

Summary of Evaluation

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| 1. Outline of the Project | |
| Country: Burkina Faso | |
| Project Title: Seedling Production Support Project | |
| Issue/Sector: Natural Environment Conservation | |
| Cooperation Scheme: Technical Cooperation Project | |
| Division in Charge: | |
| Forestry and Nature Conservation Team II, Group I(Forestry and Natural Environment), Global Environment Department, JICA | |
| Period of Cooperation | April 10, 2010 to April 9, 2013 (3 years) (Date of Signature on R/D: October 14, 2009) |
| | Partner Country's Implementing Organizations: The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable : MEDD), General Directorate of Forests (DiFor) |
| | Supporting Organization in Japan: Forestry and Fisheries Agency, MAFF |
| Related Cooperation: National Center for Forest Seeds (CNSF) | |
| 1-1 Background of the Project | |
| <p>The northern part of the country of Burkina Faso (hereinafter referred to as Burkina Faso) belongs to the Sahel region with annual precipitation of less than 600. In the country, the exacerbation of desertification in recent decades has caused land degradation, deforestation, decline of water resources and other environmental deterioration directly affecting living conditions to such a degree that anti-desertification has become an issue of national importance. As most rural residents, who account for 80% of the population, are highly dependant on natural resources including forest resources, deterioration of their living conditions and poverty among them are raising concerns. In response to this situation the Burkina Faso government has established a number of measures for the sustainable management and conservation of forest and other natural resources, such as the National Forest Program (Politique de Forêt Nationale : PFN) in 1995, the National Forest Management Program (Programme National d'Aménagement des Forêts : PNAF) in 1996 and the Forest Law in 1997. The National Adaptation Programs of Action (Programme Action National d'Adaptation : PANA), an anti-climate change initiative, was also formulated in 2007, promoting forest conservation and afforestation as a measure against climate change.</p> <p>As a result of such national policies, seedling production now plays an important part in promoting afforestation in Burkina Faso. The government, which runs its own seedling production programs using public nurseries, began to promote seedling production by the private sector in 1992; now 80% of seedlings produced every year comes from the private sector¹. Seedling production by village communities and private firms nevertheless continue to face a number of problems including: Inability to access the markets, Lack of information concerning seedling</p> | |

¹ National Tree-Planting Campaign Report 2007

demands, Poor product quality, and difficulty in securing production materials.

In response to these problems, the Ministry of Environment and Livelihoods in Burkina Faso (Ministère de l'Environnement et du Cadre de Vie : MECV) formulated the “National Strategy for Seedling Production” (Stratégie Nationale de Production de Plants : SNPP) in 2007 with an overall goal of contributing to anti-desertification, food security and poverty reduction; the strategic goals of the project were set as follows: -To improve the product quality and strengthen sales capacity through organization of seedling producers and improvement of skills, -To promote the production of seedlings of species appropriate for the locality, -To improve productivity and profitability through improvement of production infrastructure including regional nurseries, -To propose feasible afforestation programs.

The measures so far taken by the Government of Burkina for quantitative expansion of seedling production include the Project for Rehabilitating of Regional Nurseries (Projet de Rehabilitation des Pépinières Régionales : PRPR) and National Forest Seed Center (Centre National de Semences Forestières : CNSF) Support Project, which had some effect in stimulating seedling production, while leaving behind some outstanding tasks including the organization of private seedling producers, product quality improvement, development of distribution systems and formulation and monitoring of efficient seedling production plans. Facing an urgent need to address the tasks and to implement SNPP, a request for technical cooperation was made by the Government of Burkina.

The Seedling Production Support Project (hereinafter referred to as the Project) has been planned and is under implementation with a project period of 3 years starting from April 2010 and scheduled to end in March 2013, with the Forests Agency of MECV as the counterpart (C/P) agent. Four specialists [Chief advisor/seedling production plan (1), vice-chief/seedling production plan (2), strengthening of the organization/seedling production plan (3), project manager/nursery technology (4)] have been dispatched by Japan under this scheme and are currently working on the Project in Burkina Faso.

1-2 Project Overview

(1) Overall Objective

To strengthen afforestation activities in the target area.

(2) Project Purpose

To promote strategic and efficient seedling production in the target area.

(3) Outputs

1. Improvement of seedling production skills among producers belonging to the Seedling Production Groups.
2. Strengthening of information sharing among different parties involved in seedling production and afforestation activities in order to implement strategic production.
3. A policy recommendation for more strategic seedling production in close connection with afforestation activities.

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| (4) Inputs (as of August 2012) | |
| Japanese side: | |
| Expert Dispatch: 44.64MM | Equipment: ¥ 5,366,268 |
| Trainee acceptance: 2 | Local cost: ¥ 37,837,582 |
| Burkina Faso Side: | |
| C/P Personnel: 10 | |
| Provision of land and facilities | Local cost: 6,243,750 FCFA |
| 2. Evaluation Team | |
| Members of Evaluation team | <p>Team Leader: Shigeki HATA - Executive Technical Advisor, Global Environment Department, JICA</p> <p>Cooperation Planning: Shinji ABE - Special Advisor, Forestry and Nature Conservation Team I, Group I(Forestry and Natural Environment), Global Environment Department, JICA</p> <p>Evaluation/Analysis: Megumi YOSHINAGA – Evaluation/Analysis consultant, Japan Development Service, Co., ltd.</p> |
| Evaluation period | <p>October 1, 2012 – October 18, 2012</p> <p>Type of Evaluation: Final Evaluation</p> |
| 3. Results of Evaluation | |
| 3-1 Summary of Achievements | |
| <p>Output 1: "Improvement of seedling production skills among producers belonging to seedling production groups."</p> <p>The output was evaluated as “mostly achieved.”</p> <p>Indicator 1-1:"Improvement of understanding about nursery technologies of priority species among foresters and member producers of the Seedling Production Groups (Forester: 35% →85%, seedling producers: 22% → 85%)."</p> <p>The target was achieved by the producers. The result for the foresters, however, remains at 72%.</p> <p>Indicator 1-2:" Improvement in germination rates and tree-percentages of the Seedling Production Groups in the target area. (Germination rate: 81% → 85%, Survival rate 79% → 85%)."</p> <p>The germination rate rose from 81% to 89% and the tree-percentage rose from 79% to 93%, achieving the targets in both cases.</p> <p>Only the target for an understanding among foresters remains unachieved. However, since the result has shown a significant rise from 35% to 72%, Output 1 was evaluated as “mostly achieved.”</p> <p>Output 2: "Strengthening of information sharing among different parties involved in seedling production and afforestation activities in order to implement strategic production."</p> <p>The output was “achieved.”</p> | |

Indicator 2-1: "Increase in the number of seedling production plans drawn by the producers, based on the information given in the Council meetings (27% → 70%)."

The percentages of producers who draw up their own production plans reached 78%, achieving the target.

Indicator 2-2: "Over 80% of the Council members are satisfied with the information provided by the council about afforestation and seedling production and their utilization in the Project."

The questionnaire results showed that 81% of the member producers of the Council were satisfied, therefore the target was achieved.

The output was achieved with the both of the two indicators achieving their targets.

Output 3: "A policy recommendation for more strategic seedling production in close cooperation with afforestation activities."

The output is "expected to be achieved" by the end of the project period.

Indicator 3-1: "The Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) accepts proposals concerning the challenges associated with and the future direction of the national strategy for seedling production."

A draft policy recommendation was submitted to the government at the end of September 2012 and the JCC is expected to agree on it before the end of the project period.

Therefore the output was evaluated as "expected to be achieved."

Project Purpose: "To promote strategic and efficient seedling production in the target area."

The project purpose was evaluated as it is "expected to be mostly achieved."

Indicator 1: "Carry-out rate of seedlings produced in the target area increased (77% → 85%)"

Questionnaire results showed that harvesting has risen to 85%, achieving the target.

Indicator 2: "More than 60% of seedling producers use the Nursery Notebook to record production and shipment volumes."

The percentage of producers using Nursery Notebooks reached 66%, achieving the target.

The two indicators concerning the project purpose have both achieved their targets. However, taking into consideration the indicator with an unachieved target in Output 1 and another in Output 3 which are expected to be achieved, the project purpose was evaluated as "expected will be mostly achieved."

3-2 Summary of Evaluation Results

(1) Relevance

The Project was evaluated as highly relevant. Focusing on seedling production corresponds with the New Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustained Development (Stratégie de Croissance Accélérée et de Développement Durable : SCADD) 2011-2015 of Burkina Faso, which places forest resource management as an important factor in mitigating climate change and agricultural development. The Project activities also correspond with the Japanese aid strategy which supports

the local government's activities in line with SNPP and the Schematic Design for the Afforestation Campaign (hereinafter referred to as the Schematic Design) as well as forest conservation and afforestation contributing to the combat against climate change and desertification.

The Project's approach to focus on seedling production was a realistic one, particularly when taking operability into account. Before the overall objective can be achieved, some external conditions dependant on activities outside the scope of the Project must be met. Nevertheless, seedling production is an important precondition for afforestation and is an adequate objective. The method applied in technological transfer was also appropriate.

(2) Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the Project was found to be relatively high. As discussed above, barring minor shortages in a part of the output indicators, most targets have been achieved or are expected to be achieved before the Project's completion.

Output 1 contributed significantly to the effectiveness; expansion of market and better harvesting were achieved as the results of the enhancement of abilities of the beneficiaries, including the use of a Nursery Notebook. Of Output 2, the establishment of a common framework to gather all relevant persons in one place through the Council to provide a place of information exchange for both afforestation and seedling production came to play an important role in adjusting the demand and the supply of seedlings. However, not all information exchange sessions led to production contracts and not all contracts were honored; it is also difficult to describe the Council as a consistent contributor to better productivity. Lastly, the contribution of Output 3 to the Project Objective is scheduled to be confirmed before the final JCC meeting.

The strong sense of ownership among the beneficiaries and the existence of policies and strategies to support seedling production had a good impact on the efforts to achieve the Project objective. The deterioration of the security situation in Burkina Faso in 2011 caused difficulties for Japanese personnel to visit the northern border regions. Despite this absence, work continued through cooperation with the local government office and a Burkina consultant, who thereby minimized any impact on the Project's progress.

(3) Efficiency

The efficiency of the Project was evaluated to be "relatively high." Input from the Japanese side was both qualitatively and quantitatively appropriate and proved that much can be produced despite limitations on time and resources. Training activities were designed effectively. Manuals created in both French and the Moore language, good quality seeds and nursery pots experimentally distributed and the organization of the Council meetings were particularly effective in producing output. Factors such as the performance of Japanese experts, utilization of a local consultant, and the experimental distribution of seeds made possible by the cooperation of the CNSF contributed to an efficient management of the Project. Input of human resources from the Burkina side was appropriately managed, showing a strong sense of ownership among the C/P.

On the other hand, government funding for the implementation of Project tasks was insufficient.

During the Project period any shortage was adjusted by the Japanese side, however the government's inability to provide sufficient funding remains a concern for future activities.

(4) Impacts

The Project was evaluated to have had a "medium" impact. The Project produced a number of positive ripple effects. The knowledge attained through training is being shared and is beginning to spread among producers other than the direct participants of the Project. Expansion of seedling sales has resulted in some improvements in the revenues of the producers. The manuals produced for the Project training sessions have disseminated and are now used across the fields. Improved income from seedling production resulted in an increase in the number of producers in some areas. The foresters have acquired new knowledge including that concerning team-building and planning, which has already contributed to improvement of tree-percentage, soil improvement and others.

On the other hand, it is currently unclear as to whether the overall objective will be achieved. If the results of the Project are to have an impact on the overall goal, demand management for seedlings, strategic implementation of afforestation activities and improvement in afforestation skills and technologies will be needed. Afforestation will also require continuation of follow-up activities after the initial planting. Given the lack of initiative to improve afforestation skills and technologies or to promote afforestation activities, the Project's impact was evaluated as "medium."

(5) Sustainability

The Project was evaluated to have "medium" sustainability. SNPP and the Schematic Design, which the Project aided, are expected to remain as a focus of MECV activities. Since the Project activities were implemented by government administration agencies, the structure is also expected to remain beyond the completion of the Project. In terms of technical sustainability, the achievements of the Projects so far suggest that the participants of its training sessions have already acquired both the ability and the confidence to further disseminate what they've learnt. Extensive applications of knowledge are already being observed. The decision to employ a Burkina consultant was also judged to have contributed to the sustainability, as he is expected to remain and continue to work in the country.

The dominant disincentive of sustainability was found to be the insufficient funding to organize training, workshop tours, Council meetings and others. Some communities have devised their own solutions in order to continue the activities themselves. An example is the Passore Province in the North, where existing frameworks (such as periodic provincial association meetings called by the mayor) are utilized to continue the provision of places for information exchange like the one which was provided by the Council. However, there remain communities which, though their wish is to continue working on skills improvement and utilizing Council meetings, lack the necessary funds. It is therefore important that relevant parties discuss and agree on a solution, determining which activities are self-sustainable using existing frameworks and which require external funding.

3-3 Contributing Factors

(1) Project Planning

- Project content matched well with the Burkina national forest policies, which meant the significance of the activities were well appreciated by the government.
- The design in which the Japanese experts train the foresters, who in turn train the producers, enhanced the awareness of the foresters as lecturers and lubricated the accumulation and dissemination of knowledge in the target area.

(2) Implementation Process

- The strong sense of ownership displayed by the C/P government personnel and other beneficiaries throughout the Project
- The ongoing development of government policies and strategies supporting seedling production.
- The general good communication among relevant parties of the Project
- The utilization of a local consultant which allowed the activities to continue in the areas which were difficult for Japanese Experts to access due to security circumstances.

3-4 Issues and inductive factors

(1) Project Planning

- Exclusion of promotion for active support by donors and other afforestation actors from the planning made it difficult to actually achieve the overall objective.
- Transfer of foresters, an external factor, had minor impacts on the achievement of Output 1.

(2) Implementation Process

- The funds for the cost to be covered by the C/P were not released with appropriate timing, showing a trend which may affect the sustainability of future activities.

3-5 Conclusion

The Project's accomplishments in general were highly satisfactory. Analysis showed generally good results and the Project's objective is expected to be mostly achieved within the project period. Factors that made this possible include the C/P government's ownership, good relationship among the relevant parties and the utilization of local resources. The evaluation of the 5 items above showed that the Project was highly relevant and relatively high in effectiveness and efficiency, with medium impact and sustainability. Although the limitations on funding have become a disincentive for sustainability, the C/P government is showing efforts to find a solution; therefore it is appropriate to allow the Project to reach completion as scheduled. Nevertheless, attainability of the overall objective remains unclear as it depends on improvements of afforestation techniques as well as the planning and implementation of afforestation activities, none of which were included in the Project. Promotion of afforestation and relevant programs therefore, form the core of future challenges.

3-6 Recommendations

(1) Incorporation of the draft policy recommendation into the government's forest policy

The policy recommendation concerning Output 3 was drafted trusting that the Government of Burkina will reflect the Project's achievements in its seedling production policies. We also hope that the policy recommendation will contain recommendations for afforestation and silviculture policies. The policy recommendation will be discussed and finalized in preparation for the final JCC. We strongly hope the Government of Burkina will incorporate these recommendations in its forest policies.

(2) Continuation of existing activities

Continuation of existing activities is desirable for the two target provinces. We suggest that the Project implement necessary preparations in order to sustain its achievements. In view of the limitations of the government budget, such preparations may be discussed during Council meetings organized during the remaining period of the Project. We trust the government will continue this training with focus on advanced training for foresters following the completion of the Project.

(3) Contractual issues

Even as producers and afforestation participants become acquainted through Council meetings and agree on seedling production contracts, breaching of such contracts by some afforestation participants were noted as an issue. It is desirable to have the relevant parties discuss the solution to the problem during these Council meetings. A possible solution includes compulsory signing of contract documents when placing orders.

(4) Approval for and utilization of the manuals

The Project has created seedling production manuals for foresters and producers (*Guide Technique pour la production de plants, Manuel de Vulgarisation des Techniques de la production de plants*) and on priority species (*Fiches Techniques de Dix Espèces Prioritaires de la zone d'Intervention du Projet*). Adoption of the manuals into lecture materials in the School of Water and Forest Resources (L'Ecole Nationale des Eaux et Forêts : ENEF) and other training facilities as well as other utilization of the manuals will lead to further dissemination of the Project's impact. We therefore request the MECV to approve these manuals as its official text.

3-7 Lessons Learnt

(1) The importance of Projects matching the policies of C/P government and cooperation with donors

The strong sense of ownership displayed by the C/P government may come from the detailed analysis of forest policies of Burkina Faso in the planning stage and the good quality of communication, based on which the planning decisions were made. Despite the relative inexperience in running technical cooperation projects with Japan, the C/P Agency, MECV, exhibited a good understanding about the Project's contents and helped produce a lot of results for

a relatively short period. This has shed a new light on the importance of sufficient policy analysis in the planning stage. Meanwhile, it has also shown that small-scale pilot projects in which activities must be narrowed down, require cooperation and coordination among the donors in order to achieve higher level objectives.