

• Lebanon

Green Forward

Toolbox



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Context

Introduction

Lebanon stands at a critical juncture in its economic and environmental trajectory. Years of compounded crises have weakened institutions and constrained public resources, yet they have also opened new opportunities for reinvention — particularly through green innovation and private-sector leadership. This action plan builds on the momentum generated by the EU-funded Green Forward Project, which seeks to accelerate the transition toward a green and circular economy across the Southern Neighbourhood.

The Green Forward Project

The Green Forward Project is a regional initiative funded by the European Union (EU) that supports the shift to a green and circular economy in eight partner countries — Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia. It operates through three complementary levels of intervention:

- Macro (policy): Strengthening governance frameworks and national strategies.
- Meso (ecosystem): Empowering business support organisations (BSOs) to act as ecosystem enablers.
- Micro (enterprise): Supporting SMEs and entrepreneurs to adopt sustainable practices and circular business models.

Aligned with the EU Green Deal and the EU Green Growth Programme for the Southern Neighbourhood, Green Forward aims to stimulate inclusive green growth, job creation, and innovation while reducing environmental degradation. Within this framework, Lebanon's roadmap for a Green Business Network serves as a cornerstone for building collaboration, knowledge exchange, and impact-driven entrepreneurship.

Lebanon's Green Transition: A Dual Challenge

Lebanon's environmental degradation — characterised by unsustainable resource use, mismanaged waste, water scarcity, and air pollution — has reached alarming levels. These pressures have intensified under the weight of the financial and economic crisis, which has undermined public institutions' capacity to act. Yet paradoxically, this crisis has also accelerated

grassroots innovations¹, notably in renewable energy², recycling, and sustainable agriculture³, as individuals and small enterprises sought self-reliant, environmentally friendly solutions.

The government has made commitments through international frameworks such as the Paris Agreement, the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC, 2021), and the National Climate Change Strategy (2023). These outline ambitious targets for emission reduction and adaptation, but their implementation requires strong collaboration with the private sector, academia, and civil society. A coordinated platform — such as the proposed Green Business Network — is essential to align efforts, bridge gaps, and ensure coherence between policy and practice.

Why a toolbox and for whom?

What is it?

The Green Forward Toolbox is a practical, open-access set of modules that include tools, templates, and facilitation guides designed to help Business Support Organisations (BSOs) integrate sustainability, systems thinking, and green economy principles into their work with MSMEs and entrepreneurs. The toolbox is designed for practical use, not theory: BSOs are first trained to use the tools internally and supported to apply them with their beneficiaries (MSMEs, startups...).

Audience and Purpose

- **Primary audience:** Business Support Organisations (mature, semi-mature, and non-mature)
- **Secondary audience:** MSMEs, entrepreneurs, cooperatives, and early-stage green ventures supported by BSOs

¹ See Jibal NGO's report on environmental justice in Lebanon:
<https://www.jibal.org/environmental-justice/>

² See the NREAL published by LCEC

³ 3 See several publications by Jibal NGO: <https://www.jibal.org/food-sovereignty-2/>

Purpose:

- Strengthen BSOs' capacity to support green and circular business models
- Provide structured tools that translate sustainability into actionable business decisions
- Enable BSOs to coach, train, and guide MSMEs consistently and credibly

Toolbox Scope

The Green Forward Toolbox focuses on organisational and business-level capacities that enable BSOs to effectively support MSMEs in the transition toward greener and more sustainable business models.

The scope of the toolbox includes:

- Strategic framing and transition thinking, to help BSOs and MSMEs situate their activities within longer-term sustainability pathways;
- Business and organisational design tools, supporting governance, business modelling, and financial planning;
- Impact logic and measurement, enabling BSOs and MSMEs to articulate, track, and communicate their social, environmental, and economic contributions;
- Facilitation and coaching tools, designed for replication and use by BSOs with their beneficiaries.

The toolbox is not sector-specific and does not aim to provide technical solutions for individual industries. Instead, it offers cross-cutting frameworks and tools that can be adapted to different contexts, sectors, and levels of organisational maturity.

All tools included are:

- Open-access or openly adaptable,
- Designed for practical application, and
- Intended to be used first by BSOs internally and then transferred to MSMEs and entrepreneurs through training, coaching, and mentoring.

Objectives

By engaging with the toolbox, BSOs will be able to:

- Integrate sustainability and circular economy concepts into their organisational strategy and service design
- Use structured tools to support MSMEs in business modelling, governance, financial planning, and impact assessment
- Strengthen their role as intermediaries between policy ambitions, finance, and MSME realities
- Build internal capacities that support peer learning, replication, and long-term adoption of green practices

Topics

The Green Forward Toolbox includes seven topics designed to support BSOs and MSMEs across strategy, operations, financial sustainability, and impact.

The seven toolbox topics are:

- Doughnut Economics: Supports organisations and businesses in balancing social needs with ecological limits.
- Theory of Change: Links activities, outcomes, and impact through simple, measurable indicators.
- Governance and Organisational Roles: Clarifies roles, decision-making structures, and internal alignment for sustainable organisations.
- Financial Projections and Sustainability Planning: Strengthens financial viability, forecasting, and long-term planning for organisations and MSMEs.
- Lean Business Model Canvas: Supports the design and refinement of business models that integrate sustainability and circular economy principles.
- Three Horizons Strategic Framework: Enables long-term thinking by connecting present realities, transition pathways, and desired regenerative futures.
- Impact Assessment and Visibility: Supports the measurement, tracking, and communication of environmental, social, and economic impact to donors and stakeholders.

These topics are organised into five learning modules, allowing BSOs to use the toolbox progressively or selectively, depending on their needs.

What Is Included per Module?

Depending on the topic, each module includes practical tools and guidance, such as facilitation templates, calculation sheets, slide decks, PDFs, step-by-step guides, examples, and practical tips. All materials are open-access, replicable, and adaptable for use by BSOs and their beneficiaries.

Modular Flow and Actual Tools

The learning flow of the Green Forward Toolbox is designed to translate existing knowledge into practical action. It builds on the shared understanding of sustainability, circular economy, and green transition challenges already established through the programme's thematic workshops, and supports BSOs in operationalising this knowledge within their organisations and services to MSMEs. Rather than introducing new concepts, the flow provides a clear pathway from strategic insight to implementation, enabling BSOs to move from understanding what needs to change to supporting concrete change in practice.

The toolbox follows a progressive and modular structure, moving from strategic framing to applied implementation. Each module builds on the previous one, while remaining usable as a standalone entry point. Usable tools: Each topic title is a link that brings the reader to the relevant folder with the toolkit content.

Module 1: Strategic Framing & Transition Thinking

Purpose: Align members of a team (ex: business founders or even BSOs team members) around long-term sustainability pathways. Situate current challenges, explore transition pathways towards a more regenerative future.

- Builds on earlier workshops addressing sustainability, circular economy, and systemic challenges
- Uses the Three Horizons framework to explore current constraints, emerging practices, and long-term futures

- Creates strategic clarity before moving into operation

Module 2: Regenerative & Circular Business Design

Purpose: Translate strategy into business model and service design.

- Introduces the Doughnut Economics Canvas and Lean / Circular Business Model Canvas
- Supports BSOs in guiding MSMEs to design viable, responsible, and inclusive business models
- Connects ecological limits with market and operational realities

Module 3: Organisational Systems & Governance

Purpose: Strengthen internal structures that enable sustainable action.

- Focuses on governance, roles, and decision-making processes within BSOs
- Ensures sustainability is embedded in organisational practice rather than relying on individuals

Module 4: Financial Planning & Green Investment Readiness

Purpose: Bridge sustainability ambitions with financial viability.

- Uses financial projections and planning tools to support realistic growth pathways
- Prepares BSOs to support MSMEs in engaging with funding and green finance opportunities

Module 5: Impact Measurement & Learning

Purpose: Make impact visible, measurable, and learnable.

- Applies Theory of Change, impact assessment tools, and Results Framework or M&E Matrix.
- Enables BSOs to track progress, communicate results, and improve services through learning loops

How the Flow Is Used

- Sequential use: BSOs new to green transition support can follow the full flow from strategy to impact
- Selective use: More mature BSOs can focus on specific modules aligned with immediate priorities
- Replication-oriented: All modules are designed to be transferable, allowing BSOs to apply the same tools with MSMEs and entrepreneurs

This structure ensures continuity between earlier programme workshops and the toolbox, while supporting BSOs in moving from understanding to action, and from action to impact.

Green Economy Basics

This section serves as a reference library consolidating the core concepts introduced during the Green Forward Programme's thematic workshops. It ensures that all BSOs and beneficiaries have access to a shared baseline of knowledge without duplicating training content. Rather than introducing new material, this section compiles the presentations and learning resources from the workshops already delivered under the programme, including:

- Offers and Needs from BSOs
- From Degeneration to Sustainability
- Circular Economy
- Business and Sustainability
- Solar Energy
- Green Policy

These materials collectively cover key dimensions of the green economy, such as systems thinking, circularity, sustainable business models, renewable energy, and the policy context for green entrepreneurship in Lebanon.

Role within the toolbox: This section acts as a conceptual anchor for most of the modules. It provides a common reference point that BSOs can revisit as needed, and from which they can draw content when training or coaching MSMEs.

By positioning workshop presentations as reference material, the toolbox ensures:

- Continuity between earlier capacity-building activities and applied tools,
- Consistency of language and concepts across BSOs,
- Efficient reuse of existing programme assets.

This learned theory directly supports Module 1 while remaining relevant across the entire learning flow.

Testing and Finalisation Timeline

To ensure the toolbox is practical and usable by Business Support Organisations (BSOs) and MSMEs, a testing phase has been integrated before finalisation. A structured training presentation has been developed to guide MSMEs through the main tools included in the toolbox. This session will simulate how BSOs would later use the toolbox when supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses.

During the testing session:

- Selected MSMEs will be guided through key tools from the toolbox, allowing them to apply the frameworks directly to their business context.
- Participants will interact with selected modules, including strategic framing, pressure point identification, and business model reflection.
- The facilitator will observe how easily participants understand and use the tools, as well as where additional clarification may be needed.

At the end of the session, participants will complete a short feedback survey designed to evaluate:

- Clarity and usability of the tools
- Relevance of the frameworks to MSME realities
- Practical value for business decision-making
- Areas where the tools require simplification or additional guidance

The feedback collected during this phase will be used to refine the toolbox content, adjust explanations, and improve the facilitation guidance for BSOs.

Following this testing phase, the toolbox will be finalised and organised in a modular format that allows BSOs to easily use the tools internally or replicate them when supporting MSMEs transitioning toward more sustainable and resilient business models.

Appendices

Each module has appendices and templates that can be used by the trainers and later on the MSME itself. Also, we include in this toolbox the toolkit developed under the GIMED project (PDF Document: Useful - Toolkit For Green Incubation and Acceleration), in the frame of which the author of this toolbox was a trainer for Lebanon.