Benchmarking Visit & Training Catalonia (19–23/11)

Presentation of participants
The Bizerte Competitiveness Pole, which was created in 2006, is part of the National Strategy for the promotion of the agro-food sector of the XIth Development Plan.

It includes 3 components: the Agri-Food Technopole of Bizerte, high quality industrials spaces and a network of national and international partners (AGRO'TECH).

The main objectives of the cluster are: supporting innovation and innovative projects with high added value, increasing the competitiveness of the company and the development of technical and commercial partnerships and creating new jobs.

It is developing a bovine dairy cluster (Bizerte), ovine dairy cluster (Beja) (under development), an oyster cluster in Bizerte and an artichoke cluster (under development).

Organizations engaged: 142 (100 entreprises, 10 universities/R&D/training institutions, 22 other organisations) in the Competitiveness Cluster; 10 (6 entreprises, 4 universities/R&D/support structure) on the Oyster Cluster, 13 (5 cattle breeders, 6 collect-centers of milk, 1 financial institution, 1 support structure) on the Dairy Cluster.

• The main challenges in terms of management of Pole Bizerte are the definition of its strategy, the sustainability of its financing model, its ability to efficiently communicate and monitor its actions.

• International existing cooperation: IFREMER in France for the oysters cluster (first contacts and exchanges), Aquimer in France (informations and news), Vitagora (B2B), Wagralim in Belgium, SUP’AGRO in France (training), Terralia in France.

• Wishes to cooperate with: France, Italy, Spain, Canada, Morocco, Japan.

• Cooperation topics: agrofood, agri-business, packaging, conditioning, health, nutrition, environment, renewable development.

In early 2016, several olive oil producers from northwestern Tunisia, an agricultural region, formed a non-profit association to enhance their production and contribute to regional development. The Kef technopole supported by the GIZ allowed the emergence of the cluster.

North-West Olive Oil Cluster, which is located in Kef, seeks to increase the operating capacity of the region’s oil mills in order to make a substantial contribution to boosting the regional industrial sector. The cluster also seeks to increase the added value of marketed extra virgin olive oil with the intention to improve the growth and competitiveness of local industries.

Organizations engaged: 26 (19 entreprises, 7 agricultural groups).

- The main challenges of this cluster in terms of management are its strategy, its financing model and its governance.
- International existing cooperation: not yet identified.
- Wishes to cooperate with: France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Lebanon.
- Cooperation topics: Industrial innovation, services that may boost the development of new markets, business structuration / new development models of projects.
The Cluster Dattes & Palmiers Tunisia initiated by the Industrial and Technological Facility (CIT) of Tozeur (Djerid Pole) was officially created on October 30, 2015, as a non-profit organization which oversees joint projects between various actors and companies involved in the phoenicultural sector and the food industry.

Organizations engaged: 32 (22 entreprises, 8 universities/R&D/training institutions, 2 other organisations).

- The main challenges of the Dates & Palm Cluster in terms of management are its strategy, its financing model and its service portfolio.
- International existing cooperation: Cosmetic Valley (France), Cosmetics Clusters International Network (CCIN).
- Wishes to cooperate with: France, Italy, Algeria, Morocco.
- Success stories: creation of 10 start-ups, creation of 6 exporter industrial units which created 600 jobs.
The "Primeurs du Sud" Cluster was created in Gubes-Tunisia in the form of an association under Tunisian law, on October 6, 2015, at the initiative of 13 founding members composed of 6 companies, 4 farmers including 2 members mandated by a Twenty farmers operating in the early geothermal crops at ElHamma Gabes and 3 associate members.

It was initiated by the Industrial and Technological Pole of Gabes, under the supervision of the Ministry of Industry and with the support of PASRI (The Support Project for the Research and Innovation System), in the framework of the national strategy of the Ministry for the development of the clustering concept in the potential territories of Tunisia.

Organizations engaged: 20 (10 entreprises, 2 universities/R&D/training institutions, 8 other organisations).

• The main challenges of Primeurs du Sud in terms of management lie in its strategy, its communication and its staff.
• International existing cooperation: not yet identified.
• Wishes to cooperate with: EU tomato producing countries (France, the Netherlands), Morocco and Gulf states.
• Cooperation topics: business development, capacity building to complete the alternative distribution circuit, innovation and technology transfer, packaging, conditioning.
• Success story: Tunisians and foreigners have invested in this territory, in particular Spanish (Sanlucar), Dutch (DesertJoy) and Moroccan companies (GeoProduction).
Salfit House of Furniture cluster was established in Salfit in 2013 holding a group of companies and Institutions that share the same industry and are concentrated in one geographical area with focus on Salfit, Qarawat Bani Hassan, Biddya, Mas-ha, and Az-Zawiya.

The cluster was established with the support of the Private Sector Development Cluster Project (PSDCP), implemented by the Ministry of National Economy (MoNE) in cooperation with the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (FPCCIA) and funded by the French Development Agency (AFD).

The cluster started with a core group of 15 enterprises operating in the field of furniture and furnishings, covering all elements in the value chain all the way from suppliers of raw materials through manufacturers to distributors and showrooms. It comprises of small and medium-sized companies, which provide more than 50% of the entire cluster production.

Organizations engaged: 72 (67 entreprises, 3 universities/R&D/training institutions, 2 intermediates).

• The main challenges of Salfit House of Furniture cluster in terms of management mainly lie in the sustainability of its financing model. It also needs to find solutions regarding member engagement and staff of the cluster.

• International existing cooperation: French clusters during a study tour in France organized by France Clusters to learn from their experience in 2014/2015.

• Wishes to cooperate with: Austria, France, Spain.

• Cooperation topics: Wood, machinery, painting, forestry, design.

• Success stories: http://shofsalfit.com/category.php?id=a72by42795Ya72b&c_type=1
The Leather and Shoe Cluster started with a core group member of 18 SMEs across the leather and shoe value chain in Hebron in 2013. Since then, the cluster has expanded to include around 50 active members with inclusive representation for the whole value chain like tanneries, chemical suppliers, accessory suppliers, designers, mould makers, sole makers, last makers, shoe manufacturers, and retailers. In 2014, the cluster strategy was scoped out using a participative bottom up approach following a diagnosis study carried out by the cluster manager.

The cluster was legally registered as a sectoral committee in the Chamber of Commerce based on a referendum among registered members. The cluster conducted elections in September 2017, seven members were elected for the board committee of the cluster. The cluster is in the process of establishing a creative center which provides a range of services in addition to being the headquarters of the cluster.

The Leather and Shoe Cluster is one of five clusters that receive support from Private Sector Development Cluster Project (PSDCP) implemented by the Ministry of National Economy in partnership with the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (FPCCIA). This project was funded by the French Development Agency.

Organizations engaged: 50 (44 entreprises, 1 university/R&D/training institution, 3 other organisations).

- The challenges of the cluster in terms of management are to develop a sustainable business model, improve governance and the involvement of members in projects, and make monitoring and evaluation more efficient.

- International existing cooperation: Italian clusters such as SIMAC (tanning technology).

- Wishes to cooperate with: Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Scandinavian countries.

- Cooperation topics: Best practice in leather industry, business development.

- Success stories: Development of a center with 4 units: training unit, testing lab, strategic intelligence unit and design unit.
The Stone & Marble Cluster is a group of enterprises created in 2013 and related and supporting institutions based in North Hebron. The Stone and Marble cluster in the south of the West Bank includes stone quarries, fabricators, spare parts and service suppliers, business support organizations, and other related institutions.

It will shortly be registered as a Sectorial Committee, which can work independently. The cluster is in receipt of support from the Private Sector Development Cluster Project (PSDCP) which is being implemented by the Ministry of National Economy in partnership with the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (FPCCIA).

Organizations engaged: 45 (44 intermediates, 1 university/R&D/training institution).

• The challenges of the cluster in terms of management are the business model sustainability, the service offer, and the governance. Added to this is the possibility of setting up a membership system that encourages the involvement of members.

• International existing cooperation: not yet identified.

• Wishes to cooperate with: clusters in the same field or in the construction industry with target countries (Belgium, Sweden, Germany, Italy, and France).

• Cooperation topics: Access to new markets, construction industry, capacity building, R&D.

• Success stories: the lean production: 10 companies (2,5 M€ cost reduction for 5 companies; 1,5 M€ cost reduction for 5 companies), project managed by the cluster manager.
The Tourism and Creative Arts Cluster is a group of enterprises and institutions created in 2013, located in Jerusalem and working in the tourism and creative arts industry with the support of the Private Sector Development Cluster Project (PSDCP) implemented by the Ministry of National Economy in partnership with the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (FPCCIA).

The idea of the cluster was to integrate and unite all efforts within a trustful environment to develop the Jerusalem Cluster which then was named TAJ Cluster.

The cluster involves Hotels, Restaurants, Souvenir Shops, Tour Operators and Tour Guides, business support organizations, and other related institutions.

TAJ Cluster is joining the Jerusalem Tourism Cluster and will work under its umbrella. Both are joining the Alquds Tourism and Heritage Council (Alquds Tourism Board).

Organizations engaged: 95 (80 entreprises, 10 universities/R&D/training institutions, 5 other organisations) + 265 partners supporting the organisation.

- The main challenges of the cluster in terms of management are the sustainability of its financing model, the member engagement and the staff of the cluster.
- International existing cooperation: not yet identified.
- Wishes to cooperate with: France, Germany and the UK.
- Cooperation topics: Membership and identifying the value chain, sharing experiences, benefits of participating to international tourism fairs.
- Success stories: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0CD0le1Q8s0
MENARA, which was created in 2012 and is located in Marrakech, is an association specialized in the agri-food and luxury cosmetics industries.

The strategy of the MENARA cluster includes, in addition to promoting innovation and support of SMEs for the penetration of international markets, the incubation of startups and investment projects, which will increase the attractiveness of the territory of the cluster and will make it a landing platform for foreign investors.

The MENARA cluster consolidates this networking dynamic by signing partnerships with various types of national and international structures, which have a positive impact on the competitiveness of the Moroccan cosmetic and agri-food industry.

Organizations engaged: 60 (50 enterprises, 10 universities/R&D/training institutions, 6 other organisations).

• The main challenges of MENARA in terms of cluster management lie in the sustainability of its financing model, its communication strategy and lobbying activities.

• International existing cooperation: Cosmetic Valley, Portuguese, Japanese, Spanish, Tunisian clusters, Montpellier SupAgro (France).

• Wishes to cooperate with: Food and cosmetic clusters around the world.

• Cooperation topics: business development, R&D projects, transfer of technology, innovation-orientated collaborative projects.
CE3M, which was created in 2010 and is located in Casablanca, is a non-profit organisation which animates and structures an innovation space specialized in electronics, micro-electronics and mechatronics. Organizations engaged: 83 (68 entreprises, 7 universities/R&D/training institutions, 8 other organisations).

• The main challenges of CE3M in terms of cluster management lie in the sustainability of its financing model, its member engagement and the lack HR of the management team.

• International existing cooperation: Cluster Neopolia, CAMDIB (France).

• Wishes to cooperate with: France, Catalonia, Switzerland.

• Cooperation topics: medical electronics, energy conversion systems in the railway sector, tackling railway obsolescence, renewable energy, IOT.

• It is at the heart of inter-cluster cooperation in Morocco as it created the Maroc Clusters’ network. Although this network is still informal, CE3M organized several get-together events for Moroccan cluster and the creation of an association is in progress.
Oasis500 is a public-private investment company and business accelerator in the Tech and Creative Industry spaces based in Amman, Jordan and created in 2010. Oasis500 enables entrepreneurs to transform their viable ideas or creative talents into scalable businesses. That includes finding those entrepreneurs, investing in their startups, bridging their know-how gap, and eventually helping them get follow-on funding.

Initially, Oasis500 was oriented towards tech sectors (IT, mobile apps, digital media, e-commerce, web development, software development…) and in 2014/2015 it launched a smaller fund for start-ups in creative industries. Oasis500 is also interested in the cluster approach and clustering.

Organizations engaged: 152 (142 entreprises, 3 universities/R&D/training institutions, 7 other organisations).

- The main challenges of Oasis500 in terms of management is the development of its strategy, the sustainability of its financing model and the extension of its service portfolio. They are interested in creating a cluster.
- International existing cooperation: United Arab Emirates (BECO capital, ERZAN capital), Palestine (2 accelerators), Grazatic, new projects with EU partners and GIZ.
- Wishes to cooperate with: Morocco, Lebanon, Algeria.
- Cooperation topics: CT, hardware, big data, fintech, creative industry; sharing experiences to help start-ups to access new markets.
- Success stories: Amanar TV on Oasis500, Al Jazeera story on Oasis 500 (10 startups talking about how they started and graduated) and reality show at almamlaka tv showing the acceleration program.