



# **Strategic Feasibility and Implementation Plan for the Institut Burundais pour la Formation Professionnelle (IBFP) in Alignment with Burundi's National Vision 2040-2060**

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# I. Executive Summary and Strategic Imperative: Alignment with Burundi Vision 2040-2060

The establishment of the *Institut Burundais pour la Formation Professionnelle* (IBFP) is strategically positioned to function as a crucial accelerator for Burundi's long-term national development goals, specifically the transition to an Emerging Country by 2040 and a Developed Country by 2060. By focusing exclusively on the existing employed workforce and business owners, the IBFP adopts a strategy of immediate economic impact, bypassing the lengthy cycles of formal education reform to rapidly enhance enterprise productivity and service quality. This professional upskilling mandate directly supports the core economic objective articulated in the national vision: the establishment of a **"diversified, high-performing and modern services sector"**.

## A. The Strategic Context: Positioning IBFP within National Vision (2040-2060)

Burundi's ambition for structural economic transformation is contingent upon the modernisation and diversification of its economic base. The country's economy is projected to be underpinned by a competitive agro-industrial sector and, critically, a modern and high-performing services sector. Achieving this modernisation requires a systematic upgrading of the national skills base. The government acknowledges this imperative, and human capital development is identified as a strategic orientation within the National Development Plan (PND) 2018-2027. Furthermore, the professional development focus of the IBFP is in direct alignment with the National Policy and Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) 2022-2027.

By targeting those already in employment or operating businesses, the IBFP is engaging the demographic segment capable of generating immediate returns on training investment. While major international projects are underway to improve long-term educational infrastructure, such as the World Bank-funded support for the Université de Burundi to develop bachelor's degree programs in IT, these initiatives require a significant lead time before new graduates enter the workforce. The IBFP's distinct focus on continuous professional development for experienced individuals acts as an acceleration strategy, allowing current organisations to modernise their operations immediately and ensuring that the existing economic engine is high-performing and competitive on both domestic and international markets, as envisioned by 2040.

The proposed curriculum streams—Business and Management, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Hospitality, Retail, and Customer Care—directly feed the demands of the modern services sector. The following table illustrates the essential alignment between the IBFP's offerings and Burundi's strategic development objectives.

## IBFP Program Alignment with Burundi Vision 2040-2060

IBFP Program Area	Burundi Vision 2040-2060 Objective	Strategic Contribution
Business and Management	Establishing a competitive private sector and a high-performing services sector	Professionalising governance, financial acumen, and operational efficiency within enterprises.
ICT	Developing a modern economy, addressing the critical digital skills gap	Enabling digital transformation, supporting e-commerce capacity, and facilitating 4IR readiness for incumbent workers.
Hospitality, Retail, Customer Care	Diversifying employment opportunities and developing the modern services sector	Formalising service standards, enhancing customer experience, and increasing sectoral professionalism to attract investment and tourism.

## B. IBFP Value Proposition and Differentiators

The Institut Burundais pour la Formation Professionnelle differentiates itself by specialising in applied, high-impact competence acquisition, distinct from the mandate of formal higher learning institutions. Universities in Burundi typically focus on long-cycle degree programs, such as those offered by the University of Tourism, Technology and Business Studies (UTB) or the various institutes under the University of Burundi.

In contrast, the IBFP's model is predicated on two key differentiators:

1. **Focus on Applied Competencies:** The training programs will be based on short, practical, and measurable competency-based modules. This modular approach is highly suitable for adult learners who require specific skills acquisition rather than broad academic qualifications.
2. **Market Responsiveness Driven by Training Needs Analysis (TNA):** The operational core of IBFP is built around a rigorous TNA process. This mechanism ensures that the curriculum is consistently aligned with verifiable private sector skills demands, which is identified as a crucial necessity for strengthening the workforce. This responsiveness contrasts with traditional education systems, often criticised for creating a mismatch between training and labour market needs. The modular structure, which allows for skills and knowledge to be built up in discrete units, is deemed highly appropriate for more mature students and professionals.

## II. Deep Research: Market Segmentation and Critical Skills Gap Analysis

The viability of IBFP rests on accurately defining the needs of Burundi's employed and entrepreneurial populations. The research confirms significant demand within specific market segments, coupled with pronounced, critical skills deficiencies, particularly in digital competence and high-level management.

### A. Target Market Demographics and Needs

The professional development market in Burundi can be segmented into three primary groups, each presenting unique opportunities for IBFP:

1. **B2B Segment (Corporate Clients):** This segment comprises larger private and public sector entities, including highly skilled, semi-skilled, and low-skilled workers in major utilities like REGIDESO, which accounts for approximately 70% of jobs in the electricity sector alone, and other private sector organisations. These corporate clients seek measurable return on investment in training. Their needs prioritise advanced management capabilities, specialised technical skills (e.g., in engineering, agronomy, and business), and formalised assessments of staff competency, such as those provided by comprehensive Training Needs Analyses.
2. **MSME Owners and Entrepreneurs:** This vast segment is fundamental to the Burundian economy. However, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) face substantial hurdles in adopting modern business practices, particularly digital ones. Their training requirements are often immediate, highly practical, and focused on operational efficiency, financial management (generation, allocation, and monitoring of finances), and utilising digital platforms to reach new consumers. They require flexible training that leads to swift, demonstrable operational improvements.
3. **B2C Segment (Individual Professionals):** This segment consists of mid-career professionals seeking specialised accreditation to facilitate career advancement. They value flexibility in scheduling, such as weekday or weekend course options, and internationally comparable qualifications. The modular approach, which delivers knowledge in "bite-sized" pieces, is highly appropriate for these time-shortened individuals who need to manage their learning pace.

### B. Detailed Analysis of Critical Skills Gaps

The market analysis identifies specific, pressing skills gaps that IBFP's curriculum must address to be relevant and impactful.

#### 1. ICT and Digital Readiness (The Existential Gap)

Burundi faces an acute challenge in digital literacy and connectivity. The national digital readiness is low, with the country ranking 132nd out of 133 economies in the Network Readiness Index. Internet access is limited to approximately 11% of the population due to high costs and insufficient infrastructure, which severely restricts the potential for digital businesses and innovation.

This challenging environment mandates a tailored approach for IBFP's ICT curriculum. Standardised Western IT training models are likely to fail due to the infrastructure

constraints. The curriculum must therefore prioritise foundational digital literacy and digital entrepreneurship training. Training must focus on practical, low-bandwidth solutions, mobile-first strategies, and the tangible benefits of digital tool adoption to incentivise MSME owners to utilise technology for consumer outreach.

Without proactive upskilling programs dedicated to digital and technical skills, workers in manual and routine jobs within Burundi face a significant risk of obsolescence, hindering the country's transition toward the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). The IBFP provides a crucial defensive mechanism against this digital marginalisation by building the fundamental ICT adoption capacity of MSMEs and employed individuals.

## **2. Business and Management Acumen**

The strengthening of business and management fields is identified as a critical priority for the tertiary education system. For employed professionals and business owners, this translates to a demand for advanced skills that drive sustainable growth. IBFP's management programs must integrate:

- **Financial and Strategic Management:** Modules covering essential capabilities like the generation, allocation, accounting, and monitoring of organisational finances, which can be grouped into cohesive modules.
- **Sustainability Leadership:** Given the global and national emphasis on environmental and social resilience, training in **Leadership in Sustainable Business** is crucial. This equips managers with a holistic understanding of environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and economic viability, enabling them to foster resilience and spearhead transformative change.
- **Organisational Effectiveness:** Courses covering change management principles, stakeholder engagement, and strategies to overcome resistance to organisational change.

## **3. Service Excellence (Hospitality, Retail, Customer Care)**

To diversify employment opportunities beyond the dominant agricultural sector and realise the vision of a high-performing services sector, formalised training in service quality is essential. This addresses the mismatch between education and labour market needs often found among graduates who lack practical technical skills. IBFP's service excellence programs must focus on:

- Formalising international standards in hospitality and retail.
- Implementing customer experience management techniques.
- Developing communication and professionalism skills.

## **C. Competitive Landscape and Market Pricing Analysis**

The market for professional development in Burundi is characterised by a gap between local long-term academic institutions and highly specialised, expensive international corporate trainers.

## 1. Mapping Existing Providers

- **Public and Private Higher Education:** Institutions like the University of Burundi (which includes the Higher Institute of Commerce) and private institutions such as UTB primarily offer long-cycle degrees and diplomas (Licence, Master, Doctorate). These institutions are focused on initial tertiary qualifications, not continuous professional development for working adults.
- **International Corporate Trainers:** Several international providers offer niche, high-cost training in Bujumbura, often via fly-in models. Examples include:
  - Programming Training (Python) with a two-day online instructor-led format starting from \$3,295.
  - Specialised courses like Advanced Cost Accounting or ITIL 4 Specialist, which are priced at approximately \$2,475 for one week of training in Bujumbura.

## 2. Pricing Validation and Market Opportunity

The high fee structures charged by international providers for short, specialised courses (\$2,475 to \$3,295 per week) validate the existence of a high-value market segment—typically composed of established corporations, international non-governmental organisations, and high-net-worth individuals—who are prepared to pay a premium for certified, specialised professional skills.

The opportunity for IBFP is to localise this premium value proposition. By offering locally delivered, CNQC-aligned training conducted by expert national and diaspora trainers, IBFP can capture this premium market while offering demonstrably competitive pricing. A suggested pricing strategy might target the range of **\$1,200 to \$1,800** for a one-week intensive modular course. This positioning is significantly more accessible than the international equivalents but retains a premium profile, thus establishing the IBFP as the definitive, high-quality local provider of accredited professional skills. This differentiation enables IBFP to focus specifically on short-cycle professional accreditation, targeting workforce mobility and competence enhancement, distinct from the objective of formal TVET for school leavers.

## III. Strategic Framework: Curriculum, Delivery, and Quality Assurance

To succeed in the premium professional development market, IBFP's operational and academic strategy must emphasise flexibility, measurable competence, and rigorous adherence to national and international quality standards.

### A. Modular, Competency-Based Curriculum Design

The IBFP curriculum will be structured entirely on a modular, competency-based framework, which is optimally suited for mature, working professionals.

## 1. Definition and Structure

A modularised curriculum divides a course into self-contained, manageable units (modules), where each unit focuses on a distinct skill or competency. This approach contrasts sharply with linear academic programs. For IBFP, this means:

- **Independence:** Modules are standalone units that can be completed without a reliance on a fixed sequence, allowing learners to tailor their path to their immediate professional needs and progress at their own speed.
- **Skill Building:** Modules function as building blocks, allowing professionals to accumulate specialised skills incrementally, leading to certificates after completing a few units, and eventually a full qualification upon meeting all requirements.
- **Focus on Measurable Outcomes:** Each module emphasises explicit outcomes related to that specific part of the qualification, which is highly responsive to the demands of the business and industry sectors. For example, the Financial Management module would be grouped around closely related capabilities required to perform financial duties, such as generation, allocation, accounting, and monitoring.

## 2. Adult Learning Principles and Instructional Design

The modular system inherently caters to adult learning principles, granting the learner greater control and accepting increased responsibility for their learning outcomes.

The instructional design, especially in a Francophone African context, must avoid the observed pitfalls of "one-size-fits-all" training models, which can often fail to recognise or strengthen the situated professional knowledge and agency of adult professionals. The programs must be locally relevant and acknowledge the multilingual nature of the professional environment in Burundi.

## B. Delivery Modalities for Optimal Accessibility

The constraint of low national digital readiness and limited ICT infrastructure (11% internet access) precludes a purely online delivery model. Therefore, a pragmatic blended learning model is required to maximise accessibility for employed professionals.

### 1. Blended Learning Model

IBFP will utilise an integrated approach:

- **Online/Digital Components:** Flexible, self-paced access to theory, readings, and preliminary exercises, mitigating scheduling conflicts.
- **Compulsory Physical Sessions:** Mandating in-person attendance for practical application, hands-on software training, peer-to-peer interaction, and formal competency assessment.

### 2. Flexible Scheduling

To accommodate the schedules of working adults and business owners, the IBFP training calendar must incorporate non-traditional scheduling:



- **Evening and Weekend Delivery:** Dedicated evening classes and intensive weekend workshops.
- **Corporate Block Release:** Full-time, one-week intensive courses delivered on-site or at the IBFP facility, suitable for corporate groups that can release employees for defined periods.

## C. Quality Assurance and Accreditation Strategy

The market credibility and sustainability of IBFP hinge on its ability to guarantee the quality and recognition of its qualifications.

### 1. The Foundation: Training Needs Analysis (TNA)

The TNA process is mandatory and will be marketed as an initial consulting service to all corporate clients. The TNA identifies missing skills across the business by breaking down employee needs into deficiencies in knowledge, skills, and abilities. This systematic process, similar to the 10-competency assessment model used by CIPS, achieves three key strategic goals:

- **Guaranteed Relevance:** It ensures that IBFP only delivers training programs that directly plug verifiable skills gaps, leading to improved organisational effectiveness and supporting strategic business objectives.
- **Consulting Revenue Stream:** The TNA itself can be a fee-generating consulting service.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Conducting an annual TNA helps IBFP future-proof its curriculum and identify future skills needed by the industry.

### 2. National Regulatory Compliance and CNQC Integration

The IBFP must navigate the Burundian regulatory landscape for education and training.

- **Accreditation and Licensing:** The institution must be licensed and overseen by the responsible governmental body, the Ministry of Education and Merit.
- **National Qualifications Framework (CNQC):** Alignment with the National Qualification and Certification Framework (CNQC), established by Decree No. 100/018 in 2022, is a critical priority. Although the CNQC is still in the early implementation phase, its ultimate purpose is to standardise and classify all qualifications within the education and vocational training system, ensuring national recognition and comparability. The proactive engagement with the CNQC process allows IBFP to define and classify its professional certificates and diplomas, providing a competitive edge in formal qualification recognition over less formalised private training institutes.
- **Curriculum Design Quality:** Managing the education system to improve quality is a major challenge, necessitating the involvement of all stakeholders, including academic researchers and sub-sector actors, in the process of designing the curricula.

### 3. International Quality Enhancement

While national accreditation is essential for local market penetration, seeking supplementary international quality validation (akin to the external accreditation used by the Burundi American International Academy) is vital for the premium B2B segment. This external verification validates IBFP's quality standards against global benchmarks, thereby justifying the premium pricing compared to international trainers.

## IV. Business Plan: Operational Model and Financial Projections

The business plan for IBFP must reflect the dual imperative of delivering high-quality training and achieving financial sustainability in a developing market context.

### A. Organisational Structure and Human Resources Strategy

#### 1. Staffing Model and Compensation

The operational model will rely on a lean core administrative structure, combined with a flexible and high-calibre instructor pool.

- **Core Team:** A small, permanent team responsible for governance (Director), academic quality (Academic/TNA Lead), administration, and CNQC compliance.
- **Instructional Staff:** A pool of part-time industry trainers and specialised experts, recruited on performance-based contracts.

#### 2. Compensation Strategy for Specialised Talent

The strategy for attracting high-quality instructional staff must address the prevailing salary environment. While median salaries for general instructors range between 747K and 1.5M BIF, attracting the highly specialised, experienced industry professionals necessary for a high-performing services sector requires premium compensation. The IBFP must benchmark salaries closer to high-level national professional contracts, where minimum salaries are approximately 5.4 million BIF (around \$1,844 USD).

This high-end compensation model is non-negotiable for institutional credibility. IBFP's ability to offer competitive, performance-based compensation—potentially leveraging expertise from the Burundian diaspora via partnerships—will be directly linked to its capacity to deliver high-margin, specialised B2B contracts.

#### 3. Operational Facilities

The IBFP requires modern, technology-enabled premises located in Bujumbura to service the major corporate and professional markets. Facility investment must focus on:

- **Professional Training Rooms:** Spaces designed for adult learning, collaboration, and high-quality presentations.
- **ICT Infrastructure:** Reliable hardware, redundant high-speed internet connections, and secure e-learning platforms are mandatory. The initial capital expenditure for ICT infrastructure is high, particularly given the challenges of low national ICT penetration and the recognised difficulty in assessing infrastructure requirements and associated costs in Burundi.

The facility lease costs are estimated to be significant, benchmarked against local economic indicators (e.g., an annual lease equivalent to one income per capita for approximately 929 square meters of office space).

## B. Financial Model and Initial Capital Requirements

The financial model projects high revenue based on two primary sources: specialised B2B customised corporate training (expected to yield the highest margins) and B2C premium modular enrollment (expected to provide consistent volume).

### 1. Initial Capital Investment

Significant initial investment is required to secure premium facilities, staff, and technology, thereby justifying the premium fee structure. Key investment areas include:

- **ICT Infrastructure:** Investment in robust, high-availability digital tools and connectivity is mandatory to ensure training quality, addressing the current national limitation of high cost and limited infrastructure.
- **Curriculum Development and Localisation:** Costs associated with adapting international competency standards to the Burundian context and aligning materials with the nascent CNQC.
- **Regulatory Compliance and Accreditation Fees:** Costs associated with legal incorporation and licensing from the Ministry of Education.

### 2. Funding Strategy and External Support

While initial capital must be secured privately, the IBFP should proactively seek technical and financial assistance from International Development Partners (IDPs) and multilateral banks. The World Bank (through IDA financing) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) are actively engaged in projects focused on human capital and skills development in Burundi.<sup>3</sup> IBFP's commitment to strengthening the private sector training supply aligns directly with the strategic objectives of these partners, making potential grant funding or technical support a viable option for scaling up specific training modules.

## C. Financial Table: Estimated Start-Up Capital Outlay (Indicative)

This table provides a high-level, indicative estimate of the necessary capital outlay required for the initial 12-month foundation phase of the IBFP, emphasising the critical investments in human capital and technology necessary to launch a premium institution.

Indicative Start-Up Capital Estimates (12 Months)

Category	Description	Estimated Cost (USD Equivalent)
Human Capital	Core staff salaries (Director, Admin, TNA Lead) and initial part-time expert recruitment costs (benchmarked against NO-A minimums)	\$90,000 – \$150,000

Category	Description	Estimated Cost (USD Equivalent)
<b>Facility Acquisition</b>	Annual lease of premium training space (929 sq. meters benchmark) and initial fit-out	\$40,000 – \$70,000
<b>ICT Infrastructure</b>	Reliable hardware (servers, workstations, training equipment) and redundant high-speed internet connectivity investment	\$50,000 – \$80,000
<b>Curriculum &amp; Accreditation</b>	CNQC mapping, initial material development, and legal/regulatory fees	\$20,000 – \$40,000
<b>Marketing and Sales</b>	Corporate outreach, TNA consulting development, and initial branding	\$15,000 – \$25,000
<b>Total Estimated Initial Capital</b>		<b>\$215,000 – \$365,000</b>

## V. Implementation Roadmap and Strategic Partnerships

A phased implementation roadmap ensures that the IBFP establishes credibility, achieves regulatory compliance, and scales services in a controlled and financially responsible manner.

### A. Phased Implementation Roadmap (1-5 Years)

#### 1. Phase I (0-12 Months): Foundation and B2B Pilot

The immediate focus must be on legal and regulatory establishment, securing initial facilities, and validating the market through corporate engagement.

- **Legal and Regulatory:** Legal incorporation of IBFP and formal submission of the licensing application to the Ministry of Education and Merit.
- **Academic Foundation:** Initial CNQC curriculum mapping must be completed for the high-demand Business/Management and Foundational ICT modules.
- **Commercial Launch:** Launch the TNA consulting service as a gateway product. Secure 3 to 5 high-value corporate anchor clients (B2B contracts) to generate immediate revenue and provide real-world data to refine the curriculum.

#### 2. Phase II (13-36 Months): Growth and Accreditation

This phase focuses on scaling operations and cementing the institution's quality and recognition.

- **Accreditation:** Achieve formal accreditation or recognition status within the CNQC framework, leveraging Decree No. 100/018.

- **Market Expansion:** Launch a full, recurring open-enrollment schedule (B2C) across all four training streams (Business, ICT, Hospitality, Retail/Customer Care).
- **Quality Assurance:** Formalise partnerships with international certification or accreditation bodies to bolster market reputation and appeal to multi-national corporations.

### 3. Phase III (36+ Months): Expansion and Diversification

Long-term strategy focuses on consolidating leadership in the professional development sector and exploring regional potential.

- **Service Deepening:** Diversify offerings to include higher-margin services such as executive coaching, bespoke management consulting derived from TNA data, and specialised certification pathways.
- **Geographical Expansion:** Explore expansion outside of Bujumbura or scale-up digital delivery systems, contingent upon measurable improvements in national ICT infrastructure penetration rates.

## B. Key Strategic Partnerships

Strategic alliances are crucial for maintaining curricular relevance, accessing top talent, and securing funding.

### 1. Private Sector and Industry Associations

IBFP must embed itself within the Burundian private sector ecosystem. Formal engagement with local chambers of commerce and specific industry associations (e.g., for Hospitality, Retail) serves multiple functions:

- **Continuous TNA Validation:** Ensures training remains demand-responsive to current market needs, a priority identified by the World Bank.
- **Trainer Recruitment:** Provides a crucial pipeline for high-calibre, part-time industry experts to serve as instructors.

### 2. International Development Partners (IDPs)

IBFP's mission strongly aligns with the human capital development objectives of major IDPs operating in Burundi. Proactive engagement is essential for technical support and potential co-funding.

- **African Development Bank (AfDB) and World Bank (IDA):** Both organisations actively support projects strengthening human capital and technical/vocational training. IBFP should target projects under the World Bank's IDA allocation or AfDB-supported initiatives.
- **International Organisation for Migration (IOM):** The IOM, in partnership with the AfDB, operates projects specifically designed to leverage the Burundian diaspora for skill transfer to the private sector. This initiative represents a subsidised resource pool for accessing highly qualified expert trainers who can deliver world-class content locally.

## C. Risk Management Strategy

The IBFP faces operational risks typical of emerging market educational ventures, requiring robust mitigation strategies.

Risk Factor	Implication	Mitigation Strategy
<b>Regulatory Hurdles</b>	Delays or non-recognition of qualifications due to the CNQC being in its early implementation phase.	Dedicate a regulatory compliance lead to proactively manage communication and submissions with the Ministry of Education.
<b>Talent Acquisition Costs</b>	Inability to attract or retain high-caliber trainers due to salary constraints compared to international roles.	Strategically focus recruitment on part-time industry experts and diaspora talent through IOM/AfDB supported frameworks, subsidizing their professional fees through high-margin B2B contracts.
<b>Market Irrelevance</b>	Curricula failing to keep pace with rapid structural economic changes or private sector skills demands.	Mandate the TNA as an annual operational metric for all corporate contract renewals and institutional self-evaluation, ensuring continuous demand responsiveness.

## VI. Conclusion and Recommendations

The Institut Burundais pour la Formation Professionnelle (IBFP) is a structurally necessary and strategically viable enterprise. Its core mandate—to provide specialised, applied professional development to Burundi’s employed workforce and business owners—directly addresses the critical human capital gap identified as a bottleneck to achieving the goals of the Burundi Vision 2040 (Emerging) and 2060 (Developed).

Success will be determined by three foundational commitments:

1. **Commitment to Modularity and Competency:** The implementation must rigorously adhere to a modular, competency-based curriculum structure, optimising learning for adult professionals and ensuring immediate application in the workplace.
2. **Commitment to Quality and Recognition:** Proactive and immediate pursuit of recognition under the **National Qualifications Framework (CNQC)**, coupled with a mandatory Training Needs Analysis process for all corporate engagements, is non-negotiable for establishing institutional credibility and guaranteeing market relevance.
3. **Commitment to Premium Talent:** The IBFP must budget for and actively recruit high-calibre industry experts, including leveraging the Burundian diaspora, to deliver training that is commensurate with the premium fees charged and competitive with international training providers.

The IBFP represents a high-impact investment strategy that transforms human capital development from a long-term academic endeavour into an immediate driver of private sector competitiveness, accelerating Burundi's path toward a modern, diversified services economy.