



Country strategy paper:

# Burkina Faso country programme 2023 – 2027

## Introduction

ERIKS Development Partner has been working in Burkina Faso since 2004 through local partner organizations. Against the backdrop of a continuing deteriorating humanitarian situation in Burkina Faso, which puts the resilience of its population to a daily test, ERIKS Development Partner continues with local partners to focus its work on the most marginalized and vulnerable children. However, to remain relevant ERIKS' interventions should integrate the logic of primacy of humanitarian response to the multidimensional crisis (security, IDP, food security and nutrition) the country is facing. Burkina Faso's government faces a multidimensional crisis, which includes the spread of terrorist group activities, the proliferation of criminal networks, amounting pres-

sure on natural resources, state weakness and governance problems. OCHA's situation report for June 2022 establishes that nearly 10% of the population are internally displaced persons (IDPs), more than 61% of whom are under 18 years old<sup>1</sup>. Girls and boys are now facing new challenges due to the multidimensional crisis, in addition to the exacerbation of the country's numerous issues and needs relating to violence against children, lack of education, challenges to born and grow up healthy, a high and stagnating gender gap. Burkina Faso is ranking 184 out of 191 countries<sup>2</sup>.

Burkina Faso has ratified several international conventions on child rights, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and its additional protocols. Furthermore,

<sup>1</sup> <https://reports.unocha.org/fr/country/burkina-faso/>

<sup>2</sup> In the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) 2021/22 report

<sup>3</sup> Plan International- Neglected Crisis Advocacy Brief- July 2022

the budget allocated to the social basic services sectors is not sufficient and the State has neither the means nor the capacity to fulfil its obligations. Thus, numerous gaps and enormous challenges persist. Insecurity and conflict, climate change and environmental degradation, the COVID-19 pandemic effects and escalating food prices are the current main drivers of food insecurity and vulnerability. 3.3 million people is facing food insecurity and 3.5 million people require emergency assistance in six out of 13 regions<sup>3</sup>. The Child Rights Situation Analysis (CRSA) carried out by ERIKS in 2018 and reviewed in 2022 revealed that vulnerable and marginalized children and young people, especially girls, are facing major hardship, limiting full access to and enjoyment of number of their rights. This analysis was achieved through a participatory process involving all relevant stakeholders, including children and youth from partner communities. To respond to the main issues identified in the child rights situation analysis, ERIKS and its local partners have defined strategic choices. The process was also informed by lessons learnt from ERIKS' previous strategic framework and based on analysis with main stakeholders acting in the field of child rights in Burkina Faso.

While ERIKS still remain aligned with ERIKS' international strategy 2022-2026, there is a need to re-invent, improve, and/or sustain some areas of the work in Burkina Faso including projects, policy influencing, presence and reach, partnership, and funding model. Four overall approaches have been identified for ERIKS in Burkina Faso to perform these changes

and achieve the outcomes defined in this strategy:

- Establish a strong, lean, efficient, flexible, learning, and accountable based partnership that is in line with the child rights-based programming purpose and ERIKS' values, including humanitarian standards requirements and sensitivity to conflicts and environment's protection.
- ERIKS will measure progress towards Country Strategy (CS) objectives, ensure constant learning and value for money and provide the foundation for evidence-based gender transformative programming.
- Strengthen the position of ERIKS as a recognized reference organization in Burkina Faso acting on child rights, focusing on most vulnerable and excluded girls and boys, adolescents, and youth affected by the multidimensional crisis. Specific attention will be paid to their participation.
- Streamline processes, systems, and procedures to facilitate the delivery of gender transformative and policy influencing programs including humanitarian and conflict settings with orientation towards the triple nexus approach and ensure accountability to stakeholders. While the programs intend to strengthen the resilience in all programmatic areas, more work will need to be done to more effectively mainstream and measure how projects build social cohesion, social and economic assets; and help communities to adapt to climate change. There is also needed to continue efforts to systematically apply the gender marker to all projects to ensure organizational requirements are met.



## Strategic orientation

### The role and contribution of ERIKS

ERIKS is today a well-recognised voice in child rights issues in Burkina Faso. There are strong ties with other child rights programming stakeholders and ERIKS' work is respected by local partners and the government. ERIKS is particularly recognized for its work in strengthening of community-based child protection mechanisms and protection of marginalized children (living in streets and in prison) and those with disabilities. ERIKS' participation in common CSO initiatives made important contributions to child rights monitoring activities and child rights advocacy initiatives.

Several ongoing initiatives and projects aim to influence government policy and encourage the scaling up of successful initiatives. ERIKS has also convinced the Child Protection National Council to integrate advocacy for gender and child protection sensitive budgeting in communes' development planning in the country. To contribute to adaptive justice for children in conflict with law, ERIKS contributed via its partner organisation Association LYDIE to support the National Direction of Child protection for training stakeholders involved in justice for minors in Burkina Faso.

ERIKS is active in advocacy activities through participation in networks and groups involved in child rights promotion and protection (Child Protection Working Group). ERIKS is also engaged in thematic subgroups on education and child protection in emergencies. ERIKS is an active member of the national coalition of development NGOs and Associations (SPONG). ERIKS also has substantive experiences in providing support to food security and child nutrition through its partner organisations and to the development of communities' resilience capacities (preventive, adaptive, and absorptive capacities to face climate change impact on agriculture). In the coming strategy period, preventive capacities will include girls' and boys' education and participation to respect and protect the environment.

ERIKS' contributions to address the humanitarian crisis in the country have increased with urgent need to constantly improve partners' expertise in humanitarian standards and compliance with Core Humanitarian Standards for Quality and Accountability (CHS) commitments. As part of this new country strategy framework, ERIKS will strengthen its own expertise and partners' capacities and competencies in humanitarian assistance, development, and peace building through triple nexus approach programming.

Going forward, ERIKS will develop partners' capacity to gradually assume an increasing level of evidence-based programming and oversight. The capacity development of partners will be considered to a greater extent in the budgeting of projects, by establishing budgetary standards for institutional support and capacity development. Working with partners improves the effectiveness, efficiency, quality, and sustainability of programs. Coalitions with relevant partners will further be built to achieve ambitions to influence and improve local funding opportunities.

More strategic partnerships will be established with youth organisations to enable them to drive change. Believing that

they represent a crucial and largely untapped resource that can bring value and legitimacy to ERIKS' work. ERIKS' regional team is aware that if we do not adapt our partnership criteria to integrate youth organisations, we are missing a great opportunity to add value and legitimacy and the chance to learn from the perspective that youth organizations can bring to the work. Working methods need to be adapted to reach out to youth organizations and movements that do not always have a formal associative governing body.

At the same time, the partnership with classic local implementing organizations that have different levels of capacity and expertise also needs to be strengthened in terms of child rights programming principles and strategies to meet ambitions to change the root causes of the problems experienced and suffered by girls and boys in Burkina Faso. To ensure that ERIKS maximize opportunities of working through stronger partners, there is a need to continue improving the approach to partnership, e.g., by applying certain requirements in terms of capacities and good governance.



### Learning and strategic choices

The review of the previous country strategy framework and lessons learnt, highlighted the areas where ERIKS and its local partners could add value due to their capacity, experience, and expertise. The participatory evaluation preceding this strategy paper has revealed the relevance of the implemented projects and their alignment with the SDGs: Objective 2- Fight against hunger, Objective 3- Access to health; Objective 4- Access to quality education, Objective 5- Gender equality, also aligned with the provisions of treaties and conventions signed by the Burkinabè State, and in particular the UNCRC articles 19, 27, 34, 12, 24, 35 and the ACRWC articles 16, 21, 27.



Relevance was confirmed by: Children, families, and community leaders when aligning the implemented activities with the needs felt by the communities.

However, while the representatives of the decentralized technical services and the local authorities at commune level appreciated the relevance of the projects, they also noted a need for more closer links between the achievements of the projects with the sectoral policies and plans developed by their decentralized departments. The last Country Strategy framework had too many outcomes. To be more focused and maximize impact, there is hence a need to reduce the number of objectives for the new country strategy, when concentrating on the most suitable to the local context including current challenges exacerbated by the unprecedented humanitarian crisis in the country. ERIKS' approach of working in partnerships and alliances and its ambition to be a partner of choice for child rights advocacy and funding requires ERIKS to constantly interrogate its added value in relation to the work of others.

The situational analysis also highlighted priority areas that required additional attention/intervention/investment. During the "strategic choices workshop", with the key's stakeholders, areas where ERIKS should focus its efforts for maximum impact and add value were selected:

1. Inclusive, Safe, and Quality education, focusing on education completion for girls and inclusion for out of school children and those with disabilities.
2. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and the elimination of gender-based violence, particularly FGCFGC, child marriage and prevention of early pregnancy and drug use in school.
3. Child rights monitoring support and contribution to child protection system strengthening, focusing on marginal-

ized and excluded children like those living in the streets and those in conflict with law This will be done with action to promote the girls' and boys' right to live in families.

4. Integration of youth economic empowerment and entrepreneurship, with a focus on the most vulnerable children and youth.
5. Humanitarian response focusing on Education in Emergency (EiE), Child Protection in Emergency (CPiE) and Child Nutrition linking to food security, oriented towards triple nexus approach perspective. This approach recognises the importance of meeting immediate humanitarian needs through ongoing disaster response management (DRM) while tackling obstacles to development, including gender inequality, intra- and inter-community conflict and violence, and the adverse impact of climate change.

To maximize impact and effectiveness, and aligned with ERIKS international strategy, advantage will be taken of existing expertise and experience within ERIKS' staff and certain partners. ERIKS will strive for aid efficiency by investigating the opportunities of programme – and core support to partners and capacity reinforcement to build and manage partnerships, as well as developing gender transformative programming. Actions in common initiatives within relevant networks will be to influence decision and policy makers to ensure that girls and boys, have the right to learn, to grow up healthy in protective environment and thrive including in humanitarian emergencies and conflict settings.

To reach the goal and enable ERIKS and its partner organizations to contribute to the fulfilment of child's rights in Burkina Faso, focus will be on the following strategic choices during the next 5 years:

- The country strategy framework will be guided by an influencing the agenda that calls for better legal and

substantive protection of girls, boys, and adolescents from harmful practices. ERIKS and its local partners will focus on creating better protection for girls and boys more widely by addressing the causes and consequences of harmful practices and its interlinkages with widespread levels of violence against children in the country, including in emergency settings. Work with families, civil society organizations and their networks as well as with children and young people themselves will focus on:

- Promoting positive social norms, improving social cohesion and influence with partners and in relevant networks for an end to harmful practices and better protection of vulnerable children.
  - Promoting positive parenting practice and strengthen parents' ability to cope with shocks and stress affecting children's lives. Facilitating community and family-based psycho-social support to children and parents affected by violence and displacement.
  - Building community resilience and strengthen social and economic assets to reduce child protection risks and food insecurity.
- **SRHR and childhood's health** interventions including in emergency settings to address the high incidence of adolescent pregnancy and the nefarious health consequences of adolescent mothers and their children by:
    - Promoting comprehensive sexuality and reproductive health rights in education/training facilities and with community and youth groups.
    - Improving awareness on Menstrual Hygiene and improve Menstrual Hygiene Management at school.
    - Promote the use and expansion of quality maternal and neonatal health care services to tackle preventable

childhood diseases including nutrition (idea is to promote it through advocacy and the community's social mobilization on the subject).

- Support for access to drinking water and sanitation services.
- **The education** component will combine the promotion of formal and informal education and training opportunities for girls, boys, and young people from primary onwards including in emergency settings. This will be done by promoting access to and improving quality of formal education, supporting school governance, promoting school re-entry; and providing access to skills-building opportunities. Making education spaces safer and more accommodating for girls, as well as for girls and boys living with disabilities, will be part of the efforts. This ambition will be achieved through building a strong influencing agenda on safe, inclusive quality education, especially for girls.

This program will require more efforts in view of developing expertise within the existing implementing partners. It also holds substantial opportunity for making greater efforts to gender transformation in Burkina Faso by increasingly working with boys and men to understand and support girls and young women's SRHR and maternal health needs and rights. Below is a summary of the strategic approaches that ERIKS will give priority to in the coming strategy period:

- ERIKS and its implementing partners will make significant contributions to building resilience in its target zones by transforming gender relations, building social cohesion and promoting adaptation to climate change.
- Applying a conflict-sensitive approach to work: ERIKS and local implementing partners will strengthen the conflict sensitive programming during the strategic cycle. This will



involve close monitoring of the local situation and evolving context national/sub-regional context and carrying out conflict sensitive context analysis at each project level. This will include assessing particularly relations between different groups to identify horizontal inequalities and tension that these could bring and the interactions between project interventions and the context/group relations. Project design will include "do no harm" discussions to identify positive negative impacts of the project on the context, intergroup relations, and horizontal inequalities, and the identification of measures to address these risks.

- **Communication and visibility:** The communication focus will be in line with the actions initiated by the commu-

nication department from head office. Referring to the interventions contexts, it will be based on the visibility of the humanitarian crisis (realities, needs and specific needs of girls and boys considered as the first victims) as well as on ERIKS' response to this crisis (quality of the response, innovative approaches, results achieved, impact in line with the triple nexus approach). In addition, the organization's institutional visibility will be assessed with a view to strategic positioning, as well as the overall visibility of the various projects and common initiatives within relevant networks.

## Country outcomes

The following outcomes have been defined for ERIKS' work in Burkina Faso during this strategy period, based on analysis in sections 2 and 3 below:

### 1. Partnership

- **1.1:1** Partner organisations apply a **contextualised Child Right Based Approach** and work according to the **General Principles of the UNCRC**
- **1.1:2** Partner organisations apply gender and **conflict sensitivity, including religious sensitivity**, working according to Do No Harm principles and Child Safeguarding Policy/ Child Protection Policy
- **1.1:3** Partner organisations enhance the respect of the **natural environment and reduce the risks and consequences faced by girls and boys due to climate change** within the local context.
- **1.1:4** Partner organisations are **financially stable, cost efficient** and apply **democratic governance principles** within their organisations
- **1.1:5** **Movements/associations of youth and children**, especially girls, working at a local or national level to **change norms and make their views heard**.

### 2. Intervention – Long-term development and humanitarian assistance

- **2.1:1** **Girls and boys, including those with disabilities and out-of-school** (victims of conflict or exclusion) demand free, compulsory, safe, quality, and **inclusive education** (primary and secondary), pursue and complete their basic education with the support of their communities through innovative **formal and non-formal education programs tailored to their context**.
- **2.1:2** **Girls, boys, adolescents, and youth** benefit from quality services and make informed decisions about their **sexual and reproductive health and rights** including harmful practices and other forms of GBV
- **2.1:3** **Girls and boys, including those affected by a humanitarian crisis**, adopt appropriate attitudes to **protect** themselves and their peers and **demonstrate positive coping mechanisms**.
- **2.1:4** **Girls, boys, adolescent, and young people** actively **participate in decision-making** processes **in their school**

governance framework and in **their communities'** development initiatives, **including measures to prevent and reduce risks of conflict, disaster, and climate hazards**.

- **2.2:1** **State representatives technical services** are implementing learner-centred, safe, and **inclusive education**, accelerated methodologies and **alternative education initiatives**.
- **2.2:2** **Government technical services** have functional, safe, accessible, and effective **child protection systems** that prevent and respond to child protection concerns.
- **2.2:3** **Local and national authorities** establish and implement policies that guarantee children, adolescents and youth equal access to **quality health services including SRHR services**
- **2.3:1** **Parents, caregivers, communities, and leaders** actively support and take responsibility for ensuring girls and boys get safe, **inclusive, quality formal and non-formal education** in communities.
- **2.3:2** **Community leaders, volunteers and networks** support essential household and community interventions to ensure **health including the sexual health** of children, adolescents and young people and **their protection against preventable diseases, including malnutrition**.
- **2.3:3** **Community members** set up and maintain functional safe, accessible, and effective **child protection systems** that prevent and respond to child protection issues and adopt **positive parenting practices, including methods of non-violent discipline**.
- **2.3:4** **Parents, caregivers, and community members** are resilient, and able to provide continued care and support **to girls and boys affected by climate change, conflict and displacement** and are playing an active and positive role in **peace building and pacific cohabitation**.