

مواطنات
Mouwatinat

PATHWAYS TO CHANGE

Women Driving
Development
in Libya



This project is funded by
the European Union

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TABLE OF ACRONYMS

CCYW	Care Centers for Young Women
CILG	Centre for Innovative Local Governance
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
MFFEPA	Ministry of Women, Family, Children, and the Elderly (Tunisia)
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWA	Ministry of State for Women's Affairs
MoY	Ministry of Youth
VNGI	VNG International
WEON	Women Elected Officials Network

MOUWATINAT

PATHWAYS TO CHANGE: Women Driving Development in Libya

Stories, results, and lessons from a journey toward inclusive governance

'Across Libya, women are stepping into leadership roles, shaping their communities, and championing change in the face of complex challenges. From local governance to civil society, entrepreneurship to grassroots activism, Libyan women are redefining what leadership looks like driven by resilience, vision, and determination.

This booklet celebrates our journey alongside them over the past 3 years. It pays tribute to the courage, creativity, and commitment of women who are not only transforming their own lives, but also building the foundations of a more inclusive, just, and sustainable Libya.

The Mouwatinat program stands as one of the most challenging yet inspiring experiences we have undertaken. What sets it apart is its holistic and inclusive approach. Whether designing national strategies, supporting ministries, training local women leaders, or establishing six Care Centres for Young Women, we have prioritized participation over prescription, partnership over parallelism, and ownership over imposed solutions. Crucially, Mouwatinat did not emerge as an imported solution. It was born from Libya's own realities, shaped by Libyan women, informed by local experience, and implemented within Libyan institutions. It was designed to address the country's specific dynamics of participation, which remain complex and layered.

This is more than a project, it is a shared journey rooted in the everyday leadership of women sharing their communities and institutions.

As we look back on this journey, we also look ahead, with hope, with humility, and with the firm belief that sustainable change begins with those who live it, lead it, and own it.'

Libya Team



PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

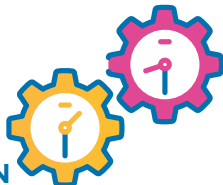
The Mouwatinat program is more than a technical intervention; it represents a strategic investment in inclusive governance. Operating in a fragile and conflict-affected context, the program has placed women at the centre of development processes, building long-term resilience through localized action, institutional reform, capacity reinforcement and sustained cooperation.

The project is also built around thematic areas identified as priorities for women. Its deliberate use of a multi-stakeholder approach aims to bring together actors across sectors and levels, from national and local governments to civil society organizations, each with distinct mandates, roles, and perspectives.

This collaborative model allows for a more comprehensive response to cross-cutting challenges faced by Libyan women.

DURATION

August 2022
> March 2025



BENEFICIARIES

+900
women
reached



3 ministries

1 CSO

6 local pilots

BUDGET

\$ 1.5
million
Euro



PARTNERS

- Ministry of Women Affairs,
- Women Elected Officials Network,
- Ministry of Local Government,
- Ministry of Youth

OUR APPROACH

- Institutional support
- Shaping strategies and visions
- Capacity reinforcement
- Pilot projects, Care Centers for Young Women CCYW
- Multi-stakeholder Coordination & synergy
- Peer-to-Peer Learning
- Thematic Focus



No Development without **Women Participation**

DISPLACED WOMEN

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

ENGAGEMENT OF WOMEN IN PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE

LEADERSHIP

ORGANIZED FOR A STRONGER UNION

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

MARRIED TO NON-LIBYANS

EMPOWERMENT

NETWORKING AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

TEAMWORK AND SOLIDARITY



WHY IT MATTERS: UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Female elected council members found themselves **working in isolation**, navigating unfamiliar and often unwelcoming spaces

Launched in 2022, the Mouwatinat project began in a complex and evolving environment. Across Libya, participation in public affairs remained uneven, with many voices and perspectives still lacking from key decision-making spaces. At both local and national levels, the diversity of leadership did not fully reflect the communities it aimed to serve.

Despite the introduction of quota measures at the municipal level, challenges persisted. While in theory allowed to run for the other seats, in practice women had to stick to the allocated seat to avoid competing with men over the other seats due to cultural and social constraints. Female elected council members found themselves working in isolation, navigating unfamiliar and often unwelcoming spaces, with limited knowledge of their contributions.

This disconnect was mirrored at the national level, where only a small proportion of parliamentary seats were occupied by new entrants into the political sphere, individuals who often had to work twice as hard to be heard.

Legal constraints, rigid social expectations, and ongoing political uncertainty further limited participation in governance and development efforts.

Yet, in the midst of these obstacles, new momentum was building. An increasing number of candidates were stepping forward during legislative elections, demonstrating both courage and a clear demand for change. Strong women occupying important positions in different institutions were eager to make a change.

For years, VNG International and its regional partner, CILG-VNG International, have been walking alongside Libyan stakeholders, supporting decentralization efforts, strengthening local governance,

Mouwatinat was built on a foundation of **long-standing collaboration**, trust, and a shared commitment to **responsive local governance**

and building the capacity of municipalities across the country. As an association of municipalities, working with and for local governments is part of our DNA. Throughout our engagement, we have consistently placed inclusiveness and meaningful participation at the heart of everything we do.

The Improved Service Delivery and Accountability at the Local Level (ISAL) initiative, jointly supported by the European Union and the Netherlands, demonstrated the value of this approach. It reaffirmed a simple truth: when local actors are empowered, progress becomes tangible. But it also reminded us of something just as vital: progress needs continuity to be sustainable.

It was from this experience, and through close consultation with Libyan partners, that the Mouwatinat project took shape. It did not emerge out of nowhere; it was built on a foundation of long-standing collaboration, trust, and a shared commitment to responsive local governance. A pivotal moment came in 2021 with the successful organization of the Statutory Conference of the Women Elected Officials Network (WEON), titled ***Supporting the Local Political Participation of Women in Libya***. This event, followed by the internal elections of a new board, signaled that the Network was ready for a new chapter, one rooted in structure, vision, and action.

Simultaneously, the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) was facing challenges that were tough to overcome without support. The MoWA had ambitious leadership and sought to fulfil its entire legal mandate for all Libyan women. However, the space in which it operated was curtailed by the additional obstacles caused by the sensitivity of women affairs. Nevertheless, it was obvious that the MoWA had potential to support women on a national scale in a way that no other institution could. It sought to develop its strategic approach on the national level and to expand its reach to bring its vision to Libyan women at the local level as well. VNG International's history with different stakeholders in Libya uniquely positioned us to bridge this gap effectively, which ultimately led to the formulation of the MoWA component within Mouwatinat.

THE JOURNEY OF MOUWATINAT

AUGUST 2022

Program kick-off with MoWA, WEON, CILG, VNG and the EU

- Strategy meetings and workshops on women empowerment lay the foundation for the overarching activity planning of Mouwatinat
- MoUs signed by all parties committing to the successful implementation of the project

OCTOBER 2022

WEON strategy and workplan drafted for the project period, outlining action points, plans and needs

DECEMBER 2022 > JANUARY 2023

MoWA development of the organizational chart of the MoWA and its competencies

DECEMBER 2022 > APRIL 2023

MoWA technical needs assessment for capacity building

FEBRUARY 2023

WEON financial management trainings

FEBRUARY 2023 > APRIL 2023

Mapping of the Women Training Centre landscape in Libya and identification of needs and added value

APRIL 2023 > JUNE 2023

WEON communication strategy development

APRIL 2023 > OCTOBER 2023

WEON internal structure redeveloped, and financial system installed

JULY 2023

Initial national outreach strategy development

JULY 2023 > OCTOBER 2023

MoWA capacity building sessions on gender analysis of legislation and policy, communication, women empowerment, human resource management and strategic planning

SEPTEMBER 2023

WEON capacity building sessions on strategic planning and on communication

OCTOBER 2023

WEON Training of Trainers on communication and advocacy

NOVEMBER 2023

- MoWA peer-to-peer learning study visit to the Netherlands, where the Minister of Women, accompanied by the WEON Director and the Ministry of Local Government engaged with Parliamentarians, Senators and professionals in the field of women empowerment
- WEON local governance capacity building

DECEMBER 2023

WEON subgrant agreement signed and initiated to be implemented by WEON accompanied by Mouwatinat coaching

FEBRUARY 2024

- WEON subgrant activity: legal dialogue symposium held to discuss the legal position of women in municipal elections
- MoWA workshop on Leading National policies for women

MARCH 2024

WEON Quota conference organized about desired amendments to electoral laws under the slogan "Quota is my Right"

MARCH 2024 > MAY 2024

WEON subgrant activity: 25 awareness sessions for women about municipal elections organized with a total attendance of over 800 women

APRIL 2024

MoWA working session with the MoWA leads to the establishment of thematic working groups on key topics:

- Women's Entrepreneurship
- Public Health of internally displaced women
- Women's legal rights
- Combatting violence against women
- Challenges faced by women who are married to non-Libyans

APRIL 2024 > MAY 2024

WEON subgrant activity: dialogue sessions held on the role of women in local development and combatting corruption in Khums, Zawiya, Tajoura, Yefren and Sabha with 128 participants

MAY 2024 > JULY 2024

MoWA dialogue sessions held in Khums, Rhibet and Tarhouna presenting the national outreach strategy

JUNE 2024 > JULY 2024

- MoWA conferences on the topics of the thematic working groups conducted in Tripoli
- WEON subgrant activities: under the framework of "Active female citizens in municipal work" WEON organized: a dialogue session on violence that women working in municipalities face, report writing workshops, computer skills trainings, a training course for municipal advisors, and a media training course

JULY 2024

Selection of municipalities for the Care Centres for Young Women

- Zouara, Yefren, Tarhouna, Murzuq, Beni Walid, Al-Jufra

AUGUST 2024 > NOVEMBER 2024

Preparation of the architectural plans and roll-out of the training centres

DECEMBER 2024

Tendering of the construction - Creation of the Female Leadership Development and Empowerment Unit

JANUARY 2025 > FEBRUARY 2025

construction of the pilots - Visit from the Supreme Council of Local Administration and MoIG to the Tunisian Center for Research, Studies, Documentation and Information on Women

MARCH 2025

Finalization of the pilot projects, accompanied by ceremonial opening of the Yefren and Tarhouna centres

2022

2023

2024

2025



COMPONENT 1
WEON'S VOICE
GETS STRONGER

COMPONENT 1

WEON'S VOICE GETS STRONGER

Finding Our Voice Amid Challenges

“We aim **to make our voices heard** in order to **increase the number of women in various legislative bodies**, such as the House of Representatives, the Senate, and municipal councils. ”

*WEON President,
Mrs Nadia Abusrewil*

898

people reached in awareness sessions

In 2021, the first internal elections of the Women Elected Officials Network (WEON) marked a new beginning. With support from the EU-funded Improved Service Delivery and Accountability at the Local Level (ISAL) program, implemented by VNG International and CILG-VNG International, a new board was elected, a milestone for the network. But after the excitement of the successful election process came the harder question: *What's next?*

The challenges were real. Operating in a fragile and often exclusionary environment, the new leadership knew that good intentions alone would not be enough. They needed a shared vision, concrete tools, and the confidence to navigate a difficult institutional and political landscape.



*Training in communication
in Riyayna,
October 16, 2023*

313

women trained in local governance

Training in communication in Suk Al-Jumaa, October 31, 2023



That's where the real work began.

The newly elected board members received intensive training in core areas: organizational management, financial reporting, strategic communication, lobbying, and advocacy. But beyond the theory, they also had the opportunity to apply these skills directly, through a subgranting initiative paired with personalized coaching. This “learning by doing” approach allowed members to move from plans to real impact on the ground.

A participatory strategy building process helped shape a common vision for WEON to enhance women representation and participation in local affairs. A Training of Trainers (ToT) cycle equipped a pool of experts capable of transferring knowledge around local governance and impact far beyond its core team.

WEON launched a national campaign to raise awareness around the importance of women’s representation in local councils, a critical issue in the lead-up to upcoming elections. The campaign aimed to mobilize communities, influence actors, and ensure that quotas for women councillors are upheld to the new legal standard of 30%.

This wave of mobilization culminated in a national conference that brought together stakeholders from across Libya. Held under the banner “*Quota is My Right*”, the event amplified WEON’s voice and reinforced the call for greater inclusion of women in local decision-making processes. As part of its continued lobbying efforts, the WEON joined a coalition of other civil society groups calling for a quota of 40%, and no in circumstances less than 30%, for women in the new parliamentary body and local councils.

WEON opened space for dialogue on key local governance issues:

- **Reforming Law 59** for more inclusive governance
- **Recognizing women’s role** in local development and anti-corruption
- **Confronting violence** faced by women in public life

8

major activities in multiple regions

Key achievements

- **Newly elected board members** trained in management, reporting, communication, lobbying, and advocacy
- **Subgrant projects implemented** with tailored coaching, applying acquired skills through a “learning by doing” approach
- **WEON Strategy developed**
- **Training of Trainers (ToT)** conducted and accompanied by coaching to build a sustainable pool of local and regional experts
- **National awareness campaign and conference organized** to advocate for increased women’s quotas in local councils and the House of Senate
- **WEON developed a communication plan** and launched a dedicated website to share their vision, values, and ongoing work with a wider audience.



*Training in Local Governance,
in Tripoli, from
5 to 7 november 2023*

Training in local governance in Tripoli, 5 to 7 nov 2023



Training in communication in Djerba, 17 to 19 sept 2023



COMPONENT 2
STRENGTHENING MOWA'S
INSTITUTIONAL ROLE

COMPONENT 2

STRENGTHENING MOWA'S INSTITUTIONAL ROLE

A Ministry for Women, Limited Mandate, Unlimited aspirations and political will

The Ministry of Women's Affairs in Libya (MoWA) has taken important steps toward becoming a fully operational and strategic institution. Despite limited resources, MoWA is actively working to define and implement a national vision for women's empowerment, one that is grounded in evidence, inclusivity, and political will.

“We are aware of the constraints, but we also know where we want to go. We understand our needs and priorities, and we have a **plan** and a **clear vision** to improve the situation of **women in Libya**”

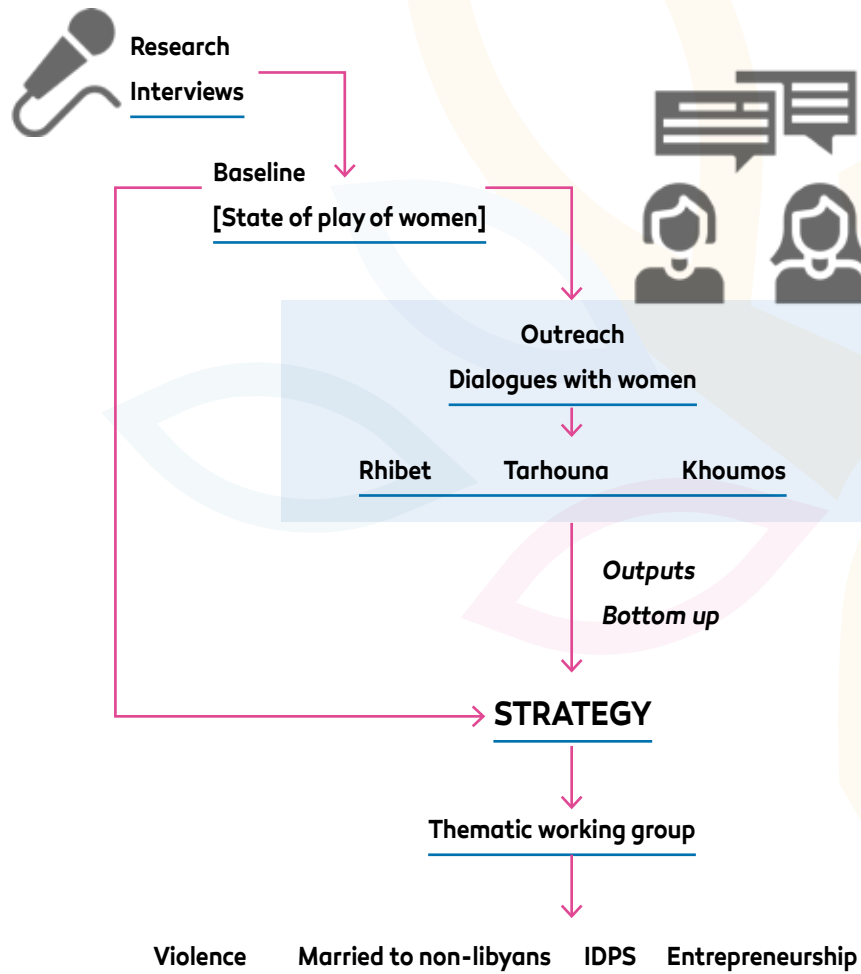
Dr Houria Al Tarmal Minister of Women Affairs

The institutional foundation was laid through the development of an organizational chart and operational framework, preparing the Ministry to function effectively with a clear internal structure. To better understand the national context and inform its direction, a comprehensive baseline study was conducted, offering an evidence-based snapshot of the state of women's rights and opportunities in Libya.

To ensure that its strategy reflects the realities and priorities of Libyan women, MoWA launched a nationwide outreach process. Local dialogue sessions were organized across various regions, feeding directly into the development of the Ministry's strategic vision. This bottom-up approach was critical in identifying five priority thematic areas: addressing violence against women, promoting women's entrepreneurship, advancing health and disability rights, supporting women married to non-Libyans, and responding to the needs of internally displaced women (IDPs).

In parallel, efforts were made to build institutional capacity. Thirty-five ministry staff members received targeted training across these five themes. Dedicated working groups were formed under the newly established Women’s Taskforce, enabling focused action and coordination in each area.

To further amplify women’s voices and encourage public dialogue, Mou-watinat launched a podcast series titled “Voices of Change, under her Hospitality”, offering a platform for women from across Libya, hosted by the Minister of Women, to share their experiences, concerns, and aspirations around these same priority issues. Emphasizing the power of solidarity among women, the podcast highlights collective resilience in the face of complex challenges.



35
women received comprehensive training in communication, advocacy and lobbying, strategic planning, and shaping national policies focused on women.

Achievements

- **Organizational foundation laid** through the development of an organizational chart and an operational framework for a fully-fledged Ministry of Women's Affairs.
- **Thirty-five ministry staff members trained** in key areas including communication, management and human resources, advocacy and lobbying, strategic planning, and the development of national policies for women.



Al Khoms, May 23, 2024

24
participants
including
19 women

- **Thematic working groups established** under the newly launched Women's Taskforce, enabling focused action across priority areas.
- **Action plans developed** for each thematic group, with pilot initiatives implemented—such as national conferences and thematic workshops.
- **Comprehensive baseline study conducted** on the status of women in Libya, providing an evidence-based foundation for future policies.
- **Nationwide outreach strategy launched**, with local dialogue sessions organized in Tarhuna, Rhibet, and Khoms to ground policy work in lived realities.

- **Strategic vision co-developed from the ground up**, reflecting the needs and priorities expressed during local consultations.
- **Minister received tailored coaching** in public speaking and strategic communication to enhance her public engagement.
- **Launch of the podcast series** “Voices of Change: Under Her Hospitality”, offering a platform for Libyan women to share their stories, challenges, and aspirations.

61 participants including **41** women

Rhibet
May 30, 2024



TOTAL
100 participants including **90** women

34 participants including **30** women

Tarhouna, July 10, 2024



Empowerment and Participation Taskforce: Thematic Working Groups

Five groups, One shared goal

Determined to strengthen its strategic direction and influence national policy, MoWA launched an ambitious and inclusive initiative, one deeply rooted in the recommendations and guidance provided by the Mouwatinat project. With technical assistance, strategic coaching, and targeted training from Mouwatinat, MoWA established five thematic working groups. Four of them tackled deeply rooted issues: **economic empowerment and entrepreneurship, violence against women, migrant and displaced women**, and the legal and social challenges faced by **women married to non-Libyans**. A fifth group worked behind the scenes to support the others, shaping overall strategy and communication.

*Women's mental health
Conference 6 July 2024*



Each team brought together a mix of technical support and personal experience. Over several months, they worked intensively together through listening, researching, and debating. What emerged were strategic roadmaps, grounded in Libya's realities and designed to guide long-term reforms that would open the way toward safer, fairer, and more empowering conditions for women across the country.

For each group, strategic planning for the future was based on discussions, but also on assessments of the state of play around their theme in the country at that time. Conducted by experts in each field, these reports provide a framework that can be referenced and referred back to.

1 The group on violence against women developed a vision for a safer and more just society, working toward better laws, survivor support, and accountability. With expert backing, the group conducted a legal review and convened national actors to strengthen coordination and advocacy.

2 The team addressing internally displaced women built a strategy centered on dignity, citizenship, and protection. Their work led to collaborative discussions on health and social inclusion, bringing together institutional, civic, and international stakeholders. In the framework of comprehensive national reconciliation, they aim to work for a Libyan society that integrates displaced women as full citizens with complete rights and duties, and provides them with political, civil, social, and economic protection.

3 The group focusing on Libyan women married to non-Libyan men shone a light on the systemic inequalities this group faces. With support from Mouwatinat, they developed a strategic framework to push for equal rights and initiated groundwork for future action.

Women's Entrepreneurship Conference 16 July 2024



4 The **entrepreneurship and empowerment group** explored how inclusive growth could become a lever for peace and justice. They identified priority sectors and skills for women entrepreneurs and led a seminar that aligned state and non-state actors around a shared economic vision. The working group aimed at a democratic and just society where everyone enjoys full rights and equal opportunities

5 Supporting all these efforts was the **strategic working group**, a cross-cutting team tasked with aligning MoWA's overall direction. Through training, planning exercises, and hands-on sessions, the group worked closely with Mouwatinat to build strategic capacity and reinforce coordination with key actors, including WEON. Together, they helped lay the groundwork for a stronger institutional voice for women in Libya.

Working Session with the Strategy Working Group of the MoWA, April 21 to 23, 2024, in Tunis



Support to the working groups

2024

February 18>19



Workshop on Leading National Policies for Women with the MoWA

June 2>3



Building Coalition to Implement Strategies Workshop

July 13



Conference on Public health of internally displaced women in Libya

1

2

Working Session with the Strategy Working Group of the MoWA



April 21>23

3

4

Conference on Women's Entrepreneurship in Libya



July 6

5

6

Conference on Women's rights legislation in Libya and combating violence against Women, in Tripoli



July 24

Part IV Deliverables and Tools





COMPONENT 3
FROM VISION
TO REALITY

COMPONENT 3 FROM VISION TO REALITY

Six Care Centres for Young Women, Six Gateways to Leadership

“Every **Libyan municipality** should offer a **safe, inclusive space for women**, a place to learn, grow, and connect, where empowerment begins through **knowledge and solidarity**”

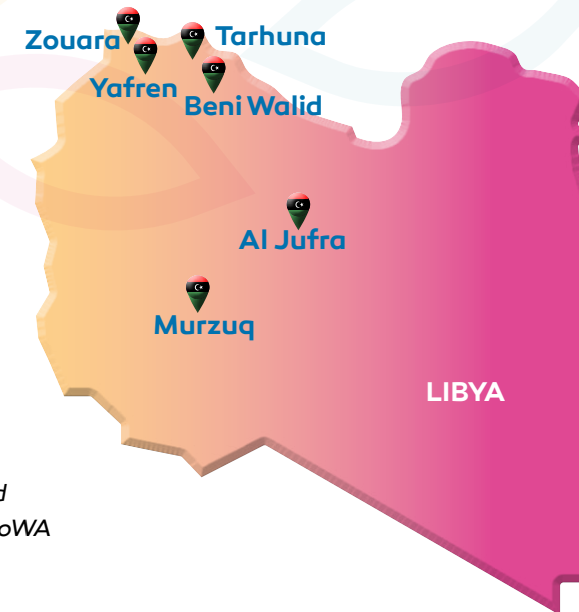
Nairoz Al Jerbi, Yafren

In close collaboration with the **State Ministry of Women Affairs** and the **Ministry of Youth**, **six Care Centres for Young Women** were established in **Tarhuna, Murzuq, Al Jufra, Yafren, Zouara, and Beni Walid** (see map).

These centres were envisioned as more than just training facilities, they were designed to become **vibrant hubs of leadership, learning, and solidarity**. Spaces where young women could connect, exchange experiences, build practical skills, and claim their rightful place in Libya’s social, political, and economic landscape.



MoU signed between MoWA and MoY



“We envision these centers as **hubs for climate change awareness** tailored to women. With my academic background, I aspire to **take a leading role** in the Tarhuna center ”

*Amani Salhin,
Tarhun, Zouara*



CoCreation with Local Women: Building from the Ground Up

Each centre was built through a **participatory process**. The process began with local **needs assessments**, where women identified their priorities and envisioned what a truly useful space would look like. Rather than importing a one-size-fits-all model, the Mouwatinat team worked hand in hand with women from the target communities to shape each centre’s specialization and layout. These ideas were pitched directly by women representatives, then expanded through **online data collection**, allowing broader input and consensus-building. Interior designers brought professional expertise, but it was the **women’s voices that led the way**.

The result is six centres that are similar in purpose but distinct in character. Depending on the location, you might find:

- **A kitchen for pastry-making classes**
- **Computer rooms and training halls**
- **Crafts studios** to revive traditional weaving and promote sustainability
- **Children’s spaces** to welcome young mothers
- **Gyms, sewing and hairdressing studios, libraries, and listening rooms** for psychosocial support
- Even **photography and radio studios, cultural cafés, and rooftop gathering spaces**

These are not just functional spaces, they are **expressions of the community’s identity**, shaped by the aspirations and creativity of local women.

Investing in Leadership and Sustainability

A key priority of the initiative was not only to build centres, but to **build a sustainable model**. Each centre is led by a female manager, selected and trained through Mouwatinat in **Project Cycle Management (PCM)** principles. These women are not only administrators, they are also role models and resource mobilizers, equipped to drive the centre’s vision forward.

“**Every woman has the opportunity, the tools, and the support to achieve financial autonomy and shape her own economic future** ”

Ghithia Ibrahim, Tarhuna

21

women trained in project management cycle for a skilled leadership of the training centers

To ensure long-term viability, the project also facilitated a **Memorandum of Understanding** between the **Ministry of Youth** and the **State Ministry of Women Affairs**. The Ministry of Youth committed to providing buildings for the centres, while benefiting from the expertise generated through the project. This partnership ensures **shared ownership** and **mutual investment**, with multiple stakeholders working toward a common goal.

From Needs to Strategy: Turning Vision into Action

As part of its commitment to sustainable, locally owned development, the Mouwatinat program provided continuous coaching and support to the Care Centres for Young Women, both in person and on-line. This hands-on accompaniment enabled centre teams to translate community-identified needs into concrete, strategic action.

With tailored guidance, each team developed its own action plan, prepared budget forecasts, and designed a coherent set of activities aligned with the specific priorities of the local context.



Project Management and Leadership trainings for the managers of the centres in Tunis, Tunisia.



Zuwara

Approximately **600** young women are expected to benefit annually through various training programs and services provided by the center

AL-Jufra

The estimated number of beneficiaries in AL-Jufra exceeds

2,000 young women annually

Yefren

The center could serve up to **900** young women per year from Yefren and nearby communities, contingent on sufficient resources and operational support

From Vision to Space: Designing Centres That Reflect Women's Priorities

Following the development of tailored action plans, the next step was to translate the vision into physical space. Professional architects were engaged to design the centres based on the identified needs, functions, and aspirations of local women. The design process included 3D models and architectural plans, ensuring that the spaces would be both functional and welcoming.

These proposals were reviewed and refined through collaborative discussions with the State Ministry of Women Affairs and the Ministry of Youth. The process was guided by a dedicated steering committee and informed by the centres' teams. This inclusive approach guaranteed that the final designs respected both technical standards and community expectations.

Once the plans were validated, construction works began, bringing to life buildings that now stand as safe, inclusive, and inspiring spaces for young women. The centres reflect a unique blend of local character, functional design, and shared ownership, turning what began as a collective vision into a concrete reality.

Bani Walid

According to the current implementation plan already underway, the center is reaching an estimated

13,000 young women per year

Tarhuna

Including surrounding towns and villages, the center in Tarhuna targets approximately

12,000 young women annually

Murzuq

With adequate support, the center in Murzuq is expected to reach around

5,000 young women per year

FROM NEGLECT TO PROMISE: CONDITIONS BEFORE REHABILITATION



Al Jufra



Al Jufra



Al Jufra



Yafren



Morzog



Tarhouna

FROM PLANS TO PROGRESS: WORKS IN MOTION



SPACES TRANSFORMED: FUNCTIONAL AND SAFE CENTERS FOR WOMEN

Reception Areas: Welcoming women with dignity and respect from the moment they walk in.



Zouara



Tarhuna



Yafren



Training Kitchen :
"Cooking Up Skills for Independence"

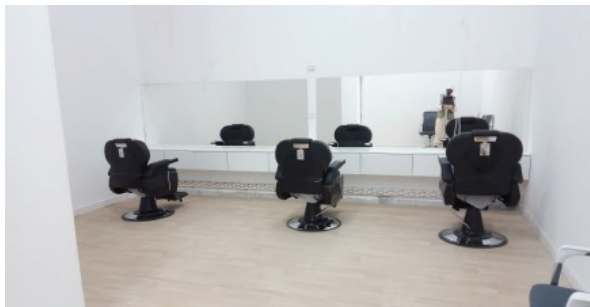


Psychological Care Room , "A Safe Space to Heal and Grow"



Photography Studio ,
"Capturing Identity and Vision"

SPACES TRANSFORMED: FUNCTIONAL AND SAFE CENTERS FOR WOMEN



*Hairdressing Room : “Confidence in Every Cut”
Training women to beauty*



*Computer Room , “Bridging the Digital Divide”
From basics to business, where women gain 21st century skills*



*Sewing & Design Room “Stitching Dreams into
Reality” Equipped for creativity*



*Gathering & Event Spaces (including Rooftop in Tarhuna and Terrace in Beni Walid) , “Building Community,
Sharing Voices”*



OPENING DOORS TO OPPORTUNITY: WOMEN'S TRAINING CENTERS LAUNCHED



Tarhouna



Tarhouna



Yefren



Yefren



Tarhouna

Program Topics & Facilities



A Model with Transformative Potential

The Care Centres for Young Women are still growing, and they need continued support to reach their full potential. But already, they have become beacons of resilience and hope in regions long marked by instability and marginalization. They offer proof that when local women lead, and when institutions listen and support, real change is possible.

From vision to structure, and now to leadership, these centres are not only empowering women, but they are also reshaping what is possible for communities across Libya.

Building Local Women's Leadership: The Journey to Establish a National Training Unit for the empowerment and development of local female leadership

Through a strategic partnership between the Mouwatinat program and the Ministry of Local Government, a specialized training unit was established to empower women leaders in local governance. Housed within the Centre for Municipal Development and Decentralization Support, the initiative offers structured, long-term support for elected women and female officials in Libyan municipalities.

The first step was to develop a comprehensive training plan to guide the creation and rollout of the unit. More than just a design document, it outlined the tools and methodologies for assessing training needs and provided a detailed workplan for establishing and operating the unit.

The training framework followed a structured, step-by-step methodology, beginning with a rigorous needs assessment based on clearly defined functional job descriptions. This process identified capacity gaps and helped set priorities for each group, from unit managers to staff in research, statistics, coordination, and advisory services.

Built on a foundation of both **foundational and advanced modules**, the plan aims to empower the unit's staff with key skills in leadership, project management, strategic planning, and research. It also includes specialized training on women's rights, inclusive governance, and effective communication with both local and international partners.

At its core, the unit's mission is to **increase women's participation in local decision-making**, improve institutional performance, and build resilient local capacities to address complex challenges facing Libyan women, from discrimination and exclusion to the need for representation and service access.

Ultimately, the training plan is expected to yield lasting results: a more effective and responsive institutional unit, stronger partnerships with local and international actors, and a new generation of skilled women leaders ready to shape Libya's local governance landscape. It is not only an investment in individuals, but in the future of inclusive governance across the country.

Building Local Women's Leadership: The Journey to Establish a National Training Unit for the Empowerment and Development of Local Female Leadership

As part of a strategic partnership between the Mouwatinat program and the Ministry of Local Government, a major milestone was achieved with the establishment of a **specialized national training unit** dedicated to empowering and developing women leaders in local governance. Based at the *Centre for Municipal Development and Decentralization Support*, the unit is designed to provide **structured, long-term capacity building** for elected women and female officials across Libyan municipalities.

The first step was to develop a comprehensive training plan—a practical roadmap for institutional sustainability. It outlined the tools and methodologies for assessing needs, alongside a detailed operational plan for establishing and managing the unit.

Built on a rigorous needs assessment informed by clear job descriptions, the framework pinpointed capacity gaps and priorities for each target group: elected women, civil servants, and unit staff in research, statistics, coordination, and advisory roles.

Combining foundational and advanced modules, the plan strengthens skills in leadership, project management, strategic planning, and research, while also addressing women's rights, gender-sensitive governance, and effective communication with local and international stakeholders.

QUOTES FROM MOUWATINAT SHE SAID

“The solidarity and mutual support of women helps **reduce and limit violence** against women ”



Ghalia Sassi
(Political Activist)

“Your success does not mean their (other women) failure. **You are half of the truth and half of the decision.** Support other women— for yourself and for your rights ”

Amal Belhaj
(Human Rights Activist and Former Candidate for Prime Minister)



“Empowering Libyan women with their rights is an **achievement of social justice** and a **fulfillment of the state’s responsibilities** toward all its citizens ”

Jamila Ben Atig
(Lawyer and Human Rights Activist)



“**Love yourself**, take care of your health—
it’s the flower of your life. **Be a role model**”

Asma Al-Juwaili
(President of the Libyan Union for Cancer Control)



“**Violence against women** in all its
forms is absolutely unacceptable. Any
type of violence against you must be
rejected—**don’t stay silent. Know your
rights on this matter**”

Dr. Aya Kaabar
(Family and Psychological Counselor)



“**Libyan women married to non-Libyans**
are our daughters—treat them
with **care and respect**”

Fathia Al-Bakhbakhy
(President of the General Libyan Women’s
Union)



“Be like beneficial rain—wherever it falls, it brings good. Let your life motto be: **‘The best of people are those who are most beneficial to others’**”

Fatima Ziyou
(Expert and Consultant in Human Development)



“Life is not about perfection; it’s about the **strength to face challenges** and the **determination to succeed**”

Dr. Leila Baddah
(University Faculty Member)



“The **environment** is not just a scientific subject—it’s about our **daily lifestyle choices**”

Amani Al-Salihin
(Student in the Environmental Sciences Department and Member of the Tarhuna Young Women’s Center)



SYNERGY IN ACTION TOGETHER IS BETTER



MoWA, WEON and MoLG visit to Rotterdam municipality specialized women care centre



MoY visit to youth program of Amsterdam municipality

Exchange with MFFEPA: Ministry of Women, Family, Children, and the Elderly (Tunisia)

Participation of **Mrs. Dalenda Gari**, General Director at the Tunisian Ministry of Women Affairs, in the training on Combating violence against women and economic empowerment to share the Tunisian experience, on October 1, 2024, in Tunis

The study visit to the Netherlands in November 2023 facilitated peer-to-peer learning between Libyan women in key positions at the MoWA, WEON and MoLG and their Dutch counterparts. It included exchanges with Dutch local and national governance, as well as CSOs. The Libyan delegation met with members of the Dutch First Chamber of Parliament, discussing topics of challenges faced by women in government, including specifically migrant and IDP women's issues in discussions led by a Dutch parliamentarian of migrant descent. Additional ministerial meetings with the Dutch Ministries of Education, Culture and Science and Foreign Affairs covered women's empowerment subsidies and environmental impacts on women, including the floods in Derna and the situation in Tarhuna. The delegation also met with Dutch CSOs like Vote for a Woman and WOMEN to discuss electoral strategies, collaboration between stakeholders, and the role of men in supporting women's empowerment. A visit to the municipality of Rotterdam's Filomena unit, a one-stop-shop for women facing violence, provided insights into integrated governance solutions to combat violence against women.

The technical program for a visit of the Ministry of Youth to the Netherlands in February 2025 was facilitated as well. The aim of this visit was to foster peer-to-peer learning in order for MoY to gain ideas on how to expand its support for young Libyan women. During this visit the Deputy Minister of the MoY met with national CSOs such as the National Youth Institute and National Youth Council on youth supporting youth programs. Innovative inclusion was addressed in a discussion with the director of the NEMO Science Museum. Visits to the municipalities of Amsterdam,

- **Coordination** with MoY, MoWA, WEON, MOLG

- **Peer to peer** visits and dialogue events

- **Partnering for Inclusion: Key Institutional Encounters:**

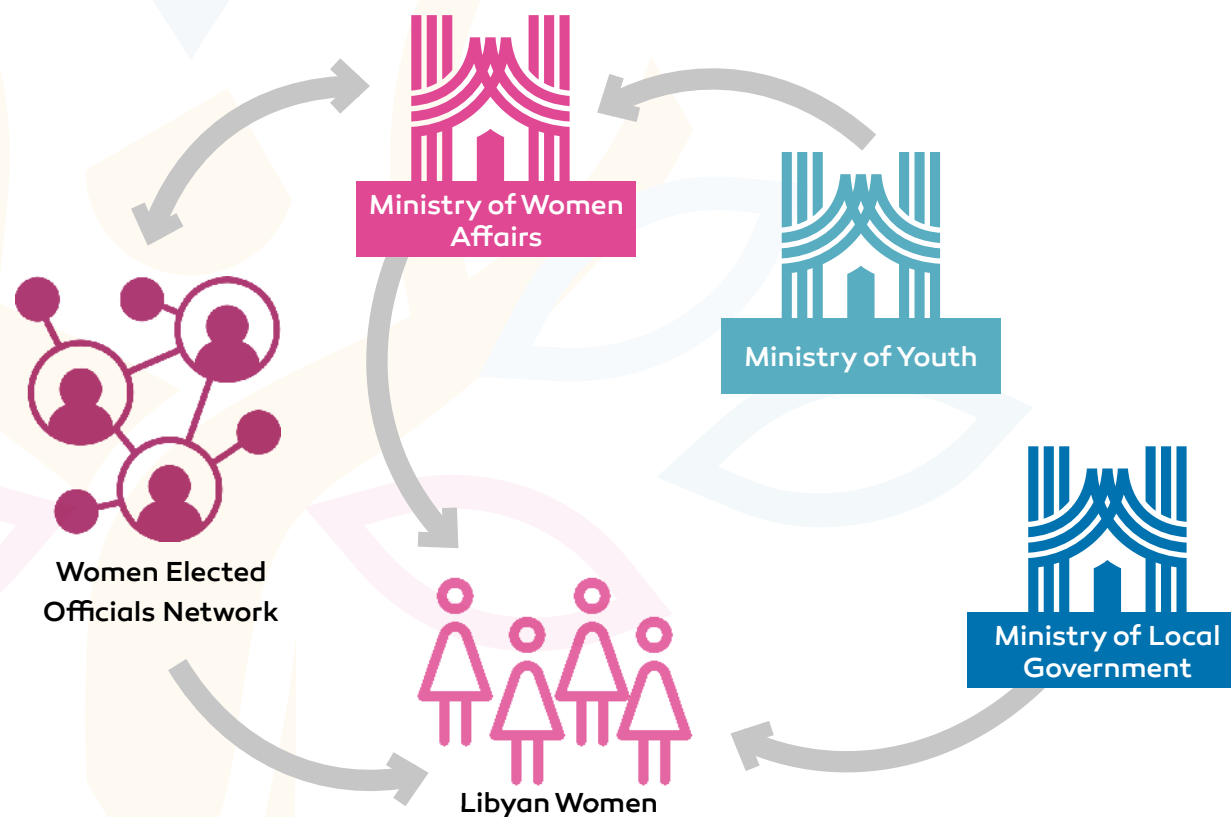
1. In the Netherlands,

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
- Ministry of Education, Culture and Science,
- Municipalities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Rheden;
- CSOs: Vote for a Woman, WOMEN, Emancipator, Alliantie Politica,
- National Youth Institute,
- National Youth Council,

2. In Tunisia:

- CREDIF (Centre de Recherches, d'Études, de Documentation et d'Information sur la Femme)
- Exchange with the Programme for an Inclusive Municipal Leadership (PLMI-CILG)
- Ministry of Family, Women, Children, and Seniors

The Hague and Rheden provided practical examples of youth policy implementation at the local level, including examples similar to the Care Centres for Young Women.



MoWA, WEON and MoLG visit to Dutch CSO Vote for a Woman

MOUWATINAT

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED



Flexibility creates room for relevance



Local **ownership** is the foundation of **sustainability**



Action must be designed by women – because **change grows from within**



No one-size-fits-all: **solutions** must be **rooted**, **localized**, and **never imposed**



Coordination **multiplies impact**



Sensitivity to context isn't optional, **it's essential**



Adaptive management keeps us **responsive** in a **changing world**

MOUWATINAT THE ROAD AHEAD

What Mouwatinat started must now grow, and you are part of it

Let the momentum continue.

Together with our partners, institutions, and communities, we move forward, stronger, bolder, and more united **for women's empowerment across Libya**



W.E.O.N
WOMEN ELECTED
OFFICIALS NETWORK
SHARING KNOWLEDGE



CONCLUSION

With the objective of promoting inclusive governance and the rule of law in Libya. Initially planned for two years, the program has been extended until March 2025.

From the beginning, the Mouwatinat project focused on supporting the **Ministry of State for Women's Affairs (MoWA)**, the **Women Elected Officials Network (WEON)**, and women in selected pilot regions, particularly in marginalized areas, through initiatives that promote women's participation in public life. Over time, the program's scope evolved to respond to emerging opportunities, shifting realities, and growing demands. These adaptations were reflected in updated action plans, revised timelines, and a broader outreach to new institutional partners, including the **Ministry of Local Government (MoLG)** and the **Ministry of Youth (MoY)**.

One major evolution involved the integration of the MoLG into the program. The MoLG has received technical support in establishing a **Women's Empowerment Unit** within its national training center, an effort aligned with its strategy to promote women's leadership and enhance institutional capacities for women, sensitive governance. Similarly, the MoY joined the initiative through collaboration on pilot projects aimed at improving inclusion and services for young women.

At both **national and local levels**, the Mouwatinat contributed to strengthening **linkages between institutions**, civil society, and elected representatives. It emphasized the creation of synergies, coherence, and complementarity among actions, thereby increasing the program's overall impact, minimizing duplication, and reducing friction between overlapping efforts.

In this dynamic context, the **Mouwatinat** program's strategy incorporated a capitalization approach to document its processes and build a legacy of shared knowledge. The intent was to **systematize the key actions**, highlight **achievements and lessons learned**, and extract **good practices** to inspire future programming. This effort was especially crucial for ensuring that methodologies, tools, and institutional capacities developed throughout the program would remain accessible and reusable beyond its lifespan.



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