



**GDPRD Civil Society Organizations and Aid  
Effectiveness in Agriculture and Rural Development  
Applications Initiative**

**Good practices in  
BURKINA FASO**

**BACKGROUND**

Civil society is important in Burkina Faso. Over 14,000 associations and non-governmental organizations have been identified. Despite progress made, Burkina Faso still depends on international aid, which represents over 12% of Gross National Income. As a Party to the Paris Declaration (PD), the country has contributed to implementing innovative measures and emerging practices to improve aid effectiveness (AE) by adopting a National Action Plan for Aid Effectiveness, implementing a Rural Development Strategy, and setting up a *Cadre de concertation des partenaires du développement rural* (Rural Development Partners' Consultative Framework) to coordinate the efforts of government, CSOs, and donor partners on AE in agriculture and rural development (ARD).

In Burkina Faso, the agriculture sector contributes to over 30% of the Gross National Product, and accounts for 60% of all exports. It employs 92% of the population and 87% of all farmers practice subsistence agriculture. Agriculture remains highly vulnerable to fluctuations in rainfall. The staple crops include pearl millet, sorghum, maize, and rice. The cash crops are cotton, groundnuts, karité, and sesame. Livestock, once a major export, has declined in recent years. Main rural development policies and strategies are defined in the *Cadre Stratégique de Lutte contre la Pauvreté* (Poverty Reduction Strategy) designed in 2000 and revised in 2003. They have been defined more precisely in a "Lettre de Politique de Développement Rural Décentralisé" (letter on decentralized rural development policy) and in a Rural Development Strategy. This last strategy aligns the agriculture sector policies with the Poverty Reduction Strategy. It constitutes the main reference framework for public interventions in rural development to year 2015.

Within this context, this summary report is the outcome of a national consultation held in Ouagadougou as part of a global initiative to follow up on the 2005 PD agenda. Twenty-eight national and international CSO representatives, including peasant organizations and women's groups, officials from three different government ministries and seven donors participated in this national consultation on AE in ARD.

**FINDINGS**

**Recognition and voice**

CSOs working in ARD are recognized in Burkina Faso for their roles as they accompany the government in the design of development policies; provide support in sectors where government has insufficient resources; reinforce capacity of producers; help organize stakeholders in the agricultural sector; and perform awareness and monitoring functions.

### **Applying and enriching the international aid effectiveness agenda**

The consultation allowed CSOs to acquire a better understanding of the PD content, constituting an important result of this GDPR-led process. However, CSOs did recognize that they must reinforce their capacity; increase their knowledge of development policies and contribute more effectively to their design; collaborate with other development stakeholders; strengthen local expertise; and improve access to production inputs.

The importance of developing a sense of responsibility and documenting best practices was also highlighted. In particular, alignment with government priorities as well as importance of harmonization and mutual accountability have been identified as those principles in the PD that will most likely exert influence on their organizations.

### **Improved understanding of good practice**

CSOs and their primary constituents: CSO representatives stressed the importance of good governance, management transparency, constant dialogue and accountability. Information dissemination and satisfaction of their members' expectations, training, and finding a means of defending the interests of their members will also contribute to make the relationship more productive.

Relationships between and among CSOs at the country level and beyond: CSOs collaborate through joint lobbying, umbrella organizations and partnerships. Difficulties in establishing such collaboration include competition, management of opportunities, and leadership problems. Insufficient coordination, lack of a harmonized approach, inadequate fulfillment of commitments and lack of transparency have also been identified as causes of difficulties. In order to increase collaboration, CSO representatives suggested improvements in consultative frameworks, implementation of joint activities, communications and harmonization of approaches.

Relationships between Northern and Southern CSOs: Both groups have collaborated on project financing and execution, lobbying, exchange of information and technical expertise as well as technological transfers. However, local CSOs recognize that international CSOs have a higher degree of awareness of AE, are more proactive, and have more capacity to mobilize resources. Collaboration opportunities include contacts through international meetings, roundtables, adoption of joint strategies, performance of joint evaluations and information dissemination. Collaboration must translate into knowledge improvements and increase awareness of the real needs of the population. Local CSOs have identified a few disadvantages for Northern CSOs in executing programs by themselves: time-constrained actions, lack of ownership by beneficiaries and ill-adapted programs. Creation of dependence, monitoring problems and salary distortions have also been underlined. Lastly, mutual respect was identified as the main element needed to improve collaboration.

Relationships between CSOs and developing-country governments: The government has already taken numerous measures to support CSOs: adequate legislation, tax and customs exemptions, access to information and good technical collaboration have been identified as favourable measures. Despite measures already taken, technical and financial support as well as capacity development and reinforcement are also needed.

Relationships between donors and CSOs: Donors could contribute in improving AE in ARD by involving CSOs in: the design and monitoring of development policies and strategies;

accompanying and supporting them to ensure that they acquire the power and voice they deserve; and reinforcing their roles as facilitators and promoters of participatory processes. Donors can contribute in improving CSO effectiveness by financing initiatives to create ARD working groups and by supporting their participation in consultative frameworks and project execution. Lastly, representatives agreed that donors should also support CSOs by implementing financial sustainability schemes, providing institutional support and establishing a good governance monitoring mechanism. They insisted on ensuring adequate financing to CSOs.

### **EMERGING GOOD PRACTICES**

Different practices and initiatives implemented in Burkina Faso to improve AE have been identified and documented. For instance, to support ARD, the government of Burkina Faso has initiated a national watershed management program known as *le Programme national de gestion des terroirs* (the National Land Management Program). The program is designed to develop local capacities in hundreds of villages and undertake thousands of micro-projects.

The existence of numerous umbrella organizations in Burkina Faso representing peasant organizations and CSOs has brought a valuable contribution to the coordination of development aid efforts. The establishment of the *Direction Générale de Suivi des ONG* (CSO monitoring office) was also acknowledged. A technical secretariat for AE, *le Secrétariat technique pour l'efficacité de l'aide – STELA*, was also set up by donor partners, i.e. the UNDP, the European Commission and the World Bank, amongst others, to identify and eliminate obstacles that prevent aid coordination, harmonization and alignment. Lastly, an analysis pertaining to harmonization and alignment in the ARD sector performed by the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development in 2005 also constitutes an important milestone.

### **Recommendations for advancing the aid effectiveness agenda**

A strong consensus was reached, opinions expressed, and difficulties identified by the different participants during the consultation. In order to improve their effectiveness, CSOs issued the following recommendations:

- reinforce CSO capacities;
- encourage CSOs in adopting a proactive approach to ascertain their position and roles in AE;
- maintain ongoing CSO participation in the alignment strategy (based on Burkina Faso's national development strategy) while ensuring that donors' financial resources allow them to remain operational;
- provide advice on development and AE issues, and transmit these recommendations to partners in development;
- allow CSOs to contribute to debates as members of consultative frameworks and ARD sectoral working groups; and
- support the creation of, or strengthen, a common CSO fund designed to provide financial support for further redistribution, in particular towards smaller CSOs working on ARD.

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[www.donorplatform.org](http://www.donorplatform.org)

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