



“Towards sustainable models of local governance for integrated and circular policies for urban waste management”

Awareness campaign for MED4Waste project in Tunisia

In the framework of the Med4Waste project, more than 50 participants took part in the project’s seminar entitled “**Towards sustainable models of local governance for integrated and circular policies for urban waste management** » that took place in September 26th 2023 in Mahdia, Tunisia.

Almost **all MedCities Tunisian members and five Libyan guest municipalities**, apart from other Tunisian municipalities of the area, participated in the event that aimed at **disseminating the main lessons learned** and **results of the Med4Waste project** in Tunisia and discuss new governance models for integrated and circular urban solid waste management policies. This event was also an opportunity to share all these knowledges with Libyan municipalities.

In this sense, the **mentoring program run by MedCities in Mahdia and M’Saken was presented**. This program has allowed these two Tunisian municipalities to develop, **in the case of M’Saken, a Municipal Waste Management Plan** (“PCGD” in French), and to **improve and update the PCGD of the municipality of Mahdia**, while highlighting the circular economy principle. The program also includes the implementation of a pilot action aligned with the PCGD, taking part in an international study visit in a city from another ENI project that has implemented a solution to enhance their waste management system, and developing a social entrepreneurship program for 2 local SMEs and start-ups tackling local challenges on waste management that have been identified during the elaboration of the PCGDs.

[You can watch this video for further information.](#)

Ms. Samira Laabidi, General Director of regulations, cleanliness and environmental protection gave the keynote speech on the main challenges of solid waste management and inter-municipal cooperation in **Tunisia**.

SPAIN | JORDAN | LEBANON | ITALY | TUNISIA | GREECE

Following the keynote speech, two round tables were organized. The first one, entitled “Integrated municipal waste management planning – a circular approach” included the presentation of the main technical results of the elaborated PCGDs of **Mahdia**, **M’Saken** and the identified projects. This was followed by the presentation of the experience of **Bizerte** in terms of green waste composting and the way the implement a project planned in the PCGD. To close this session, the participants discussed a variety of topics, in particular related to monitoring and evaluation, good practices related to municipal solid waste management planning, and main challenges faced to implement it.

The second session, entitled “Circular economy, sustainable governance of resources and waste management – Success stories implemented in Tunisia”, included the presentation of the ENI CBC Med project experiences that are executed in Tunisia, in particular the **CLIMA project** experience on organic waste management in Mahdia, the **MED-Ina** project experience on zero waste public policy in La Marsa, and the **INNOMED-UP project** experience on the promotion of waste recovery in the circular economy through innovation and education for creative industries in Tunis. The discussion raised up interesting topics like the role of the private sector and civil society in circular economy models; how to strengthen the recovery of organic waste in Tunisia; the role of the government to incentivize circular economy practices and start-ups; the importance of developing sustainable national systems for the different waste streams sectors and the coordination between the national and local stakeholders to reach the fixed targets.

To close up the seminar, the participants visited the organic and green waste composting unit recently inaugurated in Mahdia thanks to the CLIMA project. On this occasion, the municipality shared with the participants the process of the creation of the unit, the challenges and the plan toward sustaining the compost production.

Recommandations:

Gouvernance aspects :

- Strengthen coherence between the different local waste management stakeholders through establishing a dialogue considering the local waste management strategy outputs and the existing programs, and reinforcing communication.
- Establish public-private partnerships and intercommunal cooperation to develop sustainable waste collection and recovery projects. This can contribute to reducing costs and strengthen the performance of waste management in partner municipalities.

- Strengthen the cooperation between municipalities, even without official agreements (to start). This is an approach that has given good results in several Tunisian municipalities. In this regard, it is important to highlight the importance of consulting the current projects that tackled the topic from legal, financial and technical point of view (e.g. Bizerte).
- The participation of the private sector must be strengthened by developing the conditions for an effective and efficient partnership between the municipality and the private sector.
- Regularly review PCGDs and monitor and update the data.
- Strengthen communication between municipalities and the private sector.
- Encourage local start-ups on solid waste management.
- Strengthen private-private communication (for example, communication between hotels and local waste management operators, including recyclable material collectors).
- Involve civil society and local NGOs in strategic planning, solid waste management projects and programs execution.
- Develop adequate local regulations to improve waste management (e.g. obliging hotels and restaurants to sort specific waste streams at source).

Financing aspects:

- Reducing waste management costs through the promotion of intermunicipal cooperation.
- Develop a municipal tax recovery mechanism and establish incentives for citizens and institutions.
- Optimize waste collection costs by the municipality through reviewing the collection road and implementing the necessary innovative technologies (GPS for instance).
- Strengthen subsidies for projects and start-ups and develop projects aimed at strengthening circular economy practices.

Technical aspects:

- Take into consideration the results of the municipal waste management plan when developing projects in the municipal area.
- Strengthen selective sorting at the local level and implement adequate infrastructure (in coordination with the national system).
- Strengthen capacities of municipal staff on cleanliness and maintenance issues.
- Encourage the composting of green waste in municipalities through establishing PPP models or by involving local start-ups. It is strongly recommended to start small projects to guarantee a period of learning and testing, while ensuring gradual

business development (quantities, logistics, etc.). In the case of a municipal projects, it is strongly recommended to designate a manager to take care of the project.

- Strengthen the role of the private sector at the local level to ensure more contribution in the waste management field in both household waste collection (households, hotels, restaurants, specific areas), and private authorized companies that are active in the recyclable and vaporizable waste collection.
- Upgrade municipal parks to better meet the upkeep and maintenance needs of machines, and adapt resources to the real needs and urban context of municipalities.
- Sorting efforts must be stimulated by regulatory mechanisms and financial incentives. Selective sorting of waste represents a link in the waste management chain, and it is required to develop recycling and recyclable material recovery.
- Build capacities of the municipal staff.
- Strengthen the digitalization to improve solid waste management.

Information, education and awareness sharing aspects:

- Design and implement local programs to reduce the production of household waste via the improvement of the consumption and production modes.
- Strengthen communication between neighboring municipalities: best practices, exchange of information and expertise, etc.
- Develop local initiatives to promote environmental education and citizen awareness on the importance of sustainable waste management and the circular economy.
- Raise citizens' awareness of the importance of the waste management tax to cover management costs and to guarantee the necessary services.
- Analyze citizen's behavior on waste management and involve them in all solid waste management projects and initiatives (implementing infrastructure, awareness sharing programs, communication and information, waste sorting at sources, etc.).
- Involve municipal workers in waste management projects (capacity building, ensure better working conditions, etc.).
- Strengthen the communication of information, instructions and penalties.
- Create or strengthen the information system at the municipality level to optimize decision-making.
- Develop a simplified guide for the municipal staff on solid waste management.

Main identified lesson learned:

Sector / activity	Lessons learned
Composting	<p>The composting of green waste project established by the municipality of Bizerte is indeed a noteworthy and commendable endeavor that deserves recognition.</p> <p>The municipality's approach of beginning with a simple and small-scale composting operation and gradually expanding it while engaging civil society and citizens has been instrumental in the project's success. Ensuring the sustainability of a composting project, is a significant achievement. Sustainability is a key factor in the long-term success and positive impact of such initiatives.</p>
Innovation	<p>The INNOMED-UP project serves as a compelling example of how innovation plays a pivotal role in promoting and advancing the principles of a circular economy.</p> <p>The INNOMED-UP project's emphasis on different case studies and start-ups dedicated to waste reduction and prevention is a significant step towards fostering a more sustainable and circular economy.</p> <p>In fact, government and local authorities should allocate a support to ensure the sustainability of these up-cycling projects.</p>
Intermunicipal cooperation	<p>Intermunicipal cooperation in solid waste management is indeed a crucial and effective approach that can yield several benefits and to reinforcing solid waste management process, via sharing costs, logistics, risks and learning from each other's.</p> <p>The collaborative efforts undertaken by municipalities like Marsa, Carthage, and Sidi Bou Said to establish a joint composting plant. These initiatives are instrumental in promoting sustainable and efficient solid waste management at local level.</p>
Communication and waste sorting at source	<p>The presentation of the project MED-Ina shows that sorting at the source of household and similar waste is indeed a complex but crucial process for effective waste management and environmental sustainability. Implementing a sustainable model for source separation of waste involves several key components</p>
Exit Strategy	<p>It is worth to highlight that having a well-defined “exit strategy” is critical for any project financed by the international cooperation. An exit strategy helps ensure the sustainability and continued success of the project once the external funding and support come to an end.</p>