



Enhancing training and professional integration in Congo's forestry, industrial maintenance & ecotourism sectors

Project implemented from: March 2022 to Dec. 2024 Sectors: Forestry/woodworking, Industrial maintenance, Ecotourism & hospitality Agency: Expertise France

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Opportunity

The economy of the Republic of Congo has been growing due to both national and international investments, leading to an increase in demand for **local skilled workers**. To foster this growth, VET Toolbox has identified three sectors that can significantly contribute to the country's economy:

Forestry/woodworking sector: Due to legal regulations and emerging occupational profiles, there is a growing need for skilled local labour to meet new demands in wood processing. Notably, the prohibition by the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) on the export of unprocessed timber such as wood logs since 2023 requires business development of the local industry along with new skills needs and job opportunities.

Industrial maintenance sector: There is a shortage of qualified personnel and limited quality training opportunities in the country, resulting in the need

for technicians to receive training overseas and an increase in the **recruitment of foreign workers**. This shortage affects the entire economy since the skills required for industrial maintenance apply to **various sectors** and **value chains**.

Ecotourism & hospitality sector: The Republic of Congo is home to one of the richest and most biologically important natural ecosystems on the planet. This sector requires a skilled workforce to drive the country's economic development while preserving its natural heritage. Recognising its potential, both the European Delegation and the national government advocate for investment in this sector to diversify and strengthen the country's economy.

VET Toolbox aims to capitalise on the potential of these three sectors and unlock local employment opportunities by addressing the skills gap.



Achievements

VET Toolbox collaborates with both public and private partners to reinforce skills development in response to private sector needs in the growing sectors of ecotourism, forestry and industrial maintenance. More specifically, the action has achieved the following:

- Setting up a public-private dialogue (PPD)
 platform engaging public and private partners
 and VET providers in the discussion on sector specific challenges in skills development and job
 creation for youth. After starting with the
 industrial maintenance sector which faces the
 most pressing need for skilled labour, the
 platform now comprises members from the three
 sectors supported by the project.
- Engaging in capacity development activities, upskilling employees from partner private companies, and delivering equipment and training

of trainers of VTIs and companies to deliver highquality training.

- Developing tailor-made and certified training programmes for all three sectors (covering 10 trades), including work-based learning opportunities through high private sector involvement and dual VET.
- Facilitating job placement and supporting graduates with entrepreneurship skills and tools to start up their own businesses.

Key targets



400 people trained300 graduates employed

Private partners

- The Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture & Trade of Pointe-Noire (CCIAM) and the
 employers' association UNICONGO (Union Patronale et Interprofessionnelle du Congo) sensitise and
 mobilise companies to participate in the project and follow up on the training and implementation of
 the PPD.
- The private sector takes an active part in the co-creation of the training model, delivers work-based learning, provides space, equipment, and support to trainees, and commits to recruiting a percentage of graduates:
 - Industrial maintenance: ARSENOISE, Groupe Froid Moderne (GFM), ROYAL SERVICE, etc.
 - Forestry: Industrie forestière de Ouesso (IFO), Congolaise Industrielle des Bois (CIB), Likouala Timber, Wenge Bois, etc.
 - Ecotourism: Odzala National Park (Congo Conservation Company for Tour Guiding), ELAIS Hotel, Hotel du Port, Guest House Hotel, etc.
- Companies such as **Wenge Bois**, **Congo Conservation Company/Kambaafrica**, **Hotel Elais**, etc. cofinance the training by covering transportation costs, or food costs for trainees.

Public partners

- The National Employability and Apprenticeship Fund (FONEA) participates in the PPD to inform members about their training fund and improve their service offer to the benefit of enterprises.
- The **Directorate General for Qualifying Training and Employment (DGFQE)** validates, supervises, and evaluates the trainings, and issues certificates.
- The Ministry of Youth and Sports, Civic Education, Skills Training and Employment is backing up the project and participates in the PPD.

VET providers

• The CEFAs (Education, Training and Apprenticeship Centres) introduce the new training models in the three sectors, in close collaboration with the private sector.























Key success factors

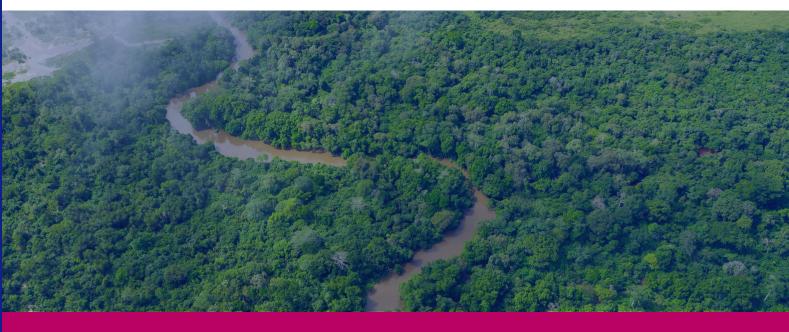
- · The project piloted an intersectoral PPD in the three sectors that emerged during public-private collaboration. Thanks to the strong leadership of the private sector and effective communication, the platform attracted new companies and laid the foundation for the other sectors to join up, creating an intersectoral forum with sectorspecific sub-fora in the countries' growing economies.
- · Skills development is driven by the private sector, which is highly engaged in the development and implementation of training modules, e.g. through applying dual VET or offering in-company training.
- · An innovative training approach in ecotourism and hospitality allows for the launching of the country's first group of national professional Tour Guides for the Odzala-Kokoua National Park.



Upscaling and sustainability

- The project is laying the foundation for the institutionalisation of the piloted training models by developing quality standards, a certification process and financing models.
- The piloted PPD platform has been registered non-governmental

organisation in Congo and is forming an intersectoral, sustaining structure that promotes vocational training and employment creation for the youth in the future. Member companies pay a small membership fee to ensure continuation of the platform.





VET Toolbox is a programme developing opportunity-driven skills development initiatives aligned with investments' needs, supporting the private sector with local job creation. For additional information, please visit www.vettoolbox.eu.

A partnership project













