

INTRODUCTION

Business Member Organizations (BMOs) and industry associations act as a unified voice for supporting their partner businesses. Often sector-specific, these organizations are comprised of businesses seeking partnership, lobbying strength, knowledge of best practices, and other benefits to improve the state of their own affairs while supporting the industry as a whole. Water For People would like to understand what role it can play in enhancing the efficacy of BMOs, particularly for small-scale and informal entrepreneurs, to encourage more rapid dissemination of modern sanitation services in Uganda, Rwanda, and Malawi.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

There is a dearth of secondary research specifically related to BMOs in the sanitation sector, particularly for the target countries. As such, this paper also incorporates analysis of non-sanitation associations within those countries, with the goal of drawing parallels that might apply to the sanitation sector. Organizations and partnerships offering Business Development Services are also highlighted.

WHY BMOs?

BMOs in any country can provide vital support and information to businesses of all sizes and structures. They may be of particular importance in the burgeoning private sector economies of Africa as entrepreneurs learn to navigate not only serving end-users, but also dealing with government regulation, financial reporting, supply chain management, and a host of other technical issues. BMO services can include:

- Business linkages – creating connections between companies for partnerships, resource sharing, and efficiencies
- “Formalizing” informal workers – allowing small-scale entrepreneurs a means of moving toward official status
- Lobbying – promoting government legislation and support to bolster industry activity, particularly in regard to business permit regulations¹
- Advocacy around improving capital markets and attracting new investment resources to the region/industry¹
- Improved collaboration between government/industry officials and business owners¹
- Business development services – providing education opportunities to strengthen members’ business acumen
- Mark of quality – holding members up to industry standards and practices
- Resources – offering facilities and technology for member use

¹ Adapted from feedback from Joan Assiime of Captiva Communications

ENGAGEMENT WITH BDS SERVICES

Business Development Services (BDS) can play an integral role in fostering interest in current and potential BMOs while maintaining current membership in existing organizations. Such services are vital to developing capacity, improving industry and member reputation, and creating a stronger sense of credibility when interacting with governments, banks, aid organizations, and other institutions.

Burgeoning BMOs might consider partnering with area business development agencies to hold seminars and classes for formal and informal sanitation entrepreneurs. By negotiating free or low-cost events early on, BMOs and BDS providers can create long-term partnerships wherein service providers can access BMO member lists to offer additional services, and can profit from on-going interest in higher-cost seminars and programs in the future.

BDS service providers might also explore developing expertise around deploying BMOs in various industries to create an ecosystem from which to draw new clients. For example, a set of best practices, boilerplate documentation and forms, and technical strategies for building and maintaining strong org structures and member rolls would be extremely valuable to those seeking to deploy new BMOs in any sector.

One BDS provider in Uganda outlines the major roles it plays in working with existing BMOs as follows:

- Formalize memberships for all participants
- Formalize business processes
- Restructure the BMO and establish a committed leadership team
- Create revenue streams for the BMO
- Create mutually beneficial partnerships with complimentary organizations to promote new business models and drive adoption of improved technologies

EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL BMOs

Below are country-specific examples of BMOs, BDS providers, and unique partnerships gathered through secondary research, along with some situational analysis as needed.

UGANDA

The main sanitation-related BMO in Uganda appears to be the **Private Emptiers Association**, which has its own fleet of waste disposal trucks. The biggest challenge facing the association is the inability to pay by those most in need of latrine emptying services, particularly in the slums of Kampala.

The **National Water and Sewage Corporation** (NWSC) is the largest state-mandated organization dedicated to deploying and maintaining water and sewage services in Uganda's major cities. A 2003 World Bank report cites a lack of "necessary efficient commercial and financial management capacity that can ensure the delivery of sustainable services in the medium to long-term."² The organization has faced internal fears related to acceptance of the private sector "because of improper information about their role".³ Little mention is made in this report of slum conditions, system weaknesses, and informal entrepreneurs. However, 5 years later, the NWSC undertook the "Kampala Sanitation Program" aimed at addressing some of these issues,⁴ with a mention of promotion of the Private Emptiers Association⁵ through financial supports for safe pit emptying services paid for in part by a levy on residential water bills.

However, according to a more recent case study, despite NWSC supports, the Private Emptiers Association services still remain prohibitively expensive for most slum dwellers in Kampala. The study points out that users also look to the Kampala City Council, which has funded some public toilets, for emptying services.⁶ To that end, international aid organization Water and Sanitation Program is working with the Pit Emptiers Association in Kampala on business model and customer service improvements.⁷

Enterprise Uganda is a government-supported organization dedicated to developing "a new generation of dynamic Ugandan entrepreneurs by actively providing support to... small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) to enhance their productivity, growth and competitiveness."⁸ The organization, established in partnership with UNDP Enterprise Africa and a group of government and non-government organizations, aims to provide hands-on business development services for SMEs including training, business advice and linkages, strategy, technology, and more. The business linkage program in particular is set up to create connections between local corporations and SMEs to enhance capacity, efficiency, and knowledge transfer, with the ultimate goal of bolstering foreign direct investment.

The Network for Water and Sanitation, an affiliate of Kenya-based Netwas International, is part of an international training network supporting private organizations working in water and waste management, and aims to be a "Resource Centre of excellence for capacity building".⁹ It provides training courses, advisory services, consulting, networking and other services to businesses, NGOs and Community-Based Organizations. The main

2 Muhairwe, p. 4

3 Muhairwe, p. 10

4 <http://www.afdb.org/en/projects-and-operations/project-portfolio/project/p-ug-e00-008/>

5 New Vision - <http://www.enteruganda.com/brochures/water-page06.html>

6 Gjeffe, p. 35-36.

7 Outlaw, p. 17.

8 <http://www.enterprise.co.ug/>

9 <http://www.netwas.org/index.php/misc/Netwas-Uganda.html>

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Netwas website (www.netwas.org) currently lists 20 in-person courses on industry-related topics such as “Business Skills in Water, Sanitation and Solid Waste Management”. This organization in particular seems to be unique as it positions itself at the intersection of the private sector, NGOs, and community organizations.

Other tangentially-related organizations:

- Uganda Institution of Professional Engineers: <http://www.ugaengineers.com/>
- Uganda Association of Consulting Engineers: <http://www.uace.or.ug/>
- Uganda Manufacturers Association: <http://uma.or.ug/>

RWANDA

Of the three nations researched, Rwanda appears to have the most fully formed private sector organization ecosystem. The country’s government has taken a decentralized approach to building infrastructure and supporting the private sector, which has led to a relatively healthy entrepreneur community and support network.

The Rwandan government has established the Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA), which regulates the country’s for-profit cooperatives and associations. The country currently has roughly 4,500 registered cooperatives, though most are small, lack skilled leadership, and are not well structured.¹⁰ *Please see Appendix for further details on RCA policies, procedures and goals.*

That being stated, however, recent preliminary Water For People research indicates a lack of interest in the BMO structure for sanitation entrepreneurs, at least in Kigali. Perhaps the relatively straightforward and supportive government structure (limited bureaucracy, simple business registration) mitigates the need for entrepreneurs to form advocacy groups. It may also be the case that there is currently not too much competition between entrepreneurs. This implies that for the BMO model to succeed in the sanitation industry in Rwanda, potential members will have to be convinced of the other benefits a BMO can provide, particularly business development services.¹¹

The strongest example of this phenomenon is the **Private Sector Foundation**, an umbrella group of 10 sub-chambers for agriculture, industry, commerce, tourism, tech, finance, artisans, professionals, and young and female entrepreneurs.¹² The Foundation focuses on entrepreneurship development, capacity building, trade and policy advocacy, involvement in regional and international trade, and member communication. The foundation operates 17 Business Development Services centers and has a partnership with

¹⁰ Adapted from feedback from Boundless Consultancy in Rwanda

¹¹ Adapted from update call discussion with Sherina Munyana and David Sparkman of WFP, 3/13/2012.

¹² http://www.psf.org.rw/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=18&Itemid=52

Maastricht School of Management for long-term training. Development services include training, access to finance, networking, and consulting. The organization also boasts a magazine and newsletter.

According to a Water and Sanitation Program (WSP) report, the Rwandan government is “actively encouraging private sector participation” in developing markets for latrines and slabs as well as pit-emptying services.¹³ WSP is also involved in the **“association of private water and sanitation operators in Rwanda”**, a group of 51 individual enterprises, cooperatives and associations, with the goal of technical and financial training, networking, government collaboration, and, most uniquely, creating “a mechanism of easy access to basic equipment and spare parts”.¹⁴ *Note: the footnoted PowerPoint presentation is the only reference to this association available online. Indeed, the presentation itself is undated and does not list an author, but is available on WSP’s website. Primary research with staff at WSP may be required for further insights.*

The **National University in Rwanda**, in partnership with UNESCO, has introduced a Master’s program for Water Resources and Environmental Management, with additional programs related to research of rural community development, improved capacity for practical training, and better access to information.¹⁵

Finally, **EDUCAT Rwanda** is a local branch of an international organization dedicated to educating entrepreneurs on business skills and financial sustainability.¹⁶

MALAWI*

While Malawi utilizes similar latrine technologies as Uganda and Rwanda, the private sector around building, emptying, and maintaining latrines appears to be in a nascent stage of development as privatization in general has been hampered by challenging market conditions. According to the CIA World Factbook, Malawi ranks among the world’s least developed countries. “Donors, who provided an average of 36 % of government revenue in the past five years, suspended general budget support for Malawi in 2011 due to a negative IMF review and governance issues.”¹⁷ The government must address infrastructure, energy and other development issues to attract improved levels of private sector investment.¹⁸ City assemblies sometimes provide emptying equipment, but access is often

13 “Water Supply and Sanitation in Rwanda”, p. 27.

14 http://www.wsp.org/wsp/sites/wsp.org/files/plenary_1_rwanda_dpssp.pdf

15 <http://www.unesco-ihe.org/Project-Activities/Project-Portfolio/Capacity-Building-in-Water-Resources-and-Environmental-Management-in-Rwanda>

*Note that according to feedback from TEECs, some of the data related to Malawi is out-of-date. Primary research may be required to verify/update this section. For now, this is the best data available online.

16 <http://www.educat.dk/>

17 <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mi.html>

18 <http://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article/malawi-seeks-to-boost-private-sector-investments-2009-11-10>

limited and fees can be too high for low-income communities. An International Institute for Environment and Development report from 2009 states, “According to city authorities, the major hindrance to emptying pit latrines is the illegal nature of developments and congestion that restricts vehicular access. However, while this may be true of squatter areas, evidence shows that little or no such service is provided in areas that are planned and have access roads.”¹⁹ This speaks to the need for additional private sector involvement in providing targeted solutions to meeting local sanitation needs.

Indeed, recent preliminary primary research conducted by Water For People indicates that BDS firms have found entrepreneurs eager for their services and excited about forming associations. They see benefit in the ability to lobby for their interests as a unified front in case of tariff changes or other government interventions.²⁰

Local water boards, common throughout the country, are the closest things to business organizations in the sanitation sector that research has revealed. Most of them are public, though a few appear to be quasi-private, as in the case of the Blantyre Water Board. However, none of these appear to provide development or partnerships for local private enterprises.²¹

There is reference in some research to the **Privatisation Commission of Malawi**, but the stated official website, www.privatisationmalawi.org, is no longer available.²²

The most prominent true BMO in Malawi appears to be the **National Association of Business Women**, which was established in 1990 to “foster the participation of women in business enterprises through promotional support to existing and potential members.”²³ The organization, with a membership of 15,000+ women, conducts many of the activities associated with other BMOs, including business development and support, advisory services, liaising with government agencies, technical training, and securing third party resources available to businesses in Malawi. Uniquely, it also works to forge linkages between rural and urban economic sectors. It is undetermined, however, what role the organization plays within the sanitation sector. While women are not typically on the frontlines of latrine building and maintenance, perhaps there are opportunities here to support health workers, educators, and other players in the sector.

More recently, however, this association has changed direction toward donor-supported projects due to funding constraints that precluded it from sustaining core activities. As a

19 Manda, p. 47.

20 Info relayed during report update call with Sherina Munyana and David Sparkman of WFP, 3/13/2012.

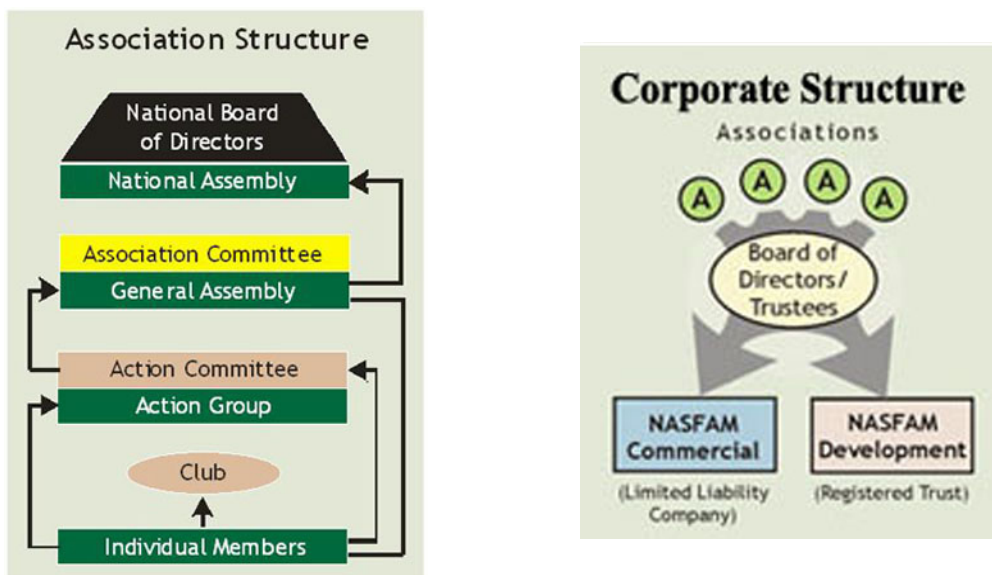
21 <http://www.bwb.mw/>

22 http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADO934.pdf

23 <http://www.hivos.nl/dut/community/partner/10003036>

result, the organization now runs projects that are not necessarily focusing on women, but rather in business in general, in a manner dictated by donors. BDS providers on the ground suggest continuing to establish a sanitation worker association outside the scope of the National Association of Business Women, though would be open to collaboration if the association needs support in the future.²⁴

The other big BMO is **The National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi**, which “promotes farming as a business in order to develop the commercial capacity of its members”. The organization, with over 100,000 members, is structured as follows:



The organization’s goals are to increase yields and commercial revenue, improve crop quality, influence policy, and enhance systems performance. This last point has significance for potential sanitation associations – it makes sense for the industry to consider holistic improvements as a method for rallying support and proposing unified strategic policy advise to government players.

Finally, in 2010, the **Scottish Malawi Business Group** launched a business consultancy for entrepreneurs, providing them economic development and microfinance advice.²⁵ This service provider, one of the most prominent in the country, could act as a strong supporter of any sanitation BMO initiative in Malawi.

STRATEGIES FOR COLLABORATION

²⁴ Adapted from feedback from Towera Jalakasi, Managing Partner, TEECs

²⁵ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2010/02/18135223>

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- Understand both the current players and the gaps that entrepreneurs see.
- Engage in strategic partnerships where Water For People can best utilize its core competencies to support partner missions.
- Look to organizations outside of the sanitation sector for local best practices as well as potential spin-off or replication opportunities for sanitation workers.
- In addition, look for possible synergies with non-sanitation organizations for potential cross-sector collaboration. For example, perhaps an agricultural org might be interested in partnering with sanitation entrepreneurs for waste-to-compost projects. Engineering, masonry, and other orgs might also make good partners.
- Interview formal and informal sanitation entrepreneurs in each country to better understand their needs and determine precisely how a BMO might benefit them.
- Understand what BDS member organizations are already providing to see if and how third-party service providers might add value. Such potential collaborations might yield stronger entrepreneurs who are more engaged in supporting BMO activities, thus improving industry solidarity and integrity.
- WFP is exploring the idea of creating a “Sanitation Solutions” brand of products and services that entrepreneurs could sell within the framework of a BMO that would provide credibility and trademark protection. This might encourage entrepreneurs to share new technologies and ideas for improvement.²⁶

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Below are some country-specific observations gleaned through conducting secondary research. Overall, it is important to note the similarities in services offered among the various BMOs described above. The most compelling differentiator among them is the equipment-sharing scheme proposed in WSP’s sanitation operators association. It is unfortunate that further detail on this project is unavailable from secondary sources.

UGANDA

- The government’s National Water and Sewage Corporation appears to be the giant player in the industry, and has shown some signs of seeking to engage the private sector, particularly when it comes to services for the urban poor. BMOs like the Pit Emptiers Association are best positioned to benefit from such interest if they can present a unified, high-impact, and actionable vision for deploying improved waste management. Water For People can provide credibility, development services, and financial support to help achieve this vision.
- An apparent lack of similar organizations for the sanitation industry speaks to the still nascent state of private enterprise in this sector. Perhaps Water For People could help facilitate the creation of a new industry organization for, say, latrine

²⁶ Discussed during report update call with Sherina Munyana and David Sparkman of WFP, 3/13/2012.

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- masons or plumbers, by first linking formal and informal entrepreneurs in one city through educational seminars. Even bringing these professionals together in one room could have positive impacts, and might create a path toward a formalized self-run membership organization. Another option would be to take the already existing Pit Emptiers Association and expanding membership to complimentary industries.
- Water For People might consider conducting research to understand what exactly private sector players in this sector feel they need most from an industry perspective. Is it business education? Networking? Resource sharing? This information could go a long way toward understanding how best to facilitate interest in BMOs in Uganda. *(This approach would likely also apply to Malawi and Rwanda.)*

RWANDA

- Rwanda appears to have the strongest government support for private industry among the three nations studied. There may be solid opportunities to further develop the sanitation industry through the creation of a dedicated BMO, perhaps under the umbrella of the Private Sector Foundation.
- The best opportunity for NGOs might be to assist in the development of a locally managed BMO in order to achieve maximum government and industry support. Water For People could consider partnering with the Private Sector Foundation on establishing BDS specifically for sanitation entrepreneurs, with an eye toward the eventual launch of a dedicated member organization.
- Rwanda's higher education facilities might also make potential partners as the national university has already established a water-specific master's program.

MALAWI

- The private sector in general is less developed (and documented in research) than in Uganda and Rwanda. This makes finding research on local entrepreneurs and business member organizations somewhat challenging.
- Women's and farmers' organizations have had success attracting tens of thousands of members in Malawi, which bodes well for future industry-specific BMO initiatives.
- Partnership with business development service providers appears to be a good first step toward strengthening the sector's entrepreneurs' businesses before galvanizing them toward setting up BMOs. An intermediate step might then be to establish informal meet-ups and other events to foster relationships among these entrepreneurs so they can share experiences, challenges, and best practices. Creating solidarity within the group will likely go a long way toward the creation of autonomous BMOs with increasing levels of formality. Perhaps Water For People could facilitate meet-ups or seminars around educating entrepreneurs on the benefits of organizing and methods for doing so, with the aim of allowing them to

self-organize in a more grassroots fashion with limited direction from Water For People.

CASE STUDIES

In 2009, **International Lawyers and Economists Against Poverty** (ILEAP) facilitated a workshop in Kampala entitled, “Building Consensus on services Reforms and Negotiations: the Private Sector and the Role of Services Coalitions”. The workshop, proposed after a meeting between ILEAP and the East African Business Council, brought together officials from government, private industry, and the non-profit sector in East Africa to begin the process of establishing a coalition of services industries in the region.

The goals of the workshop were to:

- Bring together 50 stakeholders from a cross-section of industries
- Build awareness of the value of such organizations, particularly with respect to international trade and service reforms
- Create a platform for exchanging knowledge amongst stakeholders

ILEAP leveraged its members’ expertise in working with similar organizations; strategic, logistical, and administrative issues; coalition building among different groups; and, of course, legal issues surrounding org development and deployment.

In negotiating a way forward at the end of the workshop, the group call on continued support from ILEAP, specifically via “technical backstopping and assisting stakeholders to secure the needed resources.” In this case, it appears that ILEAP was able to act as an initial facilitator in terms of simply getting all potential players in a room together, which is no small feat. After applying its additional expertise, ILEAP could then act in a supporting role to ensure the project stayed on course.²⁷ This support role appears key for basics like charter and handbook development to more complex management strategies and capacity building.

Waste Enterprisers, a Ghanaian LLC led by UC-Berkeley grad Ashley Murray, has partnered with Kampala’s pit emptiers association to study the potential for harnessing fecal sludge for energy production in partnership with the EU-backed Faecal Management Enterprise project.²⁸ Initial research has had positive results, and Waste Enterprisers is now pursuing commercial partnerships for buyers of sludge for boiler fuel.²⁹

27 http://www.ileap-jeicp.org/downloads/kampala_09/final_report/regional_eac_csi_workshop_final_report.pdf

28 <http://www.waste-enterprisers.com/archives/can-we-turn-kampalas-fecal-sludge-into-industrial-fuel/>

29 <http://www.waste-enterprisers.com/archives/coconut-husks-and-shredded-currency-make-great-fuel-why-not-use-fecal-sludge/>

While the company has been formed as a for-profit triple bottom line LLC, it is supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and is working in partnership with the EU. The key takeaway here is that it is coordinating directly with the pit emptiers BMO on developing new monetization opportunities for the waste they collect. If successful, this would be an ideal means with which to utilize the BMO structure for strengthening the industry for all players. In some ways, this represents a sort of “real world BDS” model wherein entrepreneurs can learn new business skills within the context of working with Waste Enterprisers on market-based disposal solutions. It is unclear, however, whether, for example, pit emptiers will become suppliers for a potential waste-to-energy business or will actively take part in running that business.

The **Global Business School Network** (GBSN), a US-based independent non-profit (spun off from an IFC initiative in 2006), works to “strengthen management education for emerging markets through a unique global network of business schools.”³⁰ The org facilitated the creation of the independent Association of African Business Schools (AABS) to focus specifically on supporting that market. GBSN continues to support AABS through capacity building, international collaboration and exposure, and education quality improvements. GBSN also includes AABS in its fundraising campaigns.³¹

In this case, AABS, acting as a business member organization for African business schools, provides members the direct benefit of continuous access to curriculum improvements, keeping schools engaged with modern practices and areas of focus used internationally. The GBSN-AABS partnership ensures this connection will remain solid.

APPENDIX – Rwanda Cooperative Agency: goals, procedures, and analysis³²

Goals for the Rwandan government’s policy on cooperatives are as follows:

- Increase the number of cooperatives formed countrywide
- Improve business quality and autonomy through trainings, education, information and research
- Build a strong cooperative movement to serve members efficiently, contribute significantly to poverty alleviation and social integration, and drive economic and social development
- Contribute to member empowerment, decent job creation, and enhancement of production and productivity
- Increase member access to ICT for capacity building opportunities and adoption of cooperative management best practices

³⁰ <http://www.gbsnonline.org/>

³¹ <http://www.gbsnonline.org/the-network-at-gbsn/partners/association-of-african-business-schools-aabs.html>

³² Adapted from feedback from Boundless Consultancy

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- Encourage active participation of the youth, women, the handicapped and demobilized soldiers in the cooperative movement
- Promote viable cooperatives engaged in social sectors such as health, consumers, housing, etc.

Requirements for forming a cooperative (authorization doc is typically issued in 15 days):

- A group of at least 10 entrepreneurs
- Documentation of cooperative laws including:
 - Name of the cooperative organization
 - Members
 - Location
 - Mission statement and activities
 - Cooperative boundaries
 - Share capital
 - Management structure
 - Cooperative duration
 - Application letter to the Director of RCA through the District mayor copied to the province and the local judicial institution

Required Annexes:

- Cooperative laws
- Local regulations of the cooperative
- List of members and their signatures
- Authorization document of from the district
- Minutes opening the cooperative
- List of the management committee and their responsibilities and signatures
- List of board members and their responsibilities and signatures
- Bank slip of 1200Rwf

Private Sector Federation (PSF)

- Technical support: PSF organizes trainings either in or out of the country with costs shared between itself and beneficiaries (individual business persons or cooperatives). Those trainings are mainly based on accounting and rules and regulations.
- Financial support: PSF partners with funding institutions that provide 5-year loans from 1 million to 10 million Rwf with 14% of interest rate for companies selected via a business plan competition. PSF acts as the guarantor of the business owner. For larger loans, the owner is responsible for the extra money beyond 10 million.

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Boundless Consultancy notes:

- Rwanda promotes the creation of for-profit cooperatives through RCA and PSF, which provide some technical and financial support
- Forming and registering a new cooperative takes around a month
- Tangible opportunities in forming sanitation BMOs are obvious

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