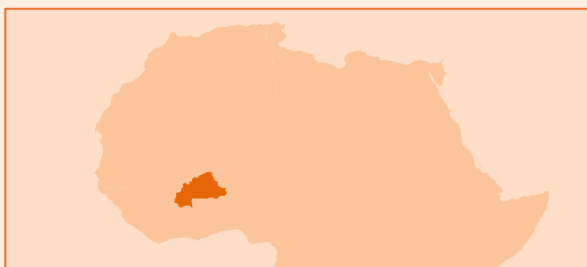


## SUCCESS STORY

# Employment support programme in Burkina Faso's border areas



### EU Trust Fund for Africa – Sahel & Lake Chad



**EUTF PARTNER:**  
Expertise France



**COUNTRY:**  
Burkina Faso



**BUDGET:**  
EUR 7.0M



From **07/2017**  
to **12/2020**

### Objective of the project

To facilitate the sustainable integration of youth and women into the workforce, by providing TVET and supporting the creation of MSMEs.

### Key successes

- > 4,292 people received technical and vocational training.
- > 26 new nationally-recognised vocational training certification frameworks for in-demand professions.
- > 2,098 MSMEs created in the agriculture and craftsmanship sectors.

The 'Employment support programme in Burkina Faso's border areas' (Emploi BF)<sup>1</sup> was successfully implemented by Expertise France across three regions of Burkina Faso (Boucle du Mouhoun, Nord, and Sahel) from July 2017 to December 2020. The programme promoted the integration of youth and women into the workforce, by improving their employability in in-demand sectors, and by supporting the creation of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). By delegating the implementation of activities to local civil society organisations (CSOs), the programme leveraged community insights to ensure more sustainable and impactful initiatives.

### How did the EUTF help?

**Emploi BF implemented technical and vocational education and training (TVET) activities to support the employability of young people and women.** The project recognised the need to enhance Burkina Faso's TVET sector, which faces challenges in both the capacity and quality of training. For instance, while the agro-sylvo-pastoral sector accounted for more than 75% of total employment in the country, only 0.1% of youth had received training relevant to this sector. To bridge this gap, the project delivered TVET training to 4,292 people (1,730 young men, 1,590 young women, and 972 women) in various fields, such as agriculture, livestock, and food processing.

**The project made notable progress in supporting the Ministry of Technical Education and Training (MJFIP) to develop professional certification frameworks for 26 in-demand professions.** These frameworks outline the required skills and knowledge to obtain professional certifications, enabling individuals to gain official qualifications based on their competencies. Demonstrating its commitment, the MJFIP independently developed frameworks for additional professions. By the end of the project, 1,849 people obtained a professional certification in in-demand sectors.

**In addition to delivering technical training, the project provided entrepreneurship training to foster the creation of MSMEs.** Emploi BF trained 3,841 people, of whom 66% were women. These trainings led to the creation of 2,098 microenterprises in the agriculture and artisanal sectors in the three regions of intervention, tripling the initial target. While many of the newly created MSMEs began informally, the project facilitated the formalisation of 7.5% of them. In addition to supporting their creation, the project also guided 914 MSMEs in applying for loans at micro-finance institutions. Of these, 135 MSMEs obtained loans for €20,885 in total.



## Keys to success

**“Faire-faire approach” or delegating implementation to local stakeholders:** To implement project activities, Emploi BF identified CSOs through three calls for proposals around the themes of “To be trained and to initiate”, “Qualify for a job” and “Territories fostering entrepreneurship”. CSOs leveraged their knowledge of local customs, practices, and languages to design training programmes in in-demand sectors. Trainings targeted diverse audiences and CSOs developed training modules to ensure that those who could not read received adapted curricula. Furthermore, the project incorporated coaching activities to enhance the CSOs’ training delivery.

**Local institutions as facilitators:** From the onset, the project engaged with local authorities that support vocational training and entrepreneurship at the local level. The project established technical support structures, such as business incubators and professional technical units, to strengthen their capabilities. These initiatives helped local authorities become resources for individuals seeking to enter the workforce. These support structures were still active after the end of the project.

## Building on success

**Concentrating on border areas:** Numerous training programmes targeting young Burkinabe take place in urban areas and in the central provinces of Burkina Faso. As a result, populations in rural regions, such as Boucle du Mouhoun, Nord, and Sahel, often have limited access to these opportunities.<sup>8</sup> Recognising this disparity, Emploi BF chose to enhance employability and create economic opportunities in marginalised areas, delivering a highly impactful intervention.

**Building on Expertise France’s experience:** Following the positive results of Emploi BF, the European Union (EU) chose to continue mobilising Expertise France in two projects: the RENCOS project (EU Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace; December 2020–June 2022; €8M) and its direct successor funded through the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) under the Programme “Support to the Stabilisation of the Ouaga-Kaya-Dori-Djibo Axis – Strengthening Social and Economic Security”. Expertise France leveraged its experience from Emploi BF to continue delivering professional training, developing training frameworks, and establishing certification mechanisms for youth. These programmes underscore the ongoing commitment to foster the development of border regions through employment initiatives.

<sup>1</sup> Programme d'appui à l'Emploi dans les zones frontalières et périphériques au Burkina Faso.

### Disclaimer

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The research for this success story was conducted from January to April 2024, was based on project documentation, and presents the situation at that moment.



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