

Burkina Faso: Performance-Based Management: Case Study on the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of PNGT2

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- The Government of Burkina Faso's Community-Based Rural Development Project – Phase 2 (PNGT2) demonstrates monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems that have been developed at the local level.
- The program has national coverage and highlights a strong willingness to place M&E of development programs in the hands of those who benefit from the program's activities.
- The outcomes achieved from the program are rolled up from the community level, making an impact on national policies and decision-making processes.
- It is thus a good example of grassroots citizen input leading to national initiatives to strengthen MfDR.

Introduction:

The Government of Burkina Faso's first program on Community-Based Rural Development achieved important outcomes. As a result, an agreement was reached between the Government and its technical and financial partners¹ on financing a second phase, PNGT2, which officially began on February 19, 2002. This second Community-Based Rural Development Project supports the National Program for Decentralized Rural Development (PNDRD). Its primary aim is to build the people's capacity so that they can manage their own sustainable, equitable, and productive development and to facilitate implementation by rural communes. It is part of a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy developed by the Burkinabé Government.

¹ Technical and financial partners include the World Bank (IDA), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Global Environment Fund (GEF), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the Danish cooperation authorities (DANIDA).

The overall aim of PNGT2 is to rapidly reduce rural poverty and to promote sustainable human development. To achieve this goal, the program has three specific objectives:

- Build the organizational and management capacities of villages and groups of villages;
- Improve the living conditions of rural populations through productive investments and socioeconomic infrastructures in the rural areas of Burkina Faso; and
- Preserve and restore the natural resources of local territories (water, soil, vegetation, fauna).

The intervention strategy of PNGT2 is “learning by doing”. The program will be implemented over 15 years in three phases each lasting five years. PNGT2 covers all 45 provinces of Burkina Faso using two different intervention modes (direct and indirect). The direct intervention mode is used in 26 provinces, while the other 19 provinces are concerned with the concerted intervention mode. In the latter case, PNGT2 intervenes by making local investment funds available to other large-scale projects and programs already in place in the field.

PNGT2 has made comprehensive use of the participatory monitoring tools designed for beneficiary communities to monitor and evaluate the implementation of project activities. This is consistent with the context of PNGT2, which is classified as a “decentralized and participatory development (DPD)” project. In Burkina Faso, one of the main tenets of the Decentralized Rural Development Policy Letter (LPDRD)², adopted in July 2002, includes the complete accountability of village-level communities in the conduct of the development actions carried out at their level. The use of participatory monitoring tools contributes to building the capacities of these stakeholders and enhances their ability to

² LPDRD: the reference document as regards decentralized and participatory rural development.

plan, monitor, and evaluate the activities. The advent of performance-based management (PBM) should be credited to the CIDA, the World Bank, and a number of other bilateral and multilateral partners. The Government of Burkina Faso adopted the approach after recognizing its relevance for the monitoring and evaluation of development policies, projects, and programs. The desire to harmonize management tools and methods to facilitate the aggregation of data and, in particular, the obligation to report on the management of official development assistance, guided the full acceptance of the principles of PBM by the Government of Burkina Faso.

Application:

PNGT2 developed participatory management and evaluation (PME) tools and made them available to village-level communities (beneficiaries). These PME tools are an integral part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism of PNGT2, which has two fully complementary subcomponents:

1. Monitoring of performance (execution); and
2. Monitoring of three impact areas:
 - Socioeconomic impact, that is, impact on living conditions, incomes, and poverty in rural areas;
 - Institutional impact, or impact on decentralized institutional capacities; and
 - Environmental or ecological impact.

Monitoring and evaluation in the PNGT2 context is designed to provide information to facilitate decision-making at three levels:

1. ***At the level of the state and technical and financial partners, in order to:***
 - Ensure proper technical and financial execution;
 - Monitor developments in relation to the objectives set; and
 - Provide information to external monitoring missions.

2. *At the level of the program management structure, in order to:*

- Monitor implementation performance; and
- Track the results produced by interventions.

3. *At the level of the beneficiary communities, in order to:*

- Engage in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of the results of their achievements.

The monitoring of PNGT2 execution makes it possible to periodically (each quarter) take stock of:

- Progress of the physical and financial execution of the project;
- The extent to which the physical and financial outcomes have been achieved; and
- Any difficulties/problems encountered, corrective measures proposed, and adjustments made.

The impact monitoring is aimed at assessing the extent to which each of the various PNGT2 activities has achieved its development objectives (in terms of the primary impact indicators selected).

From an institutional standpoint, the monitoring of program execution is carried out at two complementary and interdependent levels: central and decentralized.

- **The central level** includes the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, staffed by four senior personnel and three support staff. It is responsible for periodically centralizing all the data on PNGT2 execution and producing program progress reports. In addition, it contributes to the organization and conduct of the quarterly stock-taking and activity programming workshops. Finally, it works to build the capacities of the stakeholders involved in the implementation of the PNGT2 monitoring and evaluation system.

- **The decentralized level** consists of the province and village levels.
 - Each of the 18 provincial coordination offices includes one senior staff member responsible for monitoring and evaluation. The collection and forwarding of village-level data to the province level is performed by service providers previously trained under PNGT2 as part of village capacity building to master participatory monitoring tools (cascading training).
 - At the village level, a participatory monitoring and evaluation mechanism is provided. Image-based tools have been made available to communities to enable them to plan, monitor, and evaluate the development activities in their territories. Each village-level commission (CVGT) has named three of its members to receive training in the use of these tools.
- **A monitoring and evaluation database (BDSE)**, initially developed in MS Access and subsequently in SQL-Server, should make it possible to capitalize on all the information on PNGT2 progress.

Three impact areas are monitored under PNGT2. These areas are: (i) socioeconomic; (ii) institutional; and (iii) environmental. Three senior personnel are responsible at the central level for each of the impact areas. Three **national monitoring committees** made up of all the partners involved in or concerned with the impacts have been established, one for each of the three areas mentioned, to participate in the validation of the various outcomes identified.

The Permanent Secretariat of the National Framework for Concertation of Rural Development Partners (SP/CNCPDR) is expected to assume ownership of all the mechanisms developed by PNGT2 as well as their results so as to ensure their sustainability at the national level.

The overall approach for each of the three areas first involves preparing methodological and technical documentation. Then, these methodological and technical documents are used to conduct baseline studies, the results of which will serve as benchmarks for future assessments. To do so, a minimum battery of indicators has been defined and will be periodically updated and analyzed in order to determine the program's impact in the area concerned.

Problem Solving:

The main lessons are:

- The target population showed a genuinely keen interest in using the participatory monitoring tools for monitoring and controlling their activities;
- The use of figures and images to symbolize the different periods of the year and to distinguish between programmed activities enabled the target populations to rapidly assume ownership of the contents of the participatory management tools, which also facilitated their use;
- The PME tools are now an integral part of daily life in the villages, which have had the opportunity to experiment with them in action and "learn by doing";
- The training and use of service providers as intermediaries between the village level and province level made it possible for PNGT2 to provide hands-on assistance to all the villages concerned;
- The quality of the data collected is guaranteed when the people are empowered;
- The low literacy level of the people delays mastery of the PME tools in some villages;
- Establishing and parameterizing a database for monitoring decentralized and participatory development (DPD) projects has proven to be difficult and complex;

- The cost of implementing the mechanism is high and includes stakeholder capacity building, hands-on monitoring, purchase of compatible computer hardware and equipment, etc.
- Easing the various constraints requires substantial resources, in particular for:
 - Providing literacy training to the stakeholders concerned so as to help them assume ownership of the participatory monitoring tools;
 - Evaluating and providing each stakeholder with the financial resources and equipment essential to operationalize the mechanism;
 - Making financial resources available to stakeholders at the central and provincial levels to guarantee quality control of the information gathered and thereby ensure the credibility of the system as a whole; and
 - Identifying and setting the parameters for a simple and user-friendly database for storing and using the information on program execution.

Furthermore, the two components of the PNGT2 monitoring and evaluation mechanism were implemented in accordance with the monitoring and evaluation procedures manual. However, during program execution it was determined that one essential link, namely intermediate results, was missing. Performance monitoring is predicated on quantitative and qualitative aspects of project execution, and the fact that impact monitoring is national makes it impossible to single out the effects imputable strictly to PNGT2 activities.

Accordingly, it was necessary to introduce a supplementary mechanism to identify these effects. The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit therefore developed a methodology for

monitoring these effects, the implementation of which targets the following objectives:

- Assess the extent to which the achievements financed by PNGT2 contribute to realizing the program's three specific objectives;
- Generate the information necessary for assessing the PNGT2 contribution to poverty reduction in rural areas and to the promotion of sustainable development.

The first study on intermediate results was carried out in the first half of 2006.

Results:

In terms of results or gains, after five years of operation, the monitoring and evaluation mechanism of PNGT2 has made it possible on a regular basis to update the table of key PNGT2 performance indicators as well as to identify program impacts. *The data of the main performance indicators from the start of the project through September 30, 2006 may be summarized as follows:*

- Training of over 16,000 village representatives (about seven percent of whom were women) in mastering and using the participatory management tools;
- Effective coverage of 3,013 villages;
- Support for the establishment of 2,961 CVGTs;
- Support for the preparation of 2,986 Territory Management Plans (PGTs);
- 5,454,952 person/hours of training provided to the target villages on various topics (literacy training, participatory

monitoring and evaluation, procurement, financial management, agricultural production techniques, etc.);

- Signing of 9,234 cofinancing agreements with CVGTs through the village-level window;
- Effective transfer of CFAF 21,552,778,578 to the accounts of CVGTs for carrying out 15,197 microprojects through the village-level window, microprojects whose supervision is provided entirely by the beneficiary communities;
- Effective signing of 79 agreements with Provincial Technical Coordination Committees (CCTPs);
- Effective transfer of CFAF 2,961,466,878 for the financing of 299 structural microprojects; and
- Established socioeconomic infrastructures deemed to be economically viable and technically valuable in the following proportions:
 - 100 percent for health infrastructures; 87.5 percent for schools; 98.6 percent for nonformal education infrastructures; 91.8 percent for water supply works; 93.4 percent for storage infrastructures; and 98.7 percent for the vaccination centers;
 - 83 percent of the improved bottomlands and 64.91 percent of the market garden perimeters are in use; and
 - 97.5 percent of producers state that they have adopted water and soil conservation and soil defense and restoration (CES/DRS) techniques.

In respect to the three impact areas of PNGT2, progress as of March 31, 2006 may be summarized as follows:

- Impact on rural living conditions, incomes, and poverty according to the results of the baseline study conducted in 2004:

- The per capita annual income in rural areas was evaluated at CFAF 53,762;
 - The rural poverty line was evaluated at CFAF 41,884 - with this threshold, 41.58 percent of rural residents were classified as poor;
 - 55 percent of households in rural areas had access to potable water; and
 - Women had to travel an average of 1.8 kilometers to collect water.
- Environmental impact according to the results of the baseline studies and evaluations:
- The existence of three types of classified areas was observed: (i) those characterized by considerable human encroachment (agricultural activities) (for example, in a single decade (1992-2002) about 30 percent of the area of the Dida classified forest became farmland); (ii) those where developments have been positive (regeneration) (for example, in 1992, 15 percent of the Maro classified forest was taken up by agricultural activities, as compared to four percent in 2002, due to interventions by PNGT2); and (iii) those where the situation has remained unchanged thanks to the actions of other parties, as in the case of the following forests: Nazinga Ranch, KABORE Tambi National Park, etc.
 - Between 1992 and 2002, ten percent (1,444,316.3 hectares) of natural formations (savannah, steppes, forests) became farmland.
 - There has been a gradual decrease in the areas burned annually by brush fires (5,818,618.75 hectares for crop season 2001/2002, 5,520,037.5 hectares in 2002/2003, and 4,601,668.75 hectares for 2003/2004).
 - There has been a decrease in the volume of water drained from the main watersheds between 2003 and 2004. The reductions were as follows: 1,511.8 million cubic meters for the Comoé watershed, 2,799.8 million cubic meters for

the Mouhoun watershed, 690.5 million cubic meters for the Nakambé watershed, and 1,473.4 million cubic meters for the Niger watershed.

- An improvement in chlorophyllous activity in the Sahel and a decline in the level for the Central Plateau and the South Central region was observed.
 - The situation as regards the area of bare ground remains unchanged.
 - There has been an increase in the surface area of bodies of water from 78,311.3 hectares in 1992 to 104,695.54 hectares in 2002.
- According to the results of the 2004 baseline study for institutional impact:
- About 34 percent of national territory is structured around CVGTs. Nearly 53 percent of the CVGTs were functional, based on the following criteria: (i) holding of general meetings; (ii) participation in the general meetings; (iii) collection of statutory contributions; (iv) execution of activities under the annual investment program; and (v) holding of office meetings.
 - 52 percent of the Provincial Technical Committees (CCTPs) were functional, based on the following criteria: (i) holding of regular meetings; (ii) participation in sessions; (iii) member contributions to CCTP financing; and (iv) execution of the decisions taken by the CCTPs.
 - The impact assessments that would have made it possible to measure the changes among these institutions have not been conducted due to institutional change at the village level.
 - The national framework for concertation of rural development partners (CNCPDR) has been created and is operational.
- According to the results of intermediary study No. 1 conducted in 2006 to assess the effects of PNGT2:

- Almost all of the socioeconomic and educational infrastructures established have management committees.
- The people's access to basic social services has improved as a result of infrastructure efforts in the areas of basic education, health, and potable water.
- Moreover, productive investments (bottomlands, market gardening areas or perimeters, etc.) have enabled communities to diversify their income sources.

Furthermore, the results obtained in the impact areas are disseminated among policy makers as a tool to aid in decision-making. In terms of information use, the following actions are noteworthy: (i) the periodic forwarding of PNGT2 reports to the Directorate of Research and Planning of the ministry responsible for agriculture for purposes of consolidations to assess the progress of the Public Investment Program (PIP) from a sectoral standpoint (agriculture, water supply, and fisheries resources); (ii) use of data from PNGT2 and many other programs by the staff of the Office of the Prime Minister for purposes of preparing program statements and the state of nation delivered by the Prime Minister annually to the Burkinabé Parliament; and (iii) forwarding of the reports on performance monitoring to the technical and financial partners, but also to the technical ministries that have an interest in program results (Ministry of Environment and Living Conditions, Ministry of Economy and Development, Ministry of Finance and Budget, etc). At the program execution level, the various results obtained periodically are forwarded to the national administration through the Research and Planning Directorates of the ministerial departments, as well as to the technical and financial partners.

Conclusion:

The PNGT2 monitoring mechanism makes it possible to report on program performance. It is well suited to the participatory intervention mode because it involves and empowers stakeholders from the village level to the central level. The provincial databases

are provided with data and updated regularly. In light of the results obtained by PNGT2, the Government of Burkina Faso has expressed its intention to extend the second phase to the greatest possible extent to the entire national territory.

Next steps include: 1) a second study on the monitoring and evaluation mechanism conducted in the first half of 2007; 2) concerning institutional impact, the current review of the methodological document to take into account changes relating to progress within the decentralization process as well as the social capital component; 3) completion in 2007 of a summary paper on the environmental impact in order to superimpose the various indicators that were monitored and thereby characterize the situation as regards brush fires, land usage, and plant cover in Burkina Faso; and 4) continued dissemination of the various results obtained in connection with the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation mechanism.