



FACT SHEET

Libya Economic Empowerment (LEE)

BACKGROUND

Grantee: Mennonite Economic Development Agency (MEDA)

Project Title: Libya Economic Empowerment (LEE)

Duration: October 2013 – September 2019

Total Project Amount: \$4,499,354

OBJECTIVE

LEE builds on MEDA's successful approach to its Libyan women's entrepreneurship program by expanding these activities to a larger segment of Libyan society to include at-risk populations, who may be vulnerable to engaging in extremist activities. The program releases the untapped economic potential of nascent entrepreneurs and enables more citizens to contribute to Libya's economic growth. To do this, LEE fosters economic empowerment through business training and access to financing, enabling more people to participate in Libya's economy. For the business community, the program creates member-owned business associations for networking and builds more effective market linkages. Overall, LEE enhances the role of at-risk populations in the economy, increases stability within communities, and improves the livelihoods of those who have participated in the program.



PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- LEE provides essential business skills training and small grants targeting entrepreneurs drawn from at-risk populations so they can start a business and grow their business profitably and sustainably, while at the same time strengthening resilience/reducing vulnerability to the pull of violent extremism.
- LEE strengthens business incubation services for entrepreneurs by working with local organizations to develop innovative products and approaches that expand outreach and impact through information, communication, and technology strategies.
- LEE improves access to finance for small and medium-sized Libyan businesses by developing a portal for traditional as well as innovative financial services.
- LEE supports business associations, especially those targeting at-risk populations, to create sustainable Internet-based platforms for business engagement and advocacy. Working through these networks, LEE provides leadership training and highlights achievements of program participants in leadership and business roles in Libya.

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

- 226 people have attended instructor-led business development and information and communications technology skills training.
- Through LEE business plan competitions, 20 women were awarded grants to start or expand a business.
- 12 leadership and self-development workshops were held in Tripoli, Ghadames, Benghazi, Misrata, Yefren, Zwara, Tragen, and Sebha for over 150 women.
- 24 business networking events were held in different Libyan cities to allow business owners to network, discuss issues of entrepreneurship, and source inputs, products, and services.
- A Virtual Business Incubation portal was launched to provide on-line business development training.