On September 22 and 23, 2008, CIFOR-West Africa organized a national workshop titled “Security in access to forest resources and equity in community forest” in Burkina Faso.

The objective of the workshop was to create a space for discussions among the key constituencies and stakeholders in forest and land management in Burkina Faso on necessary strategic and political reforms to improve forest resources sustainability, land security, equity, and access to market in community forestry. The participants were government representatives from the forest service, the departments of land and of decentralization, local elected officials, community leaders, researchers, lawyers, donors’ community, and members from non-governmental organizations. The activities were based on the following issues:

- Presentation of RRI-CIFOR research project on “Livelihoods and Equity in Burkina Community Forest.” How does this research contribute to the analysis of increasing vulnerable people’s participation in the drafting of local and national policies and in access to forest resources?
- Presentations of research done by CIFOR partners and collaborators in Burkina on decentralized forest resources management, community forestry (best practices, constraints, adaptation and climate change, wood-cutting and trade), land and forest tenure, and women’s rights in access to secured tenure.
- What policy recommendations are needed for advocacy and policy reforms? Working groups were put in place to develop strategies on how to: (1) ensure women’s effective representation in community forestry; (2) guarantee land security in community forestry; (3) promote community forestry in the context of decentralization.

Policy recommendations for equitable and secured forest and land tenure

Many challenges in decentralized community forest management were identified, including:

- lack of transparency and inequity in forest resources benefits sharing, the state monopoly in decentralized natural resources management,
- women’s constraints in access to land and decision making,
- the lack of consideration of community rights, and
- the negative impacts of private concessions on outskirts communities.
Participants made recommendations to policy and decision makers for security and equity in the context of decentralized natural resources management.

**Gender equity in community forest representation**
- Take into account the rights of vulnerable group in drafting Local Conventions for natural resources management;
- Support women’s group to have access to funding and market;
- Establish women’s rights in the new law on land security;

**Community forestry in the context of decentralization**
- Make the process of transfer of power in natural resources management more participatory for a better inclusion of community rights;
- Reinforce the capacity of communities and Local Collectivities in forest resources management;

**Land security in decentralized community forestry management**

*In forest designed for community use:*
- The Commune (legally in charge) should concede the forest management to community organizations;
- Have a clear and equitable benefit sharing system of forest resources;
- Draft a *cahier de charge* that defines the role of each actor in forest management;

*In communal forest:*
- The commune set up a management committee composed of community members;
- Draft a *cahier de charge* that defines the role of the commune and of the committee;

*In classified forest (under government control):*
- Even though the state is the owner, there is should be a clear benefit sharing system among the state, the commune, and community organizations