



Enhancing Algeria's Startup Ecosystem: Lessons from the UK Model of Support and Institutional Coordination

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Received: 22/10/2025

Accepted: 07/12/2025

Published: 28/12/2025

Abstract:

The development of vibrant startup ecosystems is the key for innovation, employment and inclusive growth. In Algeria, accompaniment agencies support entrepreneurs, yet fragmented coordination as well as lack of efficiency slow ecosystem maturity. The UK by contrast, has integrated several public private mechanisms, innovation funding, and local networks that are currently contributing positively to startups.

This paper explores lessons Algeria can learn from the UK using a qualitative, comparative approach based on institutional and ecosystem theories. It analyzes policy frameworks, institutional coordination and support mechanisms in both nations. The findings identify the alignment in governance, transfer of knowledge, and inter-agency collaboration. The study concludes with policy recommendations to enhance the Algeria's ecosystem by improving its coordination, stakeholder involvement and innovation-driven support systems.

Keywords: Startup ecosystem; Support agencies; Entrepreneurship policy; Institutional framework; United Kingdom

JEL Classification Codes : L26, L53, M13.

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1 Introduction

Entrepreneurship has become widely known as one of the important drivers of innovation, employment generation, and economic diversification (Esmail et al., 2025). Governments around the world are formulating policies and institutions that support startups and small enterprises as sources of sustainable growth (Prasannath et al., 2024). To developing economies such as Algeria, the establishment of a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem is both a developmental challenge and an economic necessity (Boulefa et al., 2025).

Despite various national initiatives such as the establishment of support and accompaniment agencies Algeria's ecosystem remains fragmented and institutionally weak (Barkat & Assoul, 2024). These agencies, despite their importance, tend to work in solitude with overlapping mandates and lack of coordination (Lounes & Mancor, 2024). This institutional discontinuity limits their ability to create the synergies required in an environment of innovation-driven startups (Boufarh & Djeddi, 2024). Conversely, the United Kingdom has managed to create a consistent ecosystem in which the relationships between public and private partnerships, funding agencies of innovation, and regional networks are interrelated to support the success of entrepreneurship (Owen et al., 2023).

The contrast between Algeria and the UK highlights the importance of strong policy framework and integrated institutional structure as well as active knowledge-sharing network in building effective startup ecosystems. Although Algeria has achieved impressive progress with the national programs and the emerging incubators, absence of systematic alignment and performance monitoring limits the effect of these efforts. The UK experience, on the other hand demonstrates how sustained collaboration between government bodies, universities and private investors as well as innovation hubs can create a self-reinforcing cycle of entrepreneurial growth, funding and skills development. Such a comparison offers useful insights on how emerging economies can structure policies and institutional frameworks that help transform governmental intent into practical and scalable support for startups.

This paper seeks to identify lessons Algeria can learn from the UK model to enhance the role of its support and accompaniment agencies. It aims to provide a comparative institutional perspective on how effective coordination and governance as well as the policy design contribute to shaping startup ecosystems.

To achieve these objectives this study seeks to answer the following research question

How can institutional lessons from the United Kingdom's startup ecosystem inform the effectiveness of support and accompaniment agencies in Algeria?

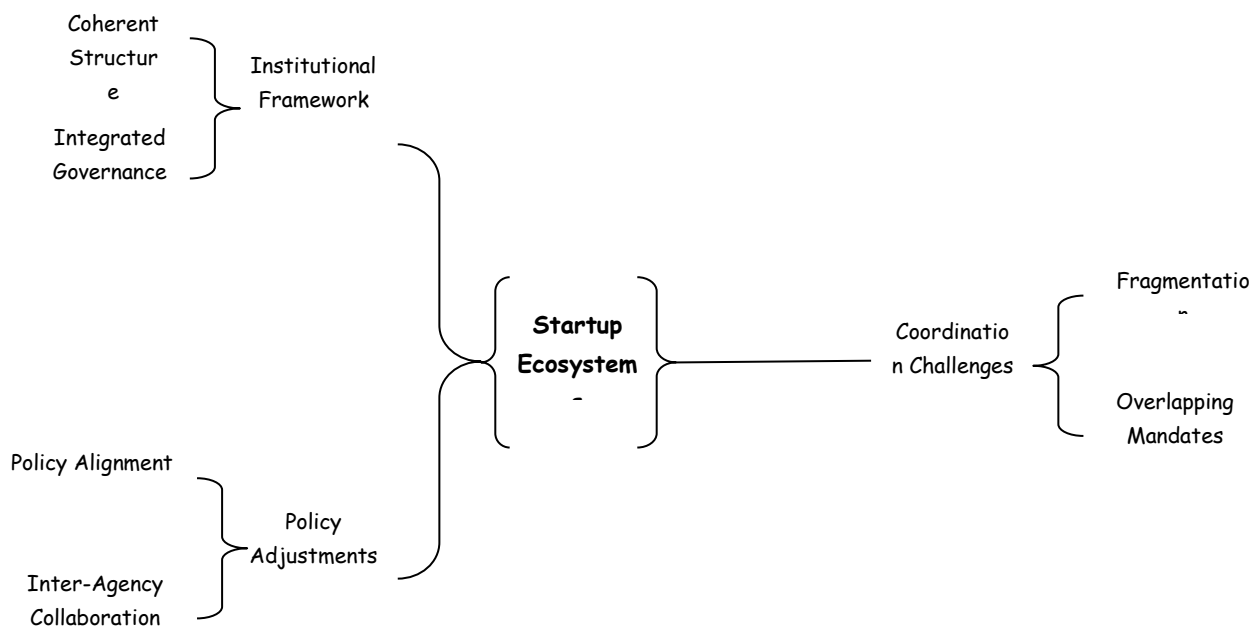
The RQ above support the formulation of the following hypotheses

1. What institutional mechanisms and governance models underpin the success of startup support in the United Kingdom?
→ H1: A coherent and integrated institutional framework positively influences the performance of startup support mechanisms.
2. What are the main institutional and coordination challenges facing Algerian support agencies?
→ H2: Fragmentation and overlapping mandates among Algerian agencies weaken the ecosystem's overall efficiency.
3. Which policy adjustments and strategic collaborations could enhance Algeria's startup ecosystem based on the UK's experience?

→ H3: Policy alignment and inter-agency collaboration can significantly improve ecosystem coherence and entrepreneurial outcomes.

By employing a qualitative, comparative approach based on secondary data and policy analysis, the study makes contributions to the knowledge on institutional capacity and governance in ecosystem development. The insights gained are not only applicable to Algeria, it also can serve as a model for other emerging economies seeking to overcome challenges of fragmentation, limited funding and regulatory constraints. Furthermore, this study places itself in the context of a wider discussion regarding the role of support and accompaniment agencies in ensuring that the policy objectives are translated into practical intervention that can further facilitate the innovation-driven development.

Fig.1. Conceptual Model: Support Agencies and Institutional Coordination for Startup Growth



2 Methodology

This study uses a qualitative and comparative research design to investigate the role of institutional arrangements and support mechanisms in influencing the startup ecosystems. The methodological approach is built on the basis of Institutional Theory and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Theory, which together offer an interpretive perspective of how governance, coordination and inter-agency collaboration influence entrepreneurial outcomes.

2.1 Research Approach and Design

The research follows a comparative case study design, selected on the basis of its ability to reveal and determine similarities as well as contextual differences between two distinct ecosystem structures one emerging, rapidly evolving with fragmented institutional arrangements (Algeria) and another mature, highly coordinated with established support mechanisms (United Kingdom). This approach enables an in-depth analysis of how the institutional coherence, policy frameworks and agency performance interact to effect ecosystem development.

2.2 Data Collection

The research uses secondary data as its main source collected from official reports, International assessments, academic literature, and policy documents issued between 2020 and 2025.

Descriptive insights on the performance trends and structural challenges were used to supplement secondary data with policy briefs, agency evaluations, and national innovation strategies, as these sources give qualitative evidence.

To enhance reliability, only verified, official, and up to date sources were included. Multiple document types were triangulated to reduce bias and ensure comprehensive coverage of each ecosystem.

2.3 Analytical Method: Thematic Comparative Procedure

A thematic comparative synthesis was used to analyse the data and generated key analytical dimensions derived from the literature. The thematic approach allowed the determination of both enabling and constraining factors across the two ecosystems

To strengthen methodological clarity, the comparison was conducted using a four step analytical procedure

Step 1: Thematic Extraction and Coding

Key analytical dimensions were derived from the literature and influenced by institutional and ecosystem theories. The themes included

- Institutional coherence and governance
- Coordination mechanisms
- Policy and regulatory frameworks
- Funding structures and financial instruments
- Support and accompaniment services
- Human capital and expertise
- Regional distribution and ecosystem reach
- Ecosystem performance and outcomes

All collected documents were coded manually. Relevant information from each country was classified under the above themes to ensure consistency.

Step 2: Cross-Case Comparison

A comparative matrix in a structured format was constructed to highlight

- Convergences (similarities) ;
- Divergences (differences) ;
- Strengths and weaknesses ;
- Institutional gaps and coordination failures across the two ecosystems.

These comparative outputs forms the analytical core of the study presented in tables and figures in the results section, to improve readability.

Step 3: Synthesis and Interpretation

The comparative findings were interpreted through Institutional Theory and Ecosystem Theory to demonstrate the causal mechanisms of differences in ecosystem performance. Patterns were evaluated against theoretical expectations to generate an integrated understanding of the effects of institutional structure on the startup ecosystem.

Step 4: Lessons Extraction & Policy Translation

Insights derived from the UK model were conceptualized into policy recommendations that are applicable in Algeria in relation to its institutional contexts. This step helps in filling the gaps

between the empirical findings and policy implications.

2.4 Limitations

The research is founded on documentary and secondary data, which can be inadequate to reflect instant institutional dynamics or informal practices in agencies. However, the use of several sources that have been verified reduces bias and increases reliability.

3 Conceptual Background and Theoretical Framework

3.1 Startup Ecosystems and Institutional Foundations

A startup ecosystem comprises a network of actors (entrepreneurs, financiers, public agencies, academia and support institutions) which interact to create an environment of dynamism in which innovation and venture creation can occur (Kayser et al., 2023). Such ecosystems are described in terms of policy, finance, support, culture, human capital and markets (Lado et al., 2024). Recent data from the United Kingdom Innovation Survey 2023 demonstrate that only 36% of the UK firms were active in innovation in 2020-2022, down from earlier periods, indicating how institutional support and external conditions can change and decrease the vitality of the ecosystem (Department for Business & Trade, 2024).

Understanding the structural elements of a startup ecosystem is important, as each component can either support or undermine the entrepreneurial activity through financial infrastructure to cultural attitudes towards risk (Stam & Van de Ven, 2019). Scholars argue that ecosystems with strong interconnections among actors and institutions are more likely to facilitate the development of the high- growth ventures and robust firms (Queissner et al., 2024). Furthermore, the dynamics of ecosystems are often context-related, as for example emerging economies face different institutional challenges than mature ones, including regulatory rigidity, lack of access to venture capital and uneven regional development (Sedeh et al., 2021).

The institutional theory emphasizes that both formal institutions (laws, agencies, regulations) and informal institutions (norms, trust, culture) have an impact on the economic performance, as they affect incentives, reduce uncertainty, and coordinate actions (Oliveira et al., 2024). In strong innovation systems, institutional coherence ensures that support agencies work together and have clearly defined mandates as well as using monitoring and evaluation to sustain policy learning (Rohracher et al., 2022).

Informal institutions such as knowledge-sharing cultures, networks of trust, and societal attitudes toward entrepreneurship play important role in determining how startups develop and grow (Alvarez et al., 2024). In context where level of trust and cooperation is weak, even well-funded initiatives may not produce sustainable outcomes, which underlines the necessity and importance of combining formal and informal institutional mechanisms (Corradini, 2020).

This dual perspective is critical towards the comparison of ecosystems like Algeria and the UK in which differences in institutional maturity and cultural attitudes with regard to risk-taking determine the effectiveness of support systems.

3.2 Support and Accompaniment Agencies as Ecosystem Actors

Support agencies provide essential services; training, mentoring, funding, incubation which are usually the turning point in the idea to scale of startups (Stephens & Lara, 2025). In the UK, The Contribution of Innovate UK to UK Firm Growth (2025) shows that grants from that agency are associated with large improvements in firms' assets, employment, and turnover, compared to firms without such support (Cowling et al., 2025).

Similarly, the Create Growth Programme (CGP) has reported that 78% of the businesses

supported believe that revenue growth has been improved and that innovation practices have increased (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2025).

In Algeria, the National Agency for Micro-Credit Management also shows positive effects, the assistance program increased SME creation by ~37.9% in study areas, but support is uneven especially between urban and rural regions (Hadeffi & Bensaid, 2019). Accelerators similarly have a significant but minor role to play, the Reality of Business Accelerators in Algeria demonstrates that material support, financial aid, and mentorship are often insufficient and the ecosystem lacks coordination (Belkhir & Ati, 2024). The A-Venture accelerator model is an indication of an attempt to offer comprehensive and accelerated support but it also reveals how culture, financial markets, regulatory procedure and administrative capacity remains evolving (Ghodbane & Daghrir, 2024).

Support and accompaniment agencies serve as a bridge between the policy intent and its practical implementation by translating the strategic objectives into tangible programs to be implemented by the entrepreneurs. Their effectiveness is determined not only by the services they provide but also by their coordination with other ecosystem actors, facilitate knowledge transfer, and offer long term mentoring. Evidence suggests that startups that receive holistic support combining financial support, training and networking highlights higher rates of survival and scalability especially in early-stage ventures (Gulia et al., 2025).

3.3 Institutional & Ecosystem Approaches

This subsection relies on two complementary perspectives, Institutional Theory and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Theory, to describe the role played by governance, coordination, and inter-agency relationships in the performance of startup ecosystems. The combination of these theories offers the analytical foundation for comparing the United Kingdom and Algeria. especially in the context of explaining how institutional structures and ecosystem connections contribute to entrepreneurial outcomes.

Table 1. Key Theories and Their Application

Theory	Key Concepts	Application in UK	Application in
Institutional Theory	Formal and informal rules, governance, evaluation systems	Agencies coordinated, clear mandates, evaluation systems in place	Fragmented agencies, overlapping roles, lack of monitoring
Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Theory	Interactions of policy, finance, culture, human capital, support, market	Integrated ecosystem, multi-level coordination, innovation hubs	Emerging ecosystem, weak integration, limited coordination

Source: Compiled by authors based on literature (2022-2025)

3.3.1 Institutional Theory

The institutional Theory examines how formal and informal rules, structures, governance, and norms affect entrepreneurial outcomes (Balzano et al., 2024). For instance, UK agencies like Innovate UK operate under clearly delineated mandates and evaluation systems (as in the Innovate

UK grants and the CGP), which exemplify strong institutional design (Innovate UK, 2018; Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2025). In contrast, Algeria's agencies demonstrate institutional gaps in monitoring, overlapping roles, and policy implementation (Lounes & Mancera, 2024).

Institutional theory also provides insights into why similar policies may produce a varying outcome in different countries. Variations in legal systems, regulatory enforcement and societal norms can play a prominent role in determining the extent to which agencies are able to foster innovation (Persaud & Zare, 2022). These contextual differences are crucial in the development of policies that are both effective and flexible, especially when well established ecosystems such as the UK are used to generate lessons.

3.3.2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Theory

The Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Theory demonstrates that ecosystems are not solely made of individual agencies, they interact in a balanced manner policy, finance, culture, human capital, support, and market access (Qian & Acs, 2023).

The UK evidence (e.g. using UKIS, the impact of innovate UK) reflect fairly well-integrated ecosystems in which support and finance mechanisms, policy incentives and institutional players are more aligned (Innovate UK, 2022).

Algeria's case demonstrates high political push and numerous incubators and micro-credit schemes (e.g. more than 80 incubators; 414,000 micro-enterprise projects) with poor achievement of formal coordination, a steady flow of funds and regulatory facilitation (Aya, 2025).

Entrepreneurial ecosystem theory emphasizes that the performance of startups is a function of how well these components are interconnected. Weak links in any dimension whether in finance, regulatory support or human capital can limit overall ecosystem effectiveness (Wang et al., 2022). Comparative analysis using this framework allows policymakers to identify where leverage points are most needed in order to have the most impactful interventions, which can provide insights for Algeria to develop and create a more integrated, resilient and innovation-driven ecosystem.

Together, these frameworks give us the opportunity to compare how institutions in UK vs. Algeria shape startup ecosystems to see what works, what doesn't, and what Algeria can adapt from the UK's institutional and ecosystem best practices.

Although Algeria and the United Kingdom have been widely studied separately, very few studies conduct a direct institutional comparison between the two contexts. Existing literature points to the lack of fragmentation and coordination in Algeria, while studies conducted in the UK illustrate effective governance and support systems. However, no prior research systematically investigates the effects of these institutional differences in terms of coherence, coordination and governance models and provides transferable lessons into the performance of emerging ecosystems like Algeria. This gap justifies the present comparative approach and underscores its potential contribution to ecosystem policy design.

4. Comparative Analysis: Algeria vs the UK

4.1 Institutional Overview

In Algeria, startup ecosystem is starting to become structured around specialized agencies and programmes although most are relatively new and in the process of scaling up (Ghodbane & Daghrir, 2024; Kheira & Safia, 2024). Key actors include Leancubator that organizes the Algeria Startup Challenge (ASC) and supports thousands of innovative projects by coaching, mentorship,

and innovation challenges in areas such as fintech, foodtech, green tech, and more (Leancubator, 2024). More than 1,800 startups and projects have been supported by over 12,000 project holders to date (CIHEAM et al., 2024). Another initiative by the Algerian government is the "KICK START" programme, which funds incubation in all provinces, and helps expedite the process of turning ideas into operational startups (Ouadah, 2025). In addition, Algeria has recently committed to specialized funds with a focus on AI, ICT, renewable energy, cybersecurity with ambitious targets (e.g. supporting ~20,000 startups by 2029) (Waya Media, 2025).

The emergence of the programs reflects the strong policy desire to promote innovation-based entrepreneurship. Beyond funding and incubation, these programs are aimed at the capacity-building of the entrepreneurs, providing mentorship in business planning, digital skills and readiness to the international market. Regardless of the scale of such programs, regional inequalities still exist. The urban centers like Algiers and Oran are more beneficiaries of incubators and training programs compared to interior provinces. This uneven distribution highlights the necessity and importance of more regional strategies and investment in infrastructure to establish the inclusive ecosystem. Furthermore, while these initiatives are designed to support the startups in all sectors, there is an increased interest in high-impact industries like renewable energy, agritech, and artificial intelligence which are consistent with national priorities of sustainable development and technological modernization (Hamza et al., 2024).

In contrast, the United Kingdom ecosystem has matured over decades a denser network of institutions and agencies with clearer mandates and varied funding streams as well as the strong coordination between public and private sectors (McLaren & Kattel, 2022; UKRI, 2022). Incubators and accelerators with regional hubs as well as university-linked support and the national innovation agencies form a part of a layered support system (King, 2025). Public-private funding, investor networks and R&D infrastructure in addition to regulatory frameworks responsive to innovation and standards around accelerators are more established (OECD, 2023b). Indicatively, over 500 accelerator programmes have investment support by Innovate UK and other bodies (Lawrence, 2025).

The UK's institutional framework demonstrates a high level of coordination across several layers of governance including national innovation agencies and local governments in addition to universities and private investors. This multi-level alignment facilitates the establishment of the ecosystems in which startups are able to access finance, mentorship and networks efficiently. Additionally, the UK policies actively promote knowledge transfer from the universities to industry, encourage collaborative R&D and simulate private investment in early-stage ventures through tax relief and co-investment. The cumulative impact of these policies is a strong self-sustaining ecosystem that supports startups in various sectors, including fintech and life sciences as well as creative industries (Department for Science, Innovation, Technology, & Department for Business, Energy, Industrial Strategy, 2021).

Table 2. Comparative Institutional Features of the UK and Algeria (2020–2025)

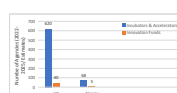
Dimension	United Kingdom	Algeria
Institutional Structure	Clear mandates, coordinated national bodies such as UKRI and Innovate UK; standardized evaluation frameworks.	Overlapping institutional mandates, fragmented coordination, and weak evaluation systems.
Funding Diversity	Diverse portfolio: venture capital, angel investors, Innovate UK grants, co-investment schemes.	Dominated by government programs; limited private VC penetration and early-stage investment.
Regulatory Environment	Adaptive regulatory frameworks (e.g., FCA sandbox), supportive of digital/fintech innovation.	Bureaucratic procedures, slow adaptation to tech-driven sectors.
Human Capital	Strong university–industry linkages; high R&D workforce density.	Persistent skills mismatch despite high graduate output; shortages in digital and managerial skills.
Support Mechanisms	Mature accelerator landscape, standardized mentorship models, >500 programs nationally (UKRI, 2024).	Emerging incubators with inconsistent service quality; limited specialised programs.
Regional Distribution	National coverage through Catapult Centres, university hubs, and regional clusters.	High concentration in Algiers and Oran; limited coverage in interior provinces.
Monitoring & Evaluation	Strong monitoring systems and feedback loops within innovation policy.	Weak monitoring architecture; lack of unified performance indicators for startups.

Source: Compiled by the authors from UKRI, Innovate UK, Universities UK, Leancubator, Algeria Invest, and OECD reports (2021–2025).

The comparative table highlights structural differences between the two ecosystems across institutional coordination, funding diversity as well as regulatory adaptability, human capital readiness and the monitoring capacity. The framework of the UK indicates a multi-level governance model supporting the first Hypothesis, while the fragmentation and the uneven regional coverage of Algeria align with Hypothesis H2. These contrasts set the foundation for the policy oriented insights developed in Section 5 supporting the rationale behind Hypothesis H3.

While Table 2 provides a qualitative overview of institutional features, Figure 2 quantifies the number of incubators, accelerators, and innovation funds in the two ecosystems highlighting the huge gap in institutional density and coverage between the UK and Algeria.

Fig.2. Startup Support Structures in the UK and Algeria



Source: Compiled by authors based on secondary data (UKRI, IUK, Leancubator, Algeria Invest, 2022–2025)

This chart provides a comparison of the entrepreneurship support infrastructures between the United Kingdom and Algeria in terms of incubators, accelerators, and innovation funds regarding for 2020-2024, showing a significant institutional gap. Approximately 500 incubators, 120 accelerators, and 40 innovation funds are located in the UK, demonstrating a well-coordinated, long-established ecosystem closely linked with universities, government agencies, including Innovate UK, and private investors, which promotes the dynamic startup environment. In contrast, Algeria's ecosystem is still at the emergent stage; the efforts of such initiatives as Leancubator, Kick Start and regional hubs show progress, but limited numbers and uneven distribution highlight the need for more coordination and funding diversity as well as integration of policies.

Overall, the chart underscores the imbalance between institutional density and resources by comparing the multi-layered innovation mature structure in the UK, to the Algerian ecosystem in its early stages of attaining a similar level of maturity.

The descriptive comparison shown in Figure 2 is further supported by the empirical patterns of the literature and secondary datasets. The strength of the UK's institutional architecture is reflected in measurable performance indicators. The Office for National Statistics indicates that 39.4% of UK firms established in 2018 lasted five years, which proves that the entrepreneurial context is relatively resilient due to the coordination of policies and funding mechanisms. The level of innovation is also significantly higher: the UK has 2.8% of GDP invested in R&D, while Algeria invests 0.48% (TheGlobalEconomy, 2017; OECD, 2023a). The lack of publicly reported startup-survival statistics in Algeria along with its low R&D intensity, reinforce the institutional gap between the two countries and demonstrates the need for stronger monitoring, coordination, and innovation support mechanisms within the Algerian ecosystem.

These quantitative differences reinforce the interpretation that institutional maturity, funding diversity, and coordinated governance have a strong relationship with the startup performance outcomes in line with the assumptions embedded in H1.

4.2 Key Challenges and Success Factors

The comparative findings reveal three empirical patterns that highlight structural differences between both the Algerian and the UK entrepreneurial ecosystems. First, institutional coordination appears to be the strongest differentiator: the UK is characterized by aligned mandates and regular monitoring while Algerian agencies have a parallel and loosely coordinated design. Second, funding diversity in the UK combining public, private, and university-linked finance is positively correlated with an increase in scalability of startup, whereas Algeria's reliance on government centered funding restricts growth. Third, human capital indicators highlight skill alignment in the UK (digital, managerial and technical) while Algeria faces an existing mismatch despite the progress. These results not only empirically reinforce the mechanisms proposed in H1 and H2 demonstrating that support agencies impact the entrepreneurial success by affecting institutional coherence and ecosystem governance, but also align with existing research.

Studies on the UK indicates consistently that institutional frameworks operate in a coordinated manner to enhance survival and innovation rates, while research on Algerian repeatedly identified fragmentation and weak governance as the main barriers to entrepreneurial performance. The convergence between the comparative findings and prior evidence strengthens the validity of the results and underscores the relevance of institutional factors in shaping the entrepreneurial performance.

4.2.1 Algeria's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

a) Challenges

- **Fragmented Institutional Coordination:** Agencies frequently share similar mandates in addition to the lack of coordinating mechanisms. Several programs exist (e.g. incubators, micro-credit, startup labels), but the interaction between them is inconsistent (Kheira & Safia, 2024).
- **Financing Gaps:** There is limited access to venture capital or angel investment where many startups depend heavily on the government grants or the personal funding. This constrains scaling as well as sustainability (Seddiki, 2023).
- **Regulatory and Bureaucratic Hurdles:** The Regulatory environment such as licensing, legal status, and operations, are often complicated or not yet adapted to innovative or digital startups. Admin delays, lack of clarity in policies and insufficient support from regulatory bodies are noted (Labidi et al., 2025).
- **Human Capital and Technical Expertise:** While Algeria produces very skilled graduates, there is often a mismatch between the skills needed for startup growth (e.g. digital, business, management) and what the founders or staff have. Retention is also an issue (Hamza et al., 2024).
- **Infrastructure and Market Adoption:** Digital infrastructure and the consumer awareness in addition to access to the markets are weaker compared to more developed ecosystems (Labidi et al., 2025).

The combination of these challenges implies that while Algeria is making progress in establishing the startup support systems, systemic issues persist, which restrict the overall performance of the ecosystem. The lack of integrated monitoring systems, restricted networks of investors and low levels of market sophistication contribute to a fragile environment where startups face a high rate of failure despite the policies supporting them. Furthermore, these problems are increased by the regional inequalities and unequal availability of digital infrastructure, which emphasizes the necessity of specific interventions to provide equal access to resources and opportunities across the country.

b) Success Factors

- **Government Commitment and Policy Push:** The launching of national calls to finance incubators as well as targeted funds to support innovation areas are manifestations of political intent to consolidate the foundations of ecosystems (Sakhri, 2025).
- **Innovation Hubs and Challenges:** The Programs like the ASC offer thematic challenges (Fintech, Greentech, etc.), mentoring, networking and open innovation. These act as points of concentration of startup activity and community-building (Bouras, 2025).
- **Emerging Regulatory Reforms:** The government is making steps to modify laws and norms (such as enhancing regulatory frameworks for fintech), and offer labels and status recognition to startups (Abdi & Zennadi, 2025).

These aspects demonstrate that Algeria has the foundational components of an entrepreneurial ecosystem such as political will, innovative programs, and gradual regulatory reform. knowledge sharing, collaboration and experimentation are promoted by the creation of sector-specific innovation hubs and competitions. Importantly, these efforts are an indication of a

shift toward a more ecosystem-oriented approach, in which startups are not only consumers of the support services but also producers of an increasingly expansive base of innovation-driven actors.

4.2.2 UK's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

a) Success Factors

- **Clear Institutional Mandates and Standards:** Support programmes are frequently standardized or regulated and this assists entrepreneurs in detecting valid support. A report (Entrepreneurs Network, 2025) argues for better classification of accelerators and incubators due to the large number of programmes (Bektimirova, 2025).
- **Diverse Funding Ecosystems:** There are multiple funding sources such as government grants as well as regional funds and venture capital in addition to angel networks and private investment. This diversity helps resilience (Sreenivasan, 2023).
- **Strong Networking and Regional Hubs:** Ecosystem hubs (such as SETsquared and others) offer infrastructure, mentoring, networking and assistance in turning startups into an investor-ready organisation. They also aid in redistributing the support in other areas beyond London and the South East, but the issue of regional inequality remains a problem (Bektimirova, 2025).
- **Policy and Regulatory Support for Innovation:** The UK has relatively less restrictive regulations, assists in knowledge transfer among universities, provides incentives on R&D taxes, and has government partnering with business to encourage innovation even in risk areas (Pope et al., 2022).

The UK ecosystem is not only supported by the strong institutions but also by a culture of collaboration and entrepreneurship. Universities, research institutions and individual investors collaborate to create pipelines of innovation. The overall implementation of best practices in governance, mentoring, and funding ensures that the startups are guided in a structured manner and receive scalable opportunities. Moreover, R&D tax credits, startup visas, and innovation grants are policy instruments that actively promote experimentation and limits barriers to high-risk and high-impact ventures which leads to the sustainability of the ecosystem in the long-term.

b) Challenges to Note

Even in the UK, there is regional disparity:

- many accelerators and hubs are concentrated in economically stronger regions (Fransham et al., 2023).
- The abundance of incubators and accelerator programmes implies inconsistent quality; not all of them provide equally high value, which causes confusion among entrepreneurs regarding the kind of support to pursue (Bone et al., 2017).
- External economic factors (e.g. inflation, interest rates, risk aversion by investors) influence the availability of capital and growth potential of startups (Sahu & Kshatriya, 2024).

These issues underscore that even existent mature ecosystems require continuous monitoring, policy adaptation and focus on regional strategy in order to avoid the concentration effect. The unequal distribution of resources can result in the lack of opportunities in less developed regions, while inconsistent program quality can restrict the entrepreneurs' ability to select the most appropriate support. Addressing these challenges requires a combination of policy control, quality standards and incentives to extend access and competitive entrepreneurial environment across all the regions.

Table 3. Comparative Overview of Key Challenges and Success Factors – Algeria vs. UK

Ecosystem	Dimension	Factor	Illustrative Prevalence/ Impact (%)	Description / Notes
Algeria	Challenges	Fragmented Institutional	80%	Agencies overlap in mandates, limited inter-agency coordination
		Financing Gaps	75%	Limited access to VC/angel
		Regulatory & Bureaucratic Hurdles	70%	Complex licensing, unclear policies, delays affecting startups
		Human Capital & Technical Expertise	65%	Skills mismatch; retention issues; lack of startup-ready expertise
		Infrastructure & Market Adoption	60%	Weak digital infrastructure and consumer adoption
	Success Factors	Government Commitment & Policy Push	85%	National funding calls, targeted innovation funds
		Innovation Hubs & Challenges	70%	Programs like ASC, mentoring, networking, community-building
		Emerging Regulatory Reforms	60%	Laws adapting for fintech, labels for startups
UK	Challenges	Regional Disparity	65%	Hubs concentrated in stronger economic regions
		Inconsistent Incubator Quality	60%	Not all programs offer high-value support
		External Economic Factors	55%	Inflation, interest rates, investor risk aversion
	Success Factors	Clear Institutional Mandates & Standards	80%	Standardized, regulated support programs
		Diverse Funding Ecosystem	85%	Grants, VC, angel networks, regional funds
		Strong Networking & Regional Hubs	75%	Hubs like SETsquared provide mentoring, networking
		Policy & Regulatory Support	70%	Favorable regulations, incentives, knowledge transfer

**Note: Percentages are illustrative estimates indicating the relative prevalence or impact of each factor.*

Source: Author's synthesis based on literature, 2025

The comparison demonstrates that institutional differences between the UK and Algeria are not only resource based but structurally rooted. The UK exhibits high institutional coherence in the form of unified mandates, standardized evaluation systems and coordinated funding pipelines conditions highly linked to increased startup performance, thereby supporting H1. On the contrary, the Algerian ecosystem demonstrates fragmented mandates, overlapping programs and limited coordination that result in inconsistent quality of services and operational inefficiencies, confirming H2. All these findings indicate that the maturity of an ecosystem is largely determined by the governance logic and institutional alignment rather than the amount of programs and financial inputs.

5 Lessons Learned

The comparative analysis between the United Kingdom and Algeria highlights some of the crucial lessons

The Mandate clarity as well as the coherent program standards are central to effective support ecosystems. The systematic incubator and accelerator models of the UK demonstrate that specific metrics of evaluation and established roles of different institutions contribute to efficiency and accountability.

Coordination of the ecosystem becomes important. The networks that have been established in the UK between universities, investors, agencies and the private actors demonstrate the importance of combined mentorship and funding systems. The emerging incubator networks in Algeria have potentials, but require more institutional synergy.

Sustainable financing systems are essential. The varied funding environment in the UK, which incorporates both public grants and venture capital, as well as angel investment, is resilient. In Algeria, the recent investments in both ICT and green innovation areas are promising, but there are still issues of scaling and privatizing.

Flexibility of the regulations promotes innovation. Streamlined registration and innovations tax relief as well as legal startup incentives are the adaptive policy instruments that allow vibrant industries, like fintech and AI, to flourish.

Inclusive regional development continues to be a collective value. In both nations they struggle with geographic concentration of resources, though the efforts of Algeria to distribute incubator presence to interior wilayas points to progress in making support more equitably distributed.

Overall, the comparative analysis highlights that the institutional clarity and inter-agency cooperation as well as strategic funding mechanisms play a significant role in the effectiveness of the ecosystem. Lessons from the UK experience underscore the value and importance of creating and developing integrated networks where knowledge, finance and mentorship flow smoothly. For Algeria, the conceptual changes in these lessons involves both structural and cultural shifts to collaboration, transparency, and mindset building of entrepreneurs. Such an approach guarantees sustainability of startups, reduction of disparities between regions and innovation-based growth becomes a stable feature of the national economy.

These insights affirm H3 by indicating that the improved policy alignment and enhanced inter-agency cooperation, as observed in the UK model, could significantly improve alignment and performance in the Algerian startup ecosystem supporting sustainable growth and innovation.

6 Conclusion

This Comparative study outlines the role of support and accompaniment agencies as key movers in the development of the startup ecosystem and the acceleration of innovation-based growth. Both contexts demonstrate that these agencies function most effectively when they are incorporated in the consistent institutional framework supported by various financing tools and coordinated with the changing requirements of entrepreneurs.

The experience of the United Kingdom exhibits the significance of network-based governance model where the cooperation of government, the private investors, universities, and incubators create dynamic and self-sustaining ecosystem. Important success factors include the diversification of funding sources such as venture capital, public sources of innovation, clear regulatory norms of accelerators, and the supportive policy environment that promotes experimentation and technological development. The institutionalization of learning within agencies and the constant improvement of policies that the UK achieves due to the feedback loops has proven its importance in ensuring the ecosystems remain mature.

On the other hand, the ecosystem in Algeria is still in its formative phase although it is evolving at a high rate. Initiatives such as Startup Label, the Kick Start programme and specialize innovation funds are a few examples of this increasing policy focus on entrepreneurship. However, structural issues, institutional incoherence, inadequate funding by the private sector, skills gaps, and inflexibility in regulations continue to limit the performance of the ecosystem in the Algerian model. The lessons learnt in the UK path give a worthy roadmap to reform and adaptation.

The analysis supports Hypothesis 1 as the integrated institutional frameworks in the UK support startups. Hypothesis 2 is confirmed as Algerian agencies experience fragmentation and redundancy of mandates, which undermines overall efficiency. Hypothesis 3 is validated as policy alignment and inter-agency cooperation comes out as a major way of enhancing ecosystem coherence and entrepreneurship in Algeria.

Building on findings related to Hypotheses, it is clear that although Algeria exhibits significant political intent and a growing number of programs, the lack of a completely integrated ecosystem hinders the possibility of the startups to scale effectively. Challenges in coordination, funding and the human capital development suggest that a more strategic and systemic approach is required. Moreover, the Algerian ecosystem could benefit from establishing formal evaluation mechanisms to help determine the effectiveness of the current programs ensuring that lessons are learned and implemented across agencies. By systematically tracking performance indicators, the policymakers can be able to detect high-impact interventions and implement the successful models in different regions and sectors.

Based on this analysis, it is possible to identify some strategic policy directions that the transition of Algeria into a more resilient and inclusive startup ecosystem must follow:

- **Institutional Coordination and Mandate Clarity:** Algeria should integrate its support environment within the framework of one national body that integrates the efforts of the support organizations and university incubators. Constant inter-agency coordination and transparent systems of evaluation would increase accountability and reduce duplication.

Such a national coordination body could also enable the sharing of knowledge among agencies, establish centralized databases of startup support programs, and offer a guide on sector-specific priorities. This would allow startups to work around available resources more efficiently and eliminate overlaps in program delivery.

- **Diversified and Sustainable Financing:** In addition to government subsidies, there is an urgent need to attract venture capital, angel investors, and the private equity participation. The use of co-investment incentives, risk-sharing instruments, and fiscal benefits to innovation investors along the lines of the UK model would trigger a shift to the private sector.

Increasing financial instruments could involve innovation grants tied to performance targets and public-private investment funds in addition to seed funding competitions of high-potential startups. Such measures would help in reducing funding gaps, promoting entrepreneur experimentation and also foster a more stable financial ecosystem.

- **Capacity Building for Agencies and Entrepreneurs:** The performance of agencies depends not only on their mandates but also on the competencies of the staff. Continuous training in mentorship, digital innovation, and strategic management possibly through international partnerships can significantly improve the quality of support offered.

Capacity building should also be provided to entrepreneurs themselves, through organized programs in financial literacy, strategic business planning and international market engagement. Programs that promote cross-border collaboration and knowledge exchange could also help to improve the skill of both agency staff and founders, providing a more competitive entrepreneurial community.

- **Regulatory Modernization and Innovation-Friendly Policies:** Simplified administrative procedures and digitalized business registration as well as flexible taxation models are necessary to reduce entry barriers. The adaptive frameworks that the UK is implementing including R&D tax credits and startup visa policies, provide replicable inspiration.

Sector-specific guidelines on new industries like AI, renewable energy, and fintech could also be part of regulatory reforms to give them some more clarity and less bureaucratic hurdles. One-stop digital portals on startup registration, licensing, and reporting may help formalize the process faster and further ease the administrative burden on entrepreneurs.

- **Regional and Green Inclusivity:** Algeria should develop regional focus on incubators in wilayas with specific programs to promote green, digital, and agritech startups that can achieve spatial balance, as well as environmental sustainability.

Special attention to the underrepresented regions can include targeted funding and infrastructure development as well as specialized mentorship programs. A green innovation ecosystem based on global sustainability trends can also be achieved by implementing sustainability criteria in the incubation programs, which will guarantee that startups are contributing to the environmental goals.

In short, the role of support and accompaniment agencies needs to shift to strategic ecosystem orchestrators as opposed to administrative implementers. Their mission should shift toward connecting actors and nurturing innovative mindsets as well as building bridges between knowledge, finance and opportunity. When properly reformed and empowered, these agencies can be sources of inclusive economic change that will make Algeria a competitive and an innovation-driven economy in the MENA region and beyond.

Ultimately, the transformation in the startup ecosystem of Algeria is tied to the interaction of policy, finance and human capital development. Algeria through UK experience, can model an ecosystem that not only supports the establishment of startups but also enhances the expansion into more scalable and innovation-based companies. This holistic strategy will not only help reinforce

the domestic economy but also make Algeria a regional center in terms of technological innovation and entrepreneurship, which will help in sustainable economic development, employment generation, and inclusive growth.

Ultimately, institutional alignment and ecosystem governance appears to be the most determining factor in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes an insight that positions this comparative study as a contribution to the overall scholarly debate on institutional determinants of startup ecosystem performance.

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