

Green Entrepreneurship

Successful business cases of Green Entrepreneurs in the Mediterranean



Regional Activity Centre
for Cleaner Production



Isolroof: Energy efficiency services in Tunisia

45

Name:	Isolroof
City, country:	Tunis, Tunisia
Name of entrepreneur/ founder:	Mr. Hatem Chebbi

Description Negotiator and service provider in energy efficiency field in Tunisia and trade agent for the Maghreb region (Algeria, Tunisia and Lybia). Import of solar thermal and acoustic materials.

Investment *Start up capital:* DT 10,000.
Rate of return on investment: 10 %
Sources of funding: 100 % private funding.

Stakeholders *Shareholders:* 100% of shares owned by the founder.
Customers: Individuals, households, real estate, industrial and entrepreneurs (in building sector).
Providers: for extruded Polystyrene: Dow chemical (US); natural thermal isolation products, cellulose and expanded perlite: SITEC (FR)
Strategic partners: None.
European partnership: Not for now, but we are looking for partnership in the field of the solar thermal.
International partnership (other than European): None.

Employment generation Not available.

Timeline Date of Start up: 2009
Progresses up to 2011: Not significant progresses.

Feasibility study The feasibility study demonstrated an important need in the local Tunisian market and the opportunity to offer a complete range of insulation products all related to the construction sector (both residential and industrial) in the market. On the other hand, the PROMO-isol program's (Incentive program conceived by the National Agency of Energy Conservation to promote thermal insulation) feasibility study showed that an insulation products market already exists in Tunisia and it can grow in a short period.

Geo-social-economic setting Isolroof works on the whole territory of Tunisia and exports to Mali via the mediation of a French Company.

Key features The aim of the owner is to upgrade to an industrial firm (to produce extruded polystyrene) thanks to a European/foreign partnership. Already, attempts have been made with some European partners but so far the owner could not find a serious partner who is willing to get involved in the Tunisian market.

Overall rational and motivation Not available.

Strenghts	The primary strength of Isolroof relies on the technical skills of the founder. Isolroof is a small company with a flexible structure and able to adapt to technological and market changes. The strategic vision of the founder is clear: to upgrade into an industry, particularly the manufacturing of the extruded polystyrene in Tunisia. In the upcoming years, the insulation technology will be spread and become important as comfort factor in the residential sector.
Challenges and constraints	The main challenge of Isolroof is to produce insulation products in Tunisia (mainly extruded polystyrene) since the import charges are very high. There is a lot of competition in the building sector and the new techniques are really hard to be adopted in the local market. The revolution of January 14th has delayed many businesses in the building sector and consequently affected the normal growth of markets of insulating products raw materials. Sensitization and communication are needed to convince the clients to use thermal insulation to obtain more comfort while saving energy, this needs a huge investment.
Direct activities and Impacts	<i>Social:</i> 1 employment. <i>Environmental:</i> 750 m ² of roof insulation using the new extruded polystyrene technique. <i>Economic:</i> Advices given to many architectures on how to use the company's products. No quantative data are available.
Use of innovative Technologies	Isolroof participated in launching the new insulation technology in Tunisia extensively, i.e.: thermal insulation with extruded polystyrene. The use of the extruded polystyrene for insulation is a great deal when it comes to the ratio quality/price.
Evidence of a holistic approach/world view	Not available.
Scale of benefits	Not available.
Policies, incentives and regulations needed	We need more incentives as the removal of the import taxes on the used products (extruded polystyrene) in order to promote the technology. Tunisia needs to promote the extruded polystyrene production in Tunisia, not only for the local market, but for the Algerian and Lybian ones too. This has been done before (tax advantages) for other insulating products like rockwool and it is very important to set the same incentive measure for the extruded polystyrene. The establishment of a quality label is necessary in Tunisia in order to maintain a good quality of the insulating products and fair prices.
Lessons and recomendations	Important financial assets are needed in the field of thermal insulation. The market is still conservative and not so ready for any new products and techniques. A young green promoter with no assets will face many problems on the market of thermal insulation. A lot of credibility is needed in the market.

References:

62, Ave de Carthage, Les jardins de Carthage, 2046 Sidi Daoud, Tunis.
Tel.: +216 71 758 689
Fax: +216 71 758 690
e-mail: commercial.isolroof@gmail.com