



VOICES OF WOMEN IN THE BURKINA FASO DEDICATED GRANT MECHANISM

EVIDENCE AND EXPERIENCES



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Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
APES-BF	Association pour la Promotion Economique et Sociale des Femmes du Burkina Faso (Association for the economic and social promotion of women in Burkina Faso)
CFA	West African Franc
CIF	Climate Investment Funds
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
DGM	Dedicated Grant Mechanism
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FIP	Forest Investment Plan
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NEA	National Executing Agency
NSC	National Steering Committee
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
REDD +	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

Glossary

Shea	(<i>Vitellaria paradoxa</i>) A tree native to West Africa that produces shea nuts, from which shea butter is derived.
Néré	(<i>Parkia biglobosa</i>) Also known as the African locust bean, the Néré tree is native to West Africa. Its seeds are often processed into Soumbala, a traditional seasoning in West Africa (see below).
Soumbala	A traditional West African seasoning rich in nutrients and protein, made from the processing and fermenting of Néré tree seeds.
Gapal	a fermented dairy product, often flavored with moringa leaves.
Moringa	(<i>Moringa oleifera</i>) A tree native to the tropics, Moringa has antifungal, antiviral, antidepressant, and anti-inflammatory properties.
Baobab	(Genus: <i>Adansonia</i> , <i>digitata</i>) A deciduous tree that grows in arid regions of Africa, the Middle East, and Australia.



A Baobab tree flanked by Papaya trees and a well in the center. Sapouy, Burkina Faso. photo credit: Debbie Pierce

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Farmers in Sapouy. photo credit: Debbie Pierce

Women in the Burkina Faso Local Forest Communities Support Project

I. Setting the Stage

Women's role in forest management has been historically undervalued but recently has become a focus of numerous studies.¹ These studies have examined gender in Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), tree and land tenure rights, natural resource value chains, division of labor in natural resource management, women's participation in forestry decision-making, women's use of non-timber forest products, among others (Colfer et al., 2017; Colfer et al. 2016; Agarwal, 2001; Shackleton et al., 2011). Many studies have found that when women participate in forestry decision-making deforestation is reduced and community well-being outcomes are higher (UN-REDD, 2011; Elias, 2016).

A study conducted by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) highlights the importance of producing local level analysis on gender in REDD+ and other similar initiatives (Larson et al., 2018). It identified a need for women's participation that is both meaningful and empowering and suggested that women should be fully engaged in design, implementation, and decision-making processes. Strategies for meaningful decision-making include improving women's empowerment, increased control over assets and the safeguarding of their rights (Bee & Basnett, 2016; Larson et al., 2018).

The experiences collected here add to the body of work on gender and forestry by providing recent, field-based examples

BOX 1. THE DEDICATED GRANT MECHANISM: BACKGROUND AND STRUCTURE

The Dedicated Grant Mechanism (DGM) of the Forest Investment Program (FIP) aims to enable the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) in REDD+ activities at local, regional, and global levels, and is premised on a belief that indigenous and local communities are the most effective guardians of the world's forests.

The DGM was approved in 2011 by the FIP Sub-Committee and is a stand-alone funding window of the FIP under the Climate Investment Funds (CIF). The DGM aims to strengthen the capacity of Indigenous Peoples and Local Community (IPLC) through grants to IPLCs to develop and support their own initiatives (i.e., sub-projects or microprojects) and strengthen their participation in FIP and other REDD+ processes at local, national and global levels (Forest Investment Program, 2013).

Each national component includes a National Steering Committee (NSC) and a National Executing Agency (NEA). The NSC is the governing body of the DGM, responsible for microproject and/or sub-project selection and oversight, among other activities (see Table 1) (World Bank, 2015). The NEA is typically a non-governmental organization (NGO) operating in the country that has experience working with IPLCs and capacity to comply with World Bank fiduciary requirements.

of women's involvement in the Dedicated Grant Mechanism (DGM) (see Box 1). These activities reflect the gender entry points defined in the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) Gender Action Plan Phase 2 (2016), which include a focus on increasing women's access to productive assets, particularly services and enterprise development for improved economic opportunities for women (Climate Investment Funds, 2016).

This case study was motivated by and tests the finding that “projects that involve women and address gender issues from the designing stage are more likely to provide better outcomes” (Marin and Kuriakose, 2017) by interviewing women who were involved in the design and implementation of their own livelihood sub-projects. All microprojects and sub-projects included in this case study (see Annex 3) were designed primarily for and by women, in contrast to those examined under other forest and gender studies (Larson et al., 2018; Agarwal, 2009). Recognizing the need to better understand the tangible experiences of women in the DGM program, this case study aims to illustrate some of the actual benefits received and the benefit-sharing mechanisms among women in the Burkina Faso DGM microprojects and sub-projects. This case study aims to document the state of the Burkina Faso DGM at the end of 2019, which is 4 years from the start of the program in the country. The case study examines the benefits women have requested and are potentially receiving and the range of benefit sharing mechanisms.

The Burkina Faso DGM aims to strengthen the capacity of local communities in the targeted regions of Burkina Faso (see Figure 4) to participate in REDD+ programs at local, national, and global levels (World Bank, 2015). It focuses on capacity building of communities and natural resource management activities that support sustainable livelihoods.

II. Overview

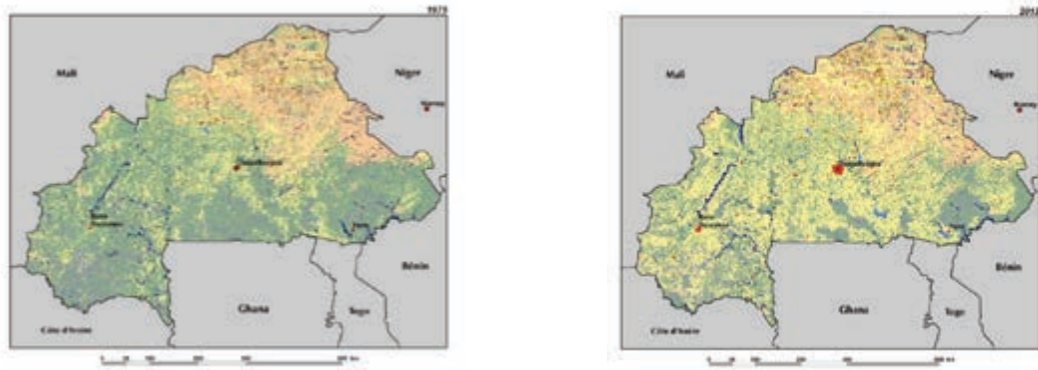
This case study explores and highlights examples of women's experiences with DGM Burkina Faso by focusing on women-led sub-projects and microprojects. The Burkina Faso DGM distinguishes between competitively awarded micro-projects that are typically more focused on livelihood support and income generation and non-competitive sub-projects awarded to each commune for natural resource management. Both types of projects are awarded at the community, or community organization level, neither microprojects nor sub-projects are awarded to individuals in Burkina Faso. Qualitative data was collected through focus group discussions and individual interviews (See Annex A for complete list of interviews), with secondary sources of literature and data used to provide context.

III. Women and Forestry in Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso is a landlocked, francophone country in West Africa. Communities throughout Burkina Faso depend heavily on forests and non-timber forest products for their livelihoods. The forests of Burkina Faso provide important ecosystem services that reduce desertification and soil erosion, and supply important nutrients for soil health, support the provision of water, and provide habitat for wildlife. The forests in the country range from tropical semi-arid to arid. Experiences with the DGM in Burkina Faso can help inform experiences in other tropical dryland forests, such as the *Cerrado* of Brazil to enhance sustainable forest management in these forest ecosystems. From 1990 to 2010, Burkina Faso lost about 18% of its forest cover (Mongabay, 2010), and continues to lose about 0.9% of its forests each year (FAO, 2018; see Figure 1 below).

In Burkina Faso, the collection of non-timber forest products (NTFP) is the traditional responsibility of women. NTFP collection and processing is therefore considered a priority by

FIGURE 1. LAND COVER CHANGE FROM 1975–2013



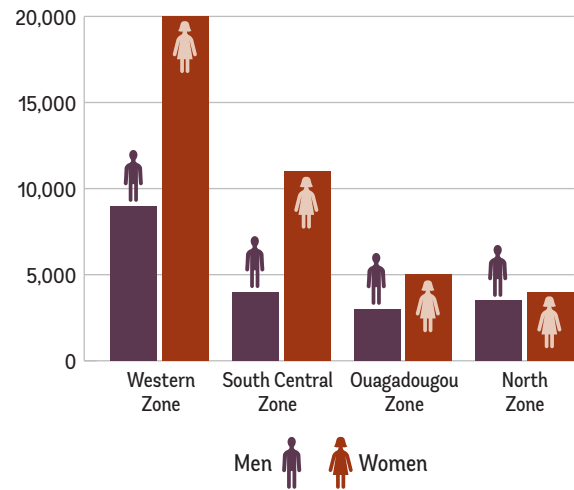
Source: US Geological Survey

the Burkina Faso National Executing Agency (NEA) to support women beneficiaries. Traditionally, the collection and processing of NTFPs was culturally reserved for women, especially the collection of shea nuts to produce shea butter, and the production of *soumbala* which is a fermented paste made from the seed of the African locust bean tree in other regions of Africa, or *néré* as it is known in West Africa. Shea butter and *soumbala* production support livelihoods through both consumption and sale of products. These NTFP activities are also commonly complemented by involvement in dairy processing, gardening and farming, honey production, pottery and/or weaving.

Certain NTFP industries are comprised mostly of women and are women’s main source of income in many regions of Burkina Faso (The Forests Dialogue, 2011; see Figure 2 below). Shea nuts are particularly important for many women, who process the nuts into shea butter. Shea butter is used throughout the world on its own or as an ingredient in cosmetics, skin and hair care, and food products. There are currently 10 women’s groups funded by the DGM who

produce shea butter, one of which has 3,000 women members. These women’s groups work to increase the capacity of women producers, increase marketing efforts, and support

FIGURE 2 FOREST INCOME BY GENDER



Source: de la Fuente, 2014

efforts to enter high-value markets, often for export, such as fair trade and organic markets (The Forests Dialogue, 2011).

Other NTFPs that represent traditional areas of women's expertise include the processing of *néré* seeds into *soumbala*, a traditional seasoning in West Africa that is rich in nutrients and protein. The production of *soumbala* is a labor and resource intensive activity that involves multiple stages of boiling, crushing, and fermenting the seeds to process them into a paste, powder, or ball of seeds. *Soumbala* has begun to be replaced by other condiments, due to a shortage of *néré* trees, the labor-intensive nature of production and the quantity of firewood needed for production (Slow Food Foundation, 2019).

For women to collect NTFPs such as shea and *néré*, they often must access trees that grow on land owned by their husbands or by the community (The Forests Dialogue, 2011). Very few women have secure title to rural land in Burkina Faso, which is often either communally owned or government owned and therefore women's ability to access the trees in many cases rests on obtaining permission from

Soumbala condiment, photo credit: Tourism Burkina



their husbands or the community. Shea butter production in particular is inextricably linked to access to land in order to collect shea nuts, given that the majority of shea trees, like other NTFPs, grow wild across Burkina Faso (Evans, 2018).

Even when women are able to access land to collect shea nuts, they may be excluded from high value steps in the shea butter supply chain. For example, one study found that men involved in the shea industry either controlled all aspects of production or were traders of shea products and had an average income 44 times larger than women involved in the shea industry (FAO, 2017).

IV. Gender and Land Tenure Law in Burkina Faso

The most recent legislation on land tenure in Burkina Faso is the Rural Land Tenure Law, passed in 2009 (Focus on Land in Africa, 2019). It is considered one of the most innovative efforts in rural land tenure reform in West Africa and was developed following numerous consultations. Burkina Faso hosts both statutory and customary land tenure regimes, with customary law being the norm in Burkina Faso's rural areas. The 2009 Rural Land Tenure Law formalized the

Shea butter, photo credit: Africa Imports



customary law approach in rural areas. Decentralized local community land is considered to be public land under Burkina Faso law, however management of this land is being transferred to local communities (The Forests Dialogue, 2011). Programs such as the FIP are aiding in this process of decentralized land management by communities. The “Decentralized Forest and Woodland Management” project implemented by the World Bank aims to strengthen the management of land by 32 communes by enforcing recent laws and regulations on secure land tenure, and to improve sustainable natural resource management plans in targeted villages (World Bank, 2015).

Earlier studies in Burkina Faso show that women access land primarily through their husbands, and even when women gain access to land they are only able to control certain aspects of land management, while their husbands retain the final say on how the land is used (Kevane et al., 1999). As market transactions are increasingly used for land, women may be able to gain more concrete land rights (Kevane et al., 1999; Chimhowu, 2018). Although much of the land in Burkina Faso is communally owned and managed, individual land titles are possible in both rural and urban areas. Efforts to increase women’s access to land and rates of land title were included in the new Rural Land Tenure Law. However, according to the FAO, only 12% of women in Burkina Faso in 2010 were individual landowners (FAO, 2010). The Burkina Faso DGM supports the strengthening of customary land tenure in project areas through training and capacity development.

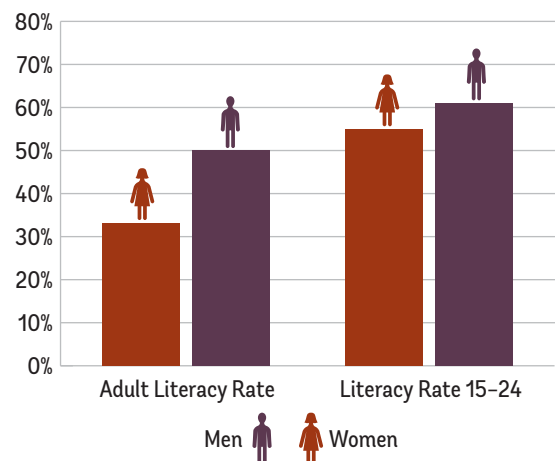
Improving gender outcomes in Burkina Faso is not just an aim in forestry programming. Gender inequality has been highlighted as a key cross-cutting driver of poverty in the most recent World Bank country partnership framework (CPF) for Burkina Faso which, among its objectives, aims to reduce gender bias against women (World Bank, 2018). According

to the CPF, women in Burkina Faso face barriers in owning land and other productive assets, which places them at a disadvantage in terms of economic empowerment. Women face other challenges, including illiteracy, traditional gender roles, and lower education rates. The overall national literacy rate among women in Burkina Faso is 32% (compared to men at 50%), though among women ages 15 to 24, it rises to 55% (compared to men’s rate for this age group at 61%)² (See Figure 3 below).

V. Background and Scope of the DGM

The Burkina Faso DGM, is located in the same 32 communes where the FIP is present in order to facilitate coordination and synergy between the two program efforts (see Figure 4 below). These 32 communes are spread across five regions of the country: i.e., the center-east, center-west, southwest, east, and Boucle du Mouhoun (the western-most region; see Figure 4). The Burkina Faso DGM began March 3, 2016 and has received \$4.5 million from the CIF in grant funds, with 65% of these funds already disbursed as of late 2019. The Burkina Faso DGM is implemented by the NEA, IUCN Burkina

FIGURE 3. ADULT LITERACY RATES, BY GENDER AND AGE



Source: World Bank data



Photo credit: CIFOR

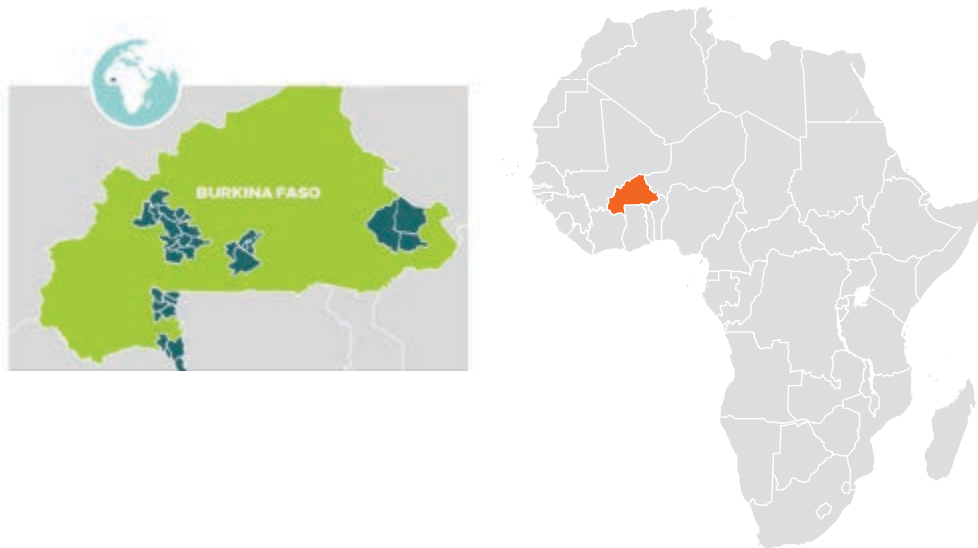
Faso. The Burkina Faso DGM is scheduled to be completed in June 2021.

There are three components of the Burkina Faso DGM:

1. Component 1: development of managerial and technical capacities and skills of local communities;
2. Component 2: support for the development of economic and sustainable natural resource management activities;
3. Component 3: coordination, management, monitoring and evaluation.

DGM Burkina Faso has both microprojects, chosen through a competitive process, and sub-projects that are granted to each of the 32 participating communes. Sub-projects support natural resource management and environmental education, while microprojects generally support livelihoods and

FIGURE 4. INTERVENTION AREAS OF FIP DGM IN BURKINA FASO



Source: DGM Annual Report 2018

income generation. Both sub-projects and microprojects are complemented by FIP projects implemented by the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

There are 85 interventions under the FIP DGM in Burkina Faso, which include 53 microprojects and 32 sub-projects. As there are no indigenous peoples in Burkina Faso by law, this project targets local forest dependent communities. There are almost 100,000 total beneficiaries of the DGM in Burkina Faso. Twenty-two of the 32 communes where the DGM works are located in regions with very high poverty rates. Only the 10 communes where the DGM works in the Southwest region have poverty rates less than 50% (see Table 1 and Figure 5

below). The high poverty rates that coincide with DGM intervention areas have implications for the DGM approach and the types of microprojects and sub-projects. For example, “poverty reduction in forested areas may entail strengthening the use of economic goods and services from forests (e.g. timber, NTFPs and ecosystem services), along with investments that enable the poor to overcome location-based limitations” (Shyamsundar, 2019).

The Burkina Faso DGM held two calls for proposals for microprojects, the first call in June 2016 and the second in September 2017 (World Bank, 2017). Each call lasted 3 months, after which microprojects were selected

FIGURE 5. ACUTE MALNUTRITION BY REGION (PERCENTAGE)

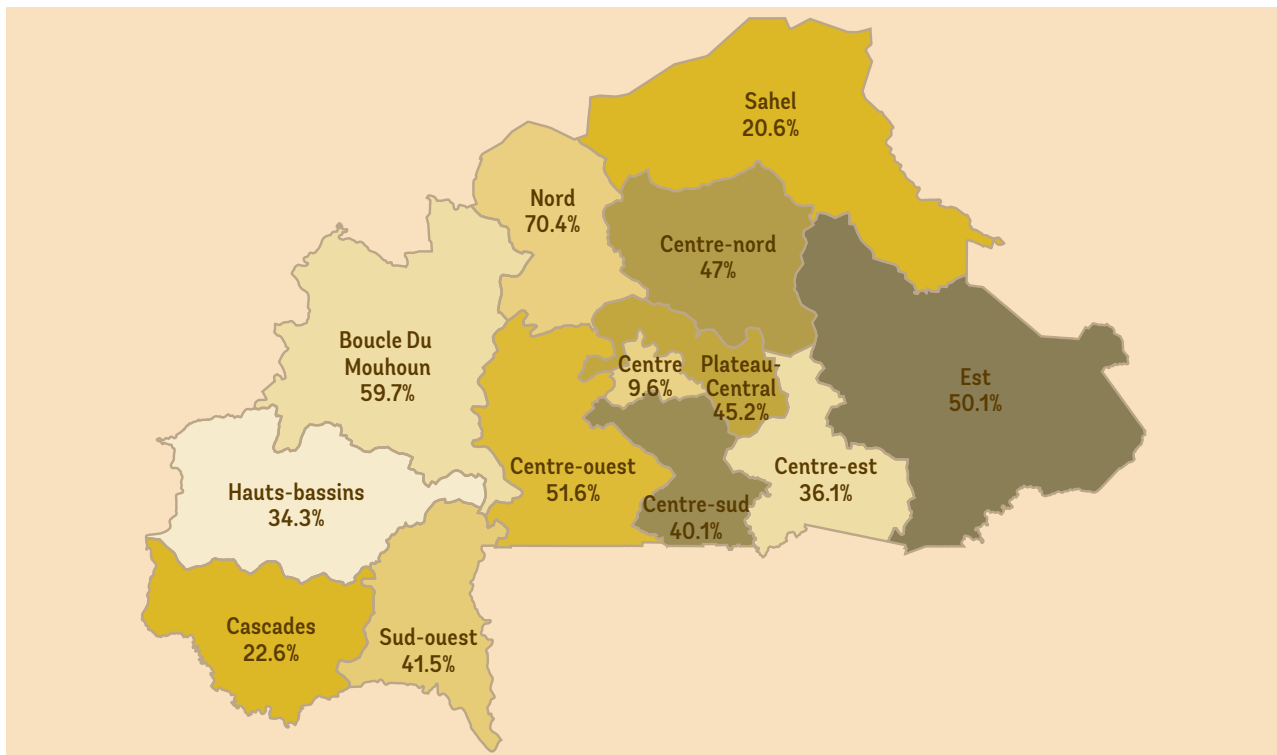


FIGURE 6 NUMBER OF MICROPROJECT PROPOSALS SUBMITTED AND APPROVED IN THE FIRST CALL



FIGURE 7 NUMBER OF MICROPROJECT PROPOSALS SUBMITTED AND APPROVED IN THE SECOND CALL



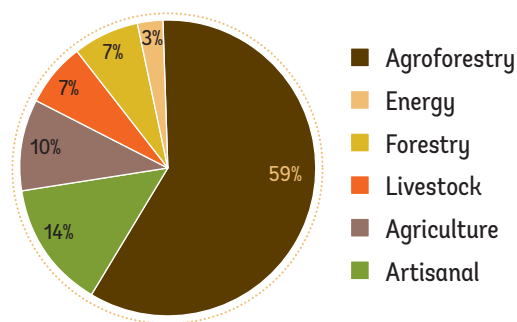
competitively. The first round of selected microprojects began implementation in 2017 and the second round began in 2018. Each microproject or sub-project is designed to be implemented within an 18-month period. Each of the 32 communes is designated one sub-project and fifteen of the 32 sub-projects have been implemented by women’s associations.

The acceptance rate from the first call for proposals was only 2% overall, and 1.2% among women-led proposals submitted (see Figure 6). The NEA was not anticipating the large number of proposals that were submitted and was not able to approve the vast majority of these proposals. Women-led projects accounted for 75% of the submitted proposals but slightly less than half of the approved proposals in the first call. These proportions were reversed in the second call, with women-led proposals accounting for about half of the submitted proposals but almost 60% of the approved proposals (see Figure 7). There were much fewer proposals submitted

overall in the second call than in the first call, and the acceptance rate was much higher, at 18%. According to the NEA, many women-led organizations were discouraged from the low acceptance rate in the first call, and therefore did not reapply in the second call.

There are 29 microprojects that have been implemented exclusively by women, 6 of which were selected from the first call for proposals and 23 of which are from the second call for proposals. Forty-three percent of microprojects in the first call for proposals are implemented by women, while 58% of projects in the second call are implemented by women. Outreach methods included radio broadcasting and information disseminated to communities through regional government agencies and technical advisers, the majority of which helped women prepare their microproject proposals, often for a fee. There was no change in outreach methods from the first to the second call for proposals, and there were no outreach methods that specifically targeted women.³

FIGURE 8 ALL MICROPROJECTS BY THEME



VI. Women in the Burkina Faso Dedicated Grant Mechanism

Women are a central focus of the Burkina Faso DGM project, and gender equality is therefore an important theme in project implementation. There is a gender specialist on the project team, and gender considerations were included in the integrated safeguards data sheet (World Bank, 2013). Project consultations discussed the importance of gender equality and the effective participation of women was a priority during implementation of the projects (World Bank, 2015). There are three project development objective indicators that are disaggregated by gender (World Bank, 2017) and women are also a target group in land use planning activities.

Interviews with both the NEA and National Steering Committee (NSC) revealed that they both saw women as central to the Burkina Faso DGM, particularly because of the role of women in forest ecosystem management. For example, women in the project sites are responsible for cooking and collecting firewood, as well collecting and processing NTFPs. Many of the microprojects are led by women and there are more women beneficiaries than men.

NSC members are chosen at the village level where local committees nominate their representative to the NSC. Three of the 11 voting members of the NSC are women, as are two of

the remaining non-voting 14 NSC members, for a total of five women on the NSC (20% of the 25 total NSC members).

The NEA has defined four levels of the DGM where gender can be mainstreamed. These include: 1) Decision-making processes on microproject activities, 2) Follow-up with local committees and the grievance redress mechanism; 3) Selection of both microproject and sub-project implementing organizations; and 4) The number of women project beneficiaries, both directly in project implementation and indirectly as community members.

Women are involved in monitoring microprojects and sub-projects. Each monitoring committee has at least one woman representative and women have become especially involved in monitoring project impacts and educating the community on the importance of safeguarding the environment.

The monitoring committee uses a system called Kobocollect, which collects information on project implementation every two weeks using a smart phone. This information is then shared with the NEA. There have been two trainings given to a total of 40 participants on using Kobocollect to track project information (World Bank, 2019). More than half of those who have attended trainings have been women (World Bank, 2020).

The NEA provides capacity building support to women once their microproject has been selected. The type of support provided includes business plan trainings, managing equipment, processing NTFPs, and other on-demand trainings. Prior to submitting a microproject proposal, women received support from local technical advisers who coordinate with the NEA on proposal requirements and technical aspects.

The NEA stated that the two most significant challenges that women face in participating in the DGM are illiteracy



The women of Allah Wallou, photo credit: Debbie Pierce

and cultural norms. Illiterate women cannot apply for micro-projects themselves, and therefore often need to pay a consultant to prepare the application material for them. In many cases, women only have enough money to pay a consultant once and cannot apply a second time if they were not successful the first time. Project implementation can also pose a challenge to illiterate women, who cannot draft a business plan and report on finances without external help.

VII. Methodology

Interviews were carried out with a diverse range of sub-project and microproject beneficiaries regarding how these sub-projects and microprojects are managed and how the benefits are distributed among participants of different genders, ages, ethnic groups and geographic locations.

Research participants included 75 sub-project and microproject beneficiaries from 10 microprojects and two sub-projects. Two NSC representatives were interviewed, including one woman and one man. Three members of the NEA were also interviewed. Each site visit was accompanied by NEA members and were selected by the NEA to represent a diverse set of microprojects and sub-projects in terms of the stage of implementation, region, and theme. For more information on the interview methodology and questions, please see Annex B.

First, women in two different microprojects in Sapouy, in the Central West region were interviewed. Next three micro-projects in Sapone, in the Central South region were visited. Finally, one microproject and one sub-project in Dassa, in the Central West region were visited. The president of the Association of Boromo Widows in Solidarity which is the recipient of a microproject for Soumbala production, was interviewed at the office of the NEA. Three microprojects and one sub-project in the East region were interviewed by phone, which include two microprojects and one sub-project in Matiacoli and one microproject in Fada N’Gourma.

Most project participants were present for each site visit, and focus groups ranged from 20 to 40 women. Questions were translated into local native languages when relevant so that all interviewees could understand the questions. Each group designated one woman to answer questions, and usually the leader or president of the association would take this role. The leader also fulfilled a translator role when necessary and helped to facilitate the discussion with women participants. Occasionally the woman answering questions would consult with the rest of the group and other women project participants would provide input or follow-up throughout the interview when they had something to add.

The interview guidelines were developed to understand the benefits and benefit-sharing mechanisms among women in the Burkina Faso DGM. The same key questions were asked of all focus group respondents, although the interviews were semi-structured to allow respondents to discuss certain themes that were especially relevant to them. Five key themes arose from the interviews, which include: management and control of decision-making and benefit-sharing; skills, capacity and knowledge; role of men and changing gender norms; income received; and support needed and challenges faced.

VIII. Findings from the Field Data

THEME 1. Management and Control of Decision-Making and Benefit-Sharing

Women have control over decision-making in each of the microprojects and sub-projects visited. Women have organized themselves in distinct ways depending on the number of women involved in the project or on the type of decision to be made. The smaller organizations, usually less than 30 women, are able to come together and make decisions regarding project management collectively, while the larger women's organizations typically have a small leadership body that is responsible for some or all of the decisions made in the microproject. The smaller organizations also tend to come to conclusions through unanimous consent, while larger groups determine outcomes by a majority vote.

All the women-led microprojects and sub-projects interviewed have at least one technical adviser who assists women with financials, reporting back on impacts, and other project implementation processes. Therefore, while decisions are ultimately made by the women themselves, their choices are often informed by the external capacity building support they receive.

Decisions on benefit-sharing are made in a similar way to other important project-level decisions, but the exact mechanism differs across microprojects. Benefits from microproject activities are split among the women participants evenly or they are distributed depending on each woman's contribution. Benefits can be both revenue from sales or a greater sense of camaraderie and empowerment.

Example: Association of Boromo Widows in Solidarity

The Association of Boromo Widows in Solidarity is a cooperative of about 60 women located in Boromo, in the Boucle du Mouhoun region. The women of Boromo Widows in Solidarity are involved in the production of soubala, a seasoning made from the fermented seeds of *néré* trees. The women of Boromo Widows in Solidarity divide the income they receive

The women of Allah Wallou grinding millet, *photo credit: Debbie Pierce*



into three parts: they share two thirds of their income among the women producers and reinvest a third back into the cooperative for future expenses. Income is divided among the women depending on the time each woman spent working for the cooperative. The cooperative has a bank account where they keep the remaining third of the income.

Example: Allah Wallou

Allah Wallou is a dairy processing cooperative in Sapouy, in the Center-West region, composed of 28 women. The women of Allah Wallou make decisions by meeting on the 25th day of each month and discuss options until they reach a consensus among all members.

THEME 2. **Skills, Capacity, and Knowledge**

All microprojects and sub-projects in the Burkina Faso DGM receive technical support from both the NEA and the government. This technical support is provided on an on-demand basis by the project implementers. The women interviewed have received training to improve skills that are necessary for the implementation of the microprojects and sub-projects. These trainings range from specific skills, such as the processing of soumbala and shea to general project management skills, such as financial management and project reporting. Most trainings are organized and facilitated by the NEA, with a few organized by the government.

Almost all women interviewed stated that with the assistance of the DGM they have saved many hours of work. In many of the projects interviewed, women previously spent significant time and energy collecting water, but the DGM has provided support for either more efficient transport to water sources or extra water infrastructure (wells and water tanks) nearby.

Many women mentioned the improved relationship they now had with other women with whom they work on DGM-funded activities. Several women mentioned that in the past women often worked individually and had a contentious relationship with each other in the community, considering they were competing in similar markets. However, since the start of the

DGM, women began to work collectively, and often formed new women's organizations. Many women said they now feel like they are part of one big family.

The DGM has also supported several women leaders in bringing their products and stories far beyond their communities. Disseta, the leader of the Association of Boromo Widows in Solidarity has brought the soumbala produced by her association to markets in Ouagadougou and has traveled to Benin and Mozambique for capacity-building training and to share her story with other DGM countries.

Example: ne kene duene ne

The women of NE KENE DUENE NE are a group of elderly women in Sapouy who farm vegetables, moringa, and baobab fruits, and sell them in the local market in Sapouy. Previously they were not able to access enough water to effectively cultivate all their land, and there were certain vegetables they couldn't grow. There was only one source of water on their land and it was difficult for the women to carry water, especially during the dry season when the well often ran dry. Lack of access to water was their main challenge, and through the DGM they were able to build another well and a water storage tower that has enabled them to grow different crops while saving time and energy.

THEME 3. **Role of Men and Changing Gender Norms**

One of the most substantial impacts that the DGM has had upon the women implementing microprojects is the transfer of land ownership to women's associations. Each organization applying for a DGM microproject was required to have secure land tenure over their project area prior to applying. Each microproject interviewed has secure land tenure in perpetuity, rather than only until the completion of the microproject. This is uncommon in Burkina Faso, where women rarely have secure land tenure, and are generally lent land or given the right to only certain aspects of land management. Each of the women-led microprojects were given land by either the community or the husbands of women involved.

Since the granting of land rights to these women-led organizations, many women-led microproject groups are interested in investing to improve their land. Many groups would like to build walls around their land to secure project activities and trees

Women of CODD making a traditional improved stove, *photo credit: IUCN Burkina Faso*



A new well built for NE KENE DUENE NE, *photo credit: Debbie Pierce*

from animals and others. Other groups are interested in planting more trees, or community gardens for both educational purposes and to supplement the diets of their community.

However, very few women mentioned changing dynamics with their husbands at the household level. Most stated that their husbands are happy with the work they are doing and continue to support them and grant them permission to continue working. Other groups mentioned that changes were more common within their women's association and the community as a whole, because they now have a greater voice within the community and feel like they can speak up and express their opinions in community meetings.

Example: CODD Burkina

The gender division of labor in some communities has also changed. In a microproject in Fada, located in the East region that is led by both men and women, women are now more involved in beekeeping, an activity that in the past was only reserved for men. Women are involved in both the production of honey, as well as the storage and processing.

THEME 4. **Income received**

Most women leading microprojects were able to point to an exact amount of income that they have received since beginning to implement microproject activities. Others have stated that the extra income received so far has been too small to make much impact, or the expenses involved with project

Disseta, the president of the Association of Boromo Widows in Solidarity, *photo credit: Debbie Pierce*



implementation often balance out the extra income received. In microprojects where women have received a quantifiable increase in income, women stated that they generally use this extra income to buy school supplies for their children, on health expenditures for their families, and on food.

Example: Association of Boromo Widows in Solidarity

The Association of Boromo Widows in Solidarity has received funds from the DGM that have been used to build a wall around the production facility, and to buy a mill for grinding the Soumbala. The Association of Boromo Widows in Solidarity has received numerous trainings on improving production, packaging, and marketing. Since the start of DGM, the women of Boromo Widows in Solidarity have improved the quality of their Soumbala and can now sell it for 1,500 CFA (2.51 USD), whereas before they sold their Soumbala for 1,000 CFA (1.67 USD).

DGM funding to Boromo Widows in Solidarity has spurred additional support from several other organizations. These organizations have provided training on production, training targeted to younger generations, and the building of a training center. They have received production equipment, including 4 dryers, gas, and cookers for the Soumbala that have saved them time and effort and improved the quality of their product. A German organization has supported them in opening a local restaurant that will open shortly.

Example: Women's Association for Shea Butter processing

The women's association for shea butter processing in Doulogou has more than 200 members. Since the start of the DGM they have been able to increase the market price of their shea nuts from \$400 CFA to \$450 CFA.

THEME 5. Support Needed and Challenges Faced

The women of DGM Burkina Faso face unique challenges compared to other countries of the DGM. All written communication is done in French and therefore any steps in DGM microproject and subproject implementation that require writing pose a serious challenge to illiterate women. In order to address this constraint, the NEA organized training events for women on preparing project reporting documents, but only literate women could benefit from these trainings. Many women involved in implementing microprojects are illiterate in French, and therefore are reliant on technical advisers for help with the microproject applications, written documentation and reporting on project activities, written communication, and financial support. Not all microprojects



The women's association for shea butter processing in Doulougou, photo credit: IUCN Burkina Faso

face this challenge, but even among groups with some literate members there is still a barrier between those who are literate in French and those who are not, in terms of who is likely to participate in training activities and who can easily

Women in the east region in a literacy workshop, photo credit: IUCN Burkina Faso





The storefront of Allah Wallou, photo credit: Debbie Pierce

communicate with the NEA and others, as not all NEA members and technical advisers speak local languages. Literacy workshops are organized by the NEA to solve this problem, but these workshops are part of a long-term strategy to improve literacy rates rather than an immediate solution.

The consistent provision of basic services is a challenge faced by all microprojects and sub-projects in the Burkina Faso DGM. Successful income generating activities in Burkina Faso are generally reliant upon a consistent supply of clean water, electricity, and access to markets. Lack of water and electricity were found to be especially persistent and common challenges faced by microprojects. Many microprojects have used DGM funds to find more sources of water or to aid in the transport of water, which has saved the women involved hours of time and substantial effort. However, reliable electricity is often harder for individual microprojects to have an impact upon, although some are interested in exploring the possibility of solar panels.

Example: Allah Wallou

The women of Allah Wallou have been able to expand the production of their dairy products and now have a store in the Sapouy market. Although they have received extra revenue from the sale of their products, they have also experienced setbacks due to unreliable electricity that has in one case led to losses of \$40,000 CFA (about \$67 USD) in spoiled products. If they lose electricity for more than a few hours their products spoil and need to be thrown away.

IX. Conclusion

The Burkina Faso DGM has undoubtedly made gender equality outcomes a priority in the selection and implementation of microprojects and sub-projects, as evidenced by the high number of women led projects. There is a higher percentage of women-led projects in Burkina Faso than in other DGM countries that have begun implementation. This is likely due to the fact that gender is incorporated into the project framework by involving women in project selection through the NSC and in monitoring project activities. In each of the microprojects and sub-projects that were assessed, women have experienced positive changes in their lives through the DGM, whether in the form of improved skills, extra income, or an increased sense of solidarity with other women. However, women in Burkina Faso face unique challenges, such as low literacy rates and traditional cultural values that often limit women's access to education and productive assets, and that continue to impact the scope and degree of their involvement in leading microproject and sub-project activities.

Older women face especially daunting challenges, due to their lower rates of literacy and heavier reliance on their children and other external parties for information and project support. However, there were several women-led microprojects exclusively led by elderly women which demonstrate that these challenges can be addressed.

A key benefit mentioned by women across microprojects and sub-projects was the increased sense of solidarity with other women working on their project and within the community more broadly. Women said that prior to the DGM, they worked individually and that conflicts with other women were not uncommon. However, with the structure and the trainings provided by the DGM, women said they were brought together through women-led organizations and worked collectively. With this increased sense of unity, women said that they now feel like they have more voice in the community, and often speak up about the importance of preserving trees in community meetings.

X. Considerations for Future Investments

Systemic challenges remain, and sustained funding will be important to maintain the momentum the DGM has achieved and to ensure that these positive changes will be sustainable. Many of the most pressing and common challenges faced by women are the provision of services such as water and electricity, rather than only strategic gender interests such as leadership development and access to finance.

Linking and building upon the lessons of the DGM in other investments such as the FIP, or the next phase of forest investments in the CIF will be crucial to ensure sustainability of the results achieved.

The importance of leveraging partnerships and undertaking linking activities to those active in the provision of basic services and other investment opportunities locally, including within a larger landscapes approach, remains an important priority. This finding supports the approach of the PRIME



The women of NE KENE DUENE NE, photo credit: Debbie Pierce

framework (Shyamsundar et al., 2019) and others writing on poverty, which found that poverty reduction occurs through a combination of five pathways, including productivity, rights, investments, markets and ecosystem services.

It would be useful to identify ongoing or planned projects with the aim to provide and expand basic services in Burkina Faso in order to foster collaboration and improve synergies between projects. For this collaboration to occur all involved partners in projects, including the government and other financial partners, must coordinate among themselves. Integrated investments across a range of outcomes areas through area-based approaches can advance gender outcomes locally, while supporting Burkina Faso's national goals of decentralized growth, poverty reduction, reduction of gender inequality and sustainable development.

Annexes

Annex A. List of Interviews and Interview Questions

List of Interviews

NEA	NSC	Project Beneficiaries
Oumarou Seynou	Idrissa Zeba	Disseta Zange
Clarisse Elodie Honadia Kambou	Cecilia Some	<i>Emmanuel Gourma</i>
Apollinaire W. Kabore	Ayouba Benao	<i>Labidi Ouali</i>
Germain Goungouga	Essié Bernadette	<i>Badiel Arouna</i>
Mamadou Ouattara		

Italics represent male beneficiaries

photo credit: Wilderness Travel



List of Project site visit interviews

Groupement des femmes de Divolet et Nébiah	Union Communale des Transformatrices des PFNL de Dassa (UCT/PFNL)	Groupement "WEND-ZOODO"	Association pour la Promotion Economique et Sociale des Femmes du Burkina Faso (APES-Femmes/BF)	Association des Femmes Laiques de Saponé (AFLS)	Groupement "NEKENE-DUENE"	Groupement "ALLAH-WALLOU"
Salamata Kinda	Elele Kankouan	Sana Nikiema	Talata Fatimata Ouedraogo	Adele Konseiga	Zoenabo Ouadraogo	Rasmata Barry
Setou Kanyili	Laurentine Kantoro	Cecile Wangrawa	Sidonie Sana Sawadogo	Rosine Kouraogo	Aminata Tapsoba	Kadydja Diallo
Sali Bado	Edwige Aminata Kanko	Tipoko Fati Ilboudou	Mariam Bonkoungo	Zoenabo Nikiema	Tenin Tanna	Fati Koanda
Rasmata Kandié	Eyon Marie Kandolo	Sibdou Samne	Awa Pafandnam	Alice Tassembledo	Mouniratou Sienou	Rasmata Diallo
Mariatou Kanyili	Irene Kandoma	Rosali Ouedraogo	Adama Nikiema	Talata Sedgo	Amie Pezongo	Djeneba Barry
Fatimata Kankouan	Asetou Banwar	Yempoaka Compaore	Mamounata Rouamba	Eveline Ouedraogo	Abibata Kabore	Pingwende Ramde
Guenabou Kandié	Mariam Dakene	Patinde Elisabeth Ilboudou	Abseta Bande	Lamoussa Nana	Kadidjatou Sankara	Aguira Koinda
Sarata Kinda	Barkissou Kantiono	Noelie Birba	Tinga Compaore	Tambila Mariam Nanninga	Abezeta Kabore	Zounogo Sonde
Marie Kantiono	Siata Kanwar	Elilienne Ilboudo	Asseta Zangre	Tikoudougou Zongo	Koudpoko Mariam Zongo	Salamata Barry
Marguerite Kankouan	Bernadette Essie	Agnes Kiendregeogo	Rasmata Eveline Compaore	Lamoussa Ilboudo	Aminata Koinda	
	Fanta Kanko					

Annex B. Interview Questions and Methodology

Pre-interview Questions:

Do you mind if I record you?

Can I take your picture? Is it ok if I use your picture in publicly available material?

Could you state your name and your role?

Can I use your first name in material that will be produced from this interview?

Short description and use of work:

I am working on a study to help the World Bank understand how the DGM has impacted/effected women in project areas. These impacts include both tangible changes, such as more income, food, or less time, as well intangible impacts such as a stronger sense of community, or leadership, or a slight change in community dynamics between men and women, or among women. This study will help the World Bank to address issues that are relevant for women's lives in future projects.

Questions for the NEA:

Can you describe the role of women in DGM up to this point?

1. How are indicators measured?
2. What kind of information is collected from the projects?
3. Are there success stories for projects? And of projects led by women especially?
4. How has DGM allowed communities to be innovative in ways they could not be? And if not, why not?
5. What is the qualification component of the project? What types of activities are involved in this?
6. Have the effects of subprojects begun to be traced?

7. Do you see any barriers or obstacles to women's participation and/or leadership in DGM? And specifically, in the sub-projects of DGM?
8. Are there any examples of female leadership in DGM?
9. Are there any training and capacity building programs for women in particular? And if so, have you tracked women's participation and involvement in these activities so far?
10. Has attention to gender changed during the DGM design and implementation process? What is different now compared to the start of the DGM?
11. Are there success stories for projects? For example, projects that have already made a positive impact on the lives of communities, land management, etc. And of projects led by women especially?
12. Are there project activities that have become self-sustaining?
13. Are there certain project activities or projects that communities are prioritizing in the future?
14. (For each project) Which window is this project under? Natural Resource management or income generation?
15. When did the project start? When is it due to close?
16. What is the project cost? How much has been disbursed?
17. What have been the impacts on the landscape/forest from this project so far?

Questions for the NSC:

1. Can you describe the role of women in DGM up to this point?
2. How were the criteria chosen for project selection?

3. Was a gender integration assessment done before formulating the NSC sub-project selection criteria? Has this evaluation influenced sub-project selection?
4. How were the NSC members chosen?
5. Was there a gender quota in the NSC?
6. Do you think that the gender composition of the NSC affected the direction of the DGM?
7. Will the membership of the NSC be rotating in the future?
8. How many women-led project proposals were received? Out of these, how many were chosen?
9. Was there any outreach to encourage women specifically to apply for DGM funds?
10. What actions were taken to ensure the participation of women in projects when women were not in charge of project implementation or design? How did the NEA and NSC contribute to these actions?
11. Has attention to gender changed during the DGM design and implementation process? What is different now compared to the start of the DGM?
12. Are there any examples of female leadership in DGM?
13. Are there project activities that have become self-sustaining?
14. Are there certain project activities or projects that communities are prioritizing in the future?
15. Do you see any barriers or obstacles to women's participation and/or leadership in DGM? And specifically, in the sub-projects of DGM?
16. What are some obstacles to increasing women's leadership in DGM subprojects?

For women beneficiaries:

*Baseline can be considered since project funds began to be disbursed to community.

(fact gathering)

17. What activities are being supported by DGM in your community?
18. How did you hear about the DGM? Did you receive any support in applying?
19. Can you tell me about these activities? Who is involved? How long have you been working in this area?
20. Who provides the work for these activities?
21. Have you received new income from these activities? (from the sales of your products) Do you control this income? If so, how important is this new source of income for you? How do you use this extra income?
22. Have you been provided with any assistance from outside the community (from other sources), such as funding, transportation, technical help?
23. Are there any training and capacity building programs that you have attended? Have these activities improved your knowledge, skills, etc.? If so, how?
24. How do you coordinate among the other women (and possibly men) involved in this project? How often do you meet? How are decisions made?

(Livelihood changes)

25. Are there changes in your lives that have been supported by the activities of the DGM? Such as changes in income, changes in time spent working and/or on household tasks?
26. Are there changes within the community that have been supported by these activities (such as change

in forest cover, change in water availability, change in livestock management, etc.) or within your household (such as changes in income management, daily household tasks, etc.)?

27. Have these activities effected your role in the community? Specifically, on community level decision-making on land use, agriculture, forestry.
28. Were there any restrictions on your daily activities in the past that this grant has lifted?
29. How has DGM allowed your community to be innovative in ways they could not be before? And if not, why not?
30. Is there anything you would like to do in the future that you are not currently doing with which this grant can help you?

31. Is there anything that is keeping you from getting involved with this project the way you want it to be?

(Role of men)

32. What is the role of men in these activities? Are men supportive of these activities?

(Future planning)

33. Do you think these activities will continue once the project has finished? Why or why not?

34. Are there certain project activities or projects that your community is prioritizing in the future?

35. If you were able, which one thing would you change that would make the biggest difference to your community?

36. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Annex C. Microprojects and Sub-projects Interviewed

	Project Name	Location	Implementing Organization	Call for proposals or sub-project	DGM Grant Amount
1	Project for the production and marketing of soumbala in the community of Boromo	Boromo	Association of Boromo Widows in Solidarity	1	21,514 USD
2	Project for the empowerment of women in the rural community of Doulogou through the collection of shea almonds and the production and marketing of shea butter to protect the environment	Doulogou	Association for the economic and social promotion of women in Burkina Faso (APES-BF)	1	30,685 USD
3	Supporting the financial empowerment of women in ten villages of the rural community of Sapone through the production, processing, and marketing of shea butter	Sapone	Laiques de Sapone women's association	2	16,462 USD
4	Project for the processing of rice paddies for the improvement of women's revenue	Sapone	Wend-Zoodo Group	2	16,439 USD
5	Project for the creation of six (6) hectares of orchards	Dassa	Women's Group Divolet and Nebiah	Sub-project	51,244 USD
6	Development and participatory management project	Fada	CODD Burkina	Sub-project	51,244 USD
7	Promotion of animal-raising activities through the establishment of a dairy in Sector 5 of the Sapouy Community	Sapouy	Allah Wallou women's group	2	15,037 USD
8	Project for the professionalization and empowerment of female processors of shea butter in the Dassa community	Dassa	Communal Female Non-Timber Forest Product Processors' Union of Dassa	2	14,594 USD
9	Supporting the cultivation of non-timber forest products through the establishment of a nursery for the growth of plants and the promotion of legume cultivation	Sapouy	Ne Kene Duene Ne women's group	2	16,501 USD
10	Implementation of a mini dairy	Matiacoali	Tapoa-Boopo departmental union of livestock raisers of Matiacoali	2	15,125 USD
11	Reduction of economic and social vulnerability of households in the rural community of Matiacoali	Matiacoali	Tin Soagi Yaba Association	2	13,194 USD
12	Promotion of an economic unit of production and valuation of honey	Matiacoali	Community Association for Sustainable Development in Burkina	2	16,528 USD

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Endnotes

- 1 For example, see Colfer et al., 2016; IUCN, 2015; Tiani et al., 2016 ; Bhalla, 2016
- 2 <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.FE.ZS?locations=BF>
- 3 Information provided by NEA

