

Business Incubator Speaker Series

Case Study - Summer 2023

Organization Overview

Medalah is a local Yemeni non-profit based in Aden, Yemen specializing in empowerment projects and youth in Yemen using technology and entrepreneurship. The goal of the incubator (project name Sandbox) was to reinvigorate the economy through innovative business ideas that can be successful while being aware of the big issues facing Yemen.

Partner Name

Medalah: Implementer

Project Name:

Business Incubator Project

Dates:

May 14 - Aug 27, 2023

THE PROJECT REQUEST



Medalah requested speakers for their Sandbox incubator cohort to address highly specialized fields and needed them to speak Arabic. RFY had to seek out experts in issues that face Yemen like water scarcity, business challenges specific to Yemen, food scarcity, etc.

THE APPROACH



The majority of RFY's existing volunteer base didn't match the needs. Through networking and advertising on LinkedIn, we were able to locate all but one specialty that was requested. One speaker required a translator which was provided by RFY. One speaker was able to visit in person.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES



1

Explore New Ideas

Gave students in Yemen an opportunity to think about larger issues facing Yemen while also exploring potential solutions and how to tie that into a business idea with an expert in that field

2

Inspiring Success Story

One of the speakers, Omer Bodakhon was born, raised and lives in Yemen and is running a biogas business that has received international attention. Students saw first hand what success could look like.

3

Networking

Every speaker was happy to share their contact information to help the students after the talk.

Recommendations and Takeaways

These recommendations are based on lessons learned to help determine future project selection.



Sandbox Demo Day - Image by Medalah



VIRTUAL CONNECTIONS

Students were not as comfortable with virtual training as past cohorts. Our speakers addressed the importance of being willing to embrace virtual meetings, trainings and other potential opportunities for entrepreneurs in Yemen, especially in trying to reach resources outside of Yemen.



FACILITATOR

Having a strong facilitator on location is key for a productive meeting. They can help address any technical issues, overcome any language barriers and steer the conversation when needed.



"The conversation enlightened me with some things that I was ignorant of about water and agriculture and how to adapt them to become entrepreneurial projects."

SANDBOX ATTENDEE