

OUR SERVICES

Entrepreneurship Acceleration

By partnering with organizations such as UNDP, GIZ, British Council, DRC, Cordaid Netherlands, we have worked with +500 remarkable Small and Medium Enterprises and social enterprises in Ethiopia. Led by majority of women, the SME owners have been provided with expert mentorship, coaching, training and peer-to-peer networking. We also facilitate an internship opportunity for young graduates to work closely with these business owners as to obtain skills and employment.

Our dedication to promote entrepreneurship through diverse interventions, is driven by research findings and our on-ground experience. Led by majority of women and youth, SME owners and startups have received innovative acceleration and scaleup programs in batches. The programs contain, blended (virtual and physical) interventions where they were actively match made with mentorship, coaches, training, peer-to-peer leaning and networking services. We also facilitate internship opportunity for young graduates to work closely with these business owners as to obtain skills and employment, while playing a bridge between our experts and the businesses.

SHARE platform

Being technology- and purpose-driven organization, R&D has built strong reputation for promotion of sustainable Business development services in Ethiopia. With our desire to support the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Ethiopia, we have used our technological skills to build a platform that connects entrepreneurs to relevant resources. We have soft launched share platform is in January 2022 and is designed to connect MSMEs in Ethiopia to business development experts and peer-to-peer investors among the local and diaspora community.

As we believe in working in partnership, the SHARE platform is aiming to be a 'space' where existing accelerators/ incubators, investors, experts, financial institutions and (N)GOs working around entrepreneurship and job-creation are "connected" (online and offline). We aim to play a spin in the web role by being a point of contact for innovative(social) entrepreneurs to gain access to the appropriate service providers, investors, partners, and information. The platform is therefore not only dedicated to those businesses / individuals that have gone through our programs (past and future) but for any innovative entrepreneurs with proper strategy and growth potential.

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACCELERATION EXAMPLES

UNDP-NBE's Innovative Finance Lab - Technical Assistance Facility

With the aim to address the businesses' challenges and contribute to Ethiopian economic development, UNDP in partnership with NBE launched the [Innovative Finance Lab \(IFL\)](#) in 2022.

One pillar of IFL, Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) is implemented by R&D Group and MDF. . As to foster the growth of SMEs and startups to create decent jobs and inclusive economic growth, TAF is a pilot project which will provide business development support to 100 carefully selected SMEs (**+50% women and youth led**). These SMEs are brought together to learn from one another, develop their internal capacity and accelerate their growth. It mainly focuses on businesses with significant growth potential and job creating opportunity, that stagnate in their growth due to lack of technical knowledge and financial resources.

Through this comprehensive service, TAF-program aims to maximize the number of enterprises that offer a higher number of decent and gainful employment. While generating wealth for themselves and families, these businesses will help expand the country's industrial base to eventually increase foreign exchange earnings, encouraging export and substitute import activities.

Enhancing Ethiopian Women Entrepreneurs

This is a pilot project, with the possibility to cooperate with Care Ethiopia and reach more **women entrepreneurs in Ethiopia**. We have designed innovative business development support program for 100 (selected from 3000) urban female and youth entrepreneurs to unleash this hidden potential of individuals to achieve the better version of themselves with practical assistance. We first trained 25 professionals who work with the 3000 women entrepreneurs to have the skills to provide them with group and one to one service.

We then selected **100 Women MSE** owners to get access to 3 months acceleration program, consisting of group coaching, workshops, networking, and matchmaking. Through the program we aim to stimulate these business owners (MSEs) utilize their imagination and creativity by unleashing the necessary drive, which cannot be achieved within few days of training but requires a holistic approach.

Disaspora Entrepreneurship Accelerator

The diaspora community is believed to be catalyst in promoting economic development and job creation through business engagement. With this view the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) has assigned R&D Group and MDF West Africa, a Dutch/Ghanaian based consulting firm, to support 20-30 potential diaspora partners that are interested in starting or expanding business activities in the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia. These entrepreneurs will be provided with an intensive incubation program where they go through modern and practical trainings business coaching and mentorship services

ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACCELERATION EXAMPLES

Resilience Business Development Services (RBDS)

Since 2014, R&D in cooperation with our partner Cordaid and RBD Consultancy have successfully supported **80 local SMEs (58% women)** in Ethiopia through Resilience BDS program. The program is set to assist growth potential SMEs to grow to the next maturity level aiming at enabling them to utilize their imagination and creativity. The program avails and provides SMEs with the necessary drive, input and support, which cannot be achieved with few days of training. Resilience BDS is a targeted BDS for mid-sized businesses that intends to build their inner capabilities and work towards them becoming bankable. It is designed to strengthen SMEs capabilities through targeted Business Development Service to not only withstand financial constraints but also efficiently manage their existing resources.

RISE Program

RISE program is was funded funded by British Council Ethiopia and designed by R&D in cooperation with a Scottish social enterprise expert company, Challenges International. We worked with 20 social enterprises based in Ethiopia to become investment ready as part of a six-month project that also provided 20 young professionals with the opportunity to participate in a business analysis mentorship program. It is designed to up-skill young people while also supporting sustainable business growth in the country.

As a result, we had social enterprises who scaled up to investment readiness and have completed their due diligence for investment. As for the junior associates, most of the youths were able to get employment in the enterprises and most of them pursued their own entrepreneurship route

Digital Innovation Acceleration

The Innovation Factory Digital Innovation Accelerator is a multi-stage programme that includes a 6-month acceleration programme and a final competition. The accelerator is funded by GIZ and is implemented by Adelph and R&D in Ethiopia and 4 other countries (Ghana, Indonesia, Mexico, Senegal) with local partners. Youth Accelerator participants receive a tailored support package combining peer-learning approach & capacity building support for business model refinement to become investment ready and optimize SDG impacts and also develop a comprehensive business plan.

Disaspora Entrepreneurship Accelerator

The Urban Center is a flexible social, educational and professional space designed to provide a platform of discussions, discourses and collaborations for urban citizens from all walks of life for educational inter disciplinary engagements with provisions of entertainment.

R&D's team co-designed a 4 months incubation program to provide 70 construction entrepreneurs with business development service program The services consisted of Training program, peer-2-peer session, mentorship and coaching for new and existing SMEs in developing a viable business plan and guiding their business to link with the various micro finances that are available for startups.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACCELERATION EXAMPLES

WIDU Africa

With the aim to increase the development impact of remittance in helping start businesses in African countries, micro-entrepreneurs and start-ups are provided with access to finance and business development related technical assistance. Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the project allows the entrepreneurs to double the total investment value through the WIDU grant platform.

Diasporas from Germany and other EU countries work with familiar local businesses and entrepreneurs to initiate a sound business proposal with growth potential. We are currently providing intensive business coaching service to 40 local entrepreneurs in the surrounding of Addis Ababa. The main objective of the program is helping the local start-ups and existing micro/small businesses increase their revenue and in turn creating employment. The WIDU platform, managed by GIZ is vital instrument in providing efficient support to the applicants while processing the relevant data as to monitor and evaluate the progress of each business ideas and overall project. The platform is also designed to provide accurate and valuable information that is useful to coaching organizations to coordinate their activities and provide coaching.

Growth-oriented Women entrepreneurs Training Program

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are important actors in economic growth and development. However, SMEs, in particular women-led businesses encounter unequal access to resources such as knowledge, information, networks, finance and markets. This hinders growth of their businesses.

IFC in partnership with R&D has developed a women's entrepreneurship training program for 50 growth-oriented female entrepreneurs in Ethiopia. The training program is designed to address key challenges that women businesses face. It is based on the need assessment among various women in business in Ethiopia and incorporates global best practice.

Our interactive training will help entrepreneurs mitigate their businesses' financial risks and helps them manage their businesses effectively while being connected with other business owners to share experiences. After the completion of the program, participants will be equipped to better navigate unforeseen crisis, manage their business resources profitably and capitalize on new business opportunities.