

Deauville Partnership SME Mentoring Initiative for MENA

Final Report



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This report has been produced by Adam Smith International with input from Upper Quartile and the Mowgli Foundation. All opinions expressed herein are those of Adam Smith International except where otherwise noted.

The success of Forsa depended on the commitment, expertise and enthusiasm of many people. We wish to thank: the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) for valuable and constructive engagement with the project, particularly those with direct management input on the project: Carl Aaron (DFID), Stella-Marie Abrahams (DFID), Alero Adetugbo (DFID), Michelle Broadbent (FCO), Alex Harper (DFID), Alex Hazelgrove-Planel (DFID), Rob Hearn (DFID), Zoe Hensby (DFID), Dean Hurlock (FCO), and Sara Rusling (DFID); the British Embassies and Ambassadors in each country; our empowered partners CJD, IACE, Consultants’ Alliance, EFE Egypt, QRCE and SMEPS, particularly the individuals in these organisations who were focal points for the project; and lastly and perhaps most importantly: the Forsa mentors who willingly and generously gave their time to help the region’s young entrepreneurs to achieve greater heights of success.

Executive summary

The Forsa concept

Entrepreneurship is one of the most powerful forces to create economic and social mobility, and mentoring is one of the most effective ways to give entrepreneurs the confidence and skills to grow their business and create jobs.

Recognising this, in 2013 the UK Department for International Development (DFID) launched the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Mentoring Initiative ('Forsa', Arabic for 'opportunity') to support enterprise growth and employment creation through mentoring activities in six MENA 'transition countries': Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen. The £2 million DFID assigned to Forsa formed part of a package of deliverables launched during the UK's 2013 G8 Deauville Partnership Presidency, to improve economic opportunities for women and youth in the Middle East and North Africa.

Forsa commenced on April 12th 2013, delivered by a consortium led by Adam Smith International, in partnership with the Mowgli Foundation and Upper Quartile. It included two work streams. Under the first work stream, mentor-entrepreneur pairs were formed and supported, participants were trained, and networking and skills development sessions were held. Giving entrepreneurs the skills,

"I've never been guided in my business before, but what Forsa offers is a strong personal and professional relationship and bond of trust between me and my mentor."

Forsa entrepreneur Amgad Morgan, CEO,
NetCare, Egypt

confidence and awareness to grow their businesses was the overriding objective. The second work stream focused on engagement with governments, international financial institutions (IFIs) and corporations to promote the uptake of more mentoring activities.

Changing regional context

The underlying logic for Forsa was developed in 2012, when a number of countries in the MENA region appeared to be transitioning towards more open and democratic ways of working. Over 2013 and into 2014, however, these transitions faltered, and the context in which the project was implemented was very different from that envisaged. Each country experienced significant political and security challenges, which damaged economic growth.

The challenges were greatest in Egypt, Jordan, Yemen and Libya. Egypt experienced huge political instability culminating in a return of a military-backed administration; Jordan, while maintaining internal stability, came under significant pressure from the influx of Syrian and Iraqi refugees; Yemen faced political deadlock and a worsening security climate, which ushered in the Houthi tribes' takeover of Sana'a in late 2014; Libya split into two rival zones of government in open military hostility. While Morocco and Tunisia avoided these extremes, they too experienced degrees of economic stagnation and political uncertainty.

"I wish the situation in my country was better so that we could advance our projects better."

Entrepreneur survey respondent, Libya

“My company encountered several obstacles that my mentor and Forsa could not control: The weakness of state law enforcement; corruption (bribes) in the field of industrial maintenance; plots to destroy small businesses to make way for large companies.”

Entrepreneur survey respondent, Tunisia

These developments swept away some of the assumptions on which Forsa was built. The environment for entrepreneurship, rather than improving, greatly deteriorated. Some Forsa participants abandoned the mentoring programme altogether due to the failure of their enterprises; many others reported that the economic climate limited the benefits, in terms of enterprise growth, they had expected. The security situation prevented some entrepreneurs and mentors from meeting, as

domestic travel became difficult, particularly in Libya. For much of the project, implementing consortium staff were not able to travel to Libya or Yemen, and relied entirely on local partners in those countries. In Egypt and Tunisia, in addition to Libya and Yemen, engagement with governments under the second workstream (promoting the uptake of mentoring as a tool for SME promotion) became extremely difficult, as leaders changed and domestic authorities focused exclusively on the immediate threats facing them.

Headline achievements

That despite this adverse context, Forsa nonetheless hit almost all of its targets, and produced many great individual success stories, marks a very significant achievement. Key achievements were:

- 1. Recruiting 303 entrepreneurs to participate in mentoring**
- 2. Improving the business skills of 77%, and the confidence, self-belief and awareness of 85% of entrepreneurs**
- 3. Seeing mentoring introduced, following Forsa lobbying, into the national SME strategies and policy portfolios of Jordan, Yemen and Morocco for the first time**
- 4. Forming relationships with three of the region’s largest companies (Microsoft, Lafarge and OCP) and two international financial institutions (the African Development Bank and European Bank of Reconstruction and Development) which will lead to new mentoring programmes reaching thousands of young entrepreneurs, with Forsa input and assistance**
- 5. Creating a network which continues to be active in some countries even after the conclusion of the project**

“Forsa got me ;) and I felt dizzy for a few weeks :) Thanks for the wonderful ride, I appreciate all that I learn every day with Forsa and await the opportunity to be a mentor :)”

Entrepreneur survey respondent, Morocco

“Forsa is an experience that will remain etched on my mind. Through Forsa’s mentoring, I’ve validated my goals and have more confidence that I’m on the right track again. I have more confidence in my methods, practical education, and new technical support and advice.”

Entrepreneur survey respondent, Morocco

These achievements have translated to individual success stories for Forsa participants. For example:

Amgad Morgan, CEO, NetCare, Egypt

Amgad began his first business in farming, but later embarked on his dream of working on something technology-related that also helped solve challenges faced by his local community in Egypt. In 2011, Amgad founded NetCare, an online healthcare site that allows users to access their medical records electronically, a first in the region. NetCare has also developed mobile applications for blood donation, hypertension and diabetes, and road emergency assistance. Still, Amgad needed help to develop a sustainable business model for NetCare, and so he jumped at the chance to attend a Forsa mentoring workshop in October 2013. Amgad was matched with Mohamed El Gamry, Head of Corporate Banking for HSBC Egypt. Besides working with Amgad on a sustainable business model, Mohamed also suggested a new concept for NetCare's mobile app, which has increased how frequently it is used.

"[My Forsa mentor] Mohamed is the perfect match for me."

Linda Al-Hallaq, CEO, First Bazaar llc, Jordan, and winner of Red Herring 'Top 100 startups in Asia' award, 2013

In September 2013, Red Herring recognised Forsa entrepreneur Linda Al-Hallaq's business, FirstBazaar.com, as one of the Top 100 startups in Asia. Red Herring, a global media company specialising in high technology and innovation, distributes the award each year to the most promising and innovative privately-held technology companies on each continent.

To win the award, Linda prepared a detailed pitch with the help of her Forsa mentor, Abdullah Al-Salman, a branding and communications executive at Arabtech Jardaneh Group. Linda met Abdullah in June 2013 during Forsa's pilot workshops in Jordan. Since then, Abdullah has regularly mentored Linda on business strategy and marketing.

"Thank you for the Forsa mentorship programme, it was a wonderful experience and my mentor Abdullah is a great advisor!"

Loay Malahmeh, CEO, 3Dmena, Jordan

3Dmena is an online 3D printing service and community targeting the MENA region. Managed by Forsa entrepreneur Loay Malahmeh and co-founder Rakan Khamash, the company is the first in Jordan to bring open-source 3D printing, scanning, modelling and fast prototyping services to the market. The company is also providing seed training and support to other entrepreneurs. A partnership with the recently established Refugee Open Ware initiative has seen 3Dmena further advance the social mission of 3D printing. They now provide made-to-order customised prosthetic limbs to children and adults who have been injured in the Syrian conflict, at a fraction of the cost and in a fraction of the time required for conventional prosthetics.

Forsa's results are described in detail in section 3.

Looking ahead

Forsa effectively concluded in December 2014, with the exception of a few organisational outreach and reporting tasks. However, the evidence indicates a strong ongoing demand for mentoring services, from both entrepreneurs and government, and specific support for the Forsa model.

1. 88% of entrepreneurs would recommend Forsa mentoring to others
2. 80% of entrepreneurs consider that there is an unmet demand for mentoring services
3. 75% of entrepreneurs would consider being a mentor in a future programme

The economic conditions of the region certainly call for further such activities. Unemployment in most MENA countries is rising, particularly among youth and women, and private sectors remain comparatively weak. The general weakness of entrepreneurship skills is a significant barrier to growth.

However, relational mentoring programmes such as Forsa are resource-intensive and, as they depend on in-person contact, are vulnerable to downturns in the security environment. They also do not address other significant barriers to entrepreneurship needs, such as access to finance. New models could be explored to reach a wider pool of beneficiaries, such as online mentoring, and to match mentoring with other support programmes. The African Development Bank, European Bank of Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank and others are currently considering or launching such activities, albeit at a relatively modest scale.

Through Forsa, the UK Government has led the way in terms of its investment and partnerships on mentoring in the MENA region. Forsa provides a valuable stock of evidence on how best to design future mentoring programmes. Key lessons learnt are described in section 4.

“Reconstructing the Moroccan economic fabric requires training entrepreneurs... this [has been a] superb program, which I think should not stop here but be pushed further and broadened to include many other dimensions.”

HE Mamoun Bouhdoud, Moroccan Minister
Delegate to the Minister of Industry, Trade,
Investment and Digital Economy

“[Forsa] is the type of solution we would like to see promoted in our organisation and others.”

Ms Hana Uraidi, Acting CEO, Jordan Enterprise
Development Co

1. Project overview

a. Forsa theory of change, logframe and milestones

DFID launched Forsa in 2013, to support enterprise growth and employment creation through mentoring activities in six MENA ‘transition countries’: Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen. Funding of £2 million was provided, as part of a package launched during the UK’s 2013 G8 Deauville Partnership Presidency.

The intended project outcome was enterprise growth and employment creation. This would in turn support private sector growth, which contributed towards the overall Deauville Partnership vision of open economies and inclusive growth in the MENA transition countries. The theory of change is provided in Annex 1.

Forsa’s outcome was supported through two work streams. First, Forsa sought to build the skills, confidence and awareness of cohorts of entrepreneurs in each country. This was to be achieved through the first work stream, mentoring delivery, which was given an 80% weighting towards overall project impact. Second, it sought to achieve a sustainable increase in mentoring uptake in the six countries. This was to be achieved through the second work stream, which included a variety of policy promotion and engagement tools. This work stream was weighted at 20% of the overall impact.

However, given the short time frame of the project, it was impossible to reliably measure results in terms of enterprise growth and employment creation per se. With generally only 12 months between the commencement of the mentoring activities for each participant and the final evaluation, enterprises were not expected to have yet experienced the growth that an improvement in business skills and confidence could ultimately deliver.

Therefore, the logframe focused on the changes that could expectably be measured within that time frame. At an outcome level, this included higher sales, safeguarded or increased employment, and expansion into new markets. These indicators were caveated by the assumption that ‘country policies and social/political/security conditions are sufficiently supportive of inclusive and sustainable economic growth’. As it turned out, conditions in each country were in fact largely unsupportive of such growth.

At an output level, indicators for the first work stream were the number of entrepreneurs receiving mentoring, and the growth in skills, confidence and awareness they experienced as a result. For the second work stream, indicators focused on the policy tools produced: the production of the Forsa mentoring ‘Toolkit’, its use by countries, and the increased recognition by state authorities of mentoring as a SME promotion policy tool. The logframe is provided in Annex 2.

Separate to the logframe, the Forsa contract specified a set of milestones which had to be achieved in order to release contract payments. These milestones fell into three categories: project set-up (the signing of agreements with project partners, the recruitment of participants, the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation framework etc); work stream 2 deliverables (the Forsa ‘Toolkit’,

“My whole life has changed, I’m stronger and I have more confidence in myself, I have been reborn again through Forsa.”

Saloua Ait Belmokadem, entrepreneur,
Morocco

letters of intent with corporations and IFIs); and reporting to DFID. The full milestone table is provided in Annex 3.

b. Implementation partners and project team

Forsa commenced on April 12th 2013, implemented by a consortium comprising:

1. Adam Smith International: project leadership and overall management.
2. Mowgli Foundation: mentoring expertise and facilitation.
3. Upper Quartile: monitoring and evaluation.

The project team is set out in Annex 4.

The geographical spread of the project, within a limited budget, did not allow us to set up project infrastructure in each country. However, local expertise and a presence on the ground were essential to our success. Therefore, we worked in each country through 'Empowered Partners' selected according to the following criteria:

- Non-profit or social enterprise;
- Experience in promotion of entrepreneurship;
- Commitment to mentoring;
- Country-wide operations or evidence of a strong, functioning country-wide network;
- Strong event organisation credentials;
- Operational resilience;
- Commanding the respect of both local entrepreneurs and public sector counterparts;
- Sufficient staff time to dedicate to the project.

The partners selected were:

- Jordan: Queen Rania Centre for Entrepreneurship
- Egypt: Education for Employment Egypt (EFE)
- Morocco: CJD Centre for Young Business Leaders
- Tunisia: Arab Institute of Business Leaders (IACE)
- Yemen: Small & Micro Enterprise Promotion Service (SMEPS)
- Libya: Consultants Alliance

"First of all, I would like to thank [Adam Smith International outreach team coordinator] Mr. Haider and [Jordan outreach officer] Miss Amal Malhem for their support and follow-up. For the program, one year is not enough. There should also be an expert in finance and a legal adviser [available for entrepreneurs to talk to]."

Entrepreneur survey respondent, Jordan

"I loved everything in this whole program, I had a great mentor and the Forsa team was amazing."

Entrepreneur survey respondent, Yemen

c. Summary of activities

i. Work stream 1

Forsa adopted a 'relational' mentoring model, built around carefully selected and closely supported one-to-one mentor-mentee relationships. The project began with the recruitment of entrepreneurs and mentors, and the provision of intensive training and 'matchmaking' by experienced facilitators, to produce mentor/mentee pairings. Those were supported through regular check-ups from the project team and scheduled peer sessions, in which a project officer facilitated a discussion on issues faced by the mentor and mentee. Each mentor was expected to dedicate three to four hours to mentoring their paired entrepreneur each month.

"At the workshops, I had enough time to look back at my life and re-plan a lot of my next moves. I gained more confidence to move forward with my business instead of over-calculating each move."

Mohammed Lafi, entrepreneur, Jordan

Quarterly networking events were held in each country with all mentees and mentors, including training on topics such as business marketing. Social media tools were used extensively to promote connections between mentors and mentees within and between the six countries.



Training events in Jordan and Egypt

ii. Work stream 2

A wide range of promotional and government engagement activities occurred under work stream 2. First, the Forsa 'Toolkit' was developed, in consultation with government agencies and other project stakeholders, as an online guide for governments, corporates and other organisations considering support for mentoring. It was the first product of its kind, articulating the benefits, sharing best practices, and setting out step by step guides on how mentoring programmes could be run.

At the invitation of the Tunisian Prime Minister, H.E. Mehdi Jomaa, the Forsa team leader launched the Toolkit development process in an address to over 500 government, industry and entrepreneurship representatives at the Tunisian National Entrepreneur and Innovation Conference on December 10th 2013. A development workshop with 40 participants was held in Cairo on 18th December 2013 (having been postponed by one month due to security concerns), and stakeholders in other countries were consulted over 2014 as the Toolkit was developed.



Forsa Toolkit roundtable, Cairo

This work stream also included engagement with IFIs and corporations to promote and support the greater uptake of mentoring in the region. Milestone 7 required the formalisation of this engagement in letters of intent for the organisations to commence or increase the scale of mentoring. The Forsa team met with IFI and corporate representatives to explore how the project could support their mentoring ambitions, and provided resources in the form of advocacy, mentoring programme design and the Forsa evidence base.

To support outreach, Forsa also developed communications tools including a professionally produced 17-minute documentary video, a number of short video introductions to participants, a multilingual website, and a set of case studies on entrepreneurs and their enterprises. These outputs have been collected separately and accompany this report; video material is available at www.forsa-mena.org and the Forsa Vimeo stream <http://vimeo.com/user19547711>.



Still shot from Forsa documentary: 'Speed-dating' entrepreneurs and mentors in Morocco

Facebook and Twitter channels, and a website blog, were used to keep in touch with participants, and saw high activity throughout the project. In some countries other networking channels were also used: for example, the Yemen Forsa WhatsApp group proved extremely successful in maintaining contact between the Sana'a and Aden mentor and entrepreneur groups.



Forsa website, English language home page, showing blog at left

d. Project reporting

Regular project reporting comprised four comprehensive quarterly reports, twenty-eight bi-weekly progress reports and this final report. These reports have been collated for record and accompany this report.

Forsa produced reports on economic trends, market demand dynamics, labour market characteristics, existing policies to support entrepreneurs and SME development, approaches to women and youth entrepreneurship, and current and planned mentoring activity in each country. These reports were submitted to DFID at the end of July 2013.

A separate gender report was also prepared, focusing on specific socio-economic conditions and challenges faced by women. The issues addressed included female labour force participation, barriers to female entrepreneurship, existing institutions engaging with women entrepreneurs, and how best to recruit women entrepreneurs and mentors. Consultants were engaged in each country to prepare the six reports.

e. Monitoring and evaluation

Forsa partner Upper Quartile managed monitoring and evaluation activities. The first major evaluation of project results was undertaken in March 2014, in a survey of participants. The second (and final) evaluation was conducted in November 2014, again in a survey of participants. The final evaluation examined the number of entrepreneurs who had completed the mentoring programme; the personal benefits they had obtained; the impacts of mentoring on their enterprises, in terms of sales, employment and market growth; and their views on the strengths and weaknesses of the programme. The key evaluation findings are provided in this report, and the full Upper Quartile evaluation has been provided separately.

2. Delivery context

The Forsa project was designed in 2013 during a period of increased optimism, when a number of countries in the MENA region appeared to be making transitions to more open and democratic societies. The project was predicated on a number of assumptions linked with this broader context. One such assumption was that: ‘Country policies and social/political/security conditions are sufficiently supportive of inclusive and sustainable economic growth.’ However, the context in which the project was implemented was very different.

Egypt: On 24 February 2014, Prime Minister Hazem Beblawi’s government resigned suddenly, leaving no ministerial counterparts with which the Forsa project could work. The new government focused largely on constitutional and security concerns, rather than on private sector development. This change in government and the increasing anti-British sentiment in the country meant that securing buy-in for the Forsa Toolkit became increasingly difficult. Prior to this, relations with the Industrial Training Council (ITC) and its Executive Director, Mr. Mahmoud A. El-Sherbiny, had been positive. Communication with the ITC became increasingly difficult under the new circumstances.

Jordan: Unlike its neighbours, Jordan remained relatively stable throughout 2014. However, the influx of Syrian and Iraqi refugees put huge strain on the resources and infrastructure of Jordan. Amid the crisis, economic reform has slowed and entrepreneurship growth has largely stagnated.

Libya: From mid-2014, the security situation escalated dramatically in Libya, leading to the complete evacuation of expatriates based in the country. The UK Embassy closed in early August 2014. Although Forsa’s mentoring work stream managed to continue operating in Libya during some of this period, our Toolkit advocacy became untenable. Against the background of increasing violence and instability, finally all project activities in Libya were halted.

Morocco: Morocco was relatively stable throughout 2014. The security situation remains relatively safe and the economic context relatively positive, with signs of well-developed entrepreneurship.

Tunisia: Tunisia experienced some change over the duration of the Forsa project, with elections occurring towards the end of 2014. The Islamist Ennahda party was required to hand over power to an interim government in advance of these elections. Despite these changes, Forsa achieved a notable degree of success in Tunisia. The project secured the enthusiastic support of Mehdi Jomaa, the acting Prime Minister of Tunisia from January 2014 to February 2015.

Yemen: The security situation deteriorated in Yemen over the duration of the Forsa project, with the risk of kidnap increasing significantly. Operations continued in Yemen with a large degree of success, but the security situation required that there be a reduction in the Forsa management presence in

“Because of the war in Libya, our enterprise has stopped... we have experienced losses continuously since the beginning of the war in the region, compounded by electricity and water cuts and the closure of roads... Our thanks to all who helped boost the progress of so many projects around the world, and sorry for the lack of progress here, because of the circumstances of Cairo and war experienced by Libya. Thank you and we wish the best for the rest of the projects.”

Entrepreneur survey respondent, Libya

the country. Networking events were outsourced and our local project partner was entrusted with more of the coordination in the country.

In most countries, therefore, the political, security and economic conditions significantly deteriorated, and so too did the entrepreneurship environment. DFID's 2014 annual review of Forsa noted that '[t]he difficulties of establishing a multi-country

programme particularly in a very short timeframe to align with the UK's Deauville Partnership Presidency year should not be underestimated. Furthermore, the operating environments in Egypt, Libya and Yemen have become progressively more difficult since the start of the programme, particularly in terms of security, and which has required a great deal of flexibility and adjustment from the Forsa team.'

These changes had a significant impact. Some Forsa participants abandoned the mentoring programme altogether due to the failure of their enterprises; many others reported that the economic climate limited the benefits, in terms of enterprise growth, they had expected. Many shifted their enterprise targets towards safeguarding, rather than growing, their sales, employment and market reach. The security situation prevented some entrepreneurs and mentors from meeting, as domestic travel became difficult, particularly in Libya. For much of the project, implementing consortium staff were not able to travel to Libya or Yemen, and relied entirely on local partners in those countries. In Egypt and Tunisia, in addition to Libya and Yemen, engagement with governments under the second workstream (promoting the uptake of mentoring as a tool for SME promotion) became extremely difficult, as leaders changed and domestic authorities focused exclusively on the immediate threats facing them.

The project results, presented in section 3, should be situated within this broader political and economic context.

"The project was very successful, but the internal situation of the country was difficult, which made progress on my enterprise slow. I hope there will be opportunities to present new ideas and for the project to continue. Congratulations on your success."

Entrepreneur survey respondent, Yemen

3. Results

a. Outcome level results: sales, jobs and markets

The intended Fora outcome was ‘enterprise growth and employment creation through mentoring entrepreneurs’. Its three indicators were:

1. Proportion of mentee entrepreneurs expecting higher sales within 24 months as a result of mentoring
2. Proportion of mentee entrepreneurs who have safeguarded jobs or intend to increase employment opportunities in their businesses within 24 months as a result of mentoring
3. Proportion of mentee entrepreneurs reporting or expecting expansion into new geographical markets and/or the development of new products/services within 24 months as a result of mentoring

“A week ago my training centre enterprise achieved a big expansion, and (praise be to Allah) my mentor helped me make the right choices so this was possible.”

Laila Habshi, entrepreneur, Yemen

These indicators were most subject to challenges from the external environment, as enterprise growth and employment creation are dependent on supportive economic conditions. Despite the challenging environment, Forsa achieved some significant outcome level results:

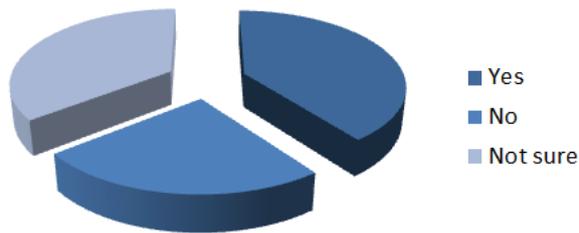
- 40% of entrepreneurs expected to achieve higher sales, and a further 18% expected to safeguard sales, directly as a result of Forsa (logframe target 50%)
- 62% of entrepreneurs expected to create or safeguard jobs, directly as a result of Forsa (logframe target 50%)
- 56% of respondents expected to enter new markets and/or develop new product or services, directly as a result of Forsa (logframe target 30%)
- In summary, 156 entrepreneurs, as a result of the Forsa project, expect to create jobs, increase sales, develop new products or enter new markets

“My Forsa mentor Mrs. Diana Nassar was able to help me select and develop the project with the greatest potential and find prospective sponsors.”

Siraj Haddadin, entrepreneur, Jordan

These results are disaggregated by country below.

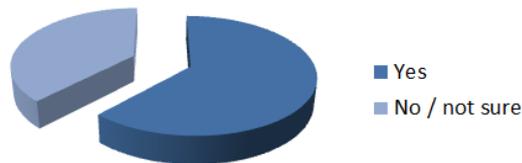
Expecting higher sales within 24 months of joining Forsa



Are You Expecting The Total Sales Of Your Business To Increase Within 24 Months Of Joining Forsa As A Result Of The Mentoring Programme?

	Egypt	Jordan	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia	Yemen	All Countries
Yes	37%	47%	15%	37%	29%	52%	39.7%
No	35%	26%	15%	27%	32%	9%	24.7%
Not sure	28%	28%	69%	35%	39%	39%	35.7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

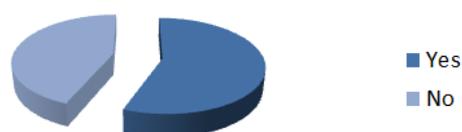
Expecting to safeguard or create jobs as a result of Forsa mentoring - within 24 months of joining Forsa



Are You Expecting The Total Number Of People You Employ To Increase As A Result Of The Mentoring Programme Within 24 Months Of Joining Forsa?

	Egypt	Jordan	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia	Yemen	All Countries
Yes	56%	60%	31%	61%	65%	76%	62%
No / not sure	44%	40%	69%	39%	35%	24%	38%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Expecting to enter new markets and /
or develop new products / services
within 24 months as consequence of
Forsa mentoring**



Are You Expecting Your Business To Expand Into New Geographical Markets Within 24 Months Of Joining Forsa As A Result Of The Mentoring Programme?							
	Egypt	Jordan	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia	Yemen	All Countries
Yes	49%	42%	38%	69%	68%	61%	56%
No/ not sure	51%	58%	62%	31%	32%	39%	44%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

These results were generally well in excess of the logframe targets. It is worth noting here a discrepancy between the wording of Outcome Indicators 1 and 2. Outcome Indicator 2 refers to entrepreneurs expecting to increase *or safeguard* employment, while Outcome Indicator 1 refers only to increasing sales. The broader wording of Outcome Indicator 2 better reflects the eventual delivery contexts of the six countries, in which safeguarding enterprises despite inclement economic conditions was a significant project achievement. Forsa fell slightly short of achieving the narrower terms of Outcome Indicator 1, with 40% of entrepreneurs expecting higher sales; but would have exceeded the broader terms, with an additional 18% of entrepreneurs expecting to safeguard sales. The results against logframe targets are shown in Annex 2.

b. Output level results: work stream 1

i. Output Indicator 1.1: entrepreneurs receiving mentoring

The project's headline goal was to provide 12 months of mentoring to at least 250 entrepreneurs. Over its full course, Forsa recruited 303 entrepreneurs to receive mentoring over a 12-month period, matched with experienced businesspeople as mentors. Initially, DFID encouraged Forsa to engage as many mentors as possible from G8 countries. However, we quickly found that entrepreneurs had a preference to be mentored by those who had run businesses in their own country, and were thus more likely to understand the specific challenges they faced. In addition, international mentor/entrepreneur pairings faced greater communication challenges. As a consequence, mentor/entrepreneur pairings were made within each separate country.

As might have been expected, recruitment was hardest in Libya, due to its state of turmoil. On the other hand, Yemen was among the most active countries in the project, despite its political and security challenges. This is attributable to the high effectiveness of the Empowered Partner in Yemen, SMEPS. Morocco, which had both an active Empowered Partner and a relatively stable economic, political and security environment, saw the highest entrepreneur recruitment rates.

Workshop breakdown and gender split

Country	Number of workshops held	Number of entrepreneurs recruited and paired	Number of women	% women
Egypt	5	52	12	23%
Jordan	5	50	16	32%
Libya	2	27	7	26%
Morocco	5	70	29	41%
Tunisia	3	42	12	29%
Yemen	4	62	25	39%
Total	24	303	101	33%

From early in the project, it was evident that entrepreneur retention would be a key challenge. Entrepreneur retention problems arose in five general circumstances:

1. When the entrepreneur felt their mentor was not the right match for them
2. When there was a lack of follow-up and response from the mentor
3. When contact with the mentor became logistically or technically difficult (as deteriorating security conditions made travel difficult, or as a result of poor communications infrastructure)
4. When entrepreneurs' business activities deteriorated or closed
5. Conversely, when entrepreneurs' businesses grew, and they could no longer make time for mentoring

The project team closely monitored retention, through regular contact with entrepreneurs and mentors, and periodic 'peer calls' with both. Where it was apparent that the mentor-entrepreneur pairing was not succeeding, we attempted to re-match the entrepreneur with a new mentor. We also encouraged entrepreneurs to remain engaged through developing an online networking tool (the Forsa 'Souk'), and holding quarterly networking events in each country. Our final round of events included training in business communications, and a competition for effective market 'pitches' (which were video recorded and are now accessible at the Forsa Vimeo stream, <http://vimeo.com/user19547711>). We also encouraged active participation through maintaining regular social media communication with entrepreneurs and mentors.

At the conclusion of the project, based on the final entrepreneur survey results, the 'number of entrepreneurs actively receiving mentoring assistance through the programme' was calculated by, first, counting the number of entrepreneur survey respondents who indicated that they were still in active mentoring relationships, or had satisfactorily completed the full mentoring programme. Of 227 respondents, 190 fell into this category, an average of 84% across the six countries. Positive responses were highest in Yemen (93%), and lowest in Libya and Tunisia (77% each).

Second, we contacted a sample of non-respondents to determine if they were still active in the programme, or had dropped out. This group had a higher drop-out rate than the respondents, but a significant number indicated that they remained active or had satisfactorily completed the full programme, but had not completed the survey due to lack of time or a general reluctance to complete surveys. By contacting numerous non-respondents, we estimated that between 50% and 75% of total non-respondents fell into this category.

We used this data to calculate the total number of entrepreneurs (survey respondents and non-respondents) actively receiving mentoring assistance through the programme as between 228 (lower bound estimate) and 251 (upper bound estimate), as shown below.

Output Indicator 1.1: number of entrepreneurs actively receiving mentoring assistance through the programme

	Entrepreneurs	Survey responses	Respondents active or completed full course	Total (respondents and non-respondents) active or completed full course, lower bound estimate	Total (respondents and non-respondents) active or completed full course, upper bound estimate
Egypt	52	43	37 (86%)	42	45
Jordan	50	43	36 (84%)	40	42
Libya	27	13	10 (77%)	17	21
Morocco	70	51	40 (78%)	50	55
Tunisia	42	31	24 (77%)	30	33
Yemen	62	46	43 (93%)	51	58
Totals	303	227	190 (84%)	228	251

The most likely figure for the number of entrepreneurs who remain active or who completed the programme is between these two bounds, at approximately 240. This is marginally short of the logframe target of 250.

The survey provides useful information on why this happened. Respondents whose relationships had ended were asked why. A significant proportion (28%) attributed the end of the relationship to circumstances outside the control of the programme, predominantly (50% of that group) because of a change in the entrepreneur’s own circumstances, the remainder due to security conditions or illness. Even more (34%) attributed the end of the relationship to commitment and communication issues, predominantly the difficulty (for both mentors and entrepreneurs) of making time for mentoring sessions. Only 7 entrepreneurs attributed the end of their mentoring relationship to a lack of support from the Forsa team.

“From the outset, [my mentor] Najoua made it clear that in this experience there would be no ‘I’ or ‘you’ but just ‘we’. This meant that we lived the experience together, together we found answers to my questions. My mentor provided an objective voice, supporting me absolutely.”

Zainab El Fakir, entrepreneur, Morocco

Why mentoring relationships ended (multiple reasons allowed)

Reason	Number	%
A lack of support and follow-up from Forsa team	7	9.5%
We completed the mentoring process and it came to an end naturally	8	10.8%
Other	9	12.2%
I lost motivation/willingness to engage with the programme	12	16.2%
Circumstances outside control of programme	21	28.4%
I was not matched with a suitable mentor and decided not to continue the relationship	25	33.8%
Communication/commitment issues	30	40.5%

Communication issues leading to relationships ending (multiple reasons allowed)

Reason	Number	%
Technological issues e.g. poor line quality/poor internet connection	3	10.0%
Mentor missed appointment/s without prior notice	3	10.0%
Mentor cancelled appointment/s in advance	4	13.3%
I had difficulty making time for mentoring sessions	16	53.3%
Mentor seems to have difficulty making time for me	22	73.3%

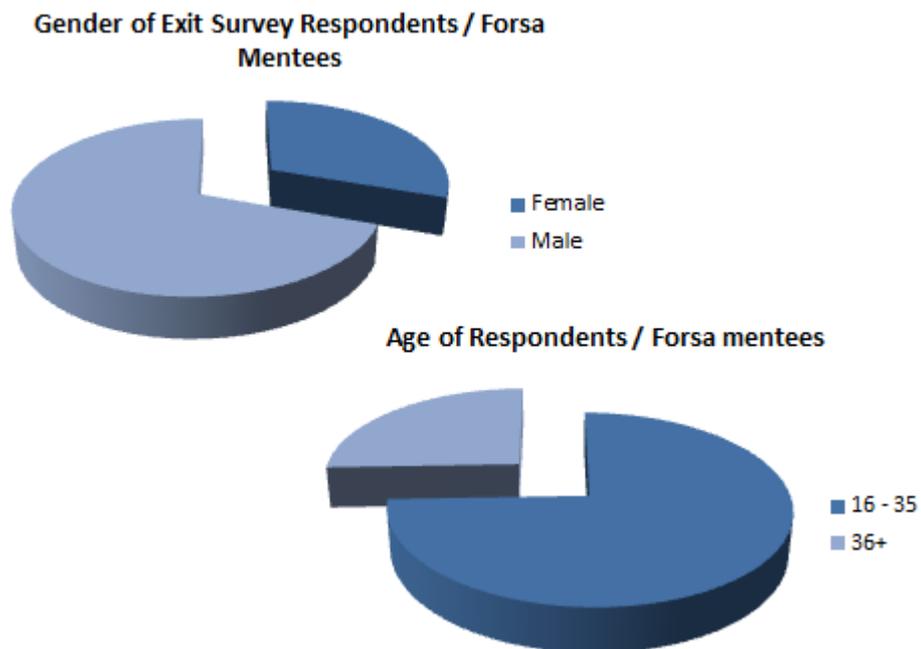
Circumstances outside control of the programme leading to relationships ending (multiple reasons allowed)

Reason	Number	%
Security conditions represented a barrier to meeting with mentor/s and/or attending events	1	4.8%
Illness of you or your mentor	3	14.3%
Security conditions represented a barrier to business activities	3	14.3%
My own circumstances changed and my need for a mentor diminished	14	66.7%

Young people and women face particular barriers to economic participation in the six countries, and Forsa was intended to benefit these groups particularly. It aimed for 50% of its entrepreneurs to be

aged 16-35, and 50% to be women. The first of these goals was comfortably exceeded: 74% of Forsa entrepreneurs were aged 16-35.

Despite sustained efforts to engage female entrepreneurs, the second goal was not achieved. Of the total pool of 303 entrepreneurs recruited, 33% were women. This reflected the prevailing economic and cultural conditions in the six countries, where women comprise a small minority of those operating businesses or engaged in formal employment.



As with entrepreneur recruitment in general, the best results in recruiting women were achieved in countries where there was a strong and active local partner, in combination with suitable economic conditions.

Country	Female entrepreneurs recruited
Jordan	17
Tunisia	13
Egypt	12
Yemen	24
Morocco	28
Libya	7

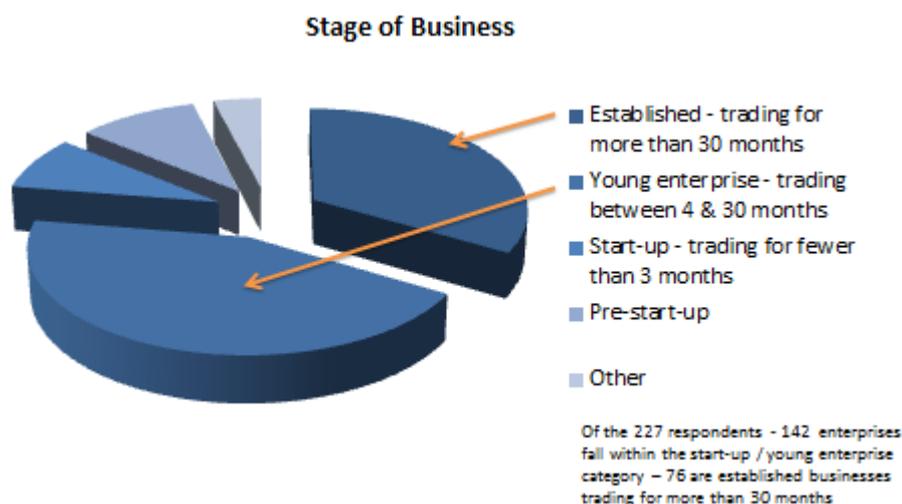
Women also tended to drop out of the programme at a marginally higher rate than men: of the group completing the full programme, 28% were women. This may reflect the gender-differentiated impacts of the deteriorating conditions in the countries: of the four entrepreneurs whose mentoring

relationships ended early due to security threats, all were women. However, the data set is not large enough to conclude this with confidence.

As a final targeting criterion, Forsa initially sought to recruit entrepreneurs at early stages in their business, aiming for 70% within the start-up/young enterprise category. However, following the pilot mentoring workshops, it was realised that the programme would be more effective at the impact level if it engaged a significant proportion of entrepreneurs who had been in business for at least 20 months. This would also increase the perceived quality of the entrepreneurs among mentors, and lead to lower levels of pairing attrition. Ultimately, 142 entrepreneurs (63%) fell into the start-up/young enterprise category, while 34% had been running their business for more than 30 months.

“I had no idea about mentorship before. I learned the whole concept of having a mentor who can guide you through and give you insights from his own experience.”

Khaled Sharaiha, entrepreneur, Jordan



ii. Output Indicators 1.2 and 1.3: skills, confidence and awareness

Forsa’s results in terms of skills, confidence and awareness improvements in entrepreneurs were particularly impressive:

- 77% of entrepreneurs improved their business skills as a result of Forsa (logframe target 65%)
- 85% increased their confidence, self-belief and awareness as a result of Forsa (logframe target 65%)
- 91% reported an improvement in one or more of these areas
- 88% would recommend Forsa to other entrepreneurs

“For me, Forsa has been an amazing experience, going beyond a simple mentoring programme! It's been an amazing boost of positive energy, an experience that I recommend to every entrepreneur facing the daily challenges of entrepreneurship.”

Hatim Rih, entrepreneur, Morocco

These improvements were distributed relatively evenly across all countries, with Yemen again standing out for its success, while Tunisia lagged somewhat behind. In all countries individually, as well as the overall average, logframe targets were exceeded.

Entrepreneurs improving business skills through Forsa, by country (target 65%)

	Egypt	Jordan	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia	Yemen	Total
Agree	72%	77%	69%	84%	65%	83%	77%
Disagree/Not Sure	28%	23%	31%	16%	35%	17%	23%

Entrepreneurs improving confidence, self-belief or awareness through Forsa, by country (target 65%)

	Egypt	Jordan	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia	Yemen	Grand Total
Agree	79%	79%	85%	92%	74%	98%	85%
Disagree/Not sure	21%	21%	15%	8%	26%	2%	15%

Other key results were:

- 87% of entrepreneurs reported that the mentoring workshops met or exceeded expectations
- 88% reported that the workshop sessions were well organised and useful
- 80% consider that there is an unmet demand for more mentoring services
- 79% would participate in a Forsa alumni association if available
- 75% would consider becoming a mentor in a future programme

The results of all output 1 indicators against logframe targets are shown in Annex 2.

c. Output level results: work stream 2

The overarching objective of the second work stream was to promote the greater use of mentoring as a SME development tool. It included the production of a mentoring 'Toolkit', and engagement with governments, international financial institutions (IFIs) and corporations to promote the uptake of more mentoring activities. This work stream faced some significant challenges, but also achieved significant successes, particularly in generating greater attention from government on mentoring as a policy tool, and in supporting organisations to start up their own mentoring activities.

i. Output Indicator 2.1: creation of the SME best practice mentoring toolkit

Output Indicator 2.1 set the target of developing a 'SME best practice mentoring toolkit'. The Forsa Toolkit is an online enterprise mentoring facility, designed to help develop and expand additional mentoring programmes throughout MENA and beyond by articulating the benefits of mentoring, sharing best practices, and setting out step by step guides for governments and corporates to take to expand mentoring opportunities. It is the first such guide developed for the region. The Toolkit

has been accessible from the Forsa website (www.forsa-mena.org) since May 2014, and in September 2014 was translated into Arabic and French.



Forsa Toolkit, French language home page

Forsa management has identified an option to prolong the life of the Toolkit post-Forsa, to enhance its impact. The World Bank (Trade and Competitiveness Global Practice, MENA region) has indicated interest in taking over the Toolkit, in line with its mandate on entrepreneurship development. This presents a win-win opportunity, contributing to the sustainability of Forsa results while supporting the Bank's mandate. This opportunity is under ongoing discussion with the World Bank.

ii. Output Indicators 2.2 and 2.3: engagement with governments

Output Indicators 2.2 and 2.3 both related to engagement with governments in the six countries. First, Forsa sought to achieve government engagement with the Toolkit. Second, we sought to raise the prominence of mentoring as a tool for SME promotion in each country. To achieve these, Forsa took a number of steps:

- Desk and field research to understand the unique characteristics of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in each country
- Identifying and meeting government stakeholders, to promote the benefits of mentoring, and discuss mentoring programme design, how governments could use the Toolkit and what it should contain
- Trialling Toolkit prototypes with government stakeholders
- Advertising Forsa's achievements and launching the Toolkit at events, and through traditional and social media in each country

Forsa's efforts in this area faced two major challenges. First, most countries lacked a functional SME policy, and SME promotion agencies tended to be relatively lowly resourced. Second, the political and security challenges in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen made it increasingly hard to engage governments, as senior officials and state agencies focused on immediate survival to the exclusion of longer-term needs.

Nevertheless, the results achieved were largely positive. Four of the six countries (Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen) engaged meaningfully with the Toolkit and have acknowledged that it has influenced their private sector approaches. Mentoring is now acknowledged within the SME policy portfolios of Jordan, Yemen and Morocco for the first time; while in Tunisia, the national SME agency is now committed to developing and implementing new mentoring programmes. Although these results fall short of the logframe targets of acknowledgements from all six countries, they represent significant achievements in adverse circumstances.

Country results on Outcome Indicators 2.2 and 2.3

Country	Result
Egypt	<p>Toolkit used by state agencies (2.2): no</p> <p>Mentoring moved up SME development policy agenda (2.3): no</p> <p>Forsa's main counterpart in Egypt was the Executive Director of the Industrial Training Council, Mahmoud El-Sherbiny, within the Ministry of Industry and Foreign Trade. Mr El-Sherbiny was a strong Forsa supporter. However, after the abrupt resignation of the government on February 24th 2014, the new government concentrated overwhelmingly on constitutional and security issues, and it became difficult to get traction on other issues. There was also increasing suspicion towards British activities. As a result, it was not possible to engage meaningfully with the Egyptian Government on the Toolkit or SME policy.</p> <p>However, Forsa's Egypt Empowered Partner, EFE, is currently developing online SME development tools drawing on the Toolkit.</p>
Jordan	<p>Toolkit used by state agencies (2.2): yes</p> <p>Mentoring moved up SME development policy agenda (2.3): yes</p> <p>Forsa engaged on several occasions with the Acting Chief Executive, Hana Uraidi, of the Jordan Enterprise Development Company (JEDCO). JEDCO is a government agency with the mandate for SME development. At the Forsa closing event in Jordan, Ms Uraidi stated that: "I've recently been introduced to Forsa's Toolkit...we see Forsa mentoring as a solution...and this is the type of solution we would like to see promoted in our organisation and others. We at JEDCO will be adopting mentorship as one of our core strategic activities for the future."</p>
Libya	<p>Toolkit used by state agencies (2.2): no</p> <p>Mentoring moved up SME development policy agenda (2.3): no</p> <p>Our engagement with the Libyan Government became difficult, and then impossible, as the country experienced growing violence over 2014.</p>

Morocco	<p>Toolkit adopted by state agencies (2.2): yes</p> <p>Mentoring acknowledged within SME development policy agenda (2.3): yes</p> <p>H.E. Mamoun Bouhdoud, Minister Delegate to the Minister of Industry, Trade, Investment and the Digital Economy, acknowledged the use of the Toolkit and the benefits of Forsa at the closing event in Morocco. The Minister stated: “Reconstructing the Morocco economy requires training entrepreneurs – only then can we speak of enterprise development. The Forsa programme supports and keeps pace with the Moroccan government’s commitment to facilitate the creation of young entrepreneurs. I’d like to thank everyone who has contributed to the superb Forsa programme which should not stop here but be scaled up to maximise the benefits from mentoring in Morocco.” A video of his speech is available at:</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=756050464466834&set=vb.504826976255852&type=2&theater</p>
Tunisia	<p>Toolkit adopted by state agencies (2.2): yes</p> <p>Mentoring acknowledged within SME development policy agenda (2.3): yes</p> <p>Tunisia was selected by Forsa management for the regional launch of Forsa June 4th 2013, as the then Minister of Industry, who later became Prime Minister, H.E. Mehdi Jomaa, was an enthusiastic supporter.</p> <p>Forsa’s main counterpart in Tunisia was the Agency for the Promotion of Industry and Innovation (API). On April 29th 2014 the Forsa team leader facilitated a half-day workshop for senior management of API along with several managers of API’s regional incubators for entrepreneurship. The outcome of the workshop, as expressed by API’s Director of International Cooperation Department, Mr Wajdi Neffati, was that API sought guidance from Forsa in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) creating a mentoring programme for their incubator alumni/residents; 2) developing a new mentoring programme for women, and 3) developing a ‘train-the-trainer’ initiative for incubator managers. <p>At the September 2014 closing event at the Ambassador’s Residence in Tunis, the President of the Arab Institute of Business Leaders, Mr Ahmed Bouzguenda, cited the success of working with more than 80 entrepreneurs engaged in the Forsa programme and thanked the UK Government for Forsa. He expressed a wish that the programme had lasted longer and underscored that their mentoring efforts in the future would focus on encouraging more of their members to become mentors and on helping to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem.</p>
Yemen	<p>Toolkit adopted by state agencies (2.2): yes</p> <p>Mentoring acknowledged within SME development policy agenda (2.3): yes</p> <p>As a direct consequence of Forsa activity, mentoring now features in Yemen’s National Strategy of Youth Employment. This was confirmed by Forsa Empowered Partner SMEPS, a government body with the national mandate for SME development: see Annex 5. A copy (in Arabic) of the full National Strategy of Youth Employment is available on request.</p>

iii. Milestone 7: engagement with corporations and IFIs

As part of this workstream, Forsa also engaged with IFIs and corporations to promote and support the greater uptake of mentoring in the region. This was not reflected in the logframe, but was required under milestone 7. Good results were achieved:

- **Forsa advocacy and technical assistance has helped two IFIs (AfDB and EBRD) design expanded mentoring activities. Mowgli Foundation will have ongoing input into these programmes.**
- **Forsa has formed relationships with a number of corporations, and three of the region's largest corporations (Microsoft, Lafarge and OCP) have committed to launching new mentoring activities, which will be delivered in collaboration with Mowgli.**

Together, these achievements will see mentoring delivered to thousands of new entrepreneurs in the region.

The achievements have been difficult. In its initial version, the milestone required 'MOUs signed for new mentoring programmes with 2 corporate sponsors and 2 IFIs'. However, the milestone language was amended in October 2014 in agreement with DFID, to require that '[t]wo corporations and two IFIs confirm (in writing and in the form of an MOU or Letter of Intent where possible) their commitment to commence or increase mentoring activities following Forsa advocacy and/or drawing on Forsa resources'. This change reflected recognition of the difficulties inherent in the milestone.

"I consider that the guidance of [my mentor] Hosni is among the most important boosts my enterprise has received."

Mohd Ebara, entrepreneur, Libya

Corporates and IFIs balked at signing MOUs for several reasons:

1. MOUs generally encapsulate medium-to-long term reciprocal commitments. However, Forsa could only commit to a reciprocal obligation until the end of its funding. When the milestone was devised, it was considered probably that the programme would be extended or carried into a second phase, but by early to mid-2014 this possibility had become unlikely. Therefore, there was no prospect of long-term Forsa collaboration to offer corporates and IFIs as justification for joining into MOUs. In effect, Forsa was required to form MOUs in which it could not offer any commitment.

We attempted to overcome this barrier through offering ongoing collaboration with Forsa partner Mowgli Foundation, which has continuing activities in the region. This approach was generally successful, especially with corporations, which tended to focus more on the content of the mutual commitments rather than the entity giving them. However, we found that our inability to offer ongoing collaboration with Forsa itself, as a UK-badged project, made it harder to engage with some organisations. This was particularly the case for IFIs.

"Getting to know oneself is an extremely rewarding experience, which would never have been possible for me without the mirror that the mentoring programme held up to my life."

Khalid Boujmad, entrepreneur, Morocco

2. IFIs generally were interested in what Forsa could bring to their existing plans, rather than contemplating entirely new activities. They were keen to hear the lessons of Forsa, and take advice on mentoring programme design, rather than form agreements for new activities. As a result, our efforts with IFIs moved towards seeking to have input into their designs, and encourage them to broaden their mentoring ambition. There was most scope for this in Tunisia, where IFIs were already considering the possible uses of mentoring.
3. Corporations found the concept of MOUs and letters of intent bureaucratic and overly formalistic, and were cautious about whether they might involve a hidden financial commitment. As a result, while we found it relatively straightforward to obtain email acknowledgements from corporations of their intent to join with Forsa to boost mentoring activities, they were very reluctant to make such a statement on letterhead.

Despite these challenges, good results were ultimately obtained.

Engagement with IFIs: Forsa advocacy and technical assistance contributed to the scale-up and improvements in the design of mentoring activities by two IFIs (AfDB and EBRD), and Mowgli Foundation will have ongoing input into their programmes.

First, the AfDB's 'Souk At-Tanmia' ('Development Market') programme is a partnership between AfDB, donors (including DFID), and public and private sector stakeholders in Tunisia. It involves identifying and providing non-financial and financial assistance entrepreneurs. AfDB Souk is preparing to launch a new phase which will include mentoring within a mix of business advice, equity and other SME support.

Forsa has had extensive meetings with the Souk At-Tanmia team over 2013-14. Forsa also included three Souk At-Tanmia participants within its entrepreneur pool, at the Souk's request. Most recently (in January 2014), Forsa provided guidance on what training mentors would need, how to run the mentor/entrepreneur matchmaking process, and what ongoing support would be needed once the pairs were formed. AfDB has confirmed that it will continue to collaborate with Mowgli as it prepares to launch the next phase of Souk At-Tanmia.



Forsa team leader David Brown at the launch of the mentoring phase of the AfDB's 'Souk At-Tanmia' programme, April 2014

A similar collaboration was formed with EBRD Tunisia, which is contemplating how to increase support to SMEs, particularly those run by women. EBRD is planning to launch a new programme for women entrepreneurs in 2016, with mentoring to be integrated with coaching and training on soft skills. Forsa team members met with EBRD on numerous occasions. As well as providing guidance on mentoring design and sharing the Toolkit, Forsa introduced EBRD to a partner on women's mentoring, the Women's Enterprise for Sustainability. EBRD has confirmed that it will continue to engage with Mowgli as it further designs and launches its mentoring activities.

Confirmations from AfDB and EBRD are included in Annex 6.

The European Investment Bank (EIB) was not one of our target IFIs, but they approached Forsa mid-2014 on the side-lines of another project. EIB is considering scaling up its mentoring activities in MENA, and sought guidance on possible approaches. In October, Forsa held a 'lessons learnt' discussion with the EIB about mentoring in MENA, and shared the Toolkit.

Engagement with corporations: In its engagement with potential corporate partners, Forsa set the bar as high as possible, contacting major international corporations with extensive reach, influence and interface with the target audience for mentoring. Its results in this area have been particularly strong, and will see three of the region's largest corporations launch new mentoring activities.

First, Forsa worked over a long period with Microsoft in Egypt, Morocco and their regional headquarters in Turkey. Since October 2013, Forsa encouraged Microsoft to increase its mentoring activities, and two executives from Microsoft participated in the Forsa mentoring policy roundtable in Cairo on December 18th 2013. Microsoft is now considering how to increase the mentoring component in its BIZSpark programme, which, to date, has helped 30,000 start-ups across 100 countries. Forsa guidance has assisted in Microsoft's design of its mentoring approach, and a MOU is currently being negotiated between Microsoft and Mowgli Foundation. This will involve Mowgli running a 'train-the-trainer' mentoring initiative, and reviewing Microsoft's online mentoring platform, among other support activities.

Second, cement industry world leader Lafarge has made a major commitment to mentoring in Egypt. Forsa has supported Lafarge to develop its mentoring activities through advocacy on the benefits of mentoring, the resources provided in the Toolkit, and the referral of entrepreneurs (who could not attend the Forsa mentoring workshops) by Forsa to Lafarge. After the conclusion of Forsa, Lafarge will be continuing a mentoring programme with Mowgli.

Similarly, Forsa has engaged with OCP, one of the largest companies in Morocco, which controls the world's largest



*Forsa networking events:
Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt*

phosphate reserves. Forsa advocacy and resources have promoted mentoring within OCP, which will carry on mentoring activities in 2015 with Mowgli.

Letters confirming the collaboration with Microsoft, Lafarge and OCP are at Annex 7.

Several other potential corporate collaborations were developed under the programme:

- Forsa began engaging with Unilever in Egypt in October 2013. After considerable engagement, in November 2014 Unilever confirmed its interest in Forsa/Mowgli support for their mentoring ambitions. Mowgli has submitted a draft MOU for Unilever's consideration but is yet to receive a response.
- The Moroccan business membership organisation CGEM has also begun MOU discussions with Mowgli, but these are yet to take definite shape.
- Vodafone's Egypt office is responsible for the Middle East, and has 40 million consumers in Egypt alone. Forsa and Vodafone have had a long engagement to lay the foundation for future mentoring activities, and Vodafone's willingness to open retail outlets on Thursday evenings for mentors to meet entrepreneurs puts it in a strong position to leverage mentoring benefits. However, as plans for a MOU became firmer, Vodafone became increasingly concerned that the mid-term commitment they were making to mentoring was misaligned with the short-term nature of Forsa. This concern was expressed in a letter to Forsa in June 2014. Discussions on potential collaboration with Mowgli are ongoing.

Correspondence relating to this engagement is at Annex 8.

iv. Other public and stakeholder outreach

In line with the objective of broadening the uptake of mentoring, Forsa also sought to engage with a wider audience. Effective communications was essential for this. Core promotional material and the Forsa website were ready by the time of the official regional launch of Forsa in Tunisia on June 4th 2013, by FCO Minister H.E. Alistair Burt, British Ambassador H.E. Hamish Cowell, and Tunisian Minister of Industry (later Prime Minister) H.E. Dr Mehdi Jomaa. Press releases were distributed to over 300 media outlets, while 80 guests attended the press conference. Publications included a 'why mentoring' brochure, brochures calling for entrepreneurs and mentors, a sponsorship brochure, a number of press packs, and ten case studies. The launch attracted widespread television, radio, newspaper and digital coverage. Some 80 people also attended the Forsa launch in Jordan on June 6th 2013, and Dubai TV interviewed the Forsa team leader in Dubai.

Forsa's trilingual website was operational for the programme launch, and has been an effective outreach tool, with Facebook 'likes' reaching 3,580 as of December 20th 2014. Likewise, Twitter followers increased from 82 in August 2013 through to 247 in November of the same year, and reached 529 by the end of the programme in December 2014. Forsa's LinkedIn Group members increased from 196

"As my mentor, Mrs. Hana always welcomed my questions and discussed all details about my company and how to grow and sustain it including handling different individual cases I faced with my employees or clients. She always showed how much interested she is in helping me to succeed; I always felt that she considers my success is hers. She played a role much beyond being a mentor; she was a consultant, coach, advisor, friend, and a partner."

Ahmad Abu Qauod, entrepreneur, Jordan

in November to 400 by the end of the programme.

Around one hundred Forsa participants, government and business representatives, and journalists attended each of the closing events. These included a business pitch training workshop for entrepreneurs, a reception for participants and stakeholders, and media activities. The closing events attracted excellent media coverage; for example, the Morocco closing event was covered on TV (one station), radio (two stations), print media (seven outlets), and online (ten outlets).

Other Forsa communications products included:

- A regional documentary
- Footage of presentations and speeches at Forsa launch, networking and concluding events
- Individual business pitch presentations from entrepreneurs
- Seventeen 'success story' case studies

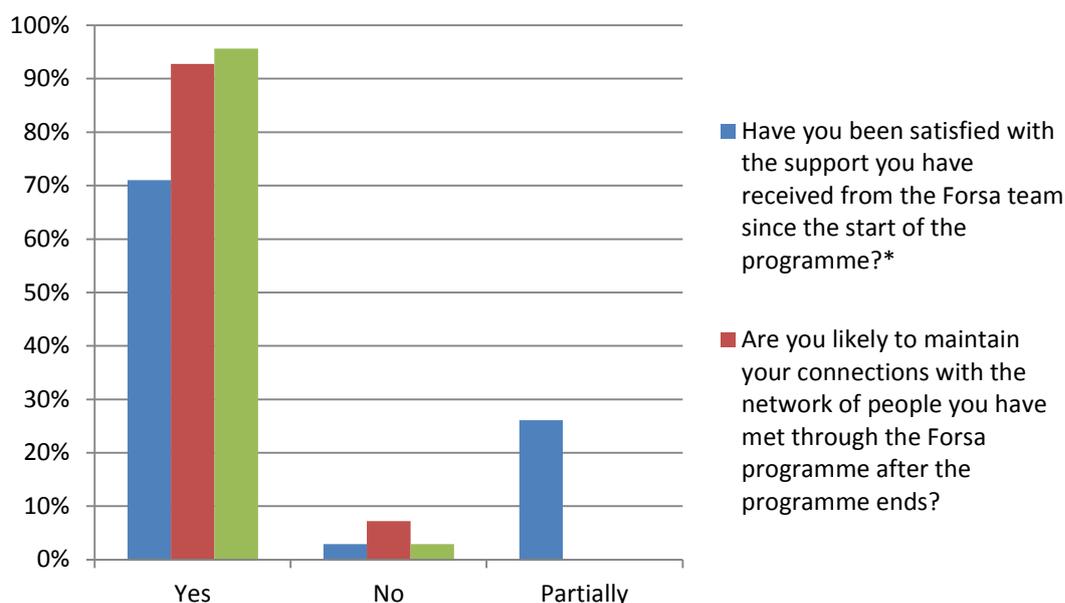
The case studies are included at Annex 9; video footage is available on the Forsa website at www.forsa-mena.org and the Forsa Vimeo stream at <http://vimeo.com/user19547711>.

d. Additional results: mentor exit survey

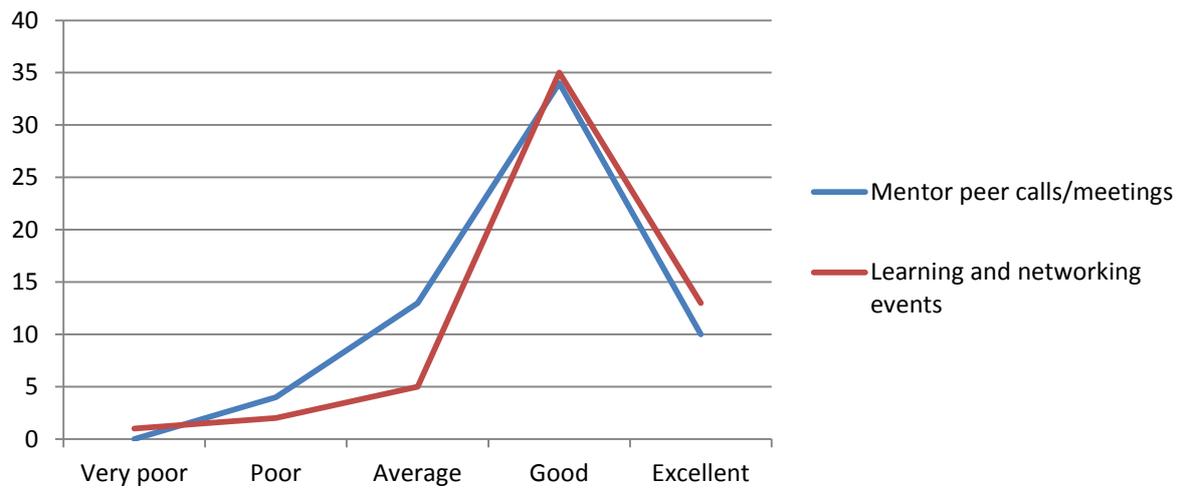
In addition to surveying entrepreneurs, Forsa management also sought to capture mentor feedback to help craft recommendations and to provide pointers for future mentoring programmes. Total mentor respondents were 69, reflecting the lower-key and voluntary nature of this survey compared to the logframe-essential entrepreneur surveys.

In total, 93 percent of responses were positive or neutral. There was strong support for the Mowgli model coupled with an overwhelmingly positive endorsement for the professionalism of the Mowgli facilitators: 93 percent ranked the facilitators as excellent (61%) or good (32%).

Mentor satisfaction rates



Mentor assessment of Forsa follow-up support



4. Lessons learnt and recommendations

Most Forsa activities concluded in December 2014. However, the evidence indicates a strong ongoing demand for mentoring services, from both entrepreneurs and government, and specific support for the Forsa model:

- 88% of entrepreneurs would recommend Forsa mentoring to others
- 80% of entrepreneurs consider that there is an unmet demand for mentoring services
- 75% of entrepreneurs would consider being a mentor in a future programme

Any future programme in this area should build off the Forsa experience. The final section of this report reflects on the key challenges faced by Forsa, and recommendations for future activities.

“First of all, thank you for all that you have accomplished in our region of Agadir through Forsa, I congratulate you. Second, why not follow up Forsa with a future mentoring programme? Thank you to you all.”

Entrepreneur survey respondent, Morocco

a. Key challenges faced

i. Relational mentoring challenges

The relational mentoring approach adopted in Forsa has significant benefits. In particular:

- By relying on self-organisation by the paired mentor and entrepreneur, the mentoring relationship can be made flexible to fit a wide variety of lifestyles and schedules.
- The group matchmaking workshops encourage friendship and trust among programme participants.
- Relational mentoring does not shy away from discussing the impact of entrepreneurship on personal life, which is an area business skills interventions usually do not touch, despite it being a significant contributor to failure for entrepreneurs.

However, this approach also has down-sides. In particular, the amount of time required from all participants to make this approach work is significant, particularly in the initial training/matchmaking stages. Other challenges include:

- It can be difficult to create unique, one-to-one pairings between mentors and mentees. It is hard to make perfect matches, and less capable mentors and mentees may be difficult to pair.
- A long-term commitment is required from both sides, leading to a relatively high long-term dropout rate.
- The long-term nature of these programmes requires infrastructure to ensure that relationships are supported.
- Confidentiality is an important part of mentoring, which can make programme monitoring difficult.

“To support entrepreneurs, especially those who are not very experienced and want a successful business venture, it is necessary to have a mentor at their side, so they don’t feel alone in facing all the problems they experience every day. If the spirit of the leader grows, the company will follow...”

Taieb Nemissi, entrepreneur, Tunisia

ii. Entrepreneurship support environment and partners

The support environment for entrepreneurs, and the quality of local partners, varied significantly in each country.

Country	General entrepreneurship support environment	Empowered Partner
Egypt	There are a number of NGOs and other organisations supporting entrepreneurs and SMEs. However, these appear to be having limited impact, and Egypt remains a difficult operating environment due to its political, economic and security conditions.	Education for Employment (EFE): A capable and committed account manager helped to overcome some of the challenges facing Forsa within Egypt. One of Forsa's mentors has been engaged by EFE to develop online SME development tools drawing on the Forsa Toolkit, was suggests it may be taking a more active approach to mentoring in the future.
Jordan	The threat of greater instability passing into Jordan from its neighbours has dampened the prospects for private sector growth, but also made it more important than ever. Jordan is saturated with organisations working on entrepreneurship, but the quality of entrepreneurship support is generally poor and impact low.	Queen Rania Centre for Entrepreneurship (QRCE): Different institutional mandates made it difficult at times to align aspirations and activities with QRCE, and ultimately Forsa exercised its option to withhold a final tranche of funding. However, QRCE made a good contribution to the first alumni networking event, and is now under new management. It offers good potential for future partnership.
Libya	Libya is characterized by a relatively under-developed entrepreneurship culture and a heavy bias towards the public sector. Finding a credible local partner for Forsa in Libya and appropriate applicants for the mentoring programme was difficult. Libya has also been the most expensive country to operate in, and the current security environment makes delivery exceptionally difficult and risky.	Consultants Alliance: Performance in recruitment and logistical support was below expectations, with numbers of confirmed participants dropping sharply just before the workshops. This triggered more direct Forsa involvement. The Consultants Alliance contract featured an earlier exit clause than the other MOUs, and Forsa decided to exercise it. In the event, the security situation in Libya led to the stalling of most project activities there.
Morocco	The environment in Morocco is conducive to mentoring, and the entrepreneurship ecosystem comparatively well-developed. There is high potential for mentoring programmes, although there is also high competition among entrepreneurship development organisations.	CJD Centre for Young Business Leaders: CJD performed well, achieving the highest number of entrepreneurs being paired without compromising quality of participant. Some challenges were faced with financial management. Nevertheless, CJD offers good partnership potential.
Tunisia	Tunisia has a high potential for mentoring, particularly in the areas of the country	Arab Institute of Business Leaders (IACE): IACE commands high levels of respect from

	away from the rich coastal cities, which receive comparatively more attention.	both the public and private sector. With 450 or so members, IACE had the least difficulty recruiting mentors. However, some financial management challenges were faced.
Yemen	Despite its poor security environment, low levels of development and degraded infrastructure, Forsa was highly successful in Yemen. However, costs of delivery in Yemen are high: security costs are high, and international level fees and costs can be expected from credible local implementing partners.	Small & Micro Enterprise Promotion Service (SMEPS): A deterioration in the security situation forced Forsa to delegate most Yemen activities directly to SMEPS. It performed these exceptionally well, and offers excellent future partnership potential.

iii. Continuity within DFID governance

Over its course, some seven different DFID officers were responsible for Forsa programme management. This presented some challenges with management continuity. However, we are grateful for the time invested by each responsible officer to quickly pick up the programme background and work with the implementing team to face remaining issues.

b. Recommendations for future mentoring programmes

i. Mentor recruitment

- Mentors are in short supply, not because there are few qualified people, but because most potential mentors do not know that they would make good mentors. Therefore, focus first on the identification and training of mentors, not on matching them with entrepreneurs.
- Invest particularly in finding female mentors. Female entrepreneurs will often be more inclined to participate in a mentoring programme if they paired with a female mentor. Therefore, a key factor in a programme's success in engaging female entrepreneurs will be its ability to attract female mentors.

ii. Entrepreneur recruitment

- Target entrepreneurs who have proven the viability of their business concepts, such as those emerging from incubators and accelerators. This will increase the credibility of entrepreneurs to mentors, and reduce drop-out due to the failure of enterprises.

iii. Mentor-entrepreneur pairing

- Forsa's initial workshops required equal numbers of mentors and entrepreneurs, all of whom were paired off, resulting in some pairings which were not an ideal fit. Instead, consider a flexible methodology that does not insist on matchmaking, but encourages entrepreneurs and mentors to find their own best fit.

iv. Other design options

- Consider industry or sector-specific mentoring (e.g. tech, agribusiness, media), using mentors with specific backgrounds.

- Consider combining mentoring with other forms of business support, such as networking activities (in person and online); training/business support services; competitions/awards; in-depth business support (such as incubation, providing recruitment and other business services, etc.).
- Implement a train-the-trainer programme for mentors. There are few such initiatives in the MENA region.

“I feel lucky (praise Allah) to have been part of this adventure, thank you for all your efforts.”

Entrepreneur survey respondent, Morocco