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BURKINA FASO

case study

Evaluation of support to gender equality in Danish development cooperation (2014-2021)

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List of Abbreviations

ANR	Assisted Natural Regeneration
CCEB-BF	Cadre de concertation de base des ONG et associations en éducation au Burkina Faso (Basic Consultative Framework for Education NGOs and Associations in Burkina Faso)
CP	Country Programmes
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DDD	Doing Development Differently
DKK	Danish Krone
FCFA	Franc de la Communauté Financière Africaine (Franc of the African Financial Community)
FCG	Fonds commun genre (Common Gender Fund)
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GCF	Green Climate Fund
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
INERA	Institut de l'Environnement et de Recherches Agricoles (Institute of Environment and Agricultural Research)
INSD	The National Institute of Statistics and Demography of Burkina Faso.
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
MSI	Marie Stopes International
PABEG	Programme d'Appui au Bonne Gouvernance (Good Governance Support Program)
SADD	Sex and Age Disaggregated Data
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WPS	Women, Peace, and Security

Introduction

The objective of this case study is to explore how the policy priority of gender equality is translated into results in Burkina Faso, a West African country that has been supported by Danish cooperation since 1973.

This evaluation covers the 2014-2021 programme period. More specifically, this section locates gender in the wider country programming with four deep dives in the sectors of:

- climate change and green economy (the Shea nuts project with INERA)
- sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)
 - the project to combat unwanted pregnancies with CCEB-BF
 - the project to combat female genital cutting with PROMACO
- water and sanitation project WASH for IDPs is reported under the UNICEF case study but referred to in this case study where relevant

The project deep dives are supplemented by examples of gender integration in the broader country engagement initiatives. This includes the cross-cutting consideration of gender in public policies, such as strategic advocacy in the area of SRHR carried out with MSI Burkina Faso through policy dialogue.

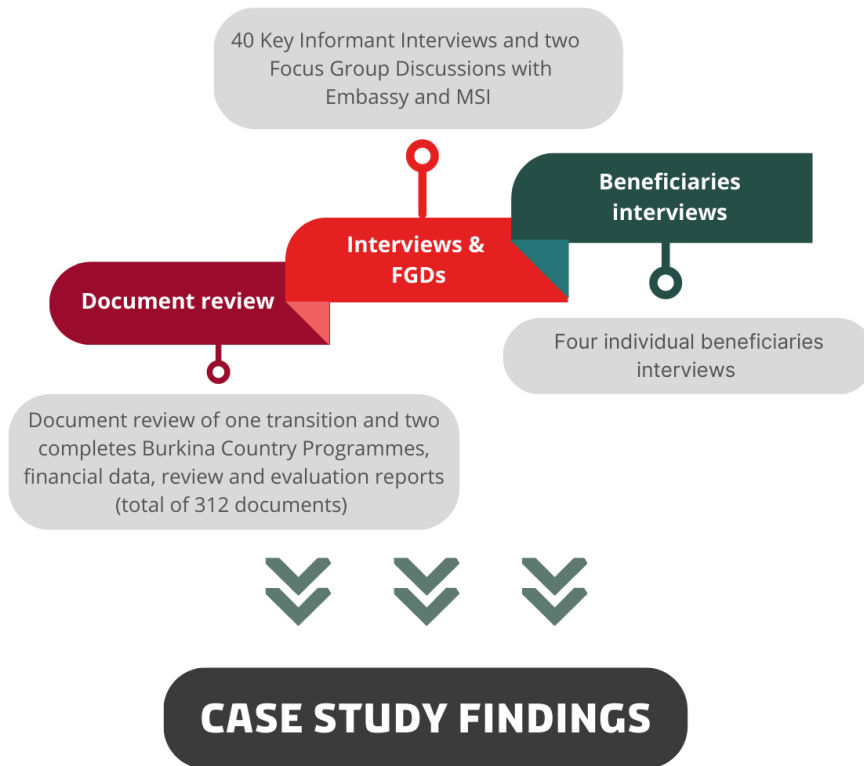
Methodology

The selection of the method and case study was guided by the main goal which was to analyse the outcomes of targeted gender integration, as well as to include development engagements with a broader focus. This was done in order to shed light on the "grey zone" of mainstreaming and the gender impact of development activities that have a different primary focus than gender. The evaluation assessed these cases in more detail in consultations with embassy staff, implementing partners and a selection of beneficiaries, as summarised in the visual below. The cases selected also consider the diversity of implementation settings (urban, rural, and semi-urban, particularly in the outskirts of urban centres).

Desk study and scoping interviews during the inception phase for the evaluation informed selection of the four project deep-dives within the Burkina Faso case study. The case study was conducted from August to November 2022, essentially triangulating findings from a review of country programme and project documentation with key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Due to security restrictions, travel to Burkina Faso was cancelled and had to be substituted by a hybrid mission, with interviews done remotely by two core members of the team and in person by the in-country expert. As per interviews outside Ouagadougou, security restrictions obliged to do them remotely. And finally, as per interviews with Danish embassy staff, the number was less than originally planned because staff were busy with the security situation and an

upcoming appraisal of the Niger country programme. These limitations led to some evaluation questions being answered in a less comprehensive manner, but the evaluation considers the quantity and quality of data collected solid enough for the case study.

Figure 1: Evaluation methodology



1. Country programme findings

Since 1973, Denmark has established development cooperation with Burkina Faso, formerly Upper Volta. In 1993, Burkina Faso was designated as a "priority" country for Danish development cooperation, followed by the establishment of the embassy in Ouagadougou in 1994. Gender equality is one of the priority objectives of Danish development assistance. Thus, since 1973, Denmark's commitment to development in Burkina Faso has prioritized the promotion of the gender equality objective in its various country programmes implemented in regular and successive cycles.

Over the period covered by the study, Denmark implemented a transitional Human Rights and Democracy Country Programme in Burkina from 2014 to 2016 and two full country programmes from 2016 to 2020 followed by the one planned to cover the period from 2021 to 2025. The budgets mobilized by

Denmark for these country programmes are respectively DKK 33.5 million, DKK 800 million and DKK 1050 million.

The 2014-2016 transition allowed the Danish embassy to synchronize as much as possible the different thematic programmes that will make up the country programme, by extending the duration of the Burkina Faso Good Governance Support Programme (PABEG 2008-2013) by two years with a budget reallocation allowing for the financing of activities in two (decentralization and gender) of the three programme components.

The thematic priorities covered by the country programmes are as follows by period: 2014-2016 (Human Rights; Security and Social Cohesion; Democracy and Civic Promotion); 2016-2020 (Human Rights and Stability, Water and Sanitation, Economic Growth in the Agricultural Sector, General Budget Support and Public Financial Management Support) and 2021-2025 (Security, Rule of Law, Human Rights, Resilience, Adaptation to Climate Change).

From 2014 to the present, the main partners in the implementation of the country programmes are civil society organizations (see box below), UN and

Overview: CSO partners supported by Denmark

Denmark supports on the one hand several civil society partners with gender targeted projects through the common gender fund (managed by Diakonia), and on the other it promotes gender mainstreaming in the projects of the partners supported on various themes of governance, security, social cohesion and resilience. The following CSOs have already received support to fight against gender inequalities in Burkina Faso at the community level or through advocacy at the national level: Cadre de concertation de base des ONG et associations en éducation au Burkina Faso (CCEB-BF); Programme de Marketing Social et de Communication pour la Santé (PROMACO); Association Burkina Camp de l'Espoir; Association pour la Promotion et le Développement du Gulmu; Catholic Organisation for Development and Solidarity; Civil Society Organization PAE; Federation Wend Yam; African Union of Development NGOs; etc.

Source: Country programme, FCG support

international nongovernmental organisations, technical services and state authorities (Ministries of Justice, Human Rights and Civic Promotion; Security; Economy and Finance; Agriculture, Water Resources and Sanitation; and Food Security), and the private sector (the Association of Private Sector Representatives in Burkina Faso).

One example of the Danish embassy's commitment to the promotion of gender equality in Burkina Faso, is the support to the Common Gender Fund (FCG for its acronym in French), Denmark being the largest donor to the Fund. As portrayed in the Desk Appraisal Report from May 2021, the FCG is a multi-donor basket fund, managed currently by the international NGO Diakonia and providing support to the government, civil society and the private sector.

The mainstreaming of gender in the thematic areas of the country programme is supported through a gender advisor at the embassy who plays a monitoring, support and quality assurance role. In relation to the Burkina Faso country programme, which was fully implemented during the evaluation period, the integration of gender objectives in the thematic areas should be illustrated as follows.

Table 1: Burkina Faso Country Programme (2016-2020)

Programme	Objective and engagement	Gender integration	Continuity
Human rights and stability (DKK 184 m)	An improved human rights situation through stronger governance and stability	Implementation of UPR recommendations with a special focus on rights related to children and women, and promotion of reforms to achieve progress on violence against women, judicial aid directed towards women, Gender targeted interventions through FCG contributions	Governance taking into account justice, security, gender and civil society; CP 2021-2025
Water and sanitation (DKK 359 m)	Ensure a sustainable management of water resources and equitable access to water and sanitation	Equitable access to drinking water, hygiene, governance in WASH Committees	Continuity with the same thematic area and integration of hygiene, integrated water resources management; CP 2021-2025
Economic growth in the agricultural sector (DKK 380 m)	Contribute to growth in agricultural productivity, in added value and income with a view to an increase in national economic growth and reduction of poverty	Gender in value chains (such as women's key role in the shea nut production), women's economic empowerment	Agriculture, explicit mention of community resilience extended to the agro-silvopastoral sector/ climate change; CP 2021-2025
General budget support (DKK 252 m)	Support to the national development strategy	Female entrepreneurship	Efforts to increase credits for women limited in terms of success

There is a clear continuity in the strengthening of the themes addressed by the country programmes. This facilitates the progressive and transversal integration of gender in a permanent learning dynamic.

Burkina's present country programme only started at the end of the current evaluation period, since it runs from 2021 to 2025. However, due to the formative nature of this evaluation, looking to draw on lessons learned to inform future efforts, inevitably references are also made to the current Country Programme (CP) (2021-2025) in the presentations and perspectives of this section. This pull effect towards the present is reinforced by the fact that data forming the basis of this evaluation was collected from informants engaged in current programming and future perspectives.

Gender Analysis during programme design

At the design level, the development of country programmes is informed by an assessment as prescribed by the Aid Management Guidelines to analyse the context and to address the country's development and gender-specific challenges.

2014-2016 Transitional Programme

- There was an external evaluation of the Strategic Plan 2008-11 and the formulation of a pre-project for the Strategic Plan 2013-17, already noting that the sustainability of the CP interventions would depend on the political environment in Burkina, with certain results like the 30% of gender quota (for women on the political party candidate lists) probably continuing but other achievements, on the other hand, maybe subject to potential political upheavals.
- Gender equality objectives are explicitly mentioned in the 2014-2016 transitional programme document as: 'aims to promote development based on the human rights approach' and specifies that the programme will support the implementation of the UPR recommendations.
- The implementation of the Rule of Law and Stability Programme was also an opportunity to highlight gender-based inequalities in access to rights in the context of deteriorating security.
- In 2015, the conclusions of the final report of the Gender with the Armed Forces 2013-2015 project made it possible to take stock and identify avenues for advocacy to increase the number of women in the army, and the Presidential Elections project had a strong component on political participation of women and youth.
- The concept note on the partnership with Diakonia, which will be of long duration, mentions democracy, human rights and gender as the

‘fundamental thematic of the interventions’, including at that time an innovative gender approach on ‘masculinities and the responsibility by men on the reduction of social inequalities’ and the ‘husband and wives’ school’.

- The PCESA concept note includes a Gender Equality Rolling Plan with actions required for the phases in the programme cycle and documentation: donor alignment, availability of SADD, assessment of major issues at national and sectoral level, gender integration in proposed objectives etc. The inception mission emphasizes the need for short-term adjustments to ensure that the human rights-based approach and gender and green growth are considered and longer-term adjustments to integrate these approaches and green growth into the CP in 2016.

2016-2020 Strategic Framework

- There in appraisal document in 2015, a mid-term review report and a summary of results achieved including gender.
- The 2016-20 programme formulates the overall objective as ‘contributing to poverty reduction, a stronger, rights-based and inclusive governance framework, and economic growth and employment, especially for youth and women. It contains an additional annex on human rights and gender analysis. Gender equality is mentioned under each of the strategic objectives, development engagements and in indicators where relevant. Under CSOs, it recognizes CSOs are not only operating as providers of social services where government institutions do not reach but have an essential role in raising awareness of human rights issues, corruption, impunity, and gender equality problems.
- A change, compared to earlier programmes, is that the Ministry of Gender is no longer supported: ‘experience has shown that the ministry’s advocacy initiatives largely failed to achieve tangible results. This aspect is now addressed through a strong focus on specific actions to secure women’s rights throughout the three engagements, including a specific gender component for civil society.
- Another evidence of significant integration of gender is the Partnership Policy, with gender included in the overall objectives of the policy and its strategic areas.
- For integration of gender in the various programmes under the 2016-20 CP refer to the table in the previous section.

2021-25 Strategic Framework

- There is a desk appraisal report from May 2021 with a whole chapter on gender, stating that although some progress has been achieved, notably in terms of legislation to improve gender equity and protect women's rights, much remains to be done. There are five focus areas: (1) support to actions that aim to prevent gender-based violence; (2) greater economic autonomy for women and the youth; (3) ensuring greater gender mainstreaming in projects and programmes by public institutions and civil society organisations; (4) ensuring women and the youth are more engaged in peace and security matters; and (5) coordination and monitoring of current practices and promoting of innovative actions.
- On the 2021-2025 country programme, the overall vision of Denmark's engagement in Burkina Faso is that: "peace and stability in Burkina Faso are strengthened through respect for the principles of the rule of law, and that poverty and inequality are reduced on the basis of increased resilience and sustainable economic growth". In addition to the requirement to take gender into account transversally in each thematic area, the strategic objectives include explicit references to gender equality, as well as the development engagements: fair and equitable administration of justice for all, effective and human rights compliant policing, gender equality and women's empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and equitable public water supply services delivery.

Gender support across the country programme

The Burkina Faso National Gender Strategy 2020-2024 (pp. 30-31) situates the main gender challenges around the following areas of support: strengthening the political commitment and involvement of men in the promotion of gender equality, strengthening the social and legal protection of women, the participation of men and women in actions in favour of peace, security and social cohesion and the integration of gender in all humanitarian actions, the effective integration of gender into sectoral policies and development programmes and projects, particularly in terms of basic social services, the strengthening of women's and girls' empowerment and the creation of a single, effective mechanism for the coordination and monitoring-evaluation of gender actions.

In the current context of Burkina Faso, key challenges include the low schooling of women/girls, the resurgence of gender-based violence with the security and humanitarian crisis (more than 1,700,000 internally displaced persons), the low economic empowerment of women, the low involvement of women in the women, peace and security agenda, women's poor access to sexual and reproductive health rights due to: insufficient operationalization of the National Law on sexual and reproductive health, economic constraints related to the high cost of services, and physical constraints (distance from services, lack of adaptation to vulnerable and minority groups).

To this end, the country programme allows for the mainstreaming of gender in all thematic areas. For this purpose, budgetary support is provided to the government for the implementation of programmes/projects. The government is provided with a set of guidelines – a social intermediation manual for the management of project activities that includes measures to be taken to achieve gender indicators (representation of women in decision-making positions, gender-specific participatory diagnoses, collection of monitoring data disaggregated by women and men, gender-sensitive dialogue and facilitation, reduction of the distance for access to water, a required proportion of at least 30% of female beneficiaries for loans granted, etc.) set by the parties.

In addition to setting targets for all programmes/projects and the modalities for achieving them, the support encourages the establishment of dedicated management units that receive periodic technical support from the embassy or technical assistance provided for this purpose. The establishment of performance monitoring matrices by country programme officers, which serve as a lever for disbursements of variable budget tranches, help motivate the achievement of gender objectives. It is also a flexible steering tool for revising and adapting targets if appropriate.

In addition to the government, gender mainstreaming is promoted among civil society organizations. This is done through contributions to the GCF. Between 2014 and 2021, Denmark provided a financial contribution of 3,843,314,839 CFA being the largest contributor to the fund by providing more than a third of a total budget of 8,385,891,111 CFA in the same time period, and followed by Sweden and Switzerland. These grants have made it possible to support civil society organizations and technical services of the State. The final report of the review "Institutional Diagnosis and Organizational Strengthening of the FCG 2005-2017" describes how the FCG has been innovative in implementing its mandate to coordinate, harmonize and fund support to national gender capacity building. Concrete support to national actors was provided in the 2019 formulation of the new National Gender Strategy (2020-2024), the adoption of the Gender-Based Violence Act, and the 2019 National Assembly Law establishing quotas for women in political candidates lists. Through its actions, it has been assessed that FCG contributes to the reduction of gender-based violence, improved women's access to land, greater participation of men in domestic tasks, and greater participation of women in local decision-making. Finally, the third approach that builds on the evidence produced by the previous ones is policy dialogue and influence. Denmark participates in the gender consultation framework of technical and financial partners and is a contributing member of the common gender fund. The advocacy conducted during the period made it possible to evaluate the NGP 2009-2019 and to develop the NGP 20-24. It also focused on gender-responsive budgeting and children's rights, which has led to the adoption of a budgetary circular by the State instituting it and the establishment of a permanent committee to evaluate the planning and performance of sectoral ministries from the perspective of gender-responsive budgeting and children's

rights. This budgeting is currently applied in 25 ministries. The budget share allocated to gender has increased from 4.26% of 1,071,779,424 FCFA in 2019 to 5.04% of 2,082,044,381 FCFA in 2022. The forecast for 2023 is 7.38% for gender out of a total of 2,305,596,557 FCFA planned for the cross-cutting themes.

Key trends of gender budgetary allocations

Burkina Faso has received bilateral aid from Denmark since 1973. Of the three focus countries for this evaluation, Kenya and Burkina Faso have consistently been among the top 10 country recipients.

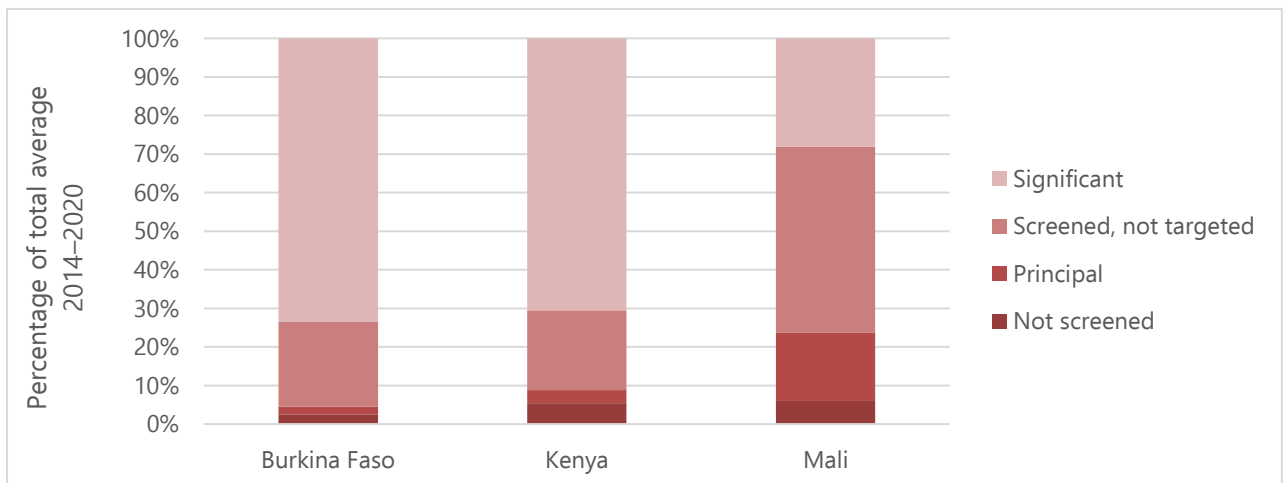
Finding 1. EQ1 and 2: What have been the development and key trends of gender budgetary allocations the Burkina country programmes over the period 2014-21?

What has been the proportion of gender allocation against the overall development and humanitarian aid yearly portfolio?

What have been the main drivers behind these priorities?

What are the main factors behind the shift in integrating gender equality in Danish development cooperation?

Figure 2: Budget allocations measured by the gender marker



The figure above shows the total average of budget allocations measured by the gender equality marker over the 2014-2021 evaluation period. As can be seen, for Burkina Faso over 70% of budget allocations have "significant" gender equality

integration, less than 5% have gender as "principal", less than 5% are “not screened” and the remaining over 20% are “screened but not targeted”, a picture more similar to Kenya than Mali.

The background for this picture was explored by the evaluation in consultations with financial management specialists at the Danish MFA and by organising a focus group in June 2022 to discuss the practice of gender marking, including two participants from the Danish Embassy in Ouagadougou.

The embassy’s contribution to the Gender Common Fund, supported by like-minded donors, goes to projects with gender as ‘principal’. These are small contributions and they not only promote gender equality as a main objective but also strengthen CSOs work on gender. In terms of reach, the numbers are small (see Promaco and CCEB projects in section below). As one key informant said *‘this is great, but this is really not what makes a difference to people in Burkina’* (understanding it makes a difference to those impacted by the projects). It is the budget allocations with mainstreaming of gender in a significant manner across programmes that can make a difference in terms of reach. Here the WASH component of the CP takes centre stage, both in terms of climate mitigation and food security, and because of the UNICEF project focus on IDPs it will continue to be very relevant given the current security and humanitarian situation in Burkina Faso. As discussed with a key informant, the Danish support to value chains in their agricultural programme is also critical, as demonstrated in the case project below on shea nuts income generation is critically important for women to contribute to decision-making. But key informants have also shared that the work on women, peace and security is more challenging, with the government requiring military equipment and considering women’s participation in peacebuilding to be concerns of second order in the present security context.

2. Case project findings

Finding 1 EQ5: To what extent are gender related results in Burkina Faso programming qualifying as ‘gender sensitive’, ‘gender responsive’ and ‘gender transformative’, and why?

EQ5: In which thematic areas do gender transformative results appear the most, and why?

Summary of perspectives from four evaluation deep dives

Four projects were selected for deeper analysis during the November 2022 hybrid visit to Burkina Faso, representing varying degrees of gender focus, with evaluation findings summarized below:

Title	Restoring and improving the productivity of shea nuts in Burkina Faso
Thematic focus	Climate + gender (Forestry research)
Geographical focus	Burkina Faso
Budget	DKK 2,700,000
Timeline	2015-2019
Partners	INERA
Title	Promote the abandonment of the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) in 20 villages in the province of Boulgou
Thematic focus	FGM
Geographical focus	Burkina Faso
Budget	60.955,518 FCFA (46.428,368 financed by FCG)
Timeline	2016 (15 months)
Partners	PROMACO
Title	Projet to combat early and unwanted pregnancies in schools in the municipalities of Boromo, Dori, Leo, Oridara and Yako
Thematic focus	SRHR
Geographical focus	Burkina Faso
Budget	60,790,518 FCFA
Timeline	2014-2017
Partners	CCEB
Title	MSI Ladies

Thematic focus	SRHR
Geographical focus	Burkina Faso
Budget	DKK 25 million annual contribution to MSI
Timeline	Ongoing
Partners	MSI
<hr/>	
Title	WASH for IDPs
Thematic focus	Climate (Environment)
Geographical focus	Burkina Faso – municipalities of Bourzanga and Kongoussi (Bam province, Centre-Nord region) and in the municipalities of Foutouri and Gayeri municipalities (Komondjari province, East region)
Budget	DKK 20 million. Danish contribution 2019-2020
Timeline	2018-2020
Partners	International NGOs, national NGOs, government counterparts (Ministry of water and sanitation, local authorities), community organisations

Table 2: GRES scale assessment of Burkina Faso case project

	CRITERIA						
	Does the project include objectives coherent with Danish gender objectives?	Does the project integrate the results of an internal or external gender analysis?	Does the project document integrate the results of consultations with women and men in the area of intervention across the project cycle?	Does the project have any earmarked gender funding?	Does the M&E framework for the project include SADD systematically?	Has the project received any support by a gender advisor?	Is the partner assessed as having gender expertise?
WASH IDP's	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	Gender expert UNICEF, gender unit	✓
CCEB	✓	✓	✓	✓ Source: FCG	✓	Source: FCG	X
PROMACO	✓	✓	✓	✓ Source: FCG	✓	Source: FCG	X
MSI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Source: FCG	✓
INERA	✓	X	✓	X	✓	X	X
	Project results suggest the following:						
	Results had a negative outcome that aggravated or reinforced gender inequalities and norms.	Results gave no attention to gender and failed to acknowledge the different needs of men, women and other marginalised groups. Provide examples	Results focused on the number of women, men or marginalised populations targeted and included. Provide examples	Results addressed the different needs and interests of men, women and marginalised groups and focused on equal distribution of benefits, resources, etc. but did not aim to influence and change gender relations. Provide examples	Results contributed to changes in norms, cultural values, power structures and the roots of gender inequality & discrimination*		
WASH IDP's	X	X	✓	Humanitarian support to displaced women and men. Objective to change gender relations	✓	Improved access for women and decision-making/WASH committees governance. For a humanitarian project is difficult to have transformative impact but it has wide reach.	X
CCEB	X	X	✓	Support for young girls with unwanted pregnancies to stay in school; parents, teachers and community leaders	✓	Reintegration of pregnant girls in school/better dialogue with parents and teachers but not enough evidence of sustainability of change and potential harm on confusing messages about contraceptive of choice	✓
PROMACO	X	X	✓	Assistance to women victims, awareness raising with mothers, dialogue for couples, engagement of community and religious leaders	✓	Change in socio-cultural norms of reference delegitimizing FGM	✓
MSI	X	X	✓	SRH services for women, men	✓	Change in the care delivery system with the delegation of services; improvement in the quality of delivery of the SRH service chain	✓
INERA	X	X	✓	Support to producers amongst which majority female	✓	Women involved as main shea butter producers and collaborative support by husbands, but missed opportunity in further including women at decision-making level	X

Summary of GRES Scale Assessment	WASH IDPs	CCEB	PROMACO	MSI	INERA
	Gender Responsive	Gender responsive with potential harm	Gender transformative	Gender responsive	Partially Gender targeted with interesting, unexpected outcomes but also with missed opportunities

Summary

The project to combat female genital mutilation in targeted communities, in alignment with the national legislation but with a more community-based approach, is the most transformative in the sense that it does eliminate FGM in the areas of intervention and beyond that it gains the understanding of both parents on the grave consequences of FGM on girls as well as the support of religious and community leaders who can guarantee the continuity of the results.

The project to combat undesired pregnancies amongst school-aged girls is responsive to the existing problem of victimisation of the girl when she gets pregnant, banishing her from continuing with her studies while the boy or man is rarely sanctioned. The analysis of the context highlights the under-information of girls and boys, the disengagement of fathers who make it the "business" of women, the persistence of taboos on sexuality affecting both men and women. One of the most successful activities is the development of a manual to facilitate dialogue between parents and kids, so the impact of the project is that it reintegrates pregnant girls at school and that there is further awareness on the prevention of unwanted pregnancies. The potential for harm as noted in the final project evaluation is that without harmonising with other services/organisations intervening in the school environment, the project risks offering diverse and even contradictory messaging regarding contraceptive of choice: "The main beneficiaries of awareness-raising actions, which are young people, find themselves with several methods confused and justified by solid arguments to the point that young people no longer know which methods to take. Right now, they have all the information but are struggling to choose a unique and sustainable method."

The sexual and reproductive health project led by MSI focuses on advocacy and influencing the legal framework to improve access to sexual and reproductive health services. The services developed, such as the [MS Ladies](#) (mobile midwives bringing services to their communities), show an integration of the gender approach to offer freedom of choice to the populations, far from the prejudices and stereotypes that limit the use of contraceptive products. This project is also gender-targeted in terms of its ability to coordinate stakeholders in the delivery chain to facilitate the effectiveness of the right of access for women and men.

The project on shea nuts inevitably targets women producers since the shea nut is known in Burkina as the 'green gold of women'. Technical trainings to improve the shea nuts productivity rightfully include women and men but miss the opportunity to further work with the leadership in the community to promote further decision-making by women as the key producers. An unexpected positive effect includes the demystification of the act of planting by women and their husband's collaborative support. In the local cultural context, the act of planting a tree is associated with a masculine attitude. However, with the shea butter project, although women were not targeted by reforestation activities, they acquired seedlings and proceeded with collective reforestation

alongside their husbands. This collaborative approach could have been integrated in the design of the project from the start and potentially support a more gender-responsive governance aspect.

The most significant changes in each project were observed as follows:

The CCEB project showed signs of ongoing social change in the intervention area. For example, 90% of affected parents report having discussions with their children about SRH through the parental dialogue guide on youth sexual and reproductive health. Overall, subject to the accuracy of certain data from some schools and the reluctance of victims, there was a decrease in cases of unwanted pregnancies and school dropouts in 2017 compared to 2016. Indeed from 368 cases in 2016 to 171 cases in 2017 including a decrease of 197 representing 53.54% rate of decline. This performance is supported by the improvement of community awareness on the importance of supporting victimized girls by encouraging them to continue their studies and stay in the educational circuit. The existence of a functional prevention and support mechanism for girls in pregnancy situations, thanks to the existence of school clubs, which are functional awareness-raising committees within the schools, reinforces the guarantees of sustainable gains. In Orodara, for example, where the phenomenon of pregnancy is more or less tolerated by local customs, considering the future baby as a blessing, parents have become aware that unwanted pregnancies are an obstacle to girls' education and have made commitments to fight against it by sensitizing their children on contraceptive methods but especially by supporting the continuation of the studies of the victimized girls. Nevertheless, the phenomenon is still a concern for girls in schools. In the opinion of an association leader in Ouahigouya: 'We have at least succeeded in ensuring that girls who have been subjected to an unwanted pregnancy are no longer expelled from school. No parent or school director demands it any longer. However, it must be recognized that with gold mining, the phenomenon is not over. There are always cases that must be taken into account'. The evaluation did not have the capacity to verify whether these statements in terms of girls no longer being expelled from school are totally credible.

According to the final evaluation report for the PROMACO project, the project has led to a decrease in the intention to mutilate women and a change in awareness and attitudes among opinion leaders, victims and the population that has been sensitized, with the commitment of local leaders and grassroots actors exceeding the expected indicators. The changes obtained include the support of religious and traditional leaders alongside health workers and community relays, against the practice of FGM. The vigil is maintained and in the opinion of a

woman from Komtoèga: "Fear has changed sides. Now, it is the persons performing the FGM who are afraid of being denounced and ending up in prison. They have understood that we are not against them, but against excision. Nowadays, even if you say you are against excision, it is not a problem. On the contrary, we support you". As per above, the evaluation did not have the capacity to verify whether these statements in terms of abandonment of the practice are totally credible.

The shea project has had a direct impact on the participation of women's groups in training workshops on techniques for renewing shea populations, in training workshops on improved plantation management techniques, with women being the first to be involved in the harvesting of fruits and the collection, conservation, processing and marketing of shea nuts. Their participation has allowed women to improve their knowledge and technical skills in the shea industry, but the project ended well before the observation of a complete production cycle of the species planted by the women. The economic opportunities expected from the sector are not yet visible and remain hypothetical.

Finally, at the MSI project level, the policy dialogue and influencing approach at the national level undertaken by MSI on sexual and reproductive health is made possible through the support of Danish financial resources. Over time, the funding has helped to establish a relevant profile for MSI at the national level on sexual and reproductive health issues. According to a key informant from MSI: "Nowadays, in Burkina, if you say sexual and reproductive health, MSI is always around the table. We have acquired a good national and sub-regional reputation thanks to our advocacy activities on sexual and reproductive health. MSI's advocacy approach on SRH is underpinned by Denmark's vision of "The World We Share". This is reflected in the ongoing effort to review the legal framework to better operationalize the RH law for more proximity of access to SRH services with innovative and adaptive strategies such as mobile ladies and men, mobile teams and task delegation.

In addition, it should be noted that with the advocacy actions, MSI has encouraged the establishment of regional select committees in six regions. These committees are made up of influential people (xxx????). To mark their adherence to actions promoting sexual and reproductive health rights, they commit to carrying out activities in their regions. This commitment is made through a charter signed by those concerned. It was noted that these documents have an unexpected, even unhoped-for influence on the mobilization of local actors. They are used as a pledge of good faith by the MSI facilitators. This convinces and facilitates the participation of the targeted actors in reflection and advocacy actions on SRH.

In which thematic areas do gender transformation results appear most, and why?

The themes of sexual rights and reproductive health and combating sexual violence showed indications of more transformative results than agriculture/climate change/green growth and humanitarian assistance. This is due to the strong understanding and buy-in of sexual and reproductive health stakeholders and particularly the participatory engagement of community leaders. MSI's expertise, knowledge of the field and experience in conducting advocacy were also valuable assets. On the humanitarian level, however, the emergency and ad hoc nature of humanitarian assistance did not allow for work to be done to bring about lasting changes, apart from the support on access to WASH provided to women IDPs. Support for the recovery of livelihoods and the balance of social relations in a more secure context in the medium and long term remains a challenge to be met. In the SHEA project, there is a missed opportunity for change in terms of economic empowerment and access to land ownership for women, the transformative effects expected from the training and support have not been fully realized.

Where are the gaps and missed opportunities?

Organisational Gaps

The evaluation observed some gaps in the projects assessed. One such area relates to how periodic reporting is undertaken around gender, which has an emphasis on qualitative information. Discussions with partners revealed that there is room for more robust, qualitative reporting around the results they are achieving, especially regarding the gender transformative effects of their engagements, and the lessons emerging. For example, beyond the engagement of traditional leaders in combatting harmful practices, how many and how long and how strongly are they engaged and can the methods used to engage them be validated and replicated in other communities and scaled up? It seems that in traditional societies like in rural Burkina Faso, particularly with the limited of presence in the field by international and even national organisations now with the insecurity context, further reliance on community mechanisms is key for the sustainability of transformative results.

Another gap is the lack of clear direction on the gender change objectives being pursued. Individual projects estimate and seek to demonstrate their gender sensitivity efforts after the implementation of the project. This is relatively easy for projects targeting women and working on SRH, but it is rather laborious for the mainstreaming projects if the links are not explicit. The effort is made to disaggregate the data into male/female but the cause-and-effect analysis and the strategy for deconstructing gender inequalities would benefit from being explicitly formulated by all partners.

Another gap relates to limited coordination. The various actors each have levers to conduct advocacy actions at their own level. MSI, for example, has

systematically set aside a budget for advocacy in each project. This is a good practice to follow to overcome the resource constraints often mentioned. The approach of a framework for regular performance measurement of gender indicators noted by senior staff at the Danish embassy is an excellent basis for negotiation and adaptation. However, there remains little agreement on aggregating the level of expected results. For example, what proportion of decision-making positions should be held by women? The proposed thresholds vary and often fall short of the progress required. This leads to margins of refusal according to multiple alibis.

Whether at the Danish embassy or at the level of the partners, the use of the gender expert made available internally is not always optimal. Key informants mentioned this is 'often done in moments of urgency' (i.e., at design phase, with pressing deadlines) and leaves little room for in-depth analysis and reflection. This is a shortcoming that can be overcome by putting forward, in addition to ad hoc advice, a structured approach with moments of exchange per thematic area per year.

Gaps in project activities

Some shortcomings in the implementation of the project were shared by partners. Several mentioned either the short duration of the project or the lack of resources for transport and equipment as limitations, for examples the lack of video projection kits for animators, or the lack of transport for community theatre actors raising awareness on the consequences of FGM.

Another gap that was highlighted to the evaluation was the limited intersectionality. Beyond the binary categories of women and men, people with different sexual orientation or gender identity, persons with disabilities, and other marginalised groups were not referred to in any project document nor interview with partners.

In contrast with the enormous needs, the resources will always be short and therefore it is important to use them strategically and have referral mechanisms when the project cannot cover a particular need. For example, a key informant from Komtoèga, "it is difficult to bear the suffering of women who are detected as ill during family planning awareness campaigns and who have no resources to treat themselves. The project has not provided enough support" (support targeted to pregnant girls only which can cause the perverse effect if not managed properly to be seen as encouraging pregnancies to get treatment). Also, a leader of an association involved in the project recognizes that the project was not sufficiently inclusive: "We should have also included people with disabilities in the sensitization and girls from very poor families. In the end, we understood that they also needed information on SRH, but it was late."

Also, in the difficult context of the security and humanitarian crisis, the Danish embassy's programme managers emphasized the increase in cases of GBV. Women victims are marginalized and struggle to be heard by a judicial system characterized by male domination. The Danish embassy's support in this area is limited to actions subsidized through the FCG.

Finding 3 EQ 5 What kind of interventions, approaches or strategies in Burkina Faso have been well suited to supporting transformational gender changes and what lessons can be drawn?

The evaluation finds that articulating clear gender-related outcome areas for the projects to be implemented, particularly with respect to activities aimed at engaging in norms and values (i.e., in raising awareness against FGM, unwanted pregnancies, access to contraception, need for collaborative husband and wife relationships, etc.), increases the likelihood that, overall, a programme will contribute with stakeholder engagement to transformative gender change. Achieving gender results is in the Danish embassy's experience linked to the development and monitoring of performance measurement frameworks that integrate gender objectives. This monitoring allows for dialogue, detection and even action to overcome areas of weakness to ensure that gender goals are achieved. The transformative potential of gender is realized when it is part of a long-term partner. Apart from bilateral support between the Danish embassy and sectoral ministries, short-term projects (two to three years) subsidized through the Gender Common Fund show limitations in terms of reach and sustainability. Changes are observed but there are also risks of relapse. For MSI the long-term funding approach through the core fund is well appreciated for its flexibility. The organisations that benefit from the core fund are institutionally more efficient, well experienced and have expertise in gender.

In general, Danish embassy staff are recognized as having gender capacity and a high level of monitoring for gender mainstreaming. The gender annex is made mandatory for every project funded by the field officers. These provisions are increasingly integrated and well appreciated by partners who recognize that they are making progress on gender issues.

Finding 4. 6A: What has been the relevance/effectiveness/efficiency of gender programming in the country programmes in Burkina Faso?

Relevance

The population of Burkina Faso is estimated at over 22 million people, at least 52% of whom are women. Gender inequality persists in daily life, even though the Constitution enshrines equal rights for women and men in its article one. Gender inequalities persist. With less income, women are generally among the most vulnerable. In this context, the implementation of projects aiming at gender equality remains relevant.

Indeed, with climate change, women are more exposed to the harmful effects of the degradation of productive resources. This is the case with the exploitation of shea trees, where they are the main producers and losers of the inherent socioeconomic benefits that are diminishing with the decrease in productivity of shea plants. Hence the relevant idea of the research to "remove these constraints in order to restore the resource and improve the productivity of shea stands and plantations. Among other results, it is expected that "the fruit production of low-productivity trees is significantly increased. The relationship to gender is not explicit. The only reference that could be related to gender is the result aimed at strengthening "the technical capacities of women's groups producing shea butter are strengthened in terms of pest control, stand rejuvenation and stand renewal. Also, at the level of methodology, taking into account women and men is mentioned, in particular "working with women and farm managers in training through their organisations (associations, groups, communes, etc.) for actions in the fields and forest areas - accompanying women and men with regeneration techniques, accompanying the strengthening of leadership in general and among women in particular" p. 15. Nevertheless, potential gender-related issues exist in the project and are addressed, including facilitating women's access to land ownership usually reserved for men, and strengthening women's economic power in the shea industry. The project remains relevant to the problems of the context. However, it lacks details and guidance on an explicit approach to furthering women's participation in community governance structures and access to land. The project's actors refer to gender in the vague concept of mainstreaming and the presence of female producers is mistakenly confused with a gender approach.

The two FCG projects aim to eradicate harmful practices, which primarily affect women and young girls physically and physiologically. At school level, early and unwanted pregnancies are common. Recent 2019 data from the Ministry of Education indicates 7,565 cases of pregnancy in schools. By age group, more than half of the cases are between 15 and 18 years old (51.2%). The over 18s represent 45.3% and the under 15s 3.5%. This is a factor in school dropout in the CCEB intervention zone. This project was developed to address this issue. Several socio-cultural and socio-economic considerations complicate the conditions of young school girls with unwanted early pregnancies (abandonment by the family, dropping out of school, social precariousness, exposure to depression and even suicide), in addition to the perpetrators of pregnancies who are rarely sanctioned. To this end, on p. 9 of the project document, it is clearly mentioned that "priority will be given to preserving girls in school. An opening will be made to support girls already affected who are in a situation of pronounced vulnerability. The general objective is to contribute to the stabilization of adolescent girls in school in the communes of Boromo, Dori, Léo, Orodara, and Yako. The specific objective is to "reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies among adolescent girls in schools by at least 80% by the end of the project" (p. 13). The target groups and stakeholders mobilized are both sexes (boys, girls; women, men; parents and teachers' associations).

In cases of FGM, the woman/girl is the victim of a ritual practice that affects her physical and psychological integrity. In Burkina Faso, according to the INSD, although declining, the prevalence rate of sexually mutilated women is 11.3% for children and young girls aged 0 to 14, compared to 13.3% in 2010, and 67.6% in 2015 for women aged 15 to 49, compared to 75.8% in 2010. Most sexual mutilations are performed on young girls under five years old in rural areas. PROMACO designed its project based on an analysis of the practice of FGM in the Central East region. The villages selected were based on the high rates of FGM in the area. The general objective of the project is to "contribute to the reduction of gender-based violence". The specific objective is to "reduce the practice of female genital mutilation to 1 per cent in the 20 villages by the end of December 2017. The management approach explicitly mentions the need to take gender into account as follows on p. 24: "Given the sensitivity of the issue, which primarily concerns women, the project's management responsibilities will be assumed by men and women, particularly in the villages (the community relays will include one man and one woman in each village).

Finally, the MSI project's advocacy and law enforcement activities on sexual and reproductive health allow it to respond to people exposed to prohibitions and restrictions that are unfavourable to women's sexual and reproductive health (remoteness, scarcity of contraceptive products, limitations imposed by husbands, high cost, etc.). According to the 2020 Annual Report (p. 28), MSI estimates that "26% of our clients will be living in severe multidimensional poverty. The report notes that "worldwide, access to reproductive health care is uneven. In the sub-Saharan Africa region, data suggest that the poorest fifth of women are twice as likely to have an unmet need for contraception as the richest fifth. For young women aged 15-19, access to contraception is often more limited. In Burkina Faso, the total fertility rate is 6.0 children per woman on average. This is enormous and is largely explained by the low contraceptive prevalence rate (16.8% long-term or permanent, 31.9% modern methods). Unmet need represents 21.3%. They concern mainly rural areas and the outskirts of urban centres, and increasingly areas under the influence of the security crisis. The MSI project has helped maintain and expand the supply of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services despite the occurrence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The advocacy actions carried out during the evaluation period complement each other and aim to improve SRH services by facilitating access to quality services. It is a gender-responsive intervention and MSI prioritizes the goal of gender equality, as MSI CEO Simon Cooke points out, "This decade has begun with much uncertainty, but what we can be sure of is that the need for reproductive care and rights will remain universal and urgent (...). Reproductive choice is an essential pillar in the struggle for gender equality and a future where women and girls take their rightful place in all aspects of society.

Effectiveness

Interviews on the projects revealed a varying number of gender-related outcomes that span the political, socio-economic and cultural spheres.

The INERA project implemented in the Hauts-Bassins, Centre-West and North regions provides an overview of the results achieved. These include the improvement of seedling growth rates, successful grafting tests, production of ethno-varieties for park enrichment, transplantation of wildings, application of direct seeding, assisted natural regeneration (ANR), and hoopla technologies, etc. It is at the technical level that results directly related to gender appear, notably the strengthening of women's technical capacities in the technique of hoopla (128 women out of 257 people at three sites), the technique of enriching shea parks by assisted natural regeneration (580 producers, including 448 women). The results show an effort to involve and train women in forestry techniques and practices traditionally reserved for men. This has allowed women to gain access to skills, social valorisation and hope for socio-economic opportunities in the sector. The project has potential for gender transformation with more resources and duration (governance, access to land, economic empowerment).

The project to combat unwanted pregnancies in schools implemented by CCEB has achieved the following results: an improvement in parents' awareness of the need to support the schooling of young girls as a priority. According to the closing report (p. 15), "90% of the parents reached affirm that they have discussions with their children about SRH thanks to the parental dialogue guide on sexual and reproductive health for youth. We also note that: 95 parents of students, including 20 local elected officials, have acquired skills and formed a pool of facilitators with knowledge of the sexual and reproductive health of young people/adolescents; 9,480 students and parents have been sensitized on the causes and consequences of sexual and reproductive violence; 21 school clubs with 10 members each have been established and are functional; 40 girls who received financial support were able to return to school and were reconciled with their families. Overall, a decrease in cases of unwanted pregnancies and school dropouts has been observed with the project's action at the level of targeted schools, from 368 cases in 2016 to 171 cases in 2017, including a decrease of 197 representing a 53.54% rate of decline. There are still relatively large cases of unwanted pregnancies persisting in schools in the area. The absence of an assessment of the project's results indicators makes it impossible to assess the level of performance.

The project to combat FGM with PROMACO has achieved the following results through the Integrated Communication Plan strategy: the prevalence of FGM among women aged 0-14 years, for example, has dropped from 11.3% to 8.2%; the percentage of fathers and mothers intending to cut their daughters has dropped from 8% to 0%. The percentage of opinion leaders who are aware of the harmful effects of FGM is estimated at 100% and those involved in the fight against corruption are around 96.4%. The project's activities benefit from the

support of endogenous leaders. Nearly 273 leaders have been sensitized on the harms of FGM and more than 43,709 people have been reached through various sensitization activities (theatre, talks, home visits, radio programmes, etc.). The project's forecasts were all met or exceeded. This is a gender-targeted project and the results achieved, despite the low level of involvement of health workers at the outset, indicate that this is a gender-transformative project.

Finally, with MSI, through the implementation of the various projects supported by the Danish embassy, the following main results related to gender can be noted: the contribution to the review of the penal code to lighten the notification mechanism to one doctor and not two (access to abortion, voluntary interruption in case of sexual violence/rape, incest); the advocacy that allowed community health agents to be authorized to offer SRH services (distribution of contraceptives, primary SRH care, referrals to health and social promotion centres); the advocacy engaged with the judiciary to harmonize the understanding of the content of the law on SRH in Burkina. A workshop brought together the judiciary of Burkina, a first, to discuss the steps to be taken to operationalize the new law related to abortion to facilitate the beneficial application in the positive spirit of the law. It is also important to highlight the effort made by MSI Burkina to set up a network of actors in the SRH service chain (health, justice, security, social action, etc.). The objective is to ensure that in each health district, these different key representatives are mobilized and available as focal points to fulfil their roles in SRH services. This advocacy is ongoing with the ministries in charge of women and health. The level of consideration given to gender issues is important and permanent in the implementation of gender-transforming projects. The effectiveness of the actions regarding the results in progress is satisfactory and calls for a continuity of the advocacy actions undertaken.

Finding 5. EQ 7: What have been the key impacts and sustainability of gender equality outcomes achieved within the three thematic areas in Burkina Faso?

Impact

In the case of the shea butter project with INERA, the effects observed relate to the improvement of women's knowledge, as they are better positioned as actors in the protection and safeguarding of the environment. The impact is educational and socio-cultural.

In the project to combat unwanted early pregnancies in schools, the visible impact is the acceptance by parents and schools to support the retention of girls in case of unwanted pregnancies in the school curriculum. The taboos surrounding girls' sexual education are losing ground with the introduction of the parent-child dialogue technique in households. The change is educational, familial, and socio-cultural.

The project to combat FGM seems to have had a real impact in the project's target villages, with the elimination of FGM practices in the areas of intervention. The commitment of religious and community leaders against FGM has made it possible to deconstruct the traditional and religious considerations that were used to justify the practice. The project has succeeded in bringing out credible allies who have become "spokespersons" and participate in the permanent watch against any attempt. In these localities, this change is perceived by the populations as irreversible in the interest of everyone's well-being. The impact is visible in terms of health (women's sexual and reproductive health) and socio-cultural aspects (demystification of the traditional argument about FGM, its rituals, and its taboo nature).

As far as MSI is concerned, the multiplicity and adaptability of support approaches around the central theme of SRH are beginning to bear fruit in Burkina Faso. The impacts include improved access to SRH services at the local level. The State has adopted measures to delegate community-based health services following MSI's advocacy. The chain of actors in SRH is better informed and participates in ongoing consultations with MSI to improve services. It is increasingly perceived at the national level by stakeholders as the organisation that works at the political and operational levels to make "reproductive choice a reality for all.

Sustainability

The project to combat unwanted early pregnancies in the school environment has led to a change in mentality regarding the relationship between girls' education and their sexuality. The responsibility for the attitude of girls who become pregnant during their school years is no longer limited exclusively to them but is increasingly part of the collective mentality of parents and school officials as an incident that must be integrated and its negative effects on the girl's future minimized. This is a lasting change in social perception that gives girls a better chance to pursue their studies without taboos. That said, if this predisposition has changed thanks to awareness-raising, the fact remains that the experience of an unwanted pregnancy for a student is difficult and affects her academic performance. The scourge is far from being eradicated despite the criminal sanctions put in place. This is most visible in areas where girls are in vulnerable family and economic situations. There is therefore certainly progress, but the battle is not yet won.

The project to combat female genital mutilation has made lasting gains in the villages that have benefited from PROMACO's intervention. Indeed, the change in mentality is perceived as real and lasting after the project has ended. The appropriation of the messages of the fight against FGM by the population, and by the animators, health, security and justice actors, and especially by the endogenous leaders (imam, Catholic, customary, etc.), resists all arguments for

maintaining FGM. This is a radical change that is proudly noted by the local populations. For a project agent, it is also important to mention that: “at the end of the project, a monitoring committee of five people was set up to follow the success of the project. The key to success was the involvement of customary and religious leaders who play an important role at the community level, so mass communication was very good”.

The shea butter project with INERA has achieved much more in terms of research, which still needs to mature. The few training sessions conducted for women on jobs generally reserved for men (hoopla, grafting, tree planting) allows some women to develop their knowledge. This is a demonstrative achievement that needs to be expanded to bring about more significant change in gender relations on a larger scale.

MSI's interventions have led to sustainable gains, particularly at the political level with the delegation of SRH services to community-based workers. MSI's advocacy in Burkina focuses on the barriers that need to be removed to allow rapid and effective access to services (review and remove the 14-week limit, which is very early for women, and allow voluntary termination of pregnancy in cases of rape or incest, which is still not a given). Among the lasting achievements of MSI, we note the contribution to the reduction of the law on sexual and reproductive health, such as the revision of the time limit for the termination of pregnancies from 10 to 14 weeks, the acceptance of a single doctor's opinion as opposed to the two previously required. This said, the advocacy process remains wide-ranging and lengthy to improve the operationalization of quality "task sharing" around SRH services for the benefit of young people and women in Burkina Faso.

Finding 6. EQ 3: What are the key challenges and barriers for promoting gender equality in Burkina Faso (evidence from each thematic area)?

The assessment reveals that the challenges and obstacles to promoting gender equality in Burkina Faso are multifaceted and vary by thematic area. Nevertheless, the most recurrent ones are social and cultural constraints, weak political will, lack of resources, insecurity, poor sexuality education and the low efficiency of the judicial system against GBV. They can be broken down as follows:

Social and cultural constraints: Gender equality is not clearly defended in traditional, customary, and religious considerations. In traditional and even customary representations, the male sex is considered as the dominant one to which the female sex must submit. In the field of agriculture, this is reflected in the poor access of women to land ownership and even to agricultural equipment. The man is the head of the household and decides which farms to favour. He is also the one who has primacy of decision for the schooling of children, the authorization of economic activity and mobility for his wife, even the authorization of the adoption of contraceptive methods, the confinement to household and domestic tasks, etc. In the area of governance, the inferior status

of women leads to low involvement and presence in political life, low access to decision-making positions in organisational bodies, low freedom of expression, etc. This predisposition evolves according to the modern or traditional or even mixed lifestyle put forward by the households. However, overall, it continues to have a negative influence on women's and men's living conditions through prejudice and stereotypes, especially in rural areas.

Weak political will: This reflects the influence of social and cultural perceptions on gender equality. The power relationship between women and men is also maintained and reinforced by the monopolization of political power by men. Women have little access to political power in Burkina Faso (less than 30% of women ministers in the government, less than 20% of women deputies, etc.). The weak political will for gender promotion expresses here the paradox between the commitment and adoption of texts, conventions, and charters favourable to gender equality and the taking of decisions favourable to their application at the national level. In Burkina, the effort to adopt a "gender quota" law to promote the access of at least 30% of women in the sphere of governance is still handicapped by measures that do not dissuade change within political parties. In other thematic areas, the lack of political will is reflected in the low demand for the application of texts that promote equity (land law, financial framework and conditionalities, etc.). The weak understanding of and commitment to gender is often coupled with confusion about the gender approach and the promotion of women.

Insufficient resources: The funding of gender actions by both technical and financial partners and the government is considered insufficient in view of the challenges of the context. On the other hand, new areas are receiving more funding (security, humanitarian) and benefit from budgetary regulation measures. For example, the Common Gender Fund is currently financed by five technical and financial partners (Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, UNICEF, UNFPA) as opposed to nearly thirty technical and financial partners active in the gender consultation framework. The coordination of technical and financial support from technical and financial partners remains a challenge to consistently support gender actions in Burkina Faso.

The worsening of the security situation: The security challenge continues to privilege the involvement of men in security issues to the detriment of women. This vision limits the mobilization of women and reduces the national effectiveness of the promotion of peace and security. The ministry in charge of gender has a national gender strategy, but it is difficult to convince other Ministries that this is a national policy that applies to them too and convince them of the importance of the women, peace and security agenda linked to UNSCR 1325.

The challenge of respecting the right to sexual and reproductive health remains, however, a major concern for the control of the demography and sexual health of women. It is noted that women have fewer children in urban areas than in rural

areas. The concern is also more present at the youth level. Indeed, young people and adolescents (60 to 65% of young people) do not have access to accurate information on sexual and reproductive health (SRH). This is an important target group, but they have few tools and programmes to help them learn about SRH to overcome unwanted pregnancies and clandestine abortions.

The low effectiveness of the legal system in fighting GBV: the socio-cultural environment is dominated by men. This power relationship is reflected in the daily life of the different sectors of society. In the justice sector, we notice prejudices and gender stereotypes that lead to the poor treatment of cases of violence against women. In cases of couples, the judicial system tends to protect and perpetuate the logic of male domination. Socio-cultural constraints are also so unfavourable to women that most avoid filing complaints in cases of prejudice.

Within the framework of the projects in general, the insufficiency of resources and the short duration of the intervention have been raised several times. Projects of short duration do not allow for the support of transformative gender change dynamics, and the humanitarian, development and peace nexus is now more important than ever in the current context.

Finding 7: Any evidence on EQ 4: Links between global dialogue and country level advocacy in Burkina Faso?

The Burkina case study provided ample evidence of linkages between global dialogue and country-level advocacy. Denmark's engagement in Burkina Faso on gender focuses on several support possibilities that also offer opportunities for connections to national and global issues.

Denmark's contribution to the gender basket fund of technical and financial partners allows for the coordination of resources and a concerted approach to the challenges of gender equality. SDG 5 is a reference shared by all technical and financial partners. This facilitates the formulation of common objectives reflected in the FCG's strategic plan, including the fight against GBV, support for women's economic and political empowerment, consideration of UN Resolution 1325 (women, peace and security) and the promotion of sexual and reproductive health. Membership in the FCG strengthens its capacity for policy dialogue and influence.

Also, through its support to civil society, Denmark reaches out to several organisations working on issues of global interest such as human rights, humanitarian, and justice issues. One of the added values of the Danish embassy lies, according to one interlocutor, in its "capacity to give a large amount of money in a common basket, to accompany civil society organisations. The embassy has contributed to improving the results framework with a specialist in monitoring and evaluation".

Finding 8: Institutional review: EQ9 *What is the level of gender knowledge and expertise at the embassy of Denmark in Ouagadougou?*

The interviews with the programme officers interviewed for this case study (allowed us to exchange on their level of knowledge and practice in gender issues. They are experienced actors who have a good knowledge of the gender challenges of the context and have already developed projects with gender analyses. They use gender guides and tools internally or with their partners. The discussions also revealed an appreciation of the presence of a gender advisor who contributes to ensuring a permanent and strategic watch for the inclusion of gender in internal and external programmes. However, retraining is not excluded to provide opportunities for continued learning.

How is gender perceived across staff and management at the embassy of Denmark in Ouagadougou?

Key informants acknowledged the priority given to promoting gender equality in Danish development cooperation. It is a cross-cutting theme that is systematically included as a requirement for effort in agreements with programme implementing partners.

Country Programmes are informed by the results of the previous CP appraisal including a gender analysis of successes and challenges in country. Each programme officer is required to prepare and systematically attach a gender analysis form. This is done with the support of the Danish embassy's gender advisor. At the level of the partners, the Danish embassy provides opportunities to mobilize qualified external resource persons to accompany them in gender at its expense. Joint monitoring field trips are made with Denmark to take note of the evolution of the support in the field. Nevertheless, with the security crisis, field trips have decreased and contacts are currently mostly done remotely.

What are the gender-related gaps and opportunities in the current Aid Management Guidelines and tools?

During the focus group discussion with Danish embassy staff, participants all acknowledged the existence of guides and toolkits that facilitate the gender mainstreaming process. These tools are known and used by embassy programme officers. The presence of a gender focal point facilitates the use of gender tools with the support of all programme officers. Staff said they had not noted any resistance to taking gender into account, including the inclusion of sexual minorities.

To what extent has gender been integrated in new approaches such as DDD and MEAL, and what are the opportunities?

The evaluation team did not have the opportunity to discuss the integration of DDD with Danish embassy staff, and as for MEAL the project descriptions on relevance and effectiveness above show that monitoring and evaluations of

projects do integrate gender considerations even if the qualitative aspect could be strengthened.

To what extent is gender included in staff performance assessments and management accountability systems, and what are the opportunities?

The evaluation team did not have the opportunity to discuss this with the Danish embassy staff.

3. Conclusions

Lessons learned and conclusions are presented in the three categories of the evaluation terms of reference:

- Budget allocations

Danish MFA financial data show a considerable share of over 70 per cent of bilateral aid to Burkina Faso to comprise 'significant' gender integration, although driven by other primary objectives, while less than 5% of budget allocation have gender as their 'principal' motivation, mostly related to GCF contributions. These figures represent total averages for 2014-2021.

While contributions to the CGF are important for gender targeted projects and are a golden opportunity to strengthen the work of CSOs on gender equality, their reach is limited and there is a question on sustainability of the gains. The 'real change' comes from fully integrating gender in all programmes.

- Effectiveness of support

When assessed based on the four case projects selected for the evaluation, the picture that emerges is one where the Burkina CP has been effective in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. One project is gender transformative, two are gender responsive with the note that one had the potential to do harm, and one was partially gender targeted with interesting, unexpected outcomes but also missed opportunities in terms of gender transformation (governance, access to land, women's economic empowerment). The UNICEF Wash for IDP sis gender responsive and reported under the UNICEF case study.

Given the prevailing situation regarding gender relations in Burkina Faso, the assessed project engagements were found to be highly relevant in addressing discriminatory practices and unequal power relations. Articulating clear gender-related results with gender-sensitive indicators against which projects are required to deliver, as observed in three of the projects enhances the potential that overall, the country programme will contribute to transformative gender changes.

Key impacts of the projects have been in policy, influencing practice and attitude change. There are some areas that emerged as presenting common challenges to

the projects. These relate to social and cultural constraints, weak political will, insufficient resources, the worsening of the security situation in county, the challenge of respecting the right to sexual and reproductive health and the low effectiveness of the legal system in preventing and responding to GBV.

- Organisational set-up

The case study in Burkina Faso confirmed that the Danish embassy's programme officers have a good knowledge of the gender approach and have acquired practical experience in applying it in their projects and programmes. The process for gender mainstreaming is initiated by the programme officers, and then the gender advisor is involved for technical assistance if necessary. All agree that the gender focal point's inputs are relevant and valuable. This allows for a good interpersonal working relationship. The Danish embassy's programme officers can instil the requirements for gender efforts to be considered by the Danish embassy's implementing partners.

4. Recommendations

EQ 12 What strategic and practical considerations might Denmark engage in in Burkina Faso to gain a leading role in supporting gender equality and women's and girls' rights?

What institutional barriers might Denmark address in Burkina Faso to gain a leading role in supporting gender equality and women's and girls' rights?

The following potential recommendations emerge from the Burkina Faso case study:

A. At the national level

#1 Organise a meeting with implementing partners to share Denmark's commitments and experiences promoting gender equality once a year at the national level. Denmark's commitment to gender equality, while acknowledged, is not well understood by the implementing partners. Contact with the Danish embassy for programmatic reflections is desired.

#2. Establish periodic planning review meetings on transformative gender objectives by thematic area. Initiatives by thematic area would be more effective if internal exchanges on gender are initiated and allow for cross-area sharing of experiences.

#3. Further reflect on exit strategy and sustainability mechanisms for short duration of projects and ensure that projects already underway are supported to reinforce achievements and avoid disruptions. This is in line with the need for further work on the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus.

#4. Leverage other donor’s support for the continued promotion of gender equality in Burkina Faso in the context of diminishing development cooperation funding to the country. This is a long-term challenge, and the Danish embassy can play a pull effect with other like-minded donors.

B. At the headquarters level

#5 HQ to engage with the embassies in fragile countries to support countries experiencing security and humanitarian fragility to conduct an in-depth reflection on the adaptation of gender support to consider the changing context (GBV, IDPs, Humanitarian Aid, the Nexus, the WPS agenda);

Annex A: People consulted

	Name	Sex	Designation	Organisation	Location
1	Dorothee Batiga	F	Programme Officer and Gender Focal Point, Burkina Faso	Embassy of Denmark in Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
2	Dorrit Skaarup Jensen	M	Head of Cooperation, Burkina Faso	Embassy of Denmark in Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
3	Aboubacar Zougouri	M	Water and sanitation officer	Embassy of Denmark in Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
4	Fatoumata Idé	F	Agriculture officer	Embassy of Denmark in Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
5	Albert Bruun Birnbaum	M	Head of Cooperation	Embassy of Denmark in Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
6	Sankara Assance,	M	Permanent secretary	Consultation framework for NGOs and associations active in basic education in Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
7	Sié Hien	M	Coordinator FCG	Diakonia	Burkina Faso
8	Bien NN	F	Finance officer	Consultation framework for NGOs and associations active in basic education in	Burkina Faso

				Burkina Faso (CCEB-BF)	
9	BAMBARA Maimouna	F	Local relay of the project	PROMACO	Burkina Faso
10	Yagouba Diallo	M	Project officer - WASH	UNICEF	Burkina Faso
11	Abbé Landry YADGO	M	Project officer- WASH	OCADES	Burkina Faso
12	Françoise Coulibaly	F	CCEB-BF focal point Boromo	CCEB-BF	Burkina Faso
13	Hilaire Dongobada	M		CCEB-BF	Burkina Faso
14	Midjour Romaric	M	CCEB-BF focal point Kéné Dougou	CCEB-BF	Burkina Faso
15	Nabaloum Bibata	F	President of the association for the promotion of women and children	CCEB-BF	Burkina Faso
16	Hermann Compaoré	M	Program officer of OCADES	UNICEF- WASH	Burkina Faso
17	Daphney Richemond	F	Project officer - WASH	UNICEF	Burkina Faso
18	PARE Sarikou, financier	M	Financial manager of the project	PROMACO	Burkina Faso
19	Kaboré Nobila	M	Programme Officer	PROMACO	Burkina Faso
20	Welgo Abdoulaye,	M	Behaviour Change Outreach Manager	PROMACO	Burkina Faso
21	BANCE /YODA Adjaratou	F	President of the association Laafi Gninta	PROMACO	Burkina Faso
22	Lise Morin	F	President of Internationale solidarity	UNICEF- WASH	Burkina Faso
23	Boubacar SAWADOGO	M	MSI Deputy Resident Representative	MSI Burkina	Burkina Faso
24	Tiguida SISSOKO , Mrs. Fatou Jansen	M	Burkina Country representative; MSI Regional advocacy advisor	MSI Burkina	Burkina Faso
25	Hamadou OUEDRAOGO	M	Program Director	MSI Burkina	Burkina Faso
26	Ganaba Souleymane	M	Project coordinator	INERA	Burkina Faso
27	OUEDRAOGO Antoinette	F	President of the Buayaba association, vice-president of the interprofessional of the Table filière karité	Table Filière Karité (TFK), partner	Burkina Faso
28	YAMEOGO Christiane Sylvie	F	Project partner Ouagadougou	INERA	Burkina Faso

29	GUIRA Francois	M	Project partner Ouagadougou-CN- PCESA	INERA	Burkina Faso
30	Koala Jacques	M	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	SP-CONAP-Genre	Burkina Faso
31	James Mugaju,	M	UNICEF Deputy Director	UNICEF	Burkina Faso
32	Tana Bagnao	F	Coordinator responsible for MS Ladies and MS Men	MSI Burkina	Burkina Faso
33	Helene Tiendrebeogo	F	Advocacy officer	MSI Burkina	Burkina Faso
34	Yasmina SOMLARE	F	Marketing and communication manager	MSI Burkina	Burkina Faso
35	Désiré OUEDRAOGO	M	Project partner	INERA	Burkina Faso
36	Assétou Kaboré	F	Secretary General of the ministry in charge of Gender	Ministry in charge of Gender	Burkina Faso
37	Tidiane OUEDRAOGO	M	Director of operations	MSI Burkina	Burkina Faso
38	SARE Fati	F	Local relay of the project	PROMACO	Burkina Faso
39	Tana Bagnoa	F	Table Filière Karité (TFK), partner	INERA	Burkina Faso
40	Dianda Laeticia	F	Table Filière Karité (TFK), partner	INERA	Burkina Faso
41	Mme ILBOUDO	F	Local relay of the project - AME	CCEB-BF	Burkina Faso
42	DOUAMBA Florence	F	Beneficiary	MSI Burkina	Burkina Faso
43	KOALLA Zarata	F	Beneficiary	INERA	Burkina Faso
44	SOW Arzata	F	Beneficiary	MSI Burkina	Burkina Faso
45	SANFO Mamouna	F	Beneficiary	CCEB-BF	Burkina Faso

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