

# MEDUP!

Promoting social entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Region



This project is co-funded  
by the European Union

# Promoting social entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean region.

Consortium Leader:



Consortium Leader:



Southern Mediterranean Partners:



Associated Partners:



# MEDUP!

Promoting social entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Region

## Promoting social entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean region.

Social entrepreneurs tackle social and environmental challenges with innovative sustainable solutions - they combine business with social impact. Social entrepreneurship has become increasingly popular, not only for its potential to create jobs and democratic participation, but also for fostering inclusive growth, shared prosperity and social inclusion.

Since March 2018, Oxfam Italia has been running an EU-funded initiative called MedUp! Promoting social entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean region. This 4-year project has been developed in collaboration with North and South Mediterranean partners, such as Impact Hub, Dïesis, Euclid Network, Enactus Morocco, Tunisian Center for Social Entrepreneurship, Johud, Sekem and P.A.R.C.. MedUp! supports social entrepreneurship ecosystems across six countries of the MENA region, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Occupied Palestinian Territories.

## The project is implemented along three main levels of intervention and with various purposes:

### Macro level:

Improving Social Enterprises (SEs) regulatory and policy frameworks at country and cross-country levels;

### Meso level:

Supporting around 60 Social Enterprises Support Organizations (SESOs) to improve quality, innovativeness and outreach of their services;

### Micro level:

Supporting 64 SEs through financial and technical assistance in the 6 targeted countries

In its last year (2022), MedUp! aspires to disseminate the good practices of social entrepreneurship in the MENA region through this publication. This 'book of stories' presents the most successful and scalable social enterprise initiatives - particularly those involving women, youth and rural communities that have been selected to receive MedUp!'s technical and financial support.

The objective? To inspire youth to build better business for a better future, connect impact makers - and create awareness for these stories of impact in action.

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### Practical notes:

*This publication, part of project MedUp!, promoting social entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean region, consists of a collection of good practices and aims to strengthen the feeling of belonging to a broader movement of social enterprises.*

*This publication is disseminated through various channels and distributed to the general audience for awareness purposes, to existing and potential social entrepreneurs to learn from good practices, to Social Entrepreneur Support Organizations (SESOs) to amplify further to their networks of entrepreneurs, and to policy makers to demonstrate how social economy initiatives can impact local communities.*

*The publication has been created by MedUp! project partner Impact Hub, a globally connected and locally rooted network for supporting early-stage social entrepreneurs & innovators. The Impact Hub community is made up of 24,000+ people taking collaborative action for a better world. Impact Hub pioneers a just and sustainable world where business and profit are used in service of people and planet. [www.impacthub.net](http://www.impacthub.net)*

*This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Oxfam and Impact Hub Network, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*

# Better business for a better future

# 64

impact enterprises were given a grant under the MedUp! program

In this storybook, we share the journeys of **29** impact projects

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) most focused on amongst MedUp! participants are;



130+

jobs created by MedUp! participants in the past 3 years

100%

of all impact ventures are scalable initiatives

72%

of the impact enterprises say they make a positive environmental impact  
Over 90% of the MedUp! participants state they support gender empowerment

*The program provided expertise needed to improve marketing and diversification and offered funding to set up our operations despite economic challenges.*

- Marc, Founder of Compost Baladi

## MedUp! provided helpful support to the impact enterprises

- All enterprises said MedUp! financial support positively impacted their business
- Nearly 60% stated MedUp! technical support contributed to their business growth
- 80% said MedUp! expanded their network



*The MedUp! program gave our team access to mentors who helped us connect with partners in other rural communities, where we can now create and distribute our water filters. The funding we got during the program helped us to develop and finalize the premium version and to purchase the required equipment to manufacture the basic version at scale.*

- Mohannad, co-founder of Water Will (buymefilter).

# Promoting social entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean region.

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# GOOD PRACTICES

Consortium Leader:



Consortium Leader:



Southern Mediterranean Partners:



Associated Partners:



Story 1

# Compost Baladi

Founded in 2017 by **Marc Aoun**



Impact / SDG focus: Clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) + Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12)

10 full time employees

Lebanon



**Marc Aoun** has an ambitious goal for Compost Baladi, “reduce organic waste that’s currently landfilled and dumped by 20% in 2030”. Compost Baladi provides waste management services to municipalities and communities while selling compost to farmers.

“

“Each of our waste management stations services 6000 rural community members, employs two impoverished community members and provides fertilizer for up to 100 small holder farmers”, explains Marc about their impact.

By selling compost management systems as well as compost, Marc and his team have built a financially sustainable business. They have created a replicable model, and with the right investors as well as additional stations in partnership with municipalities and poultry farms across Lebanon, they can scale!

Marc comments that, “composting system installation in Akkar and Tyr + expansion of compost sales nationally” are the growth opportunities for the upcoming year.



Marc’s tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“Set targets and aim to reach them through a sustainable and innovative approach.”



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Story 2

# Prev Dev

Founded in 2020 by **Tabyaoui Mohamed**



Impact / SDG focus: Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) + Climate Action (SDG 13) production (SDG 12)

3 full time employees and 3 freelancers

Morocco



Entrepreneur **Tabyaoui Mohamed** aims to “make communities more resilient to natural disasters and floods.” His social venture Prev Dev constructs smart systems to predict and warn for floods. He adds, “alerting people early about floods saves lives and goods.”

With Prev Dev technology, Risk Managers have enough time to take adequate precautions and measures to protect both people and key infrastructure.

Prev Dev is in its early stages of development, however their team is focused on building a replicable business from the start.

“

“Our system is plug-and-play, however, we need to create conditions to use it, which may vary per region/location.”, says Tabyaoui.

The team’s ambition for the upcoming 12 months is signing more contracts, so that they can protect even more lives and property. Tabyaoui comments, “we signed our first big contract in June, now it’s time to sign more contracts to cover more km<sup>2</sup> with our technology.”



Tabyaoui’s tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“Set goals, develop a strategy, allocate the right resources - and find investors early-on.”



Story 3

# Montessori Egyptian Center (MEC) + Montessori Child Corner (MCC)

Founded in 2015 and 2011 respectively, by **Marie Therese Bishay**



Impact / SDG focus: Quality education (SDG 4) + Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12)

8 full time employees, 2 part time employees, 2 interns, 2 volunteers

Egypt



**Marie Therese Bishay** is a woman on a mission, advocating for children - wherever they are. Soon after becoming the director of the Montessori Early Childhood Teacher Education Program, certified by Montessori Education International MEPI, she started her own social ventures.

With both the Montessori Egyptian Centre and Montessori Child corner, Marie Therese and her team prepare Montessori environments through a teacher preparation program. They also support parents in finding the right path for their children - and they provide learning opportunities for children. Both the teacher preparation program, and (preschool) courses for children as well as parents is how they generate revenue.

“Improving children’s wellbeing and education, as well as helping families develop an understanding about their children and their challenges is why we exist.”, says Marie Therese. “Over the past 10 years, we have positively impacted 100+ families and their children.”, she adds.

When talking about scaling their impact, Marie Therese commented, “by carefully training more adults in the existing classroom - using it as an incubator - and moving them to other sites, we can replicate our impact and business model.”

Marie’s tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“We recommend a holistic approach  
- as well as a mindset of trial and error.”





Story 4

# Asma Al Weshah Institute

Founded in 2018 by **Asma Al Weshah**

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Impact / SDG focus: Good Health & Wellbeing (SDG 3)

7 full time employees

Jordan



The Asma Al Weshah Institute produces foods such as jams, cheeses, pickles, and gluten-free snacks.

**Asma Al Weshah** says,

“I became an entrepreneur to be able to provide healthy and safe foods, free of preservatives, dyes and gluten for all members of society, especially focusing on wheat allergy patients. At the same time, through my social business I aim to create job opportunities for women.”

The Asma Al Weshah Institute business model is simple - all goods are directly sold to consumers, at affordable prices. Asma comments, “our project is easily replicable by adding new markets, this helps create more jobs and brings our healthy foods to more people.”



On the web

Asma's tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“Our tip for a successful social enterprise is to focus on creating job opportunities - in our case for women. Plus, looking for financial and technical support is important in your growth.”



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Story 5

# Bookagri

Founded in 2018 by **Rudaina Haddad**



Impact / SDG focus: Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Reduced inequalities (SDG 10) + Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11)

3 full time employees + more than 30 part time employees

Jordan



When **Rudaina Haddad** worked as a tour guide in Jordan, she experienced the need to include and integrate the rural community into the tourism sector of the country. "After all, it is this community which reserves the heritage of Jordan, its foods, agricultural traditions, stories, handicrafts and artisanal skills.", she says.

BookAgri.com is an online platform to book agri-rural experiences across Jordan, as well as purchase traditionally crafted products.

“We aim to rehabilitate the rural communities and empower them to be a more essential part of the country’s tourism industry”, comments Rudaina. “So far, we’ve impacted over 600 people in rural communities”, she adds.

Rudaina explains, “Bookagri is unique because it creates and designs agritourism experiences in rural areas with the local community. We partner with them to own the experience, brand it under Bookagri and then promote it to generate sales and revenue for all parties.”

The team are looking to scale up their project from Salt, Jerash and Aljoun to Karak and soon more rural communities.



Rudaina’s tip for Social Entrepreneurs  
“To be successful we believe it’s essential to involve the local community in your enterprise.”



# Bethlehem Star Charitable Society

Founded in 2003 by **Julia Hanania**



Impact / SDG focus: No poverty (SDG 1) + Quality education (SDG 4) + Gender equality (SDG 5) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)

4 full time employees + 9 part time employees + 140 interns

Palestine



The Bethlehem Star Charitable Society delivers vocational training to youth and women to improve their social-economic situation. Founder **Julia Hanania** comments, "Our focus is on offering training to those who were not fortunate enough to enter Palestinian universities due to difficult economic conditions, such as lack of resources or early marriage. Vocational training helps people acquire skills that will enable them to obtain a respectable source of income and live in dignity." Julia is a woman on a mission. She became an entrepreneur to reduce poverty and help youth and women find jobs. In addition, she aims to change the negative view of Palestian society towards vocational training. Last year, the team also started helping those who lost their jobs due to the pandemic; offering vocational training to find new jobs.

“We have trained 68 trainees in professional fields ; 46 of them were able to achieve success in their professional life (by finding a job or starting their own business). We now seek to help others find a job. Our impact reaches beyond the 68 direct beneficiaries, it touches their families, and local community, too.”, explains Julia.

Julia and her team run a charitable organization, 50% of the training fees is paid for by trainees, the other half is covered by donations. To scale their impact, the Bethlehem Star Charitable Society is expanding the professional areas their vocational training courses focus on. They will also continue to support people who lost their job during COVID-19 and help them reintegrate into the job market.

Julia's tip to Social Entrepreneurs

“Our secret to success? Accepting failure, learning from your mistakes and never giving up.”



Story 7

# Water Will

Founded in 2019 by **Mohannad Hesham Abo EL-rous**

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Impact / SDG focus: Clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) + Affordable and clean energy (SDG 7) + Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11)

3 full time employees + 2 part time employees

Egypt



Water Will produces and distributes sustainable and cost-efficient ceramic water filters made from a mixture of natural, indigenous materials that can kill 99.9 % of bacteria and viruses in water. Through their venture, the team improves living conditions by providing rural communities access to clean, safe drinking water.

Mohannad and his co-founders started their impact-business to empower rural communities. He explains, "Access to water is very limited in rural communities in Egypt, where the water network and infrastructure is ageing and under-maintained. In more remote areas, the pipes and shallow wells mix with the sewage systems. This causes many diseases like diarrhea and kidney failure."

Through Water Will the team creates double impact. He adds,

"Our filters provide access to clean sustainable sources of water, which in turn contributes to good health. We also create job opportunities by training rural communities on production phases of the filter, and some serve as distribution partners and enjoy a profit share."

So far, the team has distributed 1000 filters, impacting a total of 5000 direct beneficiaries. This number will grow rapidly now that the business is up and running on online sales, too. When you buy a premium filter (individually, or as a business) through [buymefilter.com](http://buymefilter.com), one family in a rural community receives a filter too. It's the classic, one-for-one model in action. Water Will also sells directly to rural communities; where rural residents are the distributors and contribute in profit share. Mohannad adds that, "In January 2020, we expanded to Kenya. From the start, we were keen to incorporate both scalability in order to be able to replicate this project elsewhere in Egypt, as well as other countries around the world."



Mohannad's tip for Social Entrepreneurs

"Empowering the local community as well as targeting the bottom of the pyramid by offering cost-efficient and sustainable solutions. Those are our tips for success."



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Story 8

# AL-Reehyah Cooperative Agricultural Development

Founded in 2004 by **Mohammad Tobasi**



Impact / SDG focus: Zero Hunger (SDG 2) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12)

1 full time employee + 2 part time employees

Palestine



Mohammad Tobasi became an entrepreneur to improve the economic situation of farmers. The AL-Reehyah Cooperative Agricultural Development promotes and sells farmer's produce at markets and through digital channels.

Mohammad and his social business are currently impacting 20 farmer families. He explains,

“we work with farmers near the Israeli settlements which are threatened by the Israeli occupation army.”

Opportunities for growth of the Cooperative are, “setting up a packing + packaging facility - and for us to have corner stalls in large malls to sell the farmers' produce.”, comments Mohammad.



Mohammad's tip for Social Entrepreneurs  
“Focus on innovation and have a marketing strategy.”



Story 9

# KOUN

Founded in 2017 by **Diouri Nada**



Impact / SDG focus: Gender equality (SDG 5) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12) + Climate Action (SDG 13)

10 full time employees

Morocco



KOUN combines sustainable development, waste recycling and professional integration. Diouri Nada became an entrepreneur to make an impact. With KOUN, she and her team have set up an innovative waste recycling and recovery program.

“We create job opportunities and now sell 3 product ranges of upcycled designs”, explains Diouri.

140 youth have been trained as part of the KOUN project and 72% are active in the job market today. Diouri sees opportunities to scale their project, “We can franchise the commercial part of our business and replicate the social setup. We are exploring implementing the project in other cities such as Rabat, Tangier, Eljadida, Marrakech.”



Diouri's tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“Make profit and create social and environmental impact. The two have to go hand-in-hand from the start.””

The KOUN logo is displayed inside a large, light-colored circle. It features a stylized, bold letter 'K' enclosed within a square frame that has an open top-right corner. Below this graphic, the word 'KOUN' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Story 10

# Baalbeck Community Farm

Founded in 2018 by **Ramy Lakkis**



Impact / SDG focus: Zero hunger (SDG 2) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9) + Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) + Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12)

10 full time employees

Lebanon



The Baalbeck Community Farm “is composed of greenhouses, a seed incubator, an agri-lab, a safe space, an urban recreational center, a training center, livestock pens and a cold storage room.”, explains founder Ramy Lakkis.

“

“Our initiative aims to modernize the farming and agricultural sector through hydroponic farming. With this new approach we hope to be a role model for many farmers - we are also paving the way to cultivating new types of fruits and veggies, such as strawberries.”, says Ramy. “So far, we have impacted 250 people.”, he adds.

“As an entrepreneur, you get the chance to change the world and impact other people’s lives.”, comments Ramy. They’ve built a scalable project, particularly the hydroponic system and set up can be replicated in other parts of the country - and world.



Ramy’s tip for Social Entrepreneurs  
“Set clear goals and work at the intersection of tech and innovation.”



Story 11

# Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center / Empowering people with intellectual disabilities

Founded in 1981 by **Fuad Samaanin**



Impact / SDG focus: No poverty (SDG 1) + Good health and wellbeing (SDG 3) + Reduced inequalities (SDG 10)

30 employees

Palestine



The Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center (SMRC) provides people with intellectual disabilities (PwID) with vocational training and job opportunities in agriculture, namely in organic farming and greenhouses. They also provide fresh organic produce for 90 PwIDs' daily meals.

According to SMRC's founder, Fuad Samaanin,

“the project tackles a number of social challenges, mainly the inability of PwIDs - which is considered the most vulnerable group in the Palestinian society - to access their rights to education, protection, vocational training, employment and inclusion. It also empowers PwIDs socially and financially to become more self-confident and self-reliant and hence live a normal life similar to their peers without disability.”

SMRC is partially funded by the Moravian Church in Germany and, additionally, raises funds through applying for rehabilitation projects from different international donors. The social venture also relies on local revenue that is generated from its guesthouse, park, workshops and the sale of locally produced organic vegetables and herbs, as well as other hand-made products such as embroidery, soap and candles.

With a solid and sustainable growth strategy for the near future, SMRC's next step to keep positively impacting their community is the development of a robust and season-responsive agricultural plan.

Fuad's tip for Social Entrepreneurs  
“Make sure to include vulnerable groups into your enterprise.”



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Story 12

# Holy land Handicraft Cooperative society

Founded in 1981 by **Basima Barham**



Impact / SDG focus: No poverty (SDG 1) + Quality education (SDG 4) + Gender equality (SDG 5) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11)

9 part-time employees

Palestine



"Handicrafts are among the most important solutions to fight unemployment in our country for both women and men.", explains Basima Barham of the Holy Land Handicraft Cooperative Society (HLHCS).

As a World Fair Trade Organization, the team at HLHCS aims to preserve the handicraft traditions for the benefit of future generations of Palestinians. Basima adds, "especially the olivewood tradition which was first developed because of the local availability of the raw material and the demand by pilgrims for religious icons."

"We strive to alleviate local poverty and unemployment, decrease emigration, and sustain Palestinian handicraft workmanship traditions. We do this by marketing the artisan products, obtaining raw materials at a reasonable cost, and developing our technical and managerial capabilities.", Basmina says. "The Holy Land Handicraft Cooperative Society has a dream of peace in the Holy Land, and we believe that Fair Trade is a tool to reach our aspirations."

Basima's tip for Social Entrepreneurs

"Our tip for fellow entrepreneurs is to build strong relationships with stakeholders."



Story 13

# Waselat Al Muffaker for educational services Co.

Founded in 2019 by **Maali Diab**



Impact / SDG focus: Quality education (SDG 4) + Reduced inequalities (SDG 10)

11 part-time employees

Palestine



Muffaker is a comprehensive interactive learning system. It covers all types of learning, including academic, life skills and crafts, adjustable to all difficulty levels. "It's particularly designed for special needs kids", explains founder Maali Diab. "We train both instructors and parents in how to use our learning system and products."

"I wanted to solve the problem of my own child struggling with education. Through our project, we are trying to overcome old traditional teaching techniques and create interactive learning experiences to improve the outcomes of the learning system - and ultimately give a chance to children with special needs so they can play a more involved role in society, rather than be seen as a burden.", says Maali.

The team of Muffaker is making a deep impact. "75 teachers, 40 supervisors-special needs, 220 parents, 160 university students have been impacted by our methods. Our concept of interactive learning has been enjoyed by another 700 students (both regular and special needs students.", comments Maali.

Maali and team have built a replicable business and are looking to expand by adding new learning concepts and additional training for parents and teachers, too.

Maali's tip for Social Entrepreneurs

"Spread your knowledge and learnings to those who need it."



On the web

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Story 14

# Safetrack

Founded in 2018 by **Mahir Idrissi**

Mahir's tip to Social Entrepreneurs

"Satisfy your partners and customers, always."



Impact / SDG focus: Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9) + Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) + Climate Action (SDG 13) + Life on land (SDG 15)

5 full time employees

Morocco



Safetrack is an agritech venture that creates hardware and software solutions that help farmers to produce more, and at the same time, consume less water and energy.

“

Founder Mahir explains, "The Safetrack solution consists of an integrated hardware and software IoT (embedded technology) platform for internal geolocation, surveillance and monitoring. 100% mobile, easy to maintain, low on electricity and bandwidth. Safetrack is an affordable, reliable and eco-responsible solution."

Mahir became an entrepreneur to give back more. Together with his team, he has impacted 500+ beneficiaries.



Story 15

# EasyRun

Founded in 2017 by **Mohamed Faouzi Ben Abdelkrim**



Impact / SDG focus: No poverty (SDG 1) + Gender equality (SDG 5) + Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) + Climate Action (SDG 13)

3 full time employees + 25 part time employees

Morocco



EasyRun's goal is clear, to significantly reduce the carbon impact caused by the 900,000 daily movements of motorcycles in Casablanca. Founder Mohamed and his team build a network of couriers using electric scooters to make express deliveries.

“

“We're not only in the business of sustainable mobility - we also create (courier) jobs. We hire people without formal training and those that are otherwise excluded from the workforce. Making a double social impact.”, comments Mahomed.

EasyRun makes money from commission on each delivery - and they aim to scale their operations to other large cities in Morocco.



Mohamed's tip for Social Entrepreneurs  
“Focus on creating a sustainable model and work on digitization.”



Story 16

# Annahda educational wooden workshop

Founded in 1986 by **George Annahda**



Impact / SDG focus: No poverty (SDG 1) + Quality education (SDG 4) + Gender equality (SDG 5) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8)

12 full time employees

Palestine



At the Annahda Educational Wooden Workshop, people with disabilities produce safe and high-quality wooden educational toys and kindergarten furniture.

“

The founders explain that, “at Annahda, people with disabilities have the opportunity to train and produce wooden educational toys. They earn an income and are able to buy new material with which they can create and sell their own produce at bazaars.”

26 people with disabilities currently work in the workshop - 16 male and 10 female employees are directly impacted because Annahda exists. Another 62 people are indirectly impacted.

The team successfully sells their wooden toys at markets and bazaars - and the furniture to schools and pre-schools. “We think we can scale our impact by selling at more bazaars and shops, creating more jobs too.”, adds George Annahda.



Annahda's tip for Social Entrepreneurs  
“Put emphasis on inclusion - and expand your market using social media.”



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Story 17

# Schaduf

Founded in 2011 by **Sherif Hosny**



Impact / SDG focus: Good health and wellbeing (SDG 3) + Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) + Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12)

50 full time employees, 3 part time employees

Egypt



Sherif Hosny's vision of creating a company that adds social and environmental value to the community became a reality in 2011, when he founded Schaduf. The venture is dedicated to "make things green, from urban farming to sustainable landscape architecture to living green walls", explains the founder.

Schaduf's business model is straightforward: they sell urban farming systems and provide farmers with training and supervision to ensure that they achieve good results. In addition to the more than 700 urban micro farms they have installed in and around Cairo - which means more than 700 families directly impacted -, Sherif Hosny says that the venture's positive footprint can be traced even further:

“

"We are trying to create jobs for underprivileged families living in cities, create food security and introduce safe foods that are grown closer to the consumer while reducing transportation costs and waste".

Schaduf is using technology as an engine to increase its impact and good results. To begin with, they have developed an automated controller to irrigate and fertilize the crops, as well as to control the temperature in the greenhouse. Additionally, they have created a specialized farming app that has the potential to reduce the errors made by farmers. Finally, the crops from the micro farms are all growing in Hydroponic systems, which allows efficient use of water and food cultivation all year round.



Sherif's tip for Social Entrepreneurs

"Innovate, grow in new markets and invest in your people."



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Story 18

# vlaby

Founded in 2018 by **Mohamed Nada**



Impact / SDG focus: Quality education (SDG 4)

7 full time employees, 5 part time employees

Egypt



Mohamed Nada, founder of Vlaby explains that, “many students face accessibility or safety challenges with traditional laboratories”. He continues, “at Vlaby we produce virtual experiments to simulate the traditional laboratory experience of students”. The virtual labs platform for students in the MENA region has already impacted 18 million students in Egypt (since 2018).

“ Vlaby aims to provide a distinctive, enjoyable and interesting educational service for students that helps in simplifying science and understanding complex scientific terms and concepts by means of gamification and personalized experiences. “Our success is in solving problems for the educational system and achieving high-quality education for students”, says Mohamed Nada.

Vlaby is a replicable platform, and scaling is exactly what the team aims to do. Science experiments are similar in many Arab and foreign countries, and the Vlaby platform produces experiments in five languages: Arabic, English, French, German and Indonesian. Meaning the social enterprise can expand to new markets, next up are Saudi Arabia and Libya.

Mohamed’s tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“Always be open to provide alternative solutions to challenges you face.”



Story 19

# ZAFARAN - Inash Al Usr

Founded in 1967 by **Ali Hamdallah**



Impact / SDG focus: Good health and wellbeing (SDG 3) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9)

10 employees

Palestine



“Zafaran - Inash Al Usra is dedicated to producing traditional Palestinian food. The social venture was created in 1967 by Ali Hamdallah as an effort “to be part of the development of our national economy, creating job opportunities and developing new business models and business methods”.

Powered by the work of Palestinian women, Zafaran - Inash Al Usra buys national goods and raw materials from social businesses, supporting hundreds of farmers, then uses modern technologies to produce the delicacies - all while making sure to preserve the flavor of home-made food.

In addition to creating jobs for women and tackling gender inequality, the impact-enterprise also encourages Palestinian organic agriculture and promotes the consumption of healthy food in the community.

Selling business to business, the team have built a financially sustainable venture and see opportunities to replicate in other cities in the future.



Ali's tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“Our tips? Develop new business models and methods, empower women participation + increase productivity and reduce cost.”





Story 20

# Le Lemon Tour

Founded in 2018 by **Zied Bahri**



Impact / SDG focus: Good health and wellbeing (SDG 3) + Gender equality (SDG 5) + Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11)

4 full time employees, 1 part time employee

Tunisia



“Being an entrepreneur is the best way to become an agent of change”, says Zied Bahri. Compelled to create the change he wants to see in the world, Zied founded Le Lemon Tour, a Tunisia-based social startup that aims to put bikes back on the Tunisian roads.

Le Lemon Tour offers its customers a touristic bicycle service dedicated to discovering the many faces of the country, from bike rental to cycle-themed events, workshops and tours. The venture aims “to promote a sustainable way to move in the city and introduce the not-very-known Tunisian heritage to local and international tourists via a bicycle tourism service”, explains Zied.

In 2020 alone, 1500 women benefited from Le Lemon Tour services (and learned to ride a bicycle!) - and more than 300 children (mostly from underprivileged neighborhoods) took part in bicycle workshops. By encouraging the use of bicycles, Le Lemon Tour is directly contributing to climate action.

The financially sustainable enterprise is now scaling up their activities in collaboration with strategic partners and developing a franchise framework to replicate their efforts throughout the country.



Zied's tips for Social Entrepreneurs

“We believe social entrepreneurship is about creating jobs and broadening our scope for impact continuously.”



Story 21

# Mothers' cooking

Founded in 2018 by **Rudy Rizk**



Impact / SDG focus: Zero Hunger (SDG 2) + Reduced inequalities (SDG 10) + Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12)

10 employees

Lebanon



Aimed at making the world a better place one dish at a time, Rudy Rizk created Mother's Cooking in 2018. The Lebanese social enterprise connects people with nearby stay-at-home moms, to order healthy and delicious homemade food.

The project was founded as a solution to address two challenges: the newer generations' bad nutritional habits and lack of time to cook on one side; and the stay-at-home moms' structural lack of income on the other side. "Mother's Cooking gives the moms the opportunity to earn extra income and be productive from the comfort of their own homes, and for people to browse their neighborhoods for healthy cooking", explains Rudy Rizk.

According to the founder, "success is to create a product of value that can make a great impact, be profitable and sustainable at the same time". The business model of Mother's Cooking is simple; the venture earns commission per meal sold. Besides a solid financial model, the team has positively impacted hundreds of beneficiaries, supporting mom-cooks to make a living and customers to eat nutritious food. All in all, the impact-venture embodies Rudy Rizk's take on success and is looking to scale-up in the near future.

Rudy's tip for Social Entrepreneurs  
"Focus on creating value, value in terms of impact - and value in profit."



# Small Artisans for Trade and Supply (SATS)

Founded in 2016 by **Amr Abou-Zeid**



Impact / SDG focus: No Poverty (SDG 1) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12)

1 full time employee, 5 part time employees, 1 intern

Egypt



Amr Abou-Zeid became an entrepreneur with the goal to “support underserved communities”. Amr founded Small Artisans for Trade and Supply (or SATS) - a value chain service provider that defines markets, designs products, and supplies raw materials and equipment to artisans and early stage businesses. SATS also provides the artisans with advanced payment, purchases their final products, runs quality controls, assists the collaborators with branding, packaging and exporting to clients in EU, USA, Australia, and other Arab countries.

“

“I saw opportunities in exporting Egyptian and African handmade products from natural and recycled materials, and challenges regarding the consistency of quality, the sustainability of supply and the impact on our artisans and their communities”, says Amr Abou-Zeid about his impact-focused venture.

Beyond the envisioned positive environmental impact, SATS was designed to address local challenges of poverty and inequality as well as creating decent work opportunities for all. Guided by these principles, the social enterprise impacts the 50 employees who work for the company or in the artisans workshops, indirectly their impact has touched over 300 individuals.

The team has built a replicable business model that can be scaled to working with artisans in different African countries. Amr and team are looking forward to opening their online store and aim to triple their B2B customer base, too.

Amr’s tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“Social entrepreneurship is about creating jobs, promoting knowledge, creating better working conditions (caring about people) and focusing on more circular models.”



Story 23

# Hum'n Go & ProAbled

Founded in 2017 by **Samer Sfeir**



Impact / SDG focus: No Poverty (SDG 1) + Zero Hunger (SDG 2) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8)

10 employees

Lebanon



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“I fell in love with the concept of social entrepreneurship, as it combines entrepreneurship, management, social impact and mission”, says Samer Sfeir. From that love, Hum'n Go was born in 2017.

Hum'n Go is a Lebanese grab-and-go snack: flavored hummus and breadsticks, Produced by a small and dedicated team and directly sold to distributors - the majority of the profits go toward ProAbled. ProAbled is an employment platform focused on the inclusion of people with disabilities.

Beyond the business and giving back, the team is passionate about incorporating sustainability into their operations by ensuring all material used is recyclable.

For Samer Sfeir, “success can be defined as the achievement of scalable and sustainable impact” and that’s what’s in store for the future of Hum'n Go and ProAbled, as they plan to start expanding both selling operations to European in the next year.



Samer's tip for Social Entrepreneurs  
“Our focus is on achieving sustainable and scalable impact.”



Story 24

# Tatreez design

Founded in 2015 by **Faten al Miari**



Impact / SDG focus: Gender Equality (SDG 5) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Reduced inequalities (SDG 10)

10 full time employees, 5 part time employees, 120 interns

Lebanon



Tatreez Design is a social venture dedicated to women empowerment and unemployment reduction through sewing and embroidery. They design, sew, make prints and sell clothing items - including bags, dresses, bed sheets, table covers, scarves and more. - both online and onsite, and generate revenue for more than 130 collaborators.

Besides the immediate socio-economic impact for its local community, Tatreez Design also aims to give a new life to traditional signs and visuals and create cultural resilience.

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“We add ancient embroidery to newer designs. When current generations wear them, we help our traditions to thrive.”, explains founder and entrepreneur Faten al Miari.

In times of pandemic, the initiative redirected part of its efforts to produce the necessary apparel and accessories for doctors and patients.

The team is excited to expand by adding new products and designs and selling more, to make more impact for their collaborators - and keep preserving cultural heritage.



Faten's tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“Our tip for success? Focus on continuity and development.”



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Story 25

# CHREEK

Founded in 2014 by **George Ghafary**



Impact / SDG focus: Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Reduced inequalities (SDG 10) + Life on land (SDG 15)

7 full time employees, 4 part time employees, 2 interns

Lebanon



George Ghafary became an entrepreneur to create innovative solutions to social challenges in the country. Guided by the principle of inclusivity, Chreek stands for the word 'partner' in Arabic. The venture was founded to act at the intersection of environmental awareness and the job creation for socially disabled people.

“Our two key projects Nasmaya, a small eco-village in Mayroba, and From Leb with Love, a platform to export Lebanese made products, exist alongside many other green initiatives. We are also helping people with social disabilities reintegrate into society. We focus on former substance users, former prisoners and people with other social issues.”, explains George.

Since its creation, Chreek has already transformed hundreds of former prisoners and substance users' lives and trained about a thousand women and youth for integration into the job market. Indirectly, more than 4000 families have benefited from Chreek's efforts. The social venture is also doing its part for the environment: through their programs, they have recycled 8000 tons of plastic, planted 30.000 trees, cleaned 6 beaches and upcycled 800 tons of garbage.

George's tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“Be happy - and passionate about the impact you make.”



Story 26

# Sciencia

Founded in 2014 by **Latifa El Ghezal**



4 full time employees, 6 part time employees

Impact / SDG focus: Quality education (SDG 4) + Reduced inequalities (SDG 10)

Tunisia



Founded in 2017 by Latifa El Ghezal, Scienza is a Tunisia-based science recreation provider. The venture creates accessible science content aimed at ensuring children's scientific curiosity and development.

“We are convinced that every child has the right to a playful scientific education, and to become fulfilled, creative and innovative adults capable of solving problems. The creation of Scienza is our modest contribution to ensuring a better future for our children”, says Latifa.

According to Latifa, scientific researcher and social entrepreneur, success means impacting other lives and Scienza's success is clearly illustrated in the bright eyes of the children who benefit from their work. By providing paid workshops (both virtually and face-to-face) and selling educational games, Scienza aims to contribute to a healthier mental development of new generations.

So far, they have benefitted around 100 children from disadvantaged regions in addition to helping several midwives to become more financially independent (by offering them the opportunity of becoming ambassadors for the venture).

Latifa's tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“Successful social entrepreneurship is about being mindful of the impact we make on others.”



On the web

Story 27

# Sociordi darnet

Founded in 2017 by **Mnassar Hichem**



Impact / SDG focus: Quality education (SDG 4) + Gender equality (SDG 5)

2 employees, part time employees

Tunisia



“The 2011 revolution in Tunisia encouraged young people to become agents of change. “Unbelievable social innovation began to sprout everywhere. We decided to follow the movement and sow seeds.”, says Mnassar Hichem, founder of Sociordi Darnet.

Sociordi Darnet, founded in 2017, is a venture dedicated to making digital technology accessible to everyone. Its conception came from the insight that the Tunisian digital revolution reinforced the exclusion of young people due to lack of equipment or skills. The venture’s mission, therefore, is to digitally empower young people by assisting them to use digital tools and enabling them to acquire essential skills for social-professional integration.

Sociordi Darnet’s business model consists of paid professional training which not only allows the venture to be sustainable, but also allows them to provide free activities for disadvantaged children and young people. To date, more than 100 girls and boys living in rural areas have been impacted by Sociordi Darnet’s work. Robotics, the Internet of Things, and 3D printing are among the venture’s technological repertoire used to power their social innovation mission.

What’s next for the team? Opening an online digital platform for digital education for young people and future digital animators.



Mnassar’s tip for Social Entrepreneurs is  
“A social enterprise creates a movement for change.”





Story 28

# habaybna.net

Founded in 2017 by **Reem Alfranji**



Impact / SDG focus: Good health and wellbeing (SDG 3) + Quality education (SDG 4) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8)

5 full time employees, 3 part time employees

Jordan



Habaybna.net is an Arabic digital platform specialized in developmental disabilities to empower parents. The venture provides specialized content that is evidence-based, practical and easy to understand and apply. In addition, the platform also provides the means to connect parents with specialists in Rehabilitation and Special Education.

“Entrepreneur Reem Alfranji founded habaybna.net in 2017. The aim of the venture is to solve a problem faced by Arab parents of children with developmental disability: the lack of guidance and continued support necessary to improve the children’s lives and skills. The initiative was born out of Reem’s own personal experience and “desire to support parents so they can make informed decisions on what they can do to support their children - from early detection and intervention until employment”, adds the founder.

Blending social impact with technology, habaybna’s business model is a mix of selling online consultations and online courses. Besides that, habaybna.net partners up with donors and governmental entities in Jordan to reach vulnerable communities to deepen their impact.



Reem’s tip for Social Entrepreneurs

“Social entrepreneurship is about impacting people and sustaining our impact, without relying on grants.”



# A TABLE - L'épicerie fine (BC DISTRIBUTION)

Founded in 2014 by **Mohamed Ali Chebil**



Impact / SDG focus: Good health and wellbeing (SDG 3) + Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) + Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12)

13 full time employees

Tunisia



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Tunisian local products do not enjoy a brand image that matches their quality. In addition, the products are often inaccessible for customers. Our goal at A TABLE L'épicerie fine is to solve this challenge through a commercial interface that is compatible with the quality of local products, and delivered under strong socio-economic values.”, says founder Mohamed Ali Chebil.

The Tunisia-based project promotes local goods, agricultural resilience and socio-economic development by creating original recipes and exceptional products that are sold throughout both physical stores across the country and a digital platform.

Considered essential in the company's operational model and future sustainability are A TABLE - L'épicerie fine's trusting relationships with partners, namely local artisans, farmers and breeders. "Success, for us, can be defined as watching the growth of the A TABLE - L'épicerie fine moving in harmony with our partners' development. That's what guarantees our products' fair purchase prices and optimal quality", affirms Mohamed.

While the social enterprise enjoys a healthy sales margin, their purpose is not only to be financially sustainable - the team's core goal is making an impact by preserving Tunisian agricultural heritage and contributing to regional development. The upcoming year is about scaling; opening new establishments and expanding the product offer, all while ensuring their partners are on the same successful page.

Mohamed's tip for Social Entrepreneurs

"Success for social entrepreneurs is in collective growth. This may be slow at the start - and then it pays off."



The logo for MEDUP! is displayed within a white, irregularly shaped speech bubble. The text 'MEDUP!' is rendered in a stylized, wireframe font. The letters 'M', 'E', 'D', and 'U' are blue, while 'P' and the exclamation mark are green. The background of the slide is split into a green upper-left section and a blue lower-right section, with a faint geometric pattern of lines and dots in the blue area.

MEDUP!

**Promoting social  
entrepreneurship in  
the Mediterranean  
region.**

# MEDUP!

Promoting social entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Region



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# Promoting social entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean region.

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