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3.6 PILOTING THE MODEL

IMPACT OF MIMIR PROJECT

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IBN TOFAIL UNIVERSITY

1- INTRODUCTION

The project Modernization of Institutional Management of Innovation and Research in South Neighboring Countries (MIMIR) aims to develop an institutional capacity for innovation and research management in the Arab World, in particular in Morocco and Jordan Universities. The project engages European, Moroccan and Jordanian higher education institutions in a structured dialogue on the transfer and implementation of European good practices.

Morocco and Jordan are represented by eight universities, namely :

- Ibn Tofail University (UIT - Kenitra)
- Mohammed V University in Rabat (UM5R)
- Sultan Moulay Slimane University (USMS - Beni Mellal)
- Mundiapolis University (Casablanca)
- The Directorate for Scientific Research and Innovation of the Ministry of Higher Education (DRSI-MENFPESRS)
- The University of Jordan
- Al-Balqa Applied University
- Jordan University of Science and Technology, and the Association of Arab Universities

This report summarizes the current status of research and innovation in Ibn Tofail University and the impact of MIMIR project on Moroccan universities, and highlights the challenges and opportunities created by the project. This report also, present the actions and activities of the Moroccan universities in participation in this project (Tour visits and the interactions with the European universities).

2- THE EXISTING RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

a. Short presentation of Ibn Tofail University :

Ibn Tofail University is one of the twelve public universities in Morocco established in 1989.



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Our university include a total of **568** full time professors and **286** administrative staff for **57000** students that are enrolled in the undergraduate and graduate courses and offers training primarily structured around the new teaching architecture of higher education, which is itself based on three levels LMD. The training offered is organized into 3 areas (Science and Technology; Arts, Human Sciences, Humanities and Law, Economics and Management).

To fit the international norms and ease student's mobility, Ibn Tofaïl offers National accredited undergraduate and graduate courses taught in Arabic, French and English.

Ibn Tofaïl Colleges & Graduate schools:

- Faculty of Sciences,
- Faculty of Literature and Humanities Sciences,
- Faculty of Law, Economics & Social Sciences,
- National School of Business & Management,
- National School of Applied Sciences and High school of Technology,
- School of Technology.

Ibn Tofaïl includes **53** research accredited laboratories, Our fields of research includes: environment and health, materials and geo-resources, data-base processing, business administration, management and marketing, foreign languages...

b. The research management strategy :

It was based mainly on the President's development project (2014-2018), restructuration of research laboratories in 2016 with the aim of grouping them together and creating centers of excellence. The objective is to federate existing research structures in transdisciplinary centers for more visibility and relevance of research and expertise. The research centers accredited by the University Council are:

- Mathematics, Engineering and Information and Communication Technology;
- Biology and Health;
- Materials Science, Electronics, Automation and Energy;
- Geosciences and Biodiversity;
- Water, Renewable Energies and Sustainable Development;
- Governance and Control of Organizations;
- Law, Economics and Management;
- Letters, Languages and Arts;
- Humanities and Social Sciences.



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The table below, present the status (in numbers) of research and innovation in Ibn Tofail university :

	Ibn Tofail University (All faculties included)
Publications/year	475/years
Ph.D programs	13
Research centers	52 laboratories / 9 poles
(Patents, journals published, conferences organized)	12
International students	756

c. Improving the attractiveness of research

Improving the attractiveness of the ITU research system has gone through a whole range of measures, the main ones being:

- Creation of the University Center of Analysis, Technology Transfer and Incubator (CUAETTI), as a tool for federation and pooling of analytical resources and services of laboratories. The center also assists laboratories in all stages of patent filing and in entrepreneurship and service delivery activities;
- Development of premises to bring together, as much as possible, research teams belonging to the same laboratory;
- Strengthening the infrastructure for scientific, computer and documentary equipment of the laboratories;
- Restructuring research management bodies around accredited DEC's and easing administrative and financial procedures;
- Creation of a fund to ensure the basic functioning of research laboratories and their upgrading.
- Creation of a fund for the organization of scientific events and for the participation of researchers in national and international scientific congresses;
- Promoting the international mobility of teachers and research managers.

Efforts to improve the attractiveness of the research system within the ITU have resulted in a resurgence of scientific production and a massive return of teachers and research students to laboratories.



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d. Center of Analysis, Technology Transfer and Incubator (CUAETTI)

As part of its vision of promoting research and innovation, in 2014 ITU created the Center for Analysis, Expertise and Technology Transfer to meet international standards for the promotion of research and innovation.

The center is led by a center manager (Professor) and a team of multidisciplinary professors are involved in the organization and animation of the various activities of the center.

The center has a main mission to monitor all university activities of analysis and expertise, its missions are divided into 4 main areas :

- Analysis : water, air, soil, nutriment, chemical, biological, physical...
- Studies, expertise and advise : technical sciences, law and economic sciences...
- Technology transfer : Ensure advanced area of expertise for a successful coaching of industrial and institutional collaborators.
- Incubator :
 - Incubation and business making ;
 - Supporting and managing incubated project ;
 - Legal framework and set of specification;
 - Collaboration with other organization and institution.

3- IMPACT OF MIMIR PROJECT AND CHALLENGES ON RESEARCH AND INNOVATION MANAGEMENT AT IBN TOFAIL UNIVERSITY

The centers visited in European universities have made it possible to focus on the main axes to be developed within our university. despite the many actions undertaken in recent years to promote and develop our managerial practices for research and innovation, there are still many steps to take to reach the expected result.

In KU Leuven, research & development advances the impact of research results on people's lives like Secure smartphones, PCs, online banking apps and internet infrastructure, collaboration with Samsonite (results in lighter, the world's first patient-specific lower jawstronger suitcases) and the creation of Bakala Academy.

In Barcelona, created by the university, the Scientific Park promotes research, knowledge, transfer and innovation, through smart management of spaces, services and relationships. So, it dynamisms highly talented researchers, entrepreneurs and business people, in order to lead and accelerate the innovation. The Scientific Park is geared to be a flexible and innovative organization, service oriented and focused on the customers.



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a. Impact of MIMIr project on at Ibn Tofail University :

Indeed, the implementation of a collaborative management platform has led to :

- Opening on other research management model
- Mutualization of information
- Establishment of joint research project
- Development of a network of researchers (potential partners in research projects)

Also, this project allowed to highlight several axes to develop in terms of research and innovation and international visibility within our university.

➤ **International relation Office :**

the MIMIr project has had a direct impact on our international service, indeed, our service needs to develop its networks even more internationally and must focus on increasing :

- International collaborations with key universities in order to carry out research and innovation projects jointly and thus achieve an exchange of experience.
- The number of students of different nationalities, in order to create a climate of exchange and openness between our students and foreigners. this can be done by broadening the fields of study approved within the framework of international conventions.
- Review the system of management of the service in term of human resources, indeed it is imperative to increase the number of administrative staff of the office to match with the size of the university and the nature of the activity.

➤ **Center of Analysis, Technology Transfer and Incubator**

As part of the MIMIr project, the analysis and expertise center has benefited from significant experience feedback in terms of managing research and innovation. in this context, the center has managed to enrich its areas of activity, and focus on :

- Valorization of research : creation of a technology watch committee and intellectual property; technology watch at the service of laboratories and industries
- Technology transfer : participation in calls for research and development projects; organization of meetings between industrialists and research and analysis laboratories; participation in conventions and industrial fairs
- Position itself as a future leader in the fields of analysis, expertise and incubation.



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b. Conclusion :

In conclusion, the MIMIr project has opened the way for an improvement of our research and innovation management system, several areas for improvement have been highlighted. The researchers and administrative staff who participated in the projects were able to draw inspiration from the European research management culture through training courses and visits to universities and laboratories, and have had access to the various instruments that have allowed European universities to achieve a high level of performance in terms of managing research and innovation.

The project has also highlighted the main challenges and obstacles that slow down our development, indeed the adherence of top management remains minimal, also it is necessary to accentuate the involvement of faculty researchers in decision-making in order to centralize management research and innovation.