

Questions and Answers to “Leave No One Behind“

Experiences from Burkina Faso



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Background

The "Leave no one behind" (LNOB) principle of the 2030 Agenda represents a shared commitment to ensure that all people are taken along on the road to sustainable development. LNOB increasingly draws attention to the poorest and most vulnerable people. The Q&A document analyses potential approaches for integrating LNOB more effectively into ongoing projects and it identifies opportunities for systematically reaching disadvantaged target groups.

The GIZ Programme *Decentralisation and Local Development* (Programme Décentralisation et Développement Communal; PDDC) supports the decentralisation process in Burkina Faso at national and local level. In order to integrate LNOB more systematically into this process, a short-term consultation on LNOB was conducted. The document presents experiences gained in the implementation of LNOB measures and thus offers an opportunity to transfer the lessons learned to other contexts.

The project

Since 1991, Burkina Faso has enshrined the transfer of certain central government responsibilities to local structures in its constitution. Through decentralisation, the government intends to increase the civic involvement of the population by enabling more political participation in local development processes and by providing infrastructure and services according to local needs. The PDDC advises the responsible ministry (Ministère de l'Administration Territoriale de la Décentralisation et de la Cohésion Sociale) and the Secretariat of the National Decentralisation Conference on the implementation of decentralisation strategies and the monitoring of their progress.

The country

Burkina Faso is one of the world's poorest countries. It ranks 183 out of 189 countries in the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) 2017. Almost 44% of the population live in extreme poverty, i.e. on less than USD 1.90 a day. Taking into account other aspects such as health, education and living standards, 84% of the population are affected by so-called multidimensional poverty. There is a large urban-rural gap: while almost 95% in rural areas are considered to be multidimensional poor, it is about 46% in urban areas. According to current projections, Burkina Faso will not reach SDG 1 (End Poverty) by 2030. High population growth - by 2030 the population will increase from around 19 million to 27 million - and challenges linked to increasing state fragility pose further challenges to the country, including food security, sustainable use of resources and the provision of social services to the population.

Leave no one behind

The implementation of the LNOB principle requires the specific targeting of the most vulnerable groups, the development of inclusive project designs and the active support to an inclusive and LNOB friendly environment (e.g. including non-discriminatory laws). LNOB thus goes beyond a pure anti-discrimination agenda and combines the reduction of poverty and inequality with the implementation of human rights and inclusion. LNOB aims to strengthen target groups, but it also calls for change of structural conditions in the society as a whole. In addition to achieving certain objectives (e.g. a minimum standard of living) for those left behind, LNOB also calls to reduce differences between various groups.

1. How can those left behind be identified?

The identification of the most disadvantaged people and groups is an important precondition for LNOB implementation. **Context-specific target group analyses** as well as the **collection and use of disaggregated data** are necessary, in order to identify existing inequalities and the particular needs of left-behind groups. More and better data are also an important condition for LNOB monitoring and evaluation.

As a first step, projects can take a **self-diagnostic approach** to develop **competencies of the project team and partners**. Who is the target group in the ongoing project? Which capacities already exist and which need to be expanded? **Objectives and indicators of a project as well as the planning process** of activities should be examined with regards to LNOB. In a second step, **external target group analyses and data**, for example from civil society and multilateral organisations (e.g. Plan International¹ or The World Bank²), should be evaluated and included in the planning. While the self-diagnostic has already taken place in the PDDC, the external target group analyses still needs to be integrated.

In cooperation with the GIZ Sectoral Projects *Reducing Poverty and Inequality as Part of the 2030 Agenda* and *Realizing Human Rights including Children and Youth Rights in Development Cooperation*, PDDC plans to conduct a specific target group. This analysis forms the basis for a **needs assessment for civil society and municipal structures**. **Experiences from other GIZ projects** - e.g. a study on disadvantaged groups within the framework of the **Equality Budgeting Tool (EBT)**³ - are being used for the preparation of this analysis. The sharing of expertise on different methods and approaches should take place across so-called **communities of practice**, across **projects and countries**, and include the sectoral department (GIZ's centre of technical and methodological support).

¹ Plan International carried out a target group diagnosis on vulnerable groups in one of the PDDC partner communities in 2018/19; EQUIPOP's figures and statistics: <http://equipop.org/fr/publications/>

² The development objective of the ongoing World Bank project is to strengthen the central government's capacity for administrative and fiscal decentralisation and the institutional capacities of communes in six regions: <http://projects.worldbank.org/P162742?lang=en>

³ EBTs aim to provide actors with a) the necessary understanding of equity, and b) an analysis of the extent to which public budgeting responds to the needs of marginalised groups. This can serve as a basis for the development of evidence-based (policy) reforms. More information: <https://www.genderingermandevelopment.net/custom/images/content/BilderGalerie/bilderGalerie1000501/GIZ-Equity-budgeting-tool-2018-EN.pdf>

At a glance: Identifying the target group

- Capacity development for the project team and partners (sensitisation)
- Establishment of LNOB working groups at different levels and with different stakeholders/partners
- Exchange of experiences with other projects and countries (e.g. via IDA⁴ Burkina Faso, Communities of Practise (CoP) as exchange platform and knowledge pool)
- Create a data basis:
 - Questions relevant to the project level: Which data collection structures and processes already exist? How is the quality of the data and is it possible to combine different databases? How can data disaggregation be improved to consider left behind groups (e.g. disaggregation by gender, age, disability)?
 - Support of institutional capacities of statistical offices (administrative reform) to collect disaggregated data
 - Use of open data approaches
 - Use of focus group interviews to generate qualitative data⁵
- Use target group analyses for strategic planning:
 - Internal diagnostics (previous target group, objectives, indicators and planning of measures/processes)
 - Use external analyses of different partners
 - Make use of scientific papers in cooperation with local universities

Who are those left behind in the project context?

For Burkina Faso, a stronger focus on the North could address existing regional disparities. For PDDC, the needs of poor communities in the focal regions - Southwest and East – have not yet been met, due to a lack of financial resources. The PDDC sees an urgent need to add further municipalities in the two focal regions.

A hypothesis about those left behind was developed within the project. According to this, the following groups are particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged in Burkina Faso: children and young people, elderly people, women (e.g. widows), illiterate people, persons of certain ethnic or regional affiliations, the rural population, people with disabilities, and people with low income or employees in the informal sector. In this context, it is particularly important to consider multiple and intersecting discrimination (e.g. young rural women).

⁴ IDA (Integrated Digital Applications): GIZ's internal tool for virtual collaboration; possibility to create flexible teams across countries and departments, edit files together, create team calendars, etc.

⁵ The qualitative approach is more appropriate if the target groups are exposed to repression or if open data may pose a potential threat to the target groups in respect of the “Do No Harm” principle.

2. What are the reasons why certain groups are left behind?

For Burkina Faso, various factors can be identified which pose a barrier to reaching certain groups. A recent government reorganisation at the beginning of 2019 led to changes in responsibilities of the respective ministries (**accountability**). Two thirds of the national budget is financed by donors and main priorities of the various actors are not systematically geared to LNOB (**priority setting**). Although the national development programme (Plan national de développement économique et social) provides the country with an economic and social development roadmap that also aims to strengthen the poorest population, political implementation is hampered by violent conflicts and terrorist threats. Additionally, some conflicts are due to misunderstandings of the law (e.g. land rights). In consequence, the gap between the poor and the poorest population groups grows wider (**framework conditions and security situation**).

The main priorities of the poorest population groups in the focal regions are basic infrastructural and social needs. However, the municipal budgets are usually not sufficient for a comprehensive supply of basic infrastructure services such as water supplies or health services. Different population groups are often not represented during budget preparations and municipal planning processes (**representation**). As a consequence, those groups often lack possibilities to stand up for their rights (**opportunities for participation**). Finally, rural and remote areas are geographically disadvantaged because they are difficult to reach and often lack appropriate infrastructure (**accessibility**).

The illiteracy rate among elected municipal committee members is high and many representatives do not speak French. Women are generally underrepresented both in committees and in state representation structures. Likewise, administrative capacities at municipal level are inadequate (**capacity deficit**). Local authorities do not have sufficient data to carry out concrete needs assessments in a regional and local context (**database**). As a matter of principle, the competencies to implement LNOB of municipal service providers such as regional authorities should be strengthened.

At a glance: Barriers to reaching left-behind groups

- Unspecified responsibilities
- No systematic focus on LNOB
- A tense security situation makes (political) implementation more challenging
- Lack of opportunities to participate for left-behind groups
- Geographical remoteness and thus lack of accessibility
- Capacity deficit at municipal level
- Lack of baseline data

3. What are examples to better reach those left behind?

As part of a participatory process, it is essential to give voice to **representatives of the disadvantaged groups** and enable them to **express their views**. The PDDC field of action 2 “Strengthening local civil society participation” offers options for LNOB implementation. These include measures such as **radio broadcasts with audience participation, village square gatherings** or the establishment of **sectoral clusters**. This field of action also includes the **cooperation and support of the civil society representative bodies** of the rural population.

Many projects in partner countries already have available data on relevant target groups. These data can be used to improve the understanding of the needs of those left behind and to develop context-specific LNOB approaches and instruments. In Burkina Faso, an **interface cooperation with other GIZ projects** was established that creates synergies in the application of the LNOB principle. A **working group on LNOB** promotes the implementation and expansion of LNOB measures in the strategic planning for 2019.

LNOB flagship measures, such as the training approach for illiterate municipal committee members, were implemented jointly with partners during the project phase. The focus hereby was on **local capacity building for civil society representative structures** (especially in rural regions). Local participation structures should be established. During the piloting phase, **additional resources** such as new staff positions, specialist planning capacities and scientific support can provide important support.

Partner networks play an important role in the implementation of LNOB. In this context, the exchange with other projects that implement e.g. human rights-based and poverty-reducing approaches is important. In addition, multi-actor-partnerships⁶ are also potential entry points to foster cooperation.

At a glance: Strategies for reaching left-behind groups

- Give voice and enable disadvantaged groups to express their concerns
- Cooperation with and support for civil society representative bodies
- Set up interface cooperation with other GIZ projects
- Establish partner networks
- Establish LNOB working groups (e.g. at national or cluster level)
- Additional personnel resources

⁶ Long-term cooperation between different actors (e.g. government, private sector or science)

4. How can the implementation of LNOB be strengthened in the project context?

For the project work in francophone West Africa, **translations into French** are essential. This increases the likelihood of local participation at all stages of the process and sensitises the project teams during the planning and implementation phases. Enough time and space for **monitoring and reflection** are important, in order to make the implementation experience more useful for other contexts - thematic or country-specific. **Personnel capacities** are to be supplemented by additional staff (LNOB focal points, development workers for process support; specialist method and planning experts).

The **implementation of LNOB** should be carried out through **all phases of the project cycle**. Therefore the development of a monitoring and evaluation system (M+E system) is essential. This system should be used to check progress towards the achievement of objectives and impacts – e.g. referring to the reduction of existing inequalities between population groups. Persons involved in the process should be prepared for LNOB related challenges and approaches through **internal training**.

New alliances and **greater involvement of civil society and academia** are an integral part of the implementation of the Agenda 2030. This can also benefit the PDDC in Burkina Faso: cooperation partners in LNOB implementation should include think tanks such as the German Development Institute (GDI/DIE), to measure the impact of governance, and/or the Working Group for Peace and Development (FriEnt), to reconcile LNOB with the *Do No Harm* approach.

What are the needs of GIZ staff to implement LNOB?

A general knowledge on methods, tools and LNOB relevant approaches, as well as solid **knowledge and skills in change management** are desirable. The implementation of the LNOB principle leads to a change process in the overall design of a development project. A **LNOB training concept for internal use** is desirable. This should draw on existing knowledge and existing tools on related topics. Finally, **local and national-regional expert networks** should be established to enable context-specific diagnostics.

5. What are lessons learned for the implementation of LNOB in other contexts?

When implementing LNOB measures, a flexible approach is required that leaves scope for context-specific adaptations. At the country level, GIZ should prepare differentiated target group analyses that provide guidance for portfolio management and country strategies. Existing experiences within a certain context should be made available to others, for example through a LNOB-specific IDA knowledge management system. Portfolio management at country and regional level should include learning and exchange platforms. The development of a didactic methodological concept for the application of LNOB should be designed jointly with the national GIZ teams as well as local and national actors in the current project phases. Possible areas of cooperation for the Agenda 2030 could be identified through bilateral government negotiations in partner countries. A differentiated target group analysis could address structural discrimination and define the scope for action through policy dialogue.

In addition, the following points should be considered in the planning:

- Integrating the results of target group analyses as parameters in monitoring and evaluation systems (measuring the impact of the project on disadvantaged people and identifying promising approaches to reach left-behind groups)
- Planning management efforts to cooperate with other relevant projects in the country portfolio and consideration of the high communication efforts in resource planning (using online platforms; e.g. IDA)
- Integrate flexible control capacities in order to have room for improvement during implementation
- Making use of the context-specific knowledge and competencies of national employees
- Consider *Do No Harm* consequences
- Allow *Trial&Error* in testing

The municipal level is crucial for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In Burkina Faso, the decentralisation project can make a significant contribution to stabilizing local democracy and the government's broader reform efforts. LNOB has the potential to increase the positive impact of decentralisation reforms, it is a central mean of securing social peace.

In order to integrate LNOB into other projects, flexible project frameworks with additional personnel and financial resources are desirable. The process of change must be designed on a long-term basis so that effects achieved are sustainable. In addition, LNOB should receive attention when selecting partner countries, target groups, suitable funding instruments or when answering economic policy questions, reducing poverty and inequality as well as market economy orientation (e.g. integration of welfare concepts or other state social policies).

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