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Empowering women in urban agriculture in Burkina Faso

Kini, J.

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Chapter 5

**Policies and Empowerment of WSEs/
WFEs in Burkina Faso**

5.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the contextual issues that characterise Burkina Faso. It intends to answer sub-question 7: How do public policies contribute to empowering WSEs/WFEs? What are its strengths and weaknesses? Answering these questions requires a good grip on the country's macro-political context and dynamics because it significantly influences policy design and implementation (Court & Cotterrell, 2006; Foeken & Dietz, 1992)). Thus, the chapter analyses the macro-political, social and institutional context (see 5.2); analyses the development policies implemented in the country from 1990 to the present (see 5.3); and then draws the lessons learnt and perspectives (see 5.4).

5.2 Macro-political and social context

5.2.1 Institutional dualism in Burkina Faso

The socio-political organisation of Burkinabe society reveals the omnipresence of the customary governance system. The popular uprising in October 2014 and the role of traditional chiefs (e.g., Mogho Naaba²⁸ in Ouagadougou) in the consensus towards the selection of President (Michel Kafando) shed light on the institutional dualism between traditional and modern²⁹ systems of governance (Bado, 2015).

The traditional informal³⁰ governance system is influential (Sory & Soura, 2014). First, traditional societies are micro-states with a more or less complex (depending on the ethnic group) organisation and socio-political culture (Bado, 2015) and ruled by traditional chiefs. For example, in villages where the State's judiciary services do not exist (like now with the terrorism which has forced local administration offices to close), traditional chiefs resolve conflicts on the basis of the customary law. Consequently, 73% of the population (in rural areas) trust that the customary laws, which co-exist with State laws, are important in human relationship management (Afrobarometer, 2010, p.1). Second, as culture depository, the State often resorts to traditional chiefs to organise festivities promoting local cultures, even in urban areas (Bado, 2015). Third, the State's administrations usually request traditional chiefs to facilitate law enforcement (Bado, 2015). So, if a law does not meet the consent of traditional chiefs, then it has little chance to be respected (Alenda & Robert, 2018; Bado, 2015). Thus, traditional chiefs serve as intermediaries between their communities and the central government. Fourth, because of their power over

28 The "Emperor of Mossé", Mossé as the dominant ethnic group in the country.

29 The modern governance system is the one represented by the formal State-nation led by the President and the government.

30 The informality lies in the fact that it is not written and codified as it depends on ethnic groups.

their communities, any socio-economic development initiative conducted by the State or an NGO has to involve the traditional chiefs (Bado, 2015). Thus, traditional chiefs are major agents in the promotion of development in the country.

In the country, 75% of people (78% in rural areas and 63% in urban areas) trust the traditional institutions as the “traditional institution through which they are represented are more reliable and credible than the modern institutions” (Afrobarometer, 2010, p.2). Moreover, the traditional Mossi kingdom is the most extended in the country, and its culture is predominant because it represents more than 53% of the total population (UNOCHA, 2020). This culture tends to be the most influential in modern political governance as, for example, in 2001, 56 out of 111 deputies in the parliament were traditional chiefs from this ethnic group (Bado, 2015, p.27). Thus, traditional chiefs are involved in both traditional and modern governance systems in the country.

However, the modern formal governance system is driven by three main political institutions (Constitution, 2015, 1991): (a) the government with the executive power, (b) the parliament with the legislative power, and (c) the judiciary. In theory, these institutions are separated from each other, meaning that there is no interference between them when exerting their individual power (Constitution, 2015, 1991). The government designs and implements the national development policies (including economic policies and laws); the parliament controls the government’s actions; and the judiciary power sanctions any deviation from the laws for both executive and legislative power. However, empirically, as these institutions comprise individual people working towards the respect of the rules and exercise power, their vested interests and socio-cultural values come to play, making this separation a façade (Court & Cotterrell, 2006). The following sections analyse how these political institutions respectively play a key role in favouring women’s empowerment in the country.

5.2.2 Gender in Burkina Faso

Gender inequality is a crucial issue in Burkina Faso. The gender inequality index was at 0.612 in 2018 (UNDP, 2019, p.6). Several factors explain this issue.

First, socio-cultural and religious factors are the most prominent; most people still resort to customary and religious laws and practices (see 5.2.1). Men’s and women’s roles and responsibilities in society are mainly set by customary culture and reinforced by certain religious beliefs (National Gender Policy-PNG, 2009). They explain and legitimate inequalities and disparities between men and women, which are considered normal, natural or divine for some. For example, boys are

still preferred to girls in terms of inheritance and property rights (PNG, 2009). In addition, significant inequalities in sexual division of labour are enacted by the cultural and religious practices. For example, women spend on average 2.5 times more time than men in domestic and non-paid work (548 minutes against 206 minutes for men) (INSD, 2020, p.104). For people aged 15 and above, women dedicate 4.54 hours per day to domestic work against 0.48 for men (INSD, 2020, p.105). These data reflect the binary nature of labour in which women's tasks are domestic and care work, which are generally unpaid, while men participate in paid production (INSD, 2020).

Second, the production systems are dominated by the predominant patriarchal system where women and children are simply considered as productive assets or simply unpaid labour that do not participate in decision making (PNG, 2009). Thus, women's decisions to conduct an activity in these sectors requires their husband's approval in advance. Consequently, the labour force participation rate is estimated at 58.5% for women and 75.1% for men (UNDP, 2019, p.6).

Third, in the employment and professional training field, data shows that 45.5% of women were professionally active against 54.5% of men in 2018 (INSD, 2020, p.65). In other words, around 54% of women were inactive, mainly because most of them were married (51.8%) (INSD, 2020, p.66).

Fourth, in the education sector, there are high inequality and disparity rates: 87.4% of women above 25 have no education compared to men (77.4%) in 2018 (INSD, 2020, p.77). Also, the population with having obtained at least a secondary education represent 6.0% of females and 12.1% of males (UNDP, 2019, p.6).

Fifth, in the health sector, maternal mortality ratio was estimated at 371 out of 100,000 live births; whereas the teenage birth rate was set at 104.3/1,000 for women aged 15-19 (UNDP, 2019, p.6). In addition, at the national level, condom use (and contraceptive methods in general) is estimated at 24.9% (Ministry of Health, 2019). Furthermore, gender-based violence is still significant in Burkina Faso. For example, child marriage or early marriage was estimated at 362 girls against 19 boys in 2018 (INSD, 2020, p.75); whereas forced marriages reached 810 women victims against 129 men in 2018 (INSD, 2020, p.75).

Last, access to resources is still unequal (but better) for women compared to men in the country. For example, in terms of access to water and sanitation, 80% of women-led households had access to clean water sources against 75.6% of men-led households (INSD, 2020, p.60). With regards to the access to electricity, 43.4%

of women-led household had access to compared to 54.9% men-led households (INSD, 2020, p.61). In contrast, 45.8% of members in woman-led households experienced food insecurity against 58.8% in men-led household in 2014 (INSD, 2020, p.63).

Formal institutions include the laws and policies regulating the social and political life at state level) (see 3.1.3). Answering the question—how do these economic and political institutions contribute to forging or improving WSEs/WFEs’ capabilities, agency and strategies—requires an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the policies and laws that regulate the political, social and economic environments in which these women are involved. I found my analysis on the market economy, which is the country’s current economic model.

5.3 Formal political and economic institutions and the empowerment of women in business

The market economy frames the paradigm of the development of Burkina Faso. It started in 1990 with the economic liberalisation advised by the Bretton Woods institutions (World Bank and International Monetary Funds-IMF) (CCI, 2018). This has gone in parallel with the issue of women’s economic participation as employees or business owners³¹. The focus is on women’s economic empowerment through their business or income-generating activities.

I analyse the contribution of political and economic institutions to women’s empowerment by looking into: 1) government policies and programmes; 2) funding policies; 3) training in entrepreneurship and technology transfer (Global Entrepreneurship Monitoring-GEM, 2017). In addition, gender policies and urban housing policies are also analysed herein. In other words, are the government’s policies and programmes neutral, inhibitive or incentive in regard to women entrepreneurial activities? To answer this question, key policies, including education, agriculture, land and employment, were analysed covering the last 30 years.

5.3.1 Contribution of education policies to women’s empowerment

The Constitution of Burkina Faso (1991) guarantees equal rights to all citizens, no gender discrimination, and provides steps towards ensuring the full participation of women in all spheres of life. By highlighting the equal rights and opportunities for women, the Constitution was meant to account for the traditionally low social

31 The revolution (1983-1987) under Thomas Sankara was the first to prioritise women’s empowerment as a basis of an equitable world (Murrey, 2012).

status and minimal participation of women in most socio-economic sectors. One step towards the full participation of women is education (Savado, 2013; Ashraf & Farah, 2007). Education affects women's behaviour and enables them to have greater access and control over material and knowledge to improve their lives and challenge the ideologies of discrimination and subordination (Ashraf & Farah, 2007; Khan & Mohammad, 2003). Thus, all the education policies designed and implemented from 1990 to date have mainly been committed to ensuring the provision of primary and secondary education on an equal basis to girls and boys.

Several periods characterise the educational system in Burkina Faso: the revolutionary period (1983-1990), the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) (1991-1995); the Letter of Intent for Sustainable Human Development Policy-LIPDHD (1996-2000); the Strategic Framework for Poverty Reduction (CSLP): 2000-2010-CSLP1 (2001-2015); CSLP2 (2006-2010); the Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy-SCADD (2011-2015); and National Economic and Social Development Plan- PNDES (2016-2020). The education (sectoral) policies were founded on macro-economic policies as follows:

The revolutionary education policies (1983-1991) and SAP programmes (1991-1995) mainly focused on mass literacy³² and schooling and were assessed in 1994 during the national meetings on education (Savado, 2013). First, although significant progress was recorded in the educational sector, lifting the education level from 16% in 1983 to 31.4% in 1994, the most significant weakness of these policies was related to the deep disparities between districts in terms of gross enrolment rate (GER): 80.21% in Kadiogo province against 8.28% in the Gnagna province (Savado, 2013, p.23). Also, a significant gender gap of 14 percentage points between girls (28.5%) and boys (42.5%) in terms of GER was recorded (Ministry of Education, 1994, p.ii).

Following the revolutionary education policies, a new ten-year policy agenda was designed, in line with the national development policy, the Intention Letter for Sustainable Human Development Policy (LIPDHD)³³ (1995-2005). The key target in the education sector was to reach 60% of GER by 2000 in the primary school. Secondary education has become another priority for decision-makers,

32 Literacy as part of non-formal education is mainly directed towards adults and youth who have not attended (exited) the formal schooling.

33 The LIPDHD as a ten-year policy document was designed to overcome the social disasters generated by the SAP programmes in the previous five years, under the new paradigm of human development (MEF, 2015). This new paradigm put at the heart the concept of human security (economic, health, food, environmental, individual and political).

particularly for girls who benefitted from the special programme “*girl’s incentives for schooling*”. An assessment of this education policy was done in 2002 during the national council of education. The gross enrolment rates were estimated at 41.3% in 2000 against 31.8% in 1994 (that is an increase of about 1 percentage point over the period). Also, the GER for girls had also increased up to 34.6% in 2000 compared to its value in 1994 (6 percentage points over the period); and 47.7% for boys. The possible explanation of this rate is tied to the government’s programme for girls’ incentives to schooling. Indeed, girls were encouraged to go to school and were given scholarships by the government if they reached the secondary school grade (Pare-Kabore, 2003). However, the gender gap between girls and boys was still significant (13 percentage points). At the national level, the secondary gross enrolment ratio was low (11.9%) with 8.5% for girls and 13.7% for boys; whereas the literacy rate reached 28% (Savadogo, 2013, p.23; Pare-Kabore, 2003, p.3). Another weakness is that the policy over this period did not achieve its main target of 60% of the GER at the national level by 2000. The inefficiency was probably due to household poverty, which increased over the period 1994 to 1999. For example, the poverty rate increased by 0.8 percentage point between 1995 (44.5%) and 1998 (45.3%) [INSD, 2000].

To address the weaknesses of LIPDHD (1995-2000), particularly in the education sector, a new policy direction was developed in line with the Millennium Development Goals. The objective, “*universal schooling-Education for all- and women’s empowerment*”, inspired this new policy. Thus, the ten-year programme for basic education development (PDDEB) was designed and implemented by the government covering the period 2000-2010. Its main objective was to reinforce the human capital necessary for the country’s economic development while eliminating existing disparities (including gender) at all levels (Savadogo, 2013). Interestingly, this policy vision has moved up to another level of consideration.

Indeed, the period 2000-2010 coincides with the strategic poverty alleviation policy (CSLP) in the country, which was supposed to urgently overcome poverty challenges generated by the SAPs by increasing opportunities and jobs for women and youth. This was the first time that the issue of employment guided the design of an education policy, particularly for women and youth (Savadogo, 2013).

The PDDEB introduced free and mandatory education in public school for all children aged 6-16 (both girls and boys). This yielded interesting and significant outcomes. First, compared to 44.4% in 2001, the GER reached 77.6% in 2010, that is an increase of 33.2 percentage points over the period (Ministry of Education, 2011, p.11). Second, GER for girls increased from 37.6% in 2001 to 75% in 2010; whereas

boys' GER increased from 53.9% to 80.2% (Ministry of Education, 2011, p.23). However, despite significant achievements, some weaknesses remained. First, this policy created an imbalance in the education sector, including the primary, secondary and university levels as basic education was the top priority in the country. Second, the policy failed to integrate quality teaching in the curricula so that it appeared to be inadequate with the real needs of the country in terms of qualified human capital (Savadogo, 2013).

To address these weaknesses, and to achieve a higher quality and labour market-orientation, the education system was reformed in 2007 and the second phase of PDDEB (2007-2010) was led under the programme for strategic development of education (PDSEB) covering the period 2011-2020. This sectoral education policy has coincided with two macro-economic policies: the SCADD³⁴ and the PNDES³⁵. The PDSEB aimed to scale-up early childhood schooling; achieve the mandatory schooling (up to 16 years of age) for all children by 2020; promote the other education and training grades as well as reinforce the internal and external efficiency of the educational system; and accelerate literacy and non-formal education (Savadogo, 2013).

A midterm evaluation of the PDSEB revealed significant outcomes. First, in the primary education, the GER at the national level increased from 79.6% in 2011 to 90.7% in 2018 (INSD, 2020, p.48). In particular, girls' GER increased from 78.1% to 90.9% in 2018; whereas boys' GER increased from 81.1% in 2011 to 90.6% in 2018. Interestingly, girls schooling rapidly increased and balanced with boys' schooling in Burkina Faso over this period, and even slightly higher than boys (0.03 percentage point) in 2018. This is a great achievement in the education system as the imbalance, which was a key impediment for females was overcome.

However, the adequacy of the educational system and its match with the real needs of the country is still criticised (Savadogo, 2013). Some recognised a real improvement in the educational system as proven by the outcomes described above. For example, it is particularly worthy to achieve a balanced GER for boys and girls. Others argue that the education system, as implemented long ago, has not really changed per se. Indeed, most people educated in the system are more

34 SCADD aimed to alleviate extreme poverty and hunger in the country, promote gender equality and women's empowerment, achieve an average real GDP growth rate of 10% compared to 5% in previous years (SCADD, 2010, p.36)

35 The PNDES has set itself the overall objective to structurally transform the Burkinabe economy, for strong, sustainable, resilient and inclusive growth; creating decent jobs for all and leading to improved social wellbeing.

likely to become public servants and are not qualified for the private sector. They do not have real capacities and technical skills to create jobs or business with high added value in the agricultural, pastoral and other related sectors. For example, an early study in 2007 shows that the rate of unemployment increases with the level of the education: 18.2% of active people with at least secondary education were unemployed compared to 19.2% of active people with a primary education level and 13.4% of illiterate (INSD, 2007, p.87). This appears to be normal as most illiterate or weakly educated people have work mainly in the agricultural and pastoral sector (Savadogo, 2013).

5.3.2 Contribution of agricultural policies to women's empowerment

Agriculture (cash and food) is an engine of the economic growth in Burkina Faso. The share of the agricultural sector in the gross domestic product (GDP) over the period 1990-2010 fluctuates around an average of 32.5%; and this trend has slightly increased to 34% over the period 2000-2010 (FAO, 2013, p.36) or over the period 2000-2015 (Aragie, Angelucci & Demanet, 2018, p.3). The sector employs about 60% of the active people (IFC, 2019, p.15); whereas 83% of women produce 75% of food despite their limited access to land and productive resources (Souratie, Koinda, Samandoulougou & Decaluwé, 2019, p.i). In regard to the significant position of agriculture in the country's economy, and its strategic role in food and nutrition security promotion and poverty alleviation, the government of Burkina Faso conducted several political reforms to boost the sector. Thus, how did these policies affect women?

First, during the 1990s, the government implemented the structural adjustment programmes in the agricultural sector (PASA), which aimed at the modernisation and diversification of production, enhancing food security and the improvement of natural resource management. Consequently, traditional farms were portrayed as ineffective in creating a higher income (Ministry of Agriculture and Hydraulics-MAH, 2008). Also, cash crops (for example: cotton, sesame, soya and peanuts) were recommended to the detriment of food crops to increase the country's exports (Laixhay, 2017). Additionally, private investment in the agricultural sector was recommended with the opening up of the sector to foreign direct investment (FDI)—it was the birth of agribusiness in Burkina Faso.

The SAPs increased the GDP growth rate by 7.4% in 1999 (World Perspective, 2018) and 6.6% over the period 1995-2000 (Raffinot & Siri, 2015, p.16). However, they brought a slight increase of 0.8 percentage points in the poverty rate compared

to 1994 (44.5%) and 1998 (45.3%) (INSD, 2000)³⁶; and 43% of the population still faced food insecurity and hunger (UNDP, 2003, p.11). In particular, poverty in the agricultural sector significantly decreased for cash crop (cotton) producers from 50.1% in 1994 to 42.4% in 1998; however, it slightly increased for food crop producers from 51.5% in 1994 to 53.4% in 1998 (INSD, 2000, p.53-54). Women were negatively affected by the poverty increase as they mainly produced food crops and as agricultural subsidies from the State were suspended.

Second, policies for 2000-2010 were implemented under the Strategic Framework for fighting against Poverty (CSLP) (Ministry of Economy and Development-MED, 2000). The CSLP attempted to reduce the negative and perverse effects of the SAPs through e.g., Axe 3: *“expanding employment opportunities and income-generating activities for the poor with equity”*. It meant, among others, to reduce the vulnerability of agricultural activities, to stimulate agricultural intensification and modernisation, and to improve the living and working conditions of rural women in particular (MEF, 2015). To improve development at the local level, the letter for decentralised rural development policy (LPDRD) was adopted in 2000 covering the period 2001-2015. The letter foresaw a total responsibility of communities and broadened the scope of investments funded by (partners’) projects and programmes to address investment priorities. The national land management programme (PNGT2) launched in 2001 was a key instrument of the letter (Government of Burkina Faso, 2019). It aimed to reduce poverty by accelerating the transfer of public resources and technologies to rural areas for the construction of socio-economic and productive infrastructures.

The CSLP achieved an averaged GDP growth rate of 6% compared to the target of 5% per year between 2000-2010 (Raffinot & Siri, 2015, p.19). While the total investment rate increased over the period at 20.59%³⁷ of GDP on average, the private investment was estimated at 9.24% (a decreasing trend: e.g., the private investment was 10.5% of GDP in 2006; 10.1% in 2007; 9.1% in 2008; 6.7% in 2009). In addition, poverty increased from 44.5% to 46.7% (MEF, 2015, p.23). Also, infrastructure slightly increased by 22.6%³⁸ in terms of roads built between 2006 (2,528 kilometres) and 2010 (3,100 kilometres)³⁹ (Raffinot & Siri, 2015, p.25). Lastly, the agricultural sector’s contribution to GDP declined from 40.0% of GDP in 1999 to 35.3% in 2005 (Raffinot & Siri, 2015, p.18).

36 Between 1995 and 1998, the poverty rate decreased by about 23.8% (Boccanfuso and Kaboré, 2004, p.12). This is contrary to the national official data provided by INSD (2000).

37 Author calculation using the geometric mean on the basis of Raffinot and Siri (2015).

38 Author calculation based on the data by Raffinot and Siri (2015).

39 Over the period 2008 to 2010, no new road was built in the country.

In particular, the contribution of PNGT2 to improving women's living conditions in the 302 communes it intervened in, included their access to basic social needs and their work burden. For example, adult women's literacy rates increased from 15.2% in 2003 to 30.6% in 2017; girls' GER increased from 38.2% in 2003 to 84.7% in 2017; access to clean water increased from 55% in 2003 to 87.2% in 2017 (Government of Burkina Faso, 2019, p.144). In terms of women's work burden, the distance travelled to collect wood also decreased from 2.8 to 2.6 kilometres; and the transfer of technologies to women, such as improved stoves, increased from 2.4% in 2004 to 5.5% in 2017 (Government of Burkina Faso, 2019, p.141).

Third, agricultural policies over the period 2011-2020 overlap with two macro policies: the SCADD and PNDES. Both policies have a common macro-economic goal: reaching a high economic growth rate, 10% for SCADD and 7.7% for PNDES on average per year (PNDES, 2016, p.29) in order to significantly alleviate poverty and hunger in the country. In so doing, they both intend to boost the agricultural sector by promoting agricultural growth poles and competitiveness around the biggest barrages in the country. Moreover, the promotion of agribusiness and agro-industries and agriculture mechanisation are at the heart of the policy, because there are sources of decent job creation.

On this basis, a policy aimed at enhancing agricultural productivity has been implemented in the country since 2011. This policy consists of providing agricultural inputs (e.g., fertilisers, improved seeds) and equipment at subsidised prices to smallholders, particularly women (Souratie et al., 2019). Clearly, this policy is about improving the access of poor and vulnerable people to productive resources (including land and credit) and the transfer of technologies to women. For example, the government foresees that by 2020, 30% of its developed agricultural lands will be allocated to women (Souratie et al., 2019, p.23).

A recent evaluation of the agricultural productivity policy provides three sound main impacts on women. First, the allocation of 30% of these developed lands has increased women's access to land and the added-value of women's land assets by 70% (Souratie et al., 2019, p.25). For example, the added-value in other crop production (excluding maize, sorghum, rice, oilseeds, fruits and vegetable) increased from 0.088% in 2013 to 26.710% in 2019 (ibid). Second, the policy has reduced the cost for fertilisers by 10%. Consequently, the demand for fertilisers has increased by 8.5% among women landowners. This has also increased the added-value for cereals and oilseed production as follows: 0.076% in 2013 to 1.660% in 2019 for sorghum; 0.024% (in 2013) to 1.26% (in 2019) for maize; and 0.454% (in 2013) to 0.510% (in 2019) for oilseeds (Souratie et al., 2019, p.26). Third, this policy

also increased the supply of agricultural equipment by 10% and contributed to increasing the demand for such equipment because its usage (or direct) cost has decreased by 0.031% (Souratie et al., 2019, p.27).

Thus, the SCADD and PNDES have contributed to increasing the land supply, agricultural equipment, and reduction of fertiliser cost for women. Furthermore, they have contributed to food security, economic growth and improved living conditions of women through job creation and improved household income.

5.3.3 Contribution of gender policies to women's empowerment

The policy and law environment in favour of women's empowerment is rich, but still recent given the country's history. Many laws enforce women's empowerment, notably the Constitution which was revised in 2012 and institutionalises gender equality in the country (INSD, 2020, p.20-22). Two relevant laws and policies are analysed below because of their relevance, cross-cutting issue and availability of data.

First, law N°034-2012/AN on agrarian and land reorganisation was adopted on 02 July 2012 by the national Assembly (AN, 2012). This law promotes at individual, local and national level: a) the lands classification within the land domain, b) the general principles governing the planning and sustainable development of land, c) the land and other natural resources management including property rights regulation; and provides agrarian policy direction. The latter mentions equity and gender as part of its general principles in its article 3. Furthermore, Article 131(2) states that the design of specifications for developed rural lands is done by taking gender into account. This law was prepared and implemented by PNGT2 (Government au Burkina Faso, 2019), and supported the programme on agriculture mechanisation and improved productivity (Souratie et al., 2019).

Second, the decree N°2009-672/PRES/PM/MEF/MPF on the national gender policy (PNG) document was adopted on 08 July 2009 (PNG, 2009). Overall, the PNG's objective is *"to promote a participatory and equitable development for men and women, ensuring them equal and equitable access and control over resources and decision-making spheres, while respecting their fundamental rights"* (PNG, 2009, p.28). To implement the policy, sectoral programmes and action-plans from ministries, regions, municipalities, NGOs and development associations, aid agency programmes and other international partners are used to achieve its objectives.

More than 50 socio-cultural and economic indicators were built to track the performance of the policy in improving women's living conditions (PNG, 2009, p.53-56). An assessment of these policies' indicators was conducted in 2019 by the National Institute for Statistics and Demography (INSD): The poverty rate has decreased over time, particularly for women-led households. Between 2009-2010, 37.6% of women-led households were poor, against 47.5% of men-led households (INSD, 2020, p.62). In 2014, the poverty rates for both types of households were estimated at 30.4% for women-led households and 41% for men-led households. This means that the living conditions have improved for women more than men, probably because of the PNG.

Second, the rate of women-led households' state of food insecurity decreased more than men-led households over the period 2009-2014. Indeed, in 2009, 49.9% of women-led households experienced food insecurity against 59.2% of men-led households (INSD, 2020, p.62). However, in 2014, 45.8% of women-led households were in food insecurity against 58.8% men-led households.

Third, over the period 2010-2018, there were more men than women within the public services, even though the gaps are closing over time. Indeed, 31,396 women were public servants in 2010 against 76,330 men; whereas 67,040 women worked as public servants against 129,037 men in 2018. In other words, men were 2.4 times more likely to be public servants than women in 2010, but in 2018, men were 1.9 times more likely than women to be in public services (INSD, 2020, p.69).

Fourth, new jobs were created in the public service and formal private sector for both men and women, but these jobs were often seasonal and temporary for women (few women were senior manager, engineer and assimilated). For example, in 2016, 1,310 men and 453 women were senior managers and engineers (INSD, 2020, p.69). This increased to 2,282 men and 470 women in 2017 (INSD, 2020, p.69), which is an increase of 3.75% for women and 74.2% for men. Furthermore, the distribution of new jobs created for men and women between 2016-2017 in the public sector were 1,732 for men against 486 for women in 2016; and 2,969 men against 630 women in 2017. In the private sector: 26,602 men against 3,276 women in 2016; and 35,995 men against 9,503 women in 2017 (INSD, 2020, p.70). These data show that women are less hired in public service, and that the private sector is the main job provider for women (even though government jobs are more secure). This shows that the implementation of national gender policy also overlaps with a slight shift in macro-economic and social development policies, such as SCADD and PNDES, which mainly targeted entrepreneurship as a key source of employment among youth and women.

Fifth, the distribution of formal enterprises created over the period 2010-2019 is sound for women. Indeed, in 2010, women business promoters were less than 1/3 of the newly created enterprises compared to men. For example, 3,788 (82.9%) of new enterprises in 2010 were created by men against 782 for women (17.1%). But, 10,476 (79.7%) new enterprises in 2019 were created by men against 2,661 (20.3%) for women (INSD, 2020, p.71). In other words, there was an increase for both male and female business owners by 176.56% and 240.28% respectively (an increase of 63.72 percentage points higher for women than men over the period). Even though these results sound good, they are still far away from achieving the target of 50% of women owners of enterprises among men by 2020.

Lastly, women were largely beneficiaries of the fund supporting the professional and learning training (FAPE) over the period 2010-2016. A first example is that 1,163 women against 842 men were beneficiaries in 2010; and 4,016 women beneficiaries against 2,246 men in 2016 (INSD, 2020, p.73). A second example, over 2007-2011, training within this fund allowed 2,356 young people (816 males and 1,540 females) to be employed. In addition, 4,714 young people (1,265 males and 3,449 females) created their own activity (L' Economiste du Faso, 2017).

5.3.4 Contribution of policies and market rules promoting women entrepreneurship

Up until 2012, the proportion of women entrepreneurs in Burkina Faso was estimated at 8.87%, while they represented 52% of the total population (CCI, 2018, p.i). In addition to the socio-cultural barriers analysed above, economic barriers also explain the weak participation in valued economic activities, particularly barriers to accessing funding. The current analysis focuses on the government policies and programmes promoting women entrepreneurship on the one hand, and market initiatives, notably funding mechanism directed to women entrepreneurs on the other hand.

Government policies and programmes in favour of women's entrepreneurship

Government policies supporting entrepreneurial development are mainly directed towards the creation of national funds to support the economy. The national funds merely support the development at the base. So, as previously seen, addressing gender issues in Burkina Faso has started early in the revolutionary period, but was institutionalised early in the 1990s. Indeed, just before adopting the Constitution of 1991, the first concrete policy aiming at promoting women's entrepreneurial activities was the establishment of the Support Fund for Women's Revenue Generating Activities (FAARF) in 1990. FAARF is institutionally hosted

by the Ministry of Economy and Finance and provides loans to both literate and illiterate women. FAARF aimed to address barriers for women to get credit from classical banks such as high interest rates and lack of guarantees. For example, more than 80% of women had no access to banks credit in 1990 because they lacked guarantees (FAARF, 1997, p.1).

Over 20 years (1990-2010), FAARF loans were distributed by sector as follows: agriculture (3.05%); craft (1.97%); livestock farming (43.27%); processing (26.15%); commerce (35.74%); and others (0.32%) (Japan International Cooperation Agency-JICA, 2013, p.33). Furthermore, over the period 1991-2019 about 2,164,975 women benefitted from FAARF loans (FAARF, 2020). For example, more than XOF 10 billion (EUR 15,244,832) was loaned to 150,000 women who expressed the need in 2018, and more than 92% of the loans were reimbursed (Burkina24, 2019).

Besides the FAARF, and from 2000 up to now, 18 other national funds supporting men and women as well as youth (girls and boys) have been set up to boost their entrepreneurial activities. The latest, the national fund for inclusive finance (FONAFI), was launched in September 2020. A work by the Economic and Social Council of Burkina Faso states that over the period 2012-2016, around XOF 86.745 billion (EUR 132,241,295) of credit were injected into the economy through these funds (L' Economiste du Faso, 2017). For example, the Support Funds to Youth Activities (FAIJ) created in 2007, allowed the creation of 20,201 jobs (5,547 direct and 14,654 indirect) over 2009-2016 (ibid).

The main weaknesses of these government funding instruments lie in their operational mechanisms. The conditions to benefit from these funds are still not accessible to a category of people (women particularly) as they include: a) a guarantee such as valued assets (house, car, motorbike, etc.) owned by the borrower; b) a joint guarantee from an organized and legally recognized group; c) a guarantor of the credit; and d) carrying out an income generating activity. Indeed, many women or youth don't have these assets because they are very poor (Pouw & Kini, 2016). As shown by Altaf (2019), many of the very poor or extremely poor usually exclude themselves from development interventions, and therefore, it is almost obvious that they will never go to such agencies. Also, these conditions suppose that the funds go only to people who are already active. As such, it gives little chance to people who are willing to start a business activity. As these funds are set by the government, there is high potential bias in the selection of the beneficiaries. Indeed, these funds are highly politicised, simply because their managers are promoted by political elites (or authorities) so that they are also politicised. Thus, those who support these politicians are more likely to benefit

from these funds (Kingsbury, 2017). Thus, they may easily have guarantors to support their credit demands since the latter are among the political elites in power. Of course, this is not formally written, but it is part of the informal institutions that drive the economic system.

Yet, it is worth highlighting the contribution of the funds supporting the economic activities, particularly at the community level. This is important as formal funding systems led by banks and other financial institutions (including microfinance) have important barriers for people (women and youth) to access credit. However, the amount of funding by the government, as seen, is still low compared to the real needs of the country's economy. For example, in 2016, the national economy was funded at 2,249.282 billion (EUR 3,428,992,621), and only 19 billion (EUR 28,965,181) were from these funds while the remainder was from the banking system (L' Economiste du Faso, 2017). However, the limited intervention of the government in the economic sphere, which benefits those in the agricultural and livestock sectors, seems to contradict the market economy rules which recommends freedom from State intervention. The following data sheds light on the weaknesses of the economic system in Burkina Faso from the free market perspective.

First, the freedom of doing business has been relatively satisfactory in Burkina Faso. The degree of free enterprise (business) was 52.79/100 on average per year over the period 1996-2016 (World Perspective, 2017). This means that the legislative or regulatory rules of the business environment are relatively acceptable even though many weaknesses remain. For example, it is relatively easy to obtain a business start-up license or to close a bankrupt business. The Doing Business Initiative ranks the country at 151 out of 190 worldwide (TCP, 2019, p.55). The underlying factors justifying the weaknesses in business freedom include the relatively constraining procedures in enterprise creation, access to electricity and loans (TCP, 2019).

Second, investment freedom has improved between 1996-2016 and is at 57.72/100 on average per year (World Perspective, 2017). This means that investors can potentially invest their capital in the economy and gain return on their investment despite financial, bureaucratic and property related constraints. For example, the index related to the protection of minority investors was 4/10 in 2018, meaning that in case of interest conflict between shareholders and their firm's management team, it is difficult to resolve this in court (TCP, 2019, p.56).

Also, access to credit is difficult for investors in regard to the weak reliability of guarantees, whose index is estimated at 6/12⁴⁰ (TCP, 2019, p.55-56). This may explain why most investments were made by the state between 2000-2010 (World Perspective, 2017).

Third, doing trade is not easy in Burkina Faso. The index of trade freedom was estimated at 64.11/100 on average per year between 1996 (55.00/100) and 2017 (69.20/100) (World Perspective, 2018), i.e., an improvement rate of 25.82%. This value means that it is not easy for anyone to trade in the country without legal constraints. The freedom of trade exists but is still weak.

Fourth, labour law is weakly enforced in Burkina Faso. Data on the degree of labour freedom shows a value estimated at 53.92/100 on average between 2005 (43.80/100) and 2017 (53.30/100), i.e., an increase of 21.69%. Although there is a minimum salary of XOF 30,648 (EUR46.79) required by the law, most workers' rights are not respected by their employers (TCP, 2019, p.18). This is probably due to the weakness of the judicial system in solving labour-related conflicts between the employer and employee. For example, the index of the quality of judiciary was estimated at 7.5/18 in 2018 (TCP, 2019, p.56) meaning that it takes very long before the employee can get his/her problem solved in courts.

Last, tax burdens, particularly for the formal sector, are perceived to be high by formal enterprises, even though it is far away from the regional convergence norms. For example, in 2018, the tax pressure rate was 16.9%%, which is still below the normal minimal of 20% recommended by the UEMOA as a regional standard and convergence criteria (CIFOEB, 2019, p.6).

Hence, in regard to the pure market rules, it is almost impossible for the poorest (particularly women and youth) to create and run a business in the country, as the capital to start up a business is not accessible to them. This requires State intervention. However, state intervention needs to be more targeted towards improving conditions of the poorest.

5.3.5 Corruption as informal economic and political institution

Corruption prevails in Burkina Faso. The National Network for Fighting Against Corruption (REN-LAC) publishes the yearly state of corruption in the country by zooming in on the most corrupt administration services. For example, in 2017,

40 The index of guarantee reliability takes values between 0 and 12. Close to 12, it means that security and bankruptcy laws are well designed to promote access to loans.

many administration services were ranked in terms of the degree of corruption. The municipal police were ranked the worst, followed by customs, the gendarmerie, tax services, and then the judiciary (REN-LAC, 2017, p.32). World Perspective has estimated the degree of corruption captured by the index on freedom from corruption. The index was estimated at 2.3/10 on average between 1996 (1.0) and 2016 (3.8) (World Perspective, 2017), indicating a high degree of corruption in the country. In 2019, the country had a high corruption score of 41 /100 with the rank of 78 over 180 countries (TCP, 2019, p.56).

Second, the degree of private property protection is low in Burkina Faso, exposing it to expropriation because of the high degree of corruption. The index capturing private property protection was estimated at 3.0/10 on average between 2003 and 2016 (World Perspective, 2017). This index means that most existing private properties are exposed to the risks of expropriation when its value is close to 1. Thus, the recorded value (3.0/10) indicates that property rights are weakly protected by the judiciary (particularly when the interest conflict involves a politician or wealthy person), and this is an important source of injustice. Also, the degree of ownership freedom is 3.28/10 on average between 1996 and 2016 (World Perspective, 2017). This means that expropriations are frequent and corruption in the sales or purchases of property is high. Although a law against corruption exists in the country, punishments are not carried out for people involved in corruption. The lack of political will to overcome corruption is probably responsible (REN-LAC, 2017).

Thus, many policy implementation activities are exposed to bad quality services or good supply. Public investment in social and economic activities are based on public procurements. Unfortunately, this sector, linked to the ministry of economy and finance, is one of the most corrupt in the country—bribe payments for getting a procurement contract is now a rule. Otherwise, it is impossible for an enterprise to get a contract on a competitive basis. An example of a restaurant manager’s experience from a recent study by REN-LAC supports this view. The restaurant manager stated: *“I was obliged to use my relationships to get a public procurement. I have competed over two years in seeking for coffee breaks and lunch procurement with public administration, but I have never been selected. A friend of mine has let me know that I would never get such a contract, if I did not exploit my relationships. Indeed, when I used my networks, I have now several contracts to my account”* (REN-LAC, 2014, p.77).

5.3.6 National policy on housing and urban development

The policy on national housing and urban development (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning-MHU, 2008) is, on the one hand, based on several international commitments in relation to Agenda 1996 for Habitat; and on national reference documents such as the Constitution (1991), the CSLP in 2000 and the five-year programme of the President of Burkina Faso, "Continued Progress for a Society of Hope" in 2005. Article 18 of the Constitution (1991, p.6) states that "education, instruction, training, work, social security, housing, sport, recreation, health, maternity and child protection, assistance to the elderly, the disabled and social cases, artistic and scientific creation, are recognised social and cultural rights". The Strategic Framework for Poverty Reduction (CSLP, 2000) in its axis 2 foresaw the improvement of poor people's access to basic social services and social protection and identified the housing sector as a sensitive area requiring supported action in order to establish an efficient contribution to poverty reduction in Burkina Faso. In the five-year programme of the President of Burkina Faso in 2005, Burkina Faso is identified as the true pole of economic development and quality living, inducing continuous improvement of the population's living conditions (LeFaso.net, 2005).

Consequently, the national policy on urban development aims at strengthening the contribution of cities to the fight against poverty (MHU, 2008). It involves (a) making cities the poles of economic growth and development, extending this policy to the entire national territory (rural and urban areas) and both vertically and horizontally (actually the population is concentrated in Ouagadougou); (b) ensuring access to decent housing for disadvantaged social groups; and (c) contributing to the fight against urban poverty. In particular, the strategic axis 5 of this policy is to contribute to improving the incomes of poor urban households by promoting the development of labour-intensive economic activities and income-generating activities.

The main instrument used to implement the policy is the national scheme on territory planning adopted in 2006, later changed into the National Schema for Territory Planning and Sustainable Development-SNADDT in 2014 (SNADDT, 2014). The main priority of this instrument was to control the causes of rapid population growth (demography) which is a necessary condition for development, particularly for Ouagadougou (UN-Habitat, 2015). In particular, the SNADDT is operationalised in urban areas through the SDAU (SNADDT, 2015; MAH, 2008). For example, the operationalisation of this policy for Ouagadougou has been shaped by the Development Master Plan for Great Ouaga (DMPGO), which delimits the urban space by allowing agriculture (mainly gardening) around dams

and rivers in the city (SDAGO, 2009). This policy also frames the environmental issues, notably the green belt initiative aiming at the stopping desertification in the great Ouaga.

After years of policy implementation, there is an increase of the urbanisation rate in Burkina Faso. The country urbanisation rate has increased from 22.7% in 2006 to 26% in 2015, and expected to reach 31.5% in 2016 (UN-Habitat, 2015, p.5). Practices in terms of urban planning have been improved through the adoption of the integrated methods of concerted planning (see UN-Habitat, 2015, p.16). The number of cities in the country has increased from 26 in 1996 to 49 in 2015 because of this urbanisation policy (UN-Habitat, 2015, p.5).

Although, the policy did not clearly specify which kind of economic activities, it may have included urban agriculture oriented towards supplying urban households with agro-silvo-pastoral products (e.g., gardening, horticulture, breeding). Thus, urban and peri-urban agriculture can be considered as included in the development of Ouagadougou. Also, the objective of improving the income of poor urban households through labour-intensive activities can be seen as an inclusive approach to urban value chains. However, is this inclusion the one advocated by Likoko and Kini (2017), which respects human dignity, and gives the opportunity to the poorest to be the master of these activities? This probably justifies why the housing and urban development policies are being revised to integrate the new challenges in the field and in accordance with the UN-Habitat 2036 Agenda (2016-2036).

5.4 Conclusion

Public policies have significantly contributed to the improvement of women's conditions in terms of gender equality over the last 30 years. The reviewed policies and laws enforcing women's empowerment have positive impacts on their lives. That is the case of the agrarian policy, national gender policy, and programme on agriculture mechanisation and productivity improvement. That is also the case with the education policies designed and implemented by the government, which has achieved an equal schooling rate for girls and boys. This achievement has contributed to raising women's capabilities and agency (mindsets and behaviour in society) and has improved the way that men look at women.

Overall, these policies brought a real change for women: increased access to land, fertilisers, improved seeds, increased added-value, increased access to funding (through the national funding policies). This change contrasts with the common

knowledge that women do not have access to productive resources (land, credit, fertilisers and equipment). As such, these achievements are the strengths of the reviewed policies.

However, the weaknesses of public policies appear to lie in the challenges that influence the interaction between formal and informal institutions which shape the conditions of women in the country. While formal institutions (government, parliament, justice) are the formal drivers of women's empowerment in regard to achieving the social and economic development goals, informal institutions, such as customary rules, religious practices, laws and corruption, appear to be the most powerful conditioners of women's life in the country. Thus, as long as these informal institutions play a significant role in influencing formal institutions (such as policy design and implementation), gender issues will be difficult to overcome in the mean term.

The most relevant lesson learnt is that the success of these policies and programmes depends on the agreement and support of the customary authorities (Bado, 2015). Nevertheless, there are still significant barriers to the enforcement of the formal laws throughout the country.