Unemployment is a large problem for the Mediterranean region.

Youth unemployment in the MENA region is particularly shocking.

Entrepreneurship fosters employment and the development of new skills, boosts innovation and opens up markets.

Women need to be integrated into the labor market—why exclude 50% of potential job-creators?

Promoting women’s entrepreneurship tackles the root causes of sectorial and occupational segregation.

### Phase I (2013-2014)
- 4 countries (Morocco, Palestine, Jordan, Spain)
- 18 motivating Women Entrepreneurship Days
- 800 participating young women & men

### Phase II (2015-2016)
- 6 countries (Morocco, Palestine, Jordan, Albania, Egypt, Tunisia)
- 16 motivating Women Entrepreneurship Days
- Over 1000 participating young women & men
**RESULTS**

**ALBANIA**

**SITUATION**
> 25% youth female unemployment
> Gender parity in education, but men still own 75% of businesses
> Only 17% of SMEs business managers & owners are women

**OBSTACLES**
- 48% Lack of funding
- 45% Gender stereotypes and bias
- 40% Work-life balance
- 21% Lack of information
- 12% Male-dominated professional environment

**WHAT WE DID**

1. **2 Women Entrepreneurship Days**
2. **16 business ideas ↓ 5 businesses**

**PROPOSED SOLUTIONS**
- More funding opportunities for young women entrepreneurs (50%)
- Business Advice Center for students (34%)
- Teach Entrepreneurship in university (14%)

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**EGYPT**

**SITUATION**
> 65% youth female unemployment (3 times that of males)
> Men outnumber women in tertiary education, labor force participation, and the business world

**OBSTACLES**
- 50% Lack of funding
- 5% Gender stereotypes and bias
- 95% Work-life balance
- 50% Lack of information

**WHAT WE DID**

1. **2 Women Entrepreneurship Days**
2. **3 businesses created + 7 awaiting funds**

**PROPOSED SOLUTIONS**
- More funding opportunities for young women entrepreneurs (100%)
- Business Advice Center for students (100%)
- Teach Entrepreneurship in university (100%)

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**JORDAN**

**SITUATION**
> 48% youth female unemployment
> Despite a roughly gender-equal enrolment in tertiary education, many well educated women are still unable to find jobs

**OBSTACLES**
- 73% Lack of funding
- 36% Gender stereotypes and bias
- 36% Work-life balance
- 7% Lack of information
- 29% Male-dominated professional environment

**WHAT WE DID**

1. **3 Women Entrepreneurship Days**
2. **3 businesses developed, but ultimately not started**

**PROPOSED SOLUTIONS**
- More funding opportunities for young women entrepreneurs (40%)
- Business Advice Center for students (23%)
- Teach Entrepreneurship in university (37%)
PALESTINE

63% youth female unemployment
Unstable political situation creates violence and impoverishment which affects both men and women alike.
These circumstances blind society to women-specific issues.

WHAT WE DID
1 Women Entrepreneurship Day

RESULTS
5 businesses developed, awaiting funds

SITUATION

30% youth female unemployment
Despite one of the highest levels of education in the region, only a 26% female labor force participation (versus 70% for men).

WHAT WE DID
1 Women Entrepreneurship Day

RESULTS
4 businesses developed, awaiting funds

SITUATION

10.9% youth female unemployment
Few legal reforms with slow implementation, widespread societal discrimination, and continuing violence against women.

WHAT WE DID
7 Women Entrepreneurship Days

RESULTS
14 businesses created

SITUATION

OBSTACLES

35% Lack of funding
48% Gender stereotypes and bias
25% Work-life balance
31% Lack of information
7% Male-dominated professional environment

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

- More funding opportunities for young women entrepreneurs (25%)
- Business Advice Center for students (40%)
- Teach Entrepreneurship in university (25%)

-TUNISIA

OBSTACLES

48% Lack of funding
45% Gender stereotypes and bias
40% Work-life balance
21% Lack of information
6% Male-dominated professional environment

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

- More funding opportunities for young women entrepreneurs (36%)
- Business Advice Center for students (33%)
- Teach Entrepreneurship in university (28%)

-MOROCCO

OBSTACLES

35% Lack of funding
42% Gender stereotypes and bias
34% Work-life balance
19% Lack of information
8% Male-dominated professional environment

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

- More funding opportunities for young women entrepreneurs (35%)
- Business Advice Center for students (30%)
- Teach Entrepreneurship in university (31%)

* data from Young Women Job Creators I (2014)
Concluding results from the Young Women As Job Creators project on barriers specific to women which impede their progress in the business world and enablers that would assist them in becoming successful entrepreneurs:

**ROLE MODELS**
Direct meetings with accessible and visible role models motivate women towards entrepreneurship

**UNIVERSITY**
Introduction of an entrepreneurial culture in university is crucial to raise awareness of the potential of entrepreneurship

**SPECIFIC TRAINING**
Training is critical to provide women with key business skills for entrepreneurship especially when quality of education is low

**FAMILIAR ENVIRONMENT**
Support and approval within the home is key, as family strongly influences a woman’s decision to enter the business world

**GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES**
Governments of all six countries are implementing measures to promote entrepreneurship to tackle youth unemployment

**ROLE MODELS**
Fewer women entrepreneurs means fewer successful women entrepreneurs and thus fewer accessible role models for aspiring women entrepreneurs

**RELEVANT NETWORKS**
Women are less present in networks that could guarantee them access to critical finances, support, and information

**EXPERIENCE**
Less-skilled women entrepreneurs struggle to prepare companies for survival and growth as previous experience fosters ability to find and capitalize on opportunities

**TIME**
Traditional gender roles place most of domestic duties on women, leaving them less time to meet potential investors, access training, seek customers and suppliers

**CAPITAL**
Due to societal obstacles such as pay gaps, women are prevented from generating large amounts of their own capital which dissuades investors

**GOING FORWARD**
The “Young Women as Job Creators” project

- brought to light the crucial link between internal motivation and business creation
- successfully motivated a portion of the women, though for many it was an insufficient time frame to help them truly overcome their reluctance in regards to entrepreneurship
- demonstrated that encouragement of entrepreneurial spirit from an early age is critical and that it is only through a sustained and holistic effort that long-term change can be achieved

The focus on motivating young women cannot stop with the end of the “Young Women as Job Creators” project!

Rather, this initiative should be seen as a launching point for further endeavors to empower young businesswomen throughout the Mediterranean.