



ENABLING WOMEN TO BUILD THEIR SOCIETY AND ECONOMY

PROGRAMME SNAPSHOT

- **Client:** European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) Tunisia
- **Funder:** The European Commission
- **Years:** 2017 to 2019
- **Number of participants:** 12 mentors, 12 entrepreneurs
- **Participating country:** Tunisia

Building women's confidence and capacity to grow their businesses sustainably and to contribute fully to Tunisia's society

THE OBJECTIVES

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has run a Women in Business (WiB) programme since 2008 as part of their gender equality and inclusion agenda in Tunisia. This programme recognises that women-led SMEs need access to business and finance advice in order to grow.

The EBRD partnered with The Human Edge (then Mowgli Mentoring) in 2018 to deliver a 12-month mentoring programme in Tunisia to support high potential women entrepreneurs who were participating in their WiB programme to:

- **Develop their entrepreneurial, management and leadership capability**
- **Increase their personal confidence**
- **Increase their capacity** to grow their businesses over the medium to long term.

THE CHALLENGE

Women entrepreneurs in Tunisia face multiple systemic and social barriers. Access to finance and support networks is limited, especially for early-stage businesses. Cultural expectations and family responsibilities often restrict time and mobility, affecting business growth. The programme required an early focus on building trust and clarity around mentoring roles, highlighting the importance of preparing both mentors and mentees for meaningful engagement.

OUR APPROACH:

The Human Edge implemented **a tailored and blended 12-month mentoring programme**, training and equipping mentors (established business women) and matching them with the WiB entrepreneurs.

Twelve mentors were trained and each was matched with a mentee in a one-to-one relationship over a 3-day workshop. Both were fully supported through the 12-month mentoring journey, with:

Mentor Training

Providing participants with the skills to mentor effectively in areas spanning personal confidence to strategic business scaling.

Mentee Preparation

Equipping mentees with the confidence and mindset to engage fully in the mentoring process.

Matching

Facilitating thoughtful mentor-mentee pairings that foster relationship building, constructive feedback and growth.

On-going Support

Including a 1-day refresher and quarterly check-ins with participants to gather feedback and ensure the long-term sustainability of mentoring relationships.

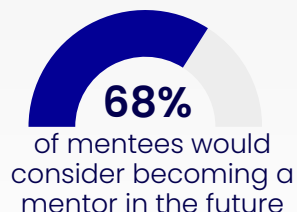
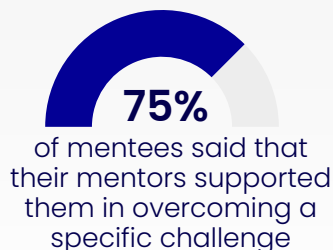


I see the mentors helping their mentees think through choices and diminish their risks. Women are also quite shy about doing business and sharing, but through the programme they open up and grow.

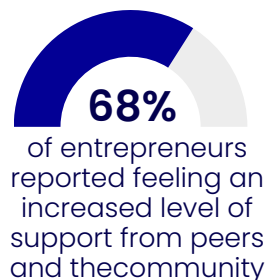
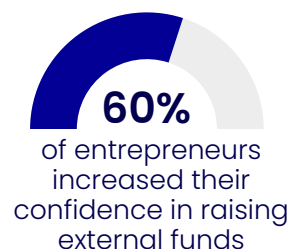
**Anis El Fahem, Small Business Support
National Programme Manager at EBRD Tunisia**

KEY OUTCOMES FOR MENTEES AFTER 12 MONTHS OF PROGRAMME

General Impact



Personal Growth and Strengthening of Leadership



During this mentoring year, I put more order in the company, thanks to Farah. When we talk, it illuminates the path that was there and that I did not see. Thanks to her, I have a window on other enterprises

Najlaa Rekik, Mentee



The matching itself was a surprise. As the Mentor / Mentee pairs were formed, we could see similarities, sometimes even in appearance or character...It was fun, but intriguing at the same time. My mentor was a total surprise for me. But, as soon as the presentations were made, we found ourselves on a path rich in discoveries and professional experiences while setting clear goals to achieve for the year

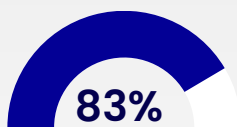
Inès Chouaib, Mentee

KEY OUTCOMES FOR MENTEES AFTER 12 MONTHS OF PROGRAMME

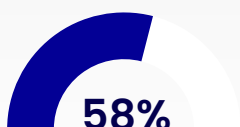
Business Growth, Sustainability, and Success



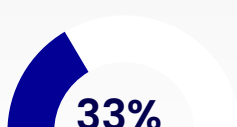
of entrepreneurs have increased their confidence in the area of business turnover and profit



of entrepreneurs implemented governance practices in their businesses



of entrepreneurs increased their profits



of entrepreneurs expanded their business geographically

Economic Growth, Job Creation and Retention

87

new jobs were created as a result of entrepreneurs' business growth

7.5

jobs created per entrepreneur, which is 2.5 times The Human Edge average.

Mentoring played a vital role in supporting women-led businesses to strengthen their foundations, build confidence and gain clarity on their vision and goals. By fostering trust-based relationships and providing tailored guidance, the programme helped entrepreneurs navigate complex personal and professional challenges.

In a context where women face disproportionate barriers to business success, this programme demonstrated the power of mentoring to accelerate growth, enhance entrepreneurial leadership and contribute to more inclusive economic participation.

Interested in strengthening the confidence, leadership and long-term success of women entrepreneurs? Partner with us to embed mentoring within your entrepreneurship support programmes or networks.

Contact us now!