

Entrepreneurship support for persons with psychosocial disabilities

ISRAEL / ENOSH – MAOF ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME

Enosh, the Israeli Mental Health Association, launched the MAOF entrepreneurship programme in 2008. MAOF (the Hebrew word for vision, courage, and imagination) supports the self-employment of persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities. Specific measures include tailored business coaching, legal and financial counselling, peer support, and mental health recovery support. Funded by the Israeli Ministry of Health, the MAOF programme has grown between 2015 and 2022 from 45 to 433 entrepreneurs.

Problem targeted

People with psychosocial disabilities often face difficulties in starting and running their own business due to a lack of personalized support.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The MAOF programme offers free individual long-term support to entrepreneurs who have already started a business. Candidates undergo an admissions interview and must submit a business and personal recovery plan. During the programme they are expected to continue to run their business, participate in trainings, and attend mentoring sessions. Their participation is reviewed on an annual basis according to their progress and needs. Participants are supported by a team of case managers, rehabilitation coordinators, and business coaches. They also have access to legal and financial counselling, digital networking opportunities, and peer support. Graduates of MAOF report increased revenue and incomes, improved coping skills for mental health, and stronger social connections. Some graduates have also hired other



MAOF generated 433 businesses run by people with intellectual disabilities.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

MAOF was launched with financial support from the National Insurance Institute of Israel and has since been funded entirely by the Ministry of Health. In 2021, Enosh received \$2.2 million to run MAOF. Enosh aims to increase the number of MAOF participants annually by 20 per cent. The organization also plans to expand the MAOF business mentor network, and open an Entrepreneurship Hub. The MAOF model has been replicated and adapted by other service providers across Israel. It could also be adapted to support people with other types of disabilities.

“With MAOF, I remembered what my abilities and knowledge are. I could believe in myself again.”

Joyce Suliman, Graphic Designer, owner of Peak Design

people with psychosocial disabilities as employees. MAOF started as a local programme in central Israel in 2008 but expanded nationally during the COVID-19 pandemic, when it started being delivered partially online. The Ministry of Health is using MAOF as a best practice for mental health rehabilitation services.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2008

- MAOF has supported 433 entrepreneurs across Israel.
- 80 per cent of graduates report an increase in revenue; 15 per cent have doubled their income; 95 per cent report increased self-confidence.
- *A project of Civil Society.*



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