

# Loubna Ksibi: Meet My Mama

**LOUBNA KISIBI:** Women in the world will say, I can become an entrepreneur. I can become independent. I can work for myself. I can be a chef. I can make a living for my talents.

**RAMA CHAKAKI:** Meet Loubna Ksibi, one of the founders of Meet My Mama, a culinary project in France. Meet My Mama enables women from all over the world to make a living from their cooking skills. Through the website or mobile app, you can order tailored catering service for your company's canteen, reception, or any other event you can think of.

**LOUBNA KISIBI:** So my name is Lubna, I'm one of the co-founder of Meet my Mama and, in the company I'm taking care of the projects. So with my team, we are creating the service and the projects for the mamas and for the clients. Our goal it's to be the food company for all the needs of the clients, like for lunch, for dinner, for events.

**RAMA CHAKAKI:** In this episode, we'll get to know the startup that helps women who cook, become entrepreneurs.

I'm Rama Chakaki, and you're listening to Innovate with Purpose, the official podcast of Expo Live, a programme by Expo 2020 Dubai.

**[INTRO STING]**

**RAMA CHAKAKI:** Ok Loubna, let's get straight into the kitchen. How did this project start?

**LOUBNA KISIBI:** Actually my aunt, she's a very good cooker. We tell her that she's a chef. But, she wasn't doing anything like she didn't have the work, so we pushed her to open the restaurant and she did. But she realized that she knows how to cook, but she doesn't know how to, create a company, how to manage, The accountancy the papers, how to attract clients, she just knows how to cook, and this is good. So she failed actually, and we realized that there is no one that helped those. To become chef, to become independent and to become an entrepreneur.

**RAMA CHAKAKI:** Meet my Mama has now grown to include more than 200 women chefs. But the platform also provides training on entrepreneurship, cooking, and soft skills like digital or public speaking. Today, the Meet my Mama website is home to more than 2,000 hours of training, while the team has given more than 3,000 hours of support to the participating women.

**LOUBNA KISIBI:** To measure the impact. It's important to mention the numbers of trainings, et cetera, but also the money. That's why we are a social business because the money is important to help those women have another status in the society.

So every time we reach a million, we are happy for those women to get more money, to change her status and to help their family also.

**RAMA CHAKAKI:** And how do you fund the company?

**LOUBNA KISIBI:** it's called crowd equity. And, it's a new way to fund your companies with people. So everybody can be an investor and anybody can take

part of the adventure. So we did that. So the mama can be an investor in Meet my mama and they can have shares. It was very important for us that she can have the opportunity to be in the board of the company.

**RAMA CHAKAKI:** But for Loubna, what really sets Meet my Mama apart from other similar businesses, is the food offered and the authenticity of the catering process.

**LOUBNA KISIBI:** And also maybe we are the only company that's that sell authentic food and not something very common you can see in restaurants. like you can discover a real meal, very authentic food. And actually, even if it's mamas from the same country, the food is always different because even if they come from the same country, they have their own recipes from their family, from their special region. So it's every time different.

So we don't have one kitchen and employees. But our model is more scalable. We use lots of technology. We have created an app, a mobile app for the mamas, and today with this business model, we can go everywhere. Then one of the biggest move also it's to focus on B2B.

**RAMA CHAKAKI:** B2B is short for Business To Business. It is when companies sell products or services to other companies, instead of direct individuals.

**LOUBNA KISIBI:** So now our clients are only companies and it's more profitable and more sustainable for us to work with companies.

RAMA: Now that Meet my Mama is expanding, what is the most challenging aspect of being an entrepreneur?

**LOUBNA KISIBI:** The hard thing is nobody can help you when you are an entrepreneur.

Nobody can do it for you and nobody can show you how to do it. You have to learn by yourself, and it's challenging.

**RAMA CHAKAKI:** That must be challenging. Full of surprises

What is your process as an entrepreneur, what gives you structure in your day to day routine, assuming you have one!

**LOUBNA KISIBI:** Whoa, no typical day when you're an entrepreneur! And actually it changed a lot through the steps of the company. In the beginning,, we were,, doing everything actually, we were buying the ingredient with the mamas. We were cooking with them. and at the same time we were talking with the clients. We were negotiating, we were creating the website and we were delivering the food by ourselves. We were waiters during the events. We did everything for the beginning. So our journey, our days were very, very, kind of painful, because of that, and now we are 25 in the team. And also, we have drivers, we have waiters, we have. Partners. So it's different now our days it's more about hiring new people. It's about thinking about the strategy for the three years. For three years later, it's about finding solutions to all the problems everybody has. It's also promoting the company everywhere.

**RAMA CHAKAKI:** What about the big picture then? As an entrepreneur, how do you think social businesses can contribute to a better world?

**LOUBNA KISIBI:** For us, I think a better word. It's when people have the opportunity to eat better. Food is very important for our body, of course. And I think we forgot how to eat well nowadays. and That's why we promote homemade foods with only good ingredients.

And if you come to Paris, we will be very happy to welcome you. And to make you taste the mamas' food.

**RAMA CHAKAKI:** Can't wait! Thank you Loubna for sharing the story of your startup and of the talented mamas with our listeners.

**RAMA CHAKAKI:** "Innovate with Purpose" is the official podcast of Expo Live, an innovation programme by Expo 2020 Dubai. Innovation can come from anywhere, to everyone.

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