



**From donation to investment:  
The ReBin case  
Sylvain Massot – co-founder**



# BACKGROUND

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## A LIFE CHANGING OPPORTUNITY

- International banking in London and Geneva
- Left banking 2 years ago to focus on impact investing
  
- Meeting Thai entrepreneur - new waste paradigm
- Met co-founder who had researched topic for 2 years
- Decision to adapt and replicate model in Benin

# REBIN IN BRIEF: THE FOUNDATION

## OUR MISSION

To address the waste issue in developing countries

To turn this waste into valuable products and services for local populations

To develop a financially self-sustainable business model



Reduce



Reuse



Recycle



Re  
Bin

# REBIN IN BRIEF: THE PROJECT

- Testing the concept through a pilot project in Toffo, Benin
- Focusing on organic waste collection in a rural area
- Turning waste into biogas and organic fertilisers
- Making the pilot financially self-sustainable after 12-24 months



# CONTRIBUTING TO THE SDGS



**Turn waste into biogas to replace wood and charcoal cooking fuels**



**Provide steady income to household and workers**

# WHERE WE STAND

Period	Key activity
10/2016	Launched the foundation
10/2016 – 10/2017	Raised the required financing
11/2017 – 02/2018	Bought the land and started to build the plant
03/2018	Start to produce biogas
2018	Validate the concept (environmental and social impact, financial sustainability)
2019 & beyond	Replicate on larger scale



# WHY A FOUNDATION: HIGH RISK/LOW RETURN



- **Difficult to get investors at early stage in innovative project**
- **Small project, frequent needs to raise capital**
- **Lack of established track-record of founders**
- **Tax incentive for donors**

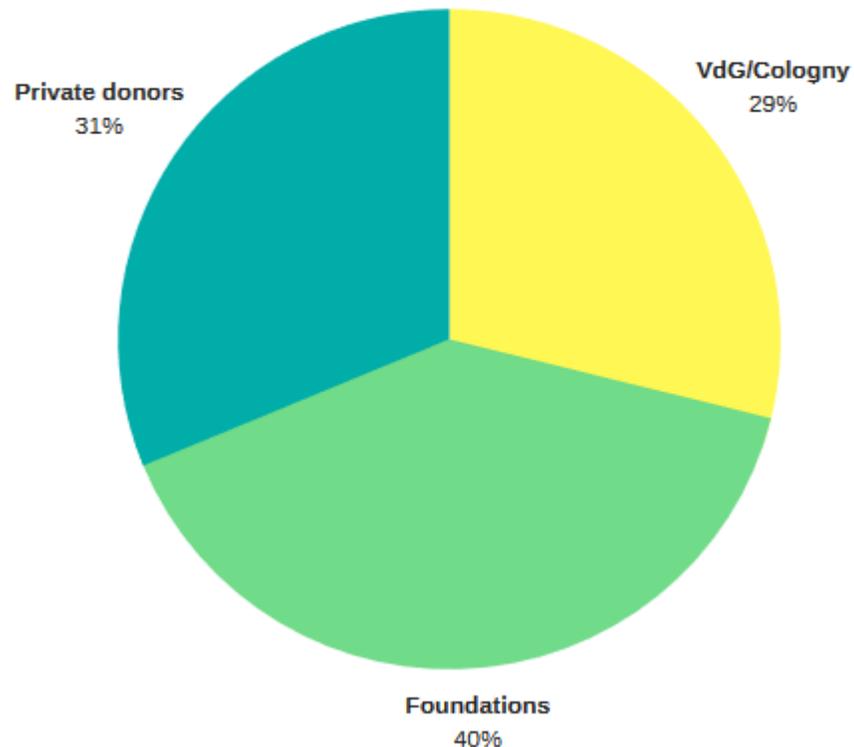
# WHY A FOUNDATION: APPEAL OF FOUNDATIONS IN AFRICA

- Reputation of Switzerland and Geneva for international Cooperation
- Regulation by Swiss supervisory authorities
- Positive image of NGOs
- Tax exemption enables faster project expansion



# WHY A FOUNDATION: NETWORKING

Sources of financing



- **Financial backing from renowned donors :**
  - *Ville de Genève, Cologne,*
  - *Foundation in Lausanne, etc.*
- **Non-financial partnerships :**
  - *International NGOs (OXFAM)*
  - *International Organisations (UNDP)*
  - *Local NGOs, local entrepreneurs*

# WHY A FOUNDATION: GOVERNANCE



- **Three founders with a shared vision and passion**
- **Entire liberty to choose our members**
- **No shareholder to make us deviate from our mission**

# POTENTIAL ISSUES: SLOW FUND-RAISING PROCESS

- **Competition from multitude of local Foundations**
- **Donations tend to focus on:**
  - *A few sectors (health and education)*
  - *Well-established organisations including UN agencies*
  - *Local Swiss projects or responses to natural disasters rather than development projects*

# POTENTIAL ISSUES: EXPANSION TO AN INDUSTRIAL SCALE



- **Difficult to raise large amounts of money necessary for industrial size project**
- **Relying on volunteers goodwill may not be sustainable**

# CONCLUSION: BLENDING DONATIONS AND INVESTMENT

## Short term

Donations to kick-start the project

➔ but the project is run as a small-scale for profit social enterprise

## Longer term

Large-scale expansion requires involvement of for-profit

➔ but the Foundation remains involved to make sure future ventures do not deviate from its mission



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# THANK YOU!

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