

Small and medium-sized enterprises' networks and their contribution to the territorial development

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Introduction

The community of researchers who are interested in the Small and Medium-sized Enterprise- henceforth the SME- do not grant on a unique definition of this one (Vilette, 2012). This difficulty in finding a common perception seems to be explained by a great diversity and heterogeneity that the term “SME” covers. According to this perspective, the SME is synonymous with diversity, so that a good number of researchers were harnessed with the task to identify the criteria of differentiation and similarity making it possible to categorize the SMEs in more or less homogeneous typologies (Allali, 2003, 2007) in order to reconsider the conceptualization of SMEs.

If one evokes the case of family SME's, it was often a question of those ones associated to a negative image, since they made formerly reference to inertia, paternalism, rigidity..., granting few competing advantages to them. These last years, the vision changed and the family company became rather a sign of impact strength, dynamism and good perceived quality, an indicator of economic development (Vinci, 2015). From this same point of view, Basly (2007, p.2) advances that "the awareness of its (the family SME) economic importance in terms of participation in the national production of the countries and in terms of employment and economic and financial performance constitutes an imperative reason explaining the renewed interest for the questions which are relative for him". More particularly, the innovative networks of SME's seem to play a

significant role in the local, regional, and territorial development (Leducq and Lusso, 2011; Torre and Tanguy, 2014; Campagne and Pecqueur, 2014).

Besides, in spite of their vulnerability (due to their small size, limited resources and funds, little-structured informal human resource management function, intuitive and implicit strategy, informal communication, infrastructure barriers, close links between all the functions, ...), these family and non-family SMEs often have clarifying and supporting networks which seem to play an important role in developing economies. (Joyal, 1997; De Oliveira, 2003; Torrès, 2003; Allali, 2007; Gueguen, 2009; Razafindrazaka, 2009).

As an example, the located productive systems, industrial districts or clusters have largely gained in productivity in a globalized economy. This gain is highly explained by their contribution to the revival and the territorial development of certain areas or cities so much “sunk without trace” or completely lacking (Pecqueur, 2005; Carluier, 2006; Courlet and Hollard, 2006; Carré and Levratto, 2011).

In this perspective, certain disadvantaged geographical areas were also able to find the way of the race to competitiveness thanks to the networks of family small and medium-sized enterprises which constitute them. Indeed, such family innovative networks are characterized by certain distinctive particularities and patterns turning around a territorial rooting, a flexible specialization, and a family socio-territorial “linking” capital. (Anderson et al, 2003; Habbershon et al, 2003 ; Angeon et al, 2006 ; Allouche et al, 2008; etc).

On the whole, the current study would contribute to respond those main research questions:

- 1- What are the main characteristics of SMEs (family and non-family ones) installed in specific territories?
- 2- In what extend these SMEs work together and collaborate in order to compound innovative networks?

- 3- How do such innovative SMEs' networks contribute to the regional and economic development of their territories (technopoles, clusters, local production systems, etc), while growing internationally?

1- The vulnerability of SMEs (family and non-family enterprises): a detour of their characteristics

Ernst Friedrich **Schumacher** has underlined in his book untitled “small is beautiful” that SMEs could drain multiple advantages whenever they are created to spread a policy that restrains the territory of intervention of their actions emphasizing the central role of the human in developing small projects which create synergies between the territory capabilities and its human resources. These SMEs, which could grow via micro-credits and small cooperatives, could supplement strategies and actions of big firms or “white elephants” which require heavy (and sometimes unproductive) investments. Such SMEs could also contribute to an endogenous and an integrated regional and national development, mainly in developing countries.

According to the GREPME, the SME is a centralized organization that is weakly specialized and which detains a simple internal and external information system as well as intuitive and weakly informal strategies (Lelorieux, 2010).

The SME has generally some specific characteristics which don't enable it to evolve at the rhythm of big firms. However, it could develop certain strategies in order to survive with them in a turbulent environment market by fast-changing events.

Among the SMEs' characteristics, the following ones could be retained: the butterfly effect that it is enduring, the scarcity of its resources, its proximity management, its informal, simple and intuitive information system, strategy, and HRM practices.

The butterfly effect: means that the flapping of the wings of a butterfly in China could ultimately result in a hurricane in Florida. In other words, a small event that has no effect on big firms could have a great influence for small firms. This effect is broken down into the microcosm effect, the proportion effect, and the egotrophy effect (Paradas, 2007).

The microcosm effect: signifies that the manager focuses his attention on the short-term and the immediate actions and concentrates on the geographical space that surrounds him and that is psychologically behind him.

The egotrophy effect: implies that the manager of a SME is usually a narcissist person and his way of thinking is focused only on his closest collaborators. In other words, it means that the enterprise is centralized and focused on its values, as well as the manager's personality and his own aspirations.

The proportion effect: translates into the fact that as long as the workforce is relatively small, each actor owns a high place in the company. For example, when the entrepreneur hires a new employee, if this latter is not "the good man at the good place", that recruitment will engender many problems. It means that the impact of each movement is inversely proportional to the number of the organizational actors (Torrès, 2003). This effect seems to derive from another one: the number effect which indicates that as long as the workforce is relatively small, the manager knows well each employee.

1-1- The SME's strategy specificities

The SME's strategy is intuitive, implicit, flexible, and informal. It is focused on reaction and on a proximity management system.

Strategic decisions which are mostly taken by the owner-manager are made in emergency situations and in an iterative process by which events could change the vision and the following actions (Bayad and Paradas, 1998). The strategic process is then relying on the activities, the experience, the judgment, and the way of thinking of the owner-manager who doesn't count on the others to do so (Filion and Lima, 2011).

Besides, the strategies that are deployed by the SME's manager are mainly specialization, collaboration, networking, and internationalization (Saporta, 1997 ; Mbengue and Ouakouak, 2012). Indeed, often enough, managers choose : either strategic niches in order to evolve in a non competitive market (Lima, 2003), or networking and collaborative strategies which enable them to adapt to a permanent moving environment. Such strategies allow them to maintain their competitive advantages, to internationalize their activities, and to supplement resources and skills they are lacking by inserting them into visionary and clarifying networks (Allali, 2007).

1-2- The SME's information system specificities

It is argued that the SME's information system is simple, flexible, undersized, direct, and informal (Torrès, 1999, 2002, 2004). More particularly, the internal information system simplicity is explained by the high physical proximity between the manager (who has a low interest in the strategic value of the information) and the principal actors of the SME. However, the external information system simplicity is due to the spatial proximity, i.e. a nearby market which allows physically and psychologically the manager to establish direct ties with suppliers, customers, investors, bankers, etc.

Besides, the internal communication systems are usually direct, simple, informal, oral and verbal (Mezziouane, 2014).

1-3- The SME's Human Resource management (HRM) specificities

The SMEs cannot afford the same advantages than the big firms. This fact is due to their limited financial resources, the few social advantages and the restrained internal mobility that they can propose. Indeed, these SMEs don't have the skills and the objectivity needed in order to develop and implement the concrete and formalized tools of the human resources' management. More precisely, the HRM politics is so linked to the manager and its omnipresence. This latter refuses mostly to delegate responsibilities to the employees, so that the level of resistance to change is generally so high in the SME.

In line of this assumption, Robert-Huot and Cloutier (2014) reported that HRM practices and procedures in the SME are informal and this fact is due to the lack of expertise of the HRM methods and techniques.

As a result, the three levels of the HRM are confused and juxtaposed : the administrative level (rules and regulations, etc), the strategic level (organizational and management choices, ...), and the staff politics (skills' management, training, remuneration, ...) (Bootz et al, 2011).

1-4- The SME's proximity management system

The SME's management system is presented as a mix of proximity: the functional, the spatial, the temporal and the hierarchical proximities form a coherent framework which creates the conditions necessary for action and reflection (Torrès, 2004).

The hierarchical proximity is reflected in the absence of the middle management, the centralization of decisions, as well as the lack of authority and management delegation (Courrent and Torrès, 2005).

The functional proximity is characterized by the versatility of the owner-manager who will concentrate and take on many functions (such as commercial, marketing, logistics, etc) without a division of labor (Torrès, 1997, 2000).

The proximity coordination implies that the methods and modes of coordination are mainly the direct supervision, the verbal and the oral communication via the usage of speech (Torrès, 2000).

The temporal proximity is explained by the preference for the short-term, the role of intuition in the strategy elaboration process, the near-absence of planning, as well as the quick reactivity, flexibility and versatility of the SME.

1-5- The SME's limited resources

Because of the scarcity of their resources in terms of time, qualified staff, financing (and access to credits and loans), energy, the SMEs are not encouraging the development of a culture of training, and could not employ a formalized and detailed strategic analysis. They have many supplying difficulties nationally and internationally.

Moreover, “SMEs don’t dispose of financial and temporal resources that allow them to obtain them internally”. (Jaouen and Tessier, 2008, p.13).

2- The SMEs’ networks and their role in the territorial and local development

The openness to globalization should be done by building on the deep roots and the identity of enterprises and territorial actors while also cultivating their differences and by themselves in the big countries of the world (Godet, 1997).

In this perspective, it should be taken into consideration that the notion of “area” shouldn’t be analyzed via a micro-economic perspective that considers it by the elements that compose it. It is, nevertheless, recommended to propel a meso-economic vision that emphasizes the networks, the relations, as well as the interdependences that might influence the economic evolution of the environment. In line with this reflection, it was argued that the SME’s networks could play an important role in the territorial development of an area by boosting the local actors to mobilize its territorial resources (Bros-Clergue, 2006).

These SMEs’ networks are composed of social actors who could interact and play a central role in the construction of a collective group and a system of governance that is well structured by a social capital which grows by every day. This social capital helps develop the ties of the networks with the external stakeholders, especially with local/national public authorities who enable these networks to be financed and to gain in reputation and legitimacy. It also supports the guidance of information actions in order to anchor the networks in their territory and consolidate their own values and their contribution to the territory dynamics (Bories-Azeau et al, 2007).

These SMEs’ networks could also contribute to developing resources, structuring relations based on confidence, improving actions’ efficiency (information transmission, reduction of transaction costs and opportunism-related to the network members’ relations, etc), and developing the dynamic innovation capabilities as well as technological and relational learning (Joyal and Deshaies, 2000; Ferray and Pesqueux, 2004).

Besides, the SMEs' networks are constituted by the public authorities as well as the territorial collectivities and enterprises which should have the prerequisites in terms of skills and resources aiming at constructing a place of governance by elaborating diagnoses/strategies, analyzing the recent institutional/public mutations, and coordinating actions of economic/local development (Bories-Azeau et al, 2007).

2-1- The local and territorial development: genesis, origins, and definitions of the concept

The territory is not only a local system, a geographical and a natural space which is well organized and developed, but also a social structure and a living space that encompasses human relations between multiple actors. These ones adhere always to local projects, innovate and mobilize resources and skills thanks to their sense of belonging and to their appropriation (Joyal and Deshaies, 1996; Lecoq and Maillat, 2006; Bros-Clergue, 2006; Pacquot, 2011; Moine, 2006, 2007, 2014). According to Le loup et al (2004), the territory is a complicated, an opening, a dynamic and a complex system which is socially constructed by the intersection of networks (physical, human, formal, and informal ones), strategies, as well as by the interdependence between partners. It's then a place of production, negotiation, and share (cited by Redondo-Toronjo, 2007).

It would be also interesting to mention that the territory is not confined to a rural space, or to the suburbs of cities, and urban areas. It is then not restrained to specific environments. What is important for a territory is the local development that it implies as well as the growing awareness of its actors (even those working in organizations, NGOs, administrative structures, local collectivities, ...), who should advocate for jobs' creation, entertainment, citizens' security and health, geographic and socio-economic disparities' annihilation between areas, etc.

The local and territorial development is considered as a response to globalization, as well as to the socio-economic exclusion and marginalization of certain zones and capitalist politics.

This concept has particularly emerged for the first time in the underdeveloped and developing countries of the third world where the decades of development initiated by the United Nations organization have failed. Such a failure propelled to re-examine the role of nongovernmental organizations-NGOs, so that they work for a restrained scale of economic development, taking

into consideration not only the local concerned culture, but also the resources (human, financial, ...) made available so that energies and skills would not be dispersed.

According to André Joyal (1994), the local development is a socio-economic intervention strategy by which local and national representatives of the public, the private or the social fields work together in order to value and upgrade the financial, technical, and human resources of a collectivity as well as to combat the devitalization (or the decline) of the area. For this purpose, these representatives are called to join their forces and to associate their efforts in a sectoral or an inter-sectorial private or public work structure, guided by a central objective of the local economy development. André Joyal (1994) has also advanced that the regional and the territorial development holds four dimensions:

- the cultural dimension: implying the local leadership, the level of implication of the actors-members of the area, the motivation and the willingness to work in order to enhance the development of the collectivity;
- the socio-economic dimension: consolidating a qualitative social change (the quality of housing, access to health care and treatment, training, etc) in order to promote a good process of local development;
- the environmental dimension: the socio-economic development of the territory shouldn't jeopardize the quality of life reigning in the ecosystem surrounding it;
- the spatial dimension: qualifying an endogenous development taking into consideration the geographic limit of the perimeter where actors operate while consolidating their territorial identity.

In this same logic, two aspects should be taken into consideration in order to enhance a local development:

*the participation of citizens and the cohesion between them;

*the role played by the public powers and the local collectivities and their mobilization and solidarity to face the situations of crisis as well as to preserve the territory.

In other words, certain immaterial factors such as the social capital, the social representatives, the social capabilities of development, the socio-local governance make the difference of a territory from another one.

Nevertheless, in order to improve the local development of a territory, a territorial dynamics should be improved and maintained by relying on three dimensions of an area (Maillat, 1994):

*a micro-analytic dimension- which constitutes a market structure that facilitates the transaction costs limitation;

*a cognitive dimension- that encompasses the local know-how;

*an organizational dimension- which highlights the interdependency between the local actors.

2-2- The SMEs' networks: types and contributions to promote the innovation of the territory and its development

Carluer (2006, cited by Razafindrazaka, 2009, p.4) identified six types of networks: the clusters, the technopoles, the service-based spaces, the innovative areas, the industrial districts, and the learning areas.

A learning region is a system which is dominated by immaterial components and marked by its capacity to attract the high-demand skills. However, an innovative area is a territorialized set where interactions between economic agents are growing thanks to learning converging to certain kinds of common resources' management (Maillat, 2000). In this same perspective, it is argued that service-based space is a center of knowledge creation, constituted by a set of enterprises associated to research and training centers and diverse other public or private organisms whose initiatives are supported by local collectivities.

The industrial district is a socio-territorial entity which is marked by the presence of a community of persons and enterprises making the same product, or gravitating around a typical production

(Carluer, 2006). The district of Montpellier is, for example, a local collectivity which aims to develop as good actors-relays' and companies incubators' (such as Cap Alpha and Cap Oméga) working for the promotion of innovative small enterprises' creation, and to strengthen the connection of local actors to generic public and parapublic networks (like ANVAR and CRITT) in order to facilitate the transfer of information (Torrès, 2002)

Piore and Sabel (1989) have, for example, advanced that the networks of companies localized in the north of Italy have played an important role in the industrial success of the country, as a consequence of the passage from an accumulation mode to another, via the paradigm of flexible specialization (Daumas, 2006).

The technopole is generally composed of heterogeneous actors participating collectively in the conception, the production, and the diffusion of production processes, products, services, etc (Razafindrazaka, 2009). More precisely, the technopole of Montpellier, composed essentially of small companies without an industrial history or specialization, located next to a huge university poles and some institutions of research.

In this same perspective, Courlet (2000) pointed out that the LPS-or the localized productive systems (which is a concept developed by Courlet and Pecqueur (1992, 2013) in Grenoble and comparable to that of industrial districts), constitute networks of productive SMEs specialized around a product or a profession. Such SMEs networks are capable of building and developing some relationships of complementarity, collaboration, and cooperation among them, similar to local competitive communication nodes and links evolving in a restrained open and competitive geographic space. This view is similar to that of Porter (1990) who identified four constituents of the regional competitive advantage-called the diamond: (1) the production resources, (2) a local market with a good quality and quantity, (3) the socio-economic and legal environment, and (4) the local fabric rich of suppliers and related industries (Wahabi and Fahmi, 2016).

In compliance with Bouabdallah and Tholoniati's (2006) assumptions, these clusters of enterprises are formed by networks of SMEs linked or not to a central enterprise (and generally next to universities conducting to the development of spin-offs). They allow enterprises to take advantage of:

- the innovation capacity development ;
- the acceleration of the new ventures' creation;
- the promotion of the productivity.

In Morocco, and especially in regions like Ain chock, AL Fida Derb Sultan and Maarif, some informal family SMEs, characterized by their ethnic and familial solidarity, are exercising in the local market. However, they evolve in order to become export-oriented firms. In the long run, such SMEs work for their relocation to industrial zones of Casablanca or Ben M'sik.

At this level, it is essential to note that, in emergent contexts like Tunisia, the competitive clusters are partly constituted by innovative networks of family SME's which struggle to promote the regional and territorial development (the case of artisanal companies located at Sfax, the competitive clusters based in Monastir, in Borj Cedria science park, or in the technopoles of Tunis, Sousse...).

Such SMEs' and family firms' networks could contribute to the territorial development and innovation (Moulaert et Mehmoud, 2008) by:

- *supporting the competitiveness of enterprises and looking for innovative and technologic partnerships with enterprises, big firms and research centers;
- *bringing a bigger visibility to the territory in order to captivate new skills and ventures;
- *consolidating their economic fabric and reinforcing their identity;
- *animating the territory (and its competitiveness) which federate enterprises around simple and common thematics via good relays;
- *knitting a mesh of relations between firms, universities, and research centers via structured projects (with good technologic platforms);
- *participating in an innovative dynamics of the territory by promoting its attractiveness;

*diffusing an innovative culture into the territorial structures and between the territorial actors in order to benefit from the national and international notoriety throughout the visibility of the competitive clusters;

*accessing to a prospective vision concerning the future challenges and implications of the field.

3- The internationalizing SMEs' milieu: the importance of glocalization and local governance in the territorial development and innovation

In an internationalizing area characterized by its fast-changing events occurring from a turbulent environment, glocalization allows the SMEs to think globally and to act locally by adapting to these unpredictabilities and increasing the development of their territory. Moreover, local governance contributes to the local development via the actions engaged by the territorial actors, the NGOs and other specific organisms and leading to improve the attractiveness of the territory and to consolidate its image.

3-1- The role of glocalization in the territorial development

Being the fact that glocalization constitutes the keystone of such innovating networks which work together in order to expand into international markets (Torrès, 2002), these latters constituted by family SMEs are fighting towards a "measured" opening which would allow them to "think globally and act locally" taking into consideration the specificities and vulnerability of their territories. Such an arrangement appears so delicate that it requires a certain balance between regional particularisms and international trends. Efforts must then be maintained and sustained in order to ensure that deal. At this level, it seems so important to mention that the concept of glocalization was popularized by Porter (1990) to design "a geographic concentration of enterprises related to each other, of specialized suppliers, of service providers, of related industries' firms, and associated institutions in a particular field, which confront each other and cooperate". By the way, the theory of glocalization entails the proximity principle which plays an important role in the global insertion of SMEs and the conciliation between the globalization constraint and the proximity logic related to their management style.

3-2- The role of local governance (i.e. local organisms) in an internationalizing SMEs' environment

First of all, it should be mentioned that local and short-distance structures with an international scope and aiming to provide the interface among the community, the local and the global level as well as infrastructures of communication which ensure an homogeneous state vision (such as proximity of airports, highways, of partner zones as well as big, prestigious, and multinational firms, etc) could largely impulse the attractiveness and the international development of the region.

Then, in a territory of an internationalizing innovative environment, territorial actors such as public or private organisms (like chambers of commerce) could also act in order to support the foreign trade and to facilitate the internationalization of the SMEs as well as the local entrepreneurial fabric (Torrès, 1999). It's a space where relationships of long lasting collaboration and exchange are established in order to enhance learning, innovation and creativity of actors and their access to the global market.

In this perspective, Torrès (2002) cited four characteristics of an internationalizing area (4 Ds): diversity, density, dynamics, and directionality.

Besides, the territory must benefit from a local governance. At a time when public action becomes a prerequisite for countries that have a weak socio-economic development, the governance increased in importance, especially in the international forums. In line with this view, Maytnez (1998) reported that this new form of governing is cooperative, and different from the previous hierarchical model (by which the state made a sovereign control on groups and citizens). This form of governance applies nowadays the values of the enterprise (such as the new techniques of management), as well as the social values (democracy, environment, human rights, etc) in accordance with the business ethics, and in a long-term economic and profit perspective.

The global bank added that governance represents "the manner in which power is exercised for the management of social and economic resources of the country to reach a development objective". Its action is restricted to four essential domains: (a) the capacity and the efficiency in the public services' management, (b) admissibility and prevision, (c) the legal framework of development, and (d) information and transparency.

The institute of governance of private and public organisms has proposed a definition of the SME's governance by stipulating that "the SME's governance is defined as a set of reports

between an owner-manager and a group of persons gathered into an advisory council or a board of directors. These persons who are predominantly independent of the direction, and of the stakeholders of control, accepted to support this owner-manager with their expertise, and their experience in order to improve decisions and to ensure the sustainable growth of the enterprise” (Oubihi and Elouidani, 2016).

The concept of local/territorial governance is appearing, in this line in order to ensure the relative autonomy of local development processes, to consolidate the democracy and the role of civic society in the decision taking, to grant another image to the public action, to encourage the participation of citizens and the civic society, and to develop partnerships between different actors of specific politics (Wilson, 2000).

Local governance is then emanating, not only from local citizens and actors, but also from national organisms other local collectivities which play a major role in the network activation and meshing between institutions and enterprises_ enhancing transnational network synergies among them (Fourcade, 1993). These synergies enable the territory to be internationalized, connected with the rest of the world and not enclosed in a solitary confinement. Indeed, the sustainability of a territory is widely based on the national extra-territorial and international relationships that local actors establish with other partners to ensure its durability throughout a networking dynamics.

Local and bridging actors, such as universities, research and technical centers as well as technopoles, could also raise the emergency and the development of innovative SMEs and the dissemination of innovation. Collectivities must also advocate for the companies’ access to resources and skills distributed around the world and their communication with other firms located in foreign and international areas, as part of a global network (taking into consideration the proximity principle regulating the functioning of SMEs).

All these local organisms and actors advocate for a local governance which avoids the simple reproduction of imported development models which are most often inappropriate.

According to Bruno (2000, p.224), the local governance is “a specific mode of regulation of power and decision taking in a given community. It designs more than the government and the politic governance”. It is reflected by the collective ability of learning and management that

certain groups of individuals or human societies possess and develop in order to anticipate situations, to recognize a clarifying operating process leading to sustainable improvements.

The local governance contains four dimensions (Lusthaus et al, 1999):

*The organizational dimension: in the organization, the components or the elements of the collective action could be localized, such as the skills, the proactive systems, the leadership, ...

*The systemic dimension: the society is a set of multi-level and correlated systems: the public, the private and the philanthropic systems which are interrelated. In this perspective, three levels of capabilities could be determined: the individual, the sectorial and the environmental one.

*The participative dimension: The two essential values of governance are change and the learning. At this level, participative processes could influence the management approaches and the mode of government of public affairs to fight against politic distortions and to ensure the market effectiveness. Besides, public interventions could contribute to a good economic development.

*The institutional dimension: at this level, the focus is placed on laws, rules, cultural values and beliefs, politic attitudes, ... in order to stimulate the knowledge creation and the access to the actors' formal and informal games.

Thus, because competition remains global and as SME's competitiveness requires a high territorial anchorage, the proximity dimension is well taken into consideration at the managerial level, and the proximity territory may facilitate the access of the SMEs and their orientation towards an international opening. Competitive advantages could also be gained by the global insertion of SMEs and their integration into the territory/ or the region thanks to the proximity principle development. This integration enables the SMEs to access to resources and skills throughout the world (financing, partnerships, technology, etc), as well as to identify and to be embedded into the best networks that create prosperity, regulation, and distribution. Emphasis is then made on making of social, political, and economic local governance aiming at ensuring the territorial cohesion and development (Torrès, 2002; Swyngedouw, 2003).

In this perspective, **the territorial intelligence** seems to play an essential role for the local/economic development of the territory (Halévy-Van Keymeulen, 2003). It should identify the external changes' (related to technological, demographic, sociologic and political trends) causes and engines in the next 5-10 next years, their opportunities and their threats, as well as the

own strengths and weaknesses of the territory's SMEs. The territorial intelligence should also determine the weightings of these changes, the plausible deadlines of their impacts on the regional economy, as well as the way by which the regional policy and the entrepreneurial dynamics of the region are coherent with such engines.

Widmer (2014) recommends for example a territorial information system which allows to modelize the territory, to benchmark it to other territories and to make an update of it via its cartography and its spatial representations, a great knowledge of its actors, their skills and their interests. A culture based on a customer relationship management (CRM) must be focused on share, dialogue, and negotiation to develop a territorial marketing by a good mastery of the territory users'/clients' aspirations and needs and by fostering competition between territories.

Conclusion

In spite of its vulnerability and limits a territory essentially constituted by a set of SMEs (suffering also from some weaknesses related to their scarcity of resources and skills) could be an internationalizing area which adapt to a changing environment thanks to different engines and factors. These ones are especially concerning: (1) the SME's innovative networks acting in the territory, (2) the territorial strategies orbiting around innovative glocalization, territorial intelligence, and local governance. In this perspective, local actors, public authorities as well as some specific local organisms should play an important role on the development of the territory in question.

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