





COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)

Period covered 2021-2022

Abstract

Period covered by this communication on engagement 2021-2022

Berytech Foundation
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berytech.org

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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.

Berytech's support falls under the following categories: Capacity Building/Networking, Policy Reform, Startup & SME Development, Startup & SME Incubation, Startup Acceleration & Incubation, Student Entrepreneurship Development, Technology Transfer Support, and Women Empowerment. As a member of the Global Compact Network Lebanon, Berytech enacts the 10 principles of the UNGC, and all the programs fall under Berytech's mission to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Berytech joined the UN Global Compact in September 2017 and pledged to support their call to companies to align strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption, and take actions that advance societal goals. Since then, Berytech has been engaged locally by being an active participant in the Lebanon Network activities.

In 2021, Berytech leveraged its years of experience, its local and regional networks, its immersion in multiple verticals and sectors, and the trust it has gained from funders and donors to multiply its impact and expand its reach in supporting Lebanese startups and enterprises through the multiple crises.

SDG9: Industry, 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 utilized 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.

Berytech, through its Fab Lab, has partnered with UNICEF to establish innovation labs in different regions of Lebanon and provide capacity building and workshops to different GIL Labs Community managers. The higher purpose of this collaboration is to increase the access of the Lebanese and Non-Lebanese youth (17-25 years) to technical and vocational trainings and innovative skills building programs for improved professional readiness and employability, as well as to make the digital manufacturing technologies at the disposal of the youth so that they come up with working prototypes and innovative products.

https://berytech.org/gil-programme-berytech-renews-partnership-with-unicef/

<u>NEX-LABS</u> intends to contribute to the creation of a sustainable and resilient agri-food sector based on NEXUS driven Open Living Labs (NDOLL) approach, thus strengthening technology transfer, cooperation industry- academia, increasing commercialization opportunities and innovation.

In December 2020, Berytech joined **Youth Business International's Rapid Response and Recovery programme** to support struggling businesses during the COVID-19 crisis. Berytech developed the Helping SMEs Build Resilience program which ended in November 2021 to provide immediate response and online training workshops and webinars for SMEs in addition to a direct helpline for businesses looking for additional personalized support.

<u>'Support to MSEs affected by the Beirut Blast'</u> is a UNDP initiative implemented in partnership with Berytech, targeting micro and small enterprises affected by the Beirut Blast by providing business development support and cash grants to help sustain or create jobs and support local livelihoods.

SPARK, with Berytech as the implementing partner, supported MSMEs in Lebanon with a combination of financial and technical support to adapt to COVID-19 with cash grants and capacity building in the form of webinars and coaching sessions. The program, which ended in March 2021, supported struggling businesses and helped them digitize and fast-track towards new trends.



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 & SDG13: Climate Action

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 <u>Agrytech Accelerator Program</u> 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 2019, from a wide range of fields from farm to fork including biology, wineries, food production, cooking, waste treatment, agriculture, and vending machines.

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 <u>Cleanergy</u>, a yearly three-phase program that allows cleantech entrepreneurs grow their startup from an idea into a scalable business.

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.

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 worked 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.

Read more here: https://berytech.org/programs/act-smart-innovation-hub-initiative/think-tanks/

Berytech joined **Youth Business International's Rapid Response and Recovery programme** – funded by Google.org, to support struggling businesses during the covid-19 crisis. Berytech has been appointed as a delivery partner of YBI in Lebanon and worked to develop and deliver an urgent package of support to struggling local businesses. For this project, Berytech has developed the **Helping SMEs Build Resilience** program conducted over 12 months. It targeted SMEs across Lebanon to support them in coping with the numerous crisis situations. During the program, Berytech in collaboration with Google.org and YBI provided immediate response and online training workshops and webinars for SMEs. A direct Helpline was available for entrepreneurs who wish to be supported further and receive personalized support. For selected applicants, coaching sessions, mentoring activities and business clinics were offered by Berytech coaches and Google experts.

The <u>Water and Energy for Food Grand Challenge (WE4F)</u> Middle East and North Africa Regional Innovation Hub MENA RIH is a consortium of Berytech, cewas, Chemonics Egypt and the International Water Management Institute that supports innovators in ten countries across the region to produce more food while using less water and energy. Together with investors and partners, the MENA RIH works to scale mid-to-later stage enterprises that have an environmental and social impact in the water-energy-food nexus.

The <u>Future Agro Challenge (FAC)</u> is a global competition that targets food and agribusiness startups from various corners of the globe including Lebanon. The FAC in joint collaboration with Berytech, launched the Impact Maker Program to empower ecosystem developers, in particular incubators and accelerators that work with startups, and strengthen their capacity to advance their advisory services to agricultural entrepreneurs in their regions.

USAID/Lebanon has awarded ECODIT the <u>Diverting Waste by Encouraging Reuse and Recycling</u> (<u>DAWERR</u>) Activity, a five-year, \$15 million project that will establish sustainable and replicable integrated solid waste diversion and valorization solutions in rural areas of Lebanon. Through the DAWERR activity, ECODIT and its partners - Compost Baladi, Berytech and ECODIT Liban, will support USAID/Lebanon to introduce financially sustainable solutions that increase the reuse, recycling and monetization of solid waste and reduce the amount of residual solid waste that goes into landfills. Berytech is providing incubation support for solid waste management startups and SMEs to develop and scale their solutions, to improve their economic and livelihood activities through the Solid Waste value chain, working with innovators, municipalities, and other players to strengthen this sector, creating jobs and protecting the environment.

Berytech has brought in local and international programs, as well as opportunities and fruitful initiatives for the support of entrepreneurs in Lebanon with the ultimate goal of creating a better business environment capable of incubating innovative startups and small companies.

The <u>Scaling-up Agri-Food Innovations (SAFI)</u> project was launched under the USAID-funded Agriculture and Rural Empowerment (ARE) activity, with the objective to increase the private sector competitiveness locally and internationally and improve the livelihoods of vulnerable groups.



The project addresses the need to equip the agri-business sector and rural communities with the technical and financial resources to generate increased productivity, sales and exports while improving producer income.

Berytech and the World Food Programme (WFP) have launched The <u>Food System Challenge</u> to improve food security and increase resilience in the food system in Lebanon through business support, technical assistance, in-kind grants, and support packages to SMEs to enable their ideas and roll-out or scale their impactful food system solution.

With Lebanon facing one of its toughest crises, the <u>Food System Challenge</u> aims to support Lebanese SMEs and cooperatives working across the agriculture and agri-food sectors to address core food system challenges with maximum impact.

The <u>Lebanon Enterprise Development (LED)</u> offered customized technical assistance to local businesses to help them identify and solve the problems that are preventing them from increasing sales, and therefore from needing to hire more Lebanese.

LED worked throughout Lebanon with a central office in Beirut. Regional business promotion partners cover Beirut-Mount Lebanon, Bekaa, North and South Lebanon. LED's partners included Berytech Foundation for Beirut-Mount Lebanon, Bekaa and South Lebanon.

LED also worked with stakeholders and partners to identify, analyze, and propose solutions to problems that are affecting the business enabling environment.

Under the <u>Transdairy</u> Project, Berytech is facilitating a Living Lab, scouting for innovations, and managing grant vouchers to support innovators in the creation of spin-offs in the Dairy Value Chain.

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 <u>Crisis Management for Women-Led Businesses</u> program supported 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 was produced as part of the Mashreq Gender Facility (MGF).

Organized by the Agence universitaire de la francophonie (AUF) in the Middle East and Berytech, <u>"Femme Francophone Entrepreneure"</u> 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.

Berytech and Groupe Bel teamed up in 2019 to launch the <u>Kiri Mompreneur Challenge</u>, and to inspire women to become entrepreneurs. The Kiri Mompreneur 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.

The Lebanese economy needs more than ever a productive private sector capable of driving economic recovery, create jobs, and support a fragile balance of payment by producing local goods and services, increasing exports and diversify export markets.

In this context, the <u>WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FOR LEBANON PROJECT (WEEL)</u> aims at Supporting Women-Owned And Women-Led Businesses In Lebanon by providing between 8 and 20 MSMEs and startups with grants that vary from 15,000 to 50,000 Euros to be used for expending investments, covering expenditures and getting technical assistance.

This project is part of a larger programme, the EU for Women Empowerment (EU4WE) funded by the European Union and implemented by Expertise France. It aims at promoting full and unconditional equality between men and women in Lebanon. The specific purpose of EU4WE is to reduce gender-based violence through women's empowerment and enhance existing institutional mechanisms working towards gender equality.

The World Bank Group has partnered with Berytech and the Lebanese League for Women in Business (LLWB) to provide capacity building in times of crisis for women who want to grow their businesses and enhance their business model, marketing, financing, and networking opportunities, as well as learn how to be resilient in the face of crisis. The <u>Crisis Management for Women-Led Businesses program</u> supported the economic mobility of women in Lebanon, helping them to grow sustainable businesses that are market-oriented, profitable, scalable, and which facilitated job creation or maintained existing jobs. Berytech and LLWB provided customized trainings in addition to mentorship sessions to participating trainers and women-led businesses.

René Moawad Foundation is leading a consortium to implement the Women Economic Participation in North and Mount Lebanon (WEP) project, with funding from the Government of Canada and under the guidance and supervision of the United Nations Development Program within the framework of the Lebanon Host Communities Support Programme (LHSP). The project aimed at contributing to the economic empowerment of women by addressing women's limited access to, control of, and benefits from economic opportunities.



Berytech organized the first edition of the <u>DigitalAg4Her Hackathon</u> in collaboration with the World Bank Group's Mashreq Gender Facility and Agriculture and Food Global Practice. Its aim was to crowdsource and support innovative ICT-based solutions, tailored to enhance women's productivity in the agri-food sector in Lebanon.

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

The <u>Green Impact MED Project – Positive Investments for Positive Impacts (GIMED)</u> 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 ecoinnovators and encourage financiers to invest in the Mediterranean eco-innovation sector.

The <u>PHEMAC</u> 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.

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.

Berytech is a partner of <u>STAND Up! Sustainable Textile Action for Networking and Development</u> 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 ecoinnovative 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.



Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

In 2021, Berytech leveraged its years of experience, its local and regional networks, its immersion in multiple verticals and sectors, and the trust it has gained from funders and donors to multiply its impact and expand its reach in supporting Lebanese startups and enterprises through the multiple crises.

Berytech received \$5M in funds to develop and implement 13 new projects and programs in addition to ongoing ones, with an increasing focus on supporting SMEs. To manage this exponential growth, Berytech expanded its team by 132% adding 57 new members to its different departments.

New programs sought to provide immediate relief to businesses directly impacted by the blast or the pandemic and also aimed to sustain and grow businesses impacted by the currency devaluation and the collapse of the banking sector.

The objective of these programs is to allow businesses to maintain old jobs and create new ones, access international markets, increase their export potential and provide substitutes for imported goods.

Many of the newly launched programs seek to strengthen Lebanon's food and agriculture sectors, improve and increase production, stimulate innovation and ultimately enhance Lebanon's fragile food security. Programs dedicated to supporting gender equal opportunities were successfully implemented and turned into a base to launch new ones.

The successful digitization of its activities that started in 2020 allowed Berytech to continue ongoing support programs, unhindered by the forced social distancing. Entrepreneurs and startups enrolled in its multiple programs impressively powered through to start, grow and scale their business ideas, driven by their social, environmental, and economic impact.

Berytech in numbers since 2002

313 Startups Incorporated

377 Companies Hosted

6260 Jobs Created

5000 Entrepreneurs Supported

\$3.4M Grants to Startups

\$95M Raised to Manage Programs

2021 in Numbers:

245 Startups Supported Through our programs and competitions in 2021

\$520k+ Revenue Generated As reported by 9 startups supported in 2021

435 SMEs Supported Through our programs and trainings in 2021



13 New Companies Incorporated of the startups that Berytech supported 399 Trainings And Workshops Conducted by Berytech in 2021 within all its programs and competitions

38 Programs Managed With local and international partners in 2021

\$720k+ Received In Grants by the startups that Berytech supported in 2021

100 Hosted Companies Throughout the Berytech 3 innovation parks in 2021 **2772** New Jobs Created as reported back by the startups and SMEs that Berytech supported in 2021

Gender

- Men 45%
- Women 55%

Age group

<30 years old: 45%30-40 years old: 54%40+ years old: 1%

Stage

- Pre-seed 26%
- Seed 12%
- Startup 62%

Geographic area

- From Beirut 35%
- Out of Beirut 65%

Startup & SME Sectors

- Education 2%
- Agriculture and forestry 20%
- Environment & energy 40%
- Information & Communication Technology & Software Development 1%
- Health and pharmaceuticals 1%
- Cultural & Creative Industries & Multimedia 1%
- Transport and mobility 1%
- Other 5%
- Engineering 2%
- Industrial manufacturing 26%



Capacity Building

- **341** Trainings and Workshops
- **67** Trainers
- **8133** Participants
- 1496 Ideas submitted

Trainings in 2021

- 20% Training & Self Development
- **1%** Technology Transfer
- 10% Sales & Marketing
- 10% Product Development
- **7%** Pitching & Presentation Skills
- 3% Legal & IP
- 1% Market Study
- **7%** Customer Development
- **9%** Crisis Management
- **20%** Business Planning & Financials
- **8%** Access to Market
- 4% Access to Funding



Indicators

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

	lumber of startups supported
	otal number of Startups Entrepreneurs supported
	lumber of startups officially registered
T	otal revenue of startups supported
T	otal value of investment raised by startups
Τ	otal number of jobs created by startups
T	otal value of cash grants received by startups
T	otal value of In-Kind grants received by startups
S	tartups survival rate
٨	lumber of new patents for startups
٨	lumber of SMEs supported
Τ	otal number of SMEs Entrepreneurs supported
٨	lumber of SMEs officially registered
Т	otal revenue of SMEs supported
Т	otal value of investment raised by SMEs
Т	otal number of jobs created by SMEs
Т	otal value of cash grants received by SMEs
Т	otal value of In-Kind grants received by SMEs
S	MEs survival rate
٨	lumber of new patents for SMEs
	and value of change in sales volume
	and value of change in Production Capacity
	and value of change in cost of Production
	verage number of Business Linkages
	verage number of new Markets
	alue of export sales
	6 of Berytech team growth
	lumber of events organized by Berytech
	lumber of attendees in events
	lumber of events hours
	vent NPS
٨	lumber of new tenants
	lumber of companies hosted
	lumber of programs implemented
	lumber of applications
	alue of programs portfolio
	lumber of new partnership signed
	lumber of investment partners
	lumber of partnerships with university
	otal number of new donors

