



# ORANGE CORNERS

AN INITIATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS



# ANNUAL REPORT

# 20 24





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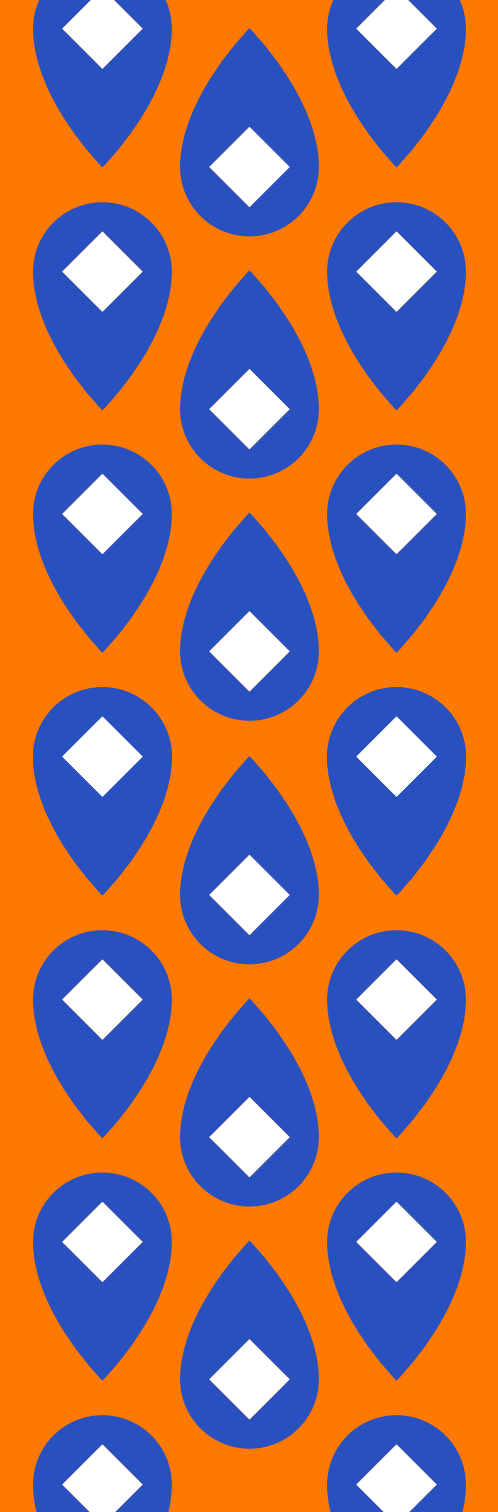
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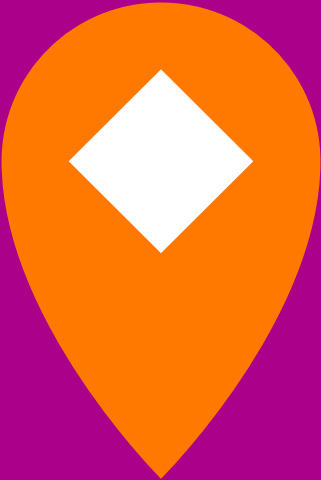
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# INTRODUCTION

# 1 Looking back at 2024

2024 was a year of many highs for Orange Corners. It marked the first year of a 5-year extension of our Orange Corners trainings and a 7-year extension of our Orange Corners Innovation Fund (OCIF). This long-term commitment provides us with a real opportunity to make a difference in the ecosystems we work in. Despite the challenges of a starting year, we successfully build out our incubation, acceleration and access to finance activities.

We reached over 14,000 aspiring young entrepreneurs through pre-incubation activities and short courses and nearly 800 entrepreneurs graduated from our training programmes around the globe. These entrepreneurs marked our programme with an average of 8.7 out of 10 (up from 8.3 in 2023). In total, the Orange Corners alumni community now counts over 3,700 graduates, who in turn already supported more than 12,000 jobs for people around the globe.

We also grew beyond our known borders. We started projects in new countries and expanded running projects to new cities and regions. Our reach now also covers Burundi, Mali and South Sudan, and in Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa we also started operations in the Delta, Ogun State and Cape Town respectively. After a successful multi-year pilot, we also scaled OCIF to all programme countries (plus Tunisia). This way, we can provide entrepreneurs with the early-stage financing they need to really kickstart their business.

A very special week came in the summer of 2024 with the very first 'Orange Corners Connect Days'. Our aim? To connect our implementing partners and embassy staff with each other and the local entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Netherlands. Highlight of the week was a networking

event with over 150 participants. We also used the opportunity to draw up new plans and concrete actions for the years to come.

To keep improving, we also kicked off an evaluation of our programmes on entrepreneurs up to 3 years after graduation. And we built out our research agenda with 6 new studies together with 10 different knowledge partners in various African countries and the Netherlands. The result of this is likely to have implications for entrepreneurial support initiatives beyond Orange Corners, and we look forward to sharing our insights.

In 2024 we also upped our efforts to strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems. We set up new, impactful projects to support entrepreneurial education in Algeria, business policy development in Burundi and easier access to finance in DRC. Ongoing conflicts and civil unrest in Bangladesh, Mozambique, the Palestinian Territories and Sudan challenged us to also keep investing in weakened business climates and resilient entrepreneurs in more fragile settings. Let me emphasise Orange Corners remains committed to these countries and innovators during these challenging times.

It's essential to note once more that we don't do this alone. Orange Corners is a true collaboration between entrepreneurial support organisations, Dutch diplomatic missions, private partners and so many others. We thank all of our partners for their continued support, and look forward to continue raising the bar together during the years to come.

Let this report be a testament to our collective power to create a better world through entrepreneurship.

To infinity, and beyond!

**Erik Parigger**  
*Programme Coordinator  
Orange Corners*



## 2 The year 2024 in numbers

10.9K+

total applications

11

new hubs launched

17%

agripreneurs

31

new implementing partners

8.7

average programme rating

100%

OCIF at all OC locations

### Entrepreneur impact



2000

full-time employees hired

64% jobs held by youth



789

new alumni

of which...



339

female entrepreneurs

### Top valued elements

- > In-person sessions
- > Industry-specific mentoring
- > Peer networking
- > Investment ready guidance
- > Practical, hands-on content



# TRAINING



### 3 Meet the OC alumni: H2Oasis



Hailing from the water-scarce south of **Morocco**, **Zakarya** learnt from a young age just how precious H2O can be. With a PhD in environmental engineering and over a decade of experience in the sector under his belt, he decided it was time to make a more serious splash in the wonderful world of water. His mission? To provide easy and cheap water reduction solutions that don't sacrifice the comforts we've grown so accustomed to.

*"A deep appreciation for water and its vital role in our daily lives fuelled my passion for finding solutions to water-related challenges. While important work is done on wastewater treatment and reuse, water conservation is often overlooked. This motivated me to start **H2Oasis**, to develop practical and scalable technologies that help people reduce their water consumption.*

*At H2Oasis, we've created affordable and easy-to-install devices that can reduce water usage up to 60%, without the need to replace taps, toilets or showerheads - immediate impact with minimal disruption. Water reduction devices aren't new, but our two-step water pressure regulation system is a unique innovation. Our devices are currently undergoing the patent process, but there's nothing else on the market that can achieve the same 60% water reduction.*

*Over the next few years, my goal is to expand internationally, and to do so, building strong partnerships is essential. I'm actively seeking partnerships across three key areas: manufacturing, to collaborate with companies capable of scaling production efficiently; research and development, to work alongside universities and research centres specialising in innovative water technologies; and sales/commercialisation, to partner with experts who can drive business development, complementing my technical expertise with commercial strategy. Collaboration with Dutch companies is definitely an attractive option, as the Netherlands is a global leader in water technology!"*

**Zakarya Baicha** | H2Oasis



### 4 From Bangladesh to Senegal: our hubs in 2024

Training young entrepreneurs to take their companies to the next level is our core business. What were our hubs up to in 2024?



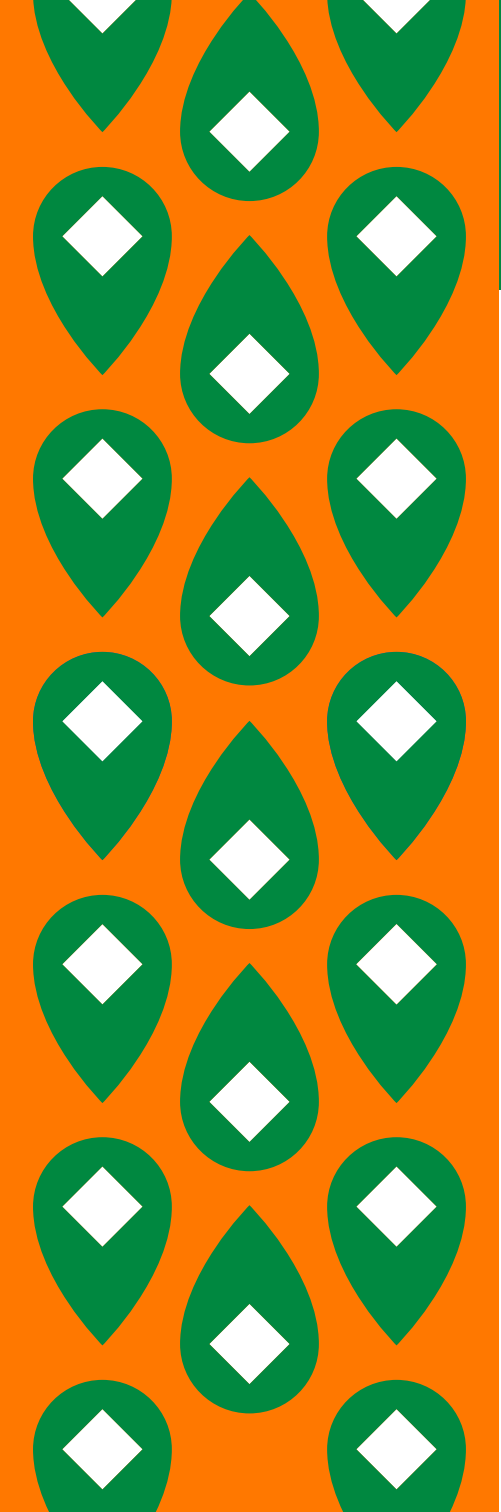
Opening Ogun hub, Nigeria

#### New hubs...

In 2024, we expanded to 11 new locations. We extended our reach to 3 new countries – **Burundi**, **Mali** and **South Sudan** – and launched **Orange Corners Designs**, a fresh programme in South Africa around design thinking running in both Cape Town and Johannesburg. But that's not all. We also inaugurated 5 new satellite hubs across **Egypt's** Delta Region and added another in Ogun State, **Nigeria**. Busy days!

#### ...and new partners

This year, we also welcomed over 30 new implementing partners to our network – driven largely by the expansion of OCIF to all Orange Corners training locations, plus Tunisia.



We're thrilled to have you on board – welcome to the Orange Corners network!



*Launch OCIF phase II, Baghdad - Iraq*

### Focus: agripreneurship

Did you know about 20% of all businesses going through Orange Corners training are active in agriculture? In some countries, this green trend has even blossomed into specialised agripreneurship programmes. Take **Côte d'Ivoire**, for example – where over 70 agripreneurs participated in a tailored agriculture track. Their harvest this year? An average sales growth of 86% and over 75 new jobs created!



### Orange Corners Algeria's desert retreat

In November 2024, our two last **Orange Corners Algeria** cohorts swapped boardrooms for sand dunes. In Ghardaïa, they dove into masterclasses on storytelling, business diagnostics and fundraising. In the desert, friendships blossomed and ideas collided in the best way possible – proving that when Orange Corners entrepreneurs gather, magic (and sustainable impact) happens.



### Orange Corners Burundi goes Senegal

Cross-country collaboration is a key ingredient to running a strong Orange Corners programme. Before **Orange Corners Burundi** was officially launched, the **3hi Africa** team touched down in **Senegal** for a deep dive with **Ignite.E**, one of our more seasoned Orange Corners partners. From exploring ecosystems to swapping ideas, Dakar became the perfect backdrop for laying the groundwork for success in Burundi later that year.





### Social entrepreneur of the year: Mohamed Amine Zariat

A big congratulations to **Mohamed Amine Zariat** (Director **Tibu Africa/ Sports Orange Corners** in **Morocco**) for receiving the Prix de l'entrepreneur social de l'année 2024 at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland!

Each year, the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship honours outstanding social entrepreneurs, and this year, they celebrated Mohamed Amine's exceptional work promoting social inclusion through sports across Morocco and Africa. A well-deserved recognition.



### Best innovation and mentoring programme: OC Côte d'Ivoire

Not only our inspiring leaders like Mohamed Amine are bagging awards, our programmes are too. During the very first edition of the Ivoire Innovation Awards, **Orange Corners Côte d'Ivoire** received the award for the best innovation and mentoring programme in the country. Many congratulations, **ESPartners** team!

### Empowering entrepreneurs

Empowering young entrepreneurs is our core business. Some hubs really knocked it out of the park this year. Take **Orange Corners Senegal**'s fifth cohort, for example, where participants saw an average revenue growth of 500%. One business, Kartoon Africa, even hit an incredible 4,100%! Or **Orange Corners Burundi**, where participants ended the first cohort with an impressive 35% increase in jobs created, while nearly all increased their monthly income. In the words of OC Burundi: "This reflects the programme's role in fostering business growth and supporting economic development!"

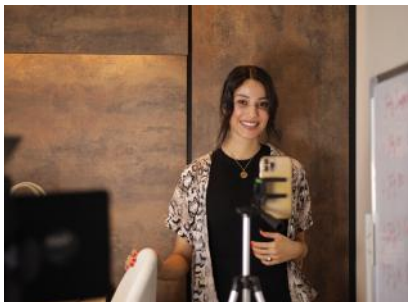


*Graduation ceremony Orange Corners Senegal cohort 5*

### A community of like-minded people

Being an entrepreneur can sometimes feel like a bit of a lonely path. Through Orange Corners, entrepreneurs meet kindred spirits all chasing the same dream. While we take our business very serious, we definitely know how to have a little fun along the way too. In the **Palestinian Territories** for example, our incubatees got hands-on with filming and pitching their startups on camera, wrapping up the session with their very own created videos.





## Connecting entrepreneurs

Going through 6 months of acceleration together doesn't just spark ideas and lasting friendships, it often results in business collaborations as well. For example, in **Ghana** 2 alumni from cohort 9 teamed up to tackle waste in style. **FITA Autotech** collects used tyres from its auto service stations and sends them to **Gold Coast Tokota**, where they're transformed into eco-friendly footwear and accessories. All thanks to the power of connection.



## Sharing knowledge & experience

Orange Corners brings together incubators and accelerators with years of experience building thriving entrepreneurial ecosystems. This year, some took it a step further, creating tools to elevate incubation and acceleration programmes across the continent. In **Nigeria**, our partner **FATE Foundation** collaborated with our implementing partners from **Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, DRC, Angola, Mozambique, Ghana** and **Senegal** to create an 'incubation toolkit'. The latter partner, **Ignite.E**, also developed an incubation playbook and finance guide to help entrepreneurs scale. Meanwhile, the **Flow Accelerator** team (**Orange Corners Palestinian Territories**) developed educational resources for startups via their YouTube playlists.



## In memoriam

This year we mourned the loss of two of our own. In November, an accident claimed our student ambassador at the Islamic University of Technology in **Bangladesh**, **Md. Mubtasim Rahman**. A month later, **Dominic Ladu Lowly** passed away unexpectedly. As a **BizEx** employee, he was a vital part of the **Orange Corners South Sudan** team. Our thoughts are with their families, friends, colleagues and everyone who held them dear.

## 5 Women in entrepreneurship

Successful women entrepreneurs break down barriers and inspire future generations to pursue their own dreams. By celebrating women in entrepreneurship, we promote diversity, drive economic growth and create a more inclusive business landscape.

### Exciting events...

You can't be what you can't see - and that's why we keep connecting aspiring young female entrepreneurs with inspiring female leaders who've already paved the way. For example, in September **Orange Corners Palestinian Territories** hosted a vibrant **PowHer** event, spotlighting the role of women entrepreneurs in Palestinian society. **Manal Zraiqa** (Al Mustaqbal School) shared her journey of transforming education, while **Shireen Shelleh** (CEP) opened up about the challenges she had to overcome to become a leader in her field.



### ...and inspiring boss ladies

The Orange Corners network is buzzing with ladies ready to follow in Manal and Shireen's footsteps – and one day maybe even outshine them. Take **Celestina Egyir**, for example, the co-founder of real estate platform **Renmo Homes**. As part of **Orange Corners Ghana's** cohort 9, Celestina didn't just stand out; she shined! Celestina was the only entrepreneur of her cohort to secure the full €50,000 OCIF investment, demonstrating absolute business brilliance.



### Focus South Sudan

Empowering female entrepreneurs starts with understanding the unique challenges and opportunities they face. That's why this year, our team in **South Sudan** commissioned a groundbreaking gender analysis, taking a closer look at what South Sudan's women entrepreneurs truly need to thrive. It's all part of our commitment to continuously learn, adapt and refine our programmes to their needs. The goal? To uplift female role models who won't just grow their businesses, but will also help transform the entrepreneurial landscape for women in South Sudan. And we're already seeing concrete results: between South Sudan's cohorts 1 and 2, the female participation rate increased from just **25** to **46%**!





## 6 Country focus: Sudan



[Read more](#)

**Sudan** holds immense potential. Recently however, the country has mostly made international headlines because of the ongoing conflict that has disrupted the lives of nearly everyone in the country. Despite these difficulties, Orange Corners remains committed to Sudan.

**Ramiro Gomes Monteiro**, Programme Advisor for Sudan:

*We've been implementing **Orange Corners Sudan** since 2018, together with our Sudanese partner **249Startups** and the Sudanese private sector. Some of the largest private sector companies in the country support us financially and in-kind.*

*Since the war broke out last year, we've doubled our efforts to combine Orange Corners with other initiatives. For example, 249Startups worked with another RVO team to set up **Resilience Rises** to support women entrepreneurs to develop their skills. And an Orange Corners Sudan alum, Enigma AI, got an assignment to create a tool for basic business support services.*



*At Orange Corners, we've developed a holistic approach supporting both the human and business aspects of organisations. This not only includes things like mental health coping mechanisms, but also projects around doing business in conflict zones. In this way, we aim to help businesses cope and survive, so they keep providing essential services and products.*

*I think there's no more resilient and brilliant people than the Sudanese. We have plenty of examples of Orange Corners entrepreneurs who lost everything, relocated several times, and were still able to set up a new business elsewhere that's servicing thousands of people with urgent needs in the fields of healthcare, food and energy. I've had the privilege to travel to many countries and meet hundreds of entrepreneurs. But every time I go to Sudan, I realise that if you can make it in Sudan, you can make it anywhere.*

*Empowering young people with the skills of turning their ideas and hopes into practice is so important. The same skills needed to run businesses are also important to run effective institutions in peaceful, prosperous and inclusive societies. You shouldn't underestimate how much difference a programme like Orange Corners can make in someone's life. It helps young people believe in the Sudan they deserve.*



# 7 Meet the OC Alumni: Deaftouch



With **Deaftouch**, **Claybourne** spearheads initiatives like the first deaf-to-deaf outsourced call centre in South Africa and an app for sign language interpreters. His vision is clear: to empower marginalised communities with the resources, skills and opportunities to live their lives independently. At our pitching competition in **South Africa**, Claybourne won a visit to the NL to connect with organisations working on similar challenges here.

*“Deaftouch exists to create economic inclusion for people with disabilities and other marginalised groups. The disabled community is governed by a ‘nothing about us without us’ ethos, and we want to be more than just another organisation out there to use them. We work with advocacy groups and the communities we serve.*

*We’re currently working on two projects: South Africa’s first deaf-to-deaf outsourced call centre and an app for on-demand sign language interpreters. Both our products are very scalable. Deaftouch can train agents in different sign language dialects, or alternatively, employ agents that speak different sign language dialects. And our Lindy app is based on an Uber-like model, where you simply just replace the Uber driver with a sign language interpreter. This is also very scalable internationally.*



*Visiting the Netherlands was one of the most mind shifting experiences in my life. I’m really impressed with how intentional the Dutch government is about accessibility. When I was there, I saw a gentleman who’s blind navigating a very busy The Hague Central station with his walking stick, following accessibility infrastructure built for him. He’s able to go wherever he wants to go almost independently. That’s access. He isn’t restricted because of his disability.”*

Claybourne Appies | Deaftouch



# ECOSYSTEM SUPPORT



## 8 OCIF

Through the **Orange Corners Innovation Fund (OCIF)**, we support young entrepreneurs by addressing their financing needs, helping them scale their businesses, create jobs and tackle local social challenges.

In 2024, we expanded OCIF to all Orange Corners locations, plus Tunisia. Our OCIF team worked hard all year, onboarding all our new partners and ensuring a smooth integration between existing incubation and acceleration programmes and OCIF everywhere. And in the midst of all this, they also found time to explore an exciting new programme with the Dutch Entrepreneurial Development Bank (FMO) – details to follow very soon!

### Unleashing capital in Lagos, Nigeria

In February 2024, we teamed up with **FMO**, the **Netherlands Consulate-General in Lagos** and **FATE Foundation** to host the Capital Unleashed roundtable in Lagos. This dynamic event with NL Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Geoffrey van Leeuwen focused on developing innovative financial products to bridge the critical early-stage financing gap of €50,000 to €250,000. Building on the success of OCIF, the roundtable highlighted our shared commitment to bridge the funding gap and support the financial needs of young Nigerian entrepreneurs.



*Capital Unleashed with Minister Van Leeuwen, Nigeria*

### OCIF Spotlight Nigeria

#### Chidimma Uzoma – Zayith Food

With **Zayith Food**, lawyer-turned-dairy-producer **Chidimma Uzoma** provides healthy yoghurt for Nigeria's health-conscious consumers. Part of **Orange Corners Nigeria's** cohort 7, since her OCIF days Chidimma has increased her revenue by over 1,500%, reaching nearly €130,000. To date, she has received over \$100,000 in convertible debt financing...impressive!



#### Jide Ayegbusi – Edusko

**Jide Ayegbusi's Edusko** is transforming Africa's education landscape by making quality education accessible to all. Edusko is a web-based platform that matches children with private schools and provides access to affordable education finance.

Since winning OCIF, Jide managed to grow his revenue by over 500%. Even more impressive, he has also attracted both follow-up grants and equity investments to further scale his business – a clear indication that others also recognise Edusko's potential.



## 9 Research

At Orange Corners, we're all about sparking innovation. To empower young entrepreneurs in low- and middle-income countries, we're not just tweaking our own programmes with smart data and insights, we also dive deep into research on exciting topics like training, finance and entrepreneurial ecosystems to make more impact.

### Milou becomes Dr. Ir. Milou

Just before Christmas, our research lead **Milou Derks** defended her PhD on value creation dynamics in low-income countries. Using a business ecosystem perspective, she analysed what makes these ecosystems tick, seeking practical and actionable insights on how we can better drive sustainable development and the SDGs. Many congratulations, Dr. Ir. Milou!



### CSSI 2024

Earlier this year, Milou wowed the crowds at **CSSI 2024** in South Africa by presenting not one, but two exciting papers on Orange Corners research projects. The first paper, a collaboration with **Utrecht University**, delved into the differences in entrepreneurial ecosystems across Africa and what that means for entrepreneurship training. The second paper, with the **International Institute for Social Studies** in The Hague, explored agripreneurship and how entrepreneurial ecosystems can better support smallholder farmers.



### Scaling success

We didn't just carry out our own research, but also invited others to contribute fresh perspectives. Students from **Utrecht University** examined how inclusive business entrepreneurs in **Angola, South Africa** and **Mozambique** balance financial sustainability and social/environmental impact as they scale. Using a mix of surveys and in-depth interviews, they explored the personal stories, challenges and triumphs of Orange Corners entrepreneurs. The result? Many valuable insights and actionable recommendations to improve entrepreneurship training, plus more attention for mission drifting as an active research topic.



Discover insights from this research project



## 10 Strengthening entrepreneurial ecosystems

We didn't just train young entrepreneurs; we also developed projects that help their ecosystems thrive and grow right alongside them.

### Startup Genome: data-driven change

How can we use data to spark real, meaningful change in the entrepreneurial world? That was the big question behind a series of hands-on workshops led by **Startup Genome's Ethan Webster**. Together with our implementing partners and the embassies, he dug into the secrets behind thriving startup ecosystems and what they themselves can do to set the wheels of change in motion.



### Lex Mundi legal insights

This year, our partnership with the **Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation** also truly came to life. In **Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt** and **Bangladesh** this collaboration led to several inspiring masterclasses on diverse topics. In Bangladesh for example, we hosted a vibrant 'legal essentials' masterclass. Entrepreneurs came together to level up their legal know-how, diving into key insights about business entities, registration and compliance. **Shalaky** provided a masterclass about formally establishing a company in Egypt to help Egyptian startups navigate the complicated legal landscape around business registration, corporate structures and regulatory requirements.



### Fuelling Burundi's entrepreneurial future

In October, 100+ bright minds gathered in Bujumbura for the Burundi Policy Hackathon, an event meant to shape the future of entrepreneurship in **Burundi**. Hosted by Orange Corners, **i4policy** and the **NL Embassy in Burundi**, the hackathon brought together ecosystem champions to tackle policy challenges startups and SMEs face, with the goal of boosting the entire entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Participants rolled up their sleeves for ecosystem mapping, problem-solving and crafting policy solutions, all guided by i4policy's expert facilitators. As the event wrapped up, the excitement was all about turning these co-created ideas into action, helping entrepreneurs in Burundi reach new heights of success.



## Two years of knowledge-to-knowledge: sparking innovation in Algerian universities

After two exciting years, we've officially wrapped up our Knowledge-to-Knowledge project in **Algeria**, in collaboration with **Maastricht School of Management (MSM)**. Over this time, we hosted 10 dynamic training and coaching sessions, covering everything from incubator management to entrepreneurial strategy. Our biggest wins? Embedding entrepreneurial skills into university programmes in Oran and Mohammadia, plus providing support in setting up an incubation programme. What a journey!



## Beyond entrepreneurship: boosting youth employment

While we're mostly about entrepreneurship, we also love mixing things up with impactful youth employment projects. Take **Sudan**, for example, where we've supported young people in conflict areas unlock essential skills in digital literacy and life, helping them build sustainable livelihoods. And in the **Kurdistan Region of Iraq**, we've been busy connecting education to employment, arming bright young talents with everything from hard and soft skills to hands-on training, so they can totally crush the job market. And in **Côte d'Ivoire**, partnering with an Ivorian university we've opened doors to jobs in the horticulture industry for youth in the Poro Region, with professional training and a healthy dose of horticulture know-how!



*Côte d'Ivoire*



*Sudan*



*Kurdistan Region of Iraq*



# 11 Igniting innovation: supporting early-stage entrepreneurs

While our training programme is tailored to support small groups of young entrepreneurs, we're also investing in pre-incubation activities for larger groups of aspiring young entrepreneurs. For this reason, in 2024 too we continued to organise hackathons and other student events, stimulating young people to think bold and dream big.

## Côte d'Ivoire

Together with **Incub'Ivoir**, we brought fresh energy to the entrepreneurial dreams of nearly 200 young agripreneurs across Vavoua, San Pedro and Korhogo, sparking innovation through a dynamic 5-day design sprint. With a hands-on focus on horticulture, cocoa and the circular economy, participants gained not only practical skills and more knowledge, but also a new mindset: bold, entrepreneurial and ready to tackle any challenge. The result? They pitched no less than 33 creative solutions to local challenges to our jury!



## Bangladesh

In **Bangladesh**, we first focused on training the trainers: empowering textile educators with the knowledge and tools to drive circular economy practices and design thinking. Together with the **University of Groningen** and our local partners **Bangladesh Apparel Exchange** and **BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology**, we gave educators hands-on experience to put theory into practice. And guess what? These newly trained educators have already hosted their first hackathons, taking innovation in Bangladesh to exciting new heights.



## Mozambique

**Orange Corners Mozambique** regularly gathered entrepreneurially-minded youngsters for Moments of Inspiration: exciting events with inspiring leaders from the business world, designed to open their eyes to the endless possibilities out there. **Alima Sauji** and **Cely Grace** hosted a meet-up focused on female entrepreneurship, sparking fresh ideas among the next generation of women leaders.



## 12 Angola Food Movement

**Angola's** immense agricultural potential contrasts sharply with the food insecurity faced by many of its citizens. Despite abundant arable land and rich biodiversity, challenges such as dependency on food imports, climate vulnerability and a declining interest in local food culture hinder progress. With youth comprising a significant portion of Angola's population, the opportunity to transform the food system is immense. The **Angola Food Movement** empowers young people to take this food revolution into their own hands.



[Read more](#)

Centred around a food academy and an international network, the AFM equips young Angolan talents to lead Angola's push towards food security and sovereignty. Training a cohort of 20-25 multidisciplinary young leaders annually, the academy equips Angola's young leaders with the tools, knowledge and network to innovate in areas such as agriculture, sustainability, product development and gastronomy. By celebrating Angola's indigenous ingredients and culinary traditions while integrating modern practices, participants act as catalysts for change, fostering a resilient and self-sustaining food system.

Infused with insights from the **Ghana Food Movement**, the **Food Cabinet** and Orange Corners (NL), this is a perfect example of the Dutch approach to private sector development. By combining creativity and multi-stakeholder collaboration, we empower youth in emerging economies to reimagine entire sectors and champion systemic change. Much like the Netherlands' own history of agricultural innovation, the AFM thrives on bringing together diverse stakeholders – from farmers to urban entrepreneurs – to co-create solutions and shape a movement that will continue to thrive long after the end of the programme.



## 13 How digital innovation is driving entrepreneurship in the DRC

A digital revolution has swept through the application process for the **Fonds de Garantie de l'Entrepreneuriat au Congo (FOGEC)**. With the support of Dutch fintech **MoneyPhone** and Orange Corners, entrepreneurs across the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** can now bypass the paperwork jungle and lengthy waits to access much-needed startup capital.

Gone are the days of travelling to city offices or dealing with snail-paced bureaucracy. The old paper-based system, riddled with errors and delays, has been replaced with an error-free digital system. The guarantee fund, vital for young Congolese entrepreneurs who lack collateral like land or financial backing, is now just a few clicks away for everyone.



What's more: applications now go through in a fraction of the time – just 5.5 weeks instead of 3 months. Plus, the bar for entry has been lowered, with minimum guarantees dropping from \$50,000 to \$5,000, and interest rates halved from 8% to 4%.

Application time

*Before*  
3 months

↓

*Now*  
**5.5 weeks**

Min. guarantees

*Before*  
\$50,000

↓

*Now*  
**\$5,000**

Interest rates

*Before*  
8%

↓

*Now*  
**4%**

This isn't just about convenience; it's also about levelling the playing field for entrepreneurs from remote corners of the DRC. Through this project, we improve their access to the funding they need to scale up. How important this is? In the words of one of the pilot participants: "a golden opportunity for serious entrepreneurs".

The secret sauce? Smart digital principles guiding every step of the way, keeping it user-focused, scalable, secure and inclusive. Proof that with a little digital magic, even a simple solution can transform lives far and wide.



[Discover more about this project](#)



# 14 Building Dutch and global support coalitions

## Developing Dutch..

To maximise our impact, we regularly collaborate with other Dutch programmes. From alumni masterclasses with the **Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries** (CBI) to access to finance projects with **FMO** and connecting Dutch businesses and Orange Corners alumni through **SBIR** – it's all about building bridges between the Netherlands and the countries we work with. And let's not forget our NL Ambassador for Youth, Education and Work **Jurriaan Middelhoff**, who's been visiting Orange Corners locations across the network to connect our work to the broader NL Youth at Heart agenda. With his presence, he brought even more energy and connections to the table in Iraq, Mozambique, Angola and Morocco.



*Jurriaan Middelhoff visits Sports Orange Corners, Casablanca, Morocco*



## ...and international partnerships

Collaboration knows no borders at Orange Corners. Last year, we also teamed up with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to launch an exciting new agripreneurship programme inspired by their Agripreneurship 101 curriculum. Our goal? To empower young people in Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa to build agribusinesses that benefit both people and planet. By combining the FAO's food system expertise with our entrepreneurial know-how, together we're planting the seeds for a more sustainable future.



## OCIF x SBIR

Through RVO's **Small Business Innovation Research** (SBIR) project, OCIF winners from **Morocco**, **Côte d'Ivoire** and **Ghana** collaborated with Dutch partners to enhance their sustainable innovations in circular economy, digitalisation, energy and transport. What makes SBIR stand out? It truly flipped the script. Our alumni were in the lead, with their innovative concepts forming the foundation of the partnerships.

Phase I concluded with a feasibility study and a plan for phase II, where in 2025 the true prototyping will take place. **Yassine Bentaleb** and **Chaimae Sqalli Adoui** (food waste management app **Foodeals**) partnered with **Jop Blom's Behold International**. They look back at phase I:

*There were 3 potential Dutch partners interested in working with us. We chose to partner with Behold International, as they have a very niche focus on sustainability and impact businesses. Jop is a very successful entrepreneur with a large network, his partner Ahmed Larouz has a lot of knowledge about the Moroccan market and also a big network here.*

*For phase I, we worked with Behold on 3-4 big topics, such as the B Corp certification. They came to Morocco, helped us fill in the assessment, assemble all the necessary documentation. We also worked on our pitch and business model and technical improvements of the MVP. In phase II we'll have the chance to add others to the team, bring in new knowledge and networks...but we'll also continue to work with Jop. We really have a long-term vision together!*



Yassine Bentaleb | Foodeals



[Read more about this project](#)

# 15 Meet the OC Alumni: Grecom



[Read more](#)

Being a female beekeeper in the DRC isn't exactly a walk in the park. Some people even believe bees will fly away if a woman comes too close. With **Grecom**, **Orange Corners DRC** alumna **Déborah Nzarubara** shows beekeeping isn't just for men.

The same spark of determination that led her to become a beekeeper also led her to think beyond producing honey. She started training future beekeepers, especially women, to help them step into the honey game. Fast-forward and Grecom is thriving with beehives in 8 locations and 1,500+ newly trained beekeepers who owe their skills to Déborah.

Bees are more than just honey makers though; they play a crucial role in our planet's ecosystem. With bees under threat, Déborah felt it was time for Nyuki Tech – a digital platform designed to shake up the beekeeping world. Nyuki helps beekeepers stay ahead of the curve by tracking and monitoring bee colonies. It allows them to spot stress or disease early, helping beekeepers to protect both their colonies as well as their livelihood.

But Nyuki Tech isn't just about helping individual beekeepers. It's also about transforming the industry as a whole.

Nyuki Tech enabled DRC's Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock to map key players in the beekeeping value chain in North Kivu. By providing beekeepers with APICARDS or electronic-chip-fitted cards, Nyuki Tech makes it easier than ever to identify and connect with beekeepers. A game-changer for the Congolese honey industry, ensuring honey reaches consumers straight from the source, reducing the risk of denatured or counterfeit honey.

At its core, Nyuki Tech is all about modernising the beekeeping industry. With Grecom and Nyuki Tech, Déborah isn't just producing honey – she's creating a beekeeping movement, ensuring that both bees and their keepers thrive for generations to come.

**Déborah Nzarubara** | Grecom

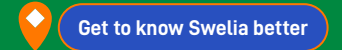




# SUPPORT NETWORK



## 16 Meet the OC partners: Swelia da Silva Antonio



Through Orange Corners, our **NL embassies** and **consulates** play a key role in nurturing entrepreneurship and innovation in the countries we work with. In **Angola**, **Swelia** is committed to fostering flourishing entrepreneurial ecosystems where young entrepreneurs can thrive.

*Swelia: it's important to focus on youth because we are the future, we are tomorrow. If we don't invest in young people, then we can't expect them to grow up to be outstanding citizens. Angola has a lot of young people, and they need raison d'être. They need a vision and they need opportunities to make that vision come alive. Without that, they easily fall for trouble.*

*There are many programmes like Orange Corners, but what really sticks out is quality. I discuss this time and time again with the Orange Corners Angola team: what's the quality, the methods and the knowledge that's being passed on. I'm also present at some of the workshops myself to see for myself that the methods we use are effective and innovative.*

*Orange Corners reaches one of the most essential parts of the population in Angola. And large organisations, the local government and other institutions should know about us, because we want to encourage others to come on board. In essence, we want to achieve a chain reaction. We pass on some of the fundamental ideas of what the Netherlands stands for through Orange Corners. It's about self-sufficiency. It's about being able to recognise chances and to be autonomous.*





## 17 Partnering with the private sector

This year many of our **private sector partners** have gone above and beyond to support our incubatees on their journey. By opening their doors and offering valuable insights, these partners not only shared their expertise but also provided young entrepreneurs with a firsthand look at the realities of the business world. At the same time, partnering with Orange Corners provided these private sector partners with access to innovative startups, new markets and entrepreneurial talent, creating opportunities for co-investment, business growth and collaboration.

### South Africa

As part of their incubation training, our inaugural **Orange Corners Designs Cape Town** cohort embarked on a series of immersive field trips, exploring key opportunities within the city's vibrant creative economy. During these excursions, participants visited iconic venues such as the **Aafricaa Store, V&A Watershed** and **Kuier at The Castle Market**, gaining firsthand exposure to local market trends and engaging directly with the pulse of Cape Town's thriving creative sector.



### Burundi & DRC

Since day 1, **Brarudi** has been a key partner for **Orange Corners Burundi**. In July, our incubatees got an exclusive tour of the Brarudi facilities, following the entire beer production process – from raw materials to bottling. The visit sparked tons of questions and lively discussions as they marvelled at Brarudi's well-oiled production chain. By the end, they left with notebooks full of notes, truly in awe of the experience.



*Orange Corners Burundi at Brarudi*

**Bralima**, another Heineken subsidiary, has been an **Orange Corners DRC** partner since 2019. Here too, they go well beyond financial support. From participating as jury members and hosting brewery visits to providing expert-led masterclasses, this year Bralima elevated its commitment by organising an exhibition and sales event for Orange Corners entrepreneurs within its premises. This not only gave our incubatees a platform to showcase and sell their products, it also allowed Bralima employees to witness the tangible impact of their support.



*Orange Corners DRC at Bralima*

## Nigeria

Our **Orange Corners Nigeria** incubatees had a blast visiting **Soilless Farm Lab**, where they got an up-close look at cutting-edge, sustainable farming techniques. The trip was packed with hands-on lessons on boosting farming efficiency while being kind to the environment – once more fuelling the passion of the next generation of agripreneurs leading Nigeria toward more sustainable agriculture.



## Sudan

The private sector plays a vital role in delivering essential goods and services in war-torn Sudan. Despite significant losses and uncertainty, in November 2024 our **Orange Corners Sudan** private partners reaffirmed their commitment to fostering entrepreneurship during their first in-person board meeting since the conflict began. A crucial pillar for stability and recovery, we deeply appreciate the continued support of Sudan's private sector.



# 18 Meet the OC partners: AstraZeneca

Our private partners are key to helping young entrepreneurs succeed. Offering more than just funding, they provide mentorship, industry know-how and vital support to help innovative young businesses scale. In Jordan, **AstraZeneca** committed €30,000 to provide 3 startups from our first **Orange Corners Jordan** cohort with an extra year of mentoring and other incubation services.

One of the lucky winners of this extended support was **TechCare**. This diabetes management app provides patients with tools to adhere to treatment plans, share experiences and support each other. In this way, TechCare aims to empower users to manage their condition more effectively, reducing healthcare costs and avoiding serious complications.

Backing an innovative startup like TechCare perfectly aligns with AstraZeneca's Young Health Programme (YHP), which aims to tackle non-communicable diseases like diabetes. Teaming up with over 50 NGOs worldwide, YHP has already reached over 10 million young people, equipping them with knowledge to avoid risky health behaviours. With TechCare on board, AstraZeneca's mission to empower young people just got a tech-savvy boost!

As we speak, TechCare and the other two winners have settled into their new offices at iPARK, gaining crucial mentoring, consultancy and support services – all to fuel an extra year of rapid growth and development.





## 19 OC mentor in the picture: Banji Ajilore

Mentors with extensive business experience help our incubatees navigate challenges, avoid common pitfalls and make informed decisions. In addition to being an entrepreneur, consultant and angel investor, **Banji Ajilore** is also a mentor for **Orange Corners Nigeria**.

As the founder of Pinnacle Business Solutions (PBS), Mr. Ajilore is all about boosting trade and unlocking funding across Africa. As Orange Corners Nigeria's **Entrepreneur-in-Residence** this year, Mr. Ajilore coached 1-on-1, led workshops, and served on the jury at big events like Demo Days. His hands-on guidance helped bridge the gap between theory and practice, giving startups from cohort 10 the tools to scale and succeed.



*"As the Entrepreneur-in-Residence, I had the opportunity to work with the fantastic FATE School team. It was a very fulfilling experience to share my extensive experiences in venture-building to help these aspiring entrepreneurs gain practical and real-life insights to start, grow and scale successful businesses."*

*Having several 1-on-1 sessions with them was quite demanding, but highly rewarding because of the continuous improvement of their business ideas. Their determination to succeed was contagious!*

*As a juror at the Business Pitch Competition, I had the privilege to see how the robust curriculum significantly helped them to improve their ideas and personal growth. I was very impressed with some of their presentations and I wish all the entrepreneurs a great success in their ventures!"*

**Banji Ajilore** | Mentor Orange Corners Nigeria



*"It's a rewarding role, both for the Entrepreneurs-in-Residence who give back to the entrepreneurial community, and for the startups, who gain invaluable experience and connections. Their insights and guidance have been instrumental in accelerating the growth of our entrepreneurs!"*

**Great Ukazim** | Programme Manager Orange Corners Nigeria



# 20 Meet the OC alumni: Kawenter



In a world where travel can feel like a never-ending puzzle, **Mustafa** aims to make global mobility more accessible. With **Kawenter**, he reimagines the way people tackle the tricky maze of visa requirements, making it easier than ever for their 500K users across Iraq, the GCC and beyond to embark on new adventures. Now, as he expands Kawenter into the GCC himself, he joins a wave of Orange Corners startups taking their business beyond borders.

*“Although I’m originally from **Iraq**, many of Kawenter’s 500,000+ users come from the GCC countries: Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE. We help them with visa, but also with travel requirements, hotels and flights, even guides. As a team, we work between Baghdad, Istanbul, Dubai and other cities around the world. To be closer to our customers and to create a payment gateway to receive their money, we also registered our company in Dubai.*

*For us, the GCC is a great target market, because these countries have great economies and people spend a lot of money on travelling. And unlike in Iraq, everyone has credit cards, uses online banking. So it’s very easy for us to acquire customers here. For a startup like Kawenter, this is a good environment to be in. It’s much easier to grow here than elsewhere. It’s pretty easy for us to do business here. We come from a similar culture, speak the same language. And doing paperwork here is easy, everything is online. It took less than a week to set up our Dubai office. I got my resident card within 3 days, registering the company took about 1.5 days.*



*My advice to other entrepreneurs considering expanding to the GCC? Know where your customer is! What worked best for us was SEO. We tried Twitter, Facebook and YouTube ads, but all failed, because people just use Google to look up visa information, not social media. Each industry has other channels that work best, and you need to find out what channels work best for you. And you need a great customer support service. Many people will contact you before and after buying your products. To give them the right experience, you need to have a great team.”*

**Mustafa Alwin** | Kawenter



# EVENTS

## 21 Orange Corners Connect Days 2024

In June 2024, we hosted the **Orange Corners Connect Days 2024**. A week full of connections and collaboration in The Hague. With hubs and embassy partners flying in from all corners of the Orange Corners network, the energy was sky-high. This wasn't just another conference; it felt like a family reunion – full of ideas, inspiration, and, of course, a good dose of Dutch *gezelligheid*.



The Connect Days were all about meaningful exchanges and learning from each other's experiences. The week included strategic sessions that tackled big topics like cross-border collaboration and ecosystem building. From the very first session, the atmosphere was charged with excitement and an eagerness to learn, connect and innovate. The cherry on top? The Orange Corners network event.



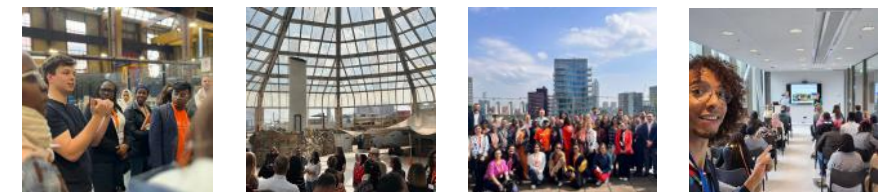
[Relive the Connect Days here](#)

The programme included a panel discussion with Orange Corners partners i4policy, Forward·Inc, African Angel Academy, the NL Consulate in Lagos, Nigeria and Heineken. **Christina Bidmon** (Utrecht University) shar-

red some preliminary results from her research with Orange Corners. NL Youth Ambassador **Jurriaan Middelhoff**, a long-time friend to the programme, was of course also present to deliver the keynote speech. After the plenary session, partners old and new mingled to discuss shared goals and explore opportunities that could shape the future of ecosystem building.



The Connect Days were not just about brainstorming in conference rooms though – there was also ample time to go out and explore! During ecosystem tours in Rotterdam and Wageningen, we dove right into the heart of Dutch innovation ecosystem. Visits to **RDM Next**, **Erasmus Centre for Entrepreneurship**, **BlueCity** and **Wageningen University** offered participants a firsthand look at cutting-edge solutions and the entrepreneurial spirit thriving in the Netherlands. Both routes were packed with jaw-dropping innovations and a lot of “Whoa, that’s cool!” moments.



[RDM Next](#)

[BlueCity](#)

[Erasmus](#)

[Wageningen](#)

As everyone flew home again, one thing was clear – this week wasn't just about the here and now. We laid the foundation for exciting projects, stronger partnerships and many impactful cross-border collaborations. As we look to the future, the Orange Corners community is stronger, more connected, and more determined than ever to drive positive change through entrepreneurship.



## 22 GITEX Africa 2024

Trade fairs provide opportunities to network, showcase products and services and stay updated on industry trends. That's why this year too, we offered our incubatees and alumni plenty of opportunity to take part in industry events under the Orange Corners banner.

**GITEX Africa 2024** in Marrakech, **Morocco**, was the ultimate playground for our young Orange Corners alumni in tech. Between 29 and 31 May, the streets of Marrakech buzzed with the excitement of the continent's largest tech event, where Africa's brightest minds came together to talk the future of technology.

Our delegation of 20 alumni from 5 countries (**Morocco, Nigeria, Egypt, Côte d'Ivoire** and **Senegal**) did us proud, showcasing their innovations with entrepreneurial flair. With their cutting-edge solutions, businesses as **Dom-Green Energy, AZA Petrosolutions, PSC Agri** and **Obens** boldly represented the next wave of African tech pioneers.



## 23 Beyond the GITEX: more trade fair highlights

### SEF

In April, **Orange Corners DRC** entrepreneurs with a digital focus participated in **Salon E-commerce & Fintech (SEF)**. Our programme advisor for DRC Geerten stopped by to meet the entrepreneurs and learn more about their businesses.



### SIAM

A little further to the north, Meknes was host to the 16th **Salon International d'Agriculture au Maroc (SIAM)**. Our **Orange Corners Morocco** squad, along with our Moroccan alumni, rolled out the orange carpet at the NL Pavilion. With a booth all our own, they chatted, connected and shared the Orange Corners magic with anyone curious enough to stop by!





Angola Startup Summit

In May, **Orange Corners Angola** was present at the **Angola Startup Summit 2024** in Luanda. With 150 startups and over 5,000 visitors, this 3-day event was a hotspot for innovation and digital transformation. Our team and graduates were front and centre, connecting with aspiring entrepreneurs at the booth and sharing information on Jumpstart and other Orange Corners Angola programmes.



FACIM

August saw Orange Corners at the **Maputo International Trade Fair (FACIM)**, where 21 proud **Orange Corners Mozambique** graduates wowed the crowd with their creative products and services. Even NL Youth Ambassador Jurriaan Middelhoff couldn't resist stopping by during his tour of Mozambique and Angola to check out the incredible innovations on display.



HITEX

In September, alumni from our programmes in **Erbil** and **Baghdad** flocked to **HITEX 2024** in Erbil, Iraq's largest annual exhibition for technology and electronics. The Orange Corners Innovation Fund booth was proudly shared by 3 recent OCIF winners: **Kevin Entertainment**, **Exchange Programmes** and **Wedonet**. They certainly turned some heads, catching not just the attention of our friends at the NL Consulate, but even stealing a moment with the PM of the Kurdistan Region himself!



Africa Sports Expo

Our **Sports Orange Corners** incubatees showed up in full force at the **Africa Sports Expo** last October in Casablanca. From **SportifyAI** to **Association Rollschool Family des Sports Urbains**, every day featured fresh faces from our latest cohort, all eager to showcase their innovative businesses at the **TIBU** pavilion. Our programme advisor for Morocco Benthe and marcom mastermind Brigitte stopped by to say hi during their visit to Morocco.



## 24 One Young World 2024

Investing in young people from Africa and the Middle East means letting them take the mic too. That's why the **NL Ministry of Foreign Affairs** and Orange Corners through the **Enterprising Futures Scholarship** each year support brilliant young entrepreneurs to attend the **One Young World** summit.

In September 2024, this global event brought together inspiring young leaders from around the world in Montréal, Canada, to collaborate on solutions to today's most pressing challenges. This year's summit included a vibrant tapestry of topics, ranging from indigenous voices and artificial intelligence to health equity and peace. On day 2, NL Youth Ambassador **Jurriaan Middelhoff** took the main stage alongside **Amin Bolis** (Sudan, Humanity Hands). Together, they delivered a compelling keynote on fostering peace and stability in the face of conflict.



Later, ambassador Middelhoff returned to the stage with **Ryme Assad** (Lebanon), **Parfait Mugisha** (Burundi) and **Wamweni Sharlette Samundengu** (African Union) for a lively debate on climate change, renewable energy, regenerative agriculture and the transition to a greener economy.

Enterprising Futures scholars **Royale** (Mali) and **Lama** (Palestinian Territories) also took the stage to showcase their initiatives So'Intim and BuildPalestine.

Together, these inspiring voices and initiatives embodied the spirit of Enterprising Futures: bold and driven to create lasting change.





## 25 Global Entrepreneurship Week

In November, the entrepreneurial buzz was electric across the entire Orange Corners network during the annual **Global Entrepreneurship Week**. From Morocco and Iraq to Burundi, everywhere entrepreneurial communities came together.

In **Morocco**, our **Sports Orange Corners** entrepreneurs shined at a busy startup fair. On the big stage **Ilham Baqqal**, founder of modest activewear brand **Beeka**, brought some feminine energy to an all-male panel, while other alumni too took the stage to inspire the audience with game-changing stories about their own entrepreneurial journeys.

In **Burundi**, the entrepreneurial energy was just as vibrant. 10+ entrepreneurs from our first and second **Orange Corners Burundi** cohorts showcased their solutions at a government-sponsored green and circular exhibition, displaying their commitment to being part of Burundi's green and zero-waste movement.



*Sports Orange Corners*



*Orange Corners Burundi*

Meanwhile in the **Kurdistan Region of Iraq**, our **Orange Corners Erbil** entrepreneurs sharpened their skills in masterclasses around emotional intelligence and growth strategies for women entrepreneurs, before taking centre stage in a thrilling pitching competition.

Panels, showcase markets, masterclasses and pitch competitions: the Global Entrepreneurship Week was a powerful reminder of the incredible potential within the Orange Corners community, showcasing our impact all the way from Morocco to Iraq.



*Orange Corners Erbil*



# 26 Meet the OC Alumni: The Middle Frame



Get to know The Middle Frame better

From identifying a gap in the market to creating a vibrant platform for authentic Arab images, **Mohammad** and his co-founder **Raya (The Middle Frame)** have come a long way since their Orange Corners days.

*"We started The Middle Frame in 2021 as a marketplace for commercial and editorial Arab images. So far, we secured over \$200,000 in investments and about \$70,000 in grants. In addition to the Palestinian market, we've initiated testing in Jordan, Egypt and the UAE.*

*Orange Corners was the perfect push towards the market for us. We validated our idea, got traction. Towards the end of the programme, our MVP was already on the market. The number of photographers that had heard of The Middle Frame had grown rapidly, and buyers could already sign up and search for the images they needed.*

*After Orange Corners, we took part in a number of other programmes for startups, for additional skills, guidance, and also as a source of income. Things really started working out for The Middle Frame. We were getting requests, subscribers. That is, until October 2023.*

*While I was stuck in Jordan, our pitch deck was shared with Flat6Labs. They offered us an investment, along with a chance to join their acceleration programme. They suggested us to introduce editorial images, news images, sports images, celebrities to create more steady revenue streams. Last year we also added an option to hire our community of photographers. Recently we've also been exploring AI, offering our authentic Arab image data sets for different purposes, from security and surveillance to image recognition and generative AI.*

*Right now, we're focusing on three things: business development, partnerships and sales. With our recent focus on AI, we're also looking at the US and European markets now. For the next 2 years, we want to focus on generative AI and supporting tools for our clients, selling and licensing data sets. And afterwards we'll turn to videos!"*

**Mohammad Alnobani** | The Middle Frame



# ALUMNI

## 27 Investing in the OC Alumni Community

Nearing 4,000, the Orange Corners alumni community is the backbone of our programme. Here our alumni continue to find support until long after their graduation. From their fellow alumni, but also from Orange Corners.

This year, we teamed up with **ScaleChanger** to dive deeper into our alumni community and roll out some exclusive workshops. Through ScaleChanger's Scale Me Up tool, our alumni got a laser-sharp look at their business's strengths, opportunities for growth and tailored tips to level up. Meanwhile, we got a big picture overview on where our Orange Corners alumni stand right now – helping us better support their journey to greatness in the long run.

### Snapshot of our alumni community

- 3 years and counting: most of our alumni kicked off their business adventures around 3 years ago
- Small but mighty teams: at this early stage, 73% of them are leading tight-knit crews of 0–5 employees – with further growth foreseen in the future
- 71% are keeping it local, selling their products or services exclusively in their home country
- 58% are earning up to €10,000, 24% are stepping it up with turnovers of €10,000 to €50,000, while the rest are earning even more

### Masterclasses

With the survey results in, we jumped straight into action mode with 3 masterclasses on hot topics: internationalisation, fundraising and leadership/HR. Knowing that so many of our alumni are rocking it in agri, we for example hosted a unique online masterclass on raising funds from international agri-focused funders.

We didn't just stop at giving participants an overview on international funding opportunities in agriculture – we also brought in some big guns! Two international donors, **Rabo Foundation** and **Anton Jurgens Charitable Trust**, spilled the beans on what funders really want to see. Plus, **Riches Attai**, a pro at securing funding from a bunch of sources, shared his ultimate tips and tricks for fundraising success.

### Alumni All-Stars

#### Winich Farms

**Winich Farms**, founded by **Orange Corners Nigeria** alum **Riches Attai**, is bridging the gap between farmers and retailers, making sure fresh produce reaches the right hands. Fast forward to 2024 and the company is thriving, having secured \$3 million in pre-series A funding from big names like the Acumen Resilient Agriculture Fund (ARAF) and the Climate Resilient Africa Fund. Not stopping there, Sahel Capital pitched in with an additional \$590,000 in debt to help scale its operations. With this being their second successful funding round in just 2 years, Winich Farms is all set to level up its tech and expand its order fulfillment centres.



### Colis.ma

Since 2022, **Colis.ma** has been on a roll, delivering over 50,000 parcels. In October, this Moroccan cross-border logistics startup secured \$300,000 in pre-seed funding from VC Fund Witamax. This funding will help level up service quality and take Colis.ma to new, exciting destinations. With this investment, **Orange Corners Morocco** graduate **Issam Darui** plans to expand the company's reach – spreading across Morocco, making waves in Europe and perhaps even reaching West Africa.



### Studio B.O.R

In October, **Orange Corners Jordan's Batoul Al Rashdan (Studio B.O.R)** snagged a prestigious Fashion Trust Arabia award in the Fashion Tech category. As its first-ever recipient, Batoul is setting a high bar for the future.

On a mission to revolutionise sustainable fashion, Batoul blends cutting-edge tech with traditional craftsmanship. From bio-based materials to advanced 3D printing and robotics, she's leading the charge for a greener, more innovative fashion world.



### Coconoto

That same month, **Orange Corners Nigeria** alum **Coconoto** made us all proud by winning the 2024 TotalEnergies Startup Challenge. By creating sustainable value from coconut waste, Coconoto turns what's often tossed aside into valuable products for industries like agriculture and cosmetics. Led by **Jacob Abiodun-Oluwayanmife**, Coconoto was one of 100 startups from 32 African countries competing in the challenge – taking home the "Cycle Up" award for the best circular economy project.





# 28 Meet the OC Alumni: Planet Health



Learn more about Planet Health

**Dalia** is a pharmacist on a mission to revolutionise healthcare in **South Sudan**. With **Planet Health**, she ensures that essential medications are within reach for those who need them most, addressing critical gaps in healthcare access. Dalia isn't just filling prescriptions — she's filling lives with care, compassion and a vision for a healthier South Sudan.

*"As South Sudan is a new country, some medicines are hard to get. We cooperate with other pharmacists to make medication available within the country. Our affordable prices and personalised customer services make us stand out, especially to patients with chronic diseases. We're for example working on developing an app that reminds them when it's time to repurchase their medication.*

*In business in general, there are a lot of challenges. Being a woman makes it extra hard. Men often view women as inferior and women entrepreneurs get intimidated a lot. They try to talk you out of your ideas, telling you "this is too big for you" or "we don't believe that you can do that". This can be discouraging sometimes. How to overcome this? You need to reassure yourself that you can do those things. Look back at where you were 2 years ago, and where you are now, and then you look at what you've achieved. It's better to not just focus on the challenges that are there, but also to look forward to what you want to achieve.*



*There are also benefits to being a female business owner. Men look at you as if you're a weak creature and like to step in to help you. And our taxation system sometimes also favours you, as the government tries to make things easier for women. It's not always bad to be a woman in business. You just need to know how to use your voice in a room full of men. You should be confident, know what you're doing, and if you are they will support."*

Dalia James | Planet Health



# NEXT STEPS

## 29 Outlook 2025

So what's in the cards for 2025? It's good to mention our overall 'Big Hairy Audacious Goal' remains unchanged: for every young entrepreneur in each Orange Corners programme country to have access to quality and sustainable support within a flourishing entrepreneurial ecosystem.

We also defined some 'bold steps' that'll help us realise this objective. We want to keep investing in the capacity of our implementing partners through relevant support projects, and similarly up the quality of our training curricula. We also foresee a big investment in our alumni community. Not only through relevant needs-based support projects that go beyond our regular incubation and acceleration cohorts but also through the launch of the online Orange Corners Alumni Community. Stay tuned for key updates in the first half of the year!

Since we enter our second year of renewed Orange Corners training and Innovation Fund activities, we also expect to incorporate a lot of lessons learned from 2024. With this in mind, we're eagerly awaiting the recommendations from the outcome evaluation of the effect of our programmes on entrepreneurs up to 3 years after graduation. These are expected in Q1 of 2025. Similarly, we look forward to the outcomes of the first studies that have been conducted within our ambitious research agenda and use the insights gained to increase the quality of our projects.

During the first quarter of this new year, we also expect the publication of the new policy note for foreign trade and development of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. As the Orange Corners programme was born out of and continues to be supported this Ministry, we're preparing to further align with the new ambitions outlined in this policy note.

We're looking forward to draw in additional knowledge and skills from the Netherlands to build out the impact of our programme, and foster new collaborations with both Dutch and international private companies and knowledge partners.

Whether you're a civil servant, an employee at a private company, an NGO worker or a budding entrepreneur, we hope to connect with you through the Orange Corners programme during the coming year (again). Together, we can truly create a better world through entrepreneurship.

Warm regards from The Hague,  
***Your Orange Corners HQ team***







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