



**ENHANCEMENT OF THE
BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IN
THE SOUTHERN
MEDITERRANEAN**

**Women entrepreneurship
workshop**

Beirut – September 28th 2017





Presentation of the results of the WE Report

Alia Nazar-Farhat

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Characteristics from the survey participants

- Women between 24 and 60 of age
- Low to middle income
- Majority are married with children
- Business sectors: trade, light industry, handicraft, food, event planning, photography
- Sole owner of their business with no employee
- Started the business looking for additional income



Women entrepreneurship study results

- Why do women constitute 30% of owners of SMEs in Lebanon when there is no legal barriers to entrepreneurship
- Cultural barriers
- Lack of supportive environments and networking
- No favorable work regulations
- Gap in information and business management
- Women are confined in traditional sectors
- Challenges of access to market and finance



Challenges and successes – survey results

- Affected by the effects of the political instability
 - Affected by the effects of the economy
 - Affected by the high competition in the market
 - Challenges to access finance
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- Adapting the product in accordance to the demand
 - Participating in development programs
 - Using social media for more outreach
 - Participating in networking events



Entrepreneurship is a mix of challenges

- **Personal Development:** (a) stereotypes, (b) 3 shifts management, (c) self-confidence, (d) soft skills development
- **Access to Finance:** (a) difficulty to access commercial loans, (b) collaterals
- **Access to Market:** (a) legal registration of the business, (b) lack of networking opportunities, (c) quality of products
- **Access to information:** (a) how to research the info, (b) rural areas versus Beirut



And opportunities

- **Personal Development:** (a) personal development trainings, (b) incubation and mentorship initiatives, (d) role models to inspire women entrepreneurs
- **Access to Finance:** (a) BLC WE initiative, (b) LLWB support, (c) NCLW initiative (d) gender based microfinance institutions
- **Access to Market:** (a) product registration and licensing (b) e-commerce
- **Access to information:** (a) Entrepreneurship trainings, (b) Information on the internet



Recommendations 1

- Policy makers need to work on developing and implementing a socio-economic strategy conducive to enabling entrepreneurship
- Provide easy access to accurate information especially in terms of sectors with potential to grow, trade regulations, business procedures
- New types of collateral or guarantee fund dedicated to women to help secure larger financing



Recommendations 2

- Easing the registration process for small business and creating incentives
- A lot of local initiatives should be articulated into a national framework to maximize synergies and impact in the entrepreneurs ecosystem
- Regional entrepreneurship hubs (a must in rural areas)
- Need to take into consideration the specifics of the less educated women entrepreneurs and in particular in rural areas