in the meantime. The report prepared after the analysis of the internal project documentation and the exploratory field missions, established that gender concerns were well taken into account in the APFS

approach. The training programme was based on themes of interest to women and was reinforced by new modules such as gender facilitation and VSLA, etc. The training modules were appropriate and women generally assimilated the contents well. The capacities of LAAs, MTs, facilitators and members of the project coordination team were strengthened in gender and APFS, which facilitated the gender capacity building of the final beneficiaries. The latter committed themselves to strengthen complementarity between men and women and to better duplicate their gender-sensitive practices with other members of their community. The representativeness of women and men in all APFS (compliance with gender quotas) was noted, although it varied from one region to another according to the sociological realities of gender. Participation in the activities and decision-making bodies of APFS (especially as micro-project managers) between the two sexes is also equitable. Despite these positive points, the low representation of women at the level of the agents involved in the project remains a matter of concern and deserves to be taken into account as part of a more global strategy for the professional training of future counselling agents.

169. As already reported during the effectiveness analysis, the project has also improved the knowledge of 65 technical managers including five women on the APFS approach and CCA and 20 technical managers including threewomen on SHARP. The project has retrained 17 FFS MTs (including one woman) and trained 25 new MTs (including five women) and 254 facilitators (including 52 women) on the APFS approach, i.e. a total of 14 per cent of female MTs on the 30 per cent target, and 20 per cent female facilitators on the 40 per cent target. This is due to the low representation of women at the managerial and technical levels. The project strengthened the capacities of 10 528 women out of the 29 201 direct beneficiaries of the FFS/APFS approach and VSLAs. All stakeholders are unanimous and very satisfied with the strong involvement of women in the different activities of the FFS/APFS approach.

3.5.2 Environmental and Social Safeguard

170. **The project has contributed to environmental and social safeguard by targeting vulnerable populations that rely directly on natural resources for their livelihood**. The APFS approach carried out with the producers – supported by two tools for strengthening the resilience of communities, namely VSLAs and LCCA micro-projects – made it possible to increase the resilience of the ecosystem and local communities to climate change and to strengthen social cohesion among the members.

171. Thanks to the technological practices (Good Agricultural Practices) experimented in APFS and adopted, it is now possible to: limit or reverse resource degradation, limit the decline in soil fertility, improve the value of natural resources, reduce livestock mortality, improve the use of organic manure, ensure the use of improved varieties/breeds, improve productivity and producers' incomes. The project promoted and ensured the sharing of indigenous knowledge as well as the use and conservation of indigenous species and varieties/cultivars. A gene bank has been established in the Sahel.

172. The VSLAs set up around APFS have helped to energise the latter and mobilise resources that have made it possible to grant loans to members. These loans have been used by some to develop income-generating activities. For example, incubators were acquired to produce chicks.

173. LCCA micro-projects have fostered the spirit of entrepreneurship within the community and have also contributed, together with APFS and VSLAs, to social cohesion.

174. The development of a strategy to disseminate the APFS approach to other partners and the signing of an inter-ministerial decree to promote the approach, will have positive effects on the dissemination and – in the longer term – the institutionalisation of the approach, with positive social and environmental consequences. GAPs and innovations adopted by producers have contributed to the sustainable management of water and land resources. They have also increased production and income and, more generally, improved livelihoods and social cohesion.

4. Lessons learned

175. **Several factors inherent in the project's execution and implementation arrangements and mechanisms had positive effects on its performance.** The involvement of FAO and sectoral government authorities at the highest level – in particular the physical participation of senior officials (the FAO Representative in Burkina Faso, the Secretary General of MAAH, etc.) in the Steering Committees and project monitoring – have a stimulating effect on the greater commitment of stakeholders at different levels. The regularity and quality of the PSCs made it possible to identify and analyse some implementation challenges — including budgeting and co-financing issues — and to propose solutions such as: revising the budget and the targets of certain indicators, resuming the State financing agreement, organising a workshop on co-financing, adjusting the intervention strategy, etc. Factors likely to improve project performance include decentralisation of project implementation by mobilising and engaging regional directorates through memoranda of understanding and local NGOs.

176. **The concept of co-financing applied to GEF projects needs to be made explicit and explained to stakeholders including the Government and other partner projects, to avoid any misinterpretation that limits or hinders their commitment.** In view of the significant time lag between the approval and actual start-up of GEF-financed projects, the closing dates of co-financing partner projects should be taken into account during the identification of co-financing partners and the project document should provide an entry point for new co-financing partners during start-up. Formalising co-financing partnerships through Memoranda of Understanding or Letters of Understanding, which clearly specify the objectives and targets and the responsibilities of each party, is very important first to stimulate and guide the commitment of the various stakeholders and secondly, to promote results-based management of the project concerned and co-financing partner projects. Such an approach makes the ownership by co-financing partners of the relevant outcomes more credible or legitimate.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. Project implementation has helped to further clarify the manifestations, facets and effects of climate change in Burkina Faso in general and in particular in the regions, communities and populations targeted by the project. It has highlighted the Government's priorities and strategic frameworks for intervention, as well as their shortcomings, and has proposed corrective actions.

177. Most rural households are aware of climate change, but the adoption rates for technologies disseminated by conventional tools remain low. The lack of a holistic agricultural advisory approach favoured by compartmentalisation and the lack of coordination among the sectoral extension and advisory systems of the three main ministries in charge of rural development, are obvious realities of the Burkina Faso context. The APFS approach was implemented to these by the project and proven to be one of the appropriate means of response. Improved collaboration between the various local technical services for agriculture, livestock and the environment offers proof that the APFS approach is relevant.

Conclusion 2. The project has succeeded in strengthening climate change adaptation and resilience capacities of the agricultural and pastoral sectors in Burkina Faso and has made significant progress towards institutionalising the approach.

178. The implementation of the project's processes has actually strengthened the knowledge of decision-makers on the APFS approach and CCA practices. They have become true promoters of the project approach within the sectoral ministries and have been involved in identifying technologies to be promoted and strategies to be deployed to support the extension of APFS. CCA practices and technologies tested in APFS and the associated tools (VSLA, LCCA micro-projects) were well accepted by decision-makers and populations and were effectively adopted as a means of strengthening the resilience of populations[31]. This has been possible thanks to the smooth functioning of the cascade training process from MTs to producers through first generation facilitators (technical agents) and endogenous facilitators (best producers), respecting the fundamental principles of the APFS approach. Thanks to the project, a committee in charge of promoting the APFS approach and CCA practices was established through an inter-ministerial decree, the approach was included in the SNVACE and SNVACA, and a tool was suggested for integrating gender in the development of CDPs. These helped to make outstanding progress towards adopting this approach as a major tool for agricultural extension and advice to address climate change in Burkina Faso.

Conclusion 3. Despite the challenges encountered at the level of budgeting and co-financing, the changes in key resources (LTO, PTA, SHARP expert from the headquarters, etc.) and the delay in mobilising co-financing and implementing LCCA micro-projects, the project has adequately mobilised mechanisms and processes to ensure adaptive management and achieve its objectives.

179. The project rightly carried out the necessary budget revisions, the (re)mobilisation of co-financing partners, and the formalisation of the implementation and supervision

[31] The end line study that was under way at the time of the final evaluation will determine the extent and intensity of household resilience building by the project.

arrangements for field activities. The project Steering Committee functioned well and provided informed and useful advice and guidance. FAO, through its Country Representation and the project supervision team based in Rome, provided outstanding support. These supervision actions have enabled budget revisions and the mobilisation of co-financing. They have also accelerated the mobilisation of implementation partners at central level (training MTs and decision-makers, supervising the implementation of the APFS approach); regional level (training facilitators, supervising the implementation of activities); and municipal level (training producers, identifying second generation facilitators, raising the awareness of municipal authorities). The main dissatisfaction that reduced the efficiency of the project is found in the shortcomings observed in mobilisation co-financing partners and the implementation of LCCA micro-projects.

Conclusion 4. The sustainability factors and conditions put in place by the project are satisfactory, despite the presence of some risks that could negatively affect the sustainability of achievements.

180. Factors promoting the sustainability of the project include capacity building of all stakeholders in the agricultural advisory system in Burkina Faso and their involvement in experimentation with the APFS approach as well as the integration of endogenous facilitators in the process. This is also the case for technologies, good practices and tools proposed (APFS, VSLA, LCCA micro-projects, gender mainstreaming guide in the CDPs), which are not only a concrete response to the needs of decision-makers, communities and producers but also factors of social cohesion, assertion of women's capacities, development of income-generating activities and improvement of people's livelihoods. Positive signs of the potential adoption and sustainability of the APFS approach include the signing of an inter-ministerial decree to promote the APFS approach and integrate the APFS tool among SNVACA and SNVACE tools and the ongoing adoption of the national agricultural advisory strategy. The institutionalisation of this approach remains subject to the budgeting of CCA measures in policies, projects and programmes. Advocacy by FAO and the Government (the SP/CPSA) is likely to attract other TFPs for wider dissemination/adoption of the approach. Besides, the national agricultural advisory strategy technically validated in 2017 and awaiting adoption by the Council of Ministers, calls for better coordination of advisory systems. The project has developed strategies to adapt to the country's security situation by deploying adapted security plans. It has also proposed tools that serve not only to build CC resilience but also to address other humanitarian risks and disasters.

Conclusion 5. The project has successfully integrated gender and environmental safeguard into its activities and achieved its objectives in these areas. It has also highlighted gender gaps that exist in Burkina Faso's agricultural advisory processes that need to be improved.

181. Gender and environmental sustainability were well integrated into the project design with clear objectives and resource allocations, most of which were achieved. Due to the low representation of women among technical managers, the project did not succeed in achieving its gender objectives regarding the training of MTs and FFS/APFS facilitators. However, it was able to deploy adequate strategies to meet its gender objectives at the level of the final beneficiaries. Women represent more than half of the final beneficiaries. Thus, the proposed resilience tools and resources (APFS and GAP, VSLA, LCCA micro-projects, gene bank, rehabilitation of degraded lands, methodological guide for gender mainstreaming in CDPs, etc.) responded well to their needs, providing a framework

for expressing and strengthening women's leadership and entrepreneurship, and contributed to environmental and social safeguard.

5.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Considering the updated strategic and operational challenges and the positive results achieved by the project, a new phase of the project should be envisaged to consolidate the achievements and institutionalise the APFS approach.

182. The project has highlighted the benefits and opportunities of the APFS approach in terms of improving the frameworks and processes for building the capacity of stakeholders and organisations involved in the extension and agricultural advisory process in Burkina Faso, ranging from decision-makers to populations and advisory agents. The progress achieved in the experimentation and adoption of the APFS approach, in the adoption of associated tools by development partners (VSLAs, LCCA micro-projects, gender and CCA mainstreaming guide in CDPs) and in the adoption of the proposed GAPs, deserve to be consolidated and disseminated more widely. FAO and the inter-ministerial committee set up should continue awareness raising and advocacy for the adoption and wider dissemination of the approach with its institutionalisation as the final objective.

183. The project through VSLAs has enabled people to strengthen social connections and women to develop IGAs to improve their livelihoods. This momentum needs to be supported in the future by other well-targeted support mobilised in a timely manner (supply of equipment and inputs, water supply infrastructure via co-financing partners, etc.).

184. In future projects, FAO can also provide support to the Government to strengthen the participation of women in vocational training schools for agricultural sector agents, with a view to eventually improving the representation of women among technical managers in the rural sector.

Recommendation 2. The modalities and mechanisms for mobilising co-financing (cash and non-cash) for future projects need to be improved both at the design and start-up stages.

185. This project was one of the first TFPs to receive a cash contribution from the State for the organisation of SC activities, the organisation of certain supervisory missions, the payment of regional focal points, the acquisition of small office equipment and the rehabilitation of the local offices. In spite of the difficulties encountered in its mobilisation, the existence of this cash counterpart funds demonstrates the very proactive commitment of the State to this project and is a significant step forward in State co-financing. The mobilisation of this fund, added to the monitoring and supervision resources provided for in the Memorandum of Understanding between MAAH and FAO, made it possible to overcome several shortcomings that often limit the monitoring and supervision by the Government of certain projects financed by TFPs. However, in order to improve the effectiveness of co-financing in future projects, it is necessary first at the design stage to evaluate and quantify this co-financing from the Government by linking it to activities and well defined outcomes. Secondly, at the start-up stage, it is worth organising the partners' workshop early on, drafting memoranda of understanding and carrying out concerted or joint planning to increase synergies.

Recommendation 3. Deliberations should be carried out and actions taken to make the Task Force more operational in future projects.

186. The functioning of the task force is often undermined by changes of the LTO and by the fact that the latter is simultaneously involved in several other projects. The LTO of the project was changed several times, consequently, the task force mechanism did not work well. This somehow reduced the visibility of the project at the FAO level.

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Annexes

Available in the French language of the original report:

Annexe 1. Matrice d'évaluation
http://www.fao.org/3/cb1994fr/cb1994fr.pdf

Annexe 2. Importance et caractéristiques du secteur Agricole
http://www.fao.org/3/cb1996fr/cb1996fr.pdf

Annexe 3. Vulnérabilité du pays au changement climatique
http://www.fao.org/3/cb1997fr/cb1997fr.pdf

Annexe 4. Etat du système national de vulgarisation et de conseil agricoles au Burkina Faso
http://www.fao.org/3/cb1998fr/cb1998fr.pdf

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