

CREACT4MED Mapping: Best Practices

Application Number: BP_79

1. Basic info*	
Email Address	seevana@kuvrd.ca
Title of the Best Practice	KUVRD
Name of the Applicant	Seevana Hawari
Is the BP a registered legal entity?	Yes, I will send the certificate of registration by email
Website	www.kuvrd.ca
Country	Jordan;
Subsector	Arts and culture (cultural heritage, gastronomy, visual arts, performing arts, leisure and recreation, crafts);
Category	a) Cultural and creative entrepreneurship;
Year of establishment and duration	4/1/2020
Target group of the BP	<p>At KUVRD, our primary objective is to foster sustainable employment opportunities for refugees and underprivileged communities in Jordan, while spreading the Arabic culture through handcrafted modern streetwear. Our production team consists of refugees with a deep passion for heritage, apparel, and fashion, particularly those interested in the creative and cultural industry.</p> <p>KUVRD caters to a diverse audience consisting of young adults, 60 percent of whom are 18 to 34. Our primary sales focus is on Arabs in the diaspora who seek to reconnect with their cultural roots through apparel. Nevertheless, our brand takes pride in inclusivity, appealing to anyone interested in preserving Arabic culture and supporting socially conscious brands. Our primary outreach is directed towards individuals in North America and Europe, owing to their substantial Arab population. This approach enables us to effectively engage our target audience: individuals passionate about fashion, cultural preservation, and supporting ethical brands.</p>
2. Best Practice Characteristics	
Problem Statement	<p>Our social venture centers on addressing multifaceted challenges, specifically encompassing inadequate employment opportunities for urban refugees in Jordan. The Kingdom, with a populace of 11 million, hosts the second largest refugee population per capita, officially exceeding 700,000 refugees registered with the United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and approximately 1.3 million total refugees (ReliefWeb). The country also faces one of the world's highest unemployment rates at 19.2 percent, though many would argue that number is much higher. Furthermore, Jordan ranks third globally for the lowest female labor force participation, severely impeding its economic growth. Our primary focus is on empowering Palestinian and Syrian refugees, given their significant representation within Jordan's unemployed demographic. Aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, our mission emphasizes Gender Equality (SDG 5), creating Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8), and reducing Inequalities (SDG 10) for urban refugees.</p>
Mission Statement & Value proposition	<p>At KUVRD we create meaningful Arab heritage streetwear rooted in tradition, culture, and history while supporting marginalized communities. Our inspiration springs from a deep-rooted history that dates back to our family's textile factory in Palestine in the</p>

	<p>1950s. We combine fashion with a purpose to craft an impact-driven lifestyle brand that speaks to the uniqueness of Arab identity and culture. Our designs not only pay homage to the people who create them and the places where they originate but also support marginalized communities through sustainable employment and community-based projects. Our mission is to connect individuals worldwide to Arab heritage by offering ethically crafted apparel. Our core values of Embracing Identity; Ethically Crafted and Authentic products; Community Bonding; and Sustainability define who we are and what we stand for. We place a strong emphasis on embracing identity, ensuring that our designs authentically represent Arab culture. We produce ethically crafted products that prioritize authenticity while preserving Arab culture. Community bonding is at the heart of our brand, as we believe in the power of coming together to support one another. Finally, we are dedicated to making sustainably responsible choices in our business practices and products to minimize our impacts on the environment. In every stitch and design, we express our dedication to these values and our mission, working towards a world where fashion becomes a bridge to culture, identity, and empowerment all while empowering refugees through employment opportunities.</p>
<p>Results and growth</p>	<p>Our approach to addressing the initial issue of inadequate employment opportunities for urban refugees in Jordan is multifaceted, reflecting our commitment to achieving a lasting impact. At the core of our strategy is a production team composed entirely of refugees and marginalized individuals, a practice we proudly consider our primary performance indicator. To date, we have hired 21 refugees, 12 of whom have successfully transitioned into other employment opportunities. In parallel, we have launched skill-training workshops, equipping individuals with essential skills to be successful at KUVRD and enhance their employability. Our initial workshop empowered 11 participants, equipping them with valuable skills that are not only valuable to our brand but can also be applied in future entrepreneurial pursuits. We are committed to expanding this initiative and thus extending the reach of our impact. Our financial growth directly correlates with our social impact, as increased sales enable us to provide more sustainable employment opportunities. As our business prospers, so does our capacity to provide sustainable employment for refugees, further reducing unemployment rates and fostering social inclusiveness. Our commitment to these objectives and the achievements we've made so far firmly establish KUVRD as a Best Practice, reflecting our unwavering dedication to empowering marginalized communities and creating a positive societal impact.</p>
<p>Strategy to be financially sustainable</p>	<p>Our business model is built on strategic factors that ensure our long-term financial stability. Central to our approach is the commitment to ethical production in Jordan, as opposed to outsourcing like many fast fashion companies. This dedication to authenticity, though inherently slower, guarantees that each product is crafted to the highest quality standards. We proudly produce all of our keffiyehs in our family-owned factory, still operating in Amman, Jordan today. The factory's origins trace back to Jericho, Palestine, established in the 1950s but relocated to Amman in 1967 after its owner, Jido Ahmed Al Bulbul, was expelled from Palestine. Our decision to craft our products in Jordan not only guarantees authenticity but also resonates with</p>

	<p>Arabs living abroad, providing them with a piece of home wherever they are. Additionally, we cater to tourists in Jordan by providing unique pieces of authentic Arab culture to take home while visit our studio in the heart of Jabal Amman. We recognize the importance of supporting the local Arab community by creating pieces that utilize fabrics made by the local community. This original approach aligns with our firm belief that people are inherently drawn to products created by other individuals who share their cultural heritage. As the majority of Palestinians and other Arabs live in the diaspora, we have observed a genuine appreciation among our Arab customer base for handmade items produced by artisans in the Middle East. This appreciation is magnified by the earnest connection to their heritage that our products evoke, even from a distance. The authenticity and cultural resonance of our creations foster a deeper connection to their roots, appealing to many worldwide allowing us to be financially stable. Ultimately our primary focus is on ethically producing our products in Jordan while primarily catering to the diaspora community. With increased sales, this will enable us to create additional opportunities for our skilled artisans.</p>
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3. Impact (please complete at least 3 of the 6 sub-sections)

<p>Economic significance</p>	<p>Over the preceding 12-month period, we have successfully reached 2,492 customers and notably achieved a customer return rate of 29.42 percent, while shipping to over 54 countries worldwide. Online orders accounted for the largest percentage of overall sales at 70 percent, underlining the increasing significance of our digital retail presence. The remaining sales were attributed to our active participation in a variety of community events, pop-up shops, and partnerships with retail outlets both in North America and Jordan. Our annual turnover currently stands at a robust 5.5, reflecting the growth of business we are generating year over year. Our email list, with over 20,000 subscribers, has generated 30% of our online revenue, making it a substantial contributor to our sales. These figures reflect our robust digital marketing strategies and effective customer outreach endeavors. Our economic significance extends beyond our financial figures. We have made a notable impact on the refugee population in Amman, Jordan. Specifically, we have recruited and employed 21 urban refugees in Jordan, which has not only offered them economic stability but also a sense of belonging, resilience, and purpose. Additionally, we have conducted skill training workshops, equipping 11 marginalized individuals with valuable skills, enabling them to work efficiently at KUVRD, and fostering their capacity to apply these skills in their future endeavors.</p>
<p>Replicability and upscaling</p>	<p>As KUVRD continues to expand, we are exploring ways to upscale in Jordan and replicate our business model in other countries with large refugee populations. The success of our expansion efforts relies on assembling a skilled workforce, encompassing craftsmen, seamstresses, and other core employees who will contribute to the quality and scale of our operations. An integral part of our upscaling strategy involves the implementation of skill-training workshops designed to empower refugees with valuable and employable skills. These workshops serve a dual purpose: firstly, they give refugees the skills that align with our brand's</p>



	<p>requirements, enhancing their employability; secondly, they facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills that can be applied to future entrepreneurial endeavors. We have successfully hosted a workshop, attended by 11 refugees, and plan to integrate these workshops into KUVRD's business model to ensure continued success. Furthermore, reflecting our commitment to quality control and customer satisfaction, these workshops will establish precise standards and ensure effective packaging procedures to minimize damage during transportation. In pursuit of our mission to make a broader impact, we intend to collaborate with reputable organizations to extend these skill-training workshops in selected regions. These international collaboration efforts will elevat our brand's expansion while nurturing a workforce capable of increasing our production capacity. Furthermore, we plan to expand and diversify our range of household goods that resonate with Arab households in addition to our current collection. To implement this strategy, we will partner with local artisans in Jordan to further expand into the household goods sector, focusing on products that resonate with Arabs.</p>
<p>Employment generation</p>	
<p>Inclusiveness</p>	<p>Since the conception of KUVRD in 2020, our commitment to fostering social inclusiveness has led to significant outcomes. We have offered sustainable income opportunities to 21 refugees, 12 of whom have successfully transitioned to other employment opportunities. At present, we employ 5 refugees and we aim to double and sustain that number by Q3 2024, working towards sustaining a workforce of at least 10 refugees. Our inclusiveness initiatives predominantly focus on hiring refugees in urban locations, recognizing the unique challenges they face living in a new country. The KUVRD studio serves as a hub for our multifaceted efforts which include providing skill-training workshops tailored to the needs of marginalized communities. These workshops equip refugees with the education to meet the demands of modern employment opportunities, ensuring their future prospects. Establishing a physical location has allowed us to reach for more tangible and long-term solutions for sustainable employment opportunities for refugees in the community. To highlight our dedication to inclusiveness, we will soon introduce the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals on our website (SDG). Our commitment to social inclusiveness is evident through our accomplishments in Gender Equality (SDG 5), fostering Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8), and Reducing Inequalities (SDG 10). We achieve this by empowering marginalized communities and providing equal educational opportunities to both male and female refugees in Jordan. The best practices we have implemented primarily target urban settings, allowing us to directly address the needs of vulnerable communities while actively contributing to societal inclusiveness.</p>
<p>Social impact</p>	<p>Our social impact has expanded in the form of a physical location for production, training, a digital educational space, community empowerment, and partnerships with Community Based Organizations (COBs) to facilitate donation contributions. The studio, located in Jabal Amman, is a renovated Syrian-style home that serves as a cultural center to preserve our heritage, adding a unique sense of cultural authenticity to each garment produced. The studio is not just a place for production, but a place to showcase rich Arabic cultures and attract people from all over the city- preserving the heritage. We believe that the studio is a step in the right direction towards</p>

	<p>providing stable and long-term change, as it empowers communities on a socioeconomic and cultural level. Regarding our digital space, we have an Instagram account that has been instrumental in advancing our mission to educate a broader audience about the unique and profound challenges in the Middle East. Through informative posts, we aim to keep our local and foreign audiences engaged regarding ongoing developments and issues in the region to foster a sense of global solidarity. In terms of our contributions to providing the community with resources they may need, we have partnered with 4 CBOs in different capacities related to donations and recruitment of employees for work at KUVRD. Additionally, we have partnered with the International Development and Relief Foundation; Human Concerns International; and the Family Development Association. With these organizations, we supplied school supply kits in the Al Wehdat refugee camp and provided 98,000 meals to families in Jordan since 2020. Of our current partnerships, we highly value our partnership with local CBOs as a means of localization and supporting national interests.</p>
Innovation	<p>At KUVRD, we have leveraged the country's unique position to innovate in unexpected ways best suited to the growing community of refugees along with expats. We have redefined our production processes to set ourselves apart from other competitors. Unlike conventional screen printing, we exclusively use authentically sourced fabrics from Jordan, ensuring an original touch in every product we offer. Our commitment to authenticity is underscored by our transparent disclosure of the precise origins of our production. What uniquely sets us apart is the family-owned keffiyeh factory that enables us to customize our fabrics while maintaining ethical practices. We proudly operate in Jordan, where our studio serves not only as a place of production but also as an in-door office, showroom, and community event space. We also have an outdoor area perfect for individuals to immerse themselves in a beautiful piece of history. With each person who enters the studio, a new memory is made and a connection is formed highlighting the link we have maintained with our heritage characterized by hospitality and collectivism. Truly, our most significant innovation lies in our commitment to provide employment opportunities to refugees and giving back to the community. All of our pieces are crafted by refugees in Jordan, contributing to both their growth and the local community. This commitment is the foundation of our distinctiveness, setting us apart from others in the market.</p>
Environmental sustainability	
<p>4. Challenges and lessons learned</p>	
Challenges	<p>KUVRD has faced several key obstacles that have impeded our endeavors to expand production effectively. Firstly, we find it challenging to scale due to several quality control issues within production and shipping. In order to address this problem, we aim to provide individuals with the skills to ensure we are delivering high-quality items. We have observed an acute mismatch between the skills required for our operations and those possessed by our employees. This challenge has been identified as one of the top five risks facing Jordan in the Employment and Livelihood crisis over the next two years (WEF). Specifically related to KUVRD, in 2022, we audited several items that lacked quality control, accounting for 7 percent of our inventory arriving at our Canadian distribution center damaged. As we expand, it is essential that we focus on quality control measures to</p>

	<p>maintain our brand quality. We aim to address this problem by equipping refugees with the skills they need to work for our organizations through creative skill-building workshops. We have begun the process of providing these workshops with a pilot workshop in which we trained 11 refugees. We will continue to provide these workshops for current employees and individuals who have an interest in working with us.</p>
Lessons learned	<p>We have gathered valuable insights and lessons that will help shape KUVRD's future and the implementation of our skill-building workshops. When talking with refugees in both the community and in camps, it was evident that individuals within these demographics possess the skills to work in the production sector of the economy. We found that these individuals lack the opportunity to realize their potential in the CCI industry. In light of this, we have recognized the value of skill-building workshops, which have been more effective when individuals are predisposed to take an interest in sewing and craftsmanship. Collaborating with local CBOs has emerged as an essential strategy to enhance our understanding of the effectiveness of workshop activities. As well, partnering with specialized CBOs allows for the successful implementation of specific activities of which we have limited knowledge. Parallel to this, further implementation of additional layers of quality control will help to minimize damages in packaging. The significance of well-equipped instructors with subject knowledge and effective communication skills to lead our workshops has become increasingly clear. These lessons have become integral parts of the development of our sustainable business model moving forward.</p>
5. Demographic Information	
Is the organization led by a woman?	Yes
What age is the lead of the organization?	Between 16 and 35 years old
6. Reference contact information	