



Project:

Business Development Centre for Women

Local Partner:

Business Women Forum

Summary:

A one-stop shop providing integrated business support for women entrepreneurs to start and expand their businesses

The facts

Palestinian women have less access to business start-up capital and business skills training than their male counterparts.

While the percentage of women educated to degree level has risen to 54%, only 16% currently participate in the labour force.

Women are less welcomed in both the formal and informal business networks that provide vital support to small and medium-sized enterprises.

Recent studies suggest that women are well represented in the informal economy, however registered businesses on average offer more employment opportunities.

What people say

“When I came up with the idea of traditional accessories, I heard about the Business Development Centre. I sent in my proposal and have since found incredible support in setting appointments with official authorities, access to the financial expert and lawyers.”

Hiyam,
Palestinian Women Entrepreneur



Business Development Centre for Women

In partnership with the Business Women Forum, the Cherie Blair Foundation is supporting a business development centre that provides integrated business support for women entrepreneurs in Ramallah. The centre serves as a one-stop shop for business development, offering a range of practical support services.

About the project

Together with the Business Women Forum in Ramallah, we are helping women entrepreneurs who are struggling to expand their businesses and women who have the potential to become successful entrepreneurs but lack the support to reach the next level.

To this end, we are providing quality business support services including preparing feasibility studies for different sectors, evaluating marketing opportunities, legal consulting, incubating high-growth projects and ongoing training and skills upgrading.

Women currently benefiting from these services have a wide range of businesses and ideas for new ventures. Hiyam runs a jewellery business and is looking to increase her income. Aayat and Hayfa run a business in a more traditionally male dominated industry. They have plans for their own paper recycling factory.

Encouraging women's participation in the private sector and their ability to operate successfully within a highly unstable economic system contributes to the revitalisation of the Palestinian economy. By expanding their businesses, women are playing a key role in the economic development of Palestine, creating much needed employment opportunities in the region.

Ultimately, our aim is to help women become significant players in the economy. This benefits more than just women themselves. As research by the OECD shows, women tend to invest 90% of their income back into their families, and so their success benefits their children too.

For more information about the Business Women Forum:
www.bwf.ps

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