

# **The Second Generation Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs II)**

## **The Case of Burkina Faso**



African Forum and Network  
on Debt and Development

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(PRSPs II)**

**The Case of Burkina Faso**

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# About AFRODAD

## **AFRODAD Vision**

AFRODAD aspires for an equitable and sustainable development process leading to a prosperous Africa.

## **AFRODAD Mission**

To secure policies that will redress the African debt crisis based on a human rights value system.

AFRODAD Objectives include the following:

- 1 To enhance efficient and effective management and use of resources by African governments;
- 2 To secure a paradigm shift in the international socio-economic and political world order to a development process that addresses the needs and aspirations of the majority of the people in the world.
- 3 To facilitate dialogue between civil society and governments on issues related to Debt and development in Africa and elsewhere.

From the vision and the mission statements and from our objectives, it is clear that the Debt crisis, apart from being a political, economic and structural issue, has an intrinsic link to human rights. This forms the guiding philosophy for our work on Debt and the need to have African external debts cancelled for poverty eradication and attainment of social and economic justice. Furthermore, the principle of equity must of necessity apply and in this regard, responsibility of creditors and debtors in the debt crisis should be acknowledged and assumed by the parties. When this is not done, it is a reflection of failure of governance mechanisms at the global level that protect the interests of the weaker nations. The Transparent Arbitration mechanism proposed by AFRODAD as one way of dealing with the debt crisis finds a fundamental basis in this respect.

AFRODAD aspires for an African and global society that is just (equal access to and fair distribution of resources), respects human rights and promotes popular participation as a fundamental right of citizens (Arusha Declaration of 1980). In this light, African society should have the space in the global development arena to generate its own solutions, uphold good values that ensure that its development process is owned and driven by its people and not dominated by markets/profits and international financial institutions.

AFRODAD is governed by a Board of seven people from the five regions of Africa, namely East, Central, West, Southern and the North. The Board meets twice a year. The Secretariat, based in Harare, Zimbabwe, has a staff compliment of Seven programme and five support staff.

## Preface

National poverty reduction plans, known in the development community as PRSPs, or Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, have evolved since the late 1990s as key instruments that provide the basis for concessional assistance from the World Bank, IMF, UNDP and other donors. This occasional renaming of PRSP is significant in that the designers of the approach expect that PRSPs are to be country-driven, locally owned and based on broad participatory processes for their design, implementation and monitoring. The expectation is that governments will design and direct poverty reduction strategies for their countries in consultation with local government, civil society and communities. PRSPs, despite their shortcomings, have been adopted in a number of countries as country development programmes, around which donor support is anchored.

The rationale for adopting Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs) as a key instrument for achieving the MDGs is clear. PRSs provide an opportunity for policymakers to formulate coherent, focused strategies and policy measures to address issues of national priority; including the achievement of the MDGs. African countries have achieved varying degrees of alignment of their PRSs to the MDGs. Drawing on case studies undertaken by the African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD), this report on Burkina Faso highlights the opportunities and challenges associated with Burkina Faso's second PRSP and how it aligns to the MDGs and other development initiatives.

AFRODAD has embarked on studying the second generation PRSPs as a follow-up to its earlier work in 10 Sub-Saharan Africa countries on the first generation of PRSPs. This study on Burkina Faso examines the particular challenges and opportunities - especially participation, poverty diagnosis, content, public expenditure management, and capacity issues and donor behaviour - confronting countries that are formulating and implementing their 'second generation' PRSPs. While there is clearly an element of continuity in the technical, institutional and political context confronting the second generation of PRSPs, they also differ from the first in a number of respects: one of which is the way the various stakeholders - government, donor and civil society organizations - have been geared and prepared to engage with the process after the first PRSPs' shortfalls. This case study thus aims to make a contribution to the debate on the relevance of the PRSP approach to sustainable development in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world.

To improve ownership, leadership and accountability the study, among other things, recommends genuine representation of stakeholders and improved quality of their participation in the design, formulation, implementation and monitoring of national development strategies by building and enhancing technical capacity for policy design, decision making, implementation and monitoring. It further calls for improved accountability to parliaments and the citizenry in the spirit of strengthening domestic accountability.



Charles Mutasa

Executive Director

AFRODAD

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## List of Abbreviations

ADB	African Development Bank
AFRODAD	African Forum and Network On Debt and Development
BEDP	Basic Education Development Program
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFCF	Gross Fixed Capital Formulation
HCPIN	Harmonized Consumption Price Index Number
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IDA	International Development Agency
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MIDR	Multilateral Initiative of Debt Relief Framework
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organisations
PAP	Priority Actions Programs
PPA	Program for Priority Actions
PPI	Program of Public Investment
SFPA	Strategic Framework for Poverty Alleviation
UEMOA	West African Economic And Monetary Union

## 1.0 Executive Summary

Burkina Faso was one of the first African countries to complete the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), and it did so in only seven months, obtaining endorsement by the World Bank and IMF in 2000. Though it was not originally prepared as a result of wide consultations, regional meetings were subsequently held.

The first PRSP, 2000 - 2003, had four main objectives of accelerating broad-based growth, promoting access to social services, expanding opportunities for employment and income-generating activities, and promoting good governance. It targeted the agricultural sector as having a dominant role in the economy, accounting for 78% of total employment. The Joint Staff Assessment (JSA) of the first PRSP found that it lacked a broader strategy for rural growth and called for a more comprehensive planning document with indicators and targets.

For the period 2005-2007, the Program for Priority Actions (PPA) endeavours to remove those constraints which limit economic and social progress. The intermediary objectives of PPA 2005-2007 are as follows:

- Ameliorate the basis and competitiveness of the economy, namely the business climate to develop the private sector
- Ameliorate the effectiveness of social expenditure to provide favourable conditions for access to basic services and to social protection.
- Contribute to the creation of jobs and revenue for the poor in order to reduce the impact of poverty in rural areas
- Accelerate the process of decentralization, increase efficiency and transparency in the management of public funds in order to promote substantive growth in equity.

Burkina Faso faces several constraints: structural rigidity, insufficient physical infrastructures, weak productivity, small size and implication of the private sector, inefficient economic and administrative management, unfavourable women's social status and delays in the political democratic process.

Efficient ownership of PPAs content by grassroots populations and, in some instances, by the national administration, seems limited by the numerous problems encountered in the participatory process. In many cases, proposed strategies and actions do not have a concrete and operational content that therefore reveals the weaknesses of national capacities to formulate policies that are recognized and emphasized by the PPAs.

## 2.0 Introduction and Background

Burkina Faso was considered one of the poorest countries in the world. It was ranked at 173 of 175 on the Development Index. It has a poverty rate of 72%; that is, those living on less than US\$2 per day. Of its population, 82% was rural. As a result, poverty alleviation is considered a strategic objective in the long term which consequently requires a prospective position. In 1995, the Government of Burkina Faso set out its vision for long term development through the Letter of Intent of policies on durable human development whose end product will be to focus the development strategy of the country on the concept of human security. The strategy for reducing poverty, formulated in 2000 and revised in 2003, is based not only on this letter but also on the results from the different stages of the national prospective study, "Burkina 2025", which confirms the urgency to confront poverty in a structural perspective.

Burkina Faso was one of the first African countries to complete the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), and it did so in only seven months, obtaining endorsement by the World Bank and IMF in 2000. It was prepared by a small group, with no participation from civil society. After the first draft, however, two regional meetings were held with civil society organisations, who reported that the meetings were more informative and less consultative in nature.

The first PRSP, 2000 - 2003, had four main objectives of accelerating broad-based growth, promoting access to social services, expanding opportunities for employment and income-generating activities, and promoting good governance. It targeted the agricultural sector as having a dominant role in the economy, accounting for 78% of total employment.

Despite a number of external shocks, a number of targets were met. For example, inflation was kept below 3%. There were improvements in the public financial management system (i.e. decentralisation of budget system, public expenditure reviews in health and education sectors, updating of medium term expenditure frameworks, the publishing of governmental tenders, and the creation of an ethics committee).

The monitoring and evaluation framework of PRSP 1 has three levels. The first is the decision-making level in charge of supervising the implementation of the PRSP and was represented by the Ministerial committee. The second is the technical level in charge of monitoring the PRSP and was represented by the Technical Inter-Ministerial Committee. The third is the operational level with the responsibility of monitoring implementation and prepare reports for the Technical Committee. The last level is represented by Sectoral groups.

The Joint Staff Assessment (JSA) of the first PRSP found that it lacked a broader strategy for rural growth and called for a more comprehensive planning document with indicators and targets. To support the latter, the JSA found the process of data collection and analysis wanting.

Interviews of civil society organisations mirrored the sentiments of the JSA. They revealed that CSOs were not represented in all sector groups, nor did the groups meet regularly. Indicators had not been developed, particularly for the third tier and there were insufficient resources set aside to collect data and build the necessary technical skills to do so. In fact, CSOs were absent at the design phase of the monitoring mechanism itself, and described it as being heavily centralised with only a few ministries involved.

As a result of initial reviews of the first PRSP, the Government of Burkina Faso held a national conference on revising the PRSP in September of 2003. SPONG, an umbrella organisation of civil society, was recognized by the Government as interlocutor.

### 2.1 Research Objectives

This study is meant to give a general background of Burkina Faso's experience and engagement with the PRSPs, while identifying and critically discussing the key similarities and differences in the first generation and second generation PRSPs. It addresses the extent to which institutional capacity needs of the various stakeholders that were not addressed in the first PRSP were addressed by the second generation PRSP, elaborates on the planning instruments of partner governments and that of donors, and identifies the degree of institutionalisation of CSO and private sector consultation. Finally, it is meant to link the formulation of the second generation PRSP with and promotion of the MDGs campaign.

### 3.0 Programme for Priority Actions 2005 - 2007

For the period 2005-2007, the Program for Priority Actions (PPA) endeavours to remove those constraints which limit economic and social progress. By 2007, it is projected that the rate of global poverty is brought down to 43.3%; which will correspond to a rate of 48.1% of rural poverty and 16.6% of urban poverty. As for the year 2005, the following targets of global, rural and urban poverty, respectively, were set: 43.7%, 48.1% and 17.9 %. The intermediary objectives of PPA 2005-2007 are as follows:

- Ameliorate the basis and competitiveness of the economy, namely the business climate to develop the private sector
- Ameliorate the effectiveness of social expenditure to provide favourable conditions for access to basic services and to social protection.
- Contribute to the creation of jobs and revenue for the poor in order to reduce the impact of poverty in rural areas
- Accelerate the process of decentralization, increase efficiency and transparency in the management of public funds in order to promote substantive growth in equity.

The principal axis of the Program for Priority Actions (PPA) 2005-2007 consists in ensuring that economic growth is sustained thus making the economy more robust. The purpose is to considerably reduce the impact of poverty. To meet this objective, it is important that effective macro-economic policies are followed, pertinent sectoral policies are adopted and measures in the form of investment components as well as capacities which translate the four axis of the SPPA are strengthened. The strategy also aims to inculcate the dimensions of good governance in state institutions.

The attainment of the objectives mentioned above will be done through programs organized around these four strategic axes:

- 1 First axis: Acceleration of growth based on equality by implementing programs that will enable:
  - 1 Consolidation and macro-economic stability
  - 2 Amelioration of the economy's competitiveness
  - 3 Support to the productive sectors
- 2 Second axis: Ameliorate access by the poor to basic social services and social security through the implementation of programs that will favour access by the poor to education, health-nutrition ( including the fight against HIV-AIDS), clean water and hygiene (including the fight against pollution), and a decent habitat
- 3 Third axis: Increase employment opportunities and activities that generate revenue for the poor in an atmosphere of equality through programs that favour reduction in the vulnerability of agricultural activities; amelioration and securing of access to land; intensification and diversification of the production of vegetables and other plants and animals; increasing and diversifying the revenue of those living in rural areas; supporting farmers' associations; ameliorating living and working conditions of rural women; promoting employment and professional training and opening up the rural areas.
- 4 Fourth axis: encouraging good governance through programs that favour the promotion of political, administrative, economic and local governance.

The Government's global strategy to reduce poverty in Burkina Faso rests on 10 main directors which are directly linked to one another. These are:

#### 1 The adoption of a position which is purely prospective

In order to significantly reduce poverty and roll it to a residual level in Burkina Faso, the actions to be undertaken must be ingrained in a long term perspective.

Taking into consideration the diverse facets and different forms of poverty, poverty alleviation requires a prospective position on one hand. This means that the state needs to have a clear idea of the outcomes and expected courses of action of its policies. On the other hand, it needs to ensure proper governance i.e. governance that is, at the very least, endowed with effective leadership. This prospect provides a coherent framework of declension and sequentialisation for the short, medium and long term policies and programs in the fight against poverty.

## **2 The promotion of good governance**

There is a dialectic relationship between democracy, good governance and socio-economic development. This is why Burkina Faso underwrites all initiatives in this domain especially the African Mechanism of Evaluation by Pairs and the Declaration of Durban on Good Governance. In fact, democracy will not be consolidated if it is not accompanied by the amelioration of the living conditions of the larger population. Good governance has an economic and political dimension.

In terms of governance, Burkina Faso has been able to make considerable progress in the political sphere (establishment of multipartism, adoption of a liberal constitution, creation of democratic institutions and the holding of regular elections), and in the economy (the quest for transparency in the management of the budget and public affairs through instruments such as the adoption of regulatory laws, the creation of an audit office) in recent years. This progress must however be consolidated through a series of complimentary measures to strengthen the democratic culture.

In other respects, the state has to concentrate its efforts in domains where it has a comparative advantage by internalizing the principle of subsidiary. In fact, public intervention must always be guided by two main considerations: making up for the weaknesses of the market in the effective allocation of resources and seeking social equality. Accordingly, it becomes necessary to build a "strategic state" capable of forestalling and executing its regulatory and redistribution functions in an effective way in view of preventing the accentuation of inequalities.

## **3 The development of human capital**

The quality of human capital is an essential condition for the promotion of lasting human development. In Burkina Faso, whose population averages 0.5 years of education, there is a real deficiency in this domain. It is therefore imperative to put emphasis on the development of human capital in both its qualitative and quantitative aspects as it has been demonstrated that gains arising from an additional year of studies can be translated into a gain of 3-4 points in the percentage growth of the gross domestic product.

## **4 The durable management of natural resources**

Democratic growth and poverty put strong pressure on natural resources which, most of the time, are the main assets in the hands of the poor. The consequence of this situation is that there tends to be over-exploitation of the available natural resources. This situation further compromises the durability of developmental interventions. The strategy for poverty reduction will be based on the quest for equilibrium between short term needs of the population and the long term management of available resources.

## **5 Consideration given to gender equality**

The Government and other social actors are very convinced that women, like men, are a medium for the distribution of economic gains. No strategy for development centred around humans should ignore this truth. There is therefore need for adequate planning with regard to gender so as to ensure that there are equitable results for women and for men and also for handicapped persons.

## **6 The promotion of employment and development of the youth**

The challenge to create employment in Burkina Faso is, more than ever before, real. This is mainly because the country's main resource is its hard-working and industrious population which, by and large, still remains unemployed.

After great efforts towards economic recovery were undertaken in Burkina Faso, its economy now maintains a positive growth rate though it creates very few jobs. The country is going through a situation where labour, both in the urban and rural areas, is still very much under-utilized, with a greater part of the population still living below the poverty line.

Joblessness and under-employment are not only a waste of human and economic resources but also a root cause of increasing social degradation, delinquency and insecurity.

Consequently, the strategy for poverty reduction should be based on a policy of intensive growth in job creation. In this light, employment should not be considered as a mere resultant of macro- economic policies but as an explicit objective of these policies.

Such an explicit policy on employment must go hand in hand with that which focuses on the promotion and development of the youth. The population of Burkina Faso is dominantly made up of the youth (more than 55%). In the context of political, economic and social globalization, this fringe group continues to be a source of precious contributions as innovators, entrepreneurs, consumers, citizens and members of the civil society in Burkina Faso.

## **7 Enculturation of open mindedness**

Limited success even from different development strategies can be explained by the lack of understanding of the history of development and cultural values. Changes in favour of the promotion of lasting development and deeply rooted advantages require a rupture in relation to acquired and easy customs; a rupture with the thought that privileges engender development and a rupture with the thought that poverty is a fate that favours proactive behaviour.

Burkina Faso is made up of a cultural mosaic (about 60 cultures) which could be a rich source of wealth and innovative dynamism if it is judiciously mobilized and channelled towards the conquest of new areas of commerce and exchange. Meanwhile, the conscious embezzlement of culture and traditions still remains a problem in the process of enculturation and in the process of educating the members of the different community on their own values.

## **8 The promotion of new information and communication technologies**

New communication and information technologies are an effective tool for political, economic, administrative and local governance due to their value of openness and reduction of time, of strengthening dialogue and rationalizing the management of development.

## **9 Consideration given to rural areas**

The different sources of data, notwithstanding the natural potential, show a gap in the level of development between different regions of the country, mainly in terms of revenue and access to basic services such as education, health and the supply of clean water. These are some of the factors which account for the migration of people from one part of the country to another. Actions that confine youths in their territories have already been undertaken and should be supported in order to strengthen the capacities for local development and thus consolidate the decentralization process which is already underway. In fact, reducing poverty at the national level requires that the disparity between regions, cities and rural areas (mainly access to social services) be reduced. The strategy for poverty reduction will thus aim at re-balancing the levels of regional development and lessening the increasing impact of poverty in urban areas. In this light, the regional and urban dimensions of development will be taken into consideration in the distribution of resources. The national scheme of territorial development, regional schemes and, amongst others, the law on regional programming of investments in the process of elaboration, will guide this distribution process.

## **10 The adoption of a new partnership with sponsors**

For the success of the strategy for poverty reduction, a new partnership between the state and development partners needs to be established. The new partnership should be based on regular and open political dialogue. The Government defines the policies and strategies for development while technical and financial partners intervene during the implementation stages. Besides, the state defines the framework for the evaluation of results and the impact of public policies which are at the same time associated with the sponsors and beneficiaries.

This partnership is backed by an effective national leadership. Once the general objectives have been accepted, the sponsors allow the Government to choose the tools for its policies as well as the rhythm and the sequence of the reforms. The effective application of the approach to the programs and the progressive passage from aid given to the project to budgetary aid are essential elements for ameliorating the coordination of participants.

### 3.1 Funding of the PPA 2005

The Program of Priority Actions for the implementation of SPPA during 2005, prescribed that a public investment program amounting to 410.3 billion FCFA (well above the amount for the Program of Public Investment, PPI), be adopted by the Financial Law of 2005, which was 292.7 billion FCFA. About 70.4% of funding by PPA was theoretically acquired (made up of 289 billion FCFA for donations) and 29.6% was (121.3 billion FCFA) was lacking. The rate of mobilization of resources (70.4%) is basically the same as that in 2004 which was 70.3%.

**Table: Balance sheet of the implementation of the PPI of the PPA for the year 2005**

Axis	Programming in 2005. Initial amount in millions of FCFA	Amount acquired or mobilized in millions of FCFA	Rate of mobilization in %	Achievement in 2005 in million of FCFA	Rate of achievements in %
Axis	128 231,12	89 209,15	69,6	59 639,53	66,8
Axis	128 796,17	100 198,49	77,8	68 136,91	68,0
Axis	118 166,61	86 708,06	73,7	53 966,55	62,2
Axis	35 151, 46	12 893,03	36,7	9 538,07	74,0
Total axis	410 345,35	289 008,73	70,4	191 271,06	66,2

**Table: Scheme of estimated finances for the Action Program 2006-2008 (CDMT)**

	2006	2007	2008	Total
<b>Costs of programs exclusive of debts but inclusive of net loans</b>				
Net loans	748,1	796,1	872,0	2 416,2
Operating expenses	377,3	408,2	446,5	1 232,0
Investment expenses	395,6	406,6	444,6	1 246,8
On national resources	183,7	186,3	218,0	588,0
On external resources	211,9	220,3	226,6	658,8
<b>Funding of the program</b>				
State owned resources	618,6	682,2	706,5	2 007,3
External resources	459,0	520,4	542,8	1 522,2
Budgetary support	269,7	278,1	284,4	832,1
Financed donations(PPI)	57,8	57,8	57,8	173,3
Financed through loans(PIP)	101,9	104,0	106,0	311,9
Funding gap	110,0	116,3	120,6	346,9
	37,2	23,0	72,1	132,3
PSTE	29,1	21,8	20,4	71,3
Need of residual funding (-)	8,1	1,2	51,7	61,0

Source: MEDEV / DGP, IAP Reference scenario, February, 2006

The amounts raised were apportioned according to four axis defined thus:

- 1 First axis : for programming 128.3 billion FCFA, about 89.2 Billion FCFA were mobilized, constituting a mobilization rate of 69.6%
- 2 Second axis: the amount that was programmed was 128.8 billion FCFA and mobilization reached a level of 100.2 billion FCFA constituting a mobilization rate of 77.8%
- 3 Third axis: the programming to be worried about is 118.2 billion FCFA and the amount to mobilize is 86.7 billion FCFA constituting a mobilization rate of 73.4% of acquired funds.
- 4 Fourth Axis: For a program worth 35.2 billion FCFA, about 12.9 billion FCFA were mobilized constituting a rate of 36.7% of acquired funds.

For a total amount of 289.0 billion FCFA, the mobilization of resources for actions that favour the promotion of social sectors and growth were the most important, constituting 65.5% of the funds. The resources that were mobilized for actions that promote employment and activities that generate revenue as well as those that favour the promotion of good governance were only 34.5% of total funding. The fourth had a very weak rate of mobilization (36.7%). These financial allocations indicate that the central axis of the Program for Priority Actions is to ensure that the economy registers significant growth and, especially, the development of human capital so as to reduce the impact of poverty.

In real terms, 191.3 billion FCFA were spent, thus constituting a rate of financial execution of 66.2%. The results in the table above also show that financial efforts were concentrated on Axis 2 and Axis 1 (66.8% of total accomplishment), in view of creating conditions that are favourable to durable growth as well as ameliorating the indicators of human development. The balance sheet for development is presented thus:

### **3.1.1 First axis: Accelerate growth and ground it on equality**

On a total amount estimated at 128.2 billion FCFA, 86.2 billion was mobilized and 59.63 billion was used constituting a rate of financial execution of 66.8%, greater than that in the year 2004 (65.8%). The results seen at this level are attributable to excellent performances recorded during the realization of later objectives which account for more than 93% of the amounts spent on this axis:

- 1 Increase competitiveness and reduce the costs of the factors of production: the rate of financial implementation is 94.3% for an expenditure of 1.6 billion FCFA.

At the level of this objective, the performances that were recorded are relative to efforts undertaken within the framework of the promotion of rural companies that deal in metallic construction and projects that support competitiveness and the development of the enterprise (PSCDE) whose rate of financial implementation is 10%.

- 2 Increase agricultural production: on a programming of 97.12 billion FCFA about 86.4 billion was mobilized and 56.2 billion was spent, constituting a rate of implementation of 61.5%.

Support granted to the promotion of the rural areas is a springboard towards growth in agricultural production. Thus, more than 100% of resources were mobilized, that is 28.2 billion FCFA for a rate of financial implementation of 63%. Concerning activities that increase production and support to the marketing of agricultural products, on 15.8 billion that was estimated, 18.2 billion was mobilized and 15.2 billion was paid out, constituting a rate of financial implementation of 83.4%.

Promotion of the Burkinabes culture: a total of 884.8 FCFA millions corresponding to a financial implementation rate of 95.1% was spent. The construction of cultural infrastructures, particularly that of the administration headquarters and the national museum and the acquisition of means of transport and capacity building for artistic groups represented nearly 99% of this expenditure.

Generally, the execution outcomes of this axis are mixed and call for more efforts in the mobilization of resources. In fact, out of a total of 128.2 billions required for the realization of these objectives, only 46.5% were effectively executed.

When compared to earlier financial forecasts, the rate of realization varies between 41.6% (promotion of the Burkinabe culture) to 55.8% (consolidation of the macro-economic stability).

### **3.1.2 Axis 2: Guaranteeing the poor's access to the basic social services and to Social Protection**

In 2005, the PAP estimated a total of 128.8 billions CFA francs for the realization of this axis. Out of the total, nearly 100.2 billions were mobilized and 68.1 billions were spent, translating into a 68% rate of financial implementation. When compared to the execution of the PAP 2004, there is a two-point improvement in terms of the rate of financial implementation. A detailed analysis of the programs composing this axis shows that subsequent efforts were deployed in order to turn the poor's access to basic social services and social protection into a reality. The sub-programs which registered the greatest performances are therefore: (i) the promotion of the poor's access to health services and to nutrition programs (up to 88.9% rate of financial implementation), (ii) the promotion of the poor's access to clean water (87% rate of financial implementation), (iii) The improvement of the poor's access to social protection (80.1% rate of financial implementation).

However, the sub-program focusing on the poor's access to basic education services registered a relatively weak rate of financial implementation of 47.2%, against 22.5 billions CFA francs investment.

The project focusing on the common fund of the Basic Education Development Program (BEDP) recorded an insignificant rate of financial implementation of 5.75%. In this particular case, the system and the management tools need to be reinforced. The counter-performances at this sub-sector level could be linked to the difficulties met on the construction sites and to the long procedures necessitated by contracting activities.

The sub-program dealing with women's income and the improvement of their working conditions has a weak rate of financial implementation of 39.6%, against a total expenditure of 345 millions CFA francs.

The health sector recorded significant results coupled with high indicators, namely for the Primary Health Care centres operating in accordance with the norms set; the rate of hospital delivery for women and the rate of vaccination coverage which has also improved. In the education sector, the principal indicators have also risen with a net improvement in the gross rates as well as school enrolment and completion of primary education.

As for clean water, nearly 1890 boreholes have been dug (against a targeted 1000 boreholes) allowing more people to get access to clean water. However, many challenges remain. The efficiency of education expenditure should be, in fact, improved and made the greatest priority in the years to come. A more efficient social expenditure would require, among other things, improved monitoring of the expenditure, capacity building for the Ministries in charge, a decentralized administration, empowered communities and simplified control systems.

### **3.1.3 Axis 3: Increasing employment opportunities and income generating activities**

Out of a total of 86.7 billions CFA francs mobilized, nearly 54 billions were availed, indicating a financial rate of implementation of 62.2%.

The situation by sub-programs is as follows:

- Opening up of the rural areas (road foundations): 83.7 billions mobilized and a 61.7% financial rate of implementation;
- Development of cattle rearing: 2.12 billions mobilized and a 71.6% financial rate of implementation;
- Improvement of rural roads: 705 millions CFA francs spent at a financial rate of implementation of 19.4%.
- Increment of developed natural forest surface areas: 142 millions mobilized and totally spent (100% financial rate of implementation).

This axis, focused on sustaining production, has recorded a very high rate of financial mobilization (second with 73.4%, after Axis 2 which recorded 77.8%). Further efforts shall however be invested in the fields of rural electrification, job creation and youth promotion, wildlife management and the organization of hunting activities in villages, the fight against desertification and the improvement of access to microfinance funds.

The recent economic growth should particularly translate into the welfare of the poor living in the rural areas. Better access of rural communities to social and economic centres will be essential for their greatest participation in this growth. Trading infrastructures, telecommunications and alternative energies must also receive substantial further investments. More emphasis shall also be put on rural women's access to land and to adequate technologies of production and transformation of agricultural products. Illiteracy in rural areas is still a significant stumbling block to the economic participation of men and women. These challenges need to be addressed in order to increase employment opportunities and income generating activities for the poor.

### **3.1.4 Axis 4: Promoting good governance**

This axis required a total of 35.2 billions CFA francs. Out of the 12.9 billions CFA francs mobilized, 9.5 billions were spent, a financial implementation rate of 74.0%. Besides the sub-program dealing with the strengthening of the efficiency of the judiciary and the expansion of access to justice that recorded a null rate of execution, the following other sub-programs show satisfactory rates of realization:

- ❑ National communication policy for development (political governance) : 1.3 billions mobilized, and a financial implementation rate of 81.5%;
- ❑ Improvement of the operational capacity of security services (political governance): 411.5 millions spent with a financial rate of implementation of 91.4%;
- ❑ Local governance (construction of provincial head offices and an increase in decentralization) : 3.9 billions CFA francs mobilized with a financial rate of implementation of 71.1%;
- ❑ Economic governance: 4.0 billions mobilized and a financial rate of implementation of 73.3%.

Axis 4 has the highest overall rate of execution, 74.0%, which translates into an increase of 1.6 points compared to the year 2004. The promotion that good governance is currently enjoying could constitute an important tool in the fight for a better socio-economic environment, especially since good governance has already been identified as an essential element in the fight against poverty. One must however deplore the weak rate of mobilization (36.7%) which could hamper the consolidation of existing achievements. Efforts will have to be emphasized in favour of a more accessible and more efficient judiciary system, improved management of public resources within a decentralized set up as well as increased participation of communities at the grassroots level and the civil society in the decision making process.

After two years of experience in the elaboration of priority action programs for the SFPA, we note that the absorption of financial resources remains relatively low. This situation needs to be corrected by actions allowing for a better monitoring of implementation activities of projects and programs, better project scheduling and selection, better project management, the respect of a project's estimated starting time, the improvement of public contracting activities and procedures and the reinforcement of the technical capacities of project managers. The next project managers meeting will be an opportunity to learn more about the issue and to formulate the necessary recommendations in order to improve the contribution of such projects to poverty reduction.

### **3.2 Macro-Economic Results**

The implementation of priority actions programs (PAP), 2005-2007 should have contributed to improving the fundamentals of the economy and lifting some of the constraints which tend to limit economic and social progress. The ultimate objective was to bring the global poverty rate down to 43.7% by 2005.

The evaluation of macro-economic performance shows that the Government has performed relatively well in terms of economic management in spite of the persistence of an unfavourable climate for basic raw materials exportation (terms of trade deteriorated by 16.8%) and strong inflationary deterioration in the course of the second and third quarters arising from a reduction in the production of the crop year 2004/2005 and of an increase in crude oil and petroleum products. The real GDP growth rate rose, from 4.6% in 2004 to 7.1% in 2005 (when 4.7% was targeted), is attributed to a significant increase in cereal production (24.7%) and cotton (16.9%). The real GDP per capita has subsequently recorded an improvement of 2.4 points, up from 2.2% in 2004 to 4.6% in 2005.

When compared to the countries of the WAEMU zone for the 2000-2005 period, Burkina Faso, with an average GDP growth rate of 6.2%, consequently registered macro-economic performances above the mean growth rate of the entire union (2.8%). Moreover, in the year 2005, per sector contributions to this growth were as follows: 3.9% for the primary sector, 1.1% for the secondary and 1.8% for the tertiary.

The relative shares of the different sectors in the GDP to the market price are: 41.9% for the tertiary, 39.4% for the primary and 18.7% for the secondary. For the year 2005, the primary sector witnessed a positive increase (15.3%) in comparison with the 2.9% of 2004, induced by a good rainfall pattern and a very good phyto-sanitary situation. In the grain production field, we observe an increase of 24.7% that translates into a grain production level of 3.649.533 tons in 2005. The production of out of season crops has more than doubled with 57.438 tons in 2005 against 27.000 in 2004.

This performance could be linked to ownership of production techniques by the populations, to numerous supports received (in terms of equipment, fertilizers, improved seeds) and to the expansion of production sites. The grain's yearly outcome shows a net surplus of 704.527 tons.

Thus, out of the 45 provinces, only five (5) have a coverage rate inferior to 90%, against fifteen (15) provinces in 2004.

As for cotton grains, the production was estimated to 750.985 tons in 2005, with an increase of 16.9% when compared to the previous harvest, against an initial forecast of 665.000 tons. This increase could be essentially due to the expansion of surface areas, coupled with the creation of two new cotton zones and to efforts invested in maintaining the price to the producers despite a very low international market price of cotton stocks.

Regarding the animal rearing sub-sector, value added increased by 2.5% in 2005.

Through the income it generated to animal farmers, animal breeding has strongly contributed to the fight against poverty. Its contribution to the growth is actually on the rise, up from 0.2% in 2004 to 0.6% in 2005.

The primary sector contributed 3.95% to the 2005 GDP against 1.1% in 2004. The agricultural sub-sector is mainly responsible for this performance with a score of +3.3%. The primary sector added value was of 696 billions CFA francs in 2005 against 628.8 billions CFA francs in 2004.

When it comes to the secondary sector, we observe that in the year 2005, as opposed to the previous year, the economic activity in this sector is on the decline. In 2004 valued added was 6%. This decline in the growth trend can be attributed to the manufacturing industries (3.5%, in 2005 against 9.9% in 2004) which represent 64.6% of value added in the secondary sector. Moreover, the negative performance of this sub-sector can essentially be explained by the market sluggishness for activities of some local industries and by a rise in crude oil and petroleum products. The sub-sector in charge of "Buildings and public works" is, on the other hand, still pursuing its growth path with 11.5%, up from 8.8% in 2004. This dynamic was brought about by the implementation of many construction sites including the one of Ouaga 2000, the construction of the Kaya-Dori and Bobo-Dédougou road, the construction of dams within the implementation framework of the biennial water plan, etc.

Valued added by extracting industries, which is solely non-monetary gold, has witnessed a rise of 28.9%. This increase can be explained both by increased production and by a 3.8% rise in prices in the year 2005.

However, the tourism sub-sector has portrayed an outstanding dynamism in regard to the rise in the numbers of visitors and hotel occupancy rates, linked to the organization of many international events.

As far as employment is concerned, the year 2005 was characterized by a decline in the growth trend of the end products consumption which was down to 7.7% against 9.5% in 2004.

In terms of gross fixed capital formation (GFCF), we observe an increase of 19.9 % of the GDP in 2005 against 19.8% of the GDP in 2004, most of which is attributed to the public sector component (12.2% of the GDP) rather than to the private sector component (6.5% of the GDP).

### **3.3 Public Finances**

The overall objective was to improve the efficiency of government expenditures in order to create conditions that favour people's access to basic social services. Burkina Faso has continued to apply a sound budgetary policy. The 2005 budget was adequately executed despite persistent exogenous shocks. The current revenues of the State have increased by 3.9% between 2004 and 2005 and, the tax revenues by 3.7%. The tax ratio, amounting to 11.3% of the GDP in 2005 (for a targeted 12.3%), is still weak. The quest for equity in fiscal operations has been a major concern for the Government.

In fact, significant efforts have been geared towards improving the collection of gradual income taxes. Particular emphasis was put on the tax-paying populations of both the formal and the informal sector living in urban areas, considering the high rate of poverty in the rural areas. Government expenditures have been well controlled, moving from 22.1% of the GDP in 2004 to 22.4% in 2005. The investment rate remained stable, amounting to a total of 19.9% of the GDP in 2004 and 19.8% in 2005. Specific emphasis also enabled the Government to channel resources towards the most impoverished areas in order to further ensure the population's access to basic social services.

The share of the national budget allocated to the social sector in 2005 (beyond HIPC and projects drawn on external funding) was distributed as follows: 14.6% for basic instruction and literacy training, 10.6% for health, 8.2% for secondary education, higher education and scientific research, and 0.9% for social action.

The budget orientation towards the fight against poverty is a reality. Social expenditures in poverty reduction have actually increased from 4.7% of the GDP in 2003 to 5.5% in 2005.

The Government's commitment to the protection of priority sectors and consistence in the settlement of budgetary credits is evident in the significant increase in the expenditures of priority sectors as compared to those of lesser importance in 2004 and 2005.

Donor aid has progressively been brought into balance with the priorities set by the SFPA thus directing additional budgetary support towards priority sectors. On 31 December 2005, budgetary supports disbursed were amounting to nearly 93.05 billions CFA francs corresponding to 99.1% of the total estimate and about 75% was paid to the treasury in the course of the first three quarters of the same year. The budget deficit (including donations) was of 5.4% of the GDP in 2005, up from 4.6% recorded in the year 2004.

### **3.4 Debt Management**

For the year 2005, the objective was to improve the Government's debt management capacity in order to set viability conditions for long-term liabilities. Generally, debt management was integrated in the framework of short-term expenditures in order to take into account the priorities set in the fight against poverty and incorporate them in the annual budget. Initially, the public debt national committee examines any new demands for loans with a particular interest in their conformity with the development priorities and to the donations component, which must be less than 35%.

At the end of December 2005, the outstanding public debt was 1.231.8 billion CFA francs against 1.072.8 billion in 2004. It was made up of 92% external debt (1.131 billion) and 8% internal debt (100.6 billion CFA francs). The external debt was mainly characterized by a leading multilateral debt component estimated at 957.4 billion CFA francs (84.6%) by the end of December, 2005. The internal debt stood at 65%, mainly made up of debts owed to local banks. The ratio of the outstanding debt to the gross domestic product was 41.3%. This ratio is below the WAEMU standard which is fixed at 70%.

With regard to exports, the external debt service ratio was 11.6% in 2005, way below its 2004 level of 7.1%. Analysis of the debt's viability (IMF and World Bank, June 2005) based on the external debt at the end of the year 2004, has shown that Burkina Faso is on its way out of indebtedness, even though the possibility of exogenous shocks remains a threat to the viability of the debt. Progress in this domain will depend on the magnitude of the Government's efforts in ensuring the diversification of the economy and triggering a rise in exports.

Within the multilateral initiative of debt relief framework (MDRI), efforts made by Burkina Faso were rewarded, as far as macro-economic stability is concerned. In fact, the board of directors of the IMF approved debt relief for Burkina Faso amounting to 100% of all the debts incurred by Burkina Faso from the IMF before 1 January, 2005. This amounts to nearly 82 million US dollars excluding the remaining assistance in the HIPC initiative. The International Development Agency (IDA) and the African Development Bank (ADB) which account for 67.3% of the outstanding debt are also expected to consider the eligibility of Burkina Faso for the MDRI.

### **3.5 The Balance of Payments**

The evaluation of the external position of the country in 2005 has shown that Burkina Faso's external balance is still in the red. The situation has even worsened, going from 1.244,7 billion CFA francs in 2004 to -252.9 billion in 2005. The influence of exogenous shocks (the drastic drop of the international market price of cotton stocks and excessive rise in the price of crude oil) was the main factor. Following sound public transfers (+7.7%), the external current account deficit was reduced from 13.2% of GDP in 2004 to 11.3% in 2005. The international reserves represented 5.4 months of importation, higher than the level reached in 2003 (5.0) but lower than the one reached in 2004 (6.7).

### **3.6 The Monetary Situation**

Compared to the year 2004, the evolution of the monetary situation at the end of December, 2005 was characterized by a concentration of the external net holdings (-22.6%), a swelling of the economy's credit (+22.7%) and an increase in the money supply (+1.8%). Considering the level of imports and the rise in the price of crude oil and petroleum products, the net external holdings have increased by 62.0 billion CFA francs out of which 54% are with the central bank and 46% with deposit banks.

The internal credit significantly increased in 2005 compared to 2004 (91.3 billion CFA francs) as a result of the combined effect of a rise of 89% in the economy's credit (fostered by the vigour of activities in the cotton industry and in the building and public works sector) and a further increase of 4.6 billion CFA francs in the net liability position of the Government

In total, the money supply has increased by 10.9 billion CFA francs, exclusively coming from an expansion of money circulation (+ 12.7 billion CFA francs), and the stock having increased by 1.8 billion CFA francs.

In summary, we can say that Burkina Faso performed well in the year 2005 (as shown in the table below). It is also obvious from this table that real growth has tended to accelerate and that there has been a reduction in the overall poverty incidence.

**Table: Progress of some macroeconomic indicators**

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Nominal GDP (in billions of CFA francs)	2 215,2	2 503,6	2 700,3	2 985,1
GDP by volume (in billions of CFA francs)	1 545,1	1 669,0	1 745,6	1 869,3
GDP growth by volume (%)	4,6	8,0	4,6	7,1
Inflation rate (%)	2,3	2,0	-0,4	6,4
Budget deficit including transfers (% of the GDP)	4,8	2,9	4,6	5,4
Current account deficit including transfers (% of the GDP)	9,2	8,4	10,2	10,2
International reserve ( per months of importation)	4,5	5,0	6,7	5,4
Progress in the terms of trade (%)	-17,0	-0,8	1,8	-16,8
Progress in the overall poverty incidence rate (%)	0	46,4	46,0*	42,4*

Source: DGEP, March, 2006 \*Simulations PAMS

## 4.0 Critical Analysis Of SFPA

Besides the fact that the SFPA has become the new common conditionality for all donors, its elaboration and implementation processes also entail particular conditions pertaining to the beneficiaries' effective participation in the planned government interventions which try to ensure that poverty reduction strategies reflect the needs of the majority of the citizens. While, in terms of process, grassroots communities' participation constitutes an innovation in the cooperation between the Burkina Faso Government and the development partners, namely the Breton Woods institutions, this is not the case with regard to the content of the planned strategies. In essence, the SFPA extends the policies and the structural adjustment programs in favour of the traditional social sector (health and education). This section evaluates, on one hand, the population participation process and the formulation and implementation of the SFPA and, on the other hand, the relevance of the strategies and policy content in regard to the constraints and identified problems.

Since the democratic system does not work properly in Burkina Faso, the direct participation of the grassroots communities in the formulation of economic policies and strategies for development goes unnoticed in the country, mainly because such participation is usually conceived and applied after few consultations at the grassroots level. We also have to add that the various challenges encountered in the practical organization of the participative process and at the drafting level of the SFPA limit the efficiency of the strategies themselves.

The elaboration of SFPA was more or less methodically prepared. Most of the time, consultations with the people were conducted during regular regional workshops in order to, first of all, collect the opinions, and capture the needs, of the people and, secondly, in order to validate the views collected. Generally, these consultations brought together a great number of people, sometimes discussing extremely complex issues. The targeted audience comprised labour organizations, professional associations and the civil society represented by NGOs and associations for local development. Although the information provided by the SFPA and periodically revised is not enough to give a complete description of the participative process, we nevertheless observe some problems likely to limit the efficiency of the process.

On one hand, consulting with the people on the country's economic and social policies is not a practice rooted in the Burkina Faso political and administrative fabric. On the other hand, considering the fragility of the democratic institutions of the country, the existing local and regional relay mechanisms of the government's actions are still at an immature stage. In this context, we cannot hope to have an efficient participative process allowing grassroots communities to really have their say on the matter. In addition, it is not certain that the real target groups were effectively reached; the Poor, being indeed the people whose needs and opinions are targeted in this research, are not always reached because they are concentrated in rural areas, whereas consultations are organized in provincial and regional centres.

Besides, in cases where NGOs are asked to represent civil society, it often turns out that many of them are either not technically competent or not well tooled up for relaying the information to the communities at the grassroots level. The SFPA endeavours to describe the manner in which the participative process will be carried out during the implementation stages of these programs. It generally tries to visualize the principles underlying preliminary actions and to identify the perceived shortcomings of the process that arise from the weaknesses of civil society.

These shortcomings as well as the available documents are final copies. The initiation of the participative process is not enough to guarantee the adequacy of the policies and strategies if the administration and the country's authorities do not have absolute control of the editing, the internal consistency and the drafting of the roundup paper. The information provided by the SFPA is not sufficient for making final judgments. It appears, however, that, in some cases, development partners actively participate in the editing of the final roundup paper in order to improve its quality.

Analytical, pairing and arbitration capacities are needed in order to avoid making a simple addition of contract proposals that come from groups of people with diverging interests. This would result in actions or incongruous public interventions that are totally uncoordinated. Such shortcomings of the national administration, the civil society and its representatives are results of more fundamental weaknesses mentioned in Section 1.2; they limit the effectiveness of these strategies and policies and turn their real objectives into illusions.

The available information is not sufficient to describe the participative process with its proper dynamics. However, having looked at the identified problems related to the uncertain targeting, the inefficient relay operations of the civil society by the NGOs, the discretion of the implementation's participation and the effective suitability of the SFPA by the grassroots communities, it seems that, this process is really limited. In some cases, the administration defaults in pairing capacities append a weak suitability of the national administration. The Breton Woods institutions entail that an efficient participative process is enough to accelerate the economic growth promised by the structural adjustment policies reinforced by budget supports in favour of the traditional social sectors. Even though, the participative process described in the currently revised SFPA is efficient, this result seem mythical if the substance of the planned strategies is not conducive to the economic growth.

Technically, the identification of objectives, strategies and poverty reduction policies was based on the problems, constraints and priorities of the country. Nevertheless, in many instances, it seems that the actions, program strategies and planning do not take into account the structural, budgetary and administrative constraints as well as the identified techniques. In such conditions one can wonder about the realism and the feasibility of the forecast policies and about the sustainability of their expected positive outcomes.

#### **4.1 Strategies and Policy Consistency**

The poor populations of Burkina Faso will only be affected by the SFPA strategies if the financial and human strategies as well as the forecast program techniques impact on them at the field level, in the regions and local communities in which they live. This will necessitate a de-centralization of government services in general as well as the budget services in particular. The sectional programs (rural development, health, education) are treated by the currently revised SFPA as if such decentralization has already occurred; or that, if this process is just beginning, it will be finalized earlier than the corresponding sectional interventions. Considering that this assumption does not conform to the weaknesses of the Burkina Faso administrative organization, the concrete implementation of the sectional strategies is expected to encounter some major obstacles. The Government's budget constraints also limit the consistency of the strategies.

Considering the difficulties of fiscal revenue mobilization and the weaknesses in the Government's management of expenditure, the size of the programs set to be implemented seems too big and their range of activities too extensive to produce the expected results within the set time. The high incidence of poverty and the low levels of financial, administrative and technical resources, necessitate a concentration of efforts on a limited group of activities (sectors) having determining and multiplicative effects.

The sizes of the programs make the expected results of the forecast strategies uncertain. This uncertainty tends to be as big as the practical organization of the administration is deficient; procedures are lengthy and the execution slow. Besides, the explicit links between the SFPA components are not always stated so that, instead of articulated and integrated programs, we observe a juxtaposing of sectors of production, namely the agricultural and social programs on one side, and the macro-economic policies on the other side.

By omitting to clarify the interactions between the macro-economic reforms, the production sector and the social sector, we black out the mechanisms by which the recommended policies will influence the life conditions of the targeted groups and, in return, the ones by which the evolution of life's conditions will affect the sustainability of the expected impacts of the implemented policies. The lack of synergy from the intervention groups will weaken their cumulative effects. In some cases, the analysis and the impressions from diverging interest groups which want their preoccupation to be taken into account in the roundup paper, have culminated in a catalogue of objectives and interventions without any ranking pertaining to the constraints facing the country. This omission has tended to give equal weight to conclusive actions and to those having a low priority. In addition, there has not always been a clear distinction between short term actions and those forecasts for the medium and long terms. The Government is conscious of the difficulties and shortcomings of its administrative organization as earlier mentioned.

This is why it has forecast interventions related to modernization and local development. However, in the absence of objective indications on how these measures are going to be implemented, i.e. in terms of technical means, human resources and time, one can easily doubt the credibility of these interventions as well as their ability to significantly improve the control of the means and administration elements necessary for the realization of the poverty reduction strategy.

## **4.2 Feasibility and Sustainability**

Recurrent phase shifts between the selected strategies on one hand and the decentralization process, the budget, administration and technical constraints, on the other hand reduces the chances of realizing the SFPA. When a clear line is not drawn between what can be done in a short term and what requires more time to be implemented, programs planned for might not be feasible. There is no single program planned to run over several years that mainly focus their efforts on well restricted and selected efforts geared towards the production of significant results in the short time, which would be expected to facilitate the implementation of activities that would have an impact in the short and the medium term. Faced with a number of constraints and an uncertain feasibility, unsynchronized strategies and policies will not lead to positive and sustainable results since, such constraints are likely to arise any time and thus, compromise the realization of the objectives pursued; therefore, the legitimacy of issues raised over the abilities of strategies pursued to effectively reduce poverty is yet to be established

## **4.3 Potential of Proposed Strategies to Reduce Poverty**

The SFPA launches an exceptional policy formulation process initiated by a country that enjoys the active participation of beneficiaries; it constitutes a common base and a tool that consolidates contributions from all development partners in the country. Social and economic policies, namely those fostering liberalization, which have been consistently suggested to governments of the region and financially sustained by Breton Wood institutions as well as other development partners are raising more questions, worldwide (CNUCED 2002) and are sometimes criticized within the institutions themselves (Easterly, 2001; Stiglitz, 2002). Nevertheless, these policies remain the backbone of the SFPA to which accrued social expenditure programs have been added. In essence, strong suggestions emanating from development partners regarding what should be included or excluded in the SFPA, limits the local administration's ability to own them. Even when adequately owned by an efficient participative process, would poverty reduction strategies hamper a considerably high and sustained rate of economic growth and would they create productive jobs which are likely to significantly reduce poverty in the region? The SFPA review underway does not make detailed analysis of all the proposed strategies and policies; this analysis which besides raises a lot of issues around statistical information, would have shed light on the already mentioned phase shift that exist between the constraints and the scheduled interventions. It could have identified specifically the short comings relating to the unfavourable social status of women which constitutes an important obstacle in the food and agricultural production, hence endangering the rural development considered by all to be the basis of the economic growth.

## **4.4 Capacity of Supply and Economic Growth**

The analysis of the SFPA indicates that the promotion of economic growth is an essential element in poverty reduction. Besides that, it entails that incentives brought about by implemented macro-economic policies would create an enabling environment for the much wished economic growth; although it does not explain the mechanisms by which opportunities created by these incentives would concretely benefit Burkina Faso. It assumes that the market will provide them with the means of increasing their supply of goods and services instead of explicitly helping them to acquire those means through adequate assistance and support (financial, human, institutional and technical). Macro economic policies affect the markets whose variations alters stock prices, labour prices, (real salaries) and credits. These changes play on the competitive positions of the market actors who in turn adjust themselves through variations of the volume and the structure of their activities. The variations of real and nominal prices as well as those in revenue are the incentives to which economic agents in general and the producers in particular adjust. Changes in the structures and volume of the goods and services supplied, as a result of economic incentives measure the capacity of the economic production system to adjust; the improvement of this ability to adjust constitutes a key characteristic of the economic growth. The response to these incentives is evident in the production, supply, organizational, financial, technological choices and market constraints that the producers face.

Due to the lack of support and proper assistance, a significant number of producers cannot minimize these constraints and are not able to carry out the requested changes in order to effectively take advantage of the opportunities offered by the market. The SFPA promotes resources distribution instead of stressing assistance and supports aiming at increasing the ability to adjust to the variation in goods and services supply.

The promotion of the economic progress is more significant than the improvement of the economic efficiency. In practice, the producer's reaction to economic incentives is effective only if they implement organizational techniques and systems not only adjusted to the existing conditions but also potentially better than the ones previously used. Technological and organizational innovations are the real sources of economic growth although they are not included in the legal provisions of structural adjustment as well as in strategies proposed by the SFPA. The SFPA put emphasizes the improvement of the macro-economic environment through budgetary, monetary and financial reforms which are expected to alter the incentives offered by the goods, labour and capital markets, by the physical and legal environment and the framework through which the development of infrastructures that would foster the opening up of rural areas, the development of the institutional framework that promotes the private sector, and the liberalization of the market so to reduce the costs of factors would be possible. In return, few actions have been proposed in order to increase and improve the bidding capacity of the majority of producers made up of family businesses rather than formal ones. The interventions aiming at the intensification and modernization of the agriculture, the reinforcement of development assistance to small businesses do not generally have a concise and operational content going beyond the stating of pursued objective.

Interventions aiming at intensifying and modernizing agricultural activities, strengthening support institutions and those specialized in developmental support for small and medium enterprises do not generally have a clear and practical content that exceeds the statement of objectives pursued.

Regarding the technological and organizational innovations likely to enable the majority of producers who are mainly rural and informal actors to respond better than before to the needs of the market, they are not of interest and the roles it deserves in the currently revised strategies. Although rural development is considered as a must in poverty reduction, proposed actions for rural development are put at the same level as those relating to the conventional social sectors (education, health, clean water). The interactions between the actions of development and those of the social sectors are not explicitly defined such that one wonders how poverty will be reduced. Is it the development of the social sectors which is going to hamper the revenues likely to reduce poverty or this role will instead be played by the rural development? The SFPA did not sufficiently articulate the rural development actions with the ones of the traditional social sectors. To us, it seems that the creation of wealth should be privileged as compared to the social sectors; in the medium and long terms, the creation of wealth will be accelerated and sustained by the growth of global productivity of the factors induced by the improvement in the access of the poor populations to basic social services, namely basic education and primary care. Consequently, the whole problem is located in the preliminary initiation of the process of wealth creation, meaning the acquisition and improvement of the bidding capacity for goods and services. In this respect, one can think that, the improvement of the production capacity and the offer of food-producing products constitute the ultimate means to obtain results and that it is advantageous to equip the mass of producers, largely made up of rural people organized in informal and family businesses, with some proper means (taxes, grants, assistance and direct supports).

#### **4.5 Capacity of Supplying Processed Food and Economic Growth**

This reason of this perspective lies in the fact that food consumption constitutes the uttermost concern of all the population's clusters and the poor in particular; the food product supply is the main activity of women, in the domestic sphere as well as the external professional sphere (agriculture, commerce, product transformation). Nutrition being the first area of expenditure for the poor, a significant reduction of its cost will have multiplier effects for households as well as the agricultural sector. Besides its potential to considerably reduce poverty, the growth of food production will have favourable per sector and macro economic effects; all the same, it will contribute to the promotion of the private sector in rural areas and will justify the need for maintenance of rural infrastructures (rural roads and tracks, bridges, irrigation equipments, stocking and conservation equipments). These impacts are not sufficiently taken into account by the SFPA in order to target the proposed strategies of agricultural food-production.

An increase in the production capacity and in the supply of food-produce through suitable policies followed by a subsequent drop in the price of food-produces will have a favourable impact on poverty reduction evident in the following channels :

- (i) the improvement of the purchasing power for all households (rural and urban), especially the poorest ones ;
- (ii) the woman, the main decision maker of the production and sale of food-produces and manager of the household's food products will be the most privileged beneficiary;
- (iii) food-produces counting for at least 50% of the African consumer price index, especially given the worsening of poverty over the past years, a significant price fall will induce a reduction in the cost of living;
- (iv) this decrease in the overall cost of living cost will benefit all the sectors of the economic activity because of the demand of their products by a great mass of people (including the poor) will also increase;
- (v) Salaries making up an important proportion of the cost of production of modern production processes, a drop in real salary following a drop in the price of food-produces should reduce the price of non agricultural commodities, which would contribute to the reduction of poverty given the fact that the initial drop in the poor's purchasing power would have become worse;
- (vi) the fall in the cost of living induces a fall in internal and external competitiveness of the national economy through a depreciation of the real exchange rate ; this will encourage exportations and reduce importations.

In a context whereby family farming constitute the bulk of the activity, the economic growth is based on the improvement of agricultural and food productivity. In fact, Burkina Faso's provincial economies have developed through extensive methods, which consumes enormous natural resources, namely land; they reach the extremes after using all land available, thus worsening forest depletion and the advance of the desert. The quality growth currently required by Burkina Faso, should henceforth, come from the progress of agricultural and food productivity and the use of more productive techniques requiring more manpower. The need to improve on agricultural productivity and the access to the intensification factors is explicitly recognized by the SFPA; however, when it comes to food productivity, it does not consider the obstacle that unfavourable social status of the women, who happen to be the main actor of this economic sub-sector; represents; the fact that this key obstacle is not taken into consideration will reduce the chances of realization of the objectives of economic growth based on rural development. The SFPA does not consider the transformation of food-produces which can contribute to the development of food production and reduce poverty. The development of food production transformation processes will contribute to the creation of a new market for its products; in return, the production of better quality of food products and at reasonable prices (following the improvement of productivity) will stimulate the food industry. This complementarity and synergy will be an important source for the creation of new productive jobs. Given the fact that the crops are located in rural areas and are the preserve of women mainly, that is the major pockets of poverty, an articulated food production, industrial activities and rural entrepreneurship presents a great potential for poverty reduction. This articulation is not brought out in the SFPA; not more than the ratio between the exportation of processed products and poverty.

#### **4.6 Capacity of Supply for Exportation and Poverty**

The link which seems to exist between the increase of poverty, the opening up of the economy and the development of Burkina Faso's primary products exports suggest that in order to reduce poverty, the country must steadily increase its exportations of manufactured products through domestic transformation of products exported usually in their raw state. In this context, the exportation of transformed products coming from food-producing crops, appears like a diversification crenel of Burkina Faso's exportations toward industrialized countries. The exploitation of this opportunity will open the food products from the poor rural areas, to diversified markets, wider and more dynamic than the traditional local markets. In contributing to the expansion of the market of agricultural produce, the growth coupled with the improvement of the market's import capacity for processed goods constitute an additional source of economic growth.

However, the exportation of these crops products will however be limited by external factors made of tariff peaks and other non-tariff barriers erected by industrialized countries in order to protect their markets.

Despite these barriers, the exportation of food-producing crops presents an important potential for poverty reduction in rural areas which is not considered by the SFPA. In the event that the integration of food production crops into the SFPA, sustained by a vigorous program for the development of rural infrastructures (communications, irrigation, product stocking), for the transformation and the exportation of such crops are put high on the agenda, they can prove to be vital since they would have a more significant impact on poverty reduction than on any other element of the poverty reduction strategy.

The key issues that needs to be addressed pertain to the selection of more appropriate food producing crops, the adequacy of the production region, the actors of this process that require support and assistance, the stage of the process at which more emphasis should be put, the volume of resources to be allocated and the efficient management of the same.

The SFPA does not use in an integrated manner farming activities directed towards the production of food products, and thus do not consider them as a pillar in poverty reduction. Proposed strategies do not emphasize on the direct support and assistance, much needed by peasants, women in rural areas, to enable them to efficiently take advantage of opportunities offered by the market incentives. Therefore, it is difficult for the region to break out of the vicious circle of hunger and disease by the horizon set; also takes the risk of not being able to definitely get rid of the problem of debt despite substantial relieves brought about by strengthened the HIPC initiative.

#### **4.7 Sustainability of the Debt**

The reinforced initiative of the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) bind their defeasance to poverty reduction in such a manner that the Burkina Faso's government is obliged to allocate the saving of the debt services to the partial funding of the SFPA.

Debt relief granted is earmarked to enable the country to definitely come out of subsequent debt rescheduling spectrum, thus the concept of the sustainability of the already incurred debt and the one to come.

For a country's debt to be sustainable, it is necessary to progressively reduce its weight borne by the government ; in order to achieve this, the economic and financial management of this country should at least fulfil three conditions :

- (i) improve the exportation capacity of manufactured products and their competitiveness in order to maintain a high level of their economic growth and their exportation revenues;
- (ii) reorganize the public finances in such a way that sufficient budgetary surpluses are created and the Government's indebtedness is restricted;
- (iii) carry out a sound indebtedness policy in order to reduce the debt servicing

The achievement of conditions (i) and (ii) depend on the increment and improvement of the exportation supply capacity for processed products. In fact, the ratio of debt to the GDP and that of debt servicing to exportation will only decrease if the real interest rates of the debt are, respectively, inferior to increment export purchasing power growth rate.

It is necessary that the economic growth be pulled by the exportations, namely the exportations of processed products to enable budgetary revenues to grow to a rate at least equal to the real economic growth rate; the tax collection system of Burkina Faso should be made also efficient because, in Burkina Faso, they are mainly based on the production and international trade. In case of an increment of real international interest rates, efforts geared to institute a number of reforms prescribed to the government by conditions (i) and (ii) shall be intensified in order to circumscribe subsequent rise of the debt ratios which can endanger the sustainability of the debt. When incentives alone are considered to be sufficient to generate the economic growth, the SFPA have once again shown more interest in the economic environment and the incentives; thus it has not emphasized on the strategies likely to increase and improve the supply capacity of most of the Burkina Faso producers and thus to facilitate their access to export opportunities offered by these incentives. Moreover, the SFPA considers list exportation supply capacity, specifically that of processed products.

In as much as the strategies proposed by the SFPA do not generally privilege the promotion of supply capacities and the exportation's supply capacity for processed products in particular, the sequences of debt sustainability might be short. The participative process initiated within the strategic framework for the fight against poverty faces some challenges which limit the efficiency of the so much wished ownership of strategies proposed to that end. Besides, as far as identified constraints and predefined economic growth and debt sustainability objectives are concerned, the content of these policies is below efficient poverty and extreme reduction requirements in Burkina Faso, mainly evident in malnutrition.

#### **4.8 Malnutrition and Poverty**

During the consultations conducted within the poverty reduction strategies formulation framework, populations place hunger and nutrition related problems top on the list of their concerns. However, the SFPA does not focus on nutrition and malnutrition issues. Consequently, few credible and consistent programs are proposed in order to increase food productivity; in what case, the fight against poverty might miss its target given the fact that an adequate nutrition cover for all family members is the first step towards improving their living conditions.

In reality, nutrition could be the ultimate medium for both an agricultural and economic revolution. In essence, if information, new technical capacities and suitable technologies are utilized to increase productivity in this sub-sector, which absorbs the majority of the active population, revenues earned from production activities will enable communities at the grassroots to increase and contribute to the regional and local market expansion.

Farming revenues being a powerful factor for investment incentive and industrial production, will generate an economic growth based on the dynamic of the local market. Besides the fact that it constitutes a market for the industrial sector, a sizeable food production of good quality and low cost constitute a source of cheap raw materials for the local transformation industries. The industrial products will therefore become more competitive and industrial exportations increase. Beyond the industrial and agricultural growth, a fall in the cost of nutrition will have a positive impact on the general price levels and on the competitiveness of all the local products on one hand and more significant economic and financial consequences on the national economy on the other hand.

#### **4.9 Socio-Economic Potentiality of Women: Barometer for Measuring Poverty**

Women represent an important and driving component of the society; their contribution to the functioning of this society is not only vital but can also be accrued. Unfortunately, women's huge potential is underutilized not only due to general constraints that limit the overall performances of the economy but also due to specific ones relating to the social status of the woman, which hamper her from contributing to her full capacity. Just like the fate of children depend largely on the living conditions of their mothers, the under exploitation of women's potential have negative effects on the living conditions of the children and thus on tomorrow's adults.

Women are massively posted at strategic points of the society and the economy; one only needs to slightly improve their productivity and their participation to obtain some significant and decisive multiplier effects on the economy and the society. Women's potential is diversified:

- (i) She is the food security manager; an improvement in her productivity gives rise to an accumulation of economical and social improvements;
- (ii) while improving the children's living conditions, she invest in the future of the nation and cumulate the human capital;
- (iii) Through her, government's investments have higher social cost effectiveness
- (iv) She absorbs exogenous shocks through suitable adjustment strategies. She controls food security. The current status enjoyed by the woman is way below her contribution to the economy and the society. In the rural societies of Burkina Faso, women are active economic agents who provide, on a daily basis, an average of 14 working hours; this time is distributed between the domestic chores and the farming chores. Women basically deal with the production of food-producing crops and informal trade. She caters for the nutrition of the whole family in conditions which are sometimes harsh and even pitiful in times of shortages.

At the economical level, the main advantages enjoyed by women are their ability to ensure food security. Improving her productivity by providing her with adequate tools and techniques will enable her to dedicate more of her time to alternative income generating activities; thus a woman is a wealth reservoir, which can be exploited to stimulate the overall agricultural and economic growth. She invests in the future of the nation.

The woman's education level will have a positive impact on the children's education; the latter will have the chance to stay longer in schools and to be able to live in the future an active and productive life. The young girl in particular will have the chance of pursuing longer studies than her peers including her mother who is not educated; she will not be likely to give up and give in to earlier marriage. Women accumulate human capital by improving the living conditions of children, as they constitute the basis of human infrastructure; in accumulating human capital, women invest in the future of their nation.

She increases the social cost effectiveness of the government investment. Due to her desire to assure food security of the members of her family and prioritize the welfare of her children when distributing here revenues, the government resources handled by a woman have a favourable cost /benefit ratio on the health sector. All the same, it is better to increase the portion of government's resources allocated to women who will transform them into quality social services at a lower cost. Faced with exogenous shocks, they create suitable adjustment strategies. Faced with diseases, natural calamities (drought, floods) resulting from men's activities (unemployment, war) women always make efforts to find means of providing for the essential needs of the family (food and health). They have a great ability to adjust and innovate when faced with the most complex and unpredictable situations. The rate of exploitation of the woman's socio-economical potential out rightly depend on the financial, human and technical means invested to improve the living conditions of the overall population, and specifically that of women. However, over and above this, women will only benefit from an eventual economic growth if the social constraints specific to women are lifted or reduced.

## **5.0 Conclusions**

The analysis has led to the following detailed conclusions and recommendations:

### **5.1 Constraints**

Besides progress made following reforms implemented in Burkina Faso, the poverty level is still high and still on the rise due to the following constraints: structural rigidity, insufficient physical infrastructures, weak productivity, small size and implication of the private sector, inefficient economic and administrative management, unfavourable women's social status and delays in the political democratic process. Planned public interventions do not address the physical and structural constraints of the country's productive system which, thus, will not be very diversified and flexible to absorb the exogenous shocks that set the trend for the social and economic life. Bearing in mind the difficulties and shortcomings of its administrative organization, the government of Burkina Faso has come up with measures aiming at improving the control of the planning and implementation of their projects; these interventions, however, lack credibility. Besides, proposed policies and strategies for that matter do not last because they are not in harmony with the constraints and uncertain feasibility. The level and the regular flow of Burkina Faso's government revenues constitute their main and permanent concerns faced with a steadfastly growing social demand. In this respect, fiscal revenues mobilization is hampered by the limited production, diversification and exportations as well as by the human factors which places personal interest above the general interest.

### **5.2 Participative Process and Content of the SFPAs**

Efficient ownership of SFPAs content by grassroots populations and, in some instances, by the national administration, seems limited by the numerous problems encountered in the participatory process. In many cases, proposed strategies and actions do not have a concrete and operational content that therefore reveals the weaknesses of national capacities to formulate policies that are recognized and emphasized by the SFPAs.

Food-production agriculture (production, transformation and exportation) is not considered, by the SFPAs, as the pillar in the fight against poverty. Proposed strategies do not emphasize direct assistance and support which is needed by the peasants and specifically by rural women, so to efficiently take advantage of opportunities offered by market incentives. Thus, Burkina Faso will hardly break out of the vicious circle of hunger and diseases given its targeted objectives. She is also risking not being able to definitively get rid of the debt problem despite the substantial relief brought about by the reinforced HIPC.

The productive system of the region rests on family production units generally operating out of the market and for auto consumption purposes; it constitutes a fundamental structural constraint. Nevertheless, its modernization and organization of its transition toward the market is not an explicit concern of the SFPAs. Therefore, putting on the market in increasing volume of competitive exports will remain an issue whereas a fall in the debt servicing/exportations ratio and debt sustainability will be uncertain in the strongly competitive field of external markets.

### **5.3 Malnutrition and Poverty**

Burkina Faso's population perceives the close link that exists between extreme poverty and malnutrition whose reality is evident in the available data. This problem is not explicitly recognized by the SFPAs, which consequently does not take into account its proposed strategies.

### **5.4 Living Conditions of Women and Children**

As per the evaluations carried out, the living conditions of the Burkinabe children are bad, inferring that Burkina Faso is losing out its human capital. The negative effects of this evaluation will be felt over the years of implementation of the SFPAs strategies and will end up worsening the already strong human constraints, which are delaying the socio-economic progress of the region.

The living conditions of Burkinabe women are bad. Their access to basic primary health care, clean water, basic education and literacy education is limited; besides, they hardly have access to land, loans facilities and agricultural awareness services.

These shortcomings tied to financial constraints which, at the global level, restrict the volume and the quality of basic public services; besides, they are in most instances due to the unfavourable social status of women. Even though their potential of generating wealth is enormous, women make up half of the country's poor population. Their unfavourable social status, whose change is not a priority of the SFPAs, does not allow them to fully utilize their potential to generate economic growth.

## **5.5 Factoring in the Problems of Women and Children in the SFPA**

The SFPA does not express explicit and sufficient interest in children who are considered to be the basic human infrastructure in which one is expected to invest to build human capacities and thus prepare the future of Burkina Faso. Thus, improving the living conditions of children (investing in children) is not high on the agenda of Burkina Faso.

The low interest in early childhood and in children living in difficult situations amount to a waste in both human and economic resources leading to losses in points of economic growth over the SFPA implementation period, at the end of which they are expected to join the employment market. Women are faced with difficulties in their daily lives when striving to ensure their family's food security even though they know their needs and priorities in this field; but are however not aware of the huge socio-economic potential they have. Thus, professional organizations and women's NGOs have a distinct responsibility of thoroughly informing their members on the real contributions they can make to the social and economic realm, to mobilize them to pressurize the society to make significant changes in the living conditions. The government's planners and decision makers do not have reliable information on women's contribution to the national economy, specifically their contribution to the production of food products due to the scarcity of data on women's specific activities on one hand, and on the other hand, because statistical data available are not gender based. Consequently, the needs and priorities of women, specifically of rural women cannot be adequately evaluated and taken into account in strategies formulation.

The existing huge needs for critical, regular and reliable data for the implementation and monitoring of the SFPA activities will hardly be covered due to financial, institutional and human constraints; consequently targeting women's needs and priorities at the local and regional level, specifically the need for their social status development will be a major issue.

Women's participation to the policies formulation process and to public life on one hand, and their dialogues with national planners and decision makers on their needs and priorities on the other hand will not be significant as long as their social status will not have changed for the better.

The role of family and community organizations in supplementing the state in the maintenance of collective equipments, the management of education and health systems and the children's education outside the school set up, is not particularly taken into account in the SFPA. A cost effective women's investment in productive activities will be limited not only by not improving their unfavourable social status, which restricts their access to land, loans, and to the agricultural awareness services but also an uncontrolled and non selective tax collection in the informal sector generally under women's control.

The organization of the transfer of financial, logistic and human resources in favour of the priority sectors and the grassroots populations, both at the regional and local level, constitute the key instrument of an actual decentralization.

Assistance and support extended to the organization, capacity building and development of the micro, small and medium enterprises emphasizes job creation and revenue increment more specifically in rural areas. The SFPAs do not have specific mechanisms aiming at correcting the shortcomings that characterize women entrepreneurship overcome by the unfavourable social status of women in the society. The role of the private sector in providing for health services and education does not feature prominently in the SFPA due to the low incomes of the populations as compared to the high and rising cost of services provided by the private sector. There is therefore a necessity for a state/private sector partnership in order to increase the choices of private services at affordable prices available to the poor populations, to women more specifically.

The welfare of Burkinabe children can be improved through the direct impacts of the rationalization of government expenditures in rural development, education, training and health (including nutrition and clean water); it will also improve in the event of positive effects of the strategies influencing family revenues, namely the mother's.

However, the extent of these favourable impacts will depend on the capacity of the proposed strategies to do away with the constraints (structural, physical, administrative and institutional) that restrict the global performances of the economy.

## 6.0 References

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