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Bourdet, Yves

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+46 46-222 00 00



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EMPLOYMENT Working Paper  
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**Employment policy implementation  
mechanisms in Burkina Faso**

Yves Bourdet

Employment  
and Labour  
Market Policies  
Branch

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## Preface

The primary goal of the ILO is to contribute, with member States, to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people, a goal embedded in the ILO Declaration 2008 on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization,<sup>1</sup> and which has now been widely adopted by the international community.

The comprehensive and integrated perspective to achieve this goal are embedded in the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), in the Global Employment Agenda (2003) and, in response to the 2008 global economic crisis, in the Global Jobs Pact (2009) and in the Conclusions of the recurrent discussion on Employment (2010).

The Employment Policy Department (EMPLOYMENT) is fully engaged in global advocacy and in supporting countries placing more and better jobs at the centre of economic and social policies and of inclusive growth and development strategies.

Policy research, knowledge generation and dissemination is an essential component of the Employment Policy Department's action. The publications include books, monographs, working papers, country policy reviews and policy briefs.<sup>2</sup>

The *Employment Policy Working Papers* series is designed to disseminate the main findings of research initiatives on a broad range of topics undertaken by the various branches, units and teams in the Department. The working papers are intended to encourage exchange of ideas and to stimulate debate. The views expressed are the responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of the ILO.

Azita Berar Awad  
Director  
Employment Policy Department

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<sup>1</sup> See [http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/dgo/download/dg\\_announce\\_en.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/dgo/download/dg_announce_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.ilo.org/employment>.



## Foreword

Job creation is a priority for all countries. Yet satisfactory job creation is an uphill battle because today's economic environment and policy circumstances are not necessarily aiding this collective effort. Employment challenges have been mounting, but policymakers are faced with limited, and even reduced, fiscal resources. It means that policy interventions for job creation need to be highly effective.

The ILO assists member states to formulate national employment policies (NEPs) as established in the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No.122). For the years 2012-2013 alone, 73 requests for technical assistance by countries seeking advice on and support for the formulation of their national employment policies have been received. This is why the Employment Policy Department is developing a series of tools that will guide and support ILO constituents in prioritizing policies based on informed choices and consultations.

As an independent evaluation in 2012 of the ILO's work on employment policy has pointed out, such NEPs, however well-formulated and well-designed, can remain as abstract entities unless the necessary institutional arrangements are put in place to ensure their timely and effective implementation. This needs to be complemented by coordination, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to adapt them to changing economic circumstances.

In the light of these concerns, the ILO, with support from technical cooperation funds secured under the ILO-Korean Government Partnership Programme launched a cross-country project entitled "Comparative analysis of employment policy implementation mechanisms across countries" in the first quarter of 2013. The following countries and region are covered by the project: Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Brazil, China, Republic of Korea, South Africa and the European Union (EU) including two of its member states, the United Kingdom and Germany.

This paper discusses the NEP implementation mechanisms in Burkina Faso. It is organized in five sections. The first and second sections present the NEP and the action plan. It begins with a brief analysis of the employment situation in Burkina Faso to put the NEP into perspective. The third section details the institutional framework for implementation and the actors and structures involved as originally planned. This section also addresses the coordination and other problems encountered in the implementation of the NEP and its action plan. The improvement of the NEP requires continuous monitoring of the measures implemented and feedback of lessons learned. It also requires assessments of the impact of the measures on access to employment. That is the subject of the fourth section of the study. The final section summarizes the main findings of the study and attempts to show how they can improve the institutional framework and mechanisms of the next action plan.

Iyanatul Islam  
Chief  
Employment and Labour Market Policies  
Branch  
Employment Policy Department



## **Acknowledgement**

This working paper was prepared by Mr Yves Bourdet, associate Professor of Economics at the University of Lund in Sweden. Comments on the draft of the paper from the reviews by the officials and others in Burkina Faso, by Claire Harasty and Eléonore D'Achon, ILO officials at headquarters, and by participants in the seminar on “Employment policy implementation mechanisms: Some country experiences” on 4-5 November 2013, are acknowledged with appreciation.

The paper was prepared as part of a project that was managed by Yadong Wang under the overall guidance of Azita Berar Awad and Iyanatul Islam.





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## Abbreviations

ANPE	Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi
ASDI	Agence suédoise pour le développement international
CDD	Contrat à Durée Déterminée
CDI	Contrat à Durée Indéterminée
CDMT	Cadre de dépense à moyen terme
CEFOC	Centre de Formation Continue
CFP	Centre de Formation et de Perfectionnement
CGTB	Confédération Générale du Travail du Burkina
CNEFP	Conseil National de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle
CNPB	Conseil National du Patronat Burkinabè
CNTB	Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Burkina
CNSS	Caisse Nationale de Sécurité Sociale
CSB	Confédération Syndicale du Burkina
CSD	Cadre Sectoriel de Dialogue
CSLP	Cadre Stratégique de Lutte contre la Pauvreté
DDC	Direction du Développement de la Coopération suisse
DGPE	Direction Générale de la Promotion de l'Emploi
DYFAB	Dynamisation des Filières Agricoles du Burkina Faso
EBCVM	Enquête Burkinabè sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages
EPCVM	Enquête Prioritaire sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages
EPM	Enquête Prioritaire de Ménages
FAAGRA	Fonds d'Appui aux Activités Génératrices de Revenus des Agricultrices
FAARF	Fonds d'Appui aux Activités Rémunératrices des Femmes
FAFPA	Fonds d'Appui à la Formation Professionnelle et à l'Apprentissage
FAIJ	Fonds d'Appui aux Initiatives des Jeunes
FAPE	Fonds d'Appui à la Promotion de l'Emploi
FASI	Fonds d'Appui au Secteur Informel
Faso Baara	Agence d'Exécution des Projets de Travaux d'Intérêt Public pour l'Emploi
FBDES	Fonds Burkinabé de Développement Économique et Social
FICOD	Fonds d'Investissement pour les Collectivités Décentralisées
FILAJ	Fonds d'Investissement Local d'Appui aux Jeunes
FMI	Fonds monétaire international
FODEL	Fonds de Développement de l'Élevage
FONA-DR	Fonds National d'Appui aux travailleurs Déflatés et Retraités

GIP-PNVB	Groupement d'Intérêt Public – Programme National de Volontariat au Burkina
HIMO	Haute Activité de Main d'Œuvre
INSD	Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEF	Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances
MESSRS	Ministère des Enseignements Secondaire, Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique
MFPTSS	Ministère de la Fonction Publique, du Travail et de la Sécurité Sociale
MJE	Ministère de la Jeunesse et de l'Emploi
MJFPE	Ministère de la Jeunesse, de la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Emploi
MTSS	Ministère du Travail et de la Sécurité Sociale
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMD	Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement
ONEFP	Observatoire national de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle
ONG	Organisations non gouvernementales
ONSL	Organisation Nationale des Syndicats Libres
PACVU	Projet d'Amélioration des Conditions de Vie Urbaine
PAEFP	Projet d'Appui à la Promotion de l'Emploi et à la Formation Professionnelle
PA-Emploi-FP	Projet d'Appui à la Promotion de l'Emploi et la Formation Professionnelle
PAMER	Projet d'Appui aux Micro-entreprises Rurales
PAO	Plan d'Action Opérationnel
PAPME	Projet d'Appui à la création des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises
PARE	Plan d'Action Régional de promotion de l'Emploi
PARPED	Programme d'Augmentation des Revenus et Promotion de l'Emploi Décent
PAFASP	Programme d'Appui aux Filières Agro-Sylvo-Pastorales
PDRDP	Projet de Développement Rural Décentralisé et Participatif
PDVM	Programme de Développement des Villes Moyennes
PIB	Produit Intérieur Brut
PICOFA	Programme d'Investissement Communautaire en Fertilité Agricole
PNAR-TD	Programme National d'Appui à la Réinsertion des Travailleurs Déflatés
PNE	Politique Nationale de l'Emploi
PNUD	Programme des Nations unies pour le développement
PNEFTP	Politique Nationale d'Enseignement et de Formation Techniques et Professionnels
PNVB	Programme National de Volontariat au Burkina

PROFIL	Projet d'Appui aux Filières Agricoles
PSCE	Programme Spécial de Création d'Emplois pour les Jeunes et les Femmes
PSTP/HIMO	Programmes Spéciaux des Travaux Publics à Haute Intensité de Main d'Œuvre
QUIBB	Questionnaire unifié des indicateurs de base du bien-être
SCADD	Stratégie de Croissance Accélérée et de Développement Durable
SMIG	Salaire minimum interprofessionnel garanti
SRE	Stratégie Régionale de l'Emploi
UE	Union européenne
UEMOA	Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine
UPI	Unité de production informelle
UGTB	Union Générale des Travailleurs du Burkina
USTB	Union Syndicale des Travailleurs du Burkina

# 1 Introduction<sup>3</sup>

Burkina Faso is one of the developing countries to have formulated and implemented a National Employment Policy (NEP). The NEP was officially adopted by the Government in May 2008. To make it credible and facilitate its implementation, the NEP has been accompanied by an Employment Action Plan (EAP). Initially the action plan was expected to cover a period of 4 years, from 2008 to 2011. The period was extended, however, and is still running. Before the adoption of the NEP, there already existed a whole range of measures whose purpose was to facilitate access to employment, particularly for youth, and the employability of the workforce. Often these measures were the result of ad hoc initiatives or initiatives of development partners providing funding. The NEP has contributed to unifying these measures. It has worked as a catalyst and also contributed to initiating new employment schemes, and has improved the visibility and the coherence of the existing measures. The expiry of the first period of the action plan and the employment results falling short of expectations make it necessary to evaluate the relevance and the effectiveness of the implementation mechanisms, the institutional framework of coordination between actors and structures, the system of monitoring and evaluation system and its feedback into the content of the policy. These are the objectives of the present study.

The structure of the study is as follows. The second section presents the NEP and the action plan. The chapter begins with a brief analysis of the employment situation in Burkina Faso to put the NEP into perspective. The third section details the institutional framework for implementation and the actors and structures involved as planned originally. This section also addresses coordination-related and other problems encountered in the implementation of the NEP and its action plan. The improvement of the NEP requires continuous monitoring of the measures implemented and feedback of lessons learned. It also requires assessments of the impact of the measures on access to employment. That is the subject of the fourth section. The final section summarizes the main findings of the study and attempts to see how these findings can improve the institutional framework and mechanisms of the next action plan.

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<sup>3</sup> Thanks are due to the officials and others in Burkina Faso who devoted time to inform me about the employment situation and the National Employment Policy. Thanks are in particular due to Eléonore d'Achon, Claire Harasty, Frédéric Kaboré, Yadong Wang and participants in the ILO seminar on Employment policy implementation mechanisms in Geneva on 4-5 November 2013 for help with the collection of materials and constructive comments on a draft version of the study.

## 2 Employment situation and national employment policy

Burkina Faso is a predominantly agricultural country. The place of agriculture (including livestock) in employment is much more important than in GDP, due to the low productivity in agriculture, which reflects in part the high underemployment in the sector. The data in Table 1 indicate that self-employment in agriculture was 84.5% of total employment in 2003.<sup>4</sup> The share of agricultural self-employment in total employment declined only slightly between 1994 and 2003. There is a more recent household survey (*Enquête Intégrale sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages* 2009) but its data are unfortunately not available. However, it is unlikely that the share of agricultural self-employment in total employment has changed much since 2003. Table 1 shows that agricultural self-employment is much more common among the poor than among the non-poor.<sup>5</sup>

The informal sector (retail trade, catering, domestic work, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, etc.) is the second largest supplier of jobs in Burkina Faso, some 12% of total employment in 2003. Table 1 suggests that the informal sector occupies one non-poor worker in five. The informal sector seems to play a less important role for the poor. It is likely that the estimation of employment from the activity of the head of household underestimates the importance of informal employment, which is often an extra activity in agricultural households. A survey of the informal sector in Ouagadougou confirms its importance as provider of jobs in urban areas. According to the survey, no less than 74% of the jobs in Ouagadougou are informal jobs (INSD, 2003b, p. 25). Table 1 reflects the importance of informal employment for non-poor people in employment.

Table 1 Distribution of employment by sector (percentage of the work force), 1994 and 2003.

	Total		Poor		Non poor	
	1994	2003	1994	2003	1994	2003
Agricultural self-employment	86.5	84.5	96.2	94.5	74	75.9
Informal sector	10.3	12.1	3.3	5.2	19.1	18
Formal sector	3.2	3.4	0.3	0.3	6.9	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Bernabè and Krstic (2005), Table 4, p. 13 based on EPCVM 1994 and EBCVM 2003.

Finally, the formal sector, private and public, provides only 3% of total employment, and the percentage has changed little over time. Only non-poor people have access to jobs in the formal sector. Often it is relatively skilled jobs that require skills acquired by people with secondary education, in particular technical and vocational, and higher

<sup>4</sup> At first glance, these data on the importance of agricultural self-employment are difficult to reconcile with the estimates of the weight of agriculture and livestock farming in Burkina Faso's GDP, approximately one third according to the INSD. The much lower productivity of agricultural jobs, compared to those in other sectors, explains some of the discrepancy. Another reason is the overestimation of agricultural activities and the underestimation of informal activities when employment is estimated from the main activity of the head of household.

<sup>5</sup> According to official estimates of the ISND, poverty affected 46 per cent of the population of Burkina Faso in 2003. It changed little between 1994 and 2003. Preliminary estimates by the World Bank based on data from the 2009 EICVM indicate a poverty incidence of 47% in 2009 (53% in rural areas and 25% in urban areas). An interesting result with regard to employment is that agricultural self-employment is the most affected by poverty with an incidence of 54% compared to 20.5% and 8% for those employed in the formal private sector and the public sector, respectively.



education. The relative importance of employment in the formal sector has changed very little over time, reflecting the slow process of diversification of the economy and the few jobs created by the private formal sector. The strong economic growth experienced by Burkina Faso over the past fifteen years, approximately 5 per cent per year on average, had only a limited impact on the distribution of employment between economic sectors. Growth in Burkina Faso has created few quality (decent) jobs. It is likely that the rapid population growth experienced by the country (+ 3.1% annual average between the population censuses of 1996 and 2006) was instrumental in the unchanged distribution, the latter in fact concealing an increase in the absolute number of formal jobs.

Another important aspect of the employment situation in Burkina Faso concerns unemployment, which is low by international standards. It is also stable over time. In 2003, according to estimates based on the Burkina Faso survey on household living conditions, the unemployment rate was 2.4 per cent of the active population, against 2.6 per cent in 1994. A striking feature of unemployment in Burkina Faso concerns the strong geographical inequalities. In 2003, the unemployment rate was 8.6% in urban areas compared with only 0.7% in rural areas. This urban-rural contrast reflects the differences in the risks of unemployment of the non-poor (mostly resident in urban areas) and the poor (mostly resident in rural areas). In 2003, some 3.2% of the non-poor were unemployed compared with 1.2% of the poor. In urban areas, youth (and first-time labour market entrants) and educated people (secondary education or higher) were most affected by unemployment. In rural areas, more than unemployment, it is agricultural underemployment, and its downward impact on labour productivity, which condemns many rural people to chronic poverty.

Those people without work during the seven days preceding the survey, available for work and actively looking for a job are considered unemployed by the official household survey, EBCVM 2003 (INSD, 2003a, p. 16). This is the definition recommended by the ILO. The discouraged unemployed, those not actively seeking work, are not counted among the unemployed. According to an estimate for the year 2007, the discouraged unemployed are 6.5% of the population of working age (Zerbo, 2009). Women, young people (15-24 years) and those without formal education, or with only a primary level of education, are over-represented among the discouraged unemployed. If this category of unemployed is included, the rate of unemployment is rising at about 9% (2.4% + 6.5%), a figure more appropriate to the severity of unemployment in Burkina Faso and one of the major challenges faced by the NEP.

## **2.1 The NEP as a response to the problems of employment and poverty in Burkina Faso**

The preparatory work for the development of the NEP began in 2006 under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth and Employment (MJE). The MJE is a recent Ministry, formed in January 2006 following the break-up of the former Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth into two separate departments, the Ministry of Youth and Employment and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MTSS).<sup>6</sup> In 2011, the MJE was given responsibility for post-school vocational training and became the Ministry of Youth, Vocational Training and Employment (MJFPE).

This institutional history contains three potential risks for the NEP. The first is that technical, organizational and financial capacities and resources available to the MJFPE are limited, which could have implications for the formulation, dissemination,

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<sup>6</sup> The title of the MTSS changed once more in 2013 to become the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Security (MFPTSS).

publicizing, implementation and monitoring/evaluation of the NEP. The second is that the influence of the latest entrant over other departments may be low, with, as a consequence, greater difficulty in conveying its message and sharing its priorities with them. The third is that some areas covered by the NEP fall within departments other than the MJFPE, which can have consequences for the coherence, monitoring and the effectiveness of interventions. One example relates to labour legislation which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Security (MFPTSS), the design of which affects the functioning of the labour market (employment placement, turnover, scope for part-time work, rules for recruitment and dismissal, etc.).

The NEP has four strategic objectives<sup>7</sup>:

- 1) Strengthening the relationship between the NEP and other national policies
- 2) Strengthening job creation
- 3) Improving employability
- 4) Improving the organization and functioning of the labour market

The first strategic objective is to raise awareness, in other departments as well as among public and private decision-makers, of the consequences for employment of macroeconomic and sectoral policies. It is also to improve the coherence between employment policy and other national policies. With regard to macroeconomic policies, it is essentially advocacy. In terms of sectoral policies, it is to support the growth of job-rich sectors, in particular agriculture (and the rural sector) and crafts. The measures recommended for these two sectors are similar to the traditional measures of labour market policies, such as labour-intensive infrastructure works which are likely to increase agricultural and rural growth and self-employment programmes and support to the creation of micro and small enterprises in the small business and artisanal crafts sector.

The second strategic objective focuses on the creation of jobs, directly and indirectly. The potential creators of micro and small businesses encounter a large number of obstacles and the objective of the NEP is to remove these obstacles, especially those related to their financing and survival during their early years of existence. The purpose of the NEP is to federate, develop interventions by agencies and structures already in place (ANPE, FASI, FAPE, FSFPA, PAMER, PNAR-TD), and improve their visibility and their effectiveness. Another aspect of this second strategic objective concerns programmes targeted at groups facing difficulties integrating into the labour market (youth, women, rural workers, etc.) as well as the emphasis on labour-intensive public works (HIMO). The great difficulties of insertion of young people (graduates or those without formal school education) and women, and the large number of young people and women seeking a first job, make them priority targets for the NEP. The NEP combines all the measures that have been introduced, often in an ad hoc manner, and makes them more coherent and effective. The NEP document gives the public employment agency (ANPE) a major role in the management of measures for young people. Finally, this second component encourages the development of labour-intensive workfare programmes (HIMO), which encourage the use of production methods which make intensive use of local labour, on a scale much larger than prior to the NEP.

The third strategic objective is to increase the skills of the workforce, focusing on those required in the labour market. It also seeks to develop the system of basic and post-secondary technical and vocational training, schools, to increase the supply of skilled workers in Burkina Faso. Finally it focuses on areas where the supply of technical and vocational training is inadequate, as in the agro-sylvo-pastoral sectors. The third strategic objective is the one that receives the least emphasis in the official NEP document, little

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<sup>7</sup> The description is based on the latest, official version of the NEP, see MJE (2008a).

more than a page compared to six pages for the first objective, eight pages for the second and five for the fourth. It is probably the process of revision and modernization of the system of technical and vocational education in Burkina Faso, at the same time as the development of the NEP, which explains the modest place of employability and vocational training in the NEP document. The national technical and vocational training policy (*politique nationale d'enseignement et de formation techniques et professionnels*, PNEFTP) was developed by the department in charge of technical and vocational training (MESSRS) and adopted on 23 July 2008, two months after the adoption of the NEP.<sup>8</sup>

The fourth strategic objective of the NEP aims to improve the organization and the functioning of the labour market. The measures proposed concern the regulatory framework (labour legislation), the information system on employment and training, and intermediation between employers and jobseekers. The NEP advocates an improvement of the provisions of the Labour Code of 2004 with regard to hiring and firing rules and working time. As employment placement, the NEP proposes to strengthen the role of the public employment agency (ANPE), in particular in the regions, and to encourage the establishment of private employment agencies.<sup>9</sup> With regard to the information system on employment and vocational training, the NEP emphasizes the central role of the National Observatory of Employment and Vocational Training (ONEF) - *Observatoire National de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle*. The fourth objective also contains measures to promote decent work, for example, through a greater application of labour legislation and social dialogue.

The four strategic objectives of the NEP aim at providing solutions to the problems of employment and unemployment in Burkina Faso. The first objective, by improving the coordination between the various ministries, agencies and actors, is to improve the coherence of the policies and the effectiveness of the overall strategy. The second objective, through measures for self-employment and public works (HIMO or others), is to promote access to employment for groups facing difficulties of integration into the labour market, for those running the greatest risk of unemployment or for those in chronic underemployment. It is also to accelerate economic growth thanks to the new infrastructure and its impact on the creation of micro and small enterprises. The third objective is to give the workforce the skills demanded by the labour market, as well as to increase the productivity of the beneficiaries of employment programmes through the acquisition of skills. Thereby, the improvement of employability will also have a positive impact on economic growth. The fourth goal, finally, aims to achieve better and faster matching of supply and demand in the labour market, as well as to steer workers towards branches and sectors with higher productivity. It also aims at better monitoring and better evaluation of the policy which allows adjustment of the composition and action of the NEP on the basis of the evaluation results. The four objectives of the NEP are in line with the poverty reduction strategy, the SCADD, whose priority objective is to accelerate economic growth. It is expected that the achievement of the four strategic objectives of the NEP will lead to economic growth in which creates more jobs.

## 2.2 From the NEP to the EAP

The NEP outlines the employment policy. It is important for the visibility of the policy, its credibility, implementation and monitoring, that the NEP is translated into specific measures, with designation of the agency and actors in charge of the measure, an

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<sup>8</sup> MESSRS (2008).

<sup>9</sup> The public employment agency (ANPE) has 13 regional directorates, each consisting of an employment office and a training centre. The ANPE also has 5 provincial vocational training centres.

estimate of the approximate cost and the sources of funding, and a realistic implementation schedule. That is the purpose of the Employment Action Plan.

The action plan covered a period of four years, from 2008 to 2011 (MJE (2008b)). It has not been renewed since 2011, which suggests that it is still ongoing.<sup>10</sup> An important difference between the NEP and its action plan concerns the inclusion of a fifth strategic objective, namely the establishment of the conditions necessary for implementation of the NEP. This 'new' strategic objective is divided into two immediate objectives: 1) establishing an appropriate institutional framework for the implementation of the NEP and the action plan, and 2) improving the insertion of the employment imperative in the poverty reduction strategy. In the official version of the NEP, these two objectives are included in the implementation mechanism (non-strategic objective). This change is not trivial because it reflects a belated awareness of the importance of the conditions of implementation for the success of the NEP.

The first crucial aspect of the action plan concerns its quantitative importance, and the distribution of the measures between the strategic and immediate objectives. It is the subject of the first column in Table 2. No less than 317 activities were planned in 2008. The objective of strengthening job creation is the one with the largest number of activities, followed by improving the organization and the functioning of the labour market. These are essentially activities that fall within the traditional definition of labour market policy. Employability improvement activities are less numerous, which reflects the delay in the development of the technical and vocational training policy in Burkina Faso and the fact that its formulation ran parallel to that of the NEP.

A second crucial aspect relates to departments and other relevant agencies. The number of departments involved in the immediate objectives is relevant to the analysis of the horizontal coherence of the actions. The number of non-departmental agencies is important for the analysis of the vertical cohesion, i.e. cohesion between the actions of departments and agencies under their responsibility. The second column of Table 2 gives the number of departments and agencies involved in the implementation of the activities. The number of departments involved, as well as the number of executing agencies, is particularly important with regard to the immediate objective of job creation (objective 2.2). This reflects, of course, the large number of activities under this objective. It is also due, however, to the fact that employment programmes for young people, women, etc. are the responsibility of different ministries, agencies and organizations. There is a strong specialization of departments: 1) the Ministry of Finance (MEF) has particular responsibility for the objectives of taking into account employment in cross-cutting policies (objectives 1.1 and 5.2); 2) the Ministry of Employment (MJFPE) has particular responsibility for employment programmes, the functioning of the labour market and the implementation of the NEP (objectives 2.2, 4.1 and 5.1); 3) the sectoral departments, crafts, industry and trade, are responsible for employment-creating activities at sectoral level (objective 1.2); 4) the department in charge of the private sector is responsible for improving the business climate, 5) the Ministry of Education (MESSRS) in collaboration with the MJFPE is responsible for employability (objectives 3.1 and 3.2); and 6) the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Service (MFPTSS) is in charge of the promotion of decent work (target 4.2).

A third crucial aspect of the action plan concerns its cost and its funding, the provision of adequate resources being a prerequisite for its implementation and success. Just under one third of the envisaged activities already had a budget allocation at the time

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<sup>10</sup> Several factors can be advanced to explain why the action plan was not renewed on time: insufficient financial and human resources at the MJE, the civil unrest that broke out in 2011 and 2012, the development of new employment schemes, etc.

of the adoption of the action plan. A budget allocation is the first stage of implementation. Just over one third, or 40 per cent, were considered as activities with no budgetary implications or activities included in the current budget of the departments or structures involved. There remained approximately 25 per cent of activities whose budget remained to be established. A prudent conclusion, therefore, is that the conditions of mobilization of resources for the financing of the activities of the whole action plan were relatively good. Of course the reality of funds mobilized for the implementation of each activity remains to be seen. The mobilization of resources has been helped by the establishment of a technical inter-ministerial committee by the Ministry of Employment in 2009, in order to accelerate the integration of the Employment Action Plan into the national budget. This committee conducted the first Public Expenditure Review of the MJE (MJE, 2010a), in close collaboration with the Ministry of Finance. As a result, the MJE was one of the seven priority ministries able to submit a programme and budget to the National Assembly in December 2010.

Table 2 Employment Action Plan, 2008-2011

<b>Strategic objectives</b> Immediate objectives	Number of planned activities (in % of the total number of activities)	Number of leading structures (of which ministries)	Number of activities with estimated budget (no. of activities without incidence or current budget)	Implementation
<b>1. Strengthen the connection between the NEP and other policies</b>				
1.1. Taking account of employment in transversal policies	25 (8) 6 (3)	10 (3)	Low	
1.2. Taking account of employment in sectoral policies	31 (10)	7 (4)	14 (10)	Low
<b>2. Strengthen job creation</b>				
2.1. Promotion of private activities rich in jobs	36 (11)	6 (2)	15 (12)	Underway
2.2. Strengthen the targeted measures of job promotion	88 (28)	10 (5)	30 (34)	Advanced
<b>3. Improve the employability of the labour force</b>				
3.1. Increase the scope of vocational training in relation to the needs	15 (5)	7 (2)	3 (8)	Initiated
3.2. Improve the quality of training through an integrated approach	9 (3)	4 (2)	1 (3)	Initiated
<b>4. Improve the organization and functioning of the labour market</b>				
4.1. Improve the governance of the labour market	32 (10)	8 (4)	7 (17)	Underway
4.2. Progress towards decent work	45 (14)	6 (3)	20 (19)	Initiated
<b>5. Institutional framework for implementation of the NEP</b>				
5.1. Establishment of an appropriate implementation framework	20 (6)	2 (1)	7 (10)	Low
5.2. Inserting the imperative of employment into the CSLP	16 (5)	3 (2)	2 (12)	Low
<b>Total</b>	<b>317 (100)</b>		<b>109 (128)</b>	

## 2.3 Mixed results at best

A crucial aspect of the action plan concerns its degree of implementation to date. Only an analysis of the 317 activities would provide a precise answer to this question. It is possible, however, to give a rough assessment of the degree of implementation of the immediate objectives of the action plan. This is what is done in the last column of Table 2. For most of the immediate objectives, the action plan is initiated or under way. A more refined evaluation would be needed give a more accurate order of magnitude. For three of the immediate objectives, however, it is possible to be more detailed.

Targeted actions of employment promotion are the most numerous, 88 activities out of a total of 317 (objective 2.2 in Table 2). According to the action plan, they are also those having either a budget allocation or are financed from the current budget (or are without financial implications). Most of these activities are traditional measures of labour market policy, which are mainly the responsibility of the MJFPE. Even before the adoption of the NEP, there existed a whole range of schemes targeting potentially vulnerable groups in the labour market.<sup>11</sup> It is also in this area that new programmes have been introduced continuously to deal with acute problems of employment and unemployment. One illustrative example is the special programme of job creation for young people and women (PSCEJF) for 2012-2014 (for an overview, see [www.psce.bf](http://www.psce.bf)). This programme is important in terms of: 1) the populations targeted (graduates, without school education or early drop-outs, urban and rural youth, women); 2) the intervention instruments (internships, labour-intensive workfare programmes, support for self-employment, vocational training, access to factors of production, etc.); 3) the large number of departments involved (ten); 4) the geographical coverage (13 regions) and the involvement of the decentralized communities; and 5) the financial resources mobilized, 11 billion CFA Francs (about 17 million euros) from the State budget. The funds devoted each year to the PSCEJF are considerable and correspond to twice the budgetary expenditures on employment and youth<sup>12</sup>. The large number of projects and the renewal of interventions under the objective of strengthening targeted employment promotion measures therefore justify the adjective "advanced" in Table 2.

Significant changes have also been made with regard to the improvement of the functioning of the labour market. As mentioned above, this objective (4.1) covers the regulatory framework (labour legislation), information on the employment and training system, and intermediation between employers and jobseekers. The last two aspects have not experienced significant improvement because of the weakness of statistical data on employment and training, and financial constraints for ANPE and the ONEF activities. The first part, however, saw significant changes in the direction of the changes advocated by the NEP. Indeed, a new Labour Code was adopted in 2008 to replace that of 2004 (MTSS (2008)). The new Labour Code simplifies the conditions of recruitment with easier recourse to fixed-term contracts. These are now renewable without limitation. The new Labour Code also simplifies the conditions governing dismissal, with the possibility of freeing itself of priority rules, such as seniority. Another change concerns the reduction of procedures of dismissal for economic reasons. The reform of the labour legislation was expected by its proponents to have a positive impact on job creation in the formal sector.<sup>13</sup> The reform gave

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<sup>11</sup> For an inventory of the schemes, see Kobré, 2011, Table 62, pp 86-92.

<sup>12</sup> Some 5.4 billion CFA Francs (0.86 per cent of budgetary expenditures) were devoted by the Government to employment and youth in 2009 (MJE, 2010a, p. 21).

<sup>13</sup> A World Bank survey from 2006 suggests that labour legislation played a role in the recruitment and dismissal decisions of 29% of companies in the manufacturing sector and 13% in services (World Bank, 2006, p. 54). Another example is given in an IMF study of the mining sector, according to which the difficulties of using temporary contracts during the exploration phase constituted a serious obstacle to the expansion of formal employment in the sector (IMF, (2008, p. 68).

rise to a lively debate among domestic (trade unions) and foreign stakeholders (the World Bank and the ILO). The changes in labour legislation, combined with the absence of significant changes to the two aspects of information and employment placement justify the qualitative assessment of objective 4.1 in Table 2 (underway).<sup>14</sup>

Taking account of employment in cross-cutting policies (objective 1.1) and the insertion of the employment imperative in the process of the CSLP (objective 5.2) broadly overlap, though they belong to two distinct strategic objectives of the NEP. Employment is not an explicit priority of the second generation of poverty reduction (SCADD), which focuses on economic growth as the main instrument of poverty reduction. SCADD relies on four priority pillars: 1) the development of accelerated growth; 2) the consolidation of human capital and the promotion of social welfare; 3) the strengthening of good governance; and 4) taking into account cross-cutting priorities in development programmes and policy. Employment does not appear in the cross-cutting priorities concerning gender, population, the environment and regional development. Employment does appear, however, in the axis “consolidate human capital and promote social welfare” (SCADD, 2011, pp 52-53). The integration of employment in the social axis may overshadow the positive impact of the NEP on economic growth. The logical framework, which is to SCADD what the action plan is to NEP, never mentions the NEP (or EAP). The NEP is mentioned briefly in the part of the strategy document on the “assessment of a decade of economic and social development 2000-2009” (SCADD, 2011, p. 19). The rather limited role of employment and access to work in the poverty reduction strategy and in the cross-cutting policies is noted by the National Council for Employment and Vocational Training (CNEFP) in its report of November 2012 on the state of implementation of the NEP (see MJFPE, 2012a, p. 6). This is all the more surprising, in that many activities of the action plan are examples of measures to help poor households escape poverty (labour-intensive workfare programmes, support for self-employment, training schemes, etc.). It is thus clear that the consideration of employment in cross-cutting policies (immediate objective 1.1) is relatively low and that the imperative of inclusion of employment in the poverty reduction strategy (objective 5.2) is insufficiently taken into account by either the former strategy (CSLP) or the new, SCADD.

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<sup>14</sup> The role of the ANPE in intermediation in the labour market remains minimal, the bulk of job offers going through other channels (family networks, private placement agencies, etc.). The number of jobseekers registered with the ANPE represents less than 2% of the total number of unemployed (discouraged unemployed included) and less than 12% of registered jobseekers found employment through the ANPE in 2010. For data on the number of vacancies and job applications, see ONEF, 2011, p. 42.



### 3 Institutional framework of the NEP

The success of the NEP requires an efficient mechanism for implementation and monitoring and evaluation. According to the official NEP document, its implementation entails: 1) the creation of the National Council of Employment and for Vocational Training (CNEFP) for piloting and follow-up of the NEP and dialogue with the social partners and civil society; (2) the appointment of an executive coordinator for the operational implementation of the NEP; 3) the establishment of a technical secretariat to assist the coordinator in implementing its tasks; 4) collaboration between the coordinator, the technical secretariat and the ONEF for the monitoring and evaluation of the measures; and 5) the organization of awareness-raising campaigns at central and regional level. As indicated above, the action plan goes further in advocating four separate pillars, orientation and consultation pillar, an executive pillar, a technical pillar, and a decentralized pillar at regional level. It also details their powers.

The National Council for Employment and Vocational Training (CNEFP) is the consultation and steering pillar of the NEP. It is an inter-ministerial and tripartite body composed of members of the departments in charge of employment, social partners and stakeholders from civil society at national and local level. More specifically its role is to:

- guide the initiatives of the mechanism and the actors, with particular emphasis on the convergence and complementarities of the interventions and actions,
- monitor the initiatives and implementing activities,
- monitor for inertia, difficulties, obstacles, new facts and opportunities relating to the implementation of the NEP/EAP and, more generally employment,
- evaluate the initiatives and the actions, from the perspectives of their appropriateness, pace, degree of commitment, quality, timing, etc.,
- formulate suggestions to improve the relevance and the efficiency of the interventions and the actions and, as and when necessary, their reorientation,
- deliberate on the evolution of the employment situation and formulate any relevant suggestions for the NEP/EAP,
- oversee the monitoring and evaluation activities and in this regard approve the annual report of the executive coordinator,
- formulate any recommendations relating to issues of employment for the actors of the NEP/EAP or the authorities,
- contribute to social dialogue and consultation on the NEP/EAP.

The Executive Coordinator is the central player in the executive pillar, responsible for the execution of the EAP under the supervision of the Department of Employment, the MJFPE. More precisely, its role is to:

- give operational impetus to the various actors of the NEP/EAP in the spheres concerned,
- lead and be responsible for the organizational process necessary for the progress of NEP/EAP and the various activities: communication, consultations, periodic meetings, studies, reflection, working groups, workshops, deadlines, sequences to be followed, organization of links, etc.,
- centralize all the information on the implementation and monitoring of all measures and technical actions undertaken in the framework of the NEP/EAP,
- organize and oversee the technical work and activities of the technical secretariat
- assure the necessary relations at regional level for the implementation of the NEP/EAP,
- prepare the meetings of the steering committee and the necessary documentation,
- contribute to the relevant initiatives to help mobilize resources and strengthen the capacity of stakeholders in the NEP/EAP,

- help to build a strategic partnership with responsible departments of the CSLP and assist with budgetary issues,
- take or support initiatives, as appropriate, to promote a permanent dialogue on the NEP/EAP,
- organize the evaluation and impact assessment work required by the NEP/EAP,
- Prepare an annual report on the implementation of the NEP/EAP and submit it to the CNEFP.

The third pillar of implementation of the NEP is the technical secretariat. Its role is to provide technical support to the executive coordinator, specifically to:

- take all necessary relational and organizational measures to support the activities of the EAP,
- ensure that the programming of tasks and work schedules are respected,
- collect and analyse the information on the progress and the conditions of implementation of the EAP,
- prepare, at the request of the executive coordinator, any study or analysis relevant to the action plan and feasible within the resources of the secretariat,
- prepare, at the request of the coordinator, any report on the execution of the EAP or related employment issues,
- prepare, as necessary, the documentation and/or the organizational arrangements for consultations, meetings or working groups, workshops, employment-related events, the communication material, terms of reference for studies, missions, etc.,
- establish good working relations with the actors in charge of the implementation of the activities of the EAP at the national and regional levels.

The fourth pillar is the regional level, represented by the regional director of the Ministry of Employment, the MJFPE. The regional director is under the authority of the governor of the region. Its role is to:

- ensure ownership of the objectives, approaches and actions included in the NEP/EAP by local actors and social partners,
- lead the mobilization of local actors and social partners on the issues of employment and the actions to be taken at regional level,
- study the employment situation in the region and actions needed to promote employment, and share this information locally and at national level,
- Prepare an annual report on the employment situation and actions to promote employment in the region,
- promote analyses and timely reflection to help in the formulation of responses to employment problems, and interventions to promote employment at regional or municipal level,
- contribute to the activities to implement the NEP and, more generally, actions to promote employment of interest for the region, in particular in terms of the convergence of efforts, support to institutions operating locally, information and orientation of the local recipients of employment measures,
- Establish relationships with regional councils and the advisory regional development councils.

### **3.1 Potential risks**

At first sight, the structure of the institutional framework for implementation of the NEP/EAP is logical, with a coordination, guidance, consultation and reflection pillar, the CNEFP, an execution and monitoring pillar, the executive coordinator and technical secretariat, and an appropriation, dissemination, coordination and implementation pillar in the 13 regions of Burkina Faso. Nevertheless, the description of the functions, their

distribution among the pillars and the omission of certain functions necessary for the effective implementation of the NEP suggests four risks inherent in the recommended structure.

First, the four implementation pillars are under the overall umbrella of the MJFPE, even if the steering committee consists of the Prime Minister and representatives of various departments. This is particularly the case of the executive structure and the regional pillars. The NEP is a cross-cutting policy that, to succeed, requires in-depth and continuous collaboration between the departments involved so as to ensure the coherence of interventions (horizontal coherence). It is crucial for funding issues where cooperation with the Ministry of Finance is essential to reconcile the priorities of the NEP with budgetary imperatives and constraints. However, collaboration with other implementing departments is also important. The description of the specific functions of the four implementation pillars in the action plan suggests that interdepartmental cooperation is insufficiently taken into account. The only explicit reference to this aspect is found in one of the functions of the executive coordinator under a rather vague formulation “help to build a strategic partnership with responsible departments of the CSLP and assist with budgetary issues”.

A second risk inherent in the description of the functions of the four pillars concerns the blurred relationship between the MJFPE and the implementing agencies (vertical coherence). For example, none of the functions of the executive or regional pillars deal with the role of executive agencies, such as the employment agency (ANPE). The same reasoning can apply to the agencies in charge of vocational training, such as the FAFPA, which plays a key role in improving the employability of the workforce. A third example concerns the ONEF and its role in the monitoring of the NEP. The absence of implementation and monitoring structures poses a risk to the vertical coherence of the NEP/EAP (coherence between the interventions of the MJFPE and the agencies under its tutelage as well as those which are under the supervision of other departments).

The third risk relates to the duplication of the functions of the different pillars. The risk, of course, is that the task will be executed twice, absorbing administrative and technical resources, or is not performed by any of the relevant bodies, each avoiding any additional workload. A good example is the monitoring of the NEP and its measures. According to the action plan, the monitoring of the implementation of employment policy is the responsibility of the executive coordinator and performed by the technical secretariat. The monitoring of employment policy measures (according to the original description in the official presentation of the NEP) is also the responsibility of the ONEF, which is also responsible for the analysis of the employment and unemployment situation in collaboration with the official statistical office, INSD.

The fourth potential risk concerns the politicization of the implementation, i.e. dependence on changes of governments or ministerial reshuffles. Politicization may jeopardize the continuity of the NEP (its temporal coherence). Two examples are the technical coordinator function and the function of the regional director under the responsibility of the governor of the region. The executive coordinator is the Secretary General of the MJFPE. It is obvious that frequent changes may affect the implementation of the policy, for instance by delaying the execution of interventions, due to the time it takes for a newcomer to appropriate the new role and new responsibilities. Another potential risk of politicization concerns the regional level, the regional director of the MJFPE, who, as pointed out by the action plan, is under the authority of the Governor of the region.

### **3.2 From EAP to reality: delay in implementation and lack of executive structure**

Initially the action plan was to cover the period from 2008 to 2011. The institutional framework should have been operational at the beginning of the period for the scheduled

execution of the measures contained in the action plan. Unfortunately, the establishment of the institutional framework was delayed. Moreover, the architecture of the institutional framework, as originally planned, has only partly been set up. Finally, new measures have diluted the central role of the Ministry of Employment, MJFPE, and its executing agencies . All this has had a significant impact on the implementation of the action plan and the outcome of the NEP.

The Decree creating the National Council for Employment and Vocational Training (CNEFP) was dated September 2009, more than one year after the adoption of the NEP/EAP (Decree No. 2009-661). The CNEFP is a tripartite body headed by the Prime Minister and composed of 58 members (see Table 3). A little under half of the members of the CNEFP represent the 17 departments in charge of the implementation of the NEP, and just over one third are representatives of the social partners. The first regular session of the CNEFP took place on 8 November 2012, three years after its creation and four years after the start of implementation of the action plan (MJFPE, 2012a, p. 3). Questions and discussions about the respective roles and areas of responsibility of the Ministry of Employment (MJE) and the Ministry in charge of vocational training (MESSRS) appear to be the cause of the delays. Nonetheless, a regular annual session of the CNEFP is expected in the future.

The same Decree also created the permanent technical committee whose main function is to support the CNEFP in the monitoring and evaluation of employment policy. The technical committee is chaired by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Employment (the MJFPE from 2011). It includes 17 members with a strong representation of the departments directly concerned by employment issues (MJFPE and MFPTSS), the social partners and the monitoring and enforcement agencies (ONEF, INSD and ANPE). Only one meeting of the permanent technical committee was held in 2012. However, two annual sessions are expected in the future.

Table 3 Composition of the CNEFP and the technical committee

	CNEFP	Technical Committee
Presidency	Prime Minister	Secretary General of the MJFPE
Number of vice-presidents	4 <sup>a)</sup>	2 <sup>b)</sup>
Number of representatives of departments	26 <sup>c)</sup>	6
Number of representatives of executive agencies	0	3 <sup>d)</sup>
Number employers' representatives	12	3
Number workers' representative of	9	3
Number of representative of civil society	7 <sup>e)</sup>	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>17</b>

Notes: a) Two ministers (of employment and of vocational and technical training) and two representatives of employers and workers. b) An employers' representative and a workers' representative . c) Of which six representatives of the MJE, two representatives of the MTSS, two representatives of the MESSRS and two representatives of the MEF. d) A representative of the ONEF, a representative of the ANPE and a representative of the INSD. e) two representatives of the National Youth Council ,two representatives of women's associations, two representatives of associations for the unemployed and one representative of the association of parents of students.

Source: Decree No. 2009-661

The Action Plan advocated the creation of an executive coordinator whose main role was to be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the measures. The plan was to establish a technical secretariat to assist him or her in the performance of his/her task. This dual structure has not been put in place and responsibility of coordinating and

monitoring the implementation of the action plan was informally endorsed by the Director-General of Employment Promotion (DGPE) in the MJFPE.<sup>15</sup> Some five years after the launch of the first plan of action of the NEP, there is still no formal executive structure. The Government is aware of this. One of the recommendations of the meeting of the CNEFP of November 2012, chaired by the Prime Minister, Luc Adolphe Tiao, is precisely the effective creation of the unit in charge of the operational management of the action plan of the national employment policy, which includes the executive coordinator and the technical secretariat (MJFPE, 2012a, p. 6). The lack of a formal executive structure contributes to a dilution of the central role of the MJFPE and its agencies, including the ANPE in the conduct of employment policy. This trend is now accentuated by the creation of new parallel structures to steer the new employment programmes.

One recent example is the special job creation programme for young people and women (PSCEJF).<sup>16</sup> This 17 million euro programme was designed by the Government of Burkina Faso following the social unrest of 2011. The launch of the programme, in early 2012, was accompanied by the creation of an orientation council (chaired by the Prime Minister and composed mainly of members of the Government), a steering committee (chaired by the Secretary General of the MJFPE), a coordination and management unit (managed by the MJFPE), and monitoring/supervision units in the departments involved in the programme (the MJFPE for component 1 on actions for young graduates; the Ministry of Infrastructure for component 2 on the implementation of labour-intensive workfare programmes, the Ministry of Agriculture and Hydraulics for component 3 on action in favour of rural youth and the Ministry for the Promotion of Women for component 4 on actions to promote the empowerment of women). The regional programme is coordinated by the local offices of the departments concerned under the supervision of the regional governors. The PSCEJF started last year and it is still too early to evaluate its institutional framework and performance.

The action plan also proposes the creation of a decentralized structure at regional level. The latter is represented by the regional director of the Ministry of Employment, the MJFPE, which is under the authority of the regional governor. Awareness and guidance structures, such as the framework for regional consultation (*Cadre de Concertation Régionale*) and coordination and promotion units (*Unités de coordination et d'animation*) were established to facilitate the ownership of the NEP at regional level. Today, 10 of the 13 regions of Burkina Faso have draft regional employment strategies (*Stratégies Régionales de l'Emploi: SRE*) accompanied by regional action plans (*Plan d'Actions Régional de l'Emploi: PARE*). The MJFPE has been in charge of the drafting of both documents. Workshops on awareness and validation were held in the regions. The objective now is to adopt the SRE and PARE by the general councils in the different regions. The process is well advanced but questions remain about the effective implementation and monitoring of these plans, their financing, and the role of actors such as the ANPE and FAFPA. The regional action plans cover the period 2012-2014. It is still too early to assess their coherence with national policy and the role of financial, human resource and organizational constraints at regional level. It is also too early to evaluate their outcome in terms of employment creation in the regions.

The delay in establishing the consultation and guidance body has had a negative impact on the governance of the NEP. The lack of an effective executive structure has delayed the implementation of the action plan. Moreover, the fragmentation of responsibilities between departments in the new employment programmes, such as the PSCEJF, has had a negative impact on the overall visibility of employment policy and the coordination of interventions. It is likely that the mixed results of the action plan, illustrated

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<sup>15</sup> A recent paper lists the attributions of the DGPE, inter alia coordination of the actors involved in the implementation of the NEP and monitoring and evaluation of the action plan (MJFPE, 2013a, p. 2).

<sup>16</sup> The PSCEJF has its own website: [www.pscejf.bf](http://www.pscejf.bf).

in Table 2, in part reflect these weaknesses. This is particularly true of the poor cross-cutting ownership of the NEP, acknowledged by the representatives of the MJFPE (MJFPE, 2012a, p. 6), and the insufficient consideration given to employment in the poverty reduction strategy, SCADD.

### 3.3 A framework for sectoral dialogue to the rescue

It was actually to cope with the unsatisfactory coordination and management under the SCADD that 15 frameworks for sectoral dialogue were established in 2012. Most of the sectors of public intervention are covered by the frameworks (economy and finance, gender, governance, decentralization, etc.). One of them is concerned with employment and vocational training. Its first meeting was held in March 2013 to discuss the performance report for the sector prepared by the MJFPE (MJFPE, 2013b). Subsequently, four thematic groups (on youth, employment, vocational training and capacity building) were created to contribute to the work of the framework. The fact that framework was only established recently and the MJFPE, for the first time, was given responsibility for the whole sector and for inter-ministerial cooperation on employment and vocational training issues, may explain the relatively meagre results achieved so far.

This emerges from a qualitative survey undertaken among donors in 2013. It indicates that the employment and vocational training framework performs poorly, not only in absolute terms, but also in comparison to the other sectoral frameworks. Three dimensions were considered by the survey, the quality of the process, the quality of partnership and the results of the implementation of policies. Table 4 details the performance and ranking of each dimension as well as the aspects covered by each dimension. The performance of the employment framework is considered especially weak when it comes to the results of the policies (score of one out of ten). The performance is somewhat better regarding the quality of partnership and even more so for the quality of the process (ownership, national leadership, participation of stakeholders, planning, etc.). The overall assessment gives different weights to the three dimensions considered: the results of policies (50 %), the quality of the process (30 %) and the quality of partnership (20 %). It confirms that the employment and vocational training framework performs poorly, with a score of 2. It only ranks fourteenth out of fifteen sectoral frameworks, just above tourism and culture.

Table 4 Donors' evaluation of the framework for sectoral dialogue on employment and vocational training

Dimensions	Performance (0: non-existent to 10: excellent)	Ranking (out of 15 sectoral frameworks)	Best performer (performance between 0 and 10)
Quality of the process <sup>a)</sup>	4	15	Education and literacy (8)
Quality of partnership <sup>b)</sup>	3	9	Economy and finance (8)
Results of the policies <sup>c)</sup>	1	14	Economy and finance (8)
Total assessment <sup>d)</sup>	2	14	Economy and finance (8)

Notes: a) Planning, reporting, dissemination of information, ownership, punctuality and regularity of meetings and reporting, participation of the Government, participation of civil society and the private sector, donor involvement, national leadership.

b) Existence of a partnership framework, commitment, memorandum, previous recommendations, joint studies, integration in the work plans of the recommendations, capacity building.

c) Sector priorities clearly identified in the budget, quality of execution, effectiveness of budget implementation, budgeting monitoring and evaluation, reporting based on results, results achieved, defining the priorities of reforms, definition of indicators.

d) The following weights are used for calculation of the total assessment: 30 % for the quality of the process, 20 % for the quality of partnership and 50 % for the results of the implementation of the policies.

Source: Computed from *Partenaires techniques et financiers* (2013).

The document relating to the donor survey does not provide any information on the number of respondents and their representativeness. Only a limited number of donors exist in Burkina Faso, thus the findings of the survey should be viewed with caution. This applies in particular to the results of the policies (youth, employment and vocational training policies) which contrast with our own assessment (see Table 2) that only covers the NEP. That said, the good performance achieved by other sectoral frameworks, in particular education and literacy and economy and finance, suggests that there is considerable room for improvement in the employment and vocational training framework.

## 4 The monitoring and evaluation system

The monitoring and evaluation system is intended to make possible the collection and analysis of reliable data and information, in order to draw lessons from past or current experiences. Its feedback on the design and implementation of employment policy permits correction of its weaknesses and improvement of its content. This process of correction and improvement is essential, and must be done continuously, in order to achieve the main objective of employment policy, namely access to employment for the greatest number, preferably in quality jobs, at the least cost to the public finances. The monitoring and evaluation system is also indispensable for the accountability of public policies to the public and the donor countries and organizations that contribute to the financing of these policies.<sup>17</sup> The goal here is to show that the money devoted to employment policy is used wisely and efficiently.

There are three broad categories of evaluation: general evaluation, evaluation of execution (based on monitoring) and impact evaluation. General evaluations aim to determine the relevance of the objectives, but also to identify new problems as soon as possible. The function of such evaluations is to facilitate and accelerate decision making. The second type of evaluation aims to follow in detail the process of implementation of a measure to see if it corresponds to the stated objectives. It is also to assess the performance of the executing agencies. Most often, this type of evaluation follows a project in terms of cost, number of participants, gender, geographical distribution of activities, assets created, remuneration of participants, etc. It can also follow up the participants to ascertain their employment status a certain time after the end of the programme. Impact evaluation aims to measure and evaluate the effects of the activities in terms of specific objectives (access to employment or self-employment, escaping from poverty, incomes of participants after the programme, etc.). Impact evaluations try to answer questions of a causal nature by estimating the effects of a measure in comparison with what would have happened without the measure. Impact assessments must take account of the evaluation before the start of the programme at the design stage, for example by the random selection of participants and the establishment of control groups.

These three different kinds of evaluation complement each other in that they are necessary steps in the process of identification of a problem, the design of a solution, the implementation of a measure and the evaluation of its effects. The ideal evaluation process is circular in the sense that the results of evaluation studies must feed the reformulation of the contents of the measure, either by improving its design or by motivating the choice of alternative measures, or combination of measures, better able to achieve the objectives set by public decision makers. The three types of evaluation are indispensable to a proper evaluation of an employment measure. Thus, for example, concurrent monitoring and impact evaluations are necessary to determine if the mixed impact of a measure is due to the measure itself or inadequate implementation of a potentially good measure.

### 4.1 Imperfect monitoring

The monitoring and evaluation of the NEP are in their infancy. No regular general evaluation is included in the action plan, despite a continuing need of an assessment that puts the progress in implementing the action plan in the perspective of the employment situation and labour market in Burkina Faso. Such an evaluation, both quantitative and qualitative, carried out every two or three years, is necessary to justify the approach and

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<sup>17</sup> This role explains that evaluation is sometimes seen by public policymakers as a risk, or even a threat. On this aspect, see for example Székely, 2012, pp 164-165.



show the relevance of strategic choices and employment measures. Nonetheless, a first general evaluation of the action plan of the NEP is envisaged in 2013, in relation to the development of a new action plan and a new NEP for the years to come (SCADD, (2013) pp 3 and 16).

There are several studies that have tracked the employment measures implemented over the past decade. Table 5 shows the most recent ones. An initial observation is the relatively large number of programmes followed by these studies, which has a cost in terms of the degree of deepening of the analysis for specific programmes. Most are typically associated with traditional schemes of labour market policy (public works, aid for self-employment, training modules and employment placement activities). Kobre's follow-up study (2011), which is the most comprehensive, concerns 20 projects or employment programmes at least partly implemented during the period covered by the action plan. An exception is the labour-intensive workfare programmes (HIMO) to which two monitoring studies were devoted in 2011 and 2012. This of course reflects the importance of these measures in the strategy to combat poverty, especially in rural areas. A second finding concerns the importance of multilateral donors, in particular the ILO and UNDP, in the funding and execution of these studies. A last observation concerns the difficulties of collecting reliable data noted in all the studies cited. For example, the study by Karim Kobre speaks of deficient and insufficient statistics for employment programmes (Kobre, 2011, p. 13). Another criticism concerns the absence of harmonized and regular data on the employment situation in Burkina Faso, making an accurate diagnosis difficult (ibid.).

According to the action plan (Operational Action Plan, 2008, p. 30), the National Observatory of Employment and Vocational Training (ONEF) and the technical secretariat are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of employment measures, under the authority of the executive coordinator who initiates and schedules them, and ensures their realization. As mentioned previously, the technical secretariat has not yet formally been established. According to Decree 2009-661, monitoring and evaluation functions are carried out by the technical committee. The establishment of this committee is recent and so far it has met only once, in 2012. This being so, the ONEF remains the main instrument for regular monitoring of employment and employment policy (including vocational and technical training).<sup>18</sup> The ONEF's lack of a status has long been regarded as an obstacle to the conduct of its missions.<sup>19</sup> It is one of the reasons behind its transformation into a public administrative body with legal personality (*établissement public de l'État à caractère administrative*) by Decree of the Council of Ministers of 27 December 2012. This transformation, partly the result of recommendations at subregional level for strengthening of the national observatories, will allow the ONEF to be more operational in its mission of gathering, processing, analysing and disseminating information on employment and vocational training.<sup>20</sup> The change is only recent and it is still too early to pass judgment on its impact on the ONEF's monitoring employment and NEP measures. Between 2008 and 2012, the period covered by the Action Plan, the ONEF published seven reports on its website, including three on labour market statistics (vacancies and applications for employment through the public employment agency, recruitment by contract type, number of participants in the various types of vocational training, etc.), two directories of vocational training centres in Burkina Faso and two studies on buoyant sectors in two of the 13 regions of Burkina Faso (Centre-East and Hauts-Bassins).

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<sup>18</sup> The ONEF was created with the support of UNDP in 2001. The fact that its establishment and many of its activities are assured by the donor community raises a number of challenges in terms of ownership, sustainability and efficiency. For an overview of the activities of the ONEF, see its website [www.onef.gv.bf](http://www.onef.gv.bf)

<sup>19</sup> ILO, 2009, p. 18.

<sup>20</sup> The Summit of Ministers in charge of employment and vocational training in the countries of the WAEMU recommended the "revision of the statutes of the national observatories for revitalization and empowerment" and "the allocation of the necessary resources to allow the observatories to effectively play their role". Final Release of Conference of WAEMU ministers in charge of employment and vocational training, Bissau, 12 May 2011.

Table 5 Documents and studies tracking recent NEP programmes

Agency (author) / Funding / year Title	Information / statistics Employment programmes
<b>ONEF / 2010</b> Impact of interventions of national funding on distribution	Sectoral and geographical FAPE, FASI, FAIJ, FAFPA
<b>ONEF / UNDP / 2011</b> Yearbook of Labour Statistics, 2010	Applications and job offers (ANPE), participants FAFPA, FAPE, FASI, FAIJ, FONA-DR, PNVB
<b>Kobré, Karim / 2011 / World Bank</b> Review of employment projects and programmes, 2011	Participants, programme costs FASI, FAPE, FAIJ, FAARF, FONA-DR, PAPME, PAMER, FILAJ, FODEL, PA-EMPLOI-FP, FAFPA, FBDES, GIP-PNVB, PSTP-HIMO, FICOD, HIMO rural roads projects, PAFASP, PROFIL, DYFAB, PDRDP, PICOFA
<b>MJE / ILO / 2010</b> Review of MJE public expenditures, (2006-2009)	Expenditures, number of projects and participants, FAPE, FASI, FAIJ, FAFPA, placement activities
<b>Government of Burkina Faso / UNDP / 2011b</b> Review of HIMO programmes in Burkina Faso	Costs / participants / activities PSTP-HIMO, PACVU, PDVM, FICOD, HELVETS-DDC, Kaya, Faso Baara
<b>Steven Miller / ILO / 2012</b> <i>Vers une stratégie de travaux publics à haute intensité de main d'œuvre au Burkina Faso</i>	Costs, duration, number of participants, PSTP-HIMO, PDVM, Faso Baara, PACVU, FICOD, rural roads
<b>Government of Burkina Faso / ILO / 2011a</b> Fund for support of employment promotion, training and development of economic activities	Funds available

Sources: see Bibliography.

There is no impact evaluation of the employment measures in Burkina Faso. This type of evaluation is needed to estimate and assess the effects of the measures in terms of specific objectives (access to self-employment, integration of higher education graduates into the labour market, increased incomes of villagers due to the building of a rural road in the framework of labour-intensive public works, etc.). This kind of evaluation requires more time and technical skills not found in the public departments and agencies concerned. Impact assessments also require intervention at the design stage of the measure to be able to produce reliable results, which is not the case in Burkina Faso.

## 4.2 EAP Indicators: relevant, recent and regular data

According to the official action plan document, it is important for the evaluations to refer to the recommended monitoring-evaluation indicators (MJE, 2008b, p. 30). Table 6 sets out the exhaustive list of indicators selected to monitor the measures of the action plan (ibid., pp 93-98). A first observation concerns the relevance of the indicators with regard to the analysis of the labour market, employment dynamics and economic development in general, but their limited relevance in following the progress of the implementation of the action plan. Indeed, most of the indicators have no direct links to the employment measures. Although they are described as monitoring indicators in the action plan (MJE, 2008b, pp 93-98), they are in fact outcome indicators that do not allow progress in the implementation of specific measures and their impact on employment to be assessed.<sup>21</sup> For example, among the 16 indicators of the strategic objective 2, strengthening of job creation, only the one on rural employment generated by the labour-intensive workfare programmes (HIMO) can be directly related to an employment measure. The same criticism applies, in varying degrees, to the indicators selected to follow the other three strategic objectives of the NEP, strengthening the link between the NEP and other national policies, improving employability and improving the organization and the functioning of the labour market.

<sup>21</sup> Similar criticisms have been raised against the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. See for example Nelson, 2012, pp 56-58, and Clemens, 2012, pp 180-183.

Table 6 Employment Action Plan, 2008-2011: Monitoring indicators

Strategic objectives Indicators	Statistical source
<b>Development goal</b>	
Growth in employment rate	EPM <sup>22</sup>
Unemployment rate of young people (15-24 years)	EPM
Rate of urban sub-occupation (15-65 years)	EPM
Rate of rural underemployment (15-65 years)	EPM
<b>1. Strengthening the connection between the NEP and other policies</b>	
Rate of investment (public and private) as % of GDP	BCEAO
Implementation rate of public investment programme	MEF
Real growth rate of credit in the economy	BCEAO
Medium and long-term credits (as % of GDP)	BCEAO
Rate of taxation of profits in the modern sector	MEF
Pro-poor growth in the rate of rural employment	EPM
Pro-poor real incomes	EPM
Rate of pluriactivity in rural areas	EPM
Share of modern employment	EPM
Share of urban informal employment	EPM
Pro-poor growth in the rate of urban employment	EPM
Pro-poor growth index: urban work productivity	Unspecified
<b>2. Strengthening job creation</b>	
Growth rate of real wages (formal and informal sector)	EPM
Share of informal employment in urban areas	EPM
Rate of pluriactivity in urban areas	EPM
Penetration rate of micro finance	EPM
Pro-poor index of real incomes	EPM
Rate of pluriactivity for women	EPM
Ratio of urban male jobs	EPM
Female unemployed rate in major urban centres	EPM
Marginal female unemployment rate (major urban centres)	EPM
Proportion of unemployed urban youth / urban unemployed	EPM
Proportion of unemployed urban youth / young urban	EPM
Incidence of child labour	EPM
Rates of children out of school and unemployed	EPM
Occupancy rates of persons with disabilities	Case study
Proportion of rural jobs generated by labour-intensive workfare projects	Unspecified
Pro-poor index of the real income transfers	Unspecified
<b>3. Improving the employability</b>	
Ratio of formal to informal training in the informal urban sector	Case study
Proportion of employees with continuous training	Case study
Ratio of pupils in technical and vocational education / secondary education	Case study
Ratio girls / boys in technical and vocational education	Case study
Proportion of agricultural education in technical and vocational education	Case study
Incidence of modern vocational training	EPM
Internal efficiency: marginal yield of vocational training	EPM
External efficiency: unemployment rate of graduates (15-24 years)	EPM
<b>4. Improving the organization and functioning of the labour market</b>	
Index of pro-poor growth of working time	EPM
Proportion of urban young people employed in the modern sector with internship or apprenticeship contract	Case study
Proportion of urban young people employed in the modern sector with a permanent contract	Case study
Share of the official employment agency in the placement of new jobs	ANPE
Proportion of unprotected jobs (women, men, total)	EPM
Proportion of bad jobs	EPM
Proportion of salaried jobs paid less than the SMIG (15-65 years)	EPM
Global index of social security in urban areas	Case study

Notes : EPM: Priority Household Survey (Enquête prioritaire de ménages) - ; BCEAO: Central Bank of West African States; MEF : Ministry of the Economy and Finance; ANPE : National Employment Agency

Source : PAO,2008, pp 93-98.

<sup>22</sup> EPM: *Enquête Prioritaire de Ménages* – Priority Household Survey

A second observation concerns the absence of recent and regular data for the vast majority of indicators of the action plan. A little under two thirds of the chosen indicators can be calculated only from household surveys (*Enquêtes Prioritaires des Ménages: EPM*). In Burkina Faso, such surveys are conducted every five or six years. The latest EPM dates back to 2009-2010, but the survey data are not available. Only data from the 2003 survey are available to calculate indicators for monitoring of the action plan 2008-2011. The next household survey is planned for 2014, suggesting that the monitoring and evaluation matrix will not be available before 2015 at the earliest. Among the remaining (non-EPM) indicators nine (i.e. 20 per cent of the total) can be estimated only from specific studies, which for the most part were not done. This lack of statistical data explains why the matrix of monitoring and evaluation indicators has not been used since the launch of the action plan in 2008.

It was to remedy this operational weakness that the MJFPE embarked on a review of the NEP monitoring indicators (MJFPE, (2010b)). The most noticeable result of this work is a drastic reduction in the number of indicators from 48 to 12. The twelve key NEP indicators are now:

1. The employment rate
2. The sectoral distribution of employment
3. The distribution of the employed by status in employment
4. The urban unemployment rate
5. The rate of underemployment
6. The rate of youth not in employment, education or training
7. The rate of labour productivity growth
8. The rate of poor workers
9. The rate of unprotected jobs
10. The vulnerable employment rate
11. The rate of bad jobs
12. The share of public expenditure on the promotion of employment

The reduction of the number of NEP indicators is undoubtedly positive. However, the chosen indicators suffer the same deficiencies as those of the extended list. The twelve key indicators are concerned with the evolution of employment and the labour market in Burkina Faso. They are not indicators for monitoring the implementation of the NEP, with the exception of the last, on the share of public spending on employment, which indicates the approximate commitment of the Government of Burkina Faso to employment (saying nothing, however, about the effectiveness of this commitment). They are not impact indicators in that they do not assess the specific impact of a measure on a dimension of employment. Finally, 11 of the 12 key indicators are based on data from household surveys conducted at irregular intervals and are only available two years after the collection of information. This explains why the matrix of 12 key NEP indicators is still short of data.<sup>23</sup>

### **4.3 The forgotten pillar of the implementation of the NEP**

In summary, the monitoring and evaluation of the NEP and its measures in Burkina Faso are deficient. This has negative consequences for the adjustment and correction of errors in the design or implementation of the measures, the quality of governance of the

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<sup>23</sup> The SCADD includes the MDG target “achieve productive full employment and decent work for all, including women and youth” and two employment indicators, the GDP growth rate per person employed and the ratio of employed urban population to total active urban population (SCADD, 2010, p. 37). Both indicators are outcome indicators without any direct links with the measures of the employment action plan. The preliminary version of the performance matrix of the SCADD for 2014-2016 (SCADD (2013a), p. 11) only contains one employment indicator, the number of workers registered with the National Security Social Fund (*Caisse nationale de sécurité sociale*).

NEP and its effectiveness in promoting access to employment for as many people as possible. The weakness of the monitoring and evaluation system reflects, in part, the absence of recent, regular and reliable data on employment and the labour market. This is also partly the result of the weakness of the structures and actors in charge of monitoring, and the lack of human, technical and financial resources, devoted to it. There is no general assessment at regular intervals to improve the design and the implementation of the NEP. There is no assessment or impact evaluation in the strict sense of the term. The question of who carried out the evaluation (official body, independent experts, etc.) is premature in Burkina Faso because of the lack of impact evaluation. This issue is important because experience has shown that assessments made by official bodies tend to exaggerate the positive impact of employment programmes on job creation. The monitoring and evaluation are not taken into account during the design of the employment measures. This is not unique to Burkina Faso since the same observation can be applied to the vast majority of developing countries.

This deficit of monitoring and evaluation of the NEP is not considered a major policy problem by Burkina Faso's decision makers. The report of the session of the CNEFP for the year 2012 (the only one to date) mentions three major problems with the NEP: the late establishment of the implementing agencies, the low ownership of the cross-cutting issues by those involved in the implementation of the policy and the lack of financial resources (CNEFP, 2012, p. 6). Nothing is said about the deficit of monitoring or the absence of evaluation. There is also little commitment by bilateral aid donors to the monitoring and evaluation of employment programmes and the improvement of employment and unemployment statistics.<sup>24</sup> There is, however, an improvement in local skills for the monitoring of employment programmes and the analysis of employment issues (consulting firms and individual consultants).

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<sup>24</sup> The Programme of support for the strengthening of the management of public finances and statistics (Par-Gs) of the European Union is considering an improvement of employment statistics (Par-Gs (2013), pp. 49-50). A programme activity is the strengthening of the ONEF and support for the preparation of a Statistical Yearbook on employment. Unfortunately, the employment component will not begin before 2015.

## 5 What lessons can be learned from the implementation of the NEP in Burkina Faso?

Several conclusions can be drawn from our analysis. The first concerns ownership of the NEP. So far the ownership of the employment policy by the Ministry of Finance, the department in charge of the overall economic policy, is insufficient. This is one reason behind the lack of visibility and the deficit in implementation of the policy. It is important for the success of the NEP that its priorities and its strategic objectives are better endorsed by those public policymakers with the greatest weight in terms of economic policy making and poverty reduction strategy formulation. In the 1990s, the fight against poverty was essentially the responsibility of the social affairs departments and UNDP. It is only when the main responsibility for the fight against poverty was transferred to the Ministry of Finance that the strategy became more credible, more efficient and received more resources. It is possible that the same shift is necessary for better ownership of the NEP by the Burkina Faso Government. A complementary action is to upgrade the NEP to a cross-cutting priority and policy in the next generation of the SCADD (in addition to the current cross-cutting policies on gender, population, environment and the regional development). This should give the NEP steering and implementing bodies a larger role, with the CNEFP acting as a framework for sectoral dialogue on employment under the SCADD and proposing action plans together with the means of implementing them. Such a measure should also provide a more solid institutional footing for the MJFPE to perform its coordinating role and to foster collaboration with other sectoral ministries, as well as with other national stakeholders. Currently, the recent creation of the sectoral framework for employment and vocational training is a step in this direction.

The second conclusion concerns the weight of constraints. The formulation, dissemination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NEP, at both national and regional level, requires technical, human, organizational and financial capabilities that are not available to the department that bears the main load of the policy (MJFPE). These kinds of constraints have greatly contributed to delays in implementing the institutional framework advocated initially. Better implementation of the NEP in terms of the measures advocated in the action plan, and also in terms of the speed with which these measures are applied and revised, requires considerable strengthening of the capacity of the MJFPE. This is supported by a study of the Ministry of Employment by the ILO that indicates that the resources devoted to the MJFPE represent only one per cent of total budgetary expenditures (ILO, 2009, p. 12).

The third conclusion concerns the scattering of measures and departments and structures in charge of the implementation. This is clearly an obstacle to the horizontal and vertical coherence and good governance of employment policy. The measures for young people and women, which are the responsibility of four departments (MJFPE, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Agriculture and Hydraulics, Ministry for the Promotion of Women) are illustrative in this regard.<sup>25</sup> The fact that the MJFPE is a relatively young department, whose area of intervention has been redefined several times since its creation, could also contribute to this deficit of coherence and governance. A simplification of the administrative “layer cake” of the NEP is needed to improve its visibility and effectiveness. The integration of vocational training within the perimeter of the MJE (now MJFPE) is clearly a step in the right direction, in particular with regard to technical and vocational training and its role in improving the employability of the workforce. Another step in the right direction would be the consolidation of departments in charge of employment, MJFPE and MFPTSS. This would make it easier to ensure the consistency of interventions, greater

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<sup>25</sup> In his speech to the National Assembly on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2013, the Prime Minister, Luc Adolphe Tiao, pointed out a delay and other problems in the implementation of the PSCEJF. In order to improve the performance of the programme, he therefore suggested greater decentralization of its activities, strengthening of its governance and the establishment of an effective monitoring and evaluation system.

technical, financial and organizational capacity for the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the NEP, and increased bargaining power *vis-à-vis* the Ministry of Finance.

The fourth conclusion concerns the NEP as a response to the problems of employment and unemployment. It is important to put the actions and measures of the action plan in the context of the employment situation in Burkina Faso. A better understanding of the labour market (skills, difficulties faced by particular categories of entrants to the labour market, bottlenecks in some branches, etc.) and its evolution is in fact necessary for the formulation of the NEP/EAP. Unfortunately there is a lack of good employment statistics in Burkina Faso.<sup>26</sup> There is no regular labour force survey made and the data of the employment component of the last household survey (EICVM 2009) are not available (in addition to being insufficient in the light of the survey questionnaire). It is illustrative that the last employment report of the ONEF is dated December 2005. Another example is the new programme for jobs for young people and women (PSCEJF) for the period 2012-2014 based on the 2003 employment and unemployment figures (see the description of the context and the rationale in [www.psce.bf](http://www.psce.bf)). The limited commitment of the Ministry of Finance to the formulation and implementation of the NEP is reflected in the absence of recent employment and labour market data; the official statistical office, the INSD, is actually under its supervision.<sup>27</sup> This lack of employment statistics that are reliable, recent and collected at regular intervals is also the result of the lack of interest of the development partners involved in projects to support the INSD in relation to employment and labour market issues.<sup>28</sup> Probably it also reflects the lack of capacity on the Ministry of Employment side to clearly identify and formulate its needs in terms of employment data.

The fifth conclusion concerns the low level of commitment of the bilateral development partners. The development, dissemination, implementation and monitoring of the NEP, or some of its components, have benefited from the generous assistance of the ILO. Some employment measures have also benefited from assistance from the World Bank and occasionally from bilateral development partners. However, there are no bilateral donors strongly involved in the NEP. It is symptomatic, for example, that the aide-mémoire of technical and financial partners of June 2012 (14 pages) about the review of the poverty reduction strategy never mentions the NEP.<sup>29</sup> The Ministry of Employment's poor capacity for advocacy and the fact that the ILO is not represented in Burkina Faso can also explain the minimal role of employment issues in the donor review of the SCADD. The low level of involvement of bilateral partners is undoubtedly a serious handicap. It is all the more surprising that the second generation of poverty reduction strategies, such as the SCADD, considers that focus on the social sectors (education and health) and the accumulation of human capital must be accompanied by measures that improve employment prospects to make this human capital profitable and lift people out of poverty.

The sixth conclusion concerns the monitoring and evaluation system. A successful employment policy requires regular monitoring and relevant evaluations. The results of

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<sup>26</sup> This criticism comes up repeatedly in Burkina Faso. See, for example, World Bank, 2006.

<sup>27</sup> This applies to many other African countries as well. As suggested in a recent book on African development statistics (Jerven, 2013, p. 85), the lack of labour force surveys (on a regular basis) mirrors the low level of commitment of policy makers to employment issues.

<sup>28</sup> The external evaluation of the first phase of the aid project of Swedish Statistics to the INSD suggested support for the INSD to "set up a mechanism for the monitoring of the labour market and employment" (SIDA, 2000, p. 20). The second phase of the project, which covers the period between 2013 and 2016, did not reiterate this suggestion.

<sup>29</sup> The only reference to the issues covered by the NEP concerns technical and vocational education. The development partners encourage the Government to expand and reorient the offer of education and technical and vocational training by targeting young people, with training adapted to the needs of the economy of Burkina Faso, or even sub regional. In this context, the management autonomy of technical and professional public institutions is essential." (*Aide-Mémoire des Partenaires Techniques et Financiers – Revue de la SCADD*, 2012, p. 6).

monitoring and evaluation are also needed for the allocation of resources to the different measures of the action plan according to their likely impact on employment. Monitoring of the NEP measures in Burkina Faso is deficient, in part because of the absence of recent and reliable employment statistics at regular intervals. Certain measures are monitored, but this monitoring does not cover all the measures implemented and is not done on a regular basis (e.g., yearly). There is currently a strong need for an annual review of all the NEP measures, under the responsibility of the MJFPE as well as other departments. The increase and the scattering of employment measures and departments and agencies in charge of the measures partly explain the difficulty in monitoring. Obviously, the cross-cutting nature of the NEP requires a strengthening of the role of the agency in charge of monitoring, ONEF, and an increase in its financial resources and human and technical capacity. It also requires an extension of its mandate to evaluate the impact of sectoral policies on employment and improved cooperation between the ONEF and the SCADD monitoring system, especially the sectoral and thematic committees responsible for the annual reviews.<sup>30</sup> In Burkina Faso, there is no impact evaluation, which could tell us what would have happened to participants (in terms of access to employment, remuneration, etc.) in the absence of the measures. Only monitoring and evaluation can show if a measure works, if it is the design of the measure itself that is deficient or if it is the implementation that raises problems. Answers to these questions are necessary to continuously renew and improve the NEP and make it more effective in terms of job creation.

A final conclusion concerns the role of the social partners in the design and implementation of the national employment policy. Their participation is necessary for the ownership of the policy by businesses and workers but also for its success. This concerns, for example, the participation of formal and informal firms in the definition of needs for technical and vocational training. So far, participation of the social partners is limited. An argument often heard is that the social partners are consulted only once the measures are developed. It would be desirable to give them more prominence, at the stages of analysis of the employment situation and design of the measures. This may include greater representation of employers' organizations and trade unions in the governance of the agencies in charge of the NEP. There is, in fact, a persistent request from the main employers' organization in Burkina Faso, the CNPB, for greater representation of the private sector in the governance of the body in charge of vocational training, the FAFPA.<sup>31</sup> Other initiatives can contribute to better involvement of the social partners, at an early stage, in the steering and implementation of the NEP/EAP.

## 5.1 The way ahead

Coherence is essential for any development policy based on results. This particularly concerns cross-cutting policies such as the NEP, which commits a large number of actors and agencies at different levels and in different regions (departments, executive agencies, social partners, local authorities, etc.). Worldwide experience shows that certain conditions are required to achieve this coherence:<sup>32</sup>

1. a strong political commitment,
2. a clear strategy with coherent measures,
3. a decision-making process that allows balancing priorities with budgetary constraints,

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<sup>30</sup> Interestingly, the last official review of the SCADD and its list of acronyms do not mention ONEF (SCADD, 2013b).

<sup>31</sup> For a presentation of the recommendations of the CNPB, see Kirchberger, 2011, pp 33-35.

<sup>32</sup> This list is inspired by the work of the OECD on institutional mechanisms to promote the coherence of development policies, see OECD, 2005, pp45-47.



4. a central coordination capacity essential to coherent horizontal and vertical interventions,
5. a monitoring system to detect early conflicts between policies and measures,
6. an institutional feedback mechanism for the results of monitoring and evaluation and assessment of the impact of changes in the environment on the formulation and conduct of policy,
7. an administrative culture that encourages cooperation between actors and agencies.

Regarding all these conditions, the experience of implementation of the first generation action plan (2008-2011) in Burkina Faso is mixed. Political commitment needs to be strengthened. There is also a clear employment strategy with, a priori, coherent measures. Finally, there is a decision-making process that reconciles the objectives of the NEP with budgetary constraints. The ongoing development of a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) for employment should make this process more transparent and efficient.<sup>33</sup> But there are weaknesses in the implementation of the NEP which are particularly evident in relation to conditions 4 to 7 in the above list. Indeed, the central coordination system is deficient and the late establishment of bodies for management, consultation and implementation of the NEP has contributed to this coordination deficit. Moreover, a monitoring and evaluation system does not yet exist that allows a rapid transmission of information to the decision-making body and the continual renewal of the policy and its components, based on the lessons learned from the implementation of measures and the evolution of the employment situation. Finally, the cooperation between departments, agencies and actors at central and decentralized level, as well as between the two levels, is not optimal for cross-cutting policy coherence.<sup>34</sup> It is in these four areas that future action should be focused to improve the institutional framework and the NEP implementation and monitoring mechanisms, so as to ensure its success in promoting access to employment, preferably decent jobs, for the largest number in Burkina Faso. It is one of the main challenges faced by the second generation of action plan.

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<sup>33</sup> See MJFPE, 2012b. It is worth adding, however, that the process of development of the MTEF in Burkina Faso is slow and incomplete and that the relations between global and sectoral MTEF are still deficient, World Bank, 2009, MJE, 2010a, pp 40-41, De Luca and Raffinot, 2007, pp 212-213, and Delavallade, 2007, pp 273-276.

<sup>34</sup> A recent study illustrates the constraints of the administrative culture on Government action in Burkina Faso, Nébié et al., 2013, pp 45-46. The SCADD acknowledges that the Burkina administration suffers from red tape and low capacity, which is considered a risk for the accelerated growth strategy, SCADD, 2010, p. 82. Indicators of government effectiveness provide a mixed picture of administrative capacity in Burkina Faso. According to the World Bank's government effectiveness indicator, which partly takes into account the culture of cooperation within the administration, Burkina Faso performs better than the other Sub-Saharan countries. Of all the World Bank governance indicators, it is actually for the one on government effectiveness that the country exhibits the best results compared to other countries. See World Bank's governance indicators, and Bourdet and Thiombiano, 2009, pp 29-30.



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International Labour Office  
Employment Policy Department  
4, route des Morillons  
CH-1211 Geneva 22

Email: [emp\\_policy@ilo.org](mailto:emp_policy@ilo.org)