

[EV07-ICT]

Serving Base-of-the-Pyramid Markets and Customers: from Pilot to Scale-Up

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Brief Bio Organizer
This event would be most likely organized jointly by the Swiss Water Partnership and the Swiss Bluetec Bridge. After a successful event in the Swiss German part (see <http://www.swisswaterpartnership.ch/events/bop/>), we would like to replicate a part of the event to leverage the resources mobilized and insights gained with a Swiss Romande and international audience.

Abstract
Short description, including alignment with conference themes and objectives
The event would showcase several initiatives from around the globe with a strong relation to Switzerland, focusing on water and sanitation services for BoP markets. The participants will be given an opportunity to strengthen their understanding of BoP markets and customers, to learn what it takes to bring projects to scale and to deepen key issues such as marketing, value chains or start-up and project financing (both in Switzerland and locally) in various thematic workshops.

Description
Proposed discussion focus
Through storytelling and workshops, the participants will discover that BoP markets are highly knowledge intensive because of their diversity and volatility. For some criteria, BoP markets are surprisingly similar to affluent markets – for example product desirability – but different for others – for example willingness to pay for (affordable) services. One key success factor is the ability of entrepreneurs to fail and learn fast (“trial and error”). It is difficult to make a business focusing exclusively on the lowest segment of the BoP market. Most successful BoP business models reach out to different market segments. Despite the enormous growth promise (“address at least 100,000,000 people!”), it remains difficult to identify and attract investors. A business model canvas mapping the key issues that companies who wish to serve BoP markets need to address to be able to get beyond the start-up stage to become large-scale actors will be presented.

Objectives
Justification and expected impact during and after the conference
The objectives of the event are threefold:

1. Gain a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges of market-entry and scale-up in base-of-the-pyramid markets
2. Learn from Swiss and international experiences in the water-food-energy ecosystem
3. Network to exchange ideas and forge new alliances and partnerships

During the event organized in the Swiss German part, participants valued the high quality of the content provided and the productive conversations enabled through the mix of presentations and workshops / interaction.

Target Audience
Start-ups, SMEs, social enterprises and NGOs active in the water-food-energy ecosystem who have had a first experience of a BoP market or are considering a BoP market entry.

Proposed Program
To be finalized in January 2016.