



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

Webinar
19 December 2024
10:00-11:30 CEST

DRIVING GENDER-LENS INVESTMENT

*Unlocking the Potential
of Women-Led Social
Enterprises in the
MENA Region*



Agenda

Background

Women-led social enterprises play a transformative role in addressing socio-economic challenges in the MENA region, fostering inclusive growth, and driving innovation. Despite these opportunities, women-led social enterprises often face systemic barriers, including limited access to finance, lack of entrepreneurial skills and financial education, inadequate visibility and knowledge of support opportunities available (networks, support organisations, funders, etc.), and restrictive regulatory environments such as a lack of definition and legal status for social enterprises that hinder their scalability and sustainability.

This webinar, organized under the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) initiative, with the support of GIZ and in collaboration with the consultants Mariangela Pensa, Seham Ghalwash and Davide Castellani aims to spotlight the importance of gender-lens investment for social entrepreneurship in the MENA region and bring together key stakeholders to discuss actionable solutions.

Target Audience

- Impact investors and development finance institutions, women-led social entrepreneurs, Social Enterprise Support Organizations (SESOs), International and regional development organizations, experts in social entrepreneurship.

Expected Outcomes

- Increased awareness of gender-lens investment opportunities for social entrepreneurship in the MENA region.
- Identification of actionable solutions and strategies for fostering a supportive ecosystem.
- Strengthened links and potential collaborations among regional and international stakeholders.

Objective

The webinar seeks to:

- Present the key findings and recommendations from the ongoing study on gender-lens investment for social entrepreneurship in MENA recently launched by the UfM.
- Discuss the challenges faced by women-led social enterprises in the MENA region, with a focus on raising awareness and identifying solutions and strategies to foster growth and scale investments, particularly from impact investors.
- Facilitate dialogue among investors, policymakers, social entrepreneurs, and support organizations on solutions.
- Develop actionable strategies to strengthen the ecosystem and scale investments for women-led social enterprises.



Agenda

10:00 – 10:10

Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Introduction by **Anna Dorangricchia**, Project Manager, Social and Civil Affairs Division, Union for the Mediterranean : Overview of the initiative and objectives

10:10 – 10:30

Presentation of Key Findings

- Highlights from the study on gender-lens investment and women-led SEs.
- Discussion on challenges, opportunities, and actionable recommendations.

10:30 – 11:10

Panel Discussion

Moderator: **Seham Ghalwash**, Senior Research Project Manager, AUC, Egypt

Discussion Points:

- Barriers and opportunities for gender-lens investment in social enterprises in the MENA region.
- Sectoral and regional priorities for scaling impact
- Approaches and solutions to de-risk investments in women-led social enterprises in the MENA region.

Panelists:

Majd Khalifa, Co-founder and Managing Director, Flow Accelerator - Palestine

Noor Althafeer, Social Investment Manager Alfanar Venture Philanthropy, Jordan

Yara Yassin, Co-funder Up-Fuse, Egypt

Mariam AbdelKarim, Business Development Manager Hivos-MENA

11:10 – 11:25

Q&A Session

11:25 – 11:30

Summary of key takeaways and next steps

Additional Notes

- Webinar materials, including presentation slides and recording, will be shared with participants.
- The panel will ensure representation from diverse sectors and regions to provide a comprehensive view of the ecosystem.
- Participants will be encouraged to share insights and ask questions during the interactive Q&A session.



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