



SEED
promoting entrepreneurship
for sustainable development

Founding Partners



SEED Dialogue Forum Burkina Faso

20 September 2017, Ouagadougou

Summary Report



Innovative Enterprise Solutions for Green Growth and Sustainable Development in Burkina Faso

The **SEED Dialogue Forum in Burkina Faso** was held on **20 September 2017** in **Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso**. The event was organized by SEED and its local partners, **Fondation Afrik Eveil** and **La Fabrique**, which promote eco-inclusive enterprises by providing necessary services.

The forum focused on the theme: « **Innovative Enterprise Solutions for Green Growth and Sustainable Development in Burkina Faso** ». It was attended by more than 50 practitioners of eco-inclusive business development, including businesses themselves and business development service (BDS) providers (incubator, accelerator, financing structures) both in the public and private sphere, as well as in multilateral and bilateral cooperation.

The aim was to discuss the **needs of eco-inclusive enterprises** and how their support can be improved, enhanced and adapted to all stages of the entrepreneurial life cycle, **from incubation to replication**. Highlights of the forum were remarkable speeches, the presentation of innovative solutions of eco-inclusive enterprises, the organization of a workshop « **Café du Sahel** », and a discussion among BDS providers on their experiences.

Welcoming words, presentation of SEED Winners in Burkina Faso and Enterprise Solutions Exhibition

After the welcoming words of the host organisations SEED, La Fabrique and Afrik Eveil, two representatives of important initiatives of the government of Burkina Faso in favour of green economy and entrepreneurship hold a speech.

For example, Mr **Becquet Polycarpe Bationo**, Director of Entrepreneurship Promotion and Green Investments of the General Directorate of Green Economy and Climate Change (DGEVCC), has shed some light on the government's commitment in promoting the green economy. This commitment is executed at two levels. At the institutional level, the establishment of the DGEVCC and its four specialized departments at the level of the Ministry of Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change (MEEVCC) is noted. In terms of policies developed or under development, there are among others the national policy for sustainable development, the national strategy for green economy and its action plan, and the green tax project. Mr Bationo ended his statement by welcoming the organization of this forum, which enables to exchange with other participants without whom the measures undertaken by the government wouldn't lead to the expected results.



Mr **Kalifa Romuald Dao** presented the Burkinabe Fund for Economic and Social Development (FBDES) of which he is a member. According to him, this fund exists since 1979 and has had several names over time. One of its main tasks is the provision of financial support for creation and development of innovative enterprises in promising sectors in Burkina Faso. It is within this framework that the Burkina Start-Up Program was launched in 2017 and whose second selection session for projects to be funded will take place in January 2018. One of the key criteria for selecting projects is their potential social impact because, according to Mr. Dao, it does not serve to be a profitable business without benefiting the population.



The second part of the speeches was dedicated to representatives of some of the Burkinabe eco-inclusive enterprises that won the SAG-SEED Award in recent editions: The **Coopérative Sahel Vert** which produces biogas and organic fertilizer from bio digesters; **Jardin Green Hope** which transforms organic waste and water hyacinth into fertilizer, as well as plastic waste into plastic pellets for the industry; **TECOCARRE** which manufactures table-benches from plastic waste, the association **Voute Nubienne** which promotes new construction techniques that are ecological and adapted to the Sahel region.





one of the beneficiary pilot countries.

The ensuing Enterprise Solutions Exhibition was an opportunity for eco-inclusive enterprises to **showcase their innovative solutions**. The SAG-SEED Award allows eco-inclusive enterprises at an early stage of life cycle to benefit from support in terms of systematic capacity building, profiling and strengthening of favourable market conditions at the regional and national levels. It is **supported by the European Union** by the **SWITCH-Africa Green** (SAG) program, of which Burkina Faso is

« Café du Sahel » on improving support for business development

During this participatory workshop, participants worked very intensively to **diagnose the situation of eco-inclusive enterprises** in Burkina Faso and to make **proposals for solutions to improve their situation**. The participants, divided into 4 groups of about 15 people, alternately reflected on four key questions for supporting eco-inclusive entrepreneurship in Burkina Faso.



Conclusions of the Roundtable at the SEED Dialogue Forum in Burkina Faso:

➤ Problems and challenges encountered by eco-inclusive enterprises:

- **Competition from lower-quality products** (notably foreign products) sold at low prices. How can higher value-added products have a place on the market?
- **Consumer insensitivity to environmental problems.** How to make the clients understand the value of the activities put in place?
- **Discrepancy of rules and regulations with realities on the ground.** How to enable eco-inclusive enterprises to benefit from facilities?
- **Lack of visibility.** How to increase visibility and fame of eco-inclusive companies?
- **Lack of finance.** How to finance these enterprises?
- **Lack of government support.** How to get known and asking for what kind of support?
- **Lack of adequate training.** How to empower entrepreneurs and their teams to build skills?
- **Lack of funding for research,** that is often indispensable for eco-inclusive enterprises. Who to call upon for support?
- **Difficulty of reconciling the social and environmental mission with financial profitability.** How to build viable business models ?
- **Difficulty to position** itself as leader in its field. How to be recognized?

- **No control of local and sub-regional markets.** How to master the realities and constraints of neighbouring countries?
- **Low technology transfer.** How to adapt existing technologies to go faster / more far?

➤ **Needs of eco-inclusive enterprises:**

- **Protection of the local market:** having privileged and secure access to the market.
- **Access to institutional markets:** benefiting from preferential clauses in public tenders.
- **Popularization of ecological values in communities:** raising awareness through ministries and NGOs and carrying out promotional activities.
- **Definition of a regulatory framework and a particular status** for eco-inclusive enterprises: for example, granting a public utility status to recognize the impact of eco-inclusive enterprises.
- **Training in business management** including marketing and contracting techniques.
- **Establishment of a fund** specifically dedicated to the development of eco-inclusive enterprises.
- **Proposal for tax facilities** for eco-inclusive enterprises.
- Development of a **tool to facilitate the transfer of innovative technologies.**

➤ **Existing support mechanisms for eco-inclusive enterprises**

Support actors

- MEEVCC, CNSF, CNRST including INERA, ANVAR, APEX, APIBF
- Maison de l'entreprise du Burkina Faso
- Universities, engineering offices
- NGOs and associations
- Professional organizations (ex : ROPPA)
- SEED, La Fabrique, Afrik Eveil, etc.
- PTF (FAO, PNUD, PNUE, FEM, SWITCH Africa Green, BAD, World Bank, Embassies)
- Sub-regional organizations (CEDEAO, UEMOA, CILSS)
- Media

Technical support services

- Training, incubation, coaching, legal support; networking, media

Financial support actors

- FBDES, FEPACI, FIE, Green Funds (MEEVCC and Primature), and other public funds
- Technical and financial partners, foundations, banks and SFD, private individuals
- Crowdfunding Platforms

Financial support services

Grants, guarantee funds, loans, shareholding or equity participation, carbon market

➤ **Measures for a better collaboration between eco-inclusive enterprises**

- Establishment of a **network to identify and get to know the actors** as well as their fields of competence and action (example: cartography, mailing list, information sharing ...).
- Capitalization of experiences through the **organization of regular exchanges** on specific themes.

- Establishment of **focal points to share information** (attention, it is important that there are several focal points and that administrative burdens do not undermine the effectiveness of their actions).
- **Regular evaluation of the effectiveness and relevance** of the actions of the various actors.

Discussion round with BDS providers



This event brought together about ten representatives of BDS providers, including those who benefited from **the training of trainers (TOT)** organized by SEED in collaboration with the Afrik Eveil Foundation from 31 January to 3 February 2017 in Ouagadougou, as well as the organizers of the forum and other BDS providers.



Through discussions, a dual **objective** was aimed: (i) to **learn from each other's experiences** in their business support activities in general and in the use of SEED tools in particular; and (ii) make **proposals for the improvement of business support**.

Conclusions of the discussion round with BDS providers

➤ Used BDS tools including those of SEED

- **Tools:** Business canvas, Triple result, Value Proposition, Relationship Mapping, Market analysis, Pitch
- **Advantages:** stakeholder participation, more precision and better targeting of actors and actions

➤ Used approaches to finance BDS

- **Contribution of the beneficiary companies**, with the possibility of settlement by installments.
- **Financing / subsidy by third parties** (State, SEED, FIDA, AFD, Fondations, ...).
- **Income from other lucrative activities.**
- **Interest on loans granted** to enterprises.
- **Valuation of the provision of services in loans.**
- **Acquisition of a stake in the capital** of enterprises.
- **Commissions on fund raising** for enterprises.

➤ Issues and challenges of BDS providers in their work with companies

- Some **tools are often not recognized** by funding structures.
- SEED tools are **not suitable for certain target groups** such as illiterates.
- **Difficulties to receive payment for services from beneficiaries** due to limited financial capacity and the habit of free services provided by NGOs.
- **Difficulty to encourage enterprises to change an already used approach** (method, technology, ...) by a new one.
- **Low openness** of companies **for collaborations.**

➤ Proposals for the improvement of business support

Improving the quality of BDS:

- Use other tools such as audio and video recordings in local languages for the illiterate.
- Use visual approaches and theater.
- Simplify the vocabulary of SEED tools.

Funding mechanisms that can be used:

- Apply to calls for projects.
- Encourage businesses to accept payment for services.
- Develop a more entrepreneurial BDS model.

Improving collaboration between BDS providers

- Information sharing.
- Organizing a consortium to respond to calls for projects.

Conclusion

The **strong participation** in this forum and the dedication of the participants in the various projects clearly demonstrate the **participants' commitment to the development of eco-inclusive enterprises** in Burkina Faso. The utilization of the forum's findings by the authorities and eco-inclusive business development practitioners will contribute significantly to the expansion of these enterprises. This is necessary for the **promotion of the green and inclusive economy** in which Burkina Faso has been engaged since 2010, with the expected **effects on reducing unemployment, poverty, and environmental degradation**, which currently constitute the biggest international and national concerns.

