

Burkina Faso

Status Index (Democracy: 2.6 / Market economy: 2.4)		5.0		Management Index		3.6	
System of government	Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Population	12.3 mill.	GDP p. c. (\$, PPP)	1,120	Unemployment rate	n. a.
Voter turnout	64 % ^b	HDI	0.330	UN Education Index	0.24	Gini Index	55.1 (2000)
Women in Parliament	11.7 % (2003)						
Population growth^a	2.7 %						
Largest ethnic minority	47.9 %						
<p>Data for 2001 – if not indicated otherwise. ^{a)} Annual growth between 1975 and 2001. ^{b)} With a very low degree of voter registration and with only 25 % of votes being valid. Source: UN Human Development Report 2003.</p>							

1. Introduction

1998 is an important year in the history of Burkina Faso. Shortly after President Compaoré was elected to his second term of office, with an absolute majority in an election boycotted by the opposition, the murder of journalist Norbert Zongo plunged the country into a serious social and political crisis. The people protested against the government, which they suspected of orchestrating Zongo's death after he had repeatedly exposed the corrupt and criminal scheming that went on in government circles. *Trop c'est trop* (enough is enough) became the slogan of the civic movement and a symbol of its extreme discontent with the country's political, social and economic conditions.

In May 2002, parliamentary elections were held for the third time since the democratic transformation began. Although the results did not put a new party in power, the political landscape has changed, making possible future changes to the system. The evaluation period coincides mainly with the period between the two legislative elections.

This report concludes that democratic transformation stagnated to a great degree between 1998 and 2003, although the government's goal-oriented reform strategy did cause market economic transformation to move forward. Given the difficult political, social, and economic baseline conditions, under which the relevant actors coped with transformation, the government at least experienced some success in the economic sphere.

In most areas under evaluation, previously achieved standards were prevented from eroding, and the transformation of only a few performance criteria

strengthened. Unresolved key issues can be found in the areas of rule of law, strengthening democratic institutions, administrative reform, stabilizing the democratic representation model, continuing with market development and competition, improving economic potential and raising the standard of living for the population as a whole. The way these tasks are handled—in particular the creation of a functional constitutional state—will determine transformation in the medium and long term.

2. History and characteristics of transformation

(1) *Democratic transformation*: The first republic under President Maurice Yaméogo was an authoritarian, corrupt single-party system, which was replaced after a military putsch in 1966 led by General Sangoulé Lamizana, who ruled from 1966 to 1980. Until 1987, Burkina Faso alternated between military and civilian governments, with military putsches in 1974, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1987 the coup led by Captain Thomas Sankara, who attempted to transform the country through revolutionary socialism, was important in this context. Democratic transformation began in 1987 after political and social crises provoked a military coup and Sankara's assassination, and one of the participants, Blaise Compaoré, took power. "Rectification" became the defining term for the controlled reforms and political opening under the new government, reinforcing the fact that the Marxist ideological framework established by Sankara would not be changed substantially.

Compaoré consolidated power by holding provincial elections, continuing with agrarian reform, liberalizing the economy, encouraging private initiatives and civil rights, and re-integrating the urban social classes into the system. Nevertheless, after the *Front Patriotique* (FP) was founded and both of his former closest collaborators were executed, Compaoré became party leader, head of government and parliament, and defense minister all in one, showing the ongoing autocratic character of the regime. Advanced reforms were introduced under strong internal pressure, particularly from unions, following the statutory legalization of non-revolutionary parties and the establishment of numerous new parties, tolerated since 1990. When Compaoré chose not to comply with the call for a national conference, the opposition demanded that the referendum regarding a new constitution be boycotted but it was adopted nonetheless with low voter turnout in July 1991.

The first presidential elections, which took place in the same year and included the election monitoring formally prohibited by Compaoré, led not only to a further boycott by the opposition, but also to massive protests by the rural population. During these elections, the president was officially confirmed in office despite a very low voter turnout; and a year later, his party won the parliamentary elections with an overwhelming majority. In the first few years after Sankara's murder, a

formally democratic system was introduced at the same time an autocratic governing style by a 1980s-type political-military class was maintained.

The 1997 landslide victory of the ruling party, which had since been renamed *Congrès pour la Démocratie et le Progrès* (CDP), not only minimized the opposition's political influence, it was also declared "troublesome for democracy" by those on the government side. Since then, new laws and constitutional changes indicate regression into an authoritarian regime.

(2) *Market economy*: Since its independence, Burkina Faso, which is part of the Sahel zone, has been ranked one of the poorest countries in the world. Until the late 1980s, the state was the dominant player in an economy in which approximately 90 % of citizens made their living from agriculture and animal husbandry. The rural population lived almost exclusively in a subsistence economy, although frequently people could not grow enough food. This has made Burkina Faso heavily dependent on international aid.

In Sankara's attempts at revolutionary reorganization, development policy focused on rural areas: building infrastructure, fostering industry, and access to education and health care. Attempts to reduce dependence on foreign aid stemmed from his understanding of national pride, self-reliance, and the mobilization of community powers. Economic policy was reoriented following the political opening in the late 1980s.

In 1991 a structural adjustment program developed with the IMF and the World Bank was implemented, and it was extended in 1993 and 1996. The dramatic economic and institutional reforms included liberalization of domestic and foreign trade (especially for agricultural products); the privatization of state-owned enterprises; reform of public enterprises and the banking sector; and tax reform. Devaluation of the CFA franc in January 1994 was handled relatively well despite a rising inflation rate and increased prices for imported goods because export revenues from cotton and livestock increased considerably.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, average economic growth rates kept pace with the rate of population growth, improving progressively to a peak of 7.5 % in 1996. Nevertheless, even currency devaluation did not stem massive growth in external debt. A certain amount of social cushioning from the structural adjustment program was achieved in some areas but reform implementation was particularly painful for the poor. Improvements in macroeconomic data were not mirrored in an increase in the standard of living for most citizens.

3. Examination of criteria for democracy and a market economy

3.1 Democracy

Burkina Faso has made progress in the transformation of the political regime in some evaluated areas. Transformation shortcomings continue to exist primarily in the areas of rule of law and institutional stability, and some indicators of democratic stability have regressed. However, the odds for progress have increased in response to the changes that came with the legislative elections in 2002.

3.1.1 Political regime

(1) *Stateness*: The state largely holds a monopoly on the use of force, but violent militias active primarily under the orders of the governmental elite, worsened the security situation during the evaluation period. Although Burkina Faso has a relatively high degree of ethnic diversity, the definition and qualifications for citizenship and who qualifies as a citizen are not politically relevant questions. All citizens have the same rights, church and state are separated, and the political process is secularized. The state is present with basic infrastructure throughout the country, though it functions inadequately in many areas.

(2) *Political participation*. The constitution guarantees all citizens the right to elect officeholders through direct, general, uniform, and free elections. The right to vote and to run for office is guaranteed. The local and legislative elections of 2002 were the first that can be characterized as largely transparent and fair as they followed preliminary changes to the election laws. On the whole, the elected government has the power to govern though the military could use its veto if a civilian government dared to curtail some of its considerable privileges. Political and civic groups are free to form.

As a rule, the government respects the freedom of assembly which is guaranteed in the constitution, but it has repeatedly attempted to curtail citizens' rights to demonstrate and strike (though with only limited success). Ethnic cleavages have almost no impact in the dynamics of civil society. The government restricts freedom of the press and opinion to a certain degree: In random cases, reports critical of the government result in press bans, and there is occasional self-censoring by journalists.

(3) *Rule of law*: The institutional division of power between the executive, legislative and judicial branches is established in Burkina Faso's constitution, but in practical terms it is seriously limited. The president's broad powers and the two-thirds majority the ruling party held until parliamentary elections in May 2002 guaranteed the executive a legally secured monopoly. Parliament's authority

and involvement in the political decision-making process is severely limited and its control is minimal.

Furthermore, transformational shortcomings can be found in the judicial branch. Legally, the judiciary is independent and institutionally distinct, but in practice it is dominated and politicized by the executive branch and its performance is impaired to a considerable degree. Deeply rooted corruption in the Burkinabe judicial system stems from inefficiency, political pressure, poor equipment and a lack of education. Fighting the high degree of political and bureaucratic corruption is one of the public's main demands, and the call for criminal prosecution of corrupt officeholders has taken center stage.

Freedom of religion and a ban on discrimination guaranteed in the constitution are respected as a rule. However, a small elite uses repression, torture, and murder to prevent the discovery of its criminal activities and the fact that there is no obligation for public actions to adhere to legal standards has created a "culture of impunity." The fight against it was put on the political agenda during the evaluation period under popular pressure, but appropriate political or legal measures have remained insignificant thus far.

3.1.2 Political patterns of behavior and attitudes

(1) *Institutional stability*: Democratic institutions are functional only to a limited degree, and do not have intra- or inter-organizational stability. Stability suffers greatly from the previously mentioned shortcomings in the rule of law and the lack of both appropriate personnel and materials. There is a lack of acceptance of and support for democratic institutions in large segments of the Burkinabe population, and they are almost irrelevant for the rural populace. The parliament in particular is generally believed to be relatively powerless.

(2) *Political and social integration*: Parliamentary parties play a minor role in popular opinion building and decision making, and they are marginalized as a mediator between society and the state. Development and expression of social concerns takes place to a much greater degree through non-parliamentary parties and groups, and is articulated through an active civil society. The highly fragmented party system has a low degree of organizational stability and program capacity, limited social roots, weak points in social integration, and personality and patronage tendencies.

However, aggregation of the 10 opposition parties into the Group of 14 February in 1998 eased the effects of fragmentation during the evaluation period. Burkina Faso has a well-differentiated landscape of interest groups dominated by unions, student associations, and human-rights organizations. The quality and development of representation are high and the labor-union system in particular is very highly organized. During the evaluation period, the dense network of interest

groups cooperating with one another became highly politicized and their influence forced the state to be more cooperative.

Burkina Faso's self-organizing civil society, which operates independently of the state, must be viewed against the background of the broad landscape of interest groups. In many areas, it takes on a representative function that government institutions are not in a position to perform. Civic organizations are very willing to act cooperatively and strategically; they generally operate under principles of self-regulation, and are a voice for political concerns. They have a highly integrated character and contribute to the strengthening of democratic action and consciousness.

A "Council of the Wise" to assess the current human rights situation was appointed by the government in 1999 by popular demand. It recommended, among other things, that a truth commission be appointed to deal with crimes committed by the government under President Compaoré. While a decision has not yet been made on whether such a commission will be created, the "Day of Pardon" (*Journée de Pardon*) organized in 2001 did not fulfill the expectations of many social groups. Popular approval for democracy is low and on the decline. In real terms, only 25 % of the population cast a valid ballot in the most recent parliamentary elections. A number of political protests between 1998 and 2003 challenged the constitutional framework.

3.2 Market economy

Burkina Faso's level of socio-economic development has made some progress, and the institutional framework for market economic activity improved slightly. Transformational shortcomings remain in the economy and competition, and in the sustainability of economic growth.

3.2.1 Level of socioeconomic development

The central indicators show a low level of development. With an annual per capita income of just \$230, which is on the decline, and the rank of 169 of 173 on the HDI, Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world. Social marginalization is a serious issue and is structurally reinforced. Over the course of the observation period, the poverty rate—particularly in the cities—and an already unequal income distribution increased even further.

The literacy rate was very low to begin with, and improved only slightly: 1999: 23 %; women: 13.3 percent; men: 33 % (UNDP 1999); 2000: 23.9 %; women: 14.1 %; men: 33.9 % (UNDP 2002). Although the government is promoting the education of girls, women are still at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to access to education. Two thirds of all women participate in the economy, but they

continue to be underrepresented politically. Existing developmental imbalances between regions did not diminish.

Table: Development of socioeconomic indicators of modernization

	HDI	GDI	GDP Index	Gini Index	UN Education Index	Political Representation of Women*	GDP per capita (\$, PPP)
1998	0.303	0.290	0.36	-	0.22	10.5	870
1999	0.320	0.306	0.38	48.2	0.23	11.0	965
2000	0.325	0.312	0.38	55.1	0.23	11.0	1,020

*Percentage of women delegates in Parliament

Sources: UNDP 2000, 2001, 2002

3.2.2 Market structures and competition

The fundamentals of free-market competition are poorly regulated institutionally, with an absence of the rule of law and growing corruption in public administration the main barriers to free-market competition. There are minimal common rules for market participants and regulations are applied inconsistently. The informal sector is developed to the extreme, meaning that a sizeable proportion of economic activity takes place on the black market. The formation of monopolies and oligopolies is not regulated consistently.

Under pressure from the IMF and the World Bank, foreign trade has increasingly been liberalized; but in numerous economic areas, the process has by no means been concluded and protectionism continues to be rampant. In addition to tariffs, there are trade barriers in the form of licenses and fees. Regional trade was expanded when a common foreign tariff was adopted as part of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) in January 2001.

The restructuring of the banking system, which was previously regulated and controlled largely by the government, reached its zenith at the beginning of the evaluation period but the government is still quite involved in this sector. Burkina Faso's banking system is supervised by common central bank serving all members of the WEAMU. Only one Burkinabe company is listed on the stock exchange in Côte d'Ivoire.

3.2.3 Stability of currency and prices

With an average inflation rate of 3.16 %, Burkina Faso benefits from its membership in the CFA franc zone. The common, stable currency—a rarity in Sub-Saharan Africa—has fixed parity with the euro. Strict fiscal and monetary regulations within the WEAMU keep domestic inflation at a low level by African standards at approximately 3 %. Because of the great dependence of price development on the annual crop yield, inflation rates are subject to considerable fluctuation (1998: 5.1%; 1999: -1%; 2000: -0.4%; 2001: 4.9% according to IMF International Financial Statistics).

An all-time peak in foreign currency reserves in 1998 had declined a bit by the end of the evaluation period. The high balance of trade deficit showed a steady increase, which was only eased by the recovery of the world price of cotton in 2001. External debt continued to increase to a high level. Adherence to the IMF's guidelines, which the fund viewed positively, led to the country being accepted into the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) Initiatives I (1997) and II (2000) and to several debt reductions starting in 2000 which somewhat lowered total debt.

3.2.4 Private property

Property rights and the acquisition of property are adequately defined under the law, but weaknesses in the judicial system complicate or prevent their implementation. Expropriation is possible, but seldom occurs. Custom forbids women from acquiring real estate, so only men own land in rural areas. The privatization of state-owned enterprises progressed steadily during the evaluation period as a result of pressure from the IMF and the World Bank. State-owned enterprises continue to exist, along with a strong state-tolerated market concentration.

3.2.5 Welfare regime

Existing social-welfare laws provide pensions, disability insurance, occupational injury insurance, and health insurance. In practice, however, these provisions are insufficient and are strictly segmented according to territory, class, and area. The demand for improved social-welfare networks was at the heart of the numerous worker and union strikes between 1998 and 2003. The privatization and liquidation of a number of enterprises resulted in many job losses not offset by the creation of new positions.

In rural areas in particular, it is almost impossible for individuals to combat poverty on their own. Despite intensified government efforts, medical care and access to sanitation remain poor. Health care is focused in the larger cities, and the

rural population frequently has no other recourse than traditional healing practices. The access of women to higher education is being promoted, but the proportion of women in higher education is still far below the proportion of men. Equal opportunity in access to public services exists in principle, however, the disabled are often subject to social and economic discrimination against which there is no legal protection.

3.2.6 Strength of the economy

A time of increasing economic growth was experienced at the beginning of the evaluation period, during which the economy was sustained by the positive effects of the structural adjustment program, elevated export revenues as a result of the CFA devaluation, and strong growth in the cotton sector. Negative world economic conditions and unfavorable external and internal influences (such as rainfall shortages, small harvests, increasing oil prices, a decrease in bank transfers from people living in exile, collapsing gold exports, political unrest, and governmental corruption) caused the economy to slow in 2000.

Despite predictions of positive growth in 2001, Burkina Faso's economy remains small. The structurally high (and growing) balance of trade deficit could be reduced somewhat in 2001 through rising cotton prices, but it still suffers from the diminishing sums provided as development aid funds dry up. A perennial current account balance deficit reached its zenith in 2001. Limited economic activities in the formal sector depress the government's ability to levy taxes, which are decreasing in any case. The debt service ratio and high expenditure for wages and salaries make it difficult to limit spending and keep the budget deficit high.

Table: Development of macroeconomic fundamentals (1998-2002)

	1998	1999	2000	2001 est.
Export growth in %	13.8	11.0	11.0	-
Import growth in %	30.0	29.0	30.0	-
Inflation in % (CPI)	5.1	-1.0	-0.4	4.9
Budget deficit in % of GDP (with the exception of grants)		-13.3	-12.7	-13.0
Current account balance deficit as a percentage of GDP		-16.0	-17.6	-15.9

Sources: UNDP 2000, 2001, 2002.

3.2.7 Sustainability

The government is environmentally aware and takes the environment into account on a selective basis. An extensive nomadic economy makes overgrazing and soil erosion the main problems in Burkina Faso agriculture and awareness of the problem has led to pursuit of environmental sustainability in this area. Implementation of the UN Desert Convention is prominent here with measures concentrated on protecting against erosion and initiating reforestation, since the forests have declined considerably due to cutting for firewood. However, environmental sustainability tends to be put on the back burner in favor of attempts at growth.

The state system of primary, secondary, and tertiary education continues to be inadequate despite some improvements and increased investments. The school enrollment rate in the late 1990s was 41 percent in elementary schools, 10 % at the secondary level, and only 1 percent at the university level. Poor conditions for teachers, pupils, and students set off massive social protests during the evaluation period. Although government expenditure on education is growing steadily, international donors urge the rechanneling of substantial funds toward this area. However, a high level of corruption in the education sector allows the lion's share of the money allocated to education to trickle away into "black holes", and previous investments have demonstrated serious and frequent shortcomings. There is a lack of both permanent infrastructure and investment in science, research, and development.

4. Trend

(1) *Democracy*: Indicators of a monopoly on the use of force, citizen's rights, and secularization fully guaranteed before the evaluation period have been preserved. The same is true for the elected administration's effective power to govern and for those administrative structures that are present—albeit with some functional shortcomings. The most comprehensive progress has been made in election criteria. While freedom of the press and opinion, and citizens' opportunities for organization experienced stagnation, regressive tendencies can be found in regard to the freedom of assembly.

Up to the parliamentary elections of May 2002, the monitoring system of checks and balances between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches stagnated. But a change in party margins since then (a slight majority of the ruling party on one side, and strengthened opposition parties on the other) could activate the system of checks and balances in the future and further democratic transformation.

The evaluation of the judiciary's independence through the end of the evaluation period remains unchanged, and the level of corruption and human rights abuses has remained static. Democratic institutions remained stable, but acceptance

declined and the parties' political and social integration remains low. Development across the landscape of civic interests and organizations, and the breadth of public participation is high and progressing. Nevertheless, popular contentment with and support of democracy show a regressive trend.

(2) *Market economy*: The fundamental development indicators show slight improvement of the low level of development during the period. This is also true of sustainability indicators, though changes to the Gini index indicate an increase in income disparity. The institutional framework conditions for market economic activity have improved slightly overall, but shortcomings in the economy and competition remain. Macroeconomic development lost some of its momentum compared to the pre-evaluation period. This loss can be attributed in many areas to the crisis conditions of 2000 and subsequent developments exhibit a positive trend.

5. Transformation management

5.1 Level of difficulty

The low level of economic and social development, limited basic free-market structures, extremely low educational levels, an inefficient state administration, considerable deficiencies in the rule of law, and a weak democracy at the beginning of the evaluation period constituted substantial hurdles to furthering transformation. However, strong civic traditions and the absence of irreconcilable religious, ethnic, and social differences within secular society had a beneficial effect.

Overall, the level of difficulty for transformation is high in terms of structural socio-economic conditions that influence the political process in the long term. Resources are in short supply to overcome the hurdles on the road to a consolidated free-market democracy.

5.2 Reliable pursuit of goals

In general, Compaoré's government pursued an economic reform strategy whose goals were appropriately set relative to the country's central development problems, but it was not very successful in some areas. There was a clear priority to implement the IMF and World Bank structural adjustment programs and the poverty-reduction strategy. The reform policy, as implemented, was associated with high costs for some parts of society and welfare improvements were made available only to a small elite and are not expected for the majority in the short or the medium term.

Only limited consistency and coherence is detected between the individual measures aimed to implement a market economy and democracy. Democratic transformation was orientated toward partial reforms and went only as far as necessary for the government to appease the looming social unrest and intense popular pressure that characterize the evaluation period. Reforms were largely a matter of self-serving strategies for the Compaoré administration rather than policy aimed at furthering democracy over the long term. On the other hand, civilian pressure resulted in a somewhat long-term democracy-oriented policy which showed itself primarily through amendments to election laws and the constitution at the same time that some members of moderate factions within the ruling party helped to further the implementation of reforms.

Reliability of expectations was guaranteed for the lives of citizens, but widespread rule of law was not. The economic framework was on a low but stable level. Essentially, however, the possibility of politically instigated insecurity could not be counted out for social and economic actors.

5.3 Effective use of resources

The government's available human, financial, and organizational resources were used effectively only in a very few areas. Due to a lack of structure and coordination, a lack of official monitoring, and in particular, a high level of corruption, immense amounts of resources are wasted and the majority of the state's resources are distributed to a small elite on the basis of patronage networks. With few exceptions, the conditions set by the IMF and the World Bank have been met, and the reform plans have generally been implemented on time. Public services are deficient in many areas, particularly in education, healthcare, and infrastructure, and further economic advances are being hindered or complicated by these deficiencies.

Since corruption has increased in all areas in recent years, fighting it has moved to the top of the list of international donor demands. Although small progress has been made in areas related to integrity (e.g., party-financing legislation, judicial reform, creation of the High Authority for the Coordination of the Fight Against Corruption), visible success in the fight against corruption has thus far failed to materialize. Cultural resources, such as the relatively conspicuous willingness of the people to self-organize and take responsibility for themselves, play a very minor role in the government's reform policy.

5.4 Governance capability

In general, the government faces difficult structural and macroeconomic conditions. The high level of external debt and accompanying dependence on external actors, especially the IMF and the World Bank, limits its own

management leeway considerably. The economic reform policy, implemented within this narrow framework and which met donor demands to the greatest possible extent, on the whole demonstrated intelligence in the selection of tools and strategies.

Willingness to learn exists in principle, and there is no lack of political authority to carry out the necessary reforms. Nevertheless, many opportunities for development have been impeded, primarily because corruption is not being fought. The distributive effects of the government's policies are taken into account to some degree, but the generally ineffective use of resources reduced its effectiveness.

In terms of shaping democratic transformation, the government showed just enough flexibility and willingness to learn as seemed necessary in view of the tense political situation during the evaluation period, since an escalation of the crisis might have compromised both the system and their power. In the run up to parliamentary elections in May 2002, the opposition parties demonstrated their increasing eagerness to learn. The political actors repeatedly showed they were neither in a position to evaluate correctly their scope for political action, nor to make adequate use of recognizable opportunities for development.

5.5 Consensus-building

In many areas, the important political and social actors' have different attitudes toward the goal of development, and there is great divergence in their visions of how to reach these goals. The Sankara era continues to define Burkina Faso. The former president's revolutionary reform policies, with the goal of a socialist society and economic system, are still remembered by many Burkinabe. These ideals, which strive for fair distribution and emphasize a strong farming community, have been maintained and the market-economy transformation is compared with them disapprovingly.

The majority of the population has not tasted the fruits of progress toward a social market economy. At the same time they suffer the negative effects of privatization, restructuring, and liberalization, and it was hardly possible for the actors to reach a consensus on the methods for and goals of shaping the economy. Although the government managed to prevent conflicts from escalating, (wages and salaries were raised to combat pressure from the street, for example) it did not succeed in reducing existing conflicts.

Although the willingness of the government and the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary opposition forces to cooperate remained low during the evaluation period, numerous civic organizations succeeded in exerting considerable influence over the political agenda shaping economic and social-welfare policy. The willingness of citizens to stand together in solidarity already exists, but the

government is not making targeted efforts to foster it. Burkinabe popular protest forced Compaoré to make rhetorical admissions regarding the political elite's social processing of historical acts of injustice. But the progress made thus far has in no way satisfied the need for a more comprehensive policy to come to terms with the past and the process has bogged down in the beginning stages.

5.6 International cooperation

Improvements in Burkina Faso's economic transformation balance since the early 1990s have been directly linked to intense cooperation with national and international donors. At the top of the list are the World Bank subsidiary IDA, the European Union, the African Development Fund (AfDF), and France which is a key bilateral partner.

Without assistance from external actors, most of which arrived as grants or loans with favorable conditions, as well as comprehensive debt-reduction, economic development would have made very limited progress in many areas because of the extremely difficult structural conditions. Assiduous coordination of reforms and a high degree of willingness to fulfill the established conditions as strictly as possible characterized the economic arena. However, patronage-based structures and increasing corruption in numerous areas of the state and society prevented effective use of the resources provided by the international community.

External actors played a much smaller role in the democratic-transformation requirements. The willingness of the Burkinabe to learn here was not very pronounced. The relationship with France had cooled at the beginning of the domestic policy crisis of 1998, in particular because of increasing human rights abuses. It was only owing to massive pressure from international donors that Compaoré hesitantly and reluctantly announced monitoring of all weapons imports to his country in late 2000, after Burkina Faso was described in a UN report months before as a trans-shipment center for the weapons and diamond trades.

The economically and politically important relationship with its closest regional partner, Côte d'Ivoire, suffered greatly. Towards other countries, in international and, especially, regional organizations, Burkina Faso has shown itself to be a reliable and cooperative partner in economic affairs. Building and strengthening collaboration was fostered actively and successfully. In other areas, Compaoré's record is uneven. After he won increasing respect for his role as an active mediator in African conflicts, e.g., between Ethiopia and Eritrea, he forfeited a great deal of it through his problematic involvement in regional conflicts in Liberia, Sierre Leone and Angola.

6. Overall evaluation

In view of the originating conditions, current status and evolution achieved, as well as the actors' political achievements (management), this report arrives at the following conclusions:

(1) *Originating conditions:* The initial conditions for transformation were generally difficult. Prior to the evaluation period, the country was faced with an extremely low level of socio-economic development and market economic structures with very limited potential. The functional deficiencies of democratic institutions, administrative structures, and the rule of law contrast to a lively landscape of civic interests and organizations, which had a significant and positive influence on democratic, political, and to some degree economic development during the observation period.

(2) *Current status and evolution:* The evolution of democratic transformation is limited and the political leadership barely managed to strengthen the character of democratic transformation. On the whole, consolidation is stagnating and there are significant consolidation deficits: primarily, institutional stability, effective use of resources, rule of law, corruption, and an alarming human-rights situation.

The massive political and social unrest in the second half of the evaluation period certainly had the potential to threaten the system from within, though that scenario was avoided. The parliamentary elections in May 2002 marked a possible turning point for democratic transformation, with the improvements in political participation and societal integration brought about by a few reforms having the potential to contribute to the dissolution of factors that are thwarting democracy. Parliament's ability to function is crucial in this.

Transformation to a market economy has advanced a little farther. Macroeconomic development fluctuated during the evaluation period, but it stabilized in most areas, although at a low level. Despite the growth that did occur, stagnant or falling per-capita income remains problematic.

Other socioeconomic indicators, especially in the areas of education and healthcare, started out poorly but improved; and despite some continued major deficits, the framework for the market economy also improved. Nevertheless, transformation to an efficient market economy has not been achieved. The greatest challenge is found in Burkina Faso's immense external debt obligations, which it can continue to meet only with the continued support of international donors, and with the "social-welfare-state" expansion of the market economy.

(3) *Management:* Evaluation of the actors' relative structural achievements is not conclusive. Compared to the time before 1998, the level of economic transformation was maintained in terms of reliability in achieving goals, speed, and prospects of success, and it even progressed in some cases. Management were

successful in their cooperative alliance with external actors but achievement in domestic-policy reform was weak. It was carried out selectively and sporadically, when the pressure from the opposition and the populace left no other alternatives and political and social unrest seemed to pose a threat to Compaoré's power. Only to a very limited degree did they appear to be a means toward a targeted and reform-oriented democratization policy.

7. Outlook

Overall, Burkina Faso has made very little progress in its transformation over the last few years. Some key tasks for democratic and market-economic reforms that need to be solved in the medium- to long-term are found in the areas of: rule of law; strengthening democratic institutions; increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the administration; stabilizing democratic representation; continuing to develop markets and competition; and improving the economic potential and significantly raising the standard of living across the population.

Strengthening the rule of law requires urgent reform of the judicial system. It needs to not only be better equipped materially and to recruit highly educated personnel, but above all the influence of the executive branch on the judicial branch needs to be cut off at the constitutional level. As long as judicial independence does not exist, Burkina Faso's dysfunctional judicial system will remain one of the main barriers to democratic development and reinforce the "culture of impunity."

Burkina Faso must press ahead with strengthening its parliament. To do this, it is especially important that the opposition parties, which gained strength in the last legislative elections, overcome their tendency toward internal and external fragmentation, and they must introduce programatically convincing alternatives in order to strengthen the parliament's functionality and credibility. Only an active, institutionalized opposition can prevent the constitutionally legitimized power of the executive branch from largely overruling the system of checks and balances.

The CDP's loss of its two-thirds majority in the most recent parliamentary elections is an important step toward democracy as it means the ruling party can no longer amend the constitution without the approval of the other parties. Furthermore, a constitutional amendment would be required to curtail the president's unfettered access to the security forces. These forces are increasingly being used to protect the government elite's political and economic interests through violence and crime. The fight against corruption—demanded by international donors—must be carried out with serious and intensive effort. Because corruption impedes the effectiveness and efficiency of all areas (rule of law, democratic institutions, administration, security, the economy, education and healthcare) combating it is one of the main duties of the government.

A new generation and a change in attitude among the elite and the leaders could strengthen the democratic and market-economic transformation. Many young people in present-day Burkina Faso are driven by an enormous thirst for knowledge and the goal of attaining a good education. These human resources must not be squandered. For this reason, among many others, precedence must be given to fighting the growing rate of AIDS infections.

The presidential election in 2005 will be an important indicator of the degree of democratic consolidation that has been achieved. For the first time since the transformation began, regime change will be on the agenda, whether it be a successor from within the CDP ranks, or from the opposition. That said, many observers assume that Blaise Compaoré will not forgo a new candidacy, although the constitution allows for only two terms. It is hoped that the reaction to such a scenario would be resolved exclusively within the framework of democratic standards and institutions.