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# Supporting Sustainable Strategies that Spur SMEs growth in Somalia and Somaliland

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Qamar, born and raised in Yaqshid district of Mogadishu is head of customer service at Waab Coffee shop. Some months ago, Qamar having graduated from the Somali international university with bachelor's degree in business administration had no job. She tried to secure a job with institutions in city, but she was not lucky to secure a job placement.

Her friend's family had a coffee shop, Qamar decided to voluntarily support her friend who was also a former classmate at their coffee shop. Her friend, Muhyiddin was managing the shop and liked Qamar's dedication towards serving customers.

Muhyiddin believes that a lot has changed after Qamar trained with Shaqodoon on business support and coaching courtesy of the LEAD program supported by the Netherland's foreign ministry and Spark organization.

The LEADS program aims to improve and enhance economic prospects and opportunities for youth through supporting SMEs to grow, entrepreneurship, and employability measures

Small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) play a significant role in fueling economic growth and job creation in Somalia and Somaliland, but the enterprises require owners and managers/departmental heads with the skills and competencies to meet both current and future challenges. Successful entrepreneurial development initiatives aimed at SMEs, specifically those from previously disadvantaged communities, can contribute to the alleviation of poverty through job creation in these communities.

Shaqodoon targeted hundred Small Medium Size businesses in Somaliland, Puntland and Mogadishu providing internship, apprenticeship, entrepreneurial coaching, acceleration, and incubation.



*A major, major thank you to Waab Coffee shop, and all the many delivery people despite the economic backdrop are still smiling and offering such great customer service, I haven't stepped inside a single coffee shop for a while now. Thank you for keeping us safe".*

*Customer Feedback*

Shaqodoon provided Qamar and other young SMEs, trainings, and information on areas of critical importance to business growth. "I have participated in the training by Shaqodoon, I learnt valuable skills on financial management, customer care and digital marketing. We're now reaching out to more customers through our social media platforms and delivering orders" she continues, "we have now partnered with delivery company to supply our products to customers right at their doorsteps easing difficulties we had with lockdowns, due to security and the COVID-19 situation".

Qamar is the one fully managing the business social media accounts. She read to her friends one of her customers feedbacks from Waab's Facebook which says," A major, major thank you to Waab Coffee shop, and all the many delivery people despite the economic backdrop are still smiling and offering such great customer service, I haven't stepped inside a single coffee shop for a while now. Thank you for keeping us safe".

Despite Qamar's improved skills and service, she is also contributing to the business customer base attracting more customers with her courteous approach and service helping sustainably grow the business at the same time creating more jobs to the delivery company as demands at her shop increases by the day.

Shaqodoon, in collaboration with Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Tourism and Spark also created Xogsiiye Platform that provides youth access to on- demand, up-to-date, accurate business information. Youth call to inquire about how to register their businesses, apply for business development services, get a direct connection to the Ministry of Trade, Industrial and tourism and as well as learn about what types of financing and funds available at a variety of different banks and private sectors. Thus far 2,114 business and youth have received information on business registration, access to finance and tourism information. The platform has also received 74 applicant seeking business development services.