MENA Startup Ecosystem News

JULY 2026

MENA startup funding reaches $172.6M in July as Saudi Arabia takes the lead

- According to Wamda's report, startups across MENA raised $172.6M across 45 deals in July 2026, 16% MoM increase, though funding remained 78% lower YoY.
- KSA led with $106.6M from 16 deals, followed by the UAE with $46.6M across 16 transactions. Syria ranked third with $10.16M.
- E-commerce led sector activity, attracting 55% of total funding, driven by a small number of large rounds. Govtech followed with a $15M deal from Whiteshield, while super apps raised $12M from startups in Syria & Morocco. Fintech remained most active by deal count with 9 transactions worth $10.9M, alongside proptech's eight deals totaling $11.9M.
- B2B startups secured $136M across 33 deals, nearly 79% of total capital, while consumer startups raised $13.3M across five deals, and B2B2C companies raised $23.3M.
- Debt accounted for 56% of total funding in July, compared with 11.5% in June and just 2% in July 2025.
- The funding landscape reflects ongoing caution, with no mega or late-stage rounds and activity concentrated in early-stage and debt-backed transactions.

INVESTMENTS (non-exhaustive)

STARTUP	SECTOR / INDUSTRY	LOCATION	AMOUNT & ROUND	INVESTORS
SILQ	Fintech/ E-commerce	KSA	$20M, Debt financing	Gemcorp Capital
Whiteshield	AI	UAE	$15M, Debt financing	Ruya Partners
Keyper	Proptech	UAE	$11M, Series A	led by Speedinvest; from NeoVentures, MEVP, Dubai Future District Fund, Property Finder, Arab National Bank, Ellington Properties, Dar Ventures, Abbey Road Investment Group
Epic Markets	Fintech	UAE	$10M, Pre-Seed	Karatage (UK)
Labby	Consumer Tech	Syria	$10M, Undisclosed	UAE and KSA investors
Think	AI/Deeptech	KSA	$8M, Pre-Seed	co-led by RAED Ventures and Wa'ed Ventures; from Dhahran Techno Valley's Venture Capital arm, angels
Bundle	Web3	UAE	$5.5M, Pre-Seed	led by Ethereal Ventures and Further; from Nascent, GSR, Scenius Capital, Anchorage Digital, Nuwa Capital
AVELIN AI	AI	UAE	$3.7M, Pre-Seed	angels
Fincart	E-commerce	Egypt	$2.8M, Seed	co-led by Launch Africa and Antler MENAP; from Yango Ventures, Five35 Ventures, Bluestream Capital, Hi2 Global, Kalahari Venture Labs
Maalexi	Agri-fintech	UAE	$2.8M, Pre-Series A	led by Tawuniya; from Global Ventures
Mylerz	Logistics	Egypt	$2M, Undisclosed	led by Lorax Capital Partners; from Fawry
ORA Technologies	Consumer Tech	Morocco	$2M, Series A extension	Undisclosed Moroccan investors
Ash Games	Gametech	KSA	$1.5M, Seed	co-led by Merak Capital and Impact46
Reme-D	Healthtech	Egypt	$1.45M, Pre-Series A	led by Anara Impact Capital; from the Global Innovation Fund, Africa Health Ventures
FLOATY Studio	Gametech	KSA	$1M, Undisclosed	led by Merak Capital

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INVESTMENTS (non-exhaustive)

STARTUP	SECTOR / INDUSTRY	LOCATION	AMOUNT & ROUND	INVESTORS
AlMkhtar	Proptech/Mobility	Syria	$100K, Seed	Angels
DoctorBook	Healthtech	Syria	$16K, Pre-Seed	Undisclosed
Kuadra	Contech	Egypt	Undisclosed	led by Edafa Venture Capital
Planno	Climatetech	UAE	Undisclosed	Incubayt Investments
SkipCash	Fintech	Qatar	Undisclosed	Qatar International Islamic Bank
Uvera	Foodtech/ Agritech	KSA	Undisclosed, Seed	Morgan Stanley Inclusive & Sustainable Ventures, LAB7, Core Vision, angels

ACQUISITIONS

COMPANY	SECTOR / INDUSTRY	LOCATION	ACQUIRER, LOCATION	DETAILS
Almakhfi	Edtech	KSA	Noon Academy, KSA	Undisclosed

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STARTUPS

Dubizzle Group invests in Takeem to strengthen UAE rental ecosystem

Oraseya-backed portfolio startup Takeem has announced a strategic partnership with Dubizzle Group. The UAE-based proptech is a rent guarantee platform protecting landlords against tenant non-payment and providing maintenance cover while enabling monthly digital direct debit payments. As part of the partnership, Bayut and Dubizzle will act as exclusive portals for Takeem’s Rental Guarantee solution across the UAE, supporting a more secure and predictable rental experience.

RiseUp, A15 and BitRoot launch NVIDIA SIGNALS for Egyptian AI founders

RiseUp, A15 and BitRoot have launched the first NVIDIA SIGNALS event in Egypt through an inaugural session held at the Grand Egyptian Museum. Led by Basil Fateen, NVIDIA’s Head of Startups and VC for the Middle East and Africa, the event explored emerging AI trends, the NVIDIA Inception program, and investor expectations for AI startups, alongside discussions with founders from Intella, Valify Solutions, Paymob, and Bluworks.

Simplex inaugurates second factory with $50M investment

Egyptian CNC manufacturing startup Simplex has inaugurated its second manufacturing facility in 10th of Ramadan City, spanning 40,000 square meters with investments totaling $50M, while laying the foundation stone for its third factory. Founded in 2013 by Ahmed Shaaban and Mohamed Mansour, Simplex designs, assembles, and manufactures Computer Numerical Control machines. Alongside the expansion, Simplex signed partnership and agency agreements in Jordan and Kuwait to strengthen its regional presence.

DESAISIV unveils AI Insurance Agent, seeks $8M to expand enterprise platform

Saudi Insurtech DESAISIV has launched its AI Insurance Agent, an AI powered platform for managing and optimizing corporate insurance, while opening an $8M growth funding round. Founded in 2023 by Mohammad Nabhan and Saed Khawaldeh, DESAISIV serves more than 600 enterprise clients and works with 18 insurers and brokers. The new funding will support AI development, product expansion, strategic partnerships, and enterprise growth.

OSN seeks full ownership of Anghami in proposed take-private deal

OSN Streaming, Anghami's controlling shareholder, submitted a preliminary non-binding proposal to acquire all remaining Anghami shares it does not already own in a take-private transaction, offering $3.39 per share in cash. Founded in 2012 by Eddy Maroun and Elie Habib, Anghami operates a streaming platform offering music, podcasts, video, and live entertainment services. OSN currently owns approximately 67% of the company's outstanding shares.

Deep Finance Capital launches as DIFC's first AI-native asset manager

UAE-based Deep Finance Capital has launched as the first AI-native asset management company in DIFC, operating under the regulation of the Dubai Financial Services Authority and serving institutional investors across real estate, private equity, commodities and special situations. The company, which emerged from Rasameel Investment House Ltd., has developed NEXT, a proprietary AI-powered investment framework supporting deal sourcing and due diligence.

'Yalla Startups' debuts as Qatar's first radio show dedicated to startups and innovation

Yalla Startups is Qatar’s first radio and multi-platform program dedicated exclusively to startups, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Launched through a strategic partnership between Startup Grind Doha and Olive Suno Radio Network, the program will broadcast weekly on OSRN’s mainstream and digital platforms. Yalla Startups will feature founders sharing their entrepreneurial journey, showcasing innovations, and highlighting people and ideas shaping Qatar’s startup ecosystem.

VENTURE CAPITAL

Catalyst Fund secures $30M to back Africa's climatetech startups

Catalyst Fund has completed the second close of its debut pan-African climate-focused venture capital fund, bringing total commitments to $30M. The fund is backed by IFC, FASA, Shell Foundation, Trafigura Foundation, Speedinvest, Blink Impact, We-Fi, and private investors. Led by Maelis Carraro, Maxime Bayen, Olúwatóyìn Emmanuel-Olubake, and Amolo Ng'weno, Catalyst Fund invests in pre-seed to Series A climatetech startups across Africa.

Growth Catalyst Fund I secures first commitment from Jada Fund of Funds

Saudi Arabia's Jada Fund of Funds has made its first commitment to Growth Catalyst Fund I, a private equity fund targeting $200M to invest in Saudi SMEs. Led by Turki Al-Dayel, the fund focuses on founder-led, upper-middle-market companies in Saudi Arabia, with flexibility to invest in pre-IPO businesses, supporting companies through their expansion phase before exiting via IPOs, strategic acquisitions, or secondary transactions.

SVC invests in SEEDRA Ventures Fund II to back Saudi tech startups

Saudi Venture Capital has invested in SEEDRA Ventures Fund II, a venture capital fund managed by SEEDRA Ventures, to support early-stage, high-growth technology startups in Saudi Arabia. Launched by SEEDRA Ventures, founded in 2019, the fund targets startups across artificial intelligence, fintech, proptech, SaaS, logistics and other technology-enabled industries, with a focus on companies at early stages. Through the investment, SVC aims to expand access to institutional capital for Saudi founders.

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STARTUP PROGRAMS

Sandbox by Oraseya Capital welcomes its SB S26 Cohort

Having received over 1,000 applications, SANDBOX Accelerator welcomed 16 high caliber startups into Phase 1 of the program where 8 startups were shortlisted to the Phase 2 of the Accelerator program, each receiving USD 150K investment from Oraseya Capital.

Designed as a founder-centric, five-month journey, the program equips startups with deep mentorship and access to Oraseya's extensive network, and the opportunity for investment to support scaling and growth.

Applications are open for the 9th Cohort, interested Applicants may send in their applications by clicking Apply Now.

Launchpad by Oraseya Capital launches Residency Program

Launchpad is a 6-month, in-person founder residency by Oraseya Capital that supports early-stage startups before they are investment-ready. Designed for founders serious about building real momentum, the program helps founders move faster through structured support, guidance, and access while building alongside high-caliber peers.

Participants receive access to world-class mentors, 50+ expert-led workshops, weekly office hours, investor networking events, $500k+ software credits and perks, and fast-track consideration for the SANDBOX Investment Program.

Applications are always open. Interested applicants may submit their applications by clicking Apply Now.

REACH Middle East opens applications for their second UAE proptech accelerator

REACH Middle East has opened applications for the second edition of its UAE-based proptech accelerator program. The program will run from November 2026 to August 2027, with applications closing on 30 August 2026. Managed by Second Century Ventures and endorsed by the Dubai Land Department, the accelerator provides selected startups with funding, mentorship, investor access, and global networking opportunities to help scale property technology solutions.

500 Global and Sanabil back 8 startups in their latest accelerator cohort

500 Global and Sanabil Investments announced the 11th cohort of the Sanabil Accelerator by 500 Global, selecting eight early-stage startups from more than 690 applications. The accelerator ran from 5 April to 1 July 2026 and selected **Carevision, Emtethal, IBEA, Kami, Melon Digital, Raid AI, TPP, and an Oraseya portfolio company and Sandbox Alumni XSquare**. The program provides mentorship, investor exposure, and access to regional and global networks.

WORTH THE READ

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- The missing piece in Dubai's AI strategy is talent

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