

Support Action Document

Version 6

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Funded by the European Union, the SwitchMed Programme is implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Economy Division, the United Nations Environment Programme Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and its Regional Activity Centre for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP/RAC). The initiative is carried out in close coordination with the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement (DG NEAR).



Mediterranean
Action Plan
Barcelona
Convention



Regional Activity Centre
for Sustainable Consumption
and Production

This document, titled **Support Action Document** (SAD), presents the general framework for the incubation phase of the selected green entrepreneurs. Thus, it describes the guidelines to be followed during the incubation of the best green business ideas and details the support activities that the programme will provide to each entrepreneur. In addition, this document describes the set of tools and templates that will be useful along the process for different purposes.

The main targets of this document are the Local Mentors (LM), who are responsible for the implementation of the indications provided here. As a result of the incubation phase, it is expected that the entrepreneur (1) develops a solid Green Business Plan, (2) registers the legal form of the company, and (3) is ready to put his/her products/services in the market.

Abbreviations and acronyms used in this document:

EE - External Experts

ETA - External Technical Assistance

GBP - Green Business Plan

GE - Green Entrepreneur

LM - Local Mentor

SAD - Support Action Document



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1. Expected results of the Incubation Programme

The expected results of the Incubation Programme are:

1.1. Complete Green Business Plan

The Green Business Plan (GBP) is a document that may be necessary to access potential investors and get funded. It will be used throughout the incubation period in order to accompany the process and guide both mentors and entrepreneurs. At the end of the programme, it will have to be complete and ready to be presented to any potential investor.

1.2. Legal Status of Company

At the end of the incubation programme, the company should have an established legal status. This is a prerequisite of the programme.

1.3. Products/services ready to be put on the market

It is desirable that the products and/or services of the company are ready to be put on the market by the end of the incubation programme. Being aware that this may not be possible in some cases, at least it will be necessary to have started the activities necessary to put these products/services on the market (that is, the activities behind the business model). In practice, this means that the 'take off' of the business has already started.

1.4. Impact Measurement

With the aim to measure the impact of the SwitchMed project in a harmonised way, entrepreneurs will have the choice to follow up an **online measure toolkit** into the Switchers webplatform that will allow them to accomplish their own impact indicators, or fill out a '**Report & Communication**' template offline. This template will be adapted throughout the execution of the GBP (e.g. they will define indicators to measure progress). In addition to this, entrepreneurs will be asked to put figures to these indicators in order to measure certain results.

2. Overview of the Support Programme

The support programme lasts for 32 weeks, during which the entrepreneur will be receiving support from one Local Mentor (LM) and from one to five external experts.

This document will be the basis of the work to be undertaken and it will be used throughout the incubation period in order to accompany the process and guide both mentors and the green entrepreneurs. It aims to accompany them with the use of the online **Green Business Development Plan toolkit** in order to create and implement the green business.

The current document is structured along 4 parts, which constitute 4 of the 5 stages comprised within the incubation programme:

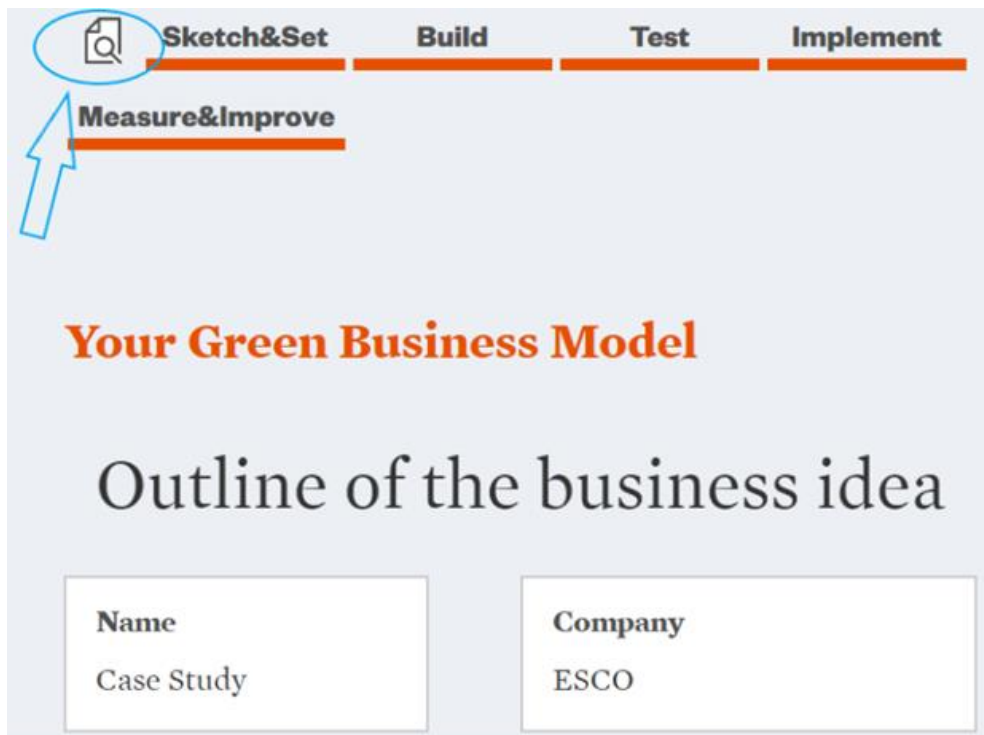
- The Green Business Canvas Review (Stage 1)
- The Green Business Plan (Stage 2)
- The Business Take Off (Stage 3)
- Get Funded (Stage 4)

The whole incubation programme is divided into 5 stages (see figure below), so there is an additional stage not explicitly shown in the structure of the 'Launch your Green Business' document, which will be named stage A (Identification of External Needs).

STAGE	Week																																						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32							
1/The Green Business Canvas Review	█																																						
A/ Identification of External Needs				█																																			
2/ The Green Business Plan								█																															
3/ The Business Take Off																																							
4/ Get Funded																																							

The five stages comprised in the incubation programme along to assigned documents are described next.

- **Stage 1. Business Idea and Validation** (weeks 1-7)
General review of the green business canvas can be done into the webplatform .



Green Business Model canvas available at Switchers Web Platform.

The webplatform also provides a “**calendar**” feature that could be used to schedule the whole incubation phase including the meetings between local mentors/experts with entrepreneurs. LM/E and GE calendars will be linked to follow up the events during the process.

A **Test validation** document will be available to be used by entrepreneurs to register the tests and to validate hypotheses.

The next figure shows what documents will be involved along stage 1.

Phase I	Document	Where to find it?
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GB canvas review	GB canvas	GBM webplatform tool GBP webplatform tool (intro)
	Calendar	GBP webplatform tool
	External technical Assistance proposal	www.theswitchers.org/resources
	Test validation	www.theswitchers.org/resources
	Green Bussiness Plan canvas	GBM webplatform tool GBP webplatform tool

- **Stage A. Identification of External Technical Assistance Needs** (weeks 4-7)

The support programme counts on the involvement of one Local Mentor and one or several experts that will provide external technical assistance. During this stage, these entrepreneur's needs to be tackled through external technical assistance will be identified.

Besides the above-mentioned Web platform facilities that allow to schedule the meetings and events that might happen during the incubation phase, there is a document available at <https://www.theswitchers.org/resources>, **external technical assistance proposal**, that will be used by LM to submit an external technical assistance proposal.

In addition, LM/E and GE will have access to their GBP at any time into the webplatform.



The screenshot shows a dark navigation sidebar on the left with the following items: Dashboard, My tools (expanded), Green Business Model, Green Business Plan (circled in blue), Eco-design Tool, Finance Toolkit, Access to market, Impact Measurement Toolkit, My calendar, and Users. A blue arrow points from the 'Green Business Plan' menu item to a progress bar on the right. The progress bar consists of orange horizontal lines representing steps: Intro, Step 2, Step 2.1, Step 2.2, Step 2.3, Step 2.4, Step 2.5, Step 2.6, Step 3, and Step 4. Below the progress bar, the text reads: **0 - Intro** and 'This tool will support you to create and execute a successful Green Business Plan (GBP).'

Green Business Plan canvas available at Switchers Web Platform.

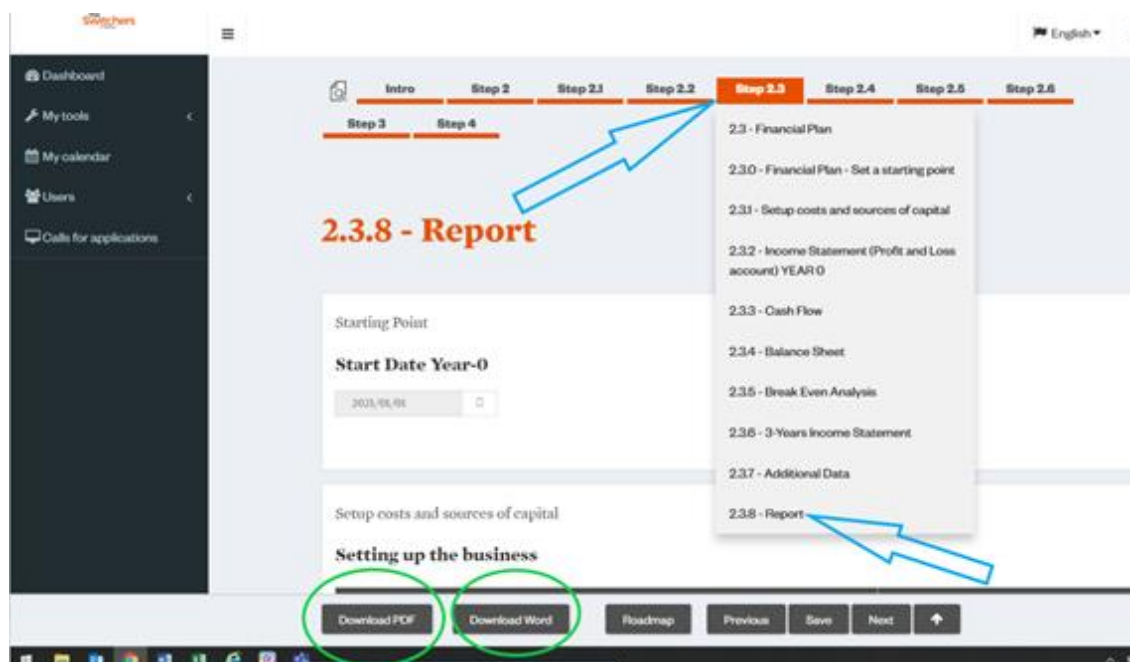
GBP can be downloaded anytime in PDF or Word files.

- **Stage 2. The Green Business Plan** (weeks 8-19)

Support to develop the green business plan and define a roadmap. This section includes communication, marketing, operations and financial management.

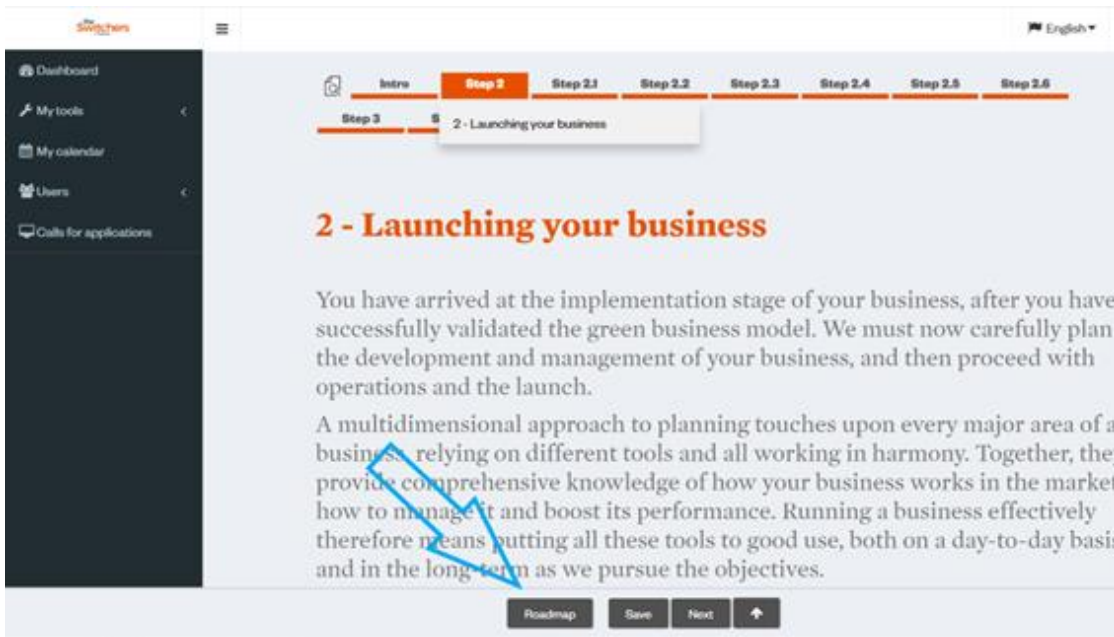
Like the previous stages, LM and Green Entrepreneurs will have access to Web Platform tools as “calendar” and “GBP template”. In addition, two new documents will be available online.

The “Financial Plan” can be elaborated online into the Web platform through 8 different steps. Once the Green Entrepreneur has completed their Financial Plan, they will be able to download it anytime in PDF or Word files and continue working on it offline.

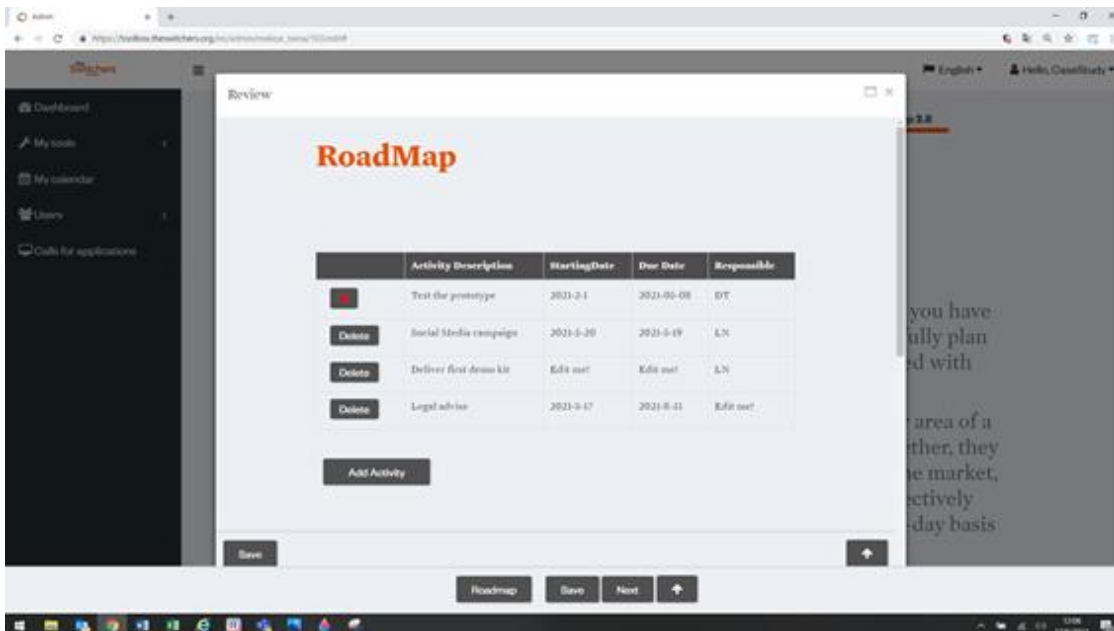


Acces to financial plan into the webplatform

The “roadmap” is a document that will be used by entrepreneurs in order to help their business take off. All along the process, the **roadmap** will be accessible in every task (button at bottom of the pages) and will allow to list and programme all the tasks needed to materialize Green Entrepreneur’s plan. As Green entrepreneur progress in building their plan, describe the actions which will need to be undertaken, set a starting and a due date and define a person responsible for the task. The minimum time horizon of the Roadmap should cover the year 0. Nevertheless, it is also of interest to set up the main strategic actions intended to be executed in the following years (1, 2 and 3).



Accessibility to “roadmap” inside the Web Platform



Example of “roadmap”

The next figure shows what documents will be involved along stage 2.

Phase II	Document	Where to find it?
Green Business Plan	<u>GBP template</u>	GBP <u>webplatform tool</u>
	Calendar	GBP <u>webplatform tool</u>
	<u>Financial Plan</u>	GBP <u>webplatform tool</u>
	<u>Roadmap</u>	GBP <u>webplatform tool</u>

- **Stage 3. The Business Take Off** (weeks 20-29)

Execution of the plans.

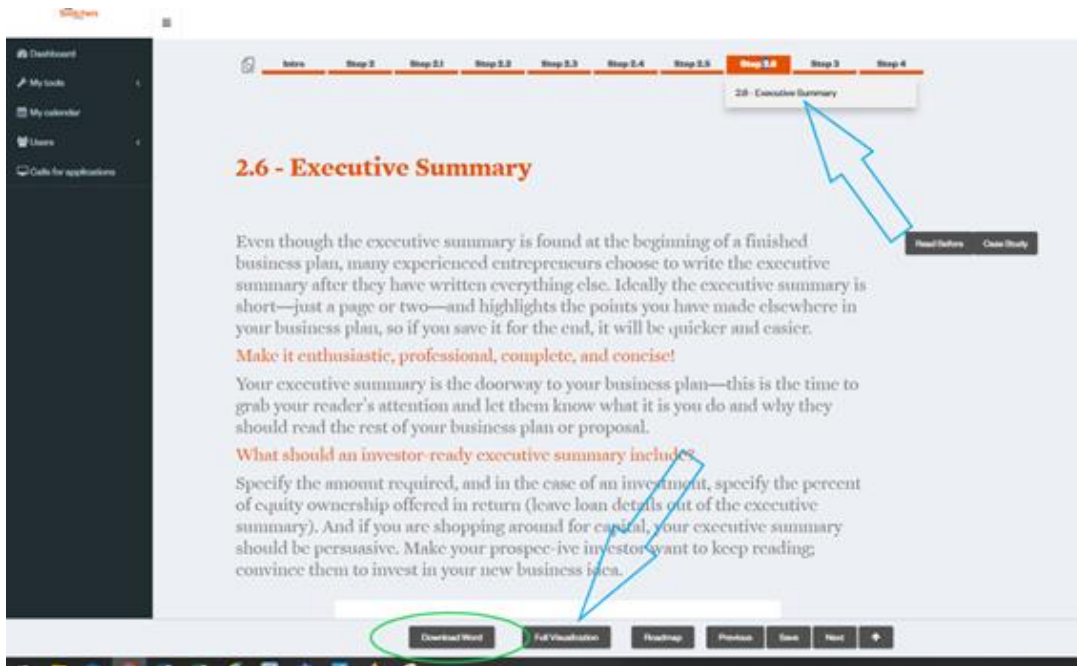
Concerning the documents that will be involved along stage 3, these are the same than the previous stages except a new one named, “**external assistance outputs**” that will be used by LM to assess the output of external assistance tasks and it will be available at <https://www.theswitchers.org/resources>

The next figure shows what documents will be involved along Stage 3.

Phase III	Document	Where to find it?
Business take off	<u>GBM canvas</u>	GBP <u>webplatform tool</u> (intro)
	Calendar	GBP <u>webplatform tool</u>
	<u>External assistance outputs</u>	https://www.theswitchers.org/resources
	<u>Green Bussiness Plan canvas</u>	GBP <u>webplatform tool</u>

- **Stage 4. Get Funded** (weeks 30-32)

This step includes preparing an executive summary and the latest and improved version of the Green Business Canvas, together with a video pitch. Final Green Business Canvas can be accessible at the “executive summary” step, through the “full visualisation” button. This document can be downloaded in word file.



Accessibility to “GB canvas” at executive summary stage inside the Web Platform.

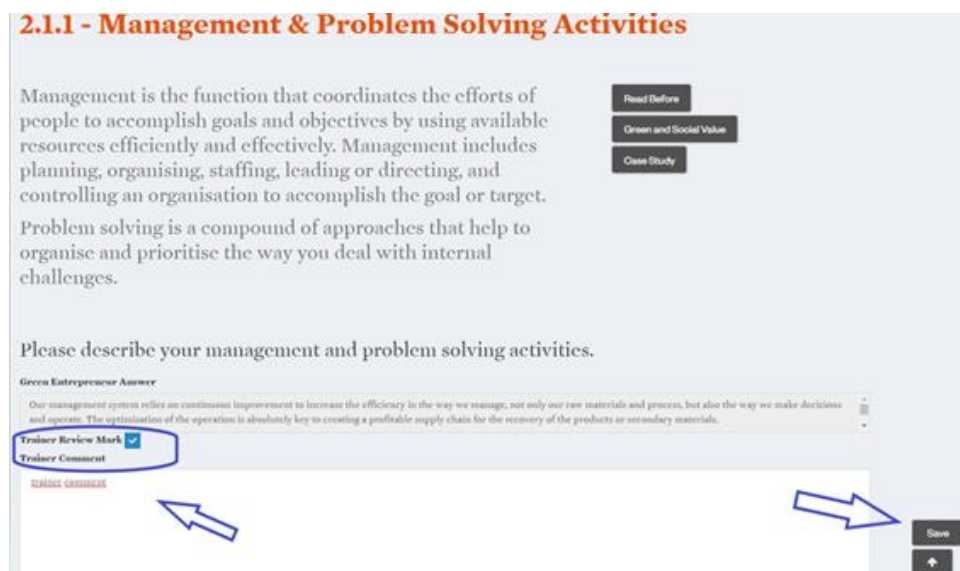
Finally, an online impact measurement toolkit will be followed, in order to facilitate the measure of the impact created by entrepreneurs in a harmonised way. All these materials will be useful to raise funds.

The next figure shows what documents will be involved along stage 4.

Phase IV	Document	Where to find it?
Get funded	Green Business final Plan canvas	GBP webplatform tool
	Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL)	MEAL webplatform tool

3. Ongoing follow-up of the incubation programme

The follow-up activities aim to assure that the incubation is implemented properly and that the expected outcomes are achieved. The follow-up will be done online through the Switchers' Web platform. This online managing tool allows interaction between LM and GE who can exchange comments and work reviews through platform features as the calendar, chat and alert system to GE that notify them about LM comments.



2.1.1 - Management & Problem Solving Activities

Management is the function that coordinates the efforts of people to accomplish goals and objectives by using available resources efficiently and effectively. Management includes planning, organising, staffing, leading or directing, and controlling an organisation to accomplish the goal or target.

Problem solving is a compound of approaches that help to organise and prioritise the way you deal with internal challenges.

Please describe your management and problem solving activities.

Green Entrepreneur Answer

Our management system relies on continuous improvement to increase the efficiency in the way we manage, not only our raw materials and process, but also the way we make decisions and operate. The optimisation of the operation is absolutely key to creating a profitable supply chain for the recovery of the products or secondary materials.

Trainer Review Mark

Trainer Comment

Save

Drop out comments on trainee's GBP canvas.

The Coordination Team will be responsible for carrying out the follow-up of each project, with the collaboration of Local Mentors, external experts and entrepreneurs.

Here is a detailed enumeration of the follow-up actions and documents throughout the incubation programme:

- **Calendar: following up on developments and each milestone**

What? The 'Calendar' will be the first document to be used by the LM in order to establish the expected timeline and deadlines of each entrepreneurship project. Thus, the LM will define the schedule of each project following the general guidelines provided in this document. After its submission and acceptance by the Coordination Team, the programme can start. It is extremely important that the Local Mentor indicates in the Calendar when each milestone is achieved in the Schedule along the incubation phase. In case there is some sort of deviation from the Schedule, the online tool will also be used to register and justify any alterations.

When? It will have to be filled in before starting the incubation programme and should be kept updated along the whole incubation phase (particularly, when achieving the scheduled milestones). At any time, the tool can be accessed and checked by the Coordination Team.

Who? The LM is responsible for the completion and update of this tool.

- External Technical Assistance Proposal

What? The 'External Technical Assistance Proposal' will be used to configure the external technical assistance. In this document, the LM will justify the support actions to be provided by 1 to 5 external experts.

When? The External Technical Assistance Proposal will be developed within stage A and will have to be completed by week 7. Once this proposal is validated by the Coordination Team, external technical assistance may start (tentatively from week 12).

Who? The LM is responsible for the development of this document, based on the needs of the entrepreneur.

- The Green Business Plan

What? The Green Business Plan will be one of the main outputs of the incubation programme, since it will be the document used by the entrepreneur to plan his/her business, get access to funding and eventually take off. This document will be subject to control by the coordination team at the end of stage 1, stage 2 and stage 4. At the end of stage 1, a first draft of the GBP will need to be made available to the Coordination Team, in which the entrepreneur will have read the entire template and filled in all information available. At the end of stage 2, section 2 of the template (Green Business Plan) will need to be completed, meaning with this that all "planning stuff" is undergone. Finally, at the end of stage 4 the whole document should be completed, including the remaining sections, namely the Executive Summary.

When? The document will be used from stage A until the end of the incubation programme. However, there are three expected deadlines for its submission: end of stage 1 (week 7 - first draft), end of stage 2 (week 19 - section 2 complete) and end of stage 4 (week 32 - the entire document completed). At the end of stage 2, the Coordination Team will check if it is complete and, if necessary, will ask for amendments within a certain deadline. In case the expected work is not finished by week 19, the LM will have to share whatever has already been done, and explain why it is not ready and what will be done in order to finish it before week 29.

Who? The green entrepreneur is responsible for the development of this document, with the support of the LM and external experts.

- **External Technical Assistance results**

What? A report of the work done by the external experts, titled '**External Assistance Outputs**' will be filled out by the Local Mentor, with the information provided by the external experts involved. It will be used to check the work done within the External Technical Assistance. The approval of this report both by the LM and by the BSO responsible of the incubation process will be necessary in order to get paid.

When? This report will be submitted at the end of the external support services, that is to say, no later than week 29. The LM may start preparing this document from the moment that the tasks of the external experts are over.

Who? This report will be filled out by the Local Mentor with the information and help of the externals at the end of their tasks

- **Impact Sheet results**

What? The **MEAL online toolkit** will be used to measure the impact of the green entrepreneurship project. With this document, entrepreneurs will estimate the expected impact that will be achieved in one-years' time by putting figures to the indicators.

When? This tool should be developed along stage 4, so the deadline for its submission is week 32.

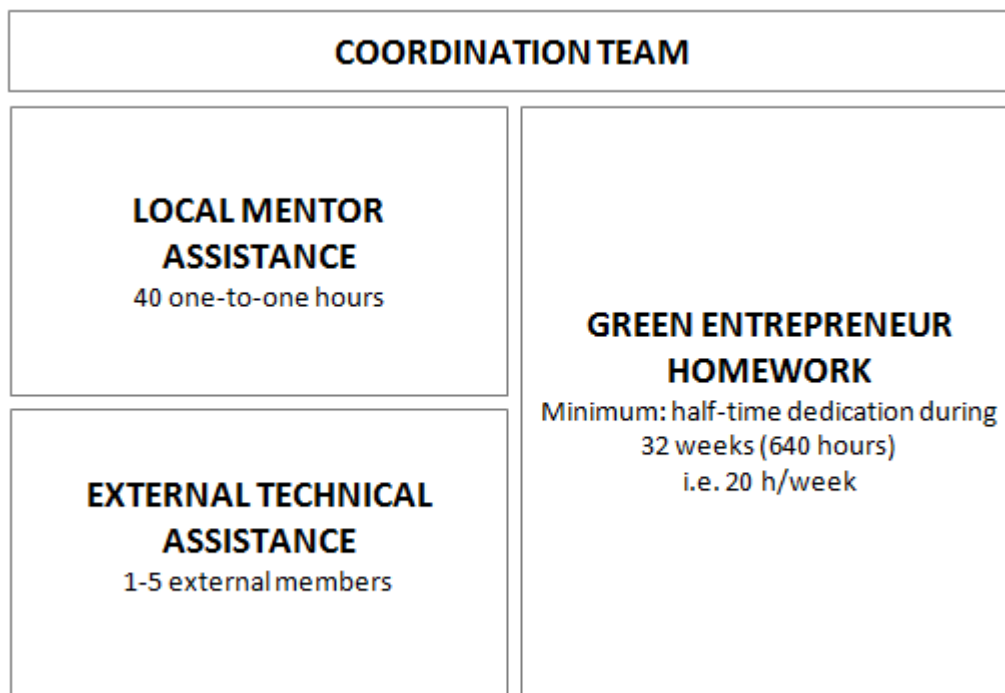
Who? The entrepreneur is responsible for the development of this document, with the support of the LM.

4. Roles along the incubation programme

4.1. Who will provide the support?

A Local Mentor (LM) will be assigned to each entrepreneur, and dedicate 40 hours of one-to-one support. The LM will provide assistance throughout the entire process.

In addition to this, the entrepreneur will count on the support of 1 to 5 experts providing External Technical Assistance between weeks 12 and 29 (a buffer of 4 weeks between the identification of needs and the beginning of external technical assistance is kept for administrative issues). The external technical assistance will be identified in stage A and will contribute to stages 2 (Green Business Plan) and 3 (Business Taking Off).



Please note that entrepreneurs are expected to be highly involved in the project: they should work a minimum of approximately 20 hours per week on their project, equivalent to half of the time that should be dedicated during the 8 months that the incubation phase lasts. As a reference, it is estimated that the entrepreneur should dedicate at least 16 hours of time for each hour of one-to-one meeting. However, this time will need to be adapted to each case (some entrepreneurs may need more time or may wish to dedicate more time to the project).

Note about the One-To-One Support. By default, the one-to-one support (both of LM and external technical assistance) will be face-to-face, that is to say, the entrepreneur will meet and work directly with them. In parallel, the LM will follow up and review the entrepreneur's homework through the web platform accessing to his/her green business plan. An exception to this rule is

the case of external technical assistance which by definition does not require face-to-face attendance -e.g. the design of a brand logo.

4.2. The Coordination Team

The Coordination Team from the implementing BSO will supervise the incubation programme. They will provide support and guidance to Local Mentors during the incubation phase and will make sure that all the process runs smoothly. This refers to the team of people from BSO with the support from SCPAC.

Some of the main responsibilities of the Coordination Team include (non-exhaustive list):

- Provide general instructions to the LM on how to proceed, including the assignment of entrepreneurs to Local Mentors, information about the needs perceived by the entrepreneur and the results of the jury assessment.
- Support regarding the general understanding of this document and all complementary materials.
- Follow-up activities (more details on the follow-up activities will come later).

Local Mentors should contact the Coordination Team in case of any deviations from the expected activities or when facing problems that may put the results of the incubation at risk.

4.3. Local Mentor Assistance

The LM will provide general support throughout the incubation phase of the programme. Thus, he/she will cover all the essential aspects related to the incubation with the support of the web platform GBP tool and the complementary documents available on line at <https://www.theswitchers.org/resources>.

Throughout this process, the Local Mentor will be offering general guidance and advice regarding the exercises. In addition to this, he/she will also take care of the general aspects of the incubation.

Duration and delivery: 40 hours of one-to-one LM support, distributed along the 32 weeks. As general guidance, these hours may be distributed according to the following table. It is suggested that the Local Mentor meets the green entrepreneur in a timely manner. It is highly recommended to set up one-to-one meetings with the entrepreneur every 2-3 weeks, which could last between 2 and 4 hours. The eventual distribution of the meetings between the entrepreneur and the mentor is flexible and will depend on the agenda of the attendees. However, it is highly recommended that the development of each part fits within the corresponding time limits. In case this is not possible, the LM will need to provide a justification.

Stage of the Incubation phase	LM one-to-one support (hours)*
Introduction to the Incubation Programme	1
The Green Business Canvas Review (Stage 1)	8
Identification of External Needs (Stage A)	6
The Business Launch Plan (Stage 2)	12
The Business Take Off (Stage 3)	9
Get Funded (Stage 4)	4
Part A	40

*There is some flexibility on the distribution of time depending on each project (e.g. in the case that the green business canvas does not have limitations or concerns, the time may be distributed proportionally to the other areas of support). In any case, the total LM support should be 40h.

4.4. External Technical Assistance

This part is adapted to the specific needs of each entrepreneur and will be carried out by 1 to 5 external members, depending on each project's needs (it may be more relevant that all efforts are concentrated on one topic supported by one expert, or on the contrary, it may be necessary to provide support in different areas).

There may be different types of external technical assistance (non-exhaustive list):

- **In-depth assistance on a given topic**, in the form of hands-on practical workshops oriented to working together on the GBP. For example, co-creating the business's financial plan.
- **Solving specific issues, doubts or questions** that the entrepreneur may have. For example, helping the entrepreneur to decide the best legal status for the company.
- **Follow-up and guidance during the execution and implementation of key tasks'**. For example, providing instructions and reviewing the process of brand name registration.
- **Delivery of certain tasks (products/services)**. For example, development of a web page or design of a logo.

The external technical assistance will focus on the steps 'the Green Business Plan' and 'the Business Take Off', and it will take place between weeks 12 and 29.

STAGE	Week																																
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	
1/The Green Business Canvas Review	█																																
A/ Identification of External Needs																																	
2/ The Green Business Plan																																	
3/ The Business Take Off																																	
4/ Get Funded																																	
External Technical Assistance																																	

Duration and delivery: The duration and delivery of the external technical assistance activities is difficult to predict and it will depend on the type of external assistance services required, the number of externals participating in the support programme and their availability. Whenever possible, it is desirable to concentrate meetings to reduce travel and logistical needs. The eventual distribution of the meetings between the entrepreneur and the external experts is flexible and will depend on the agenda of the attendees.

How are the needs of External Technical Assistance defined?

It is the task of the LM to identify the external technical assistance needs of the entrepreneur and to suggest which external members will carry them out, which should be done between weeks 4 and 7 (stage A). For this purpose, the LM will take into account the budget available for

the Local Partner (LP) to contract them. The LP will validate the appropriateness of the suggested external technical assistance made by the LM.

In order to define the necessary external support, the LM will proceed in the following way:

- In **week 4**, the entrepreneur will be asked to go through the step number 2 of the GBP webplatform tool '**Launching your Business!**.. At that moment, it is expected that the entrepreneur has already gone through the step number 1 '**Reviewing your Green Business Model**'. All this work from the entrepreneur will be useful for the LM to see what has been done so far.
- After this 'first go' from the entrepreneur, both **the LM and the entrepreneur will meet and go through the first and second steps** in order to detect and foresee the main needs. At this time, they are not expected to fill everything in, nor are they expected to solve all concerns and issues, but to see what has already been done and to identify in what area they may require external technical assistance.
- In order to facilitate the process of the identification of external technical assistance needs', a document entitled '**External Technical Assistance Proposal**' has been prepared and it will be available at <https://www.theswitchers.org/resources>. This document includes a list of potential needs, which may be useful to guide the LM to obtain orientations regarding the type of support that could be provided (the list of actions is not exhaustive; you are encouraged to design a very-specific support plan for each entrepreneur). To start with, the mentor will identify the support actions that may be part of the external **technical assistance** (the LM could select any support actions from the list in the '*Potential Needs Overview*' sheet or describe new actions). When preparing this list, the LM will need to take into account that he/she will have to cover all general aspects and also those issues that are within his/her expertise. Thus, he/she will have to indicate what additional external technical assistance is necessary to complement the local mentorship and foster specific areas of either the Green Business Plan and/or the Take Off stages. The identification of external needs will take into account the specific project needs and also the capabilities of the LM to perform the necessary tasks.
- After having gone through all the step number 2 of the GBP webplatform tool and having identified potential External Technical Assistance support actions, it may be necessary to set priorities (e.g. in case that many external support actions are envisaged). From all potential needs, the **LM will have to select the main ones and identify external suppliers and experts** that could provide such technical assistance. To do so, the LM will fill out the template included in the spreadsheet, which aims to define and justify the External Technical Assistance needs and the selection of the external expert/s. Remember that there is a specific budget to be allocated to this external support and this budget has to be approved by the Local Partner (LP).

- The LM will need to **submit the complete ‘External Technical Assistance Proposal’ in week 7** to the Local Partner. This document will include the justification of tasks and experts. At this moment, **all advances in the GBP template should be also made available to the Coordination Team.**
- The **Coordination team will review the Proposal** and either approve it or ask for amendments/clarifications before the end of week 8. The LM should be aware that the proposal should be clear and justified.
- After its approval, the Coordination Team will submit the proposed external technical assistance plan to the Local partner in order to start the administrative tasks to **contract the external members, so they could start working with entrepreneurs from week 12 onwards.**

5. What's next?

Within SwitchMed we are also developing other tools and activities to support green entrepreneurs to access finance:

- In 2021-22 we will organise a national event in each country where Green Entrepreneurs will meet national financial actors. We are now working on building a Green Impact Investment Network for Green Entrepreneurs in the MENA Region.
- An access to finance toolkit is available for entrepreneurs in the platform.
- Selected Green Entrepreneurs will receive support to develop a funding strategy.
- We will launch different regional awards, such as the Mediterranean Sustainability Award (WeMED) addressed to those sustainable businesses and public authorities who are promoting an inclusive transition to sustainability in Southern Mediterranean countries.

The WeMed Award is a Flagship Initiative of the Mediterranean strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) and will support efforts for initiating the needed transformational and green recovery in order to ensure that post COVID-19 recovery is fully supporting sustainable businesses contributing to build back better and creating green jobs.

www.wemedaward.org

6. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Answers to the Frequently Asked Questions of TheSwitchers.org users are available at www.theswitchers.org/support

If you cannot find what you are looking for, you can email support@theswitchers.org with any questions.

This web page will be updated regularly with the new FAQs.



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