

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation mission is part of the bilateral cooperation between Burkina Faso and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. It concerns the joint evaluation of two projects: project BKF/011 (Support for basic vocational training) and project BKF/014 (Making the Literacy Training in the Hauts-Bassins Region sustainable). Both projects partly cover the same geographical area, the Hauts-Bassins region. Over and above the individual evaluation of projects BKF/011 and BKF/014, the objectives of this joint evaluation were to analyse the links between literacy and vocational training and to propose guidelines and actions to strengthen them.

This report gives the results of the intermediate evaluation mission for project BKF/014 and relates to the specific objectives set out in the ToR for evaluating BKF/014. The objectives were to analyse, in line with the evaluation criteria¹ and the cross-cutting issues² :

- (i) the results and specific objectives achieved at the time of the evaluation compared to the results and objectives specified in the project document;
- (ii) the results achieved by the project in capacity-development terms;
- (iii) the management and monitoring of the project.

The evaluation was carried out by an international expert and a national expert (Luisa Maria Aguilar Tiraboschi and Benoît Ouedraogo; CECOFORMA) who carried out the final internal evaluation of project BKF/010 - this allowed them to have a better appreciation of the changes and developments effected by the project. The evaluation took place in Ougadougou and the three provinces of the Hauts-Bassins region (Houet, Kenedougou and Tuy) from 21 September to 12 October 2011. During this period, the evaluators carried out semi-structured interviews with a variety of persons directly and indirectly involved, in particular those who are part of the project's three core actors: the operators, the decentralised technical departments and local administrations and the supervisory bodies and beneficiaries of literacy³. The evaluators also organised a large number of field visits in order to observe the work of the project in situ; they also met other actors working in similar fields.

Project BKF/014 continues the activities carried out under the previous two projects (projects BKF/003 "*Literacy and Training for Integrated Rural Development*" and BKF/010 "*Literacy and Training for Sustainable Development*") and aims to ensure that the achievements made through the increased literacy courses on offer in the region are sustainable. This new phase proposes a step and paradigm change to make the literacy system independent. This approach was not sufficiently explained in the specific objective set out in the project document. The latter presented a limited view of how the system would become more independent, based on strengthening the associational fabric - although only one actor was mentioned out of all the actors involved in the literacy system. Recent institutional developments and a review by the project team have enabled this relationship to be made more explicit and the project strategy to be reworked.

The specific objective can be split into four results. Each result relates to one of the core actors in creating an independent system: R1 - operators; R2 - decentralised technical departments; R3 - local administrations and R4 - retention of best practice derived from the linkage of the three actors. One important principle in the project is to develop the actors' capacities. Thus the local collectives of associations for the promotion of literacy (UCAPA) and the provincial collectives of associations for the promotion of literacy (UPAPA), as well as other emerging operators and civil society organisations working in the region have had their organisational, institutional and management capacities strengthened. Furthermore, the large majority of these actors are now able to lead a literacy campaign. The central organisations and the decentralised technical departments are making progress in terms of awareness and very positive involvement. Moreover, they have strengthened their capacity to monitor and control the quality of the literacy campaigns. As far as the local authorities are concerned, they have received the required support to bolster their skills in managing literacy programmes and to act as delegated contracting authorities. Moreover, nine local authorities

¹ DAC criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

² Poverty reduction, democratic governance, gender and environment.

³ See technical appendices F1 for the interview framework and appendix B for the mission programme and list of people met.

are participating in a mapping process of non-formal education. This will enable a better understanding of demand and more relevant management of courses on offer based on a deeper understanding of the regional situation from the non-formal education viewpoint.

Nevertheless, despite the knowledge acquired, there are still challenges to be met to ensure the system's sustainability and independence. These challenges are at different levels: (i) the consolidation of an approach involving ownership and inter-actor linkage and (ii) the mobilisation and availability of resources allocated to literacy. Furthermore, it is important to point out that the level of reinforcement achieved by the various beneficiaries is very diverse.

In practical terms, the project will last 48 months. It will extend from April 2009 to March 2013. The total budget specified for this project is EUR 3 087 000, of which EUR 3 000 000 is the Luxembourg contribution.

The project is very relevant, given the needs of the population of this rural region, where the literacy rate (33%) still needs to be markedly improved.

Therefore, based on interviews, visits and observations, the evaluators have drawn up a list of recommendations/conclusions which also address the issues and challenges to be met.

In general, project BKF/014 has adopted a strategy of "faire-faire", which has become a factor in the relay effect and capacity-development for local actors.

Furthermore, through agreements, the project has managed to establish a framework of collaboration and partnership between the key players working in the literacy sector in the region. Included in the latter are: (i) various operators in the associational network (UPAPA and UCAPA), emerging operators and civil society organisations; (ii) decentralised state technical departments and (iii) local authorities. The creation of this synergy is a value added by the project, even if some aspects are still being consolidated both at the level of ownership of the strengthened capacities and the approach of multi-actor linkage.

The overall aims of the recommendations are to ensure that the literacy system is independent and operationally sustainable, while still attempting to promote the linkage of the actors working in literacy and establishing a dynamic relationship between functional literacy and vocational training.

More precisely, the recommendations are split into three parts.

1. The mission has some short-term recommendations that it is important to act on before the end of project BKF/014:
 - (a) the development of actors' capacities must be consolidated, especially at the level of ownership and the implementation of apprenticeships during training. In this sense, the organisation of local support must be prioritised as a way of developing capacity. It is a major request formulated by the beneficiaries. To that end, the mission recommends a relevant, realistic action plan to prioritise and organise the actions targeted in relation to the specific needs identified for each class of actor;
 - (b) the mission estimates that the support for women's participation in the full training cycle will prove crucial, given the fundamentally-important role played by women, especially in a rural environment. The time will not be sufficient to allow an improvement on all levels, since the obstacles identified as being at the origin of this situation require fundamental changes that cannot easily be addressed in the short term;
 - (c) it would be important also to redefine the management and monitoring of the project. Firstly, to make up for the reduction in the Project Officer's responsibility, the mission recommends giving more responsibility to the national technical assistant (NTA) based in Bobo-Dioulasso and appointing him/her Chief Technical Adviser (CTA). Secondly, priority must be given to redefining strategic and operational monitoring focused on identifying the existing sustainability and ownership factors. They must contribute to better planning of the interventions required to create a sustainable system of empowerment. Furthermore, this monitoring system must enable an improvement in the monitoring of the state of progress of the project's results and its specific objective;

2. Regarding the medium-term recommendations, the evaluators propose;
 - (a) supporting the coalition of actors in literacy and non-formal education ⁴ so that it will be capable of ensuring the continuation and independence of the literacy system, especially at the technical, institutional level. In this sense, the mission proposes working from an action plan which would consistently specify the steps needing to be implemented. The two workshops planned by project BKF/014 before the end of the project must be set up with this direction in mind;
 - (b) continue the analysis started by literacy programme stakeholders on the linkages with vocational training. In order to do this, the project must plan to retain the experience and best practice gathered while engaged in BKF/014 interventions. On this point, a link with project BKF/018⁵ would appear to be necessary. Even though project BKF/014 only concerns one region, there are a significant number of lessons drawn from it that should be taken into consideration;
 - (c) to make up for the negative impacts of the end of the project and to find an alternative transition method, two aspects must be taken into account as far as mobilising financial resources is concerned: (i) increasing financial support for the FONAENF and encouraging it to decentralise, on condition that a distribution key is created for each region. Furthermore, the mission recommends that research should be carried out together with the FONAENF into revising the admission criteria for funding requests, in order to adapt them for emerging operators, while still ensuring the quality and effectiveness of the educational process of training courses; (ii) providing one-off support for transition to the Regional Fund established by BKF/014, linked to the Regional Council. This support may be designed with a threefold objective:
 - (a) to enable the retention of the lessons learned during the involvement of Luxembourg development cooperation with literacy;
 - (b) to improve the organisation of mobilising the financial resources intended for literacy at the national level (decentralisation of the FONAENF, adaptation of selection criteria and procedures, etc.);
 - (c) to begin an initial phase in the implementation of the programme-based approach and sector-based support for non-formal education;
3. Finally, the mission makes some recommendations for the attention of the Ministry of National Education and Literacy, with a view to promoting the harmonisation of practices, ensuring the quality of the actions taken but also pooling existing ideas, experiences and strengths and working cooperatively.

In brief, the mission is well aware that it is not relevant to envisage an extension of the project or a new phase predicated on a project-based approach. The recommendations point to the retention of factors and experiences likely to strengthen a strategic, sector-based approach and contribute to alignment and harmonisation with the priority policies of the current institutional situation in Burkina Faso.

⁴This coalition is chaired by the DREBA (regional department for basic education and literacy) and consists of the operators and decentralised technical departments in charge of literacy and non-formal education in the Hauts-Bassins region. This coalition also interacts with the regional development coalition, which consists of all the development actors in the region and is chaired by the Governor.

⁵ Until this evaluation, no contact had been made with the BKF/014 actors for the formulation phase for BKF/018.