

# Ex post evaluation – Burkina Faso

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**Sector:** Multisector aid for basic social services (CRS code 16050)  
**Project:** Labour-intensive road construction I (HIMO) (BMZ No. 2000 65 870\* plus B+A training 2001 236\*) / II (BMZ No. 2001 66 314\* plus B+A training 2003 281) and PFA Self-Help Fund in the East III (PFA) (BMZ No. 2001 66 330\*\*)  
**Project Executing Agency:** Ecobank, formerly BACB and DG-COOP



## Ex post evaluation report: 2014

		HIMO I & II (Planned)	HIMO I & II (Actual)	PFA III (Planned)	PFA III (Actual)
Investment costs (total)	EUR million	8,35	7,95	7,00	7,00
Counterpart contribution	EUR million	0,59	0,19	0,87	0,87
Funding	EUR million	7,76	7,76	6,13	6,13
of which BMZ budget funds	EUR million	7,76	7,76	6,13	6,13

\*) Random sample 2012  
 \*\*) Random sample 2013

**Description:** HIMO I / II: labour-intensive maintenance of national and local roads in peripheral regions that are largely municipally funded, and execution of further labour-intensive civil engineering works to facilitate drainage and prevent erosion in river valleys. Basic and advanced training measures included training small businesses and local consultants in manual road construction techniques as well as selecting, implementing and maintaining individual measures. PFA: Small projects were carried out using the Self-Help Fund to create income and boost production, village cooperatives were refinanced while social and economic infrastructure was expanded. This was complemented by measures to raise awareness and provide advice to the target group.

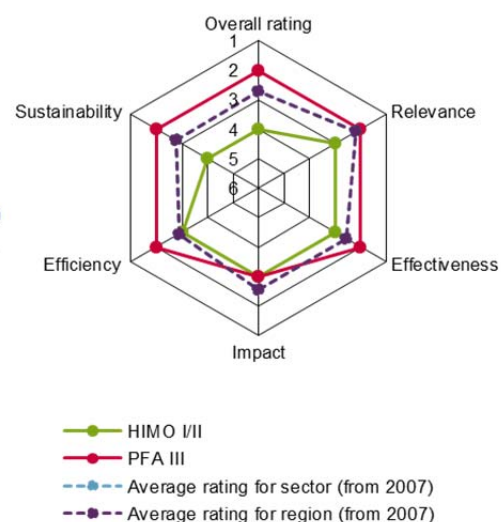
**Objectives:** The objective of the HIMO project was to meet basic transportation requirements of residents in a sustainable and cost-effective manner across all seasons (HIMO I) and to facilitate a sustainable improvement in simple connecting roads, agricultural areas and living conditions in the residential districts (HIMO II). The ultimate objectives of HIMO I and II were to help reduce poverty. The objective of the PFA III programme was to improve the economic position of the target group and improve their quality of life by means of better agricultural production requirements and investments in economic and social infrastructure. The overall objective of PFA III was to contribute to improving the living conditions of the largely poor population and bolster their self-help capabilities.

**Target group:** ---

## Overall rating: : 4 (HIMO I and II) and 2 (PFA III)

**Rationale:** There are doubts regarding the effectiveness and sustainability of the roads built using labour-intensive methods. Other FC-financed infrastructure has resulted in improvements of labour and living conditions for the population.

**Highlights:** The promises made by the target group during the planning process to maintain and service the roads voluntarily and free-of-charge were not kept. A proactive approach to maintenance is required, but there is little evidence of this in practice.



## Rating according to DAC criteria

**Overall rating: 4 (HIMO I and II) and 2 (PFA III)**

### Overall context

The HIMO I and II projects (Haut Intensité de Main d'Oeuvre, labour-intensive procedures) primarily focus on labour-intensive rural road construction. The PFA Self-Help Fund (Projet Fonds d'Autopromotion de l'Est) can be construed as a precursor to decentralisation projects, as structural effects in a decentralisation context play a secondary yet prominent role alongside the financed infrastructure. The concepts of the three projects were assessed in terms of their main features, whereby the assumed results chains for the Self-Help Fund were more convincing, not least thanks to the very participatory approach combined with a mix of social and economic infrastructure. Some elements of the target group analyses were not integrated sufficiently into the concept. The indicators were not defined, which prevented a reliable assessment of success. The objectives for the HIMO I and II projects were only partially achieved, but the goals of the PFA III project were considered met. The projects contributed to the institutional development (capacity building) of the project executing agency, the private economy (building industry), the territorial authority and the target group. The sustainability of the measures implemented under HIMO I and II is insufficient given the lack of maintenance.

### Relevance

Given economic and social developments in Burkina Faso, rural areas play a key role. Relevant priorities are laid down in the SCAAD development strategy (Stratégie de croissance accélérée et de développement durable, 2011 - 2015). Roughly 80% of inhabitants live directly or indirectly from the land. It is the most important economic sector in the country and generates one third of GDP.

The HIMO I and II project concept is completely integrated into current national sector policies and strategies (Cadre stratégique de lutte contre la pauvreté, 2000; Programme Sectoriel des Transports II, 2000,) for rural areas.

In contrast to the results of some rigorous impact assessments<sup>1</sup> on rural roads, a recent study by the World Bank<sup>2</sup> casts doubt on earlier hypotheses regarding the relevance and use of roads in places such as Burkina Faso. The majority of the rural population is essentially connected in some way with markets and social infrastructure, roads are generally used by four-wheel vehicles only to a limited extent<sup>3</sup>. Maintenance is allegedly expensive and for lack of sustainable working solutions it is not long before the roads quickly become difficult to use again<sup>4</sup>. A combination of infrastructure investment, agricultural promotion and supporting the development of transport solutions, particularly for agricultural products, is needed to improve the links between rural households and the markets.

Based on the observations in the ex-post evaluation of the HIMO I and II projects, the statements of the World Bank can be backed up in all of the points described. The situation only differs with the financing of bridges and culverts, as they enable the reclamation of larger agricultural areas by means of stone dams, e.g. for growing rice.

Some elements of the target group analyses were not integrated sufficiently into the concept. The HIMO I concept has no target group analysis. The HIMO II target group analysis is inaccurate in some key points. The need for roads is based on dialogue ("cut off from the rest of the world") and relies more on assumptions than on facts. Little attention is paid to the key issue of improving the fertility of land to increase agricultural production with a view to bringing about a sustainable reduction in poverty. The problem of sea-

<sup>1</sup> Khandker, S. R. /Bakht, Z./Koolwal, G. B., 2006. "The poverty impact of rural roads: evidence from Bangladesh"; (2) Van de Walle, D./Cratty, D., 2002. "Impact Evaluation of a Rural Road Rehabilitation Project"; (in Vietnam); (3) DANIDA 2010: Impact Evaluation of DANIDA Support to Rural Transport Infrastructure in Nicaragua.

<sup>2</sup> World Bank: Rural road investment efficiency: lessons from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Uganda (English) | The World Bank, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> One example mentioned regarding Burkina confirms that 19 out of 47 financed roads have no motorised traffic.

<sup>4</sup> Quote from the cited study, p.: "roads disappear quite quickly"

sonal unemployment in the target rural region is discussed as justification for the labour-intensive implementation of rural road construction. In light of their design, both HIMO projects made an only limited contribution to solving the core problems (poverty, access to markets).

The chosen approach with the FC-financed Self-Help Fund aims to improve the living conditions of disadvantaged rural populations via plausible result chains, thereby making a direct contribution to solving the main problems mentioned in the project appraisal report (development barriers caused by bottlenecks in economic, social and institutional infra-structure as well as production materials, inadequate access of target group to financial resources). The project concept is also fully integrated into the current sector policy and strategies (Termes d'Orientation de la Décentralisation, 1998 and Code Général des Collectivités Territoriales 2004). As the communities and the target group are involved in determining promotion opportunities, selecting individual measures eligible for promotion and in contracting activities, these levels are strengthened.

What is more, a vote was held to select infrastructure from the National Programme for Regional Management (PNGT – Programme National de la Gestion des Terroirs) for financing, funded mainly by the World Bank.

Some elements of the PFA III target group analysis were not integrated sufficiently into the concept. The target group analysis comprises a detailed explanation of social conditions in the project area; related opportunities and limitations in sub-areas are reflected in the project concept. One criticism is that while the target group analysis details the very low social status of women, the planned inclusion of women into decisions on planning and executing the project has not yet been adequately implemented. In actual fact, the ex-post evaluation of the project revealed that women were not sufficiently involved in the decision-making process, despite women profiting to the same high extent from the financed infrastructure.

**Relevance rating: 3 (HIMO I & II) and 2 (PFA III)**

### Effectiveness

The objectives of the HIMO projects were to meet basic transportation requirements of residents in a sustainable and cost-effective manner across all seasons (HIMO I) and to facilitate a sustainable improvement in simple connecting roads, agricultural areas and living conditions in the residential districts (HIMO II). The objective of the PFA III programme was to enhance the economic position of the target group and improve their quality of life by means of better agricultural production requirements and investments in economic and social infrastructure (for ultimate objective of projects see "overarching developmental impacts"). The following indicators were defined to measure the achievement of project objectives:

HIMO I indicators	Status Ex post Evaluation
Adequate maintenance (in terms of technology and institutions) for 75% of the final projects after three years of operation.	In 2008, i.e. five years after the project finished, the indicator's achievement level stood at 81%. At the time of the evaluation only very few roads were serviced and maintained in an appropriate manner.
Clear and quantifiable improvements in the socio-economic situation of residents.	Cannot be quantified due to lack of baseline analysis.
Local work accounting for more than 30% of construction costs.	In 2008 the indicator's achievement level totalled 24%.

HIMO II indicators	Status Ex post Evaluation
Local work accounting for more than 30 % of construction costs.	The indicator's achievement level totalled 24 % according to the final inspection report.
Adequate maintenance (in terms of technology and institutions) for 75 % of the final projects after three years of operation.	In 2008, i.e. two years after the project finished, the indicator's achievement level stood at 78 %. At the time of the evaluation only very few roads were serviced and maintained in an appropriate manner.

PFA III indicators	Status Ex post Evaluation
Repayment rate for funded measures generating income > 90 %.	In 2008 the indicator's achievement level totalled 90 %. The current status cannot be measured. The funds provided for the groups via the project have now been transferred to village cooperatives, where they are not shown separately in the books. The repayment rate is more than 90% according to the cooperatives, but random checks highlighted failings in the internal control system.
75 % of the final social projects financed are still operated by the groups after 2 years.	Achieved in the random check <sup>5</sup> during the ex-post evaluation (5 years after start-up).

The objectives of the HIMO I and II projects were only partially achieved. However, it remains unclear to what extent the improved roads actually met basic transport needs. While maintenance was adequate (in terms of technology and institutions) for 75% of the roads after two years (HIMO II) and five years (HIMO I) of the roads being made available for use, this only applied in certain cases at the time of the ex-post evaluation. The roads may now only be used temporarily as unmaintained rural tracks. The life cycle of simple rural roads is no more than ten years, which means the roads are approaching the end of their useful lives. However, the current state of repair reveals the lack of maintenance in previous years. No quantitative or qualitative statements can be made on the change in the socio-economic situation of residents based on the renovated roads because of the lack of any baseline analysis. During the random check, no improvements were identified that could be placed in a specific category. The labour-intensive execution of the HIMO projects was temporarily able to increase the incomes of the households involved, but the monetary effects cannot be quantified. Living conditions were improved by creating agricultural areas and through surface drainage measures.

Basic and advanced training for institutions delegating development activities, members of maintenance groups as well as local construction companies and workers went well. Many of those involved in the training managed to find a job on the market and the maintenance groups have reportedly retained their specialist know-how, despite the weak execution of the tasks entrusted to them.

In retrospect, the twin objective (measures to create jobs, sustained use of roads) was overly ambitious and had a negative impact on reaching the long-term goal. The late date of the ex-post evaluation and the limited life-span of roads constructed using labour-intensive methods mean that the effectiveness of the roads is still considered to be satisfactory, in spite of the insufficient indicator achievement level.

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<sup>5</sup> The random check for the PFA III comprised 7 municipalities, 11 infrastructures and associated wells and toilets; this makes up roughly 9 % of the total measures. Infrastructure financed from the PFA I and II projects and by the World Bank was also examined for comparison purposes.

The programme objective of the PFA III Self-Help Fund can be deemed achieved. Nonetheless, it is relatively broad and is not represented in all sub-areas with indicators. There is no indicator to measure the improvement in the economic and social situation of the target group as well as an appropriate baseline. Sufficient data cannot be reconstructed ex post to enable the addition of indicators. The participatory elements of the project as well as the structural impacts of the project in the context of decentralisation are not contained in the target system.

The user committees for the financed infrastructure in the PFA III project recognise the economic and social benefits of appropriate maintenance much more clearly than those in the HIMO projects. The economic infrastructure results in higher revenues for the municipalities. Apart from a few exceptions, both the social and the economic infrastructure display high utilisation rates with clear user satisfaction. This indicates a distribution in the infrastructure that meets the needs of the population. Moreover, the useful life in this context is much higher than with roads. The construction method applied that was improved based on experience of previous projects facilitates long-term use requiring little maintenance.

**Effectiveness rating: 3 (HIMO I & II) and 2 (PFA III)**

### Efficiency

The wide-ranging individual measures of all three projects do not enable the calculation of a profitability rate. The costs per kilometre of road were not quantified during the appraisals of both HIMO projects. During the evaluation there were very different views on customary local prices per kilometre of road, ranging from XOF 8 – 15 million (roughly EUR 12,000 – 23,000). According to the final report drafted by the implementation consultant, the costs per kilometre of road amounted to approximately XOF 7.2 million (EUR 11,000) for HIMO I and XOF 8.7 million (EUR 13,000) for HIMO II. Consequently, the specific costs were considered appropriate.

The situation was similar with the costs for individual PFA measures. Random checks revealed somewhat higher prices than infrastructure financed elsewhere, but the quality of FC measures was much higher. High utilisation of economic infrastructure leads to good and sustained levels of revenue compared to investment costs. Both the high rates of use in social infrastructure (e.g. schools, medical centres) and the user satisfaction expressed at the local visits point to a sectoral distribution in the infrastructure that meets the needs of the population.

Standard construction solutions were identified for all the individual development measures in the random check, both in the HIMO projects and the PFA project. This contributed to rapid and efficient planning and execution. The construction costs of the individual measures were considered adequate. There were no delays of note when implementing the projects.

It is difficult to make statements on allocation efficiency because of the small-scale measures. Approximately, the low use of the roads coupled with the less than persuasive choice of individual development measures (see relevance) suggests weak allocation efficiency. All told, the efficiency of the HIMO programme can therefore only be classed as satisfactory. The solid use of measures realised as part of PFA III and their sectoral mix, however, suggest better allocation efficiency in this project.

**Efficiency rating: 3 (HIMO I & II) and 2 (PFA III)**

### Impact

The projects should make a contribution to combating poverty (HIMO) and improving the living conditions of particularly the poor, rural population. The ultimate objective indicators for HIMO I and II are not specified and this does not provide a suitable basis for measuring success (75 % of individual projects realised facilitate better access to markets and better access for the population to infrastructure). No relevant indicator was formulated for PFA III. The good use of the measures realised as part of PFA III allows us to assume some positive impacts at the ultimate objective level. The temporary employment effects in the HIMO projects managed to bump the incomes of many households up in the target region, offering an additional source of income over and above the seasonally fluctuating revenue from agriculture. It is plausible, albeit not quantifiable, that this made a positive contribution to alleviating poverty. This means the ultimate objectives of the HIMO I and II projects as well as the PFA III project can be considered achieved,

if only for a short period (see Sustainability) and with some reservations (generally good use of infrastructure and increase in municipal revenues in some cases).

PFA III has helped strengthen the groups, associations and municipalities that were involved in building the financed infrastructure. The refinancing of village cooperatives gave the target group access to loans and increased financial capacities. Nonetheless, there is little evidence of a sustained impact on self-help capabilities. The "fund" concept is misleading and suggests a long-term financing mechanism, but apart from the support of village cooperatives this is not the case. The municipalities and cooperatives sometimes appeared swamped with the range of tasks entrusted to them related to various financing and contracting mechanisms; this was caused by the low level of coordination between the do-not-induced procedures and those of the state. However, progress has been made in recent years.

Neither of the two programmes has generated any notable widespread effects. All the same, valuable experience was gathered in the projects that can be absorbed both by the partners and by FC / DC in sector dialogue regarding decentralisation.

**Impact rating: 3 (for all three projects)**

### Sustainability

While all of the roads financed via HIMO I and II are still used by the population as unmaintained "rural tracks", the maintenance of the roads is one of the main weaknesses of the HIMO projects (see Achievement of project objectives). The labour-intensive execution leads to high maintenance costs. Revenues are too low at the municipalities to be sufficient for a high level of maintenance. Priority is given to building new infrastructure. Although the maintenance committees and beneficiaries of the roads signalled their willingness during the project planning process and after the construction to take on the maintenance and servicing tasks regularly and free of charge, this has rarely happened. Self-responsibility for maintenance is highest where the population perceive clear economic improvements as a result of the financed infrastructure, e.g. reclamation of a large agricultural area thanks to stone dams, which can be used for rice growing amongst other things. Most of the maintenance committees surveyed estimated the last maintenance work was conducted several years ago, even though some roads were cleaned. The basic and advanced training measures for HIMO I and II transferred maintenance and servicing know-how, but did not trigger a rise in self-responsibility. Without maintenance work the useful life of the roads is coming to an end. No structures were built that had a positive impact on sustainability. The approach of relying on the commitment of the local population subsequently proved to be ineffective.

In terms of the individual measures visited as part of PFA III, so far there have been no significant measures connected to the maintenance and upkeep of schools, medical centres, markets, etc. Due to the robust construction methods applied these will only arise at a later date. Should maintenance become necessary, this would be financed from the budget of the given municipality. Such budgets, however, are either very low or non-existent. The usage of financed infrastructure is appropriate and has no extraordinary or negative effect on useful life. On the positive side, the user committees display a high level of responsibility for ensuring sustained use of the economic infrastructure, such as markets for example.

**Sustainability rating: 4 (HIMO I & II) and 3 (PFA III)**

### Notes on the methods used to evaluate project success (project rating)

Projects (and programmes) are evaluated on a six-point scale, the criteria being **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency** and **overarching developmental impact**. The ratings are also used to arrive at a **final assessment** of a project's overall developmental efficacy. The scale is as follows:

<b>Level 1</b>	Very good result that clearly exceeds expectations
<b>Level 2</b>	Good result, fully in line with expectations and without any significant shortcomings
<b>Level 3</b>	Satisfactory result – project falls short of expectations but the positive results dominate
<b>Level 4</b>	Unsatisfactory result – significantly below expectations, with negative results dominating despite discernible positive results
<b>Level 5</b>	Clearly inadequate result – despite some positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate
<b>Level 6</b>	The project has no impact or the situation has actually deteriorated

Rating levels 1-3 denote a positive assessment or successful project while rating levels 4-6 denote a negative assessment.

### Sustainability is evaluated according to the following four-point scale:

Sustainability level 1 (very good sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to continue undiminished or even increase.

Sustainability level 2 (good sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline only minimally but remain positive overall. (This is what can normally be expected).

Sustainability level 3 (satisfactory sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline significantly but remain positive overall. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability of a project is considered inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation but is very likely to evolve positively so that the project will ultimately achieve positive developmental efficacy.

Sustainability level 4 (inadequate sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project is inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation and is very unlikely to improve. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability that has been positively evaluated to date is very likely to deteriorate severely and no longer meet the level 3 criteria.

The **overall rating** on the six-point scale is compiled from a weighting of all five individual criteria as appropriate to the project in question. Rating levels 1-3 of the overall rating denote a "successful" project while rating levels 4-6 denote an "unsuccessful" project. It should be noted that a project can generally be considered developmentally "successful" only if the achievement of the project objective ("effectiveness"), the impact on the overall objective ("overarching developmental impact") and the sustainability are rated at least "satisfactory" (level 3).