



Annual Report 2016

In 2016 we have developed our group of multi-disciplinary ventures further and broadened the scope of services. Resources and Synergies Development (R&SD) includes companies in Democratic Republic of Congo, Belgium, Latvia (headquarters), Luxemburg and Singapore. In addition, R&SD not for profit has been created in Belgium. In December 2015, our companies employed 37 people including 18 female staff members. Over the last three years our staff and annual turnover have evolved as given in figure 1.

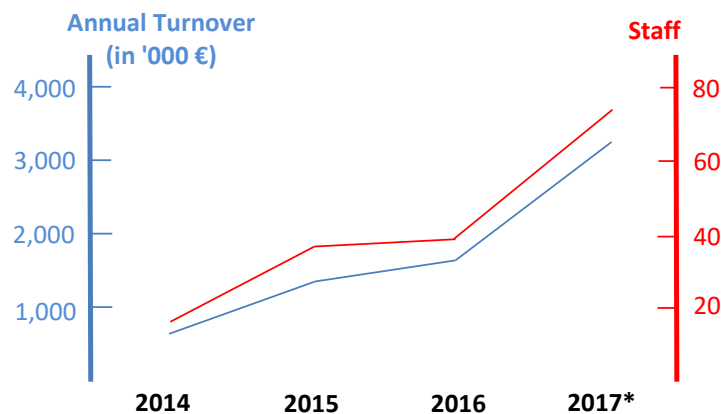


Fig. 1 – Annual turn-over and staffing over the last three years and forecast for 2017*

The development of our company has met most of our expectations. Business opportunities looked elusive as a result of economic stagnation in Europe. Conversely, business opportunities were identified overseas, including trade in Indonesia, construction and services in Africa.

Project in Luxemburg

R&SD Technology sarl strengthened their projects with the Government of Luxemburg. Activities revolved around both the development and maintenance of WebGIS applications in the scope of rural landscape monitoring in line with the common agricultural policy (Ministry of Agriculture and State Center for Information Technologies).

A civil drone was used to acquire very high resolution imagery. Data acquired during this experimental flight were used to test new processing algorithms, in particular those related to automatic recognition of objects such as single trees, hedges, etc. present in rural landscapes.



Fig. 2 – A team of experts in R&SD Technology offices.



Fig. 3 – A civil drone used over rural areas in Luxemburg.

Two more experts joined the company end of 2016. Significant improvement of hardware and software assets was made in 2016, in particular a quality system enabling some continuous integration delivery.

R&SD Technology will pursue diversification policy both in Europe and overseas in 2017. We aim at providing our customers and business partners with innovative and cost-efficient IT solutions.

Projects in Belgium

The firewood pilot project conducted in Southern Belgium has showed mixed results. It will phase out in 2017. Main services delivered by R&SD sprl included logistics and procurement support to projects in Congo as well as certified surveying of lands and buildings in Belgium. R&SD sprl has played a central role in promoting the group during the Agricultural Fair in Libramont.

Business models of this entity will need to be more thoroughly reviewed and investigated in 2017.

The not for profit unit (R&SD asbl) has continued to gather and ship second-hand books to Africa.

Projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo

R&SD sia and R&SD sarl have pursued and strengthened their support to the Center for International Forestry Resources (CIFOR¹), in the scope of the REFORCO² and FCCC³ Projects funded by the European Union. We supported CIFOR and their partners in terms of coordination, procurement, human resource management, events, teaching, financial controlling, accounting, logistics, office management, capacity building (Fig. 2) infrastructures rehabilitation and construction (Fig. 2 & 3). Our local teams led by Gloria Assimbo have delivered some serious work. R&SD contributed in the design and planning of a new project FORETS funded by the European Union and implemented by CIFOR (total budget € 27 million; life span from 01/2017 until 12/2021).



Fig. 4 – Construction of a 2500 m² building on the site of The Faculty of Sciences (University of Kisangani). Excavation work in 2015.



Fig. 5 – The foundation of the building also fits a 600 m³ water tank. Earth excavated was used to build bricks (see picture 6).



Fig. 6 – R&SD strongly advocate an approach combining both resources efficiency and capacity building. Workers were trained in new skills.



Fig. 7 – Early 2017 the building showed impressive progress.

¹ www.cifor.org, CIFOR is a member of the CGIAR.

² REFORCO stands for (Appui à la) Recherche Forestière au Congo (€ 5.74 million, European Union, ending in June 2016).

³ FCCC stands for Forêts et Changement Climatique au Congo (€ 12.95 million, European Union, ending in December 2016).

Other projects and assignments in ACP⁴

R&SD has been partnering with Incatema for implementing the ‘Banana Accompanying Measures’, an initiative funded by the European Union. It aimed at supporting the banana sector in ten ACP countries⁵. Besides monitoring tasks, R&SD contributed to an important study on the level of competitiveness of the banana sector in these countries.



Fig. 8 – A 2-day workshop was held in December 2016 in Brussels. This event provided participants with a unique opportunity for sharing lessons and reviewing strategic orientations in the banana sector. The workshop was attended by some 80 participants, most of which representatives of producers associations, government agencies, donors, research institutions, etc.

Dr Quentin Ducenne participated in an assignment led by The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) about governance in the forestry sector in Madagascar. This assignment was conducted in the scope of the FLEGT⁶ programme in a non-VPA⁷ country supported by the European Union.



Fig. 9 – Seizure of illegal logs of rosewood. Rosewood is a very precious timber resource found in northern forests in Madagascar. It has been depleted for years. Several rosewood and ebony tree species are listed on CITES⁸ annexes. The Government of Madagascar and the forestry administration are unable to efficiently fight this illegal trade of endangered species.

Dr Ducenne also contributed to the development of a theory of change in the forest governance in Madagascar. The starting point is not very good in terms of governance. However, one must remember that there is no universal definition of “good governance”. Secondly, Madagascar is facing many challenges including poverty, law and order, deforestation and political instability to name a few. Under such adverse conditions, there is no silver bullet to address the governance problems facing poor farmers and weak administrations.



Fig. 10 – A Workshop was held in Antananarivo (Madagascar). Participants working in small groups identified priority interventions in the forestry sector with a special emphasis on governance.

⁴ Africa - Caribbean – Pacific.

⁵ Belize, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname.

⁶ FLEGT stands for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade. The EU's FLEGT Action Plan was established in 2003. It aims to reduce illegal logging by strengthening sustainable and legal forest management, improving governance and promoting trade in legally produced timber (source : EUFLEGT Facility, <http://www.euflegt.efi.int/about-flegt>)

⁷ Voluntary Partnership Agreement.

⁸ Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species.

Projects in Latvia

The acquisition of land assets has continued. As of today, R&SD manage over 400 ha of land in Latvia. Four groups of projects were identified as follows:

1. Developing an outdoor climbing gym. The project is on hold.
2. Developing events such as a marathon raising further awareness about climate change and positioning R&SD on ad hoc projects. This project has been led by R&SD Experiences in partnership with CIFOR and other R&SD entities.
3. Outdoor and nature-based tourism activities. On-going activities.
4. Forestry and agroforestry on our land assets. On-going activities.



Fig. 11 – R&SD acquired an old school. This asset shall be maintained and improved. It will serve as a training center and welcome think tanks in 2020.



Fig. 12 – R&SD paid attention not only to assets such as buildings but also to landscapes and natural features.

Growth

R&SD nurtures an experimental business culture tailored to SME and supporting unique business models. The company is developing at steady pace. New ventures are considered in Asia (Indonesia and Thailand), in Central America (Mexico and Cuba), in Africa (Madagascar), in Europe (Latvia, Germany and Luxemburg). Several of them shall be incorporated in 2017.

R&SD is pursuing a vision where small and medium scale businesses can be successfully managed along with personal development and sustainable use of natural resources. This leads to a cross-cutting approach involving the search for both talents and efficient improvement.

*40+ staff members, three continents, **connected** teams.*



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