



Replicable Innovations of SSE in the provision of services and creation of decent jobs in the post Covid-19 crisis recovery

ROADMAP FOR REPLICABILITY

Setting up a Social and Solidarity multi-service territorial support centre:

CitESS model



RESEARCH
THAT MAKES
THE DIFFERENCE



PIN

POLO
UNIVERSITARIO
CITTÀ DI PRATO

SERVIZI DIDATTICI
E SCIENTIFICI
PER L'UNIVERSITÀ
DI FIRENZE



Executive summary

The Roadmap was elaborated within the framework of the ENI CBC Med **MedRISSE project** and it analyses the pilot experience of the CitESS pole established in the Tunisian Governorate of Mahdia under the EU funded **IESS!** project (2014-2018).

CitESS proves to be a **positive model** to foster an enabling, supporting, and synergistic territorial ecosystem for the development of the local Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) and the promotion of **public-private collaboration** for the benefit of the community. The aim of the CitESS is to create a **common and collaborative territorial platform** which pools together and catalyses the available public, private and civil society actors, resources and initiatives to offer **integrated and comprehensive support to entrepreneurs and SSE actors**.

With a view to the potential **replicability** of the model, this Roadmap retraces and analyses the overall process, the key phases and respective main actors, resources, and actions, which led to the set-up of the Tunisian CitESS of Mahdia. Key determinants to replicate the model, as well as potential risks and respective mitigation measures, complete the overall assessment of CitESS model for those readers who might be interested or even considering embarking on a similar experience elsewhere.

In a nutshell, setting up the Tunisian CitESS of Mahdia required a first crucial phase focused on fostering a **wide, multi-stakeholder, multi-level, and participatory consultation process**. This preliminary process brought together all key stakeholders of the territory coming from the public, private,

Academia, and civil society sectors at the common discussion table to co-decide the location of CitESS and to jointly identify its aim and main function. During the following stage of setting up the CitESS territorial pole, efforts were dedicated to **enlarging the circle of engaged actors and organisations** that could support the SSE in the territory. This entailed actively mapping, identifying, and connecting territorial SSE actors and organisation, organising networking and dissemination events, delivering trainings and workshops to strengthen entrepreneurial support services and to promote SSE principles. Finally, when the network was consolidated, a third stage focused on the **formalisation** of the CitESS Association, steered by a **Governing Board** which strategically includes key actors and organisations coming from the public, private, Academia and civil society sectors. Indeed, the accumulated experience through the Tunisian CitESS of Mahdia could be capitalised to inspire its replication to other territories given its **positive support to the SSE** and the constructive **promotion of public-private collaboration** for the benefit of the community.

In addition to the necessary financial resources needed for the CitESS set-up and management, **key contextual determinants** for a positive replication of the model may be summarized as follows:

- Having on board **key territorial actors and organisations** coming from the public, private, Academia and civil society organisations that are playing or can play a crucial role for the local SSE development.
- Counting on **individuals** having the needed **skills and propensity** to engage in open dialogue, practice active listening, being flexible, open minded and

adaptable, capable of long-term vision and truly motivated by SSE principles.

- Relying on some degree of **social capital** allowing different actors to work together to effectively achieve a common purpose, building on mutual trust, collaboration, and respect for one another.
- Having existing basic public and private **entrepreneurial support programs/services** that CitESS can connect, leverage and put at the service of the SSE.
- Setting up an **effective formalized governance structure** ensuring a **participatory and democratic functioning** of the CitESS. This should entail a sound Governing Board which guarantees strong multi-sector linkages that can open doors to facilitate collaborations and unlock strategic networks.
- Having access to **strategic networks** that can allow CitESS to leverage needed private, public, Academia, or civil society resources to put in place successful and well-integrated SSE support programs.

To avoid governance risks when setting up a CitESS pole, it is recommended not to prematurely accelerate its legal formalization process. Conversely, it is better to work first on creating and developing the CitESS concept, acting, connecting and mobilizing actors and organisations, and then, when and if this works, cautiously steer towards formalization, opting for a legal form which can work well within the local culture. Also, to avoid the risk of the pole being overly dependent on public funding and international cooperation Donors, provided that they are fundamental in a preliminary stage, it is

fundamental to diversify funding, and to rely on a more viable and mixed economic model, for example, by offering direct support services for clients.

Finally, if not framed in a broader territorial strategy, a CitESS pole can risk being a top-down operation. Therefore, it is key to ensure that the overall process truly stems from the needs of the territorial key actors themselves, and that it serves a common vision of SSE really suiting the local context and its communities.

SSE practitioners, policymakers and local administrations searching for ways to improve the SSE in their own territories may consider replicating the CitESS model provided that key ingredients are in place and the process is well adapted to their specific context.

DISCLAIMER

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union under the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin programme. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of ARCO-Action Research for CO-Development - and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.

This document was published in January 2023.

Table of contents

1. Introduction	6
2. The good practice	8
3. Theory of change	11
4. The process	12
5. Key contextual determinants for replicability	24
6. Drawbacks and risks	28
7. Final remarks	30
8. Useful contacts	31

Acronyms

ARCO: Action Research for CO-development

ENI CBC Med: European Neighbourhood Instrument - Cross-Border Cooperation
Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme (2014-2020)

EU: European Union



1. Introduction

MedRiSSE PROJECT

This Roadmap was developed within the framework of the **European funded project MedRiSSE (Replicable Innovations of SSE in the provision of services and creation of decent jobs in the post covid-19 crisis recovery)** under the **ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020**¹. The 24-month project launched in September 2021 is currently (at the time of writing) being implemented in **Spain, Palestine, Italy, Jordan, and Tunisia** by 8 partner organisations with a total budget of **1.1 million euros** (with 90% EU contribution).

The overall objective of MedRiSSE project is to develop a **Mediterranean scalability pathway for social innovations** that enable the co-production of public social services with local Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) agents that have emerged from interactions between the government and the SSE involved in several ENI funded projects. The initiative aims to demonstrate **that co-production of public social services with SSE actors can provide with low-cost, highly effective, and scalable solutions** to fight poverty and promote equality, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. These innovations, in fact, represent successful and efficient practices for the achievement of the SDGs in general, and for the protection of the most vulnerable groups in the post Covid-19 economies in the Mediterranean Sea Basin (MSB). In the post pandemic era, it will

be necessary to promote social inclusion and fight against poverty through cooperation, offering basic services in a different way, recovering, and creating decent employment through diverse and complementary organizational models of production. Many SSE are already responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in the fields of social and health protection, provision of food and prevention equipment, financial support, education and training, organization of community aid, converting their production to face the emergency, re-localizing supply chains, and many more.

However, the full potential of the SSE for the recovery stage will depend on **governments' willingness** to co-design and **co-implement** public policies and recovery measures within a **multi-stakeholder approach**, as well as civil society's capacity to act and mobilize resources.

In this respect, the **capitalization and dissemination of good practices** has the potential to inform and inspire similar experiences and solutions through a multiplicative global effect on local communities. It is against this backdrop that MedRiSSE project developed the Mediterranean Replication Toolkit building on the learnings and capitalization of 5 EU funded projects, namely MedTOWN, MoreThanAJob, MedUP!, IESS! and RUWOMED.

¹The 2014-2020 ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). The Programme objective is to foster fair, equitable and sustainable economic, social and territorial development, which may advance cross-border integration and valorise participating countries' territories and values. The following 13 countries participate in the Programme: Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, and Tunisia. The Managing Authority (MA) is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy). Official Programme languages. Official Programme languages are Arabic, English and French. For more information, please visit: www.enicbcmcd.eu.

The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.



THE ROADMAP

The **aim** of this Roadmap is to provide **guidance and resources** for **policy makers, public servants, and SSE practitioners** in the Mediterranean **wishing to replicate social innovation and co-production models and initiatives**.

A total of **5 Roadmaps**, one for each good practice identified from **MedTOWN, MoreThanAJob, MedUPI, IESS!** and **RUWOMED** projects, were elaborated under the MedRiSSE project within the [Replication Toolkit](#). The other 4 Roadmaps are accessible [here](#).

Each Roadmap was built upon the results of the **replicability assessment** carried out by MedRiSSE partner **PIN S.c.r.l.**- Didactic and Scientific Services for the University of Florence/[ARCO – Action Research for CO-development](#) - research centre (Italy). The assessment followed an evaluation framework elaborated by ARCO following a thorough literature review on replication and scalability methods on social innovations. Moreover, the framework was grounded on a conceptual and interpretative framework based on the **Sustainable Human Development paradigm** and **Capability Approach perspective** (Sen; 1985,1999) which frames the Social and Solidarity Economy with a territorial ecosystem perspective. The assessment was primarily based on the desk review of project documents and materials, as well as information and insights collected during the semi-structured interviews carried out with key informants of the good practices [the assessment **methodology** is described in detail in the [Toolkit](#)].

HOW TO READ THIS ROADMAP?

The objective of this Roadmap is to provide readers a **practical guidance to replicate the analysed good practice** (or similar initiatives) **in other contexts and territories**. However, the overall process as well as the identified key determinants, which are presented in this Roadmap as important elements for a positive implementation of the good practice, should be always and carefully (re)considered in the **local and national contexts** in which replication may take place. In other words, an underlying and thorough understanding of the readers' contexts must be taken into consideration in order to tailor and adapt the process and the suggestions here reported.

The Roadmap is structured as follows:

- **Presentation of the good practice:** its origin and context, triggering factors and main objectives, its distinctive features, innovativeness and value-added.
- **Theory of change:** a schematic overview of how inputs, actions, outputs, outcomes and impacts of the good practice are related, in order to facilitate the planning and the implementation of similar practices in other contexts.
- **The process:** an overview of all the sequenced main phases which allowed the execution of the good practice, from the triggering factor(s) to planning, implementation and, finally, sustainability phase, identifying for each key actors, resources, and actions. Additionally, Suggested Actions and Self-Assessment Questions are also provided to assist the reader when considering the feasibility of this model in his/her own context. The purpose is to offer supporting tools allowing to abstract key elements from the assessed good practice to be applied in other contexts.
- **Key determinants for replicability:** an outline of the **main contextual determinants** that emerged during the analysis when seeking to identify key “ingredients” and conditions that should be in place in a given context for the replicability of the analysed good practice. The purpose is to support readers in running a quick general screening of their own context to assess the preliminary feasibility of replicating the practice.
- **Drawbacks and risks:** a list of possible drawbacks and potential risks that may arise for future replications, accompanied by possible coping strategies for prevention and/or mitigation.
- **Final remarks:** a final overview of why this practice can be considered an effective driver for sustainable human development and the objectives that could be reached by implementing this practice.



2. The good practice

CitESS is a **multi-service virtual and/or physical territorial pole** aiming to create an enabling environment to support the development of the **Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE)** within a territory. More specifically, the pole facilitates an **open space for multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration between** key territorial actors for the **co-production of support services enabling the creation and development of SSE enterprises** for the benefit of the whole community.

The logic behind the model is that open dialogue and strategic collaboration among key multi-sector actors allows to **catalyse and leverage available territorial resources** to offer a higher quality, better integrated and more comprehensive support to local entrepreneurs. The idea of the territorial platform, therefore, is to offer a **one-stop shop** directly at the service of entrepreneurs which connects them to the system, service, network, or organisation that can meet their needs. CitESS pole, therefore, brings together all existing local public structures already supporting local entrepreneurship, “pressures” new or existing entrepreneurial projects towards SSE principles (social and environmental objectives), and hooks such initiatives with other key territorial players and initiatives such as Universities, CSOs, and existing social enterprises already engaged in the local SSE.

Moreover, by its own collaborative nature, the CitESS model aspires to expand and connect with other multi-service territorial clusters² in different regions to **facilitate further cooperation and sharing of best practices, experience, skills, and resources**.

The first experimentation of the CitESS model was carried out in Tunisia, a country which traditionally counts on a highly centralised administrative system and where the existing public structures supporting entrepreneurship (including SSE entrepreneurs) work in silos, each governed by separate Ministries following their own programs and strategies.

The CitESS pilot in the Tunisian Governorate of **Mahdia**³ was set up within the framework of the 2014 EU **IESS! Project** - « IESS! Initiatives d'Emploi en Économie Sociale et Solidaire en Tunisie⁴ ». However, the original concept of the CitESS model goes back to 2013 when it was theorised by **iesMed**⁵ - a former European cooperative platform based in Barcelona (Spain) for the promotion of the SSE in the Mediterranean- following the MedESS Forum.

The pilot, hence, were set up in order to:

- Support all forms of **individual social entrepreneurship and collective solidarity entrepreneurship**.

² The recent example of the GECES report confirms the validity of this concept, theorized by iesMed after the 2013 MedESS: GECES report (December 2021). The role of clusters and similar forms of business cooperation in fostering the development of social economy. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/1ceb9a1d-6146-11ec-9c6c-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>.

³ Within the framework of IESS! Project, a CitESS pilot was also set up in the Tunisian Governorate of Sidi Bouzid. However, for the scope of the assessment, only one pilot experience was analysed to inform this Roadmap.

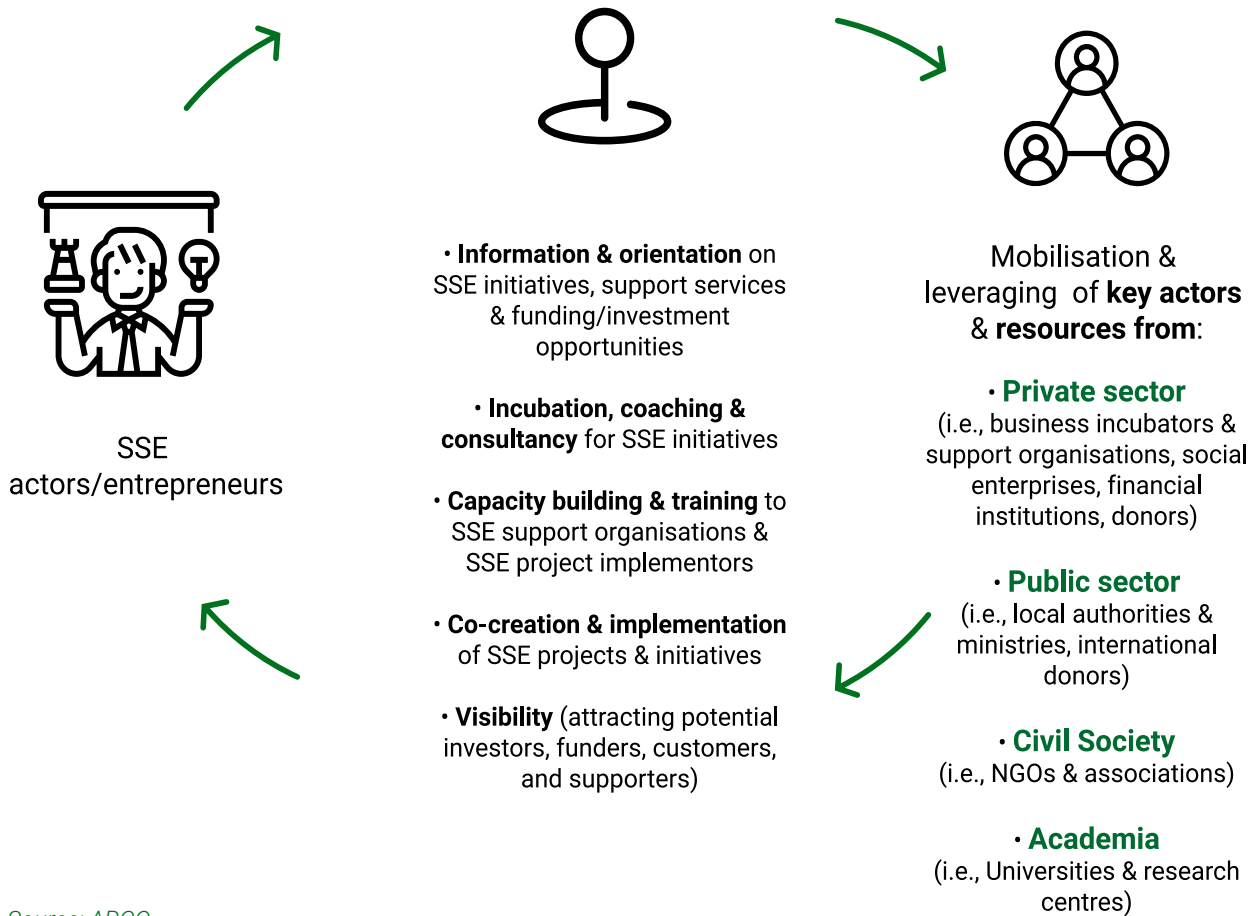
⁴ IESS! Project (ENPI/2014/344-995) was financed by the ENPI CBC “Mediterranean Sea Basin” 2007-2013 Programme and implemented in the Tunisian Governorates of Kasserine, Sidi Bouzid, Jendouba and Mahdia from October 2014 and May 2018.

⁵ Created in Barcelona in September 2011, the year of the Jasmine Revolution and the “Arab Spring”, the European cooperative iesMed, Innovation and Social Economy in the Mediterranean, was a leading group for the development of the SSE in the Mediterranean. In 2018, it joined the EU Commission’s Group of Experts on Social Economy and Social Enterprises (GECES). The CitESS concept gives continuity to the MedESS 2013 event: 600 participants from 12 countries bordering the Mediterranean were mobilized in Tunis to collectively structure a Mediterranean dynamic of the SSE. The creation of interconnected territorial hubs of support for SSE entrepreneurs, “solidarity innovation clusters”, was one of the priority projects identified by the participants. iesMed took up the challenge by designing the CitESS Med program in 2014.



Overview of CitESS territorial pole

CITESS MULTI-SERVICE TERRITORIAL POLE



Source: ARCO

- Support a **territorial dynamic** of SSE and raise **territorial awareness** on the SSE concept and culture, notably through awareness-raising activities, SSE training and advocacy, sharing of project ideas inspired by national or Mediterranean cases, organization of SSE events, etc.
- Play an active role in SSE **advocacy** at the level of the **legal framework** but also at the level of funding lines and opportunities.
- Detect **promising sectors** for the SSE and SSE **investment opportunities** / niches.

The main services offered by the CitESS pole to local SSE entrepreneurs and initiatives are the following:

- **Information and orientation** of entrepreneurs and SSE initiatives in order to support their access to legal support, existing training and coaching programmes, financing and SSE investment opportunities, networks, incubation spaces and other available support services that can respond to their needs.
- **Incubation, coaching and consultancy** for SSE entrepreneurs and actors.
- **Capacity building and training** for SSE support organisations (i.e., associations, Universities, vocational and incubation centres)



- Co-creation and implementation of **SSE projects and pilot initiatives**
- **Showcase for the promotion of the territorial SSE and its actors**, attracting potential investors, funders, customers, and supporters.

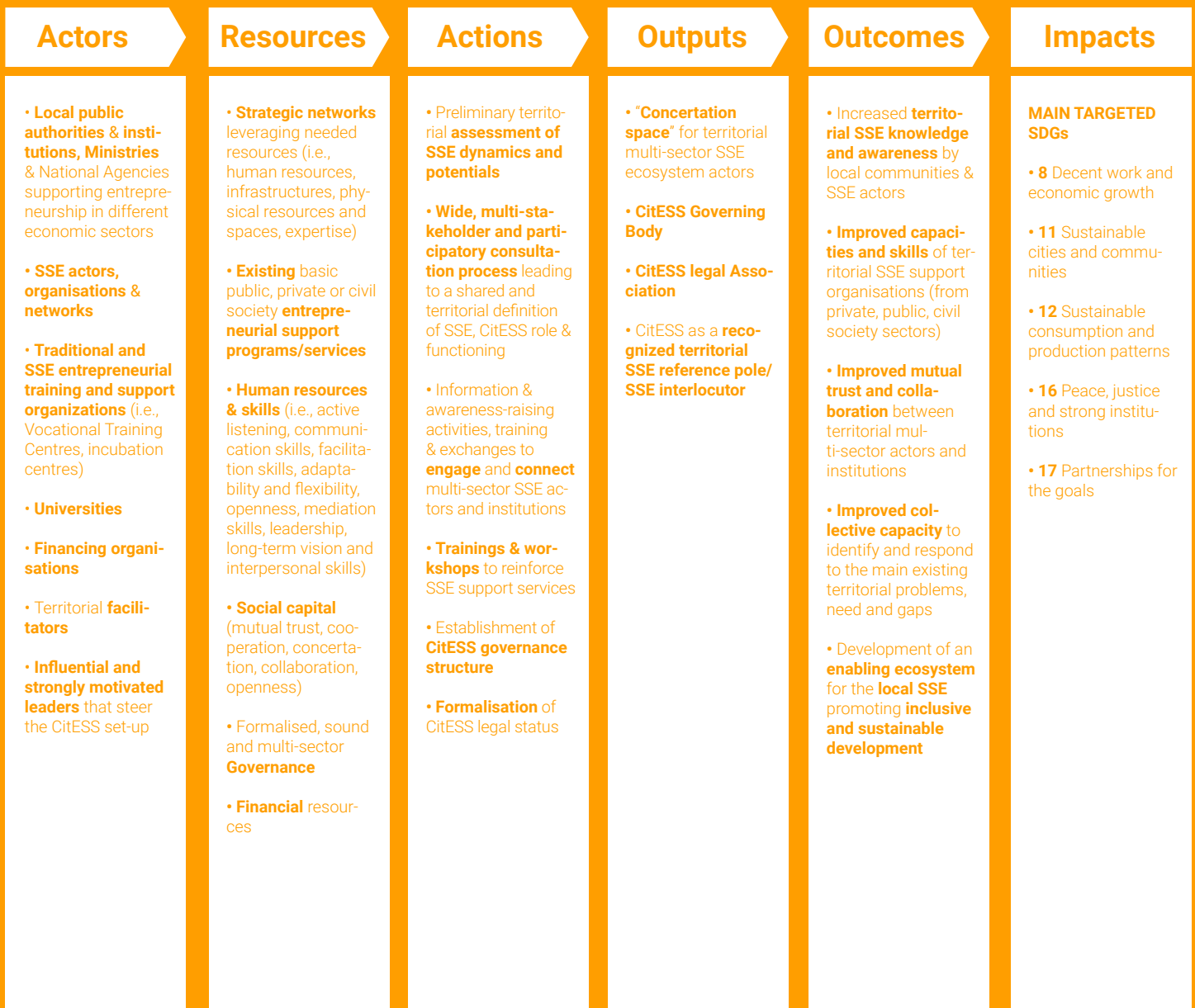
In the following sections, the Roadmap retraces and analyses the key phases, and respective main actors, resources, and actions, which led to the set-up of the CitESS pilot pole in the Tunisian Governorate of Mahdia. Key determinants to replicate the model, as well as potential risks and respective mitigation measures, complete the overall assessment of CitESS model for those readers who might be interested or even considering embarking on a similar experience elsewhere.



3. Theory of change

TRIGGERING ELEMENT

The Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) is generally a diverse and very dispersed world, given the multiplication of actions and actors with similar purpose and operating in the same territory, region, or country. This calls for the strong need to create a common territorial SSE support platform which i) facilitates an open and multi-stakeholder dialogue, ii) pools together the available public and private actors, resources and support infrastructures of the SSE and iii) consolidates dynamics of territorial collaboration and mutual support in order to maximize the overall impact of SSE actions.



4.

The process

For the purpose of this Roadmap, 4 key phases of the process enabling the CitESS Mahdia experience were identified and analysed, starting from the triggering factors (Phase 0) to planning (Phase 1), implementation (Phase 2) and, finally, sustainability phase (Phase 3), identifying for each key actors, resources, and activities.

In summary, in response to the need to create a mutual support hub pooling together the different and scattered actors and resources of the SSE, a **first crucial phase** focused on fostering a **wide, multi-stakeholder, multi-level and participatory territorial consultation process** which was carried out over a period of more than a year in the Tunisian Governorate of Mahdia.

The objective was to bring together all territorial key stakeholders - public, private, Academia, and civil society actors - at the discussion table to co-decide the location of the pole and to identify what was the aim, the function and potential of the CitESS platform.

A **second key phase** concerned the actual **activation** of the platform counting on the strong engagement of the public actors and local SSE actors.

A **third phase** (currently ongoing) focuses on key measures driving **financial, institutional, and technical sustainability** of the pole.

Phase 0

TRIGGERING
FACTORS



Phase 1

THE IESS
MULTI-STAKEHOLDER
& PARTICIPATORY
CONSULTATION PROCESS



Phase 2

SET-UP &
ACTIVATION
THE CITESS POLE



Phase 3

SUSTAINABILITY



Phase 0

TRIGGERING FACTORS

Insights from the intervention

The **SSE is generally a diverse and very dispersed world, given the multiplication of actions and actors with similar purpose and operating in the same territory, region, or country.** This holds true particularly in Tunisia, a country which traditionally counts on a highly centralised administrative system and where the existing public structures supporting entrepreneurship and (potentially) SSE actors work in silos, each governed by separate Ministries following their own programs and strategies. This called for the strong need to create a **common territorial SSE support platform** which i) facilitates an open and multi-stakeholder dialogue, ii) pools together the available public and private actors, resources and support infrastructures of the SSE and iii) consolidates dynamics of territorial mutual support in order to maximize the overall impact of SSE actions.

This need was indeed voiced by the actors participating to the 2013 MedESS Forum which identified the following priorities for the region:

- To create a favourable environment for the development of SSE in the territories in terms of enabling legal framework;
- To create a favourable environment for the development of SSE in terms of territorial support;
- To facilitate the financing of SSE;
- To promote a common conceptual SSE framework through training and capacity-building of the actors managing, regulating and supporting the SSE.

The CitESS model was hence theorised and later experimented in response to the need for a quality and integrated public-private SSE territorial support infrastructure favouring an enabling environment for the SSE development in a given territory. Moreover, the model also responds to the need for a publicly recognized interlocutor of the SSE sector in a given territory.

Self-assessment questions

- Are there SSE actors and initiatives in your territory?
- Are there available public and/or private SSE support services and opportunities in your territory?
- Are SSE actors and public and private support organisations in your territory dispersed or well interconnected?
- Are SSE actors in your territory aware of the available support opportunities? Do they know where to turn to when needing support for the ideation, start-up, development, scaling-up and sustainability of their enterprises?
- Do potential investors, national or international funders, public or private institutions and organisations wishing to support SSE in your territory know whom or where to turn to in order to reach out to SSE actors?

Phase 1

PLANNING: THE IESS MULTI-STAKEHOLDER & PARTICIPATORY CONSULTATION PROCESS

Insights from the intervention	Suggested actions	Self-assessment questions
MAIN ACTORS		
<p>The following key actors were involved in a wide, multi-stakeholder, multi-level and participatory territorial consultation process which was carried out over a period of more than a year leading to the set-up of the CitESS pole:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key actors from local public authorities and institutions (i.e., Municipalities, Regional Council) supporting entrepreneurship in different economic sectors. • Key actors from Ministries and National agencies supporting entrepreneurship in different economic sectors (i.e., ANETI – Agence Nationale pour l’Emploi et le Travail Indépendant under the Ministry of Employment; the Centres of Affaires under the Ministry of Industry; CRDAs -Commissariat régional de développement Agricole – under the Ministry of Agriculture) • Key local SSE actors (i.e., cooperatives, social enterprises, CSOs, informal groups, NGOs) and SSE Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, focus on key actors and organisations (from different levels and sectors) that are already working on entrepreneurship and bring them at a common discussion table to develop the SSE: avoid duplication of efforts (actors doing the same things) and synergize and capitalize on the existing. • A strong interest, involvement, and active participation of key local public institution and local public authorities that are supporting/can support entrepreneurship and the SSE is crucial if we want to concretise support to the SSE. • A strong interest, involvement, and active participation of key regional/national level institutions and authorities (i.e., ministry-level actors, ministerial agencies) that are supporting/can support entrepreneurship and the SSE is crucial if we want to concretise support to the SSE. • Make sure you involve key local SSE actors (i.e., cooperatives, social enterprises, CSOs, informal groups, NGOs) and SSE networks to make sure the building of the CitESS and the support to the local SSE is well rooted in the local community and to the territorial real needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the key public, private and academia actors in your territory that are or can be key to promoting an enabling SSE ecosystem? What do they do? In which sector and level of intervention do they work? Are they aware of the other actors of the ecosystem? Are they connected to each other? Do they collaborate? Can they be gathered at a common discussion table? Are they willing to cooperate? • Which are the key local institutions and local public authorities in your territory that are supporting/can support entrepreneurship and the SSE? How can you effectively engage them and ensure their active participation to the discussion table? • Which are the key regional/national level institutions and authorities in your context (i.e., ministry-level actors, ministerial agencies) that are supporting/can support entrepreneurship and the SSE? How can you effectively engage them and ensure their active participation to the discussion table? • Which key local SSE actors (i.e., cooperatives, social enterprises, CSOs, informal groups, NGOs) and SSE networks should you actively involve in the preliminary consultation process? Which key actor can best inform you on the real needs of the community?



Insights from the intervention	Suggested actions	Self-assessment questions
--------------------------------	-------------------	---------------------------

MAIN ACTORS

- **Key local private entrepreneurial training and support organizations** (Vocational Training Centres, incubation centres, etc.)

- Identify and engage key **local private SSE support organisations** that can provide first-hand information on the real needs of the community and the local SSE.

- Are there available **local private SSE support organisations** in your territory? How can you effectively engage them to gather key information on the real needs of the community and the local SSE?

- **Key Universities** and **research centres**

- Engaging key **Universities** and **research centres** is fundamental when working on a cultural shift towards SSE.

- Which **key Universities** and **research centres** could you engage in the preliminary consultation process to support the discussion on the importance of promoting the SSE?

MAIN RESOURCES

- This first consultation phase mainly consisted of roundtable discussions, meetings, and interviews with multi-sector and multi-level stakeholders. This step mostly drew from **human resources and personal skills and attitudes** of key individuals which were steering and participating to the wide and participatory consultation process: i.e., active listening, communication skills, facilitation skills, adaptability and flexibility, openness, mediation skills, leadership, long-term vision, and interpersonal skills. Most importantly, their **true motivation and willingness to collaborate and to make this experience work** was the ultimate success factor at this stage.

- **Human resources and personal skills and attitudes** of involved individuals are key to a successful, wide, and participatory consultation process. The latter builds on crucial human skills, such as **active listening, communication skills, facilitation skills, adaptability and flexibility, openness, mediation skills, leadership, long-term vision, and interpersonal skills**. Most importantly, individuals' **true motivation and willingness to collaborate and to make this experience work** is the ultimate success factor at this stage.

- Who are the right individuals in your territory to engage in a wide and participatory process for the set-up of a CitESS? Do they have the **necessary skills** to dialogue, collaborate and connect with other key stakeholders of the ecosystem?

- The consultation process greatly benefitted from having an **influential, charismatic, and strongly motivated leader**, personally involved and highly committed to the CitESS setup and key to animate the discussion table.

- It is important to have **influential and strongly motivated leader** sitting at the discussion table that can steer the consultation process leading to the CitESS set-up. Better if not representing public administrations or institutions, these leaders must be personally involved and really interested in the process, highly committed, and sufficiently charismatic to animate the discussion table.

- Is there an **influential and strongly motivated person** that can take up the **leading role** throughout the consultation phase and the overall process of setting up the CitESS?

- Another key resource (and outcome) during this phase was the (progressively created or strengthened) **social capital**, hence a set of shared values and attitudes which allowed all these different stakeholders to work together to effectively achieve a common purpose, building on **mutual trust, cooperation, concertation, collaboration, openness, respect for one another**.

- **Social capital** is a crucial resource allowing stakeholders to work together to effectively achieve a common purpose, building on **mutual trust, cooperation, concertation, collaboration, openness, respect for one another**.

- Can your territory count on a certain level of **social capital** allowing these different key stakeholders to trust each other to work together to effectively achieve a common purpose?

- Finally, **IESS! project financial resources** (EU funds) supported the work done by the project team steering the overall consultation process.

- **Financial resources** are needed to support the work to be carried out by the staff team to steer and facilitate the consultation process.

- Can you intercept sufficient **financial resources** to support the work done by the staff team to steer and facilitate the consultation process?



Insights from the intervention

Suggested actions

Self-assessment questions

MAIN ACTIVITIES

In order to set up the CitESS pole, a **wide, multi-stakeholder and participatory consultation process** was carried out over a period of more than a year through numerous **collective** and **bilateral meetings** and **exchanges** among engaged stakeholders. The following key actions were undertaken:

- **Preliminary studies** targeting the candidate host territories for the CitESS and investigating the **dynamics of the SSE actors** (i.e., development and dynamism of the associative groupings); the existence or absence of **enabling SSE legal frameworks**; the **social needs and problems** (i.e., access to drinkable water, education, healthcare, cultural life); the **multi-actor dynamics and support organisations**; the **existing supply chains** which could be opportunities for the local SSE (i.e., craftsmanship, ecotourism).

- Building and nurturing of the **"Concertation Space"** bringing together all territorial key stakeholders - public, private, Academia, and civil society actors - at the common discussion table through several meetings and exchanges. The Concertation Space constitutes the **embryonic informal stakeholder network of the CitESS** and continued to play a crucial role throughout the entire process of the pole set-up and functioning. Among other, the **"Concertation Space"**:

- provided a **crucial dialogue and listening space**, allowing to acknowledge diverse realities and point of view of public and private entrepreneurship/SSE support service providers and that of the beneficiaries of these services.

- Favoured the co-identification of a **shared and territorial definition of SSE**.

- A **preliminary territorial assessment** should previously inform any feasibility consideration of setting up a CitESS in a given region. It is important to assess and consider the **dynamics of the SSE actors** of the territory (i.e., development and dynamism of the associative groupings); the existence or absence of **enabling legal frameworks**; the **social needs and problems** (i.e., access to drinkable water, education, healthcare, cultural life); the **multi-actor dynamics and support organisations**; the **existing supply chains** which could be opportunities for the local SSE.

- Build the **embryonic informal stakeholder network of the CitESS** by bringing together all territorial key stakeholders - public, private, Academia, and civil society actors - at the common discussion table.

- Make sure you can promote a proper **dialogue and listening space** for the informal stakeholder network where all actors can acknowledge diverse realities and point of view concerning the SSE ecosystem in your territory.

- A delicate and essential step is the **common definition and sharing of the SSE framework together with local actors and which suits your territory**. If not framed in a **broader strategy of territorialization** starting from the key local SSE actors, a CitESS risks being a top-down operation. It is necessary to make sure that the pole serves the territorial context and that it is designed directly by the local actors themselves.

- Can you access reliable **data and information** providing you with a comprehensive overview of the territory that could benefit from hosting the CitESS pole? What are the **dynamics of the SSE actors** of the territory? (i.e., development and dynamism of the associative groupings) Are there **enabling SSE legal frameworks** in place? What are the main territorial **social needs and problems**? (i.e., access to drinkable water, education, healthcare, cultural life) What are the **multi-actor dynamics** among SSE actors and support organisations? Which are the **existing supply chains** which could be opportunities for the local SSE?

- Which is the best way to **bring together** all territorial key stakeholders - public, private, Academia, and civil society actors - in your context? How can you effectively engage them in an **informal stakeholder network** building the CitESS set-up?

- How can you promote a proper **dialogue and listening space** allowing to **acknowledge the different SSE ecosystem actors' realities and point of view** and to promote **mutual understanding**?

- Can a **shared definition of SSE** suiting your territory be collectively identified and agreed upon among key ecosystem actors?



Insights from the intervention	Suggested actions	Self-assessment questions
MAIN ACTIVITIES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensured a participatory decision-making process concerning where the pole should be set up and the aim, the function and potential of the CitESS platform. - Created the necessary trust climate among stakeholders to set up the pole, and increased collaboration, willingness, and openness to share information and resources among actors. - Broke silos, built trust, and allowed mutual knowledge among key SSE ecosystem actors – who they are, what they do, the resources and networks they can deploy, share, and leverage. - Improved the collective capacity to identify the main existing territorial problems, needs and gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive collective debate and dialogue among key actors in order to agree over the location, role and functioning of the CitESS. • Create and foster a climate of trust, openness, cooperation, and dialogue among actors of a territory that are or can be key to the development of an enabling SSE ecosystem: ensure all actors acknowledge that cooperation is a win-win situation for all. • Work towards breaking silos and building mutual knowledge between key SSE ecosystem actors and their potential: who they are, what they do, the resources and networks they can deploy, leverage and share. • Promote dialogue between key public and private actors to improve the collective capacity to identify what are the main territorial problems, needs and gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building on the results of the preliminary territorial assessment and on the mutual dialogue promoted through the informal stakeholder network, which location can really benefit from hosting the CitESS pole? What should be its main role and function? • Is there a climate of trust, openness, cooperation, and dialogue among actors of your territory that are or can be key to the development of an enabling SSE ecosystem? Can it be created or strengthened? Do the actors of your territory acknowledge that cooperation is a win-win situation for all? Can this perspective be promoted, understood, and adopted? • Do the (current and potential) SSE key actors of your territory know about each other, their activities, the resources and networks they can deploy, leverage and share? Can mutual knowledge and networking be fostered? • Is there a common space for dialogue and reflexion in order for key public and private actors to collectively identify what are the existing main problems, needs and gaps in your territory?

Phase 2

IMPLEMENTATION: SET-UP & ACTIVATION THE CITESS POLE

Insights from the intervention	Suggested actions	Self-assessment questions
MAIN ACTORS		

In addition to the key actors already engaged in the embryonic consultation phase (Phase 1), the **set-up and activation** of the CitESS pole (Phase 2) enlarged the circle of organisations and actors engaged in the platform.

- The public, private and civil society **territorial entrepreneurial support organisations** were the **main target** of this step, hence primary beneficiaries of the **training cycles** promoting and disseminating **SSE culture** and **improving their support skills and services**.

- Additionally, the work done to build/strengthen SSE territorial supply chains made it possible to consolidate strategic links with other key territorial actors, such as the **trade union structures**, in particular the Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT), the Union of Farmers of Tunisia (SYNACRI), and the Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fisheries (UTAP).

- Finally, the **IESS! Project staff team** was an **important facilitator** of this phase and key to ensuring a dynamic work and the proper implementation of the activities (i.e., trainings, meetings, facilitation of exchanges and promotion of tools and seminars) by encouraging the sharing of responsibility and participation of the various actors.

- Existing public, private and civil society **territorial entrepreneurial support organisations** are key targets when promoting and disseminating **SSE culture** and **improving SSE support infrastructure**.

- Map, identify and engage in the CitESS pole all strategic public and private - for profit and non-profit -actors to make sure the support to the local SSE is well rooted in the local community and to the territorial real needs.

- Hands-on, competent, and dynamic **facilitators** are key to ensuring the good implementation of the activities (i.e., trainings, meetings, facilitation of exchanges and promotion of tools and seminars) and to encouraging the sharing of responsibility and participation of the various actors.

- Who are the **main public and private actors** - for profit and non-profit - that are working to support entrepreneurship in your territory and can be key to promoting an enabling SSE ecosystem? What do they do? In which sector and level of intervention do they work? Do they need support to strengthen their capacities? Can they be engaged in the CitESS?

- Which are other public and private - for profit and non-profit -actors that you can engage in the CitESS platform in order for it to pursue its purpose?

- Can you count on a **hands-on, competent, and dynamic team of facilitators** leading the networking process and coordinating all activities to set-up the CitESS? (i.e., trainings, meetings, facilitation of exchanges and promotion of tools and seminars)

Insights from the intervention	Suggested actions	Self-assessment questions
MAIN RESOURCES		

Key resources in the set-up phase mainly continue to be the same of the implementation phase, namely:

- **Human resources and personal skills and attitudes** of key individuals engaged in the CitESS set-up: i.e., active listening, communication skills, facilitation skills, adaptability and flexibility, openness, mediation skills, leadership, long-term vision, and interpersonal skills. Most importantly, their **true motivation and willingness to collaborate** and to make this experience work was the ultimate success factor also at this stage.

- **Social capital**, hence, a set of shared values and attitudes which allowed stakeholders to work together to effectively achieve a common purpose, building on **mutual trust, cooperation, concertation, collaboration, openness, respect for one another**.

- In addition, another crucial ingredient for the activation (and current functioning) of the CitESS pole are the **strategic and multi-sector networks** that the CitESS governing body (-> see Sustainability) can mobilise to improve or create SSE support programs. Depending on the needed SSE support services or projects, in fact, such key networks allow CitESS (i.e., through Partnership Agreements) to leverage a vast array of **private and public resources** (i.e., human resources, infrastructures, physical resources and spaces, expertise).

- Finally, the **IESS! project financial resources** (EU funds) continued to be important at this stage.

- **Human resources and personal skills and attitudes** of involved individuals are key to the CitESS set-up process. The latter builds on crucial human skills, such as **active listening, communication skills, facilitation skills, adaptability and flexibility, openness, mediation skills, leadership, long-term vision, and interpersonal skills**. Most importantly, individuals' **true motivation and willingness to collaborate and to make this experience work** was the ultimate success factor also at this stage.

- **Social capital** is a crucial resource allowing stakeholders to work together to effectively achieve a common purpose, building on **mutual trust, cooperation, concertation, collaboration, openness, respect for one another**.

- **Strategic public and private networks** are key to leveraging **crucial resources** (i.e., human resources, infrastructures, physical resources and spaces, expertise) needed to improve or create SSE support services or projects. Hence, when formalising the CitESS governing body, make sure you can count on members who can leverage such strategic networks and resources.

- **Financial resources** are needed to carry out the information and awareness-raising activities, trainings to SSE support organisations and exchanges to engage and connect multi-sector SSE actors and institutions.

- Who are the right individuals in your territory to engage in the set-up of a CitESS? Do they have the **necessary skills and incentives** to dialogue, collaborate and connect with other key stakeholders of the ecosystem?

- Can your territory count on a certain level of **social capital** allowing these stakeholders to work together to effectively achieve a common purpose?

- When formalising the CitESS governing body, can you secure the membership of key actors who can leverage **strategic networks and resources** to improve/ create SSE support programs and services?

- Can you intercept sufficient **financial resources** to support the activation of the CitESS pole?

Insights from the intervention	Suggested actions	Self-assessment questions
MAIN ACTIVITIES		
<p>Once identified the location of the CitESS platform, its aim and key function, the following stage focused on its set-up and activation. The key steps undertaken to set up the pole were the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping, mobilisation and “mise en réseau” of territorial SSE actors: identification of SSE support organisations/actors/ initiatives to be engaged in the CitESS and fostering of connection/networking among SSE actors. • Promotion of a preliminary and informal structuring of the pole by co-elaborating a charter formalising CitESS values, principles, and commitments of involved public and private actors. • Delivering of a cycle of trainings and workshops mainly for involved entrepreneurial support organisations to reinforce existing SSE support services and/or implement new missing services (identified according to the needs of the territory) in the fields of training, support, and funding for the SSE. • Facilitation of exchanges and promotion of tools and seminars for sharing existing experiences in the Mediterranean area of SSE support services and SSE business ideas as well as experiences of other Mediterranean SSE clusters in the process of being created/strengthened. • Establishment of the CitESS governance structure and formalisation (-> see Sustainability). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key SSE support organisations/actors/ initiatives in your territory to be engaged in the CitESS and foster connection/networking among these SSE actors. • Promote a preliminary and informal structuring of the pole by co-elaborating a charter formalising CitESS values, principles, and commitments of involved public and private actors. • Reinforce existing SSE support services and promote the implementation of new missing services through ad-hoc trainings and workshops. • Facilitate exchanges and promote the sharing of existing experiences of SSE support services, SSE business ideas as well as experiences of SSE clusters in other territories or abroad. • Promote the establishment of the CitESS multi-actor (public-private) governance structure and formalise the network into a suitable legal form (->see Sustainability). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which are the key SSE experiences and actors in your territory? How can they be connected? • Could these actors benefit from a co-elaborated definition of a charter of principles formalising shared values, principles, and commitments within the CitESS? • Could existing SSE support services benefit from capacity building and skill-strengthening support? Are there missing services they could offer? Should they be supported with ad-hoc trainings? • Could your SSE ecosystem benefit from exchanges and sharing of other existing experiences concerning SSE support services, SSE business ideas as well as experiences of SSE clusters in other territories or abroad? • What kind of governance structure could benefit the CitESS in your territory? • Which available legal form in your territory could best reflect CitESS nature and values allowing for good and long-lasting governance?

Phase 3

SUSTAINABILTY: PROMOTING A SUSTAINABLE FUNCTIONING OF THE CITESS POLE

Insights from the intervention	Suggested actions	Self-assessment questions
--------------------------------	-------------------	---------------------------

a) FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

• **Pursuing a mixed economic model to ensure greater financial sustainability of the pole:** the public local/national funding or international cooperation funding that CitESS Mahdia intercepts is put at the services of its territory. Hence, this allows a strategic channelling and redistribution of resources towards local SSE initiatives which, in turn, facilitates greater economic and social returns to the benefit of the community as a whole. However, this questions the essential aspect of the financial sustainability of the CitESS pole, which was voiced and debated since the initial consultation space (Phase 1). It was indeed remarked that **the pole should not rely only on public financing or international cooperation donors** (as it is mainly the case today). This shed light on the need for CitESS to develop and offer SSE support **services** which are attractive to clients (i.e., SSE actors, public or private actors) in order to secure a **self-financing** channel and therefore relying on a more viable economic model. Therefore, the long-term vision of the CitESS pole foresees a mixed economic model, which may include:

- Funds from **International cooperation Donors** (i.e., EU-funded projects).
- **Public financing** (i.e., Ministries).
- Targeted **partnerships** with the **private sector**.
- **Contributions** from the territorial actors on a principle of solidarity and mutualization.
- Progressive **invoicing of services**.

• Questioning the financial sustainability of the CitESS pole is crucial and should be voiced and debated since the initial consultation phase. It is **fundamental to diversify funding** and avoid depending on public financing or international cooperation donors. For this reason, a CitESS pole needs to rely on a more **viable and mixed economic model**. One solution is to **develop and offer SSE support services** which are attractive to clients (i.e., SSE actors, public or private actors) in order to secure a **self-financing** channel.

• How can you ensure financial sustainability of the CitESS in your territory? Is there a possibility to **diversify funding** and avoid relying only on public financing or international cooperation donors? Are there **SSE support services** that can be **attractive to SSE actors** in your territory and that can ensure a self-financing channel to support the CitESS? How can you ensure such services do not compete with existing ones?

Insights from the intervention	Suggested actions	Self-assessment questions
--------------------------------	-------------------	---------------------------

b) INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY:

• **Formalising and institutionalising the CitESS pole:** at the end of the overall process, a **CitESS association was created** to build a sustainable SSE dynamic in the territories and to ensure the participation and good governance of all the actors involved in the SSE initiatives in the Governorate of Mahdia. The association is governed by a **Board of Administration** (about 10 members) **gathering individuals coming from public institutions, Universities, civil society, SSE, and private sector**. This **diversity of the composition** of the Board of Administration is undoubtedly the **main richness** of the CitESS allowing for the **multi-stakeholder collaboration** to materialise into SSE support programs. In Tunisia members of an association may only be individuals (natural persons and not legal entities such as other organisations, associations, or institutions). Nevertheless, while the Board members do not formally represent the organisations they come from, they indeed allow for strong linkages which can easily open doors to facilitate collaborations, unlock strategic networks and leverage needed private or public resources.

• **Formalisation and Institutionalization**, if and when the time is ripe, are essential for sustainability. Firstly, set up an **effective governance** of the CitESS including all the key multi-sector territorial actors and stakeholders and guaranteeing an effective, yet inclusive, democratic, and participatory decision-making process and management. Secondly, **formalizing CitESS role, objectives, pursued values, and governance structure** is key to **ensuring lasting structures, strong participation, long-term functioning, and good governance of the pole**. Opt for a **legal form which best reflects CitESS nature and values** and allows for good and long-lasting governance (i.e., cooperative, association). Make sure such legal form allows to **involve key territorial actors** coming from the public, private, Academia and civil society sectors.

- What kind of autonomous **governance structure** could benefit the CitESS in your territory in order to guarantee an effective, yet inclusive, democratic, and participatory decision-making process and management?
- Which available legal form in your territory could best **reflect CitESS nature and values** allowing for good and long-lasting governance?

Insights from the intervention	Suggested actions	Self-assessment questions
--------------------------------	-------------------	---------------------------

c) TECHNICAL SUSTAINABILITY

- **Strengthening existing entrepreneurial support structures:** The fact that CitESS opts to strengthen existing entrepreneurial support structures, especially public ones, is a way of ensuring that the new skills and capacities acquired are retained and applied in the long run.

- **Building the territorial capacity to collaborate:** the connections and collaborations established among public-private stakeholders through CitESS, when proved successful, are most likely to be continued in the future. Additionally, the same collaborative approach may be replicated with other stakeholders in many other fields or sectors. In other words, CitESS model builds and promotes the territorial collective capacity to collaborate to achieve common goals for the benefit of the community.

- Work to **strengthen existing entrepreneurial support structures**, especially **public ones**, as a way of ensuring that the new skills acquired are retained by the territorial institutions.

- When **multi-actor and multi-sector collaborations** prove to be successful, actors are more likely to pursue and replicate a collaborative approach in the long run. Make sure you effectively support, foster and advocate successful multi-actor and multi-sector collaborations in your territory.

- How can you **strengthen existing entrepreneurial support structures**, especially **public ones**, as a way of ensuring that the new skills acquired are retained by the territorial institutions?

- Should **connections and collaborations** established among public-private stakeholders in your territory prove to be successful, how can you best ensure they will continue in the future? How can you ensure they have wide **visibility** to inspire other collaborations?

d) SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- **Rooting CitESS to the real needs of the territory and the community:** CitESS efforts to connect and dialogue with the territory and local actors, to map and identify true territorial needs and gaps allows for the pole to be well rooted in its own context and to address the community's social issues, instead of being a top-down process. This territorial approach is likely to ensure the relevance of such a platform in the long run.

- Creating and fostering **strong and rooted links with the territory and with local actors and communities** is key to CitESS sustainability. For this reason, it is essential to map and address the community's real needs and issues, **focus on actors who are already existing and active in the territory**, connect them together and create **synergy** at different levels and sectors.

- How can you create and foster **strong and rooted links with your territory and with local actors and communities**?



5. Key contextual determinants for replicability

The following table aims to inform readers of the **main contextual determinants** that emerged during the analysis when seeking to identify key “ingredients” and conditions that should be in place in a given context for the replicability of the CitESS model. The table should support readers in running a quick general screening of their own context to assess the preliminary feasibility of considering replicating the practice.



Key determinants	Self-assessment questions
 <p>SOCIAL CONTEXT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social capital is a crucial resource allowing public and private sector actors to work together to effectively achieve a common purpose, building on mutual trust, cooperation, open dialogue, respect for one another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can your territory count on a certain level of social capital allowing key territorial stakeholders to work together to effectively achieve a common purpose?
 <p>FINANCIAL RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial resources are needed to set up and manage the CitESS. The model foresees a mixed economic model drawing resources from public financing, funds from international cooperation donors (i.e., EU Commission) as well as invoicing of support services offered to SSE actors. The public local/national funding or international cooperation funding that CitESS intercepts is put at the services of its territory. Hence this allows a strategic channelling and redistribution of resources towards local SSE initiatives which, in turn, facilitate greater economic and social returns to the benefit of the community as a whole. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there financial resources coming from public financing and international cooperation donors that can be intercepted to set up and manage the CitESS, and channelled by the latter toward local SSE initiatives? Moreover, which missing SSE support services can be offered to SSE actors to also secure CitESS self-financing income?
 <p>HUMAN CAPITAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human resources and personal skills of engaged and truly motivated individuals are key to a successful, wide, and participatory CiteESS set-up and management. The latter builds on crucial human skills, such as active listening, communication skills, facilitation skills, adaptability and flexibility, openness, mediation skills, leadership, long-term vision, and interpersonal skills. • Influential and strongly motivated political leaders that can steer the process leading to the CitESS set-up. Better if not representing public administrations or institutions, these leaders have to be personally involved and really interested in the process, highly committed, and sufficiently charismatic to animate the discussion table. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the right individuals in your territory to engage in a wide and participatory process for the set-up and management of a CitESS? Do they have the necessary skills and motivation to dialogue, collaborate and connect with other key stakeholders of the ecosystem? • Is there an influential and strongly motivated political person that can take up the leading role throughout the overall process of setting up the CitESS?
 <p>ACTORS AND ORGANISATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local public authorities and institutions (i.e., Municipalities) supporting entrepreneurship and the SSE in different economic sectors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the main local public authorities and institutions in your territory that are supporting/ can support entrepreneurship and the SSE? Can they be engaged in a model like CitESS? Would they be willing to collaborate with the private sector, civil society actors and academia to strengthen/improve the territorial support to SSE initiatives?



ACTORS AND ORGANISATIONS

Key determinants

- **Ministries and National agencies** supporting entrepreneurship and the SSE in different economic sectors.

- Dynamic, skilled, and committed local **entrepreneurial support organisations** (public and private – for-profit and non-profit) such as vocational training centres and incubation centres.

- **Local SSE actors** (i.e., cooperatives, social enterprises, CSOs, informal groups, NGOs) and SSE Networks that can inform CitESS on the real needs of the community and could benefit from CitESS support.

- **Universities & research centres** that are committed to researching and supporting the SSE.

- **Financing organizations** (i.e., national or international public institutions, cooperation agencies, donors) supporting and promoting SSE.

- Building **strong and strategic networks** is undoubtedly among the most fundamental resources that a CitESS model can count on. Engaging multi-sector and multi-level actors and organisations from the Public, private, Academia and civil society sectors allows CitESS to access their respective networks, therefore being able to leverage, connect and catalyse all the needed resources (i.e., human resources, infrastructures, physical resources and spaces, expertise) to support entrepreneurs and SSE initiatives in a given territory. Hence such strategic networks are key to setting up the CitESS platform facilitating the integration and co-production of support services.



NETWORKS

Self-assessment questions

- Which are the **key national level institutions and authorities** in your context (i.e., ministry-level actors, ministerial agencies) that are supporting/can support entrepreneurship and the SSE? Can they be engaged in a model like CitESS? Would they be willing to collaborate with the private sector, civil society actors and academia to strengthen/improve the territorial support to SSE initiatives?

- Who are the **main public and private actors** - for profit and non-profit (i.e., cooperatives, social enterprises, CSOs, informal groups, NGOs) - that are working to support entrepreneurship in your territory and can be key to promoting an enabling SSE ecosystem? What do they do? In which sector and level of intervention do they work? Do they need support to strengthen their capacities? Can they be engaged in the CitESS?

- Which **key local SSE actors** (i.e., cooperatives, social enterprises, CSOs, informal groups, NGOs) and **SSE networks** can best inform you on the real needs of the local community? Which **key local SSE actors** could benefit from CitESS support?

- Which **key local Universities and research centres** could you engage in the CitESS set-up and management to support the community's cultural shift towards the SSE?

- Which key national or international **financing organizations** (i.e., public institutions, cooperation agencies, donors) could you engage in the CitESS to support and promote SSE in your territory?

- Which **strategic networks** do you need access to in order to leverage the needed resources (i.e., human resources, infrastructures, physical resources and spaces, expertise) to support entrepreneurs and SSE initiatives in your territory?

Key determinants	Self-assessment questions
<div data-bbox="256 524 331 607" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="193 613 399 667">BASIC HARD INFRASTRUCTURES</p> <ul data-bbox="475 495 901 672" style="list-style-type: none"> • All key economic hard infrastructures needed by the SSE actors to be operative, such as the marketplace, transportation and communication infrastructures, power grid and water supply network, etc., allowing them to produce, purchase and exchange resources, products, and services. 	<ul data-bbox="965 495 1412 649" style="list-style-type: none"> • Can SSE actors in your context count on existing and functioning key economic hard infrastructures to be operative? (i.e., marketplace, transportation and communication infrastructures, power grid and water supply network)
<div data-bbox="256 927 331 1010" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="161 1010 427 1064">SOFT INFRASTRUCTURES (SERVICES)</p> <ul data-bbox="475 719 901 1075" style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing basic public, private or civil society entrepreneurial support programs/services should already be in place for CitESS model to be experimented in a given territory. By its own nature, CitESS primarily catalyses, connects, leverages, and improves existing resources and support programs for the local SSE, albeit it can promote also new services. In fact, while CitESS is not meant to be primarily a direct support service provider, it is indeed a platform facilitating the integration and co-production of support services as well as strategic matchmaking with actors in need for such services. • All services needed by the SSE actors to be operative in their market: i.e., commercial services, transport and export logistics, informatics, legal and technical support, research and development, patent and licencing, advertising. 	<ul data-bbox="965 719 1412 896" style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there basic public, private, or civil society support programs/services for entrepreneurs in your territory? Are they effective? Where do entrepreneurs in your territory turn to when needing support for the ideation, start-up, development, scaling-up and sustainability of their enterprises?
<div data-bbox="252 1447 327 1529" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="220 1536 363 1590">GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK</p> <ul data-bbox="475 1335 901 1765" style="list-style-type: none"> • It is necessary to set up an effective formalized governance where the Governing Board includes organisations and/or individuals coming from/representing public institutions, Universities, civil society, SSE, and the private sector. Such rich diversity of the Governing Board can ensure strong multi-sector linkages which can open doors to facilitate collaborations, unlock strategic networks and leverage needed private, Academia, public, or civil society resources to actually materialise successful SSE support programs. Moreover, the governance structure should guarantee an effective, yet inclusive, democratic, and participatory decision-making process and management of the CitESS. 	<ul data-bbox="965 1111 1412 1265" style="list-style-type: none"> • Which are the key services your SSE actors need to be operative? Are they available in your context? (i.e., commercial services, transport and export logistics, informatics, legal and technical support, research and development, patent and licencing, advertising) <hr/> <ul data-bbox="965 1335 1412 1489" style="list-style-type: none"> • Which key public, private, Academia and civil society individuals/organisations could join the CitESS Governing Board in your territory? Can they facilitate collaborations, unlock strategic networks and leverage needed resources to put in place effective SSE support programs? <ul data-bbox="965 1514 1412 1646" style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of governance structure could benefit the CitESS in your territory in order to guarantee an effective, yet inclusive, democratic, and participatory decision-making process and management?

6.

Drawbacks and risks

DRAWBACKS AND RISKS

The main risks which may arise when replicating the intervention

COPING STRATEGIES

The best strategies that could be implemented to cope with and/or prevent these risks

GOVERNANCE RISKS:

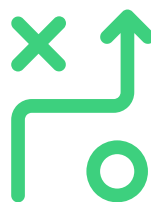
- Speeding up too fast the formalization process of the CitESS may hamper its governance and management if the proper grounds for effective cooperation are yet to be consolidated. In Tunisia where the associative culture is not strongly rooted, opting for the associative form for the CitESS was considered a premature and hazardous step. Prominent local actors took the lead of the overall IESS! initiative and, while on the one hand this guaranteed ownership and a positive boost to the process, on the other it created frictions when it came to concretize (i.e., electing the governance board) a participatory governance limiting the concentration of decisional power.

AVOID PREMATURE FORMALISATION:

- It is recommended not to prematurely accelerate the formalization of the CitESS. Conversely, it is recommended to work first on creating and developing the concept, act, connect and mobilize actors and organisations and then, when and if this works, cautiously steer towards formalization.

CHOOSE A SUITING LEGAL FORM AND MULTI-SECTOR GOVERNING BODY:

- To avoid governance risks, it is suggested to consolidate a multi-sector membership of the Governing Board and opt for a legal form which can work well within the existing local culture. Strong leaders are needed to steer and boost the CitESS set-up but can hamper the CitESS governance if reluctant to share the decision-making power.



DRAWBACKS AND RISKS

The main risks which may arise when replicating the intervention

COPING STRATEGIES

The best strategies that could be implemented to cope with and/or prevent these risks

ECONOMIC DEPENDANCY:

- Up to date, the Tunisian CitESS heavily relies on international cooperation Donors. This may hamper the economic sustainability of the pole and increase its vulnerability in case of political changes.

DIVERSIFY FUNDING AND OPT FOR MIXED ECONOMIC MODEL:

- Ensuring the financial sustainability of the CitESS pole is crucial and should be considered and debated since the initial consultation process. It is **fundamental to diversify funding and avoid relying only on public financing and international cooperation Donors**. For this reason, a CitESS pole needs to rely on a more **viable and mixed economic model**. One solution is to **develop and offer support services** which are attractive to clients (i.e., SSE actors, public or private actors) in order to guarantee a **self-financing** channel. However, this depends also on the type of organization in which the CitESS is formalized.

RISK OF A TOP-DOWN PROCESS:

- If not framed in a **broader strategy of territorialization** stemming from the key territorial SSE actors, a CitESS risks being a top-down operation. It is necessary to work so that the pole fits into the territorial context and that it is designed directly by the territorial actors themselves.

FAVOUR A COMMUNITY-OWNED CITESS MODEL:

- It is crucial to properly frame the CitESS set-up in a **broader strategy of territorialization** stemming from the key territorial SSE actors. A delicate and essential step is facilitating stakeholders' agreement over a **common and owned definition of SSE and of a CitESS charter of principles** which suits the **territory**, its **context**, and its **communities**.

7. Final remarks

Job creation through a more sustainable and inclusive economic development is today a relevant concern of the countries of the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. It was also a priority of the European Neighbourhood Policy and its financing instruments (ENPI CBC Med 2007-2013, ENI CBC Med 2014-2020), now continued by the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI 2021-2027). Job creation is crucial for **social cohesion** in this region and, in some countries, for the success of the **democratic transition**. The challenge lies in the capacity to create new jobs for the millions of young women and men who will join the labour market in the coming years.

The **SSE** has long demonstrated its ability to promote more **sustainable and inclusive development** by creating **quality jobs** that generate **positive social and environmental impacts**.

In recent years, on the southern shore of the Mediterranean, there has been a proliferation of SSE initiatives which attract many young people (especially young graduates), and many women. However, the SSE is generally a diverse and very dispersed world, given the multiplication of actions and actors with similar purpose and operating in the same territory, region, or country. This makes it necessary to create a **common SSE territorial platform** which **pools together** and **catylisises** the available **public, private and civil society actors,**

resources and initiatives by fostering **dynamics of mutual support** and **cooperation** and promoting a **common vision** of sustainable development. It is only through such strategic collaboration and solidarity that an **enabling territorial ecosystem** can be put in place in order to maximize the overall impact of local SSE actions.

CitESS proves to be a positive model to foster such an enabling, supporting, and synergic territorial ecosystem for the development of the local SSE. The CitESS pilot in the Tunisian Governorate of Mahdia facilitated an **open space for multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration between** key territorial actors, including those who usually worked in silos, and actively promoted and disseminate the principles of SSE. Cooperation among key actors and organisations from different sectors and levels in this Governorate helps to **catylise and leverage available territorial resources** to offer a higher quality, better integrated and more comprehensive support to local entrepreneurs and SSE initiatives for the benefit of the community as a whole.

SSE practitioners, policymakers and local administrations searching for ways to improve the SSE in their own territories may consider replicating the CitESS model provided that key ingredients are in place and the process is well adapted to their specific context.



8. Useful Contacts

Contact person: **Rodérick Egal**
E-mail: roderick@ess.coop
Organisation: **Planet'ESS**
Website: www.ess.coop
CitESS Mahdia Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/citess.Mahdia



ARCO C/O PIN S.r.c.l.
Didactic and Scientific Services
for the University of Florence
Website: www.arcolab.org
E-mail: info@arcolab.org



RESEARCH
THAT MAKES
THE DIFFERENCE



PIN

POLO
UNIVERSITARIO
CITTÀ DI PRATO

SERVIZI DIDATTICI
E SCIENTIFICI
PER L'UNIVERSITÀ
DI FIRENZE

 www.enicbcm.edu/projects/medrisse
Community of practice: cop.acpp.com

 medrisse@acpp.com

    @medrisseproject





MedRiSSE



RESEARCH
THAT MAKES
THE DIFFERENCE



PIN

POLO
UNIVERSITARIO
CITTÀ DI PRATO

SERVIZI DIDATTICI
E SCIENTIFICI
PER L'UNIVERSITÀ
DI FIRENZE

