



# Morocco Startup Ecosystem

# 20 23

Entering a new phase

# Introduction

“The Moroccan startup ecosystem has come a long way in recent years, with an increasing number of innovative and ambitious entrepreneurs taking advantage of the country's growing economy. This report provides an in-depth analysis of the current state of the Moroccan startup ecosystem and offers insights into the key trends and opportunities that are likely to shape its future in 2023 and beyond. Through the examination of data and interviews with key stakeholders, this report aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the ecosystem and its potential for growth and development in the years to come. Thanks for reading!”

**The authors**



**Lotf Belych**



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# Morocco at Glance:



Rank in Africa in Startup Ecosystem Index



Rank in Africa by number of developers



In Ease of doing business ranking in Africa



Rank in Africa in English proficiency index



Rank in Africa by total funding raised

# Morocco Startup Ecosystem Map

## HR



## Foodtech



## Greentech & Agritech



## Health



## Deeptech



## Retail



## SaaS



## E-commerce & Marketplace



## Fintech & Payments



## Proptech



## Edtech



## Mobility & Logistics



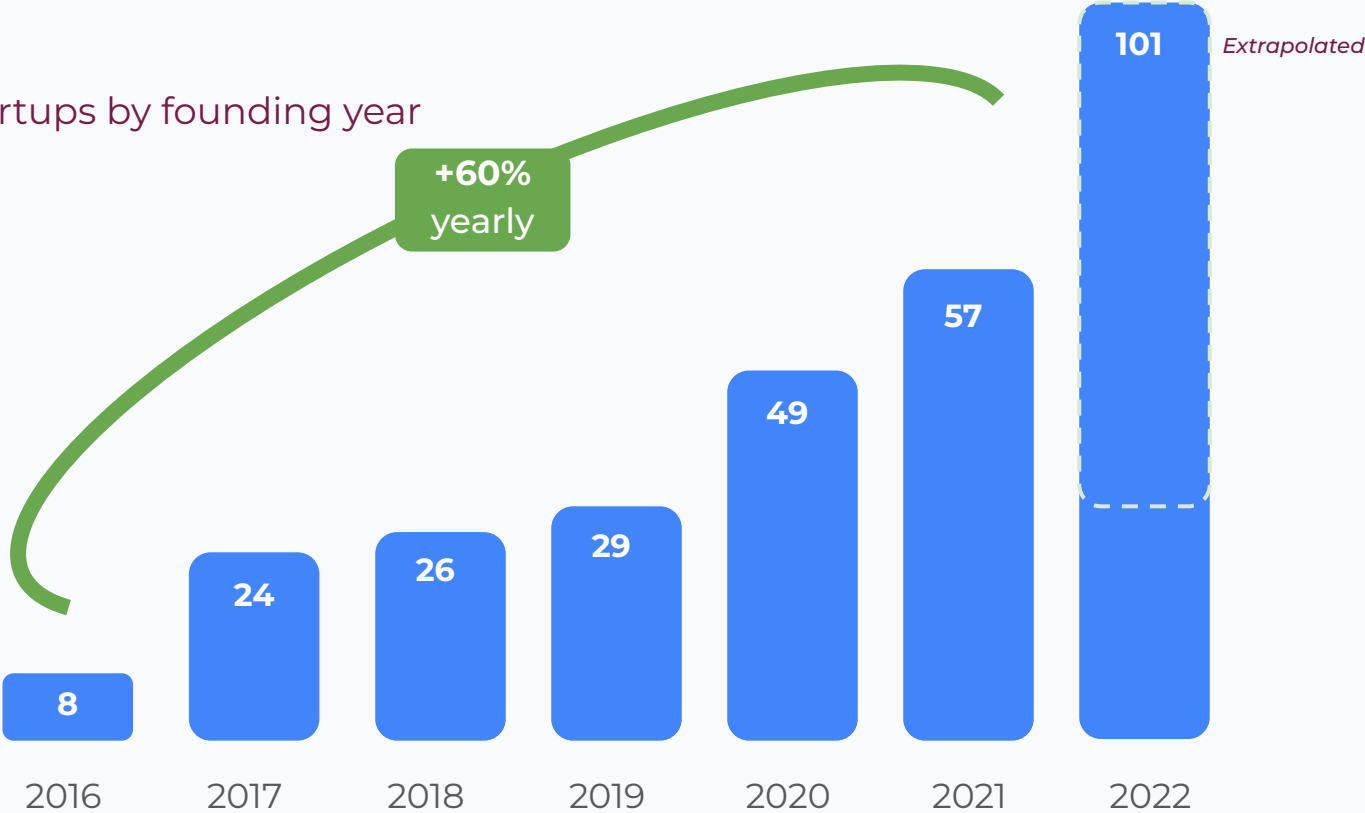
# The ecosystem is still in its infant stage: Only 5% of Moroccan startups have more than 50 employees.

Breakdown of startups by employee range



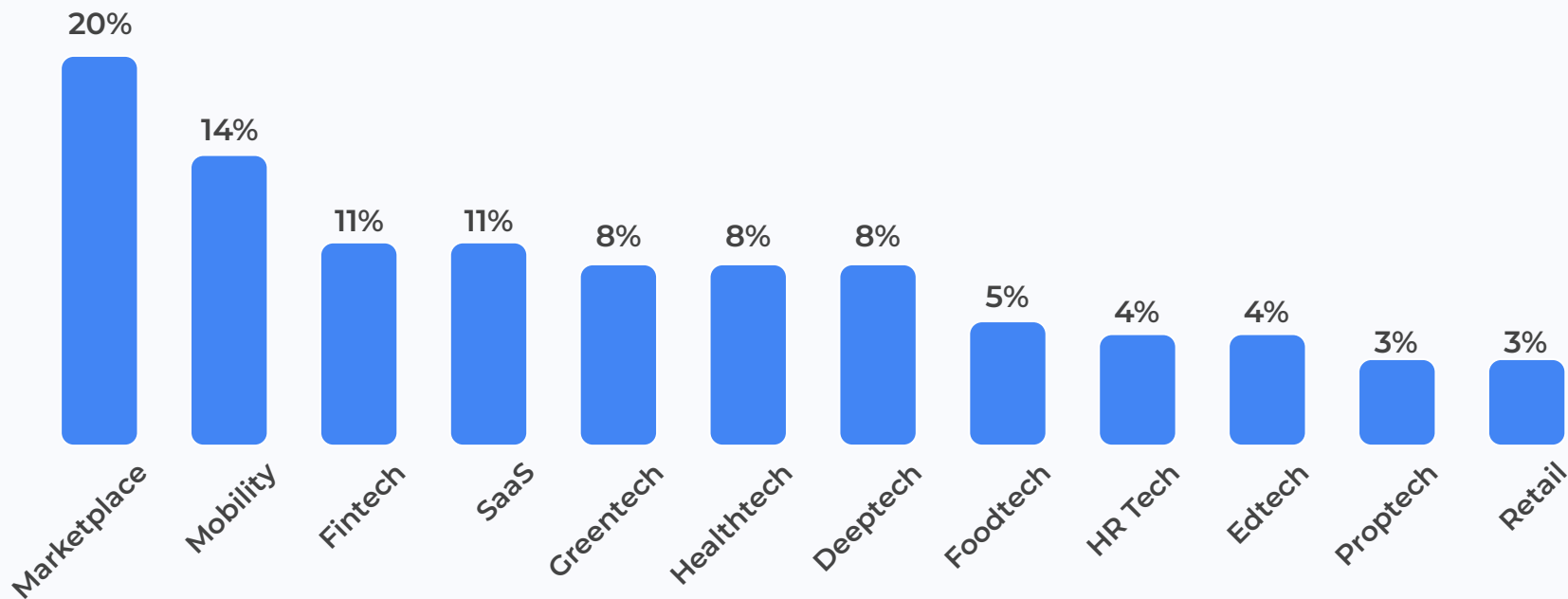
# However, it is growing in terms of startup creation. Covid has accelerated this trend.

Breakdown of startups by founding year



# Marketplaces and Mobility startups represent more than one third of total startups in the ecosystem.

Breakdown of startups by sector



# Female-led startups represent 23% of total startups thriving the most in Greentech, HR and Health.

Representation of female founders per sector



Greentech

48%



HR

36%



Health 29%

23%

Women-led  
Startups





# How do you see the Moroccan startup ecosystem in 2023



**Othman Chraibi**

Chief Investment Officer  
UM6P Ventures



“ The Moroccan startup ecosystem is rapidly growing, and the trend is expected to continue in 2023.

More international investors are likely to be attracted to the market, as the Moroccan economy continues to grow along with the growing trend of Moroccan startups expanding into international markets, which will help to further broaden the reach of the ecosystem. We can also expect to see more government support for the startup ecosystem, the fund Mohamed VI is also expected to play an important role and many international organizations are showing commitments to support initiatives; i.e IFC, FMO, BPI and others.

I also think that Morocco is in good shape to become the Africa Hub for DeepTech startups in a near future. The fundamentals and the supporting system are building up and UM6P Ventures is committed to develop and scale DeepTech economy."

# How do you see the Moroccan startup ecosystem in 2023



**Sara Elmahi**

Director · Ceed Morocco



“Moving forward in 2023, CEED will continue connecting Moroccan fintech and innovative startups to corporations that need the innovative technologies they offer.

FinTechs are the Disruptive Technology for Financial Institutions in Morocco and the African continent. As we begin 2023, CEED is as committed as ever to supporting Moroccan Startups and SME's.

For the last year, CEED has been one of the leading actors operating in Morocco and supporting Moroccan fintech reshaping the financial services industry in the MENA region by facilitating the creation of new solutions and services and seeing the rise of emerging new technologies, without the restrictions typically associated with traditional banking.”

# HR tech: Jobwinwin introducing Swipe, Match and Meet concept to talent sourcing



**Nabil Brouz**

Founder · Jobwinwin



“ HR TECH continues to grow in Morocco with more and more advanced solutions which I am convinced will allow some startups to shine internationally

Various subjects are treated, recruitment, sourcing, management... Some insurtech or healthtech solutions can also wear a human resources management hat.

The culture of talents is an essential lever for the years to come. sourcing, onboarding, career management and the well-being of employees are all key issues for companies in order to best take the post-covid shift.

Regarding Jobwinwin, we are already planning our installation in France and the deployment of our solution in French-speaking Africa.

The working relationship begins with a meeting, our mission is to qualify it to the best and above all ease in 3 steps swipe, match and meet.

# How do you see the Moroccan startup ecosystem in 2023



**Meryem Mahfoud**

Partner · INSKIP Entrepreneurs

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**INSKIP**  
ENTREPRENEURS

“ Moroccan startup ecosystem is incredibly vivid: it definitely has the potential to become a regional and international hub for innovation.

We are at a turning point and in a positive motion to tackle our key challenges as:

- Work alongside national institutions to create an entrepreneur-friendly regulatory framework
- Bring even more support and coaching to entrepreneurs to become local champions and go global
- Sustain Morocco's unfair advantages through innovation on key sectors as energy, industry, logistics, agriculture etc ...

2023 has to be OUR year, we have all it takes to make it happen: growing involvement from both Moroccan and international public institutions, talents wishing to take risks and international investors looking at Morocco as a promising African hub for innovation.

At INSKIP Entrepreneurs, we dedicate our Entrepreneurial Taskforce to institutions, corporates and entrepreneurs willing to accelerate to make this ambition come true.

# Ecosystem enablers: more entities joining the ecosystem to help, finance and accelerate Moroccan startups.

## Incubators & Accelerators



## VC Investors



## Other Initiatives























## Govt & Int Organizations



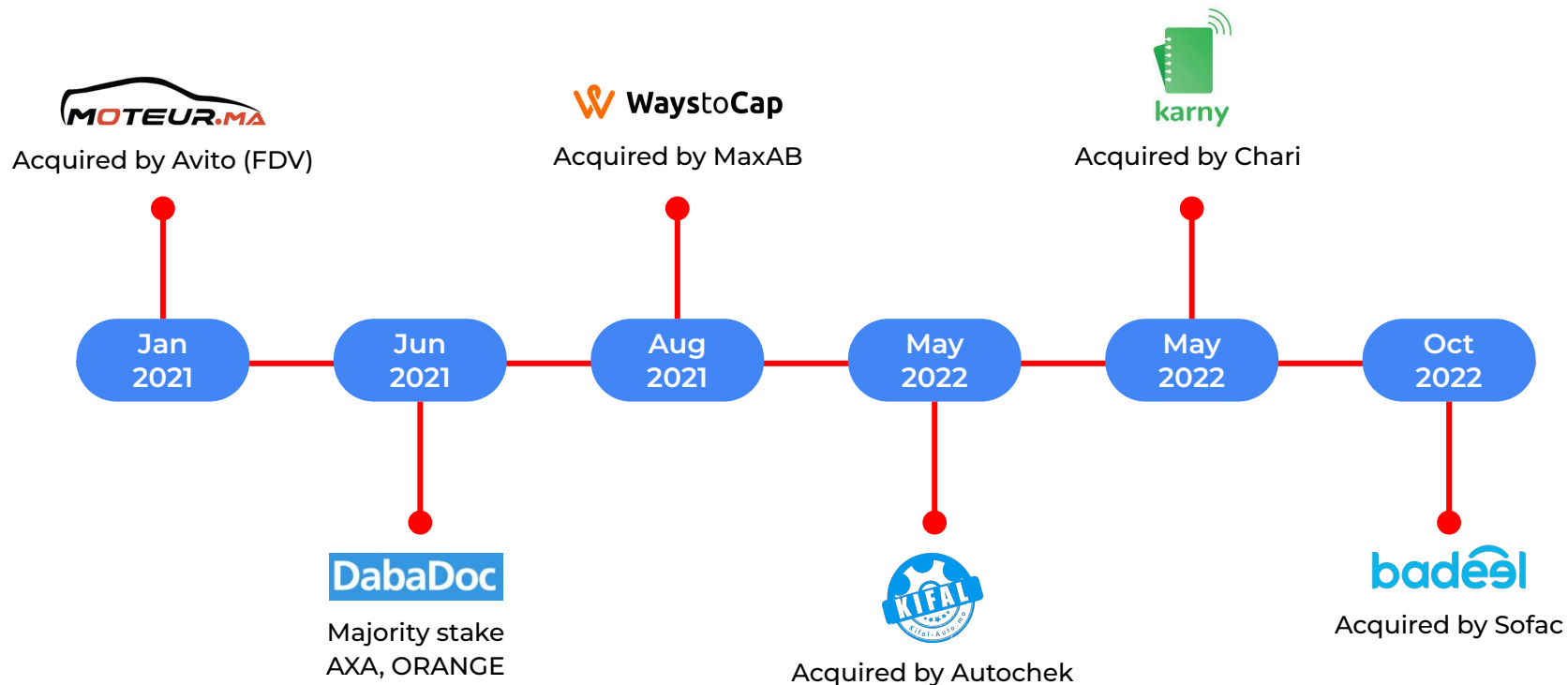
## Angel Groups



# Morocco reached an all-time-high in 2022 with \$30M invested in more than 25 funding rounds.

	Retail		Mobility		Fintech
	Marketplace		Mobility		Fintech
	Marketplace		Mobility		Fintech
	Marketplace		Mobility		Fintech
	Marketplace		Energy		HR
	Health		Energy		Deeptech
	Health		Agritech		Deeptech
	Edtech		Sport tech		Deeptech
	Agritech				

# Moroccan startup exits: 6 acquisitions in the ecosystem in the last two years.



# How do you see the Moroccan startup ecosystem in 2023



**Youssef Mamou**

Program Manager · 212Founders

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**212**  
Founders

“ The local ecosystem is getting more structured providing a viable basis for founders and startups.

I believe that 2023 will consolidate the momentum created in 2020-2022 and register a substantial growth in number of launched startups as well as invested ones. International expansion will also be a good growth lever for the existing startups.

After the announcement of “Mohamed VI fund” more initiatives will be launched and will provide supplementary “dry powder” even at a slightly later stage. We will also start to see more international investors betting on the Moroccan market.

From the vertical side, we can foresee that 2023 will see the launch of more Fintechs and Retailtech startups.



# How do you see the Moroccan startup ecosystem in 2023



Fatima-zahra Bennani

Principal · Sawari Ventures

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**sawari  
ventures**

“ The market in Morocco has been steady, with the number of startups raising funds increasing in recent years.

The ecosystem is flourishing credits to the outstanding work of the local funds covering most of the seed stage and interest from global funds for later stage. Unfortunately, the ecosystem is still lacking opportunities in key sectors such as Fintech, sector that attract the most of the capital in the continent (39% of the African fundraising in 2022).

Moreover, we have to consider the global landscape affecting African countries and may have some domino effect in Morocco: 1) companies that had grown during a period of capital abundance may take more time to find available money for later and bigger rounds 2) The M&A landscape is becoming more interesting to African founders who are perceiving this path as a practical and more feasible exit strategy (we already experienced it in Morocco with the exit of Kifal in 2022).

In 2023, the Moroccan startup ecosystem is expected to see some improvement thanks to the tremendous ongoing work of Bank Al-Maghrib. However, the Moroccan fintech landscape may need more efforts and commitment to catch the backlog compared to the fast growing African Fintech economies (Nigeria, Egypt, Kenya...). A special accelerated regulatory track would help the Moroccan Fintechs to deploy fast in the market with a continuous regulatory support. B2B Corporations should also have incentives to work and collaborate more efficiently with Moroccan startups to foster the ecosystem's growth. Our investment strategy in Morocco for the coming years is leading or co-leading Series A, helping them to develop in new markets such as the giant Egyptian market. Our investment focus areas articulate toward different sectors such as Fintech, Climate change, Health tech, Edtech, Deeptech, Biotech , Green tech, Air quality. Climate change is a pressing issue in Africa, and Sawari Ventures is committed to supporting startups that are developing solutions to this problem.

# How do you see the Moroccan startup ecosystem in 2023



**Ghita Zniber**

Partner · Kalys Ventures



“ In 2022, the ecosystem underwent several changes. This is reflected in the quality of the deals we have received.

With startups that are more focused on the customer need than on the product, and that are more prepared to build startups rather than SMEs. This includes 1) using technology to scale their business, 2) having the right team, and 3) validating the depth of the market. In fact, many of them suggest West Africa as an expansion territory directly after conquering Morocco. On the other hand, we have unfortunately also noticed a continuity of valuation levels that are out of line with market realities, which makes fundraising time longer and executing the business plan complicated given the lack of visibility on available cash, so many startups have not been able to raise a second round. Finally, corporates are starting to integrate the ecosystem, both by creating their own investment vehicle in startups and by integrating innovative solutions in their operations, this has increased B2B startup activities.

I personally think that in 2023:

- The ecosystem will need to have more venture builders and startup studios than incubators,
- Valuation levels will naturally be market corrected,
- Fewer pre-seed startups will raise funds, due to the expansion of the investment thesis of local funds to international startups,
- We will see more startups created by Moroccans living abroad in Morocco than by locals,
- We will probably see local acquisitions, especially in the agriculture, mobility, logistics, and retail sectors,
- We will see more international startups integrating morocco in their roadmap expansion, due to the creation of partnerships with international institutions that can facilitate their implementation,
- If regulations do not change in favor of foreign investors, the wealth created will continue to flee with local startups continuing to open their holdings outside of Morocco to increase their chances of raising money from international players

# How do you see the Moroccan startup ecosystem in 2023



**Zouheir Lakhdisi**

Angel Investor



“ The last year was special for Retail tech and Logistic startups in terms of funding.

These two sectors raised most of the funding in Morocco, followed by Health tech and Edtech as rising stars sectors where the demand and the focus is getting more acute. We also witnessed really good valuations of Moroccan startups like Chari, Freterium and WafR. These startups have given more visibility to the ecosystem in connection with attracting foreign investors.

One thing to take into consideration is the fact that in other African countries like Nigeria, Kenya or Egypt, fintech ranks first in terms of total funding raised by sector, which is not the case in Morocco. This is mostly due to less flexibility when it comes to regulation that can facilitate access to the creation of real fintech solutions facilitating interactions and transactions between users.”

# Survey: Insights on Startup Failure in Morocco





# Survey: 80+ founders breaking down the top reasons for startup failure in Morocco.

Top reasons  
startups fail  
in Morocco

 Ran out of cash & failed to raise new capital **25%**

 Regulatory & legal challenges **18%**

 No market need **11%**

 Not the right team **11%**

# Quotes on startup failure from Moroccan founders: It's not only about cash, regulation and team.

*"We teach an entrepreneur business model and plan but not communication and charisma"*

Marketplace female founder

*"Lack of funding and acceleration program that support the startup grow at its early stages"*

Greentech founder

*"Very small market. Not mature enough for digital transformation"*

Marketplace founder

*"Society / Businesses do not trust startups"*

Edtech founder

*"Delay in client payments"*

Proptech founder

