TREE AID’s Experience of forest governance decentralisation in Burkina Faso

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• 21% (about 5,600,000 ha) of Burkina Faso is forested
• There is very little closed forest; forest is approximately 50% open/fragmented forest and 50% other wooded land.
• Forestry is an important sector for the national economy, accounting for around 16% of GDP
• In total, 1990-2010, lost 17.5% of its forest cover, ≅ 1,200,000 ha. At a rate of ≅ 60,000 ha/yr
• Poverty, agriculture pressure, poorly defined forest property rights and insecurity of tenure system are all contributing to this deforestation
Pro-poor forest governance

Secures long-term access to natural resources for the poor ensuring they can benefit from protecting and enhancing

• creating coherence between various policies, laws and customs that define ownership and use rights over forests;
• increasing the degree to which people respect and abide by the above regulations;
• equalizing the relative power and clarifying the mandates of stakeholder groups;
• enhancing the incentives, enabling conditions and capacity of organizations and individuals to engage in forest governance practices; and
• enhancing the motivation of private actors to go beyond regulatory requirements.

1. Improved understanding of forest governance amongst stakeholders at all levels

2. Organisational capacity strengthened for decentralized forest resource management actors

3. Technical capabilities of users in managing forest resources strengthened

4. Forest governance tools developed and implemented

Equitable, profitable and sustainable FR management
Results to date from the experience

Community level

• 15 Forest Areas demarcated = 45,000 ha in 8 communes
• 97 villages involved in the management of these areas
• More than 30,000 beneficiaries with an involvement of at least 60% women
• 52 Intra-village/Village Forest Management Committee (VFMC)
• For each forest area, 1 Local Forest Management Convention (LFMC) local user right agreement and 1 management plans with Districts.
• Over 270 forest-based enterprises (FBE) in these areas
• Development of User Rights Agreement for FBE

District and National level

• District Strategy on decentralised local forest governance
• Training of technical support staff at the district level (Conseillers Techniques Communaux)
• Working group on Forest Governance (Groupe de Recherche Action sur la Gouvernance Forestière)
Lessons learned: Drivers enabling positive change

- Enabling policy frameworks and development of multi-level collaborative networks
- Creating participatory and inclusive processes, needs assessment, local knowledge and involvement in VFMCs
- Connecting local enterprise and forest management
- Learning by doing and learning exchange for local actors

Way forward to strengthen durability

- Transform the user right agreement and management plans into functioning legalised structures with fiscal benefits
- Support for the development of common capabilities and budgetary planning in municipal budgets
- Certain aspects of customary law contradict principles of gender equality and non-discrimination
- Support on the development of the necessary subsidiary legislation to facilitate the Forestry Code
Thank you!

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