

## **Organon and Flat6Labs Announce Winners of MENA Region's First Digital-Health FemTech Accelerator**

- *'Omgyno' founded by Doreen Toutikian and Elisabeth Milini in Greece and Lebanon, 'Siira' founded by Sandra Salame in Lebanon, and 'Maternally' founded by Yasmin El Mouallem in the UAE, were announced the winners of the region's first digital-health FemTech accelerator, marking the culmination of the program that was launched by Organon and Flat6Labs at Expo 2020 to advance women's health*
- *The winners were announced at the 'Demo Day' event in Cairo Egypt, which saw the participants pitch their ideas to a panel of eminent judges from across the women's health world*

**Cairo, Egypt, 13 September 2022** – *Omgyno* founded by Doreen Toutikian and Elisabeth Milini in Greece and Lebanon, *Siira* founded by Sandra Salame in Lebanon, and *Maternally* founded by Yasmin El Mouallem in the UAE were crowned the winners of the MENA region's first digital-health *FemTech Accelerator Program*. Launched in October 2021 during Expo 2020 by partners Organon and Flat6Labs to address unmet women's healthcare needs, the winners were announced after the program's ten finalists from across Egypt, Lebanon, UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Jordan pitched their ideas to a panel of judges and an audience of prospective investors.

The pitches took place at the 'Demo Day' event, hosted at the GrEEK Campus. The panel of judges selecting the final winners consisted of Dina El Shenoufy, Chief Investment Officer at Flat6Labs; Ramy Koussa, Associate Vice President of MENAT at Organon; Dr. Amr Alashkar, Chief Information Officer at Cleopatra Hospital Group; Jailan El Messeiry, Group Digital Marketing & Communications Manager at UN Women; and Frederika Meijer, Country Representative at UNFPA.

*Omgyno*, the start-up that won first place, is a FemTech platform redesigning the gynecological experience. After identifying the causes behind gaps in testing for the potentially cancer-causing HPV virus, including fear of judgement and accessibility, the two entrepreneurs worked on a user-centered platform offering home testing and telehealth, tailored to promote self-care and privacy.

*Siira*, the start-up that sat in second place, developed a mental health platform designed to accompany women in their daily struggles related to parenting, relationships and



work. Conscious that only 30-35% of people with mental health problems seek professional support<sup>1</sup>, Sandra Salame's start-up is focused on addressing this gap.

Globally, one in five women experience mental health issues during pregnancy, and/or following birth.<sup>2</sup> Seeking to plug this gap, *Maternally*, which was adjudged third runner-up, is an online platform being developed to cater to women's specific mental health needs during their motherhood journey.

"At Organon, we understand that prioritizing women's health is tied to long-term productivity and resilient societies. That's why, as part of our ESG Economic, Social and Governance-driven purpose to achieve her promise, we are committed to investing in programs, partnerships, initiatives, and ideas that work to fill that gap. The best ideas for addressing these gaps truly come from the women who experience these challenges first-hand," said **Ramy Koussa, AVP MENAT, Organon**.

"With vast unmet medical needs, today, women across the MENA region cannot fully participate in the economy on account of a lack of adequate healthcare. Shockingly, the region loses **\$575 billion** yearly due to the lack of female economic participation,"<sup>3</sup> he added.

**Dina El Shenoufy, Chief Investment Officer at Flat6Labs**, commented, "At Flat6Labs, we have been delighted to participate in and support this female empowerment initiative. Participating start-ups have received over 65 hours of training sessions led by top local and international advisors, and 27 hours of one-on-one coaching sessions, helping them gain a solid understanding of the FemTech market, connect with key leaders and grow their networks."

"Our partnership with Organon not only works to redress many of the gender inequities we see in the start-up world, particularly around access to funding, but also to support better women's health. We know that female health and economic empowerment go hand in hand. By investing in the women in our communities and supporting greater gender equity, everyone across our societies benefits," she added.

The FemTech accelerator program, announced shortly after Organon's launch in the MENAT region, is the first regional Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) initiative by Organon that is committed to addressing unmet women's needs. Inspired by Organon's purpose to help women and girls achieve their promise through better health, the program was designed to support female entrepreneurship and digital health start-ups

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<sup>1</sup> <https://bmcp psychiatry.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12888-014-0275-y>

<sup>2</sup> <https://panda.org.au/articles/how-common-is-mental-illness-in-the-perinatal-period/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/overview-female-entrepreneurship-middle-east-and-north-africa-region>



that advance women's health by providing support to build products, test market fit and improve business models, as well as access to investors.

– End –

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### **About Organon:**

Organon (NYSE: OGN) is a global healthcare company formed through a spinoff from Merck, known as MSD, outside of the United States and Canada, to focus on improving the health of women throughout their lives. Here for her health, the company has a portfolio of more than 60 medicines and products across a range of therapeutic areas. Led by the reproductive health portfolio coupled with an expanding biosimilars business and stable franchise of established medicines, Organon's products produce strong cash flows that will support investments in future growth opportunities in women's health, including business development. In addition, Organon is pursuing opportunities to collaborate with biopharmaceutical innovators looking to commercialize their products by leveraging its scale and presence in fast growing international markets.

Organon has a global footprint with significant scale and geographic reach, world-class commercial capabilities, and approximately 9,000 employees with headquarters located in Jersey City, New Jersey.

For more information, visit [www.organon.com](http://www.organon.com) and connect with us on LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook.

### **About Flat6Labs:**

Flat6Labs is the MENA region's leading seed and early-stage venture capital firm, currently running the most renowned startup programs in the region. Annually, Flat6Labs invests in more than 100 innovative and technology-driven startups enabling thousands of passionate entrepreneurs to achieve their daring ambitions and ultimately becoming their institutional co-founders.

Flat6Labs manages a number of seed funds with a total AUM in excess of \$85M. More than 25 leading institutions have invested into the Flat6Labs managed funds: believing in the asset class and Flat6Labs' proven track record as the market leader. Flat6Labs provides a wide range of investment ticket sizes ranging from \$50K to \$500k, supporting startups through their early journeys from Pre-Seed all the way to Pre-Series A stages. Alongside to the investments, Flat6Labs' exceptional startup programs, executed to cater specifically for the needs of the innovative entrepreneurs, helps them accelerate their growth by providing them with a



plethora of support services and connecting them to unparalleled opportunities with an expansive network comprising hundreds of business mentors, investors and corporates.

Launched and headquartered in Cairo since 2011, Flat6Labs has multiple offices across the region with ongoing plans to expand into other emerging markets.