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**Berytech**  
The Ecosystem  
for Entrepreneurs

# COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)

Berytech Foundation

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Engagement 2018 – 2020

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## **PART I. STATEMENT OF CONTINUED SUPPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR EQUIVALENT**

### **PART II. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS**

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SDG 14: Life Below Water, SDG 15: Life on Land & SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

SDG 5: Gender Equality & SDG 10: Reduce Inequality within & among countries

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## Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the Chief Executive or Equivalent



## Part II. Description of Actions

Initiated in 2002 by the Saint-Joseph University, Berytech provides a dynamic environment for the creation and development of startups and SMEs fostering innovation, technology and entrepreneurship.

### *SD9: Industries, Innovation and Infrastructure*

Berytech has particularly committed to the 9th Sustainable Development Goal related to Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. Our role focuses on improving the economy, the society and the sustainability of our country. We aim to be part of the social responsibility framework working towards a better world through creating a network of startups and SMEs and have them join the UN Global Compact network and be the change we are aiming at.

SDG9 complements the mission and the vision of Berytech that offers the right ecosystem for innovative entrepreneurs to create and develop their own startups and SMEs, through research, incubation, business support, networking, mentoring, funding, access to markets, company hosting, and acceleration. We seek to be the leaders in supporting innovative companies to scale up, and in shaping the tech and innovation scene in the region using Lebanon as our launch pad. Having that said, we have events and programs that fall under the activities and initiatives that Berytech is undertaking within its commitment to the SDG goals. We have promoted and implemented our commitment to SDG9 in some of these programs and events.

SDG9 focuses on building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation to achieve continuous economic growth and sustainable development.

In our efforts to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation to achieve continuous economic growth and sustainable development, we have partnered with Fast Forward 2030 Lebanon, a network aimed at raising awareness of the SDGs as a tool that can be utilised to frame the challenges faced in Lebanon, and inspiring and empowering a social movement of entrepreneurs making businesses that will create a sustainable, regenerative and distributive economy for Lebanon.

Social entrepreneurship is essential to the Lebanese economy and plays a major role in creating and sustaining a better socio-economic environment, however it needs a proper ecosystem to grow where social innovators can be mentored, financed and supported.

This is addressed and solved through Berytech's program Impact Rise – Lebanon's pioneer social entrepreneurship scale-up program, funded by MEPI. The Impact Rise social innovation program is designed and managed by Berytech and funded by the U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) to put ambitious startups, devoted experts and support partners on the road to growing sustainable and successful social ventures.

<https://berytch.org/programs/impactrise/>

*SDG 2: Zero Hunger, SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy*

*SDG 14: Life Below Water, SDG 15: Life on Land & SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth*

As part of our mission, Berytech contributes to sustainable and inclusive economic growth and jobs creation to improve living standards.

Increasing agricultural productivity and sustainable food production are crucial to help alleviate the perils of hunger. Through the Agrytech Accelerator Program and with support from the Kingdom of The Netherlands, Berytech continues to source the top startups with disruptive innovations in the Agri-Food sector and provide them with the adequate technical and business resources as well as community support to scale their ideas into successful businesses with global impact.

Berytech has graduated two batches of startups since 2017, from a wide range of fields from farm to fork including biology, wineries, food production, cooking, waste treatment, agriculture, and vending machines. The third batch of entrepreneurs is currently finalizing the last phase of the program. A total of 69 startups have been admitted to the program since 2017, receiving over \$1million in grants so far, and going through around 1200 hours of training. The startups have helped create over 100 jobs over the past three years and are expected to create another 300 over the next two years.

<https://berytch.org/programs/agrytech/>

In addition, Clean technologies are taking center stage in creating smarter and more sustainable ways of living in the face of quick evolving environmental challenges. Berytech is catalyzing cleantech innovations through Cleanergy, a yearly three-phase program that allows cleantech entrepreneurs grow their startup from an idea into a scalable business.

Berytech received 146 applications for the first batch of its Cleanergy Accelerator Program innovating in cleantech in Lebanon, including renewable energy, solid waste management, water and wastewater management, agriculture, and transportation. Twenty-three (23) teams were chosen to join the first phase of the Cleanergy Accelerator program.

<https://berytch.org/programs/cleanergy/>

Berytech designed and developed the Agrytech and the Cleanergy programs to make sure Lebanon has the most competitive companies that are sourcing, solving, growing and transforming food, as well as feeding the world from Lebanon and also innovating in clean technology.

On the other hand, Innovative startups contribute to job creation and sustainable economic development. Improved policies and business linkages contribute to an enriched ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship in food and agriculture led by the private sector.

QOOT, which means food and sustenance in Arabic, is the first agri-food innovation cluster in Lebanon. It was officially launched at the Lebanon Agri-Food Innovation Day 2019 organized by Berytech – with the support of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and under the patronage of H.E. Prime Minister Saad Hariri.

QOOT's vision is to be the leading Agri-Food Innovation Cluster in the MENA region, placing Lebanon at the center of the world food innovation map. It is driven by the mission to accelerate innovation in the agri-food sector by bringing innovators, knowledge providers, investors and support institutions under one umbrella, creating the right environment and offering the services required for collaboration, sustainable growth and internationalization of the Lebanese agri-food sector.

Successful Lebanese entrepreneurs and pioneers have joined forces to tackle the challenges in the Agri-Food sector, building on collaboration, promoting and developing smarter solutions, and combining assets and efforts to shape this clustering concept.

<https://qoot.org>

Under the Cleanergy program, our partner Issam Fares Institute (IFI) conducted outreach for potential members and established 3 working groups one for water, one for waste and another for energy with 15 active stakeholders each and they are meeting frequently to discuss industry needs and priorities for improving entrepreneurship and business landscape in their respective sectors. These working groups are working towards producing a series of 3 Cleantech white papers around the integration of innovation and entrepreneurship in the creation of a conducive business environment in water, energy and waste and a policy paper on "policy reform options to incentivize and harness momentum" for the 3 Cleantech sub-sectors.

### *SDG 5: Gender Equality & SDG 10: Reduce Inequality within & among countries*

Berytech provides equal opportunities to all women who have an idea to launch their startup and grow by offering financial and technical assistance and facilitating networking.

The "Crisis Management for Women-Led Businesses" program supports the economic mobility of women in Lebanon, helping them to grow sustainable businesses that are market-oriented, profitable, scalable, and which will facilitate job creation or maintain existing jobs. This Program is produced as part of the Mashreq Gender Facility (MGF).

<https://berytch.org/programs/crisis-management-for-women-led-businesses/>

Organized by the Agence universitaire de la francophonie (AUF) in the Middle East and Berytech, "Femme Francophone Entrepreneur" has valued entrepreneurship in Lebanon for 9 years and offers a grant of 20,000 euros (\$ 21,660) shared between the winners. This sum covers the

incubation costs of each winner for a period of six months at Berytech, which thus supports the selected startups in the market launch stage.

Media partners since 2016, L'Orient-Le Jour and Le Commerce du Levant participate in this competition to support female entrepreneurship, but also encourage young people to stay in Lebanon by allowing them to develop their ideas and participate in the economy of the country.

<https://competitions.berytch.org/ffe/>

Berytech and Groupe Bel teamed up in 2019 to launch the Kiri Momprenneur Challenge, and to inspire women to become entrepreneurs. The Kiri Momprenneur Challenge was open for mothers based in Lebanon, with an early-stage project which contributes to improving the future of society and the planet. It was open for mothers who are innovating in art, education, culture, food or any other societal or environmental field with a validated business idea.

Launched back in March 2019 on Mother's Day, around 80 applications were received, of which 30 mom entrepreneurs were selected and given access to a series of capacity building and business development workshops by Berytech's Business Support and Development team, helping them refine their business models and perfect their business plans. The teams received over 70 hours of trainings, given by 9 different experts. During the finale, 5 finalists pitched their startup in front of a jury panel, and three winners were announced.

<https://berytch.org/groupe-bel-and-berytch-join-forces-to-launch-the-kiri-momprenneur-challenge/>

### *SDG 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable & SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*

The Green Impact MED Project – Positive Investments for Positive Impacts (GIMED) is an EU-funded project under the ENI-CBC Med Programme aiming at supporting green entrepreneurs to better access finance and market in the Mediterranean.

The project will provide trainings, coaching sessions, capacity building workshops and sub-grants to consolidate green business creation and green business development.

400 entrepreneurs in 5 Mediterranean countries will benefit from GIMED's support. GIMED's main goal is to support entrepreneurs, particularly young and women, to better access to finance and markets in Spain, Lebanon, Palestine, Tunisia, Egypt and Italy. On the ground, the project will train and coach eco-innovators and encourage financiers to invest in the Mediterranean eco-innovation sector.

<https://berytch.org/programs/gimed/>

The PHEMAC project is co-funded by the European Union under the PRIMA program. This project consists of creating an interactive IHUB platform which aims to capitalize on the results and best practices of the innovative projects carried out and those in progress linked to NEXUS and more particularly in the fields of water and agriculture in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

PHEMAC aims to develop and disseminate an interactive platform that will gather and share best practices focused on PRIMA SRIA priorities, involving a wide range of stakeholders from the farming system, water management and agri-food sectors.

The PHEMAC project is implemented by 12 partners, distributed among several countries in the Mediterranean basin: Spain, Egypt, Italy, Lebanon, Jordan, Morocco, France and Tunisia.

<https://berytch.org/programs/phemac/>

### *SDG 12: Responsible Production and Consumption*

Sustainable consumption and production are about doing more and better with less. It is also about decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, increasing resource efficiency and promoting sustainable lifestyles. The BESTMEDGRAPE project was launched in September 2019 in 5 countries (Italy, France, Lebanon, Tunisia, Jordan), aiming at creating new business opportunities by transferring to potential entrepreneurs the scientific know-how on the sustainable use of grape pomace to manufacture cosmeceutical and nutraceutical products.

<https://berytch.org/programs/bestmedgrape/>

Berytech is a partner of STAND Up! Sustainable Textile Action for Networking and Development of circular economy business ventures in the Mediterranean, an EU-funded project under the ENI CBC Med programme. The STAND Up! project addresses the need for transition to an environmentally and socially responsible circular model in the textile sector, a traditional key industry in the Mediterranean with an undoubtful cross-border nature. The project intends to support textile entrepreneurs and eco-innovative ventures in 5 participating countries (Egypt, Italy, Lebanon, Spain, Tunisia) and help them seize the business opportunities and employment that the green evolution will inevitably generate in the region.

<https://berytch.org/programs/standup/>



## Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

Since 2002 and up until today, Berytech has incorporated more than 140 startups, hosted more than 350 startups in 3 Innovation parks located in Mar Roukoz, Mathaf, and Bechara el khoury, supported 3,800 entrepreneurs, ran more than 10 local and international entrepreneurial support programs in parallel per year and created more than 2,000 jobs hereby reducing poverty, improving the economy growth, creating job opportunities, providing infrastructure for our community, advancing technological capabilities, and the development of new skills especially with the creation of Berytech's Fabrication Lab.

The key impacts and results that Berytech has created include having 6 SMEs and startups join the Global Compact Lebanon network and committing to support one of the 17 SDGs. The team has also announced Berytech's commitment to 10K people in the database, have attracted more than 35 SMEs and startups to the "Grow your business with a purpose event".

### Indicators

Below are some indicators that are measured across Berytech's portfolio:

- Women are empowered economically and have better access to finance
- The MSMEs women-led and/or women-owned businesses supported by the project have acquired knowledge in crisis management and say they are more ready to overcome future crises
- Women - % of female entrepreneurs across interventions: 25% of female entrepreneurs were across interventions in 2019
- Women - % of jobs created occupied by women
- Women - % of startups founded by women: 22% of the startups supported in 2019 were founded by women
- At least 2 policy reform proposals for the Cleantech and Agri-food sector are discussed nationally and submitted to the Ministry of State for Technology & Investments for adoption
- The Agri-food Innovation Cluster (QOOT) has become a sector leader and achieved self-sustainability
- At least 4 Lebanese-Dutch partnerships are established to support the Cleantech and Agri-food sector development
- The Lebanese institutions engaged in supporting the Cleantech working groups remain committed to support them beyond the lifetime of the program
- At least 3 new patent applications and/or licensing agreements have been developed, by universities through tech transfer support and are linked to industrial applications
- Establish 3 Cleantech working groups on water, waste and energy in partnership with AUB-Issam Fares Institute and a Think Tank from the Netherlands – Task Leader (AUB-IMF)

More on measurement of outcomes:

- <https://berytch.org/gimed-project-maps-25-potential-investors-in-lebanon/>
- <https://berytch.org/recommendations-to-boost-technology-transfer-commercialization-in-lebanon/>

Berytech has produced major in-depth articles/white papers:

- <https://berytch.org/food-security-in-mena-region/>
- <https://berytch.org/the-water-energy-food-nexus-approach-for-lebanon-and-the-region/>
- <https://berytch.org/challenges-opportunities-cleantech-lebanon/>
- <https://berytch.org/clean-technology-a-focus-on-water-waste-and-energy-in-lebanon/>
- <https://berytch.org/how-social-entrepreneurship-might-save-lebanon/>
- <https://berytch.org/key-learnings-berytch-learning-series-on-clean-technology/>