Appendix 3
Policy development for the rural sector, Burkina Faso

A scenario-guided policy formulation process of the second National Plan for the Rural Sector (PNSR II) in Burkina Faso made for the third case. This foresight process was part of the Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) Scenarios Project (Zougmore et al. 2016) and of the ‘Secrétariat Permanent de la Coordination des Politiques Sectorielles Agricoles’ (SP/CPSA; the Burkinabe governmental body responsible for the formulation of agricultural policies and plans). Thanks to collaboration between CCAFS and the SP/CPSA, the process was initiated in 2015. This joint leadership shaped the broader goals of contributing to a new rural sector plan, as well as contribution to and harmonization between broader CGIAR objectives. Initially this partnership had plans to include government representatives, private sector actors and third sector actors (i.e. CSOs and NGOs). However, the process primarily involved public sector representatives and CGIAR researchers, with some involvement from the private sector. This brought together different branches of government and different branches of Burkina-based CGIAR researchers.

After a first workshop in which participants reviewed the first PNSR using the CCAFS scenarios set for West Africa, a second workshop was organized in 2016. This was centred on a smaller number of participants. It included key SP/CPSA representatives and participants from the review workshop. The team of researchers aligned with the needs of the SP/CPSA for the formulation of the new National Plan for the Rural Sector. Ultimately the researchers were fully aware that the level of ambition was in the hands of the policy maker whose primary concern was with the formulation of an updated and improved plan, making the researchers’ role rather limited. Visioning was used solely as a normative foresight approach and contributed novel aspects to be considered for the new plan. This included strengthening multi- and cross-level governance, a stronger focus on the vital, yet vulnerable, smallholder farmers. The following phase that entailed scenario testing, gathered new insights such as inclusion of smallholder farmers, capacity building, stronger governance across jurisdictional levels, and continuous engagement with civil society and private sector actors. The workshop participants translated the scenario-guided recommendations into actionable activities, which were consequently used in the formulation of the PNSR II. These participants were in key positions to create and help implement the national strategy. The lack of third sector involvement in the process meant that the actors involved faced very few obstacles and almost no pushback in policy formulation and implementation. Arguably, the lack of diverse representation diminished the possibilities for new actor coalitions to come out of the policy formulation process. However transformative the ambitions stated in the actual plan might still be, it is likely to rely on similar actors as in the previous plan.

The successful incorporation of outcomes is clearly associated with the active participation of government representatives. Central to the Burkinabe workshop was the formulation and implementation of a specific new rural policy and participation leaned heavily on government representatives. As the executive secretary of SP-CPSA valued the insights on policy and institutional change very valuable, he and his team decided to directly incorporate it in the new rural policy and its initiation. An added layer was capacity-building among the writing team of the new PNSR. They have reported better understanding of the scenario process, its usefulness
and the relevance of its recommendations and potential actions (outputs), which they considered to a significant extent during the formulation of the new plan. While the foresight resulted in transformative change in policy, the inclusiveness of transformation is debatable, due to the predominant involvement of established public-sector (government) representatives.

LITERATURE CITED