

MENA Startup Ecosystem News

APRIL 2026

MENA startup funding rebounds to \$150M in April 2026, after March slump

According to [Wamda's report](#), the amount was raised from 27 deals, and shows an 211% rise MoM after March's sharp slowdown.

- The UAE attracted \$78M across 8 deals, accounting for 52% of total funding. KSA followed with \$26.2M raised by 7 startups, while Egypt recorded a similar funding level spread across 5 transactions. Oman, Bahrain, and Qatar collectively raised \$14.5M through 5 deals.
- Fintech led sector activity with \$89.4M across 7 deals. E-commerce secured \$19.3M across 4 transactions, while online services raised \$15M across 2 startups. Foodtech attracted \$13M across 2 deals.
- B2B companies raised \$95.8M across 11 deals, outpacing B2C companies which secured \$35.8M through 12 transactions.
- Debt financing accounted for \$80M in 2 deals, around half of the total funding.
- Funding shows early signs of recovery but remained down by 42% YoY, with around half of the capital deployed through debt financing, reflecting continued caution.

INVESTMENTS (non-exhaustive)

Company	Sector	Country	Amount	Lead Investor(s)
Comfi	Fintech	UAE	\$65M, Pre-Series A (Equity & Debt)	Equity led by Iliad Partners; from Yango Ventures and Raw Ventures. Debt from Partners for Growth, Shorooq and a family office
Lucky	Fintech	Egypt	\$23M, Series B (Equity & Debt)	Disruptech Ventures, DPI via Nclude, Suez Canal Bank, OneStop
Signit	SaaS	KSA	\$15M, Series A	led by Raed Ventures; from STV, Seedra Ventures, Takamol Ventures, Suhail Ventures
Fascano	Foodtech	Oman	\$10M, Undisclosed	HH Sayyid Dr. Kamel bin Fahd Al Said, Cyfr Capital, Future Fund Oman
Udora	E-commerce	UAE	\$10M, Undisclosed	Undisclosed
Aya	E-commerce	KSA	\$7M, Series A	led by RAED Ventures; from Nuwa Capital, Sanabil Investments (PIF), Joa Capital, Khwarizmi Ventures
Lola	Foodtech	Bahrain	\$3M, Seed	led by Vision Ventures; from Aljazira Capital, Seedra Ventures, Plus VC
Jozo	Proptech	KSA	\$2.21M, Seed	led by Sheikh Hamad Bin Saedan Real Estate Co.
ZSystems	Retailtech	Morocco	\$1.65M, Seed	led by Azur Innovation Managemen; from MNF Ventures, Witamax, Harambeans Prosperity Fund
Sinai.ai	Edtech	Egypt	\$1.45M, Pre-Seed	led by KAUST Innovation Ventures and DisrupTech Ventures; from Maza Ventures, YOUXEL Ventures, angels
Invia	Fintech	Egypt	\$1.2M, Undisclosed	angels
HealPort	Healthtech	Oman	\$1.2M, Undisclosed	Undisclosed
Ray	IoT	UAE	\$1.2M, Seed	led by angels including Meirambek Abelkasov and Serik Uspanov
Maison Safqa	E-commerce	KSA	\$620K, Pre-Seed	500 Global and angels
Reme-D	Biotech	Egypt	\$500K, Undisclosed	Global Innovation Fund (GIF)

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INVESTMENTS (non-exhaustive)

STARTUP	SECTOR / INDUSTRY	LOCATION	AMOUNT & ROUND	INVESTORS
ElGoat	Sportstech	KSA	\$266K, Seed	Trigon
Sufra AI	Foodtech	Qatar	\$100K, Pre-Seed	Snoonu Startup Factory
AVA	Fintech	KSA	Undisclosed	Plug and Play
BRKZ	Contech	KSA	Undisclosed	Saudi Industrial Investment Company
estaie	Proptech	UAE	Undisclosed, Pre-Seed	led by Plus VC; from Falak Angels and Value Makers Studio

ACQUISITIONS

COMPANY	SECTOR / INDUSTRY	LOCATION	ACQUIRER, LOCATION	DETAILS
Cyclex	Climate tech	Egypt	Edafa Venture, Egypt	Undisclosed six-figure deal
Digital Ma'arefa	Media	KSA	Rain Financial, UAE	Undisclosed
Kernel for AI	AI	KSA	Falak Holding, UAE	Majority stake acquisition
Maktapp	Fintech	Qatar	Vodafone Qatar	Undisclosed
Rubikal	Software Engineering	Egypt	iSchool, Egypt	Undisclosed amount; acquisition includes Rubikal founders and 21 engineers
Playable Factory	Gametech / Adtech	Turkiye	Tamatem, Jordan	Undisclosed
TAPnGO	Fintech	UAE	PayTabs Group, KSA	Undisclosed
Viral Wave	Media	UAE	PopArabia, UAE	Undisclosed

VENTURE CAPITAL

Saudi Venture Capital backs Growth Catalyst Fund to boost mid-market growth

Saudi Venture Capital announced an investment in the Growth Catalyst Fund to expand private equity activity in Saudi Arabia mid market segment. The fund managed by Growth Catalyst Investment Co will target growth stage businesses across the Kingdom and Gulf Cooperation Council focusing on sectors with strong expansion potential and strategic importance to improve efficiency competitiveness and support development of national companies under Vision 2030 and increasing demand for capital.

Speedinvest launches MEA fund backed by Mubadala, QIA, and EIB Global

Speedinvest has launched its first flagship fund focused on the Middle East and Africa, backed by Mubadala, Qatar Investment Authority, and EIB Global. The fund will invest in early and growth-stage startups across MENAPT and Sub-Saharan Africa, targeting fintech, embedded finance, AI, climate, health, and digital infrastructure. The initiative formalizes Speedinvest's long-term regional expansion, supported by dedicated capital, local teams, partnerships, and an existing MEA portfolio across multiple priority markets.

Aramco Ventures backs Via Separations in \$36M round

Saudi Arabia's Aramco Ventures participated in a \$36M funding round for the US-based deeptech startup Via Separations, alongside Climate Investment and Marathon Petroleum. Via Separations develops modular filtration systems that replace heat-based industrial separation processes with energy-efficient alternatives. The funding will support global deployment, manufacturing expansion, and adoption of membrane-based separations across industrial sectors, accelerating deployment into the refining and chemical sectors.

Homegrown Ventures closes \$22.8M Fund I to back MENA consumer brands

Homegrown Ventures has closed its debut Fund I at \$22.8 million, exceeding its \$20 million target. The UAE-based venture capital firm focuses on early-stage CPG and FMCG startups and better-for-you brands across food and beverage, health and wellness, personal and home care, and lifestyle categories. Founded by Nader Amiri and Ahmad Shamieh, Homegrown Ventures has invested in five startups and will deploy capital across the Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, and select international markets, supporting the next generation of locally built consumer brands.

Snoonu Launches "Snoonu Startup Factory" to Support Early-Stage Founders

Snoonu has announced the launch of Snoonu Startup Factory, a new initiative designed to support early-stage founders and accelerate startup growth. This launch marks a strategic shift, transitioning into an active venture builder. The programme's first investment is a \$100,000 pre-seed round in Sufra AI. Through Startup Factory, Snoonu aims to go beyond funding by offering mentorship, operational expertise, and direct access to market opportunities.

STARTUPS

Raedbots launches as Egypt's first industrial robotics manufacturer

Raedbots has launched as Egypt's first industrial robotics manufacturer, developing AI-powered industrial robots for welding, material handling, and warehouse automation. Founded in 2026 by Mohamed Ibrahim and Hamza El-Sahiti, the company builds its technology entirely in-house, covering hardware, electronics, control systems, and AI software. Raedbots is part of the NVIDIA Inception programme and is supported by Egypt's Technology Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (TIEC).

Arabic.AI partners with HeyBreez to scale Arabic voice AI for enterprises

UAE-based Arabic.AI has partnered with HeyBreez to deliver production-grade Arabic voice AI solutions for enterprises and governments. The collaboration combines Arabic language intelligence with real-time, low-latency infrastructure, enabling scalable voice deployments. Arabic.AI contributes NLP models across Modern Standard Arabic and regional dialects, while HeyBreez provides streaming, telephony integration, and orchestration. The partnership targets over 400M Arabic speakers underserved by English-first voice systems across enterprise contact centres and public services.

OmniOps partners with Grafana Labs to deliver sovereign observability in Saudi Arabia

OmniOps announced its participation in the Grafana Labs global partner program to help enterprises advance their observability with Grafana Cloud. The collaboration introduces Advanced Observability services hosted within Saudi Arabia, ensuring data sovereignty and compliance. Through the channel partner program, OmniOps gains access to an observability portfolio, expands market coverage, and leverages Grafana Labs' expertise to deliver real-time visibility, performance optimization, and control for enterprises across the Kingdom customers environments.

Crypto Exchange ChangeNOW Opens MENA HQ at Dubai World Trade Centre

ChangeNOW, a noncustodial cryptocurrency exchange headquartered in Europe has opened a regional headquarters at Dubai World Trade Centre marking its expansion into the Middle East. The new office will support collaboration with developers, partners and users enabling in person engagement. The platform supports over 1500 digital assets across more than 110 blockchains and reports more than 8 million users while contributing to the digital economy in region and ecosystem.

VAST Data closes Series F round at \$30 billion valuation

With presence in Saudi Arabia and UAE US based AI infrastructure company VAST Data has raised 1 billion in a Series F round reaching a 30 billion valuation round was led by Drive Capital with Access Industries as co lead and participation from NVIDIA Fidelity and NEA Founded in 2016 VAST Data develops an AI Operating System that unifies data compute and real time processing into a single platform to support global strategic acquisitions and further AI infrastructure systems.

WHOOOP attracts Gulf sovereign funds and global athletes in \$575M round

GCC-based investors, including 2PointZero Group, Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), and Mubadala Investment Company, participated as WHOOOP raised \$575M in a Series G round at a \$10.1B valuation, led by Collaborative Fund. The funding will support global expansion, with a focus on the GCC, including WHOOOP Labs Doha, scaling regional partnerships, and advancing personalised health using AI and continuous biometric data. Founded in 2012 by Egyptian entrepreneur Will Ahmed.

STARTUP PROGRAMS

Sandbox by Oraseya Capital welcomes its seventh Cohort



Having received over 600 applications, SANDBOX Accelerator welcomed 15 high-caliber startups to the Phase 1 of the program, hosted by Oraseya Capital. Designed as a founder-centric program, it spans five months with a two-phased structure where the program equips startups with deep mentorship, access to Oraseya's extensive network, and the opportunity for investment, whereby startups shortlisted into Phase Two of the program will receive a US\$150K investment from Oraseya Capital to support scaling and growth.

Propeller brings five MENA deeptech startups to Silicon Valley with Kernel Camp

Propeller has launched the first cohort of its Kernel Camp residency, bringing five deeptech startups from Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, and Egypt to Silicon Valley. The eight-week programme embeds founders into the ecosystem through access to engineers, investors, and operators. The cohort includes OORB, Eli by Techbible, Firstflow, Nexguards, and Flowbrave, operating across AI infrastructure, developer tools, and cybersecurity, and will conclude with a demo day in May 2026.

Tamwilcom launches \$69M venture-building programme to support 800 Moroccan startups

Tamwilcom has launched a \$69M (MAD 700M) venture-building program to support 800 Moroccan startups over three years. The initiative combines capital, mentorship, and operational support, guiding founders from ideation to market expansion. Startups will receive monthly stipends, grants, and financing tools including loans of up to MAD 2M (\$69M), with a strong focus on market access and early corporate partnerships.

Scale It Forward: A new initiative targets Egypt's venture debt gap for scaleups

Scale It Forward is a program launched by GIZ Egypt and enpact to activate venture debt solutions in Egypt. The initiative targets financial institutions and scaleups, aiming to bridge capital supply and demand. Five institutions will pilot venture debt products and access a curated pipeline of startups, while 30 scaleups receive training and €5,000 in non-repayable support to improve financial readiness, as Egypt's funding remains heavily equity-driven despite \$614M raised.

Monshaat launches sports innovation incubator to back Saudi startups

Monshaat announced launch of the Sports Innovation Incubator in partnership with RSport Holding to empower entrepreneurs and innovators to develop scalable entrepreneurial ventures. The incubator offers 24 week program co working spaces, training workshops, mentorship, advisory sessions, connections with supporting entities and investors, contributing to sustainable opportunities supporting sports sector.

WORTH THE READ

Wamda

- [A new playbook for founders navigating uncertainty in MENA](#)
- [MENA startup funding slips to \\$941M in Q1 2026 amid heightened geopolitical risk](#)
- [The Middle East's butterfly effect on the global economy](#)

Zawya

- [Does the AI business model have a fatal flaw?: Joachim Klement](#)
- [Dubai accelerates shift to AI-powered city governance](#)

Dubai Media Office

- [Dubai Integrated Economic Zones Authority launches set of economic measures to strengthen business resilience and empower partners](#)
- [Dubai Land Department and Dubai Silicon Oasis Organise the Developers Meeting as Part of Emirati Real Estate Business Incubator Programme to Empower National Talent](#)
- [Leaders of Dubai-based unicorns hail city as global innovation hub shaping future technology and driving the digital economy](#)