

LIBYA



Following the revolution in 2011 that ousted Muammar Gaddafi, Libyans are faced with rebuilding a broken economy and government. The economic system under Gaddafi primarily focused on the oil industry, with little room for innovation or entrepreneurship. Women and men were not encouraged to build on their potential to develop their business acumen or take risks by engaging in business.



Creating business solutions to poverty

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QUICKFACTS

- Population: 6.2 million
- Urban Population Growth: 1.1%
- 97% of people have access to clean sanitation facilities
- GDP: \$41 billion USD
- GDP Growth: -6% (2015)
- Industry (mining, manufacturing, etc.): 78% of GDP
- Exports: 72% of GDP

Background

Libya is a country in political and economic turmoil. The country's dangerous security environment still witnesses frequent clashes between government forces and militia groups. The violence, combined with a lack of infrastructure, creates roadblocks to success for entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Though Libyan women were at the forefront in the fight for independence, the constraints that keep them from full participation in any economic recovery are particularly tight. Business support networks for entrepreneurs, especially women, are weak. Lack of a thriving marketplace, along with cultural restrictions, mean

there is little incentive for women to innovate or take the risks required to create healthy business competition and keep the economy strong.

MEDA's Assessment

Despite the volatile security, MEDA has made an impact building networks of entrepreneurial women through the Libya Women Economic Empowerment (LWEE) program. Launched in 2012, the first phase of LWEE was a women-focused project that contributed to the growth of Libya's private sector through business training, networking and mentorship, and a matching grants competition.

Building upon these successes, MEDA's second phase works with women-owned and managed businesses and business support organizations to increase the number of women able to engage in entrepreneurship throughout Libya. The goal of the program is to enable women-led businesses to grow by enhancing networks, market linkages, developing web-enabled and mobile technologies,

financial training programs, and tools for increased access to finance.



Recent graduates stand with their certificates after planting the "Hope" tree – a symbol of what the program means to them.

Outcome | ?-Year Project Budget

- 600 entrepreneurs (at least 75% women) have access to financial training
- 150 small-to-medium sized businesses have increased access to financing
- 8 local service providers increase their ability to provide business training to small businesses
- Increased access to local business networks, including the creation of an online networking portal for entrepreneurs.
- Contributing to the growth of the Libyan non-oil private sector

