




Côte d'Ivoire Entreprises Développement and the Support to Micro and Small enterprises programme of the RED have initially focused on providing training and follow-up to MSEs. The target is currently moving to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), in order to reach value creators and to support in the long term the beneficiaries who scaled up. **What services should we offer them, and what added value should we provide to guarantee their growth and performance?**

Supporting SMEs' growth and performance

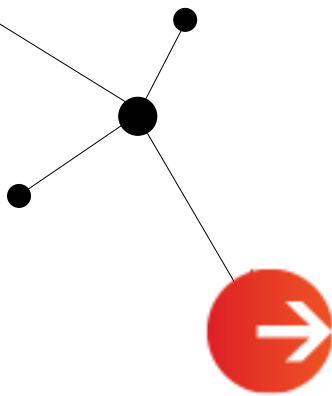
THE TOP LEADER SEMINAR



Within the Support to Micro and Small enterprises programme, entrepreneurs take part to the Basic Management Training, then to Specialised Trainings and become active in the Entrepreneurs' Club, while their business is growing. The increase of the turnover and number of employees, and new types of clients require changes in their management methods, management tools and even in the business structure. Entrepreneurs do not feel equipped and thus need further training. Entrepreneurs' Club monthly thematic evenings allow them to occasionally tackle some issues, but the entrepreneurs express the need for new trainings and long discussion with experts.

To deal with these needs, CIED launched in 2015 the **TOP LEADER seminar** for the entrepreneurs who subscribed to the club, who undertook a Specialized Training, and whose business is growing at a great pace. The goal is **to set up new management tools and to discuss SME's specific issues**, thanks to the participation of experts. In each Club, entrepreneurs submit their needs and indicate topics they want to work on to the CIED staff, who enlists experts and organises the seminar.

The first **TOP LEADER seminar** took place during a week-end in June 2015 at the Management Training Center of Cocody and gathered **26 members of Abidjan's Entrepreneurs' Clubs**. This seminar's goal was twofold : enabling the entrepreneurs to analyse their economic model and introducing personal development skills.



A consultant presented a *Business Model Canvas* that identifies the potential of a business through a complete analysis of its activities and environment. Another consultant conducted a workshop on management and leadership. **Following the seminar, 15 SMEs subscribed to CIED coaching services**, which shows the services' complementarity and the SMEs' strong demand for coaching.

In 2016, Top Leader gathered 32 Club members in Yamoussoukro around the theme « Building a bright future ». The two sub-themes focused on the development of a strategic action plan and the set up of a quality approach. This session also allowed the participants to improve their marketing strategy. On the last day, CIED organised a visit to a medical centre, which resulted in a financial and material donation from the entrepreneurs in order to contribute to the center's development.

Visit to the medical Center and material donation



The **third Top Leader** seminar took place last 9th & 10th of June in Bouaké. Participants could choose between two working groups: the first one dealt with innovative management techniques for growing SMEs and the second one addressed the revision of business models for a sustainable performance. This falls within the 2015 Top Leader seminar. **32 entrepreneurs took part to this third edition** and a caritative action like the one in 2016 was set up.

The first Top Leader seminars led to **a new dynamic in the Entrepreneurs' Clubs due to more invested members, the birth of a real SMEs' network and a growing awareness of complementary needs like coaching.** Top Leader's participants become more aware of their roles in their growing businesses and feel better equipped to implement decisions.

For a two-day seminar, participants payed from 25.000 to 35.000 XAF, which compensate for a part of the fees. Financial balance is still a concern for the up-coming seminars.

The success of this new type of training set up by CIED, through participant's feedbacks and an increasing participants' number, confirm the demand identified by CIED and the RED for services destined to SMEs. Likewise, the complementarity between Top Leader seminars and coaching services, deployed in Ivory Coast since 2015 and whose activity volume is also increasing shows a high potential for the development of a range of trainings and services for SMEs.

The MSEs support program wants to tackle the issue of proper support to SMEs, to help entrepreneurs grow sustainably and to contribute to the development of entrepreneurship and value-creation. ■

AT A GLANCE



Congo In Congo, an entrepreneur who ended his training path and whose business is expanding is given the opportunity to subscribe to a *Centre de Gestion Agréé (CGA)* of the Association Pointe-Noire Industrielle (APNI), working in partnership with CGED, and whose primary purpose is the emergence and the reinforcement of SMEs. The CGA helps entrepreneurs to maintain their accounts, offers business diagnoses and gives access to the APNI's guarantee fund to facilitate the financing of spending linked to their enterprise's development.



DRC RDCED organized a seminar in 2016 about business performance to encourage high potential entrepreneurs who are members of the Club to steer their business based on measurable objectives and indicators. A personalized support was then offered to volunteers, including the creation and the monitoring of an action plan and the measure of performance indicators.



Cameroon In Cameroon, trainers help fast-growing entrepreneurs to carry out a diagnosis of their activities with the SWOT method (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) in order to identify challenges. They elaborate together an action plan in which they identify together which lever of performance the entrepreneur must activate to improve its operations and follow it throughout the year.

90 SMEs took part to
TOP LEADER

95 new members
in the 4
Entrepreneurs' Clubs
of CIED.

182 entrepreneurs
trained in the Basic
Management Training
in 2017

TESTIMONY PORTRAIT

Laurette Kehunde (in the middle),
member of Marcory's Entrepreneurs' Club
and Top Leader's participant



My name is Laurette Kehunde, I'm a pastry chef and member of the 9th BMT promotion from the Marcory MTC. I then followed the Marketing ST and I'm a member of the Entrepreneurs' Club.

I was attracted by the topics and the format of the TOP LEADER seminar and by the opportunity to meet and exchange with entrepreneurs from other MTCs in Ivory Coast. This training met my needs because my business was starting to grow and I was facing new challenges. The TOP LEADER seminar helped me to reinforce my personal development capacities and to understand my economic model and what is creating value in my business sector. Unlike Thematic Evenings, we had enough time to share our experience with external consultants. Networking enabled me to develop and sign partnerships with other Clubs' members. I also attended a presentation on coaching services and subscribed for 6 months. After taking part to TOP LEADER, I was eager to renew my subscription to the Club and above all, I felt that my new needs were taken into account. This year, I took part to the third edition in Bouaké.

Today, I'm a businesswoman and can identify more clearly the challenges in the development of my business and give myself the means to reach my goals. ■