Report Number: ICRR0022868

1. Project Data

Project ID P143993	**Project Name** Burkina Faso - FIP - Forest Mgmt.	
Country Burkina Faso	**Practice Area(Lead)** Environment, Natural Resources & the Blue Economy	
L/C/TF Number(s) TF-15339,TF-16915	**Closing Date (Original)** 31-Dec-2019	**Total Project Cost (USD)** 23,712,205.29
Bank Approval Date 23-Jan-2014	**Closing Date (Actual)** 30-Jun-2021	

	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	21,451,586.35	21,451,586.35
Revised Commitment	23,770,195.78	21,316,007.13
Actual	23,731,831.27	23,712,205.29

Prepared by	Reviewed by	ICR Review Coordinator	Group
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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

The Project Development Objective (PDO) for the Decentralized Forest and Woodland Management Project was “to promote national development policies, as well as support the definition and implementation of community-based natural resource management processes in thirty-two (32), mostly rural, communes in the territory of the Recipient in order to strengthen sustainable local development practices and to contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and woodland degradation” (Grant Agreement for TF015339 dated February 17, 2014, Schedule 1, page 6).

The formulation of the PDO is identical to that in the Grant Agreement for TF016915 dated September 2, 2014 (Schedule 1, page 6) and the PAD (para 23), except for that the PAD referred the territory of the Recipient as “Burkina Faso.”

For the purposes of this ICR Review, the following objectives will be assessed:

Objective 1: To strengthen sustainable local development practices

Objective 2: To contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and woodland degradation

b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?

Yes

Did the Board approve the revised objectives/key associated outcome targets?

Yes

Date of Board Approval

22-Dec-2020

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

No

d. Components

Component 1: Mainstreaming Climate Change and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) into Sectoral Frameworks and Strategies *(Estimate: US$6.10 million; Actual: US$3.83 million, 62 percent of the estimate [ICR, pg. 54])* intended to improve climate governance and Burkina Faso’s readiness to implement REDD+ by: (i) developing a National REDD+ Strategy; (ii) conducting awareness-raising activities and consultations related to REDD+ and climate change; and (iii) strengthening the country’s climate governance and resilience.

Component 2: Participatory Planning and Management of Forests and Woodlands *(Estimate: US$17.07 million; Actual: US$14.81 million, 86 percent of the estimate [ICR, pg. 54])* provided support to target the drivers of deforestation and forest and woodland degradation. First, strengthening land-management capacities of selected local communities would focus on developing strategies and investment plans for sustainable forest and woodland management on the issues of economic use of non-timber products, conflict resolution, land use planning and mapping, and wildlife resources. Second, implementing a community-driven approach through the provision of sub-grants to beneficiaries for sub-projects would reduce deforestation and improve the management of forested land.

Component 3: Coordination and Information and Knowledge Sharing *(Estimate: US$3.10 million; Actual: US$6.90 million, 222 percent of the estimate [ICR, pg. 54])* provided resources for the support of REDD+, Forest Investment Program (FIP), and climate change at the programmatic and project levels.

e. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates

Project Cost: At appraisal, the project was estimated to cost US$26.26 million (PAD, page 14). At project closing, the actual cost was US$25.54 million (ICR, page 54).

Financing: At appraisal, the project was planned to be financed by US$16.50 million grant from the Strategic Climate Fund (SCF) (TF015339) and EUR7.30 million (approximately US$9.76 million) grant from the European Union (EU) Trust Fund (TF-15339) (PAD, para 48 and ICR, pg. 5 Note). The grant amount from the EU Trust Fund was amended to EUR6.5 million (approximately US$7.27 million) while the grant amount from the SCF remained the same (Amendment to Grant Agreement for SCTF Grant No. TF015339 and Grant No. TF016915, signed March 29, 2018 and Operations Portal). At project closing, the actual disbursements were US$16.48 million from the SCF (ICR, page 2) and US$7.24 million from the EU Trust Fund (Operations Portal). The actual financing source of the remaining US$1.82M was not specified in the ICR.

Borrower Contribution: At appraisal, 10 percent of the overall FIP funding, which was approximately US$ 1 million, was expected from the Borrower as cash and in-kind contribution (PAD, para 49). At project closing, some in-kind contribution from the Borrower was provided but not quantified (Meeting with the TTL of the project, hereafter, TTL Meeting).

Dates: The project was approved on January 23, 2014, and became effective on September 16, 2014. The Mid-Term Review was published on February 13, 2017.

There were four restructurings: the first (July 17, 2014), the second (March 22, 2018), the third (December 10, 2019), and the fourth (December 22, 2020). The first and second restructurings amended the SCF Grant Agreement twice: (i) to lower the disbursement percentage of the SCF for eligible expenditures from 62 percent to 38 percent, to allow EU funds to be disbursed more rapidly; and (ii) to first use the EU trust funds to cover 100 percent of the expenses until fully disbursed, to use it fully before its closure (ICR, para 24). The second restructuring also reallocated approximately US$3 million from Component 1 to Component 3 to cover the configuration of the management accounting reporting system, as well as reallocated approximately US$5.5 million from the disbursement category “Goods, works, non-consulting services, consultants’ services, Operating Costs, and Training under the Project” to the disbursement category “Sub-grants” (ICR, paras 22-23). Key changes made among the third and the fourth restructurings were to extend the project closing date, to: complete the Integrated Community Development Plans (PDIC) in at least 27 communes out of 32, and finance the planting season in 2021, which was missed in the year prior due to COVID-19 lockdown measures (ICR, para 25). The fourth restructuring also rephased a few indicators for clarity and revised a few indicators’ targets upward, as described in Section 9.c. There were no substantial changes to the project’s components or activities.

The project closed on June 30, 2021, after three closing date extensions totaling one and a half years of delay from the original closing date of December 31, 2019.

IEG concluded that a split evaluation was deemed unnecessary, as the revision of the PDO indicator was not substantive and simply rephrased a geographical reference to better reflect the reality in implementation.

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

Country and Sector Context: At appraisal, Burkina Faso had a population of 16.5 million and a high population growth rate of over 3 percent, which was projected to result in a doubling of the population in one generation (PAD, para 1). Deforestation and woodland degradation were caused by expansion of agricultural land, grazing, and over exploitation of forest resources with a significant carbon sequestration potential. It was estimated that the territory was deteriorating because of anthropogenic factors at a rate of 105,000 to 250,000 hectares each year, with 74 percent of arid and semi-arid areas affected by desertification or land degradation (PAD, para 5). A significant carbon sequestration potential existed both above and below ground simultaneously. Above ground, carbon sinks could be restored through avoided degradation and reforestation of forests facing the greatest anthropogenic pressures. Below ground, soil organic carbon comprised a sizable portion of the overall carbon sequestration potential of the vast areas of savanna and drylands. The project aimed to solve a development challenge of misalignment of investments for forestry, climate change and national development plans (PAD, para 14). The Forest Investment Program (FIP) of the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) program which provided financing for investments to support total of eight pilot developing countries including Burkina Faso to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (PAD, para 14).

Relevance to Government Strategies: At appraisal, the objectives were in line with the Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development and the National Rural Sector Program. They aimed at upgrading these national strategies and increasing the emphasis on REDD+, climate resilience, and low-carbon development (PAD, para 22). At project closing, the objectives were aligned with the priorities outlined in the Second National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDESII) for 2021-2025. The project reduced emissions to an estimated 3.8 million tons carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2eq), which directly helped deliver on the PNDESII's commitment to reduce net carbon emissions by 15 million tCO2eq by 2025 (ICR, para 32). The project also contributed towards Burkina Faso's higher-level objectives of food security and poverty reduction while increasing resilience to climate change and preservation of forest resources (ICR, para 7).

Relevance to Bank Assistance Strategies: At appraisal, the objectives were in line with the third strategic themes supported by the Country Partnership Strategy (2013-16) consisting of reducing economic, social, and environmental vulnerabilities. At project closing, the project's objectives were aligned with the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) FY18-23. In particular, the objectives were in line with the CPF's Objective 1.5, which addressed the management of extractives and natural resource sustainability, where security of land tenure and forest management was highlighted, as well as Objective 1.1, which aimed to increase sustainable agricultural productivity. The project was important to the CPF because the project's PDO indicator 2 on reductions in emissions from deforestation and forest degradation was closely linked to the CPF indicator 1.5.1, which measured reductions in emissions from land use and forestry.

Prior Sector Experience: The World Bank supported Burkina Faso to promote decentralized rural development and reinforcing the capacity of local institutions to sustainably deliver a number of services selected by and for their population through the three phases of Community-Based Rural Development projects for nearly two decades (P035673, FY01-07; P098378, FY07-13; P129688, FY13-18). The country's experience with the participatory approach in natural resource management, combined with the country's carbon sequestration potential of dryland forests, resulted in being selected as one of eight pilot countries to be financially supported by the Forest Investment Program (FIP), which was a multi-donor trust fund to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. This project was complemented by the Participatory Management of State Forests Project, which was also funded by the FIP and executed by the African Development Bank.

The objectives were aligned with the strategies of the Government and the World Bank's assistance at project closing. The World Bank's solid experience in working with the country in the sector resulted in the piloting of the FIP for the first time in Sahelian countries. On the other hand, the PDO statement included activities to reach the intended outcomes, negatively affecting the conciseness the PDO. The PDO statement in the financing agreement presented promoting national development policies as one of activities and means to achieve the development outcomes, not being in line with the ICR (para 11) that considered "to promote national development policies" as one of the development objectives. Overall, the relevance of objectives is rated high.

Rating

High

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

OBJECTIVE 1

Objective

To strengthen sustainable local development practices

Rationale

Theory of Change (TOC): Objective 1's TOC envisioned that project activities such as taking participatory processes to develop integrated landscape management strategies and investment plans for sustainable forests and woodlands, establishing a monitoring system of co-benefits of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), and providing sub-grants to small- and medium-sized local enterprises that adopted SLM and SFM practices would result in outputs such as integrated landscape management strategies and investment plans, as well as local community's capacity in implementing them. The outputs were envisioned to contribute to outcomes such as effective implementation of sustainable natural resources management plans.

Critical assumptions included (ICR, para 12): (i) high degree of commitment from local stakeholders to carry out the required planning and investments to change local development practices and reduce GHG emissions; (ii) the synergies with the AfDB-executed FIP project on developing a monitoring, reporting, and verification system to assess the carbon impact of realized activities; and (iii) political stability at the national level and operational security in the project areas were ensured.

Outputs (based on ICR para 34-45 and Annex 1):

- A monitoring system of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) co-benefits was established and operational, meeting the target.

- Average number of single users of the Environment and Sustainable Development Observatory (ONEDD) website per month was 6,000 users at the maximum in November 2018 and approximately 3,000 - 5,000 users at project closing in November 2021, increasing from the baseline of 2,500 and meeting the target of 5,000.
- A database with relevant information on climate resilient agricultural practices was operational, accessible easily within the country and broadly known, meeting the target.
- Land area impacted by a SFM and SLM investment defined in the Integrated Community Development Plan was 400,000 hectares (ha), meeting the target of 400,000 ha. The target and the methodology of measuring this indicator was not defined in the PAD. At closing, the project team defined a radius with a range of 3-5 kilometers per plan to estimate the localized impacts of physical investments such as boreholes, manure pits, nurseries, hay storage facilities, animal pounds, and access tracks, in addition to income-generating activities employing sustainable techniques to preserve forest resources. Based on the approach, about 1,000 physical investments impacted between 300,000 - 500,000 ha (a median point was 400,000 ha) by supporting sustainable forest and land management investments.
- Planned conservation areas that were established with the villagers' consent were 100 percent, exceeding the target of 80 percent. At closing, all 32 communes were implementing locally agreed upon FIP investment plans. Villagers gave consent to restrictions on access and user rights to natural resources in nearly 30,000 hectares of 72 conservation areas across the 32 communes.
- Small- and medium-sized local enterprises supported by the project were 555, not meeting the revised target of 575. Through the implementation of investment plans in the Integrated Community Development Plan, small- and medium-sized companies across sectors and regions were supported, i.e., beekeepers, market gardeners, dairy distributors, and makers of traditional non-timber forest products.
- Participation of local stakeholders in the planning, management, and monitoring of forest related activities was 97 percent, exceeding the target of 90 percent. All 32 communes had completed a land use participatory diagnosis and developed land use management plans. In one commune, however, the security situation did not allow for the landscape management plan to become operational.
- People in forest and adjacent community with monetary and/or non-monetary benefit from forest were 533,395 people, exceeding the target of 250,000 people. Of the total, 253,825 people were women, exceeding the target of 85,000. According to an analysis of the M&E data, monetary and non-monetary benefit included: (i) 148,415 people benefitted from improved access to potable water; (ii) 252,883 people benefitted from an improved diet; (iii) 172,104 people benefitted from improved collection of medicinal plants; and (iv) 194,836 people benefitted from income-generating activities. Tough this indicator was designed as a PDO Indicator, it counted individuals or entities whose development practices were directly supported by FIP activities, investments, and capacity building (ICR, page 25), which provided evidence on the project's output.

Outcomes (based on ICR para 34-45 and Annex 1):

- Effectiveness of sustainable natural resource management plans in targeted sites was 100 percent, exceeding the target of 75 percent. The indicator was defined as the percentage of local sites where the land use planning process was satisfactory enough to lead to FIP investments. It was achieved through an innovative consultation mechanism implemented in the 32 communes of the FIP. It included four villages per commune for a total of 128 villages and 6,696 people (ICR, para 38). This

- pilot process led to the development of FIP investments plans and was scaled in a larger follow-on REDD+ program. The process of strengthening sustainable local development practices was in itself one of the most important achievements of the project (ICR, para 37).

In addition to the outcomes defined in the Results Framework, the ICR reported on the following achieved outcome which did not have any formal targets.

- Increased agricultural yields and improved soil fertility were observed by 88 percent of producers, and improved incomes were observed by 65 percent of the producers, according to a Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of the overall FIP implemented by both World Bank and African Development Bank (ICR, page 25). The extent to which these improvements were attributable to this project only was unclear.
- Income-generating activities for farmers and women's organizations were developed in close collaboration with the Local Forest Communities Support Project (P149434), which was also part of the FIP program. The local Small and Medium-sized Enterprises supported them to develop and commercialize products under the public communal investments funded through the PDIC/REDD+ (ICR, para 40).
- Rural poverty in the FIP intervention areas was 44.5 percent in 2021, compared with 47.5 percent in 2018, based on a rural poverty index in an impact assessment of the Burkina Faso FIP, which was completed in 2021 in partnership with the National Institute of Statistics and Demography (ICR, para 44).
- Among the project beneficiaries, almost 30 percent say their livelihoods have improved due to better access of potable water, while close to 50 percent report that their livelihoods have improved as a result of an improved diet (ICR, para 43). It was based on an analysis of the M&E data collected through the Kobo Toolbox, which indicated that 533,395 people (253,825 women) directly benefitted in various ways from the project. This suggested the transformative potential of REDD+ for improving food security and reducing poverty while addressing local deforestation and degradation as well as global emissions reductions.
- The income from forests in the 32 FIP intervention communes was approximately USD$60 million over the preceding 12 months (ICR, para 44). However, without a baseline to ascertain what the level was before implementation, the extent to which the results would be attributable to the project was not clear.

The local planning and implementation of sustainable natural resource management plans successfully led to the development of FIP investments plans and the scaling up to the larger REDD+ program. The increases in agricultural yields, soil fertility, and incomes were observed among the producers supported by the whole FIP, implying contributions to reducing rural poverty and improving food security. It is however also noted that the scope of attributability of the results to this project would require additional evidence. Overall, the achievement of Objective 1 is rated substantial.

Rating
Substantial

OBJECTIVE 2

Objective
To contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and woodland degradation

Rationale
Theory of Change (TOC): Objective 2's TOC envisioned that project activities such as supporting development of the national REDD+ strategy and integration of REDD+ and climate change concepts into next national and rural development strategies would result in outputs such as developments of the national REDD+ strategy and new development strategies which integrated REDD+ and climate change concepts. The TOC also envisioned that project activities such as providing sub-grants for implementing REDD+ activities would result in outputs such as reduction in deforestation and improvement in the management of forested land in the target area. Those outputs were envisioned to contributing to an outcome of reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Critical assumptions included: (i) the project was well complemented by the other project funded by the Forest Investment Program (FIP); and (ii) political stability at the national level and operational security in the project areas were ensured.

Outputs (based on ICR para 34-45 and Annex 1):

- The REDD+ strategy was defined, and institutional arrangements were defined for its implementation, meeting the target.
- The capacity of national and local authorities to manage program activities strategically (including by performance payments) existed, meeting the target. The indicator target was described in the PAD as a "satisfactory rating" that would demonstrate Burkina Faso's ability to implement program activities in a satisfactory manner to attract possible future carbon investors, such as eligibility for the REDD+ mechanisms with performance payments linked to carbon sequestration. At closing, the implementation of FIP activities in the municipalities was a case study for all categories of municipal staff, which has resulted in the establishment of institutional structures ready to scale and replicate future REDD+ investments.
- Participation in 9 international events to promote about the FIP in Burkina Faso, meeting the revised target of 9. Burkina Faso participated in the events including: the Conference of Parties (COP) 21 meetings in Paris in 2015, and the Conference on Land and Poverty in Washington, DC in 2017.
- Three national development strategies included sound objectives for REDD+ and the use of climate resilient agricultural practices, meeting the target of three. Specifically, REDD+ was an integral part of the National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES) 2016-2020 and PNDESII 2021-2025, the National Rural Sector Program Phase 2, and the Green Climate Fund Country Program. Though this indicator was designed as a PDO indicator, the integration of REDD+ concept and climate resilient agricultural practices into new development strategies were output-level achievements.

In addition to the outputs defined in the Results Framework, the ICR reported on the following outputs achieved which did not have any formal targets.

- The REDD+ activities completed: (i) reforestation of 1,400 ha; (ii) avoided deforestation on about 2,500 ha; (iii) reduced forest degradation on 6,000 ha; and (iv) created 72 conservation spaces on 30,000 ha and planting over 600,000 plants with an average survival rate of 70 percent at project closing (ICR, page 26-27).

- A sustainable forest management charter and 25 Payment for Environmental Services (PES) contracts to promote compliance with agreed management rules were signed with the communities (ICR, page 40).

Outcomes (based on ICR para 34-45 and Annex 1):

- Emissions of 3.78 million tons carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2eq) from deforestation and forest degradation were estimated to be reduced, exceeding the target of 3.52 million tCO2eq. The Measurement, Reporting and Verification system that was expected to determine the 2012 reference level and enable a verification of the carbon impact of project investments was not completed under the complementary project executed by the African Development Bank, as described in Section 9.a. Instead, the carbon impact of local investments related to REDD+ was estimated by using the Food and Agriculture Organization's Ex-Ante Carbon-balance Tool.

In addition to the outcomes defined in the Results Framework, the ICR reported on the following achieved outcome which did not have any formal targets.

- Financial mechanics that were piloted under the project led to improved deforestation and woodland degradation, according to the Development Impact Evaluation (DIME) Group's assessment of the FIP during the implementation (ICR, para 41). The DIME's assessment concluded that: (i) providing farmers with cash transfers conditional to afforestation and reforestation initiatives, such as PES, was able to bring immediate benefits in terms of food consumption while supporting long-term benefits to communities such as higher income opportunities and forest preservation; (ii) collectively incentivizing farmers via group payment schemes was able to support successful conservation efforts in de facto commonly owned land in Burkina Faso, and; (iii) using financial compensations to support peer-to-peer knowledge transfer and coaching was an effective tool to encourage the adoption by farmers of new SLM practices in forest areas. Moreover, in the context of COVID-19 pandemic, the assessment showed that PES had a potential to become a contingent social protection mechanism for forest communities.

The greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and woodland degradation were estimated to be reduced by implementing the REDD+ activities. The project piloted financial incentive systems such as the PES to link the program's investments in forests to the promotion of the adoption of good practices by communities living around forests. Overall, the achievement of Objective 2 is rated substantial.

Rating
Substantial

OVERALL EFFICACY
Rationale
The achievement of Objective 1 is rated substantial, as the local planning and implementation of sustainable natural resource management plans successfully led to the development of FIP investments plans and the

scaling up to the larger REDD+ program. The achievement of Objective 2 is rated substantial, as the greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and woodland degradation were estimated to be reduced by implementing the REDD+ activities. Overall, the efficacy of the project is rated substantial.

Overall Efficacy Rating

Substantial

5. Efficiency

Economic Analysis: At appraisal, no Economic Internal Rate of Return (EIRR) was presented in the PAD. The NPVs of incremental livelihoods increases ranged from minus US$12,984 million to US$22,296 million when incremental project benefits were assumed to be 1 percent and 5 percent, respectively, with a discount rate of 5 percent over 15 years (PAD, page 105). The number of households in the project area was assumed to be about 82,000 households with a total baseline income of about US$103 million (PAD, page 105). When incremental carbon benefits were included in the ex-ante analysis, the NPVs ranged from US$9,773 million to US$155,627 million with a discount rate of 20 percent over 15 years (PAD, page 105). At project closing, an EIRR was 9 percent and a NPV of US$2.3 million with a discount rate of 6 percent over 20 years (ICR, para 48). The costs included: the expenses associated with all project components, the maintenance costs, and the opportunity costs of land subject to reduced deforestation. In addition, the analysis captured forest benefits derived from: reduced deforestation on 2,500 ha; reduced degradation on about 6,000 ha; and reforestation of 1,400 ha; and additional agricultural benefits from the establishment of lowlands, vegetable gardens, and enhanced rangelands, but excluded carbon benefits. When the carbon benefits were included in the ex-post analysis, the NPV ranged from US$87 million to US$174 million when a range of shadow prices of carbon was applied US$35 per tons of carbon dioxide (tCO2) (low scenario) and US$70 per tCO2 (high scenario), respectively (ICR, para 48).

Aspects of design and implementation that affected efficiency: The 18-months extension of the project duration did not incur any cost overruns. The limited capacity and experience on procurement and financial management of the newly established Forest Investment Program (FIP) Coordination Unit resulted in external auditors' qualified opinions and ineligible expenditures (ICR, para 91), but did not cause implementation delay in a pronounced way (TTL Meeting).

The ex-post EIRR of 9 percent was reasonable. The design and implementation aspects did not affect the efficiency in a critical manner. Overall, the efficiency is rated substantial.

Efficiency Rating

Substantial

a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal		0	0 ☐ Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	9.00	100.00 ☐ Not Applicable

* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

6. Outcome

The relevance of objectives is rated high due to the objectives' alignments with the strategies of both the Government and the Bank assistance, as well as with the Bank's prior sector experience in the country. The efficacy is rated substantial, as both objectives were achieved substantially. The efficiency is rated substantial, as the ex-post EIRR was more of a substantial value. Overall, the outcome is rated satisfactory.

a. Outcome Rating

Satisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome

Political Risk: There had been a growing risk on conflict and instability since 2015. After a series of attacks from 2015 in the north of the country, the number of violent events grew dramatically since 2017, affecting roughly one-third of the country, with persistent armed conflict rampant in five of the country's thirteen provinces and increasingly affecting civilians. In rural areas, the trade-off between basic needs for food and energy and sustainable forest management practices would persist. To mitigate the risk, the project demonstrated the potential for REDD+ activities as a source of livelihood in local communities. In addition, a succeeding project on Communal Climate Action and Landscape Management Project (P170482) was prepared by scaling up the project's participatory land use planning methodology from 32 to 96 communes, with an aim to reduce conflicts over natural resources. Moreover, a broad institutional engagement in the REDD+ agenda was enhanced by supporting Burkina Faso to prepare a Readiness Package to be submitted to the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility in 2022 for an eligibility for the REDD+ mechanisms.

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

The strategic relevance and approach were adequate, as the project built upon the preceding projects' experiences in participatory natural resources management and applied it to forest management. Technical, poverty, gender, environmental, and social development aspects were adequately considered. On the other hand, the fiduciary aspects and implementation arrangements were not fully adequate. The designed mitigation measures to address the risk associated with limited fiduciary management capacity and experience of the Forest Investment Program (FIP) Coordination Unit were not sufficient to prevent ineligible expenses. The design of M&E system for PDO indicator on GHG emission reduction, specifically the M&E arrangement to rely data collection on a parallel project executed by another development partner, was not fully adequate, as described in Section 9.a. Overall, the quality at entry is rated moderately satisfactory.

Quality-at-Entry Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

At the Mid-Term Review, the team proactively addressed implementation issues to accelerate implementation of the sub-grant funding for Integrated Community Development Plan and REDD+. The team found practical solutions to address land tenure issues to address a main driver of deforestation and woodland degradation. The transition arrangements were adequate with a development of a succeeding project. The supervision inputs and processes were adequate in general, as implementation support missions were conducted biannually except for the mission restriction period during the Covid-19 pandemic. To improve regular M&E activities, Bank supervision team involved Bank management and decided to increase the frequency of supervision missions from every 6 months to every 3 months. To measure the achievement of PDO indicator on GHG emission reduction, the FAO Ex-Act tool was adopted. The team supported the external auditors and the Government to clarify and resolve the issues of ineligible expenditures. On the other hand, some shortcomings were noted for the implementation of baseline studies, as described in Section 9.b. Overall, the quality of supervision is rated satisfactory.

The overall Bank performance, thus, is rated moderately satisfactory, based on the harmonized ICRR guideline between OPCS and IEG.

Quality of Supervision Rating

Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

The theory of change was generally sound and reflected in the results framework. The PDO included activities and multiple objectives were worded in one sentence. The indicators encompassed all outcomes of the PDO statement. The intermediate results indicators were adequate to capture the contribution of the operation’s activities and outputs toward achieving PDO-level outcomes. On the other hand, the indicators were not fully specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound in general, as no annual target values were set in the PAD. The M&E arrangements for PDO indicator on GHG emission reduction were not adequate, because the M&E arrangements for PDO indicator 4 were “partly embedded in the AfDB-executed FIP project” being implemented almost simultaneously with the project that did not timely complete development of a Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system to assess the carbon impact across the FIP (ICR, para 78).

b. M&E Implementation

The FIP Coordination Unit was responsible for M&E of the whole FIP in the country. The project benefitted from M&E being implemented at the FIP level with data collected at the local and regional level with support from eight Local Development Facilitators. The National Institute of Statistics and Demographics participated in the final impact assessment of the Burkina Faso FIP to support methodologies in the survey design and data collection. In addition, a Forest Reference Level (FRL) was set as the baseline for an MRV system of emissions reductions from the forest sector and submitted to the UNFCCC to be assessed in the context of results-based payments (ICR, para 83). Progress on the FRL would be sustained after project closing, as the follow-on project would use the MRV system for M&E and the team members who implemented the Burkina Faso FIP. On the other hand, there were shortcomings in the implementation of baseline studies and regular M&E activities. First, household surveys were not conducted at the outset of the project to ascertain a baseline for the target villages related to income generating activities, income levels, and other measures of local socio-economic conditions. Second, yearly monitoring of the social dynamics related to project implementation was not carried out. Third, the implementation of the Kobo Toolbox for data collection and recording was at times delayed and at times irregular. Fourth, there were delays in the transmission of statistical data collected at the local level to the PIU. DIME’s policy research working paper titled Reducing Hunger with Payments for Ecosystem Services provided evidence to the development outcomes in addition to those captured in the Results Framework.

c. M&E Utilization

The M&E findings were communicated to the various stakeholders of the FIP. The revisions in the Results Framework in the restructuring in December 2020 was informed by the M&E data, though the revision was made only six months before project closing. The PDO indicator 2 was reworded from “Effectiveness of sustainable natural resource management plans in targeted villages” to that in “targeted sites,” to reflect the reality that the project was implemented at the commune level (ICR, para 20). The Intermediate Results indicators to measure the communities’ adoption rate of the new landscape management plans and the international events on Burkina Faso’s FIP were revised to increase the end target (ICR, page 32 and 34). The revision in the PDO indicator helped to inform the succeeding project to ensure that the next round of consultations would be anchored at the village level. The M&E data also informed an impact assessment of the Burkina Faso FIP, which was completed in 2021.

There were weaknesses in the design of M&E arrangements and initiation of baseline studies, which were not addressed during implementation, negatively affecting M&E utilization. The end-line evaluation by DIME on the project provided evidence to development outcomes. Overall, the M&E quality is rated modest.

M&E Quality Rating
Modest

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

Environmental and Social Safeguards: The project was classified as category B and triggered the following safeguards policies: OP 4.01 Environmental Assessment, OP 4.04 Natural Habitats, OP 4.36 Forests, and OP 4.12 Involuntary Resettlement. The environmental safeguards policies were triggered to ensure that no activities would have unintended consequences on the environment. OP 4.12 was triggered due to the potential restriction of pastoral access rights to livestock tracks, grazing, and water holes. The project developed an Environmental and Social Management Framework and a Process Framework, both of which were timely disclosed in-country and online. Both instruments were updated in 2018 with the launch of physical investments, resulting in developing Environmental and Social Impact Notices for investments plans in two of the 32 communes, as well as Process Framework Action Plans and land roadmaps in three of the 32 communes. In June 2021, a completion report on the implementation of environmental and social safeguards under the project and the REDD+ Preparation Grant concluded that overall environmental and social safeguards were implemented in compliance with applicable safeguards policies.

Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM): The project used the same GRM as the Local Forest Communities Support Project (P149434), which was implementing the FIP in the same area. The GRM received and resolved 4 complaints. The Communal Complaints Management Committees, which managed the GRM were transferred to the municipalities at project closing to deal with complaints not only related to the project but also the whole municipality.

b. Fiduciary Compliance

Financial Management: The project's external audits were timely (TTL Meeting). The limited capacity and experience on procurement and financial management of the newly established Forest Investment Program (FIP) Coordination Unit resulted in external auditors' qualified opinion in 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 financial statements (ICR, para 91). According to the Bank's in-depth financial management review in 2019, the project's ineligible expenditures of US$0.9 million occurred due to factors such as delays and deficiencies in the justification of expenses (ICR, para 91). The fiduciary management issue was not resolved until 2020 when the Government made a full refund of the ineligible expenditures (ICR, para 91) and also replaced main staff for project and fiduciary management (ICR, para 92).

Procurement: Procurement delays were increasingly noticeable before the Mid-Term Review. Additional training for the FIP Coordination Unit was not sufficient to accelerate the procurement process, as the absence of leadership in the fiduciary team resulted in further procurement delays. The Procurement Risk Assessment and Management System Assessment (PRAMS) undertaken in May 2018 noted that after three years of effectiveness the project disbursed only 22 percent due to prolonged processes in finalizing procurement. The procurement performance was improved in late periods of implementation as the Government implemented actions to address fiduciary issues.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

No unintended impacts were described in the ICR.

d. Other

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11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Bank Performance	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	The quality at entry is rated moderately satisfactory due to some weakness in fiduciary aspects and M&E arrangements. The quality of supervision is rated satisfactory. Overall, the Bank performance is rated moderately satisfactory, based on the harmonized ICRR guideline between OPCS and IEG.
Quality of M&E	Modest	Modest	
Quality of ICR	---	Substantial	

12. Lessons

The ICR provided four lessons. Some of them are summarized below because they may provide lessons of interests for other operations on Forest Investment Program (FIP).

Citizen engagement at the most local level can lead to successful implementation of community-led Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) projects. For example, local actors including different users of land and customary and administrative authorities at commune and village levels engaged in a participatory land and social diagnostic (i.e., TerriStories) as a basis for identifying practical solutions to give access rights to different user groups (ICR, para 37). Through active citizen engagements, the project mitigated the potential risk of underlying social tensions to induce conflict over land security and access to natural resources (ICR, para 101).

Burkina Faso's decentralization process was strengthened by the project's approach to use Integrated Community Development Plan (PDIC) for REDD+. For example, the project reinforced the trust and dialogue between its targeted local municipalities and communities by integrating the results of the diagnostic activities into territorial planning tools (ICR, para 58). After project closing, the municipal institutions were expected to mobilize funds from the State budget to support natural resource management at the communal level (ICR, para 58), contributing to scale up the same approach for a broader jurisdictional emission reduction investment program under a follow-on project (ICR, para 102).

13. Assessment Recommended?

No

14. Comments on Quality of ICR

The ICR provides a detailed overview of the project. The narrative supports the ratings and available evidence, in line with the project development objective. The report tries to triangulate data to reach conclusions. There is a reference to the project's theory of change that helps the reader to understand the causal links between outputs and outcomes. The ICR's lessons are clear and based on evidence outlined in the ICR. Additional explanation and information were provided as per request in the TTL Meeting. Overall, the quality of the ICR is rated substantial.

a. **Quality of ICR Rating**
Substantial