



# Learning from EUTF-funded projects and programmes supporting youth across West Africa

## CASE STUDY – BAB AL AMAL

Altai Consulting for the European Union – 2025



Funded by  
the European Union



© 2025 Altai Consulting. All rights reserved.

Licensed to the European Union under conditions.

Unless specified otherwise, all pictures in this report are credited to Altai Consulting.

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union through the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF). Its contents are the sole responsibility of Altai Consulting and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

## ALTAI CONSULTING

Altai Consulting provides strategy consulting and research services to governments, public institutions and private companies in developing countries.

Our teams operate in more than 50 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. Since its inception 20 years ago, Altai Consulting has developed a strong focus on migration, governance and sustainable development related research and programme evaluations. [www.altaiconsulting.com](http://www.altaiconsulting.com)

## EUTF MONITORING AND LEARNING SYSTEM (MLS)

The EU Trust Fund (EUTF) Monitoring and Learning System (MLS) was initiated in July 2017 and is being implemented by Altai Consulting. The overall objective of the MLS is to strengthen EUTF interventions through the creation of a monitoring and learning system, which should provide an evidence-based approach for programming and implementing interventions.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was written by Amir Hamdane and Manuel Schaedler, under the supervision of Estelle Briot.

The authors of this report are grateful to all informants who agreed to speak with them and contributed to the reflections contained in this report.

## CONTACT

Estelle Briot (West Africa Regional Director): [ebriot@altaiconsulting.com](mailto:ebriot@altaiconsulting.com)

Justine Rubira (MLS Deputy Team Leader): [jrubira@altaiconsulting.com](mailto:jrubira@altaiconsulting.com)

Eric Davin (Altai Partner): [edavin@altaiconsulting.com](mailto:edavin@altaiconsulting.com)

# CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1. Context and scope of the study	4
1.2. Objectives and methodology	4
1.3. Overview of the project	5
<b>2. ANALYSIS</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1. Approach and design	6
2.1.1. Relevance	6
2.1.2. Reach	14
2.1.3. Coherence	17
2.1.4. Sustainability	19
2.2. Project results	22
2.2.1. Overview	22
2.2.2. Engage	22
2.2.3. Empower	23
2.2.4. Connect	24
<b>3. CONCLUSION</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>4. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>5. ANNEXES</b>	<b>27</b>
5.1. List of key informants interviewed	27
5.2. List of focus group discussions conducted	27
5.3. List of project documents reviewed	27

# INDEX

Figure 1: Workshop at a private training centre, Sarh, April 2025 (Altai Consulting)	13
Figure 2: Employment and information at a BFE, Moundou, April 2025 (Altai Consulting)	15
Figure 3: Bikes at the disposal of young people at a BFE, Sarh, April 2025 (Altai Consulting)	15

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. CONTEXT AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) was established to address the root causes of irregular migration and displacement across Africa, with a particular focus on fostering stability, economic opportunities, and resilience in vulnerable communities. Within this framework, youth have been identified as a critical demographic, given their disproportionate vulnerability to unemployment, social exclusion, and migration pressures. Recognising the transformative potential of youth empowerment, the EUTF has funded numerous projects across West Africa aimed at improving youth livelihoods, enhancing skills development, and promoting social inclusion.

This case study is part of a broader learning initiative commissioned by the European Union (EU) to learn from EUTF-funded programmes supporting youth. The first phase involved a comprehensive mapping of youth-focused interventions within the EUTF portfolio, followed by a more in-depth analysis of 30 selected projects/programmes. This phase aimed to map the diversity of approaches, geographical coverage, and thematic areas, while identifying trends, successes, and challenges across projects. The second phase consisted of case studies of selected initiatives. These case studies aimed to provide a deeper understanding of how specific interventions addressed the needs of youth, adapted to local contexts, and contributed to sustainable development outcomes.

## 1.2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The objective of the case studies conducted by Altai was to **identify good practices and lessons learned from selected EUTF-funded projects, to feed into future EU programming supporting youth in West Africa**. Among the four selected projects was the Project to support the socio-professional integration of vulnerable young Chadians (“Projet de soutien à l’insertion socio-professionnelle des jeunes tchadiens en situation de vulnérabilité”), called Bab Al Amal (BAA; Arabic for “The Gate of Hope”), implemented by the French development agency (AFD) in Chad between April 2017 and July 2024.

Interviews for the case study were conducted between 07 and 11 April 2025. Altai collected, analysed and triangulated data from several sources: in-depth **document review** (project documents, national and EU youth strategies, etc.); **16 key informant interviews** with various stakeholders (implementing partners, national and local authorities, EU Delegation, civil society, business owners, beneficiaries) in Chad (N’Djamena, Moundou, Sarh); **two focus group discussions** with beneficiaries of components 1 and 2; and **field observations** in Moundou and Sarh.

The analysis is structured into two phases: (1) **analysis of project design** (relevance, coherence, reach, and sustainability, focusing on adaptation to local contexts and alignment with EU and national strategies); (2) **analysis of project results** (using the EU Youth Action Plan 2022–2027 as a framework, revolving around three pillars – Engage, Empower, and Connect – outlined further below). **Lessons learned** and **good practices** are identified and presented throughout the different sections. Primary data collection for this analysis focused on the project intervention areas of Moundou and Sarh, and to a lesser extent N’Djamena. The focus of qualitative data collection in the field was put on Sarh, following recommendations of the EU Delegation in Chad. This choice helped fill a void in data collection exercises, considering that the final evaluation had already conducted a mission to Moundou. Abéché was considered less insightful by the EU Delegation as new EU projects do not work in this city anymore. Nevertheless, Altai seized the opportunity of passing through Moundou to also conduct a few interviews there with a view to capture first hand findings. Moreover, N’Djamena was included because several key actors at the national level were based in the capital. This geographical focus means that, while the findings provide in-depth insight into these specific localities, they may not fully capture the nuances or impacts across all project sites.

### 1.3. OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

The **Bab Al Amal (BAA)** project aimed to improve the socio-economic integration of **vulnerable young people** and enhance their skills through structured vocational training and insertion support. Funded primarily by a **EUR 10 million grant** from the **EUTF**, the project operated under an agreement between the **Government of Chad** and the **AFD**. It targeted **young Chadians**, particularly those with limited or no formal education, in **six cities – N'Djamena, Bongor, Moundou, Abéché, Bol and Sarh** – addressing broader **regional stability** by tackling the root causes of socio-economic vulnerability.

**Two specific objectives contributed to this goal:** foster socio-economic integration through targeted training and professional insertion services (Component 1 – C1); and enhance youth skills via formalised apprenticeship programmes aligned with market needs (Component 2 – C2). Component 3 (C3) supported cross-cutting activities, such as monitoring, evaluation, and communication. More specifically:

- **C1 (EUR 4 million) focused on promoting the socio-economic integration of vulnerable youth in N'Djamena, Bongor, Moundou, Abéché, and Sarh**, by establishing support services for short-term, qualifying training and professional insertion. Implemented by the NGO ESSOR, activities included setting up *Bureaux Formation Emploi*<sup>1</sup> (BFE) to provide employment and training assessments, deliver short-term training for vulnerable youth, support the insertion of youth into jobs or self-employment, and strengthen public and private training actors. The component also aimed to strengthen civil society organisations (CSOs) and formalise the *Plateforme pour l'Insertion Professionnelle*<sup>2</sup>, fostering collaboration among stakeholders to enhance local training ecosystems.
- **C2 (EUR 5 million) sought to strengthen the skills of young Chadians through the development of formal dual apprenticeship training tailored to local private sector's needs with a focus on youth already in employment.** Building on the previous AFPACET project<sup>3</sup>, the component was managed by the *Fonds National d'Appui à la Formation Professionnelle*<sup>4</sup> (FONAP). Key activities included expanding dual apprenticeship training to new regions (Moundou, Sarh, Bol and Abéché) beyond the capital city, improving and promoting youth skills, structuring the institutional framework for dual technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and reinforcing professional organisations and training providers to ensure alignment with market demands.
- **C3 (EUR 600,000) focused on project monitoring, evaluation, capitalisation, and communication.** Coordinated by the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Vocational Training and Small Trades, it included real-time monitoring and evaluation of project outcomes, capitalising on established systems, and disseminating results to ensure the visibility and sustainability of the project's impact.

---

<sup>1</sup> Training and Employment Offices.

<sup>2</sup> Professional Integration Platform.

<sup>3</sup> AFPACET (*Projet d'Appui au Financement de la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Apprentissage au Tchad*) was a previous project (funded by AFD and implemented from 2015 to 2022), which aimed to strengthen vocational training and apprenticeship financing and provision in N'Djamena, notably in the construction, livestock, and crafts sectors.

<sup>4</sup> National Training Support Fund.

## 2. ANALYSIS

### 2.1. APPROACH AND DESIGN

#### 2.1.1. RELEVANCE

##### 2.1.1.1. Contextual analysis and intervention design

**The BAA project operated within a challenging Chadian context marked by high youth vulnerability and unemployment.** When the project started in 2018, youth underemployment and unemployment in Chad had reached over 37%, exacerbated by a persistent mismatch between the skills provided by training and the demands of the labour market. Against the backdrop of a rapidly growing youth population (with 70% of the population under 25 years) and the lack of education and training opportunities, young Chadians often entered the workforce prematurely without completing secondary or even primary education.<sup>i</sup> The private sector was little developed and characterised by a dual structure: few large companies, primarily in the agro-food (cotton, sugar) and service (banks, telecommunications) sectors coexisted with a large number of informal businesses. As of 2018, 97% of the population worked in the informal sector where training is often undertaken while on the job.<sup>ii</sup>

**C1 employed a holistic approach to address unemployment among the most vulnerable youth in target regions.** Beneficiaries (vulnerable Chadian youth aged 18–35 years who were low-skilled or unschooled) were targeted through a vulnerability assessment. This assessment was conducted by ESSOR's teams, notably through the Training and Employment Offices (“Bureaux de Formation et d’Emploi”, BFEs) and included interviews and home visits, alongside the use of socio-economic survey forms to evaluate vulnerability levels. These forms considered various criteria, such as the quality of housing, access to running water and electricity, the number of household members (including those without income-generating activities), and the family's education level. This comprehensive analysis culminated in the creation of a matrix called the ‘family picture’, which synthesised survey information to classify families according to different priority levels, ensuring the selection of the most vulnerable youth for adapted training and integration pathways. The selected youth went through motivational interviews for the final selection. After selection, beneficiaries first received a ‘MUVA’ training focused on developing their professional and personal skills, building self-confidence, fostering critical thinking, cultivating positive attitudes, and engaging community members. Subsequently, ESSOR oriented youth to trades that best matched their profiles, drawing from a list of promising trades established through ESSOR's needs analysis. ESSOR partnered with private and public training centres to provide short-term training. In addition to the practical training, 13 sessions were conducted within the BFEs, focusing on essential skills for professional integration. These sessions covered topics, such as curriculum vitae (CV) writing, job search, and professional conduct, all delivered within the BFEs.

**While the initial needs assessment had primarily identified urban trades, C1 ended up including the agricultural sector under a dedicated module (FIPA<sup>5</sup>).** The FIPA module was directly delivered by farmer cooperatives. The FIPA agricultural training module utilised dedicated plots, secured by ESSOR through agreements with seven local partner organisations. These partners provided the land, which ESSOR then developed for training. This arrangement allowed for the introduction of new sustainable practices, like agroecology, aiming to reduce reliance on costly chemicals while protecting the environment. Young farmers were encouraged to apply these techniques on their own plots to improve yield quality, enhance productivity, and increase their income.

---

<sup>5</sup> *Formation et Insertion Professionnelle en milieu Agricole.*



**ESSOR's efforts at providing in-depth, individualised support to vulnerable youth proved relevant but not replicable on a larger scale.** ESSOR's model involved close collaboration with a network of around 50 partner businesses and community organisations, building a database for internships and apprenticeship opportunities. For youth identified as better suited for self-employment, ESSOR provided individual kits<sup>6</sup> to help them launch their activities, with a 35% repayment of the kit's value required to encourage responsibility. Post-training monitoring and support were consistently provided for six months after the end of their training. ESSOR's approach combined training with human development sessions and personalised follow-up. While relevant on a small scale for individuals with limited prior insertion prospects, its (human and financial) resource-intensive approach renders it unsuitable for replication on a larger scale.

**C2 was designed to advance dual apprenticeship by integrating youth already in employment into structured training programmes.** This component aimed to foster dual apprenticeship models by engaging public and private training centres and, notably, businesses, with a focus predominantly on youth already integrated into the professional environment. The planned time allocation typically involved 20% in the training centre for theoretical and technical inputs and 80%<sup>7</sup> in the company for practical application. The objective was for participants to acquire skills recognised by professionals, initially through certification via a *Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle* (CAP), based on dual training for a period of nine months to three years depending on the trade. A condition stipulated that youth should remain with the same employer for at least two years after completing the training, to mitigate the reluctance of businesses to invest in training staff who might subsequently leave. Key actors included Professional Organisations, Professional Organisations of Trades, and Houses of Trades<sup>8</sup>; these bodies were tasked with identifying business needs and recruiting/mobilising enterprises (mainly SMEs) which, in turn, selected the youth they wanted to send for training in public or private centres.

**This approach adopted for C2 implementation faced limitations regarding broader unemployment alleviation and effective dual TVET implementation.** By exclusively targeting those already employed, this design bypassed the challenge of vulnerability and unemployment and, thereby, fell short of the overall objective of the BAA project. In addition, focusing on already inserted youth meant that the core rationale for dual TVET – practically applying theoretically acquired skills – lost much of its traction: beneficiaries met by Altai reported that, during the practical components of the training, they continued with their work as before, without benefiting from additional support to apply newly acquired skills to their work environment.

### 2.1.1.2. Needs analysis, potential employers and youth engagement

**The project's approach to analysing the target group's needs aimed to align training with labour market demand, revealing both successful matches and unforeseen challenges.** The project design was initially based on an analysis of employment basins and training needs across the six target cities<sup>9</sup> carried out by ESSOR in 2018–2019. A specific analysis on perspectives in the agriculture and livestock sector (FIPA) was also conducted in Sarh, Moundou and Abéché. This study identified seven priority activity sectors across the five cities, covering a range of trades, such as market gardening, electricity, building, solar, catering and hospitality, sanitary plumbing, transformation (electronics, agri-food, and cosmetics), as well as commerce and services. Training plans for C1 were subsequently developed based on this study. However, according to ESSOR, some sectors, such as automotives in

---

<sup>6</sup> Kits were adjusted to training and employment needs. Youth following an agricultural training obtained for instance kits containing a bicycle, a wheelbarrow, or a sprayer.

<sup>7</sup> However, some beneficiaries consulted by Altai indicated that their training time was equally split between hands-on sessions at the centres and classroom-based theoretical instruction.

<sup>8</sup> *Maison des métiers* - provincial umbrella bodies structured by the project to group professional organisations and support vocational training, particularly dual apprenticeship.

<sup>9</sup> N'Djamena, Bongor, Moundou, Abéché, and Sarh.

Moundou, proved not viable in practice: despite a significant number of youth trained in this sought-after field, job opportunities remained limited. Positions often demanded several years of experience, and competition from informally trained youth was strong. Employers often placed greater trust in these informally trained individuals, valuing their direct field experience. Consequently, ESSOR discontinued this trade halfway through the project's implementation. C2 relied on the same needs assessment to select promising sectors. A high potential trade for both C1 and C2, photovoltaic installation, was considered but not selected in Sarh due to a lack of businesses willing to send young people for training (practitioners were often informal and reluctant to share knowledge or create competitors) coupled with the absence of an appropriate training centre, according to FONAP.

**Despite conducting needs assessments for training centres, C2 faced recurrent issues with materials and personnel capacity.** The design of C2<sup>10</sup> was informed by initial assessments in February 2019, which evaluated the functioning, infrastructure, equipment, and prospects of training establishments for dual apprenticeship implementation. These highlighted major deficiencies, such as a lack of accounting management and inadequate safety conditions for practical work. Later, in 2022, a specific diagnostic of trainers' and master artisans' competencies for C2 revealed discrepancies between skills taught in centres and those mastered in practice. Following these diagnostics, the project initiated the rehabilitation of four public training centres and aimed to equip them with essential materials, including IT equipment, office furniture, personal protective equipment, and technical-pedagogical tools. A training plan was also implemented to enhance the skills of master artisans and trainers on the competency-based approach and apprentice follow-up.<sup>11</sup> Despite these efforts, the project did not fully respond to the identified needs and operational challenges. Materials often arrived late and sometimes proved inadequate.<sup>iii</sup> For example, Altai met one private training centre that received outdated tools that were effective for a previous generation cars but not on current models where vehicle software is predominant. Despite efforts to build capacity on the dual training approach, according to an informant met by Altai, public vocational high schools still faced a shortage of trained personnel. High turnover within public training centres further complicated the situation, as each new director required sensitisation to the dual training approach. The efficiency of implementation also depended significantly on each director's vision and motivation. These aspects, including staff turnover and leadership dynamics, would have benefited from greater consideration during the initial needs assessment to maximise relevance.

**Youth were not directly involved in the project design, leading to challenges with material relevance and training effectiveness.** Feedback gathered by Altai and the final evaluation from youth after their training revealed regrets related to inadequate training time and insufficient practical experience to apply certain knowledge. Incorporating these insights during the design phase could have been relevant, especially when introducing a new model like dual training. Similarly, in C2, issues arose where the content of kits distributed to apprentices did not meet their expectations or enable them to launch self-employment activities, as noted in the final evaluation. The lists of materials planned for the self-employment kits were discussed with Houses of Trades and training centres without consulting youth who would ultimately use them, which proved to be a limitation.<sup>iv</sup>

### 2.1.1.3. Relevance of activities and targeting

**Project activities were largely relevant to achieve the project objectives.** The project based its core activities on short qualifying training (C1) and dual apprenticeships (C2), with an overall objective of socio-professional integration. C1's shorter training duration (up to six months plus a three-month

---

<sup>10</sup> C2 was responsible for these assessments. C1 focused primarily on direct youth engagement rather than institutional capacity building of training centres and, therefore, did not conduct such assessments.

<sup>11</sup> Diagnostics covered four establishments in Abéché, Bol, Moundou and Sarh. In total, 334 received technical-pedagogical equipment items. Training was provided to 21 trainers and 98 master artisans on pedagogy, and seven trainers and 50 master artisans on specific trade modules.



internship) suited vulnerable youth needing rapid labour market entry, while integration support (job search techniques, follow-up) proved relevant to complement the training, according to the beneficiaries met by Altai. C2 contributed to consolidating the theoretical knowledge of youth already in employment, although its benefits on income and productivity remain difficult to establish (see below).

**Bab Al Amal's adaptable and decentralised approach, encompassing both urban and agricultural training pathways, provided essential flexibility to suit diverse local contexts and youth profiles.** Recognising that vocational training models focused on urban-dominated jobs were less effective in rural settings where many young people were already engaged in some form of agricultural activity, ESSOR developed the FIPA module for C1. This allowed for a direct focus on accompanying farmers, introducing techniques to improve productivity and environmental practices, and incorporating relevant modules like health awareness tailored to physically demanding farm work. ESSOR sought to mitigate the general negative vision and low valorisation of agricultural jobs through promotion campaigns, which highlighted income potential and contributions to food security. Finally, it accounted for Chad's Sahelian climate, focusing on locally adapted farm inputs rather than imported bio-pesticides, which cost more and are sometimes unsuitable locally.

**ESSOR worked with a mix of private and public training providers. Working with both presented a trade-off between responsiveness, cost, and training quality.** Private training centres generally offered greater responsiveness and adherence to project goals yet often lacked sufficient technical equipment and proved expensive.<sup>12</sup> The latter could pose a barrier to inclusivity after the project period, as private training providers were less accessible to vulnerable youth once the project stopped paying the fees. ESSOR found that private centres were more effective, with better monitoring. ESSOR also highlighted the project's leverage towards private centres in ensuring accountability and the ability to withdraw support if performance lagged. According to various stakeholders, public centres, in contrast, frequently possessed better equipment (provided by the state) and offered lower fees (thanks to public subsidies),<sup>13</sup> but were often characterised by lack of flexibility and innovation, stemming from tight budgetary allocations and the significant impact of individual directors' vision and motivation, in addition to weak links with the private sector and varying quality. According to business owners interviewed by Altai, trainings provided in public centres were perceived as less valuable, with teachers often considered technocrats, disconnected from the realities of the workplace. Private training centres were seen as more connected to industry, often because their owners were former professionals in their respective fields.

**Alongside vocational training, the integrated human development training (called "MUVA") in C1 proved highly relevant within the context, notably by addressing gaps in life skills and personal agency often overlooked in traditional vocational programmes.** MUVA trainings focused on behavioural questions in a professional setting, including modules on employability, health, and entrepreneurship. Although initially engaging youth in the MUVA soft skills training was sometimes difficult, as some beneficiaries considered it less valuable and less directly applicable than technical training, participants ultimately recognised its added value. MUVA modules specifically addressed employability and entrepreneurship, reinforcing transversal skills that complement technical competencies. These behavioural skills were also highly valued by employers, who often noted a lack of ethics, motivation, and punctuality among job seekers when interrogated in the early diagnostics,<sup>v</sup> demonstrating MUVA's direct relevance in preparing youth for workplace expectations. Relying on support materials, such as paper documents or short videos, in local languages reportedly increased satisfaction. Beneficiaries met by Altai highlighted that the MUVA training helped them develop planning and management skills, particularly household income management, thereby facilitating saving and, in some cases, enabling them to invest in their own businesses. Altai also met employers that appreciated MUVA training. For example, a hotel in Moundou indicated their interest and observed a noticeable

---

<sup>12</sup> For example, one private training centre visited by Altai charged approximately XAF 200,000 per trainee for a full training.

<sup>13</sup> For example, one vocational high school visited by Altai charged approximately XAF 15,000 per trainee for a full training.

difference in employees who had received human development training through the project, sometimes deeming it as important as technical (hard) skills, as those can often be acquired on the job.

**The limited number of formal businesses in Chad presented challenges for securing wage employment and emphasised the need for adapted approaches, including a shift towards self-employment under C1.** The challenging economic climate, particularly outside N'Djamena, made securing wage employment difficult for beneficiaries. ESSOR also shared that many businesses found training durations of three to six months too short, as some technical trades typically require 12–24 months of training. At the same time, it should be noted that the project faced a trade-off between longer trainings for fewer youth and shorter trainings for more youth, for the same budget. While C1's insertion target was slightly exceeded, this remains a modest figure in absolute terms,<sup>14</sup> highlighting the inherent difficulty of achieving widespread wage employment in such an environment and thus raising doubts about the overall relevance of a primary focus on this approach. Consequently, ESSOR reflected on the suitability of increased focus on self-employment for future action. During the project, 542 youth were oriented towards entrepreneurship, among whom 386 formalised their projects and 265 were approved for self-employment kits.<sup>vi</sup> For those who did not receive kits, as well as for youth not selected for the project, ESSOR introduced tool repositories (*'outilthèques'*) in its BFEs. These offered a practical, low-cost alternative (XAF 2,500 for three months) for accessing the necessary equipment for self-employment activities, a solution that proved popular according to ESSOR. While these results appeared encouraging, ESSOR also highlighted the difficulty in assessing whether these self-employment activities guaranteed a decent standard of living for the youth, suggesting that improved monitoring may be necessary to assess the impact on livelihoods. At the same time, the FIPA trainings, combined with the provision of essential equipment like wheelbarrows, quality sprayers, and essential seeds, led to 74% of functional economic activity among beneficiaries, including 53% women, six months after training completion.<sup>vii</sup> These activities, focusing on self-employment and entrepreneurship, yielded significantly higher results than wage employment pathways, suggesting that an increased focus on entrepreneurship could be a more viable strategy to reinforce livelihoods in the context of an unstructured private sector. ESSOR is considering a higher focus on entrepreneurship for the future but noted the challenge in assessing if these self-employment activities ensured a decent living standard, indicating a need for improved livelihood monitoring. Furthermore, according to several informants, a limitation for this focus is the insufficient financial inclusion of beneficiaries, a gap not addressed by BAA, but which is necessary to consider in future interventions to ensure the full potential of these self-employment efforts.

**C2's dual training model offered young participants a mixed experience in terms of relevance to participant needs and workplace realities: theoretical instruction proved valuable in some areas, but practical workplace application often faced limitations.** The theoretical component (20%) sometimes involved tasks already familiar to participants, suggesting that curricula/lessons in training centres did not consistently introduce new skills or methods directly aligned with market demands. Moreover, although beneficiaries reported that vocational high schools had modern machines which participants learned to use, these were typically unavailable in their workplaces, limiting the practical relevance of these skills. Business owners interviewed also confirmed this, stating that few competencies acquired during theoretical training were useful in the workplace for technical trades. Besides trades-related technical training, additional courses including business management for marketing and financial planning, and IT for invoicing and data management, were perceived as useful and relevant, particularly for beneficiaries with low levels of formal education. For example, mathematics was reportedly essential for product planning and calculations and French was helpful for written communication and client interaction, especially in less technical businesses (e.g. hotels).

**Similarly, gender-based selection strategies varied significantly between components, with C1 adopting a gender-sensitive approach while C2 largely reflected existing market inequalities and**

---

<sup>14</sup> Component 1's insertion rate was 52%, surpassing its 50% target.

**structural barriers.** In Chad, structural barriers significantly impede the integration of girls and women, particularly into traditionally male-dominated sectors. According to BFE staff met by Altai, prejudices against women entering 'men's trades' are prevalent and young married women often face challenges, including objections from husbands for engaging in jobs that require late hours or in sectors, like the hotel industry, lending to social disapproval and family disturbances. Further, girls' educational backgrounds, often oriented towards literature, present a mismatch with technical fields where more employment opportunities exist, according to ESSOR. The distance to training locations also represents a barrier: while boys can often walk, girls are more reluctant to travel across neighbourhoods due to perceived risks and a fear of social judgment. In response to these challenges, C1 explicitly tried to include trades typically favoured by women, such as cosmetics and agricultural product transformation, and established clear objectives for female participation. Its in-depth assessment approach also provided greater flexibility in selecting female candidates. As a result of these efforts, C1 reached 38% women with training, against a 40% target. However, the proportion of women among the 1,892 individuals who completed their training dropped to 21%, revealing a considerably higher dropout rate than the 6% dropout observed across all trainees combined.<sup>viii</sup> Stakeholders widely attributed this significant attrition among women to these persisting barriers. In contrast, C2 lacked a specific gender strategy. Its design, which prioritised reliance on company-led selection processes, made influencing enterprises' selection of women challenging. This difficulty was further exacerbated by the limited presence of female candidates in traditionally male-dominated trades targeted by the component. Consequently, of the 1,654 young people identified for dual training, only 58 were girls, representing merely 3.5%. Among the 632 young people who completed dual training, 4.4% were girls. This selection method in C2 largely reproduced existing inequalities within the labour market.<sup>ix</sup>

#### 2.1.1.4. Lessons learned

##### *Context analysis and stakeholder consultation*

**Formal training in highly informal economies requires deep private sector integration in design and delivery to ensure relevance and perceived value by employers, enhancing the project's market-driven approach.** The project operated within Chad's predominantly informal private sector, where standard formal training risked not meeting the expectations of employers accustomed to workplace-based apprenticeships, especially given the scarcity of formal job openings. The private sector's insufficient involvement in shaping and delivering training, as noted in BAA's evaluation, led in many cases to a disparity between the training content and actual professional practices and labour market needs. This lesson is relevant when developing vocational training in markets dominated by informality, where employers' perceptions and actual skill demands might not align with standard formal curricula. Future interventions, therefore, could benefit from proactively and deeply engaging a wide range of private sector actors, including informal businesses, in the co-design and delivery of training programmes. This engagement could help ensure the skills imparted are directly applicable, valued, and enhance youth employment prospects within the existing economic structure.

**Direct and early involvement of youth in the design of programme elements, including support packages, is important for ensuring their relevance, enhancing a demand-driven approach.** Although the project involved needs studies and discussions with local stakeholders, young beneficiaries were not always directly engaged during the planning stage. For instance, decisions on the contents of self-employment kits were made with business support centres and training institutions, without direct consultation of beneficiaries. This may have limited how readily applicable or valuable some project interventions were from the viewpoint of the beneficiaries, which is an important aspect of fostering ownership and achieving impact. Projects should more systematically try to integrate participatory mechanisms that ensure young people are actively involved from the earliest stages of design.

**Initial labour market assessments must be complemented by continuous market intelligence and adaptive programming to respond to real-world sector evolution.** Although the initial needs

assessment pinpointed certain sectors like automotive mechanics in Moundou as promising, the implementation sometimes indicated otherwise (stringent requirements, lack of business interest, etc.). As a result, one training stream had to be halted. The preliminary assessment could not entirely foresee fluid market conditions or ingrained employer preferences, revealing the shortcomings of depending solely on initial diagnostic studies. This lesson is particularly relevant to TVET programmes that select specialisations based on preliminary market studies. Programmes could integrate mechanisms for ongoing labour market scanning and monitoring, and it may be beneficial to maintain flexible programming structures that allow for timely adjustments to training portfolios, phasing out less viable streams and potentially introducing new ones as market conditions and opportunities evolve.

### *Trainings content, design and trades*

**Agriculture is a highly promising sector for youth engagement and employment, contingent upon the implementation of well-tailored and locally relevant strategies.** ESSOR historically had an urban-centric training approach but also wanted to reach rural youth in this project. Consequently, a specialised agricultural module (FIPA) was created, offering hands-on support and applying improved farming methods using climate-appropriate local materials, and was effectively marketed. This resulted in high interest from targeted groups, countering negative perceptions of farming. In rural societies where youth may perceive farming negatively or where imported solutions are unsuitable, designing agricultural training that is highly contextualised, leverages local knowledge, addresses climatic realities, and is promoted through campaigns that emphasise the value of agricultural careers, focusing on income and community impact, can prove advantageous.

**In economies with limited formal employment, a well-supported focus on self-employment can offer viable livelihood pathways.** C1's shift towards self-employment was informed by more encouraging outcomes in entrepreneurship, especially in agriculture via FIPA, as the formal market could not accommodate all trainees. This experience demonstrated the value of strategies responsive to prevailing economic conditions and the limited absorption capacity of the formal sector. Future programmes in similar contexts should strongly consider prioritising and robustly supporting self-employment or entrepreneurial pathways, while concurrently developing monitoring tools to better assess the impact of these initiatives on beneficiaries' standard of living.

**Integrating human development and soft skills training significantly enhances the personal and professional development of vocational training beneficiaries.** Beneficiaries came to appreciate the impact of trainings – helping narrow down career prospects and improving organisational and money management abilities, aided by training materials translated into local languages. The training met a need for foundational professional competencies, promoting broader personal growth. This is relevant when designing interventions for vulnerable youth who may require more than just technical skills to succeed.

**Effective dual training requires robust alignment between theoretical learning and practical workplace application to ensure that new, market-relevant skills are acquired and utilised.** Participants found the classroom-based theory in the dual training useful. However, the on-the-job experience frequently covered existing knowledge, and the advanced equipment used in training institutions was often absent in businesses, hindering the application of newly learned skills. This mismatch diminished the practical value added by the hands-on component of the programme. To enhance the effectiveness of dual training, projects should strive to ensure a stronger, more direct linkage between theoretical curricula and practical workplace needs, through deeper enterprise engagement in curriculum design and by addressing the disconnect in available technology and equipment between training centres and typical workplaces. A potential example of how to achieve this alignment is a private automotive training centre met by Altai, which functions as an active workshop with clients while simultaneously incorporating a comprehensive learning and training component.





Figure 1: Workshop at a private training centre, Sarh, April 2025 (Altai Consulting)

**Proactive and distinct gender strategies within all project components are necessary to address structural barriers and improve women's participation in vocational training and employment.** A dedicated strategy in C1 to include women in specific trades with set targets led to a higher initial intake of female participants, even if challenges resulted in a higher dropout rate among women. Conversely, C2 had no such focused gender approach and, due to employer-led selection in male-dominated fields, enrolled very few women. Gender strategies, thus, are needed when operating in contexts with deep-rooted gender inequalities in the labour market. These strategies should address both supply-side barriers (e.g. targeted recruitment, flexible training conditions, support services such as transportation) and demand-side barriers (e.g. sensitisation of employers and promotion of non-traditional roles).

### *Scalability*

**Intensive, resource-heavy support models effective for the most vulnerable may require adaptation for broader scalability.** C1 employed a comprehensive and personnel-intensive approach designed for the most vulnerable youth, consistent with ESSOR's objective to provide in-depth support rather than to design a widely replicable solution. For contexts where scalability becomes an objective, exploring phased approaches like delivering modular services, or integrating cost-effective technologies (in contexts where connectivity allows) can be worth exploring to maintain impact while expanding reach. For example, scalability would seem more feasible if parts of the trainings were delivered through online materials, reducing human resource costs associated with the personalised and comprehensive accompaniment of beneficiaries. A modular approach, on the other hand, could help prioritise those training and support measures which would be the most needed for an individual case.

**Integrating financial access mechanisms remains beneficial for the success of youth entrepreneurship programmes in challenging economic contexts.** In this case, the project effectively delivered skills training and supported beneficiaries with individual kits to help them launch their activities. While this addressed some initial financial constraints, this is not always sufficient to ensure new business growth and sustainability, highlighting that skills alone are insufficient for entrepreneurial success. This lesson is particularly relevant when designing employment programmes with self-employment components in economies with underdeveloped financial markets or where vulnerable youth lack collateral. Future interventions aiming to foster entrepreneurship, therefore, could incorporate mechanisms for accessing finance, such as micro-loan facilities, guarantee funds, or linkages with financial service providers.

### Local partners and operations

**Thorough needs assessments of training providers are essential to ensure they have adequate and appropriate resources and personnel to deliver quality training effectively.** The project's examination of training centres' requirements was not sufficiently detailed, causing operational difficulties. For example, some private centres received insufficient, delayed, or unsuitable equipment; and public vocational schools occasionally lacked staff with the specific training needed to deliver the project's short-term course or dual-training formats. These deficiencies resulted from an inadequate appreciation of what each provider specifically needed, directly affecting the quality of the trainings. This is an important consideration when projects cooperate with external public or private training institutions for implementation. Before programme launch, conducting comprehensive assessments of partner training institutions – covering not just physical infrastructure but also the suitability and adequacy of teaching materials, equipment aligned with current industry standards, and the capability and specific skills of trainers for the proposed curricula – could help address gaps more systematically.

**Selection of training providers requires balancing cost, flexibility, and quality.** Two options arose when choosing training providers: private options were agile but costly and lacked some equipment, whereas public institutions were better equipped and cheaper but often inflexible and out of touch with employer requirements, due to their low experience with the private sector. When selecting training providers, it could be valuable to evaluate the balance between responsiveness, cost, quality, and industry linkage and, where public centres are utilised, explore avenues to enhance their market relevance.

#### 2.1.2. REACH

##### 2.1.2.1. Outreach strategies

**The C1's outreach strategy combined targeted sensitisation efforts and extensive collaboration with local partners.** ESSOR conducted awareness-raising campaigns in neighbourhoods to attract youth and inform them of project-related opportunities, particularly in areas with high population density and low socio-economic levels. Beyond these sensitisation campaigns and general project visibility efforts on Facebook, ESSOR implemented a proximity approach via the creation of BFEs. These offices served as direct entry points for youth, located in the most disadvantaged and densely populated neighbourhoods to be closest to vulnerable young people (Figure 2). ESSOR's methodology was grounded in proximity support and individualised follow-up provided by professionals, working closely with grassroots community organisations (OCBs<sup>15</sup>), such as youth centres or neighbourhood centres, which served as operational relays. This was complemented by hiring local coordinators and engaging with local stakeholders (e.g. community leaders, churches, mosques, public billboards) to anchor the BFEs in the communities and disseminate project information effectively. This approach proved efficient in expanding project reach. A total of 15 BFEs were established across C1's five intervention cities. Over the four years of the project, these BFEs collectively recorded 41,274 visits, 32% of which were made by women.<sup>x</sup> These are relatively high figures considering the overall number of direct beneficiaries.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Organisation à Base Communautaire.

<sup>16</sup> 2,019 young people started vocational training (FIPU or FIPA) across the project's three cycles.



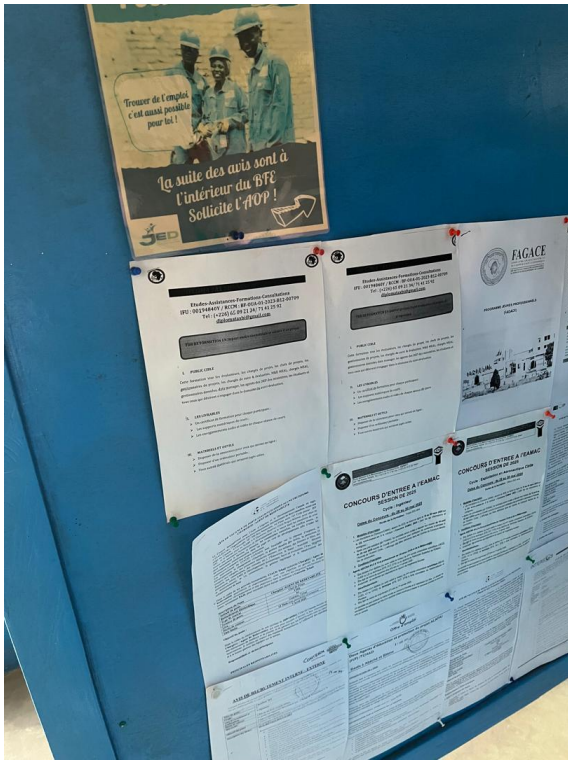


Figure 2: Employment and information at a BFE, Moundou, April 2025 (Altai Consulting)



Figure 3: Bikes at the disposal of young people at a BFE, Sarh, April 2025 (Altai Consulting)

**Geographical barriers limited the project's ability to effectively reach and retain participants, but some mitigation measures were introduced.** Despite efforts to leverage economic hubs, significant challenges arose regarding accessibility. C2, focused on urban trades, remained inaccessible to youth in rural areas. C1's FIPA training helped extend reach to rural youth, but sometimes engaging and ensuring the consistent attendance of peri-urban and rural participants proved challenging, particularly due to costly and time-consuming transportation to the places where trainings were organised. According to ESSOR, the dropout rate was particularly pronounced among peri-urban youth, directly linked to the distance required to travel to training centres. As a mitigation measure for this geographical barrier, bikes (Figure 3) were made available for rental (XAF 500 month) to trainees, which, according to ESSOR, helped limit the dropout rate slightly.

**The reliance on established partner networks and the variety of regional contexts further limited the project's reach.** BAA's reliance on existing channels for partner engagement significantly restricted its flexibility and reduced its ability to expand its outreach. For C2, FONAP communicated with employers to clarify selection criteria primarily through networks like Professional Organisations, Professional Organisations of Trades, and Houses of Trades. These organisations were also responsible for apprentice identification and recruitment in collaboration with businesses. However, this limited C2's flexibility in beneficiary selection and restricted its outreach to youth already connected with these networks, rather than exploring new avenues to reach a wider demographic. Concurrently, FONAP's local branches, part of C2, faced their own limitations in the intervention cities, primarily due to a restricted budget. Furthermore, specific regional contexts posed unique obstacles. In Abéché, for example, youth preferred immediate income-generating activities, and this clashed with the longer training durations according to ESSOR. This was reportedly compounded by the fact that the region hosted many Sudanese refugees with specific expectations and short-term needs and, linked to that, a considerable number of donor-funded projects in the area. In this humanitarian context, BAA's (particularly C1's) more complex, longer-term approach, with its extended training durations, struggled

to attract and retain participants who often prioritised quicker, more immediate support and shorter programmes offered by other initiatives.

**A national platform and local multi-stakeholder groups aimed to foster coordination among TVET actors and supported a comprehensive approach to TVET service provision, bundling to some extent different actors' offers.** The national Training and Professional Integration (FIP<sup>17</sup>) platform was formally established in March 2019 – with support from the BAA project – through a signed agreement with its members, defining its institutional and regulatory framework. Its members subsequently elaborated a strategic plan and annual action plans, particularly to establish support services for the socio-professional integration of vulnerable youth. Among its achievements, the platform established a 'unique information and orientation kiosk', also known as a 'pilot one-stop shop', within a BFE in N'Djamena. This initiative's main objective was to pool and centralise professional integration support services for young people, making information and guidance on public integration and employment schemes readily accessible. ESSOR also participated in creating and formalising multi-stakeholder consultation spaces in the project's four other intervention cities. These local platforms, comprising both state and non-state actors, provided valuable support for organising local events promoting youth employment, such as job fairs, information days, and vocational training weeks. These events served as direct mobilisation and communication actions, publicising project opportunities and raising awareness among youth and their families about available training and integration schemes.

**The project activities extended indirectly to individuals not initially targeted, including families and participating businesses.** Families were involved in the selection process for C1, to contribute to assessing the vulnerability of young candidates. In C1, some of the youth not oriented towards self-employment launched their own businesses after struggling to find stable wage employment. In some instances, these youth-led businesses employed up to four individuals. Similarly, BFE's reach also surpassed direct project beneficiaries, providing workshops on job-search techniques which were open to all youth from neighbouring districts. For C2, participating businesses also gained from the project, notably through the strengthening of skills of the apprentices they hosted and the transfer of knowledge. Additionally, many received equipment kits from FONAP in specific trades, with this equipment set to benefit not only the direct apprentices but the broader workforce as well.

### 2.1.2.2. Lessons learned

**Effective local outreach for vulnerable youth is resource-intensive, presenting scalability challenges when expanding to multiple locations.** Using local offices and strong community ties to reach vulnerable youth proved effective. However, the intensive nature of this approach led to operational difficulties and stretched resources, particularly when activities were simultaneously expanded across several new cities. This points to the trade-off between intensive support for fewer beneficiaries and more superficial support for larger target groups. The balance to be found between these conflicting goals depends in each case on the specific context, the project's objectives, and stakeholders' capacities.

**Relying on established networks for outreach is essential, but it can limit broader youth inclusion and result in only certain target groups being reached.** C2 utilised established channels, like professional bodies and trade associations, to identify and recruit apprentices. While this method built on existing ties and capacities, it narrowed the project's ability to select beneficiaries and did not leave enough room to explore new ways to connect with a wider range of youth, confining its reach mainly to those already within these networks. When using existing professional networks as a primary outreach mechanism, it could be beneficial to concurrently explore and integrate a variety of other

---

<sup>17</sup> Formation et Insertion Professionnelle.

communication and recruitment avenues to support the inclusion of youth who may not be connected to these established structures.

**Formalising multi-stakeholder platforms can lay a foundation for structured, long-term collaboration in the TVET sector but, for them to function effectively and keep people engaged, they need to offer incentives to encourage participation.** The project supported the official establishment of national and local multi-stakeholder platforms, involving diverse actors, with the aim to improve organization in the sector. While these platforms were intended to build a foundation for future cooperation and represented a strategic investment in the improvement of systems in the TVET sector, their initial functioning relied mostly on the voluntary engagement of members. This demonstrated that formal structures alone may not guarantee sustained engagement from all parties. It could be valuable to design integrated incentives to foster engagement within these platforms – without making them fully dependent on external support. In general, sustained engagement is more likely to be observed where stakeholders experience tangible gains for their core mandate, for example when private sector actors gain better access to skilled workers.

**Focusing interventions on equipping young people with entrepreneurial skills and cultivating their drive for business-ownership often leads to widespread benefits, creating positive ramifications for their families, broader communities, and associated businesses.** The BAA project yielded positive outcomes for individuals and entities beyond its primary participants. Some youth, even if not initially set on entrepreneurship, went on to start their own small businesses that created further employment. Workshops on job-seeking skills were made available to youth from adjacent areas not officially enrolled. Moreover, businesses involved gained from the enhanced skills of the apprentices they took on and, in some instances, received equipment that benefited their broader workforce. This illustrates that project effects can ripple to the community. Identifying and documenting these wider positive effects could help community members appreciate the full spectrum of a project's contribution to the community and economic well-being and help future projects better explore this indirect channel for impacting communities.

### 2.1.3. COHERENCE

#### 2.1.3.1. Alignment with youth employment policies

**The Bab al Amal project aligned with Chad's national development agenda, particularly its focus on youth employment and vocational training.** The project was consistent with Chad's National Development Plan 2017–2021,<sup>xi</sup> placing significant emphasis on vocational training, linking it directly to the fight against youth unemployment and inclusive economic development. BAA's objectives aligned with this national focus, which prioritises combating youth unemployment and underemployment, adapting training provisions to labour market needs, and leveraging vocational training for competitiveness and innovation.

**The project's support for dual-type apprenticeship models directly responded to a key government objective, reflecting a broad national consensus.** A primary goal of the Government of Chad was to develop and disseminate dual-type apprenticeships: as early as 2014, Chad's national employment and training policy explicitly stated that '[t]he introduction of the principle of alternation in training is necessary'.<sup>xii</sup> The project contributed to this by consolidating and extending previous dual apprenticeship experiments, notably those conducted by FONAP, such as the AFPACET project. Multiple informants, including officials from the Ministry of Planning, reiterated the widespread consensus within the government on the relevance of the dual training approach.

## 2.1.3.2. Complementarity and synergies

### 2.1.3.2.1. Internal coherence

**The project's components, despite being designed as complementary, operated largely as separate initiatives due to fundamental differences in their intended scope and beneficiaries.**

The original plan aimed for complementarity: ESSOR (C1) was expected to orient young people towards the dual apprenticeship opportunities offered by FONAP (C2), and it was also planned for ESSOR to collaborate with FONAP's local branches to integrate human development modules into their activities. However, a major hurdle was the divergence of their selection methods and target audiences.

**Targeting strategies differed significantly between components, leading to inconsistencies in reaching the most vulnerable youth and preventing any direct flow of beneficiaries between both components.** C1 employed a rigorous process specifically designed to target the most vulnerable youth aged 17–35 years old. This involved detailed interviews and home visits, using surveys to assess socio-economic situations based on criteria, such as quality of housing, access to water/sanitation, income, and nutritional status, which generated a vulnerability score for each potential beneficiary. This approach focused on reaching socially vulnerable, out-of-school youth, demonstrating some flexibility on prerequisites, like literacy, to avoid excluding the most disadvantaged individuals. In contrast, C2 targeted youth aged 15–35 years who were already in employment, with selection managed via employers and professional organisations, and required a minimum fourth grade school level. As this component selected young people already integrated into the workforce, they were most likely not among the most vulnerable within their community, and the educational requirement likely excluded many of the most vulnerable individuals.

**Operational and coordination shortcomings further exacerbated the separation between C1 and C2.** A significant gap in timelines contributed to this: ESSOR (C1) began operations shortly after disbursement in January 2017, whereas C2 did not begin until September 2019 due to significant administrative and financial constraints. Specifically, public procurement procedures imposed by the Ministry of Finance's Financial Controller for all FONAP expenditures considerably slowed market tender processes and consequently delayed the launch of the training of trainers and the delivery of equipment and kits.<sup>xiii</sup> Additionally, overall project coordination limitations played a part in their independent functioning. The project coordination committee, which assembled representatives from both components, met only once a year, and there were no other effective coordination mechanisms in place. A lack of systematic monitoring of synergies, combined with frequent leadership changes in key institutions, like the Ministry of Vocational Training and FONAP, also hindered the integration of project components.<sup>xiv</sup>

### 2.1.3.2.2. External coherence

**The BAA project demonstrated significant complementarities with existing initiatives, notably extending dual training to new regions and reinforcing established NGO programmes.** C2 directly continued the work of AFPACET, an earlier initiative implemented by FONAP with co-financing from AFD. AFPACET had contributed to initiating dual apprenticeship training in N'Djamena. BAA aimed to consolidate these initial results and expand dual training to new cities, specifically Moundou, Sarh, and Abéché. Early coordination meetings and workshops, such as the July 2017 project launch workshop, were held within BAA to draw upon AFPACET's experience, and the training referential for dual apprenticeship deployment in BAA C2 was validated within the framework of AFPACET, meaning they built directly on the foundational work of this earlier project. In parallel, C1 was designed to reinforce ESSOR's existing initiatives: the NGO had been collaborating closely with AFD since 2009 on supporting and economically integrating vulnerable youth through its 'citizen pathways' and FIP schemes. BAA C1 built upon ESSOR's FIP methodology and its pre-existing network of BFEs in N'Djamena and Bongor. BAA increased the number of beneficiaries supported by these existing BFEs and facilitated the establishment of new offices.



**The broader landscape of youth employment initiatives in Chad includes the World Bank's 'Skills for Youth Employability Project', with which cooperation was limited.** Launched in 2020 with a five-year duration and USD 50 million funding, this World Bank project aimed to enhance the quality of TVET and to strengthen its ties with the private sector across all 23 provinces of Chad. It targeted 31,700 young people aged 15–39 years and 500 teachers and trainers, focusing on improving access to quality skills, supporting youth employment and entrepreneurship, and strengthening TVET system governance. While the World Bank project operated on a significantly larger scale than BAA and collaborated with FONAP on dual apprenticeship, the cooperation between the two initiatives did not extend further primarily due to fundamental differences in their design and operational modalities. These disparities notably concerned beneficiary selection, the remuneration of key actors (apprentices and master apprentices), and the specific apprenticeship model employed.

### 2.1.3.3. Lessons learned

**Achieving complementarity between project components requires the intentional alignment of target groups, operational models, and timelines from the outset, supported by strong coordination.** Substantial differences in their target populations (vulnerable, out-of-school youth versus already-employed apprentices), distinct selection criteria (no schooling required versus a minimum educational level), and a significant lag in the operational start of one component created considerable obstacles for cross-component cooperation within the BAA project. This experience highlights that, for multi-component projects to develop synergies, their design should be harmonised from the beginning (target groups, beneficiary selection processes, operational schedules, and inter-component coordination frameworks). Setting up a more systematic monitoring of potential synergies could also facilitate integration and adaptation during implementation.

**Even without explicit cooperation, smaller projects can benefit from alignment with larger initiatives, which may shape the broader institutional or policy landscape.** A major, concurrent World Bank project shared some overarching objectives with BAA, such as enhancing vocational training and collaborating also with FONAP on dual apprenticeship. Despite significant potential for complementarities, FONAP's work with the World Bank did not directly reinforce BAA's objectives beyond some shared efforts on curriculum validation as the integration of the two initiatives was complicated by fundamental differences in their operational models. Nonetheless, such larger initiatives can influence the wider institutional framework or policy landscape, potentially creating a more conducive environment that smaller-scale projects, like BAA, can exploit.

**The nature of the local donor landscape can significantly constrain or enable partnership opportunities for sectoral projects.** Beyond the World Bank, BAA did not establish collaborations with other donors. The implementation context was characterised by a scarcity of development-focused donors and a greater presence of humanitarian organisations, the funding priorities of which rarely aligned with vocational training, thus making cooperation in this field challenging. A thorough understanding of the landscape is needed to inform realistic and effective partnership and resource mobilisation strategies.

### 2.1.4. SUSTAINABILITY

**The BAA project aimed for sustainability by reinforcing existing structures and fostering institutional development within the TVET sector.** It explicitly aimed to strengthen and extend existing initiatives of ESSOR and FONAP, building upon their achievements and structures across new geographies. C2 was intended to structure the institutional environment of vocational training in Chad through the expansion of apprenticeship, notably by supporting FONAP and striving to shift training centres towards more effective governance models and an entrepreneurial logic. Further, the project supported the formalisation and operationalisation of the FIP Platform, a multi-stakeholder forum for institutional and private actors in vocational training and integration. This platform was established with

the intention of enhancing coordination, dialogue, and synergies for a more structured and potentially more sustainable ecosystem.

**While C1 actively strengthened local mechanisms, these remain reliant on continued external support since BAA has ended.** C1 pursued sustainability at the local level through its ETOs and by relying on local BFEs. It tested different ways to manage these local BFEs, such as handing control over to local associations and communities. The aim was to find a lasting transfer model and encourage local ownership, with clear plans for dialogue and multi-stakeholder partnerships to ensure the continued viability of its activities. However, these attempts were not entirely conclusive as the lack of clear financial independence was an issue. A successor project of C1, '*Jeunesse vers l'Emploi Durable*' (JED), implemented between April 2022–March 2026 by ESSOR with EUR 8 million AFD funding, subsequently took over the role of supporting these structures.

**It is not possible at this stage to assess the long-term sustainability of Bab al Amal's outcomes.** C1, for instance, has been directly continued by the JED project, without which most BAA achievements would have been at risk, in the absence of a clear strategy for financial autonomy of the structures that ESSOR supported. C2's efforts to strengthen the organisational capacity of Professional Organisations, Professional Organisations of Trades, and Houses of Trades represent a positive step, but their long-term impact on youth employment remains difficult to ascertain, considering the rather long causal chain between such organisations' capacities and youth employment. Similarly, the FIP platform, which resulted from these efforts, is also receiving support from JED.

**Achieving institutional sustainability and formal recognition for training models faced considerable political and systemic obstacles.** A significant bottleneck for the dual training approach and broader institutional structuring stemmed from a lack of structured coordination and formal validation at the central level. The TVET sector in Chad is overseen by multiple ministries, including the ministries of education, vocational training, agriculture, and industry, which complicates coordination and the implementation of a coherent, integrated dual training strategy. The absence of a clear, harmonised national policy on dual training restricted the establishment of lasting partnerships between training centres and businesses. Therefore, a lack of incentives and regulatory frameworks (as well as difficult relations with the Ministry of Vocational Training) to encourage companies to host apprentices hindered the development of alternating training models. An obstacle arose when the CAP diploma was abolished by law in 2022, preventing the Ministry from approving a new certification referential for the dual training model, citing legal contradictions. Further, the validation of the dual CAP depended directly on the approval and publication of a broader national TVET strategy, which the World Bank financed but which remained pending. This delayed the possibility of obtaining the necessary certification. These institutional hurdles meant the project could not meet its target of certifying 90% of youth pursuing dual apprenticeship. While they received attestations, these held less value than the intended CAP, limiting their acceptance by employers and impacting the insertion of beneficiaries, particularly their salary levels. This underscores a strong dependence on political engagement and coordination. To date, the official recognition of dual training by the Government of Chad remains limited.

**Achieving long-term financial sustainability and securing meaningful private sector engagement proved challenging for the schemes promoted by the project.** While mechanisms were introduced for post-project financing and youth ownership, such as the Training Support Fund (FAF) with a 10% beneficiary contribution and a requirement for youth to repay 35% of material kit value, the recovery rates did not meet targets for post-project functioning. Furthermore, this kit repayment scheme sometimes led to negative coping mechanisms, such as selling kits for cash, which raised questions on the viability and accessibility of these approaches for vulnerable youth. Engaging the private sector for financing also proved difficult as private financial institutions required the project to fully guarantee loans for equipment, and business managers often saw little value in paying for employee training unless it offered clear added value like new technology or equipment, as they felt they could train employees internally. Public training centres lacked dedicated budgets for dual training schemes and for maintaining equipment acquired through BAA. According to the final evaluation, the



lifespan of this equipment was estimated at a maximum of five years due to its low quality and insufficient upkeep.<sup>xv</sup>

**According to FONAP and ESSOR representatives, a potential mitigation strategy to obtain long-term funding could have involved a deeper implication of large companies.** While a framework for public-private communication already existed for dialogue with major enterprises – like the Chad Sugar Company, Chad Cotton Company, and NSCT textile – calling for skills referencing and knowledge transfer, BAA beneficiaries were not trained within these large firms. These typically recruit at a higher qualification level (Bac +2 equivalent) than the training provided through the project, although some trainers did originate from these firms. This highlights a missed opportunity for greater engagement with these large enterprises, to overcome diploma barriers by finding alternative pathways for professional integration. This could have allowed these companies to play a role in designing training for their specific needs, subsequently hiring youth, financing their training, and transferring skills which are often closer to international standards to local youth, ensuring stronger sustainability.

#### 2.1.4.1. Lessons learned

**Sustaining local support structures, such as BFEs, requires acknowledging that financial and operational independence may extend beyond a single project's lifespan.** The project tested various BFE management modalities, including the delegation of responsibilities to local associations and communities, aiming to identify a sustainable transfer model and foster grassroots ownership through multi-stakeholder partnerships. However, these efforts proved inconclusive, with a successor project eventually taking over direct support. This highlights the need for clear, early hand-over strategies when designing initiatives that establish and rely on local service delivery points, especially in contexts where local institutional capacity and financial resources are constrained.

**Achieving institutional sustainability and formal recognition for new training models demands proactive engagement with regulators.** The project encountered bottlenecks in its dual training approach due to a lack of structured political coordination, fragmented oversight across several ministries (education, vocational training, agriculture, industry), and the absence of clear, harmonised national policy on dual training. The abolition of the CAP diploma and a pending national TVET strategy further hindered certification. This emphasises the importance of dedicating substantial resources and time to high-level policy dialogue, fostering inter-ministerial coordination, and advocating for necessary regulatory reforms, ensuring project outcomes align with and are supported by national policy frameworks and official recognition processes from the outset.

**Establishing sustainable financial mechanisms and securing direct financial contributions from the private sector, public institutions or beneficiaries necessitates a deep understanding of local market realities.** Mechanisms introduced for post-project financing, like beneficiary contributions to a Training Support Fund and material kit repayments, failed to meet targets and sometimes led to negative coping. Engaging financial institutions for kit financing proved difficult due to guarantee requirements, and businesses often saw little value in paying for employee training unless it provided clear, tangible benefits. Public funding was also inadequately prepared to absorb the long-term maintenance and operational costs of the new schemes and equipment. Financial models relying on direct payments require careful contextualisation, strong value propositions, and possibly de-risked financing options for partners to be viable and genuinely accessible.

**Missed opportunities for deeper engagement with large, well-resourced companies can hinder impact and sustainability.** The project did not directly train youth within major enterprises, even though the enterprise's staff were aging and they possessed significant budgets. While these companies typically recruit at higher qualification levels than the project's training provided, the experience suggests that future initiatives should actively explore tailored engagement strategies. This includes seeking alternative professional integration pathways to overcome diploma barriers, leveraging corporate budgets, and co-designing training that meets their specific needs, thereby facilitating the transfer of skills and creating more robust employment opportunities for youth.

## 2.2. PROJECT RESULTS

### 2.2.1. OVERVIEW

**This section provides an analysis of the project's activities through the lens of the Youth Action Plan (YAP) 2022–2027 framework, with the aim to understand its impact on youth across its three pillars:**

- **Engage:** Youth participation in community, policy, and institutional landscapes
- **Empower:** Access to education, employment, livelihoods, and basic rights
- **Connect:** Collaboration and cooperation among youth at local, national, and international levels

The BAA project's design was finalised before the adoption of this action plan. Thus, this section offers a backward-looking examination to identify how project activities align with these three pillars, and it aims to offer points for reflection on the design and execution of future projects targeting youth.

### 2.2.2. ENGAGE

#### 2.2.2.1. Engagement within the community and the institutional landscape

**The project actively fostered youth engagement within the community, primarily through its BFEs and targeted training initiatives, like MUVA.** The MUVA training significantly contributed to community engagement by sensitising young people to act as responsible citizens within the professional sphere and their communities. The BFEs served as direct entry points for youth, located in disadvantaged and densely populated neighbourhoods to ensure proximity to vulnerable young people. Within these BFEs, youth could access information, employers could post job opportunities, and other actors could publicise their events, creating direct avenues for youth to engage with training professionals and available resources. ESSOR's model for the BFEs was grounded in local support and individualised follow-up support provided by professionals. These efforts involved close collaboration with OCBs, such as youth or neighbourhood centres, which served as operational relays. This was further complemented by hiring local coordinators and engaging with local stakeholders (e.g. community leaders, churches, mosques, public billboards) to anchor the BFEs in the communities and effectively disseminate project information.

**The project also promoted youth engagement in formal institutions and processes, fostering ownership and integration into the broader economic landscape.** Beneficiaries of C1 were invited to contribute to the Training Support Fund (FAF), equivalent to 10% of their training costs, fostering a sense of ownership and investment in this formal financial mechanism. In addition, a national platform served to enhance community engagement by providing a central information hub. This platform offered a single entry point for information and training, further reinforcing community engagement.

#### 2.2.2.2. Lessons learned

**Comprehensive approaches that blend grassroots community engagement with linkages to formal institutions and processes can be effective in fostering youth participation and integration.** The project's success in engaging youth stemmed from a multi-layered strategy that combined community outreach (e.g. BFEs, OCBs, local stakeholders) with direct connections to formal systems (e.g. interactions with the Professional Orientation Agent, formalisation of ventures, certificate ceremonies). Future initiatives could design engagement strategies that bridge informal community networks with formal institutional pathways, ensuring youth are not only targeted but also integrated into broader societal and economic structures.

## 2.2.3. EMPOWER

### 2.2.3.1. Education, training, and skills development

**The project empowered youth by providing tailored education, vocational training, and practical skills development, reflecting a decentralised approach to capacity-building.** Its core aim was to enhance the socio-economic integration of vulnerable Chadian youth, including those with limited schooling, by extending training and integration services beyond the capital. Through its two components, the project delivered diverse training pathways, such as hands-on dual apprenticeships and practical agricultural techniques, designed to equip beneficiaries with various profiles, adaptable skills directly applicable to the Chadian labour market.

### 2.2.3.2. Access to employment and entrepreneurship

**BAA's efforts to facilitate youth access to employment and entrepreneurship represented a significant push towards improving livelihoods.** BFEs served as hubs for information, orientation, and individualised support throughout the professional integration journey. The project connected youth with partner companies and provided dedicated support for entrepreneurship, including training and material kits, enabling many to initiate their own economic activities. This comprehensive approach aimed to create tangible pathways for youth to achieve greater economic independence and improve their living conditions by engaging directly in productive work.

**Significant data limitations, however, hindered the project's ability to assess its long-term impact on youth employment and self-employment.** Assessing the impact on youth who secured jobs proved challenging, primarily due to a lack of data on job quality and income levels, with follow-up data not extending beyond six months. Nevertheless, the project did assist many young people, including several met by Altai, who successfully integrated into various sectors, such as agriculture, hospitality, metallurgy, and, particularly for women, the processing of local products. Similarly, defining and measuring self-employment insertion was challenging, lacking quantitative criteria to evaluate decent work outcomes. This data fragility extended to C2, where assessing the impact on income and the enhancement of skills and productivity for youth participating in dual training models was difficult as the unstable nature of pre-training earnings made definitive income comparisons challenging and left the actual added value of the dual training on income unclear beyond simple beneficiary statements. The utility and added value of equipment provided by FONAP to participating enterprises were also hard to assess. This overall lack of precise data, including the inability to compare insertion rates between training modalities, limited the project's capacity to provide robust evidence on the effectiveness of its models.

### 2.2.3.3. Lessons learned

**Decentralised, tailored training combined with accessible support mechanisms can empower vulnerable youth by bridging skill gaps and creating direct pathways to employment and entrepreneurship.** Extending training and integration services beyond the capital city, coupled with diverse, context-specific training pathways (e.g. dual apprenticeships, practical agricultural techniques), proved instrumental in equipping beneficiaries with relevant and adaptable skills. Establishing accessible hubs, like the BFEs, and providing direct support, including connections with partner companies and material kits for entrepreneurs, created tangible avenues for youth to secure livelihoods. Future interventions should prioritise decentralised, demand-driven skills development alongside robust, localised support systems to empower youth in challenging labour markets.

**Robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks are essential for generating evidence to advocate for national funding and inform future programming.** The project experienced limitations in evaluating its impact on employed youth, lacking data on job quality and income levels beyond a six-month follow-up period. Defining and measuring self-employment insertion also proved challenging

without clear quantitative criteria, making it difficult to assess decent work outcomes. Data fragility extended to measuring the income and skills enhancement from dual training in C2, as well as the utility of provided equipment. This highlights the necessity of designing monitoring and evaluation frameworks with comprehensive indicators from the outset to capture job quality, income progression, and decent work outcomes, enabling projects to provide compelling evidence of effectiveness for future national investment and policy decisions.

## 2.2.4. CONNECT

### 2.2.4.1. Cooperation and collaboration among youth

**The project fostered cooperation and collaboration among youth at various levels, strengthening community bonds and professional networks.** The MUVA training, for instance, contributed to community cohesion and, according to beneficiaries met by Altai, anecdotally helped resolve interpersonal conflicts among young participants. Within the agricultural sector, some of the FIPA youth benefited from exchange trips that facilitated the sharing of good practices and interaction with external experts, such as agents from the ANADER, as well as other young farmers. This encouraged a culture of mutual support, where young farmers could seek assistance from each other or from ESSOR's technical partners when facing challenges.

**Beyond individual connections, the project indirectly encouraged the formation of collective structures and a sense of shared ownership among beneficiaries.** In some instances, the FIPA module led to the creation of agricultural cooperatives, enabling young farmers to achieve better negotiation power when selling their produce. In Sarh, some BAA beneficiaries spontaneously came together into trade-specific associations. Their operations were inspired, in part, by village savings and loan associations, with members paying a monthly fee (XAF 2,000/month) to build up reserves for collective equipment purchases, demonstrating grassroots collaboration and resource pooling among youth.

### 2.2.4.2. Lessons learned

**Facilitating platforms and opportunities for youth to connect and share experiences can lead to grassroots collective action and enhanced economic agency.** The project's role in enabling interactions, such as through exchange trips and by nurturing connections, demonstrated that providing initial catalysts can empower youth to spontaneously form associations and cooperatives. These groups, driven by shared interests and a desire for collective benefit (e.g. improved negotiation leverage, pooled resources for equipment), highlight the potential for sustainable, youth-led initiatives when supportive environments are cultivated.

**Encouraging peer-to-peer support and collective resource pooling mechanisms can strengthen youth resilience and economic prospects, particularly in informal contexts.** The emergence of trade-specific associations, functioning like village savings and loan associations, where members contribute financially to collective purchases, illustrates a powerful model for mutual support. Future initiatives, therefore, could consider the potential of such grassroots financial and collaborative mechanisms as a valuable channel of support, particularly in contexts with low financial inclusion, given their capacity to enhance the ability of youth to overcome individual limitations and improve their livelihoods through collective action.

### 3. CONCLUSION

**BAA offers interesting lessons on the importance of targeting interventions in line with the local context and carefully designing projects while engaging key stakeholders, particularly for projects aiming to support novel and demanding concepts such as dual TVET.**

**The case study showed that locally adapted and gender sensitive implementation of trainings can yield significant results, even in highly vulnerable environments.** Key components of the effective trainings were the thorough and locality-specific needs assessments as well as the comprehensive and personalised support structure established to accompany young beneficiaries. In C1, the gender sensitive approach implemented across the entire project yielded important results for women, despite sometimes unfavourable gender stereotypes. These results were achieved, amongst others, by developing agricultural training modules, and integrating human development and soft skills into the curriculum. Nevertheless, structural challenges posed significant barriers to sustainable economic integration, particularly the absence of wage employment opportunities. In contexts with a weak private sector, self-employment can be an important alternative. Seizing this opportunity, however, requires additional support measures such as entrepreneurship training and access to finance (see 2.1.1).

**The study further revealed the importance of a well-thought and consistent project design which engages all actors involved, particularly veto players.** When it comes to TVET, developing a dual training concept in a context with a strong theory-based training tradition can be challenging. In the case of BAA, the dual training model developed for C2 was partly dysfunctional, as theory and practice were not sufficiently coordinated with each other. Instead, evidence collected by Altai suggested that workers recruited for dual training continued business as usual during the practical parts of the training (see 2.1.1). Moreover, the project illustrated the importance of buy-in from key parties, including regulators and private sector. Engagement with such veto players can be important to ensure sustainability, for example by mobilising private sector funding for dual training, or by engaging regulators to institutionalise and certify dual training approaches (see 2.1.4).

## 4. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
AFD	<i>Agence Française de Développement</i>
AFPACET	<i>Projet d'Appui au Financement de la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Apprentissage au Tchad</i>
BAA	Bab Al Amal
BFE	<i>Bureau de Formation et d'Emploi</i>
C1	Component 1
C2	Component 2
C3	Component 3
CAP	<i>Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle</i>
EUTF	European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa
FIPA	<i>Formation Insertion Professionnelle Agricole</i>
FONAP	<i>Fonds National d'Appui à la Formation Professionnelle</i>
MUVA	Human development training
OCB	<i>Organisation à Base Communautaire</i>
PIP	<i>Plateforme pour l'Insertion Professionnelle</i>
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training



## 5. ANNEXES

### 5.1. LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEWED

Organisation	Position
ESSOR - Moundou	Project officer
L-CETIM (Public vocational school)	Headmaster
BFE in Moundou	Head of the BFE
Rondouba Hotel	Director
Plateforme / PADIESTE NGO	Coordinator of PADIESTE and for the Platform
FONAP	FONAP's focal point for C2 in Sarh
BFE in Sarh	Respectively: Technical referent for FIPA and AOP (career guidance officer)
Public Vocational School	Headmaster
<i>Maison des Métiers</i>	Director
Business owners – Metal welding and Car Mechanics	Owners
Private vocational training center	Owner
ESSOR – N'Djamena	Respectively: Education referent and FIP referent
AFD	Respectively: Deputy Director & Project Team Manager
MEPD (Ministry of Economy and Development Planning)	Coordinator for Bab Al Amal
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	Head of Cooperation
EUD	Social Services Program Officer

### 5.2. LIST OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS CONDUCTED

Beneficiaries	Type of support	Location	Date
6 beneficiaries including 1 woman	Component 1	Sarh	9-Apr
6 beneficiaries including 1 woman.	Component 2	Sarh	9-Apr

### 5.3. LIST OF PROJECT DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Author	Date	Name of Document
AFD	2016	<i>Jeunesses sahéliennes : dynamiques d'exclusion, moyens d'insertion</i>
EUTF	2017	Description of action – <i>Projet de soutien à l'insertion socio-professionnelle des jeunes tchadiens en situation de vulnérabilité</i>
AFD	2018	<i>Compte rendu – Premier comité de pilotage</i>
AFD	2020	<i>Compte rendu – Deuxième comité de pilotage</i>
AFD	2020	<i>Compte rendu – Réunion extraordinaire du comité de pilotage</i>
AFD	2021	<i>Compte rendu – Troisième comité de pilotage</i>

AFD	2024	<i>Compte rendu – Cinquième comité de pilotage</i>
AFD	2021	<i>Rapport d'activités S1 2021</i>
AFD	2021	<i>Rapport d'activités S2 2021</i>
AFD	2022	<i>Rapport d'activités S1 2022</i>
AFD	2022	<i>Rapport d'activités S2 2022</i>
AFD	2024	<i>Rapport d'activités annuel 2023</i>
Trade unions and Trade	2024	Chad Trade Fact Sheet
AFD	2025	<i>Rapport execution final</i>
Technopolis Group	2025	<i>Evaluation du projet Bab al Amal</i>

<sup>i</sup> UE, 'Description d'Action - *Projet de soutien à l'insertion socio-professionnelle des jeunes tchadiens en situation de vulnérabilité – Bab Al Amal*', 2017.

<sup>ii</sup> Trade unions and trade, 'Chad Trade Fact Sheet', October 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Technopolis Group, '*Évaluation du projet Bab al Amal*', April 2025.

<sup>iv</sup> AFD, '*Rapport d'exécution final*', April 2025.

<sup>v</sup> Technopolis Group, '*Évaluation du projet Bab al Amal*', April 2025.

<sup>vi</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>vii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>viii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>ix</sup> Technopolis Group, '*Évaluation du projet Bab al Amal*', April 2025.

<sup>x</sup> AFD, '*Rapport d'exécution final*', April 2025.

<sup>xi</sup> Ministère de l'Economie et de la Planification du Développement, 'Plan National de Développement 2017-2021', August 2027. Retrieved [here](#).

<sup>xii</sup> *Ministère de la Fonction Publique, du Travail et de l'Emploi*, '*Politique nationale de l'emploi et de la formation professionnelle au Tchad (PNEFP)*', April 2014. Retrieved [here](#).

<sup>xiii</sup> Technopolis Group, '*Évaluation du projet Bab al Amal*', April 2025.

<sup>xiv</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>xv</sup> *Ibid.*