

Congratulations to the winners of the 2011 COPEGOL

On November 30, 2011, 36 communes received a prize in recognition of their local good governance practices. The 29 urban and 7 rural communes rewarded during the 2011 COPEGOL award ceremony held at the Salon International de l'Artisanat de Ouagadougou were selected as best practitioners in the field of: participatory budgeting, planning, social service delivery, procurement and monitoring and evaluation. The rewarded practices induced increased transparency, citizen participation and accountability and are showcased as good examples to follow by other communes in Burkina Faso and countries in the sub-region. This year's competition for excellence in local good governance is marked by an impressive increase in the number of participating communes compared to 2010. While only 13 communes submitted an application for the first round of the competition, 100 of them participated in the second round.

This explosive rise underscores the motivation and potential of local authorities and

their populations to innovate model practices despite limited financial resources and human capacities.

With this competition also ends the pilot phase of COPEGOL. Thanks to a robust partnership between the World Bank, the Community-Based Rural Development Program (PNGT2) and the Burkina Faso Mayors' Association, the results of the pilot phase were very satisfactory. As a sub-component of the Local Government Support Project activities, future editions of COPEGOL will be conducted by the Ministry of Territorial Administration, Decentralization and Security. We wish them lots of success and convey our congratulations to the 2011 COPEGOL winning communes.



Cloud of uncertainty over Article 37

On December 8 and 9, 2011, the Consultative Council on Political Reforms (Conseil Consultatif sur les Réformes Politiques, CCRP) conducted a national conference to discuss Article 37 of the Burkina Faso Constitution which limits the presidential term to two. About 1500 representatives from political parties, civil society and the armed forces were reported to attend the forum. The discussion mainly revolved around the question as to whether the current presidential term can be renewed. Unfortunately, no consensus has been reached on this issue at the after-

math of the national conference. Consequently, President Compaore invited participants to further think about how to find a consensus on the various issues, including that of Article 37. The future remains thus uncertain whereby some expect a referendum and some others believe that the President will abide by the Constitution. Time will tell how this cloud of uncertainty will disperse. To be continued...



Sealing up complaints handling mechanisms



As the World Bank's agenda for improved service delivery to beneficiaries moves forward, complaint handling mechanisms are likely to play an increasingly prominent role in Bank-supported projects. A well designed and implemented Complaint Handling Mechanism (CHM) would help project management to significantly enhance operational efficiency in various ways. Under the leadership of AFTFM, the country team is undertaking an innovative multi-sectoral approach with INT and SD to complement ongoing initiatives on CHM. The projected approach under this technical assistance aims at increasing the appetite of Bank projects in

Burkina Faso for complaint handling mechanisms. At *project level*, the TA will focus on selected operations, namely the PGNT & PACT in the decentralization sector, and the Bagré Growth Pole Project in the agricultural sector. At the *national level*, a stocktaking of procedures existing within the national institutions handling financial and non financial complaints will be conducted. The objective will be to develop a blue print to include the benefits of developing a CHM as well as a definition of the steps required to achieve expected results. The work at both project level and national level will be linked. At the *country office level*, a rapid assessment of the existing CHM will be performed and a suggestion on the way forward will be presented with the view of developing simplified procedures to strengthen the system in the future. An initial mission was undertaken in late November at the national level. A second mission at project and country office levels is scheduled for February 2012.

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EISR+ initiative: Taking stock of the first round of third party monitoring

The pilot experience of third party monitoring of: i) The Additional Financing to the Transport sector Project; ii) The Agriculture Productivity and Food Security Project; and iii) The Agriculture Diversification and Market Development Project has completed its first round of feedback collection and pre-supervision report delivery. The experience has shown that the initiative can indeed be a good tool to help improve project performance, and that beneficiaries appreciate the opportunity to

share their perception of project performance. Challenges faced during implementation give an indication of how to improve current methodology and will help project teams think ahead of how to pre-empt difficulties next time around.

Third party monitoring will next be conducted in the context of the Urban Water and Sanitation Project.