

Country Report 1: Burkina Faso

GRTI Activities in Burkina Faso

The Burkinabe Forum for Rural Transport and Development (FBTRD) was awarded a grant in Phase II of GRTI to undertake a study to identify the conditions under which rural men and women in Burkina Faso meet their transport needs, including their use of Intermediate Means of Transport (IMTs). The need for the study was based on the realization that in Burkina Faso, rural dwellers face serious constraints in carrying out their livelihood activities and meeting the needs of their families. Many of these constraints are transport-related. One of the major assumptions underlying the project is that relieving transport constraints can be a major poverty alleviating measure.

Although IMTs can alleviate some of the hardships endured by the rural population, their use has socio-cultural and economic implications. The conditions for females in terms of their responsibilities and transport needs had also been found to differ from that of males in other research studies. For these reasons, a gender analysis on rural transport particularly as it affects the use of IMTs was found to be a significant topic to be studied.

Objectives of the Study

The study focused on several central questions concerning gender issues and rural transport, specifically in relation to the use of IMTs:

- Do existing IMTs in Burkina Faso meet the needs of men and women?
- Have IMTs been modified to be adapted to women's use?
- What are the types of financial support for ownership of IMTs?
- Is there any gender differentiation in the use of IMTs?

To address these questions, the main objective of the study was to carry out a gender analysis of the use of IMTs in Burkina Faso. The specific objectives were:

- i to survey and identify crucial factors for increasing women's access to IMTs; and
- ii to propose well accepted alternative solutions to the issues.

Methodology for the Study

Burkina Faso, like most other countries, has different agro-ecological areas which affects the types of productive activities of the residents. The differences can also affect the accessibility to the areas and their predominant means of transport. For this reason, the researchers decided to carry out a comparative study, sampling ten villages each from five different selected provinces, resulting in a sample size of 50 villages.

Field visits to each of the villages were made and a significant number of households in each village were surveyed using a structured questionnaire. The resulting quantitative primary data were supported with relevant secondary information. Some use of qualitative methods, particularly in-depth interviews (IDIs) with community leaders and other key informants resulted in additional important insights.

Findings of the Study

From the preliminary review of the secondary and primary data, an overall picture of gender and rural transport in Burkina Faso evolved as presented in Box 1.1.

Box 1.1: The daily travels for a typical household in Burkina Faso

Generally speaking, in whatever region, a typical household owns a bicycle controlled by the head of the family who is in most cases a man. The mother and her daughter are in charge of fetching water – 20 litres each time for three times a day and about an hour walking for each round trip. Collecting firewood is the duty of the mother and her daughter, twice or three times a week. The mother can carry about 25 kg and the young girl about 10 kg for one to one½ hour for each time to reach the village. In villages where there is a grinding mill, women need only a few minutes to reach it for grinding their millet.

The entire membership of the family contributes to the farming activities. The mother and the children walk over 30 minutes to reach the farm. The father, who owns a bicycle will reach it within 10 to 15 minutes. When children go to school, they help their parents on holidays. Once a month for the woman and twice a month for the man, they go to the local market to sell part of their crops.

In poor regions, sales are insignificant in spite of certain compulsory sales occurring at the end of the farming season. In the grain surplus regions, the returns from sold surplus are of great importance. The amount of sales depends on the type of weather for the year.

The province or department markets are the most important ones, often visited in search of better prices. Women walk to reach them, while men use their bicycles. In the north Soum region, animal traction carts are used for travel. The same cart is used to carry crops from the farm. When the family does not own a cart, there is a possibility of renting one if the service exists or if local assistance is available.

To reach the provincial city, the head of the family uses his bicycle whenever possible. Otherwise, he may need to use conventional transport services. For those, he must cover about 10 km before reaching the main road to catch the commercial vehicle. The closest school is situated at a distance that requires about one hour walking in villages that do not have a school. When a member of a family has to travel for medical care, he or she must move over 10 to 20 km on a bicycle. Carts are used for medical emergencies and for women that are about to deliver.

Source: Burkinabe forum for Rural Transport and Development (2001) *The Uses of Intermediary Means of Transport (IMTs) in Burkina Faso* Report prepared for the GRTI project. (p.12)

Since data were collected from residents in 50 villages spread over five different provinces of the country, the overall view of transport conditions for rural dwellers as

well as the variations from one village to another could be shown. The findings of the study can be broadly classified into three major aspects:

- a) mode of travel and transport used by the households,
- b) obstacles to the mobility of rural communities, and
- c) use of IMTs by gender.

Mode of travel and transport

With respect to the mode of travel and transport used by the households, it was apparent from the data that bicycles are the most commonly owned type of IMT found in the rural areas of Burkina Faso. In most surveyed villages, the typical rural household had a bicycle. Other IMTs, including motorcycles, wheel borrow, animal drawn cart or push carts were less common. The following table presents the findings on the IMTs per household in the villages selected for the study.

Table 1.1: Number and Type of IMTs per Household in Selected Villages of Burkino Faso

Site / Province / Department / Village	Bicycles*	Motor-cycle	Wheel borrow	Human Traction Cart	Animal traction cart	Total No. of House holds
1. COMOE/LERABA						44
Niangoloko: Bokouo	60 (1.36)	5 (0.12)	1 (0.02)	---	2 (0.04)	93
Diefoula	40 (0.43)	13 (0.14)	---	---	3 (0.03)	272
Kimini	400 (1.47)	40 (0.15)	15 (0.06)	---	100 (0.37)	160
Nanfesso	30 (0.180)	12 (0.07)	---	---	10 (0.06)	111
Toundoura	118 (1.96)	16 (0.14)	---	1 (0.00)	---	677
Moussodougou: Diamon	220 (1.50)	35 (0.25)	7 (0.05)	---	---	147
Kolokolo	300 (1.40)	30 (0.14)	5 (0.02)	---	1 (0.00)	213
Malon	140 (1.70)	18 (0.22)	---	---	---	82
Mondon	500 (1.70)	22 (0.07)	4 (0.01)	---	5 (0.02)	293
Moussodougou	1000(1.48)	30 (0.04)	30 (0.04)	---	5 (0.00)	677
Province:	2808(1.34)	311 (0.15)	62 (0.3)	----	126 (0.06)	2092
2. KOSSI						
Dokui : Ayoubakolon	100 (0.62)	10 (0.06)	---	---	10 (0.06)	161
Dokui	800 (1.57)	12 (0.02)	---	---	400 (0.78)	511
Goni	100 (0.50)	4 (0.02)	---	---	7 (0.03)	201
Kamadena	100 (0.29)	40 (0.12)	---	---	40 (0.12)	340
Karesso	400 (0.89)	100 (0.22)	---	---	100 (0.22)	449
Sono: Sono	2,000 (4.76)	200 (0.48)	10 (0.02)	---	300 (0.75)	420
Kale	130 (1.20)	10 (0.09)	---	---	20 (0.19)	108
Bankoura de kale	150 (1.60)	12 (0.12)	---	---	27 (0.29)	94
Nouna: Sampopo	300 (2.48)	17 (0.14)	---	---	20 (0.17)	121
Solemana	400 (1.70)	40 (0.17)	---	---	200 (0.85)	236
Province	4,480 (1.70)	445 (0.17)	10 (0.00)	---	1124(0.43)	2,641
3. NAKOURI / ZIRO						
Bakata: Bakata	600 (1.26)	22 (0.05)	18 (0.04)	2 (0.00)	74 (0.15)	478
Lorou	150 (1.15)	28 (0.22)	2 (0.01)	---	30 (0.23)	130
Kou	200 (1.27)	8 (0.05)	---	2 (0.01)	30 (0.19)	157
Guiao	28 (1.08)	---	---	---	4 (0.15)	26
Tayalo	140 (1.04)	4 (0.01)	5 (0.04)	---	18 (0.13)	135
Guiaro: Betare	160 (1.10)	7 (0.05)	7 (0.05)	---	23 (0.16)	146

	Boala	150 (1.18)	10 (0.08)	---	---	14 (0.11)	127
	Guiaro	237 (1.04)	24 (0.11)	10 (.0.04)	---	28 (0.12)	228
	Kologo	55 (0.86)	3 (0.05)	4 (0.06)	---	5 (0.08)	64
	Kombili	100 (2.0)	4 (0.08)	30 (0.6)	---	6 (0.12)	50
Province		1820 (1.18)	110 (0.07)	76 (0.05)	4 (0.00)	232 (0.15)	1541
4. NAMENTENGA							
Boala:	Boala	250 (0.53)	4 (0.00)	---	---	5 (0.01)	476
	Zaongo	1000(1.95)	15 (0.02)	3 (0.00)	---	30 (0.06)	514
	Ledere	576 (1.0)	20 (0.03)	50 (0.08)	---	20 (0.03)	576
	Koumestenga	400 (1.15)	22 (0.09)	6 (0.02)	---	22 (0.06)	348
	Mogodin	103 (0.77)	15 (0.11)	7 (0.05)	---	20 (0.14)	134
Dargo:	Boko	500 (2.10)	4 (0.02)	4 (0.02)	---	14 (0.06)	238
	Dargo	700 (1.03)	20 (0.03)	---	---	25 (0.04)	677
	Yaongo	500 (1.49)	20 (0.06)	20 (0.06)	---	50 (0.15)	336
	Yelembidou	400 (1.72)	10 (0.04)	---	---	5 (0.02)	233
	Zissegre	300 (2.73)	5 (0.05)	13 (0.12)	---	14 (0.13)	110
Province		4,729 (1.30)	135 (0.04)	103 (0.03)	---	205 (0.06)	3,642
5. SOUM							
Baraboule	Baraboule	350 (0.79)	50 (0.11)	20 (0.05)	---	20 (0.05)	442
	Daoure	40 (0.19)	5 (0.02)	1 (0.00)	---	8 (0.04)	209
	Filifili	50 (0.23)	12 (0.06)	3 (0.00)	---	3 (0.00)	214
	Dankanaou	50 (0.16)	7 (0.02)	3 (0.00)	---	14 (0.05)	310
	Lessan	60 (0.16)	7 (0.02)	---	---	25 (0.08)	301
Nassoumbou :	Damba	50 (0.08)	13 (0.02)	1 (0.00)	---	41 (0.07)	611
	Bouro	400 (0.88)	60 (0.13)	20 (0.04)	---	56 (0.12)	466
	Ouapa	80 (0.26)	1 (0.00)	1 (0.00)	---	20 (0.07)	311
	Nassoumbou	1,100 (1.83)	20 (0.03)	5 (0.00)	---	80 (0.13)	602
	Soboule	100 (0.20)	8 (0.02)	2 (0.00)	---	40 (0.08)	511
Province		2,280 (0.57)	183 (0.05)	56 (0.01)	---	307 (0.08)	3,977

* total number of IMTs in sampled households (average per household / number of IMTs per household)

It is important to note that there is significant variation in the number and type of IMTs per household between provinces. Of particular note are the differences between Kossi Province where the overall average number of bicycles per household is 1.70 compared to Soum Province with an average of 0.57. Significant differences can also be seen between villages in the same province such as Nanfesso and Toundoura villages of Comoe / Leraba Province with average number of bicycles per household of 0.18 and 1.96 respectively or Dokui and Gone villages of Kossi Province with average household ownership of animal carts of 0.78 and 0.03 respectively. These findings point out the need to recognize locality-specific differences when designing interventions to alleviate transport problems. In some communities, more efforts may be required to introduce particular types of IMTs, such as animal carts, while in other settlements, their use may already be relatively common.

Obstacles to mobility

In terms of the obstacles to the mobility of members of the communities, a number of issues were raised. Concerning environmental conditions, not all IMTs may be suitable for the natural terrain. The types of off-route transport cannot always fit with existing IMTs, especially the wheeled ones. The issue of 'ecological fitness' needs to be particularly addressed in forest or mountainous areas.

As a result of long distances to facilities, farm lands, forest areas or water sources local residents use many hours to carry out different activities as shown in Table 1.2. The table again points out the locality-specific differences in the amount of time needed to carry out these frequent activities. The domestic or daily reproductive activities are carried out by women and children in nearly all cases. The farm production and socio-economic activities are engaged in by both males and females. By comparing the amount of time used to meet domestic needs with the total duration used for household tasks, it is again shown that women carry out a disproportionate share of household responsibility leading to severe time constraints. This is particularly apparent when it is realized that much of the farm production activities are carried out by women and the responsibility for carrying family members to health centers or schools, as well as taking products to market are also their tasks primarily.

Table 1.2: Time allocated to Transport for Household needs / Activities by Study Area (hrs. / mins.)

Site / Province / Department / Village	Domestic needs*	Farm Production activities*	Socio-economic services*	Total duration for household tasks
1. COMOE/LERABA				
Niangoloko: Bokouo	3hr 34	1hr 20	38	5hr 32
Diefoula	1hr 49	1hr—	34	3hr 19
Kimini	1hr 50	40	1hr 02	3hr 32
Nanfesso	51	1hr --	1hr 12	3hr 03
Toundoura	3hr 14	2hr –	1hr 30	6hr 44
Moussodougou: Diamon	1hr 18	30	2hr 10 mn	3hr 58
Kolokolo	1hr 45	45	40	3hr 10
Malon	1hr 40	55	1hr 23	4hr 30
Mondon	2hr 12	48	1hr 32	4hr –
Moussodougou	2hr 10	1hr 05	1hr 34	3hr 49
2. KOSSI				
Dokui : Ayoubakolon	1hr 20	2hr 40	42	4hr 42
Dokui	55	3hr 40	52	5hr 27
Goni	25	1hr 25	1hr 10	3hr
Kamadena	1hr 54	2hr 24	54	3hr 12
Karesso	44	2hr 34	45	4hr 3
Sono: Sono	1hr 22	3hr	1hr 10	4hr 32
Kale	1hr 36	2hr 50	49	4hr 15
Bankoura de kale	30	2hr 20	48	3hr 38
Nouna: Sampopo	54	2hr 50	57	4hr 41
Solemana	1hr 53	3hr 57	50	5hr 43
3. NAKOURI / ZIRO				
Bakata: Bakata	2hr 45	3hr –	1hr 26	7hr 11
Lorou	2hr 10	40	1hr 34	4hr 24
Kou	5hr –	1hr 16	17	6hr 27
Guiao	1hr 53	50	20	3hr 03
Tayalo	1hr 40	1hr 20	25	3hr 25
Guiaro: Betare	4hr 09	1hr 30	1hr 29	7hr 08
Boala	1hr 29	1hr 30	1hr 54	4hr 59
Guiaro	4hr 20	1hr 40	1hr 20	7hr 20

	Kologo Koumbili	3hr 07 4 hr 15	2hr --- 1hr 30	1hr 53 50	7 hr --- 6hr 35
4. NAMENTENGA					
Boala:	Boala	48	1hr	38	2hr 26
	Zaongo	1hr 33	54	45	3hr 12
	Ledere	1 hr 27	1hr	1hr 02	3hr 29
	Koumestenga	1 hr 18	1hr	20	2hr 38
	Mogodin	2hr 30	54	27	3hr 51
Dargo:	Boko	1 hr 53	54	45	3hr 32
	Dargo	1hr 45	1hr	45	3hr 30
	Yaongo	1hr	1hr 02	57	2hr 59
	Yelembidou	2hr 05	1hr 12	58	4hr 15
	Zissegre	45	1hr 32	1hr	3hr 18
5. SOUM					
Baraboule	Baraboule	1hr 33	1hr 02	1hr 11	3hr 46
	Daoure	1hr 54	1hr 40	3hr	6hr 34
	Filifili	1hr 45	1hr 40	1hr 42	5hr 07
	Dankanaou	1hr 49	1hr 10	2hr 06	5hr 05
	Lessan	1hr 50	1hr	1hr 58	4hr 48
Nassoumbou	Damba	1hr 15	1hr 28	2hr 34	5hr 17
	Bouro	2hr 30	1hr 12	45	4hr 27
	Ouapa	1hr 37	1hr 40	2hr 10	5hr 27
	Nassoumbou	2hr 18	1hr 30	2hr 12	5hr 50
	Soboule	1hr 45	1hr 42	1hr 56	5hr 23

*Domestic needs = daily reproductive activities like fetching water, collecting firewood, grinding grains and all kinds of frequently performed chores

Farm Production activities = food crop farming, all other farming activities including harvesting

Socio-economic services = reaching basic services like health centers, schools, markets, etc. as well as visits to relatives or friends within or outside village.

The importance of non transport solutions to relieve transport problems was also highlighted by the findings. Significant time can be saved through bringing services closer to rural populations. For example, wells can be dug closer to the village to reduce distances to natural water sources. The study found that in some locations, less time was required to carry out tasks where water sources or other social services were nearby. In part of the provinces of Nahouri and Ziron, water shortage is not a problem due to rivers, temporary waterways, natural ponds and a few dams. Five small dams are reinforced by 178 wells. Most of the sampled villages are equipped with a well or a shaft. The average covered distance to reach water sources in dry season is 2 km. No household covers more than 500 m in search of a well or shaft during the rainy season

The case of lack of transport and poor access to necessary educational or medical services was also considered. When facilities are far and the transport conditions are poor, local residents lose important opportunities and services. In site III, the rate of school attendance is 37% with an average school distance of 4.84 km. In six of the sampled villages, the closest schools are 5 to 7 km away. As an example, for children from Guiao who attend school in Kondui (17 km away), parents have to find them a host family in the village. Children only get home during the weekends. Similarly, in Site II, long

distances must be covered by children in villages without schools for them to reach schools in other villages. For instance, in Bamkoura de kale children need to go to Yassan, 20 km away; children from Sampopo go 8 km to Kouro; and children from Kale will go as far as 13 km to reach a school.

Some obstacles to mobility are even political in nature. The view was expressed that non-motorized IMTs are not desired, even if they may be more practical because “*the bicycle does not show a good image of the country*”. In such a situation, the most logical and sustainable means of solving the transport problem is neglected by those who want to project an unrealistic view of the level of development in the country.

Lack of capital and low access to credit are also significant impediments to rural dwellers’ ownership of vehicles and IMTs. From the study, it was found that a donkey cost between 40.000 and 60.000 FCFA and a new or second hand bicycle cost 85.000 and 50.000 FCFA respectively. The poor level of income and lack of access to alternative income sources by most rural dwellers restrict not only their ability to own means of transport, but even to hire vehicles to transport their families and their produce. This implies that farmers are still largely dependent upon head loading and on outside traders from cities to evacuate their produce.

Use of IMTs by gender

The findings of the study clearly indicate that overall, the availability of IMTs to rural households in Burkina Faso is low. With regard to the use of IMTs by gender, it is important to understand that the availability of IMTs to the household does not necessarily mean that all members of the household have access to their use, nor that the IMT can be used for every transport-related purpose. As illustrated in the case study presented earlier, women and children seldom have access to the use of IMTs owned and controlled by the male head of household. Tasks such as fetching water or firewood are not considered jobs for which the ‘family’ bicycle or animal carts should be used. There are also taboos that limit access of women to some IMTs. In the Northern Province of Yatenga in Burkina Faso, women are not allowed to ride bicycles. Once married, women’s access to bicycles or mounting a donkey are forbidden.

The gender division of labor as well as differentiation in access to resources is very apparent from the findings of the study. Walking and head loading are the common modes of transport used by women to carry heavy loads. According to the study, “*women have the permanent duty to walk, to head load heavy burdens with children on their backs and sometimes in a state of pregnancy. The family IMT, whether a donkey, cart or bicycle, is always used by men. Women’s chores are socially and culturally perceived as less important and, therefore, no means of transport can be allocated to them. Even when the IMT is not being used, the woman is not able to use it either because of cultural restrictions or because she does not know how to use it.*”

The sexual division of labour is often perpetuated by beliefs such as the “strong neck theory” used as the rationale for promoting women’s head loading roles; that is, women

are naturally more adept to carry heavy loads, for they have stronger necks. Even if they don't physically have a stronger neck than men, it appears that in the African context, they have developed a comparative advantage in head loading. Yet, carrying heavy burdens is often a source of headache and backache. The spine may also be distorted by pain after carrying heavy loads.

The increase in time and effort for fetching water and collecting firewood is a damaging factor to the health of women in rural areas. As was shown in Table 1.2, a significant number of hours are spent in carrying out domestic activities which are almost entirely the responsibility of women and their children. Women become more vulnerable to diseases. If the mother is often sick or tired, the welfare of the children is similarly affected. The high level of anaemia among pregnant and non pregnant women, combined with carrying heavy loads is apt to hamper the growth of the foetus and reduce the quantity and quality of maternal milk of the prospective mothers.

The study found that there are variations in the ownership and use of IMTs between households and from one community or area to another. At the same time, however, women's access to the use of IMTs is generally found to be very limited regardless of the availability to the household. Efforts to improve transport conditions for rural women in Burkina Faso, therefore, must be targeted to the women themselves and not to their households where their use may still be denied.

Recommendations

The following recommendations in terms of alternative solutions were made from the results of the study:

- Identify transport and travel as a priority sector in rural areas;
- Reduce gender gaps in access to IMTs. Although the study pointed out some of the factors affecting gender use of IMTs, it will be necessary to carry out a study to identify the underlying causes of the limiting or increasing factors of women's access to IMTs;
- Meet some of the transport needs through reducing amount of time and energy used to secure services by locating infrastructural facilities such as schools, health centers and markets closer to communities;
- Promote the use of improved stoves and any other appropriate technology that can reduce the consumption of firewood and the amount of time needed to secure it; and
- Enhance the profitability of income generating activities for women to increase their financial capacity and autonomy.

The improved use of IMTs can be accomplished only through a participatory approach for an enlightened dissemination of transport improvements. The residents of the communities must be aware of the possible ways to enhance their quality of living.

