

Project Completion Report 2020 Cycle

INNOVATION FOR GROWTH: INSPIRING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURS AND LEADERS IN IRAQ

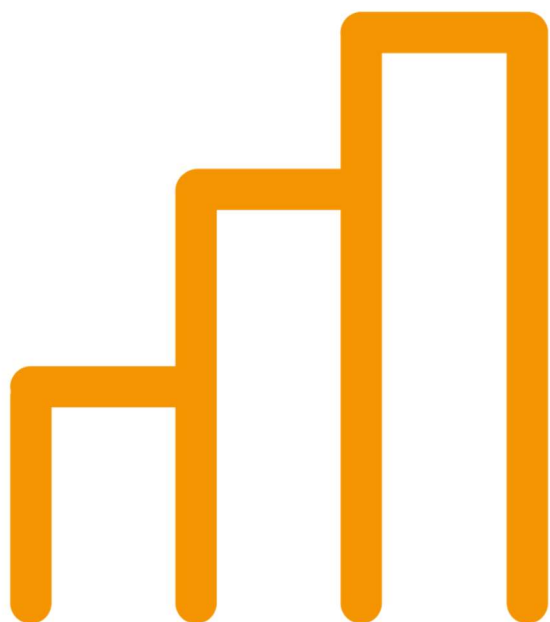
DIVISION FOR PROSPERITY
June 2021, Hiroshima, Japan



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**INNOVATION FOR GROWTH: INSPIRING YOUTH
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Acknowledgements

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research would like to express its deep gratitude to the following supporters of UNITAR Innovation for Growth: Inspiring Youth Entrepreneurs and Leaders in Iraq Programme.

- The Government and People of Japan

We would like to also recognize:

- The Embassy of the Republic of Iraq in Tokyo, Japan
- The Embassy of Japan in Baghdad, Iraq
- United Nations Development Programme, Iraq
- United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)
- Hiroshima Prefectural Government
- The City of Hiroshima

Our special thanks go to the UNITAR partners and stakeholders in Baghdad, Iraq, for their institutional and moral support.

In addition, we would like to thank our resource persons, coaches, and participants who contributed their time and expertise to the programme so graciously.

Finally, we would like to thank the people of Hiroshima, whose support was indispensable for the success of the 2020 cycle of the programme.

“Going through the experience of UNITAR was like getting a key that opens a door to develop myself, my skills and my career.”

—Sarah Alramadany



June 2021

About Us

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

UNITAR was established in 1963 as an autonomous body within the United Nations and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. As a training arm of the United Nations system, UNITAR provides innovative learning solutions to individuals, organizations and institutions to enhance global decision-making and support country-level action for shaping a better future. UNITAR designs and conducts some 500 different global training activities per year for more than 133,000 participants. Our alumni include diplomats and other government officials, non-governmental representatives, and local authorities.

UNITAR, Division for Prosperity

The Division for Prosperity is one of the eight divisions of UNITAR and consists of the Trade and Finance Programme Unit and the Hiroshima Office. We offer cutting-edge training and learning opportunities that promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

The Division for Prosperity programmes fall under six thematic pillars that support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- Anti-corruption and Combatting Crime
- Entrepreneurship and Private Sector Development
- Finance and Trade
- Frontier Technologies
- Hiroshima and Peace
- Leadership and Empowerment

Leveraging our Division's extensive experience in designing relevant and targeted training, we adapt our methodologies and technologies to the needs of the regions and individuals we serve. We work with learners in least developed countries, small island developing states, and fragile states, with special attention to the most vulnerable including women, youth, and those in conflict situations.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Kumamoto'.

Mihoko Kumamoto
Director
Hiroshima Office, Division for Prosperity
United Nations Institute for Training and Research



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COURTESY OF UDDAY JABBAR JASSAM



Executive Summary

Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected almost every sector and industry, disrupting lives, education, businesses, and the economy. The pandemic is likely to undo much of the progress made towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in emerging economies.¹ It poses unprecedented challenges to young people, especially those in marginalized communities, with millions of jobs and livelihood opportunities threatened.

Entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship have the potential to address socioeconomic inequalities and “build back better.” Guided by the lessons learned from the UNITAR Iraq programme’s previous four cycles (2016–2019), UNITAR redesigned the training for both early-stage youth entrepreneurs and established business leaders from Iraq, with the generous financial support of the Government and the People of Japan.

The 2020 programme was run entirely online, transformed from its original format of an in-person training with four workshops, as the pandemic and subsequent lockdown measures posed risks and operational challenges in conducting in-person trainings.

Programme Participants

The six-month online programme trained 102 Iraqi participants in Phase 1, and 25 participants in phase 2 in entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, leadership, and innovation. The 2020 online programme reached eight times as many participants as the 2019 in-person programme. The participants were selected through an open call for applications to the public sector, private sector, academic institutions, and civil society organizations.

Programme Structure

The programme’s two-phased approach supported the development of entrepreneurial skills and knowledge of participants looking to address local needs through innovative and creative business solutions. Phase 1 focused on the fundamentals of entrepreneurship and innovation; Phase 2 went deeper into leadership, strategy and innovation. The programme was delivered through self-paced online modules on the microlearning platform EdApp, in combination with live webinars and local coaching and mentoring support. It encouraged peer learning and knowledge sharing and supported the formation of a network of like-minded practitioners and entrepreneurs in Iraq.

Thirty-one coaches – standout participants from previous UNITAR programmes in Afghanistan, Iraq, and South Sudan – provided participants with regular feedback, mentoring, and guidance. They were an invaluable addition to the programme as they shared their own experiences and helped participants contextualize the course content to the changing needs and priorities in Iraq.

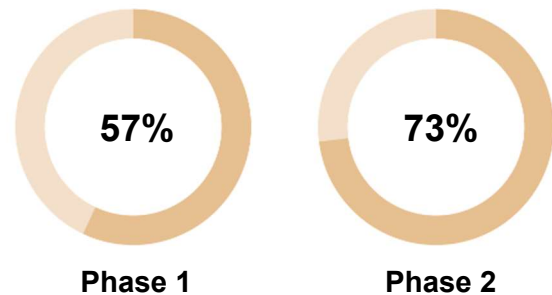
Outcomes

The overall learning outcomes of Iraq’s participants were highly satisfactory. In both phases of the programme, participants showed high rates of course completion: 57% of the Phase 1 learners and 73% of Phase 2 learners completed more than 85% of the course. Current research finds that average completion rates for online courses range between 0.7% to 52.1%, with a median value of 12.6%.² This shows us that the completion rates for this programme were excellent.

¹ “Pandemic threatens lost decade for development, UN report reveals,” *UN News*, 25 March 2021, news.un.org/en/story/2021/03/1088292.

² Katy Jordan, “Massive open online course completion rates revisited: Assessment, length and attrition,” *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning* 16, no. 3 (2015): 341–58, <http://oro.open.ac.uk/43566/>.

The high completion rates were likely influenced by the interactive course design that encouraged participant engagement. The UNITAR team also provided robust oversight and clear communication with participants, responding to daily inquiries and resolving issues in a timely manner.



Another key component was the coaching and mentoring provided by UNITAR alumni from Afghanistan, Iraq, and South Sudan. The coaches provided feedback, shared insights to contextualize the learning, offered regular support, and animated the discussions. The total number of programme alumni since 2016 now stands at 213, almost half of them women (39%). Alumni come from the private sector, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and other institutions across Iraq. UNITAR will continue to build upon this network so that future participants and alumni can draw on its resources and expertise.

Highlights of the Programme

- The microlearning platform EdApp allowed participants to complete self-paced microlessons in their own time and space without risks associated with COVID-19.
- Expert videos, guidebooks, and additional resources augmented the self-paced online lessons to enrich the learning.
- Group assignments gave participants the opportunity to collaborate with their peers, encouraging cooperation and networking.
- Weekly group discussions with peers and the coaching team allowed participants to network and exchange Iraq-specific knowledge and information.
- Using new technologies such as Zoom and EdApp allowed the participants to learn and work with world-class experts through webinars and live sessions.
- Learning communities allowed participants to engage with each other, discuss how to overcome existing challenges and seize new opportunities presented by the pandemic, and support each other beyond the completion of the programme.

COURTESY OF ATHRAA AKRAM SABRI



Lessons Learned

The online delivery allowed Iraqi youth entrepreneurs to learn safely and also expanded and diversified the participant pool. The multisectoral mix enriched the programme, as participants built trust and friendships with like-minded Iraqi youth. Iraq has thriving social and business networks, both online and offline, and IT literacy empowers youth to tap into those networks in building their careers.

“What made the training special is the variety in the participants’ backgrounds, [which] enabled me to make good connections.”
—Mohammed Azzam Alkhalaf

National and regional experts familiar with the local situation were drawn from the large UNITAR alumni network in Iraq and were invaluable in relating the learning content to the Iraqi context. They provided local examples and shared personal experiences in starting up new businesses. UNITAR plans to actively engage with the network to encourage its long-term development.

The political and security situation in Iraq, while improving gradually, still hinders youth entrepreneurship and growth in Iraq. Young people also have difficulties accessing seed funding and investment. While largely out of the scope of the programme, UNITAR may explore building relationships with local and national incubators, accelerators, and other institutions to support the young entrepreneurs.





Programme Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world forever. It has affected almost every sector and industry, disrupting lives, education, businesses, and the global economy. The pandemic has also posed unprecedented challenges to young people worldwide, especially those in vulnerable and marginalized societies. Millions of jobs and livelihood opportunities are threatened, with huge socioeconomic implications.

The pandemic is likely to undo much of the progress made towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in emerging economies.³ It may further exacerbate youth unemployment, poverty, social inequality, and climate change; all of which were concerns raised in the youth-led protests across Iraq to demand reforms to mitigate corruption and improve essential services.

Entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship have the potential to address socioeconomic inequalities and “build back better.” Guided by the lessons learned from the UNITAR Iraq programme’s previous four cycles (2016–2019), UNITAR redesigned the training for both early-stage youth entrepreneurs and established business leaders from Iraq, with the generous financial support of the Government and the People of Japan.

2016

Aug 2016 - March 2017

24 participants

Workshops: 2 in Baghdad,
1 in Amman, 1 in Hiroshima

2017

Aug 2017 - March 2018

25 participants

Workshops: 2 in Baghdad,
1 in Istanbul, 1 in Hiroshima

2018

Oct 2018 - March 2019

21 participants

Workshops: 2 in Baghdad,
1 in Istanbul, 1 in Hiroshima

2019

Sep 2019 - March 2020

16 participants

Workshops: 2 in Baghdad, 1
in Istanbul, 1 in Hiroshima

³ “Pandemic threatens lost decade for development, UN report reveals,” *UN News*, 25 March 2021, news.un.org/en/story/2021/03/1088292.

2020 Cycle Participants

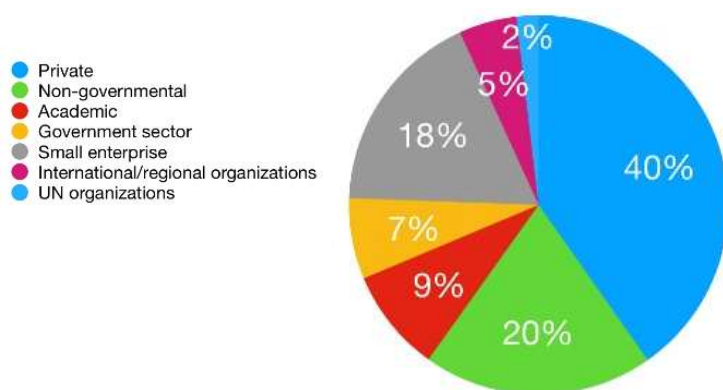
The 2020 programme – consisting of two stand-alone phases, or courses – was delivered entirely online, due to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the uncertainties, transforming the programme from an in-person training and delivering it fully online helped to increase the number of participants eight-fold, compared to the 2019 cycle.

Assignments for Phase 1: The Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

1. Case Study on a Social, Not-for-Profit or Commercial Enterprise
2. Value Proposition
3. Designing the Business Model
4. Demand Creation Strategies

In Phase 1, which focused on the fundamentals of entrepreneurship and innovation, a total of 102 Iraqi youth from different parts of Iraq were trained, of which 67 (65%) were male and 35 (35%) were female.

Phase 1 Participants: Sectors



By sector, 40% were from the private sector, 20% from non-governmental organizations, 9% from academia, and 7% from the government sector, including national, local, and state governments. In addition, 18% of the participants were from start-ups and small and medium enterprises, 5% from international organizations and regional organizations, and 2% from United Nations organizations.

In Phase 2, which focused on leadership, strategy and innovation, 25 Iraqi youth were trained, of which 14 (56%) were male and 11 (44%) were female. Among them, 36% were from private sector, 36% from non-governmental organizations, 20% from the governmental sector, and the remainder were from academic institution and others.

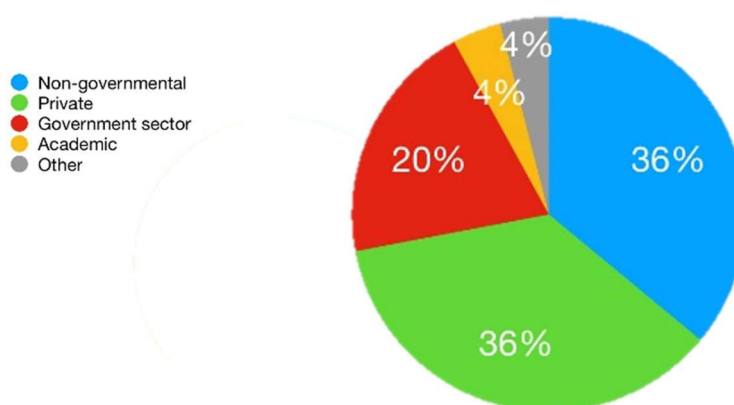
Programme Structure and Methodology

The 6-month programme had two phases, which helped participants to effectively develop their knowledge and skills and reach each learning objective.

Needs Assessment

UNITAR conducted an initial needs assessment with the participants to ensure that the programme's learning objectives and modules were in line with the latest regional and global trends and aligned with the participants' needs. The assessment also included an evaluation of previous cycles of the programme, consultations with our international, regional partners, alumni, and literature review.

Phase 2 Participants: Sectors



Phase 1: The Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Phase 1 consisted of a ten-week course called the “Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Innovation.” Using the microlearning platform EdApp, the participants completed three on-demand modules with over 33 lessons and four assignments, submitted one post per week to the discussion space on EdApp, and took part in two live webinars to receive UNITAR Certification.

For both phases, participants joined a learning community of their choice, aligned with their working sector and/or area of expertise. Each learning community held weekly discussions to facilitate interaction and collaboration among participants with similar interests and struggles.

Phase 2: Leadership, Strategy, and Innovation

Phase 2 consisted of an eight-week course called “Leadership, Strategy, and Innovation,” which was run online between January to March 2021 with 25 participants chosen from Phase 1.

To qualify for Phase 2, participants from the Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Innovation phase could apply by submitting a digital pitch. The 25 finalists were chosen through a competitive selection process. This select group of participants completed three EdApp self-paced modules with over 31 lessons, five live webinars, and three assignments. The participants were divided into three learning communities, in which they held weekly discussions and completed assignments.

“It was a great opportunity for me to participate in this UNITAR cycle. The courses are well assigned and organized. I learned a lot by enrolling in this programme. Thank you for your support!”

Learning Communities for the Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

- LC1: Agriculture, Food Processing, Horticulture, Energy, Renewables and Rural Development
- LC2: Retail and Craft Industries, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- LC3: Information, Media, Information Technology, including Software, Robotics, 3D Printing, AI and other Frontier Technologies
- LC4: Health, Well-being and Social Assistance
- LC5: Social Entrepreneurship, including Sanitation, Water Provision, Social Entrepreneurship Hubs and Incubators
- LC6: Professional, Scientific and Technical Services including Logistics, Supply Chain, Waste Management

Assignments for Phase 2: Leadership, Strategy and Innovation

1. Reflective Learning Log #1: Sharing one personal or professional experience to reflect on
2. (Group/Individual) Competitive Strategy
3. Innovation Programme Framework
4. Reflective Learning Log #2: Sharing one personal or professional experience to reflect on

Learning Communities for Leadership, Strategy and Innovation

- LC1: Not-for-Profit or Social Enterprises
- LC2: For-Profit, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (SME)
- LC3: Large/Multinational Organizations, Academic or Public Sector Organizations

Learning Objectives

The key learning objectives of the programme were to:

1. Evaluate (social) entrepreneurship in the context of Iraq's sustainable growth and development
2. Appraise their own entrepreneurial and leadership style and motivations
3. Implement a design thinking methodology to identify and solve problems or needs through (social) entrepreneurship and innovation
4. Apply frontier technologies such as i.e. robotics, and the internet of things to the creation of new enterprise for the betterment of individuals, society and the environment
5. Outline key elements of stakeholder identification integration, engagement and enrolment in financing new ventures, building partnerships and the co-founding team
6. Apply impactful communication techniques to various contexts
7. Resolve social and environmental challenges through social entrepreneurship and innovation
8. Discuss the key components of the SDGs
9. Explore the post-war reconstruction of Hiroshima in close cooperation with local authorities and institutions in Hiroshima
10. Outline existing opportunities and challenges in promoting gender equality

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Programme Modules

Phase 1: The Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

1. Nurture an Entrepreneurial Mindset	2. Find a Problem Worth Solving	3. Build a Scalable and Sustainable Enterprise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants learn the entrepreneurial process of identifying opportunities and mobilizing resources to bring a new enterprise to life. • They are exposed to examples of social and commercial enterprises and international best practice and encouraged to reflect on and develop their own entrepreneurial style and capacity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants gain the tools and techniques of design thinking and lean start-up to create desirable, feasible, viable and sustainable solutions that solve customer needs and problems. • Design Thinking is crucial to entrepreneurship. It focuses on building empathy, identifying needs through customer insights, ideation, prototyping and experimentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants learn to design a business model appropriate for their enterprise and customer segment(s), evaluate revenue models to capture value in all its forms, and formulate financial projections appropriate for social or commercial enterprises. • They also learn how to pitch with impact to win funding and investment.

Phase 2: Leadership, Strategy and Innovation

4. Lead and Manage for Growth	5. Craft the Competitive and Risk Strategy	6. Foster Enterprise-Wide Innovation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are exposed to contemporary theories and practices of leadership. • They are encouraged to appraise their own leadership style and to reflect on their competences and preferences in identifying and building partnerships and the co-founding team. • Participants learn to appreciate the role of stakeholder engagement in building early-stage credibility and driving growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants develop an understanding of the tools and techniques of competitive and risk mitigating strategy. • They learn how to appraise the competitive landscape and to develop competitive strategies to win while mitigating the different types of risk they are exposed to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants learn how to decipher the many types of innovation that lead to competitive advantage and enterprise growth. • They learn the practice of innovation management. • They are exposed to international best practices in the design and management of innovation initiatives and programmes.

Regional Coaches and Mentors

Local and regional experts on entrepreneurship and leadership were assigned to each learning community. Through EdApp, this coaching team provided regular feedback to the participants and shared their own experiences and insights. Phase 1 had 31 coaches and Phase 2 had 15 coaches. All coaches were volunteers who had completed previous UNITAR programmes in Afghanistan, Iraq, and South Sudan. They underwent additional training before serving as coaches.

"During this hard time of COVID-19, I am very glad to get this golden opportunity to learn about entrepreneurship and innovation. It will help me boost my career. Many thanks to UNITAR."

International Experts

Clare Gately, Professor, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Waterford Institute of Technology (Ireland), led and oversaw the design, implementation, and evaluation of the entire programme. A leading expert in innovation and entrepreneurship, she helped develop the course content, coaches' guidelines, participants handbooks, digital content, and case studies.

Two other renowned experts were invited to give webinars on leadership and team development:

- **Linda Hill**, Professor of Business Administration, Harvard Business School, and chair of the Leadership Initiative (US)
- **Michael A. Fors**, Executive Leader, Corporate Division and Business Development Unit, Boeing (US)

Strategic Alignment: Sustainable Development Goals

In accordance with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, this programme meaningfully contributes to the following SDGs:



COURTESY OF HAIDER LUTFI MUHSIN



The Key Takeaways for Participants

The participants learned the following in each phase:

Phase 1: The Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

- The entrepreneurial process of identifying opportunities and mobilizing resources to bring a new enterprise to life
- Tools and techniques of design thinking and lean start-up to create desirable, feasible, viable, and sustainable solutions that solve customer needs and problems
- How to design a business model appropriate for their enterprise and customer segment(s)
- How to develop and evaluate revenue models to capture value in all its forms and formulate financial projections appropriate for social or commercial enterprises

Phase 2: Leadership, Strategy and Innovation

- Contemporary theories and practices of leadership, teambuilding, and teamwork
- The tools and techniques of competitive and risk-mitigating strategies
- How to decode and apply the many types of innovations that lead to competitive advantage and enterprise growth

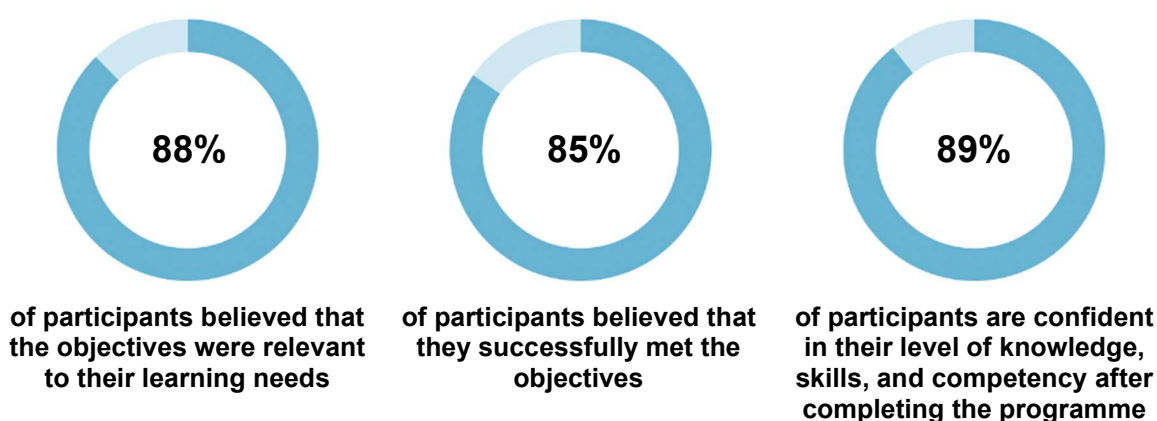
Outcomes

At the end of each phase, participants completed online evaluations of the programme. The Phase 1 survey consisted of 30 questions, and the response rate was 87%. The Phase 2 survey consists of 10 questions, and the response rate was 100%. Other outcomes were measured using data from EdApp platform.

The participants' evaluations measure **relevance**, **individual satisfaction**, and **engagement**. The minimum target is positive feedback from more than 70% of the participants.

Relevance

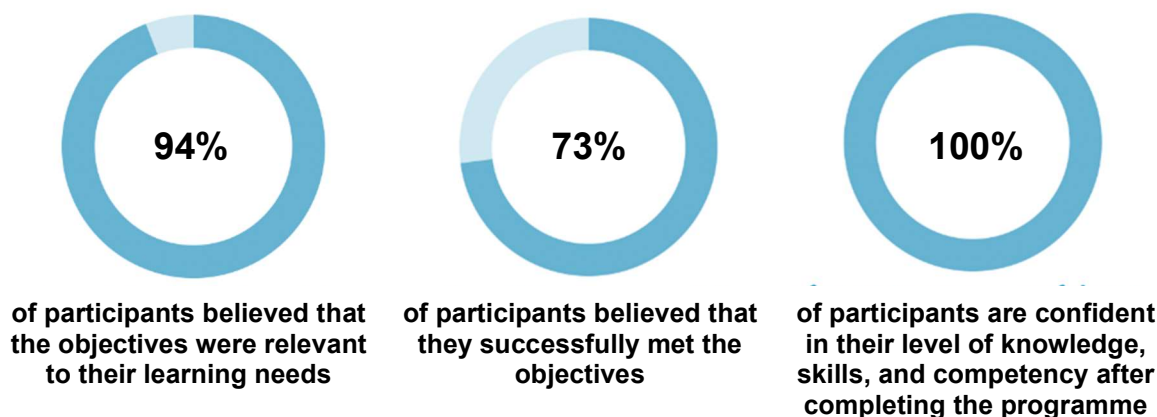
The participants evaluated the relevance of the programme's learning objectives (see page 12) to their own learning needs, on a scale of 1 ("not all") to 5 ("fully").



For Phases 1 and 2 combined, 88% of participants agreed that the programme learning objectives were relevant to their learning needs. This exceeded the minimum target of over 70% for all learning objectives, with the exception of Objective 4 (64%). The response was remarkably positive on Objective 3 ("Implement design thinking," 94%) and Objective 6 ("Apply impactful communication techniques," 93%).

Individual Satisfaction

The participants evaluated the extent to which they met each learning objective, on a scale of 1 (“not all all”) to 5 (“fully”).



Phase 1

On almost all objectives, more than 70% of the participants said they “mostly” or “fully” met the learning objective. Only Objective 4 (“Apply frontier technologies,” 58%) scored below the minimum target of 70%. The response was remarkably positive on Objective 3 (“Implement design thinking”) which scored 92%.

Objective 4, which focuses on frontier technologies including AI, may have scored low because the programme only provided the basics of AI. Frontier technologies is a highly complicated field and in-depth knowledge is needed to fully understand its application. Given this result, we are planning to develop a new course on AI and entrepreneurship that will offer a reasonably good foundation to understand the applications of the technology.

Phase 2

For Phase 2, 94% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed that they met the learning objectives of the course. This is the combined result for all the learning objectives.

Engagement

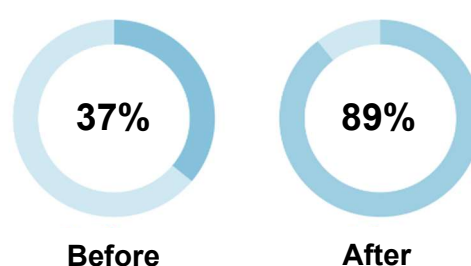
Knowledge levels before vs. after the programme

The participants were asked to evaluate their level of knowledge, skill, and competency for each learning objective before and after the programme, on a scale of 1 (“low”) to 5 (“high”).

Phase 1

Before the programme, 37% of participants answered that their knowledge levels were “moderate” or “high” across all learning objectives. After programme completion, this increased to 89%, an increase of 52 percentage points. The result was remarkable for Objective 1 (“Evaluate entrepreneurship in the Iraqi context”), which increased 64 percentage points, from 28% to 92%.

Knowledge Levels (Phase 1)



Phase 2

Phase 2 participants were asked to evaluate their skills and knowledge of leadership, strategy, and innovation, before and after the course. Notably 100% of participants answered that their skills are either “moderate” or “high” after completing the programme, compared to 24% before the programme.

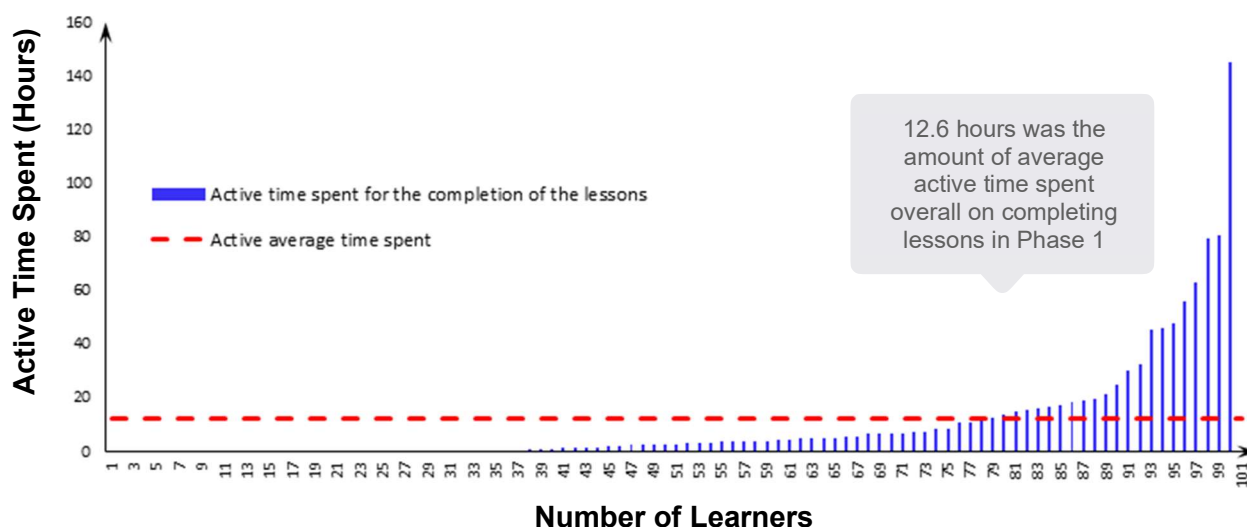
Time spent by participants

The amount of time each participant spent to complete the course was recorded through EdApp. The time spent depended on participants' English language ability, level of motivation and commitment, and internet accessibility.

Phase 1

Phase 1 participants spent between 6 to 140 hours on the course. On average, participants spent 13 hours of active time to complete all necessary lessons. This does not include time spent on assignments and discussions.

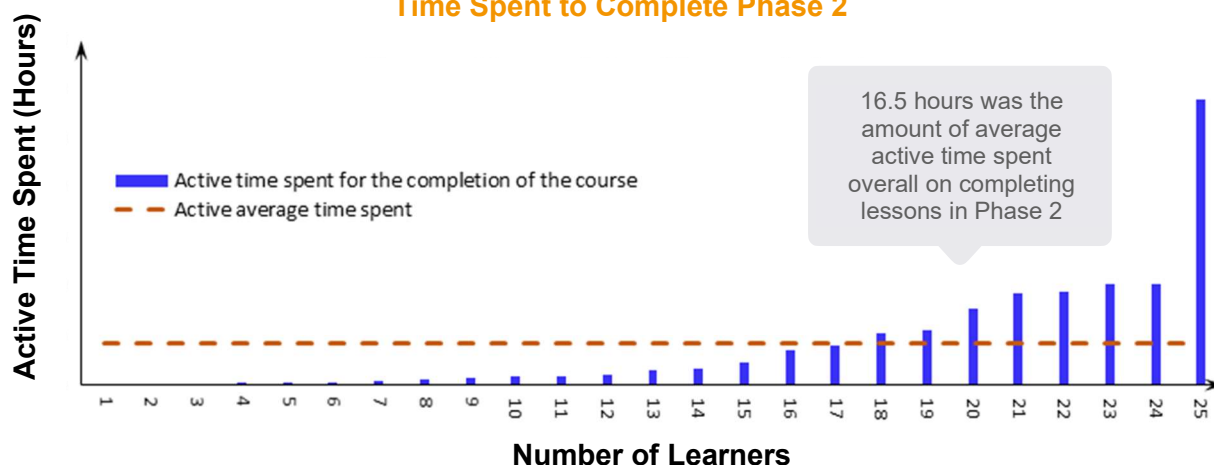
Time Spent to Complete Phase 1



Phase 2

In Phase 2, participants spent on average 16.5 hours of active time to complete all necessary lessons, excluding time spent on assignments and discussions.

Time Spent to Complete Phase 2



Completion Rate**Phase 1**

In Phase 1, 57% of participants completed 85% of the programme and received a completion certificate.

"The lessons, assignments and discussion topics were very useful and helpful in keeping up with my studies."

Percentage of learners completed the course (%)	Number of learners that completed the course	Met completion criteria for UNITAR Certificate (%)	Certification
56.8	42	85	Obtained Completion Certificate
60.8	45	75	Obtained Participation Certificate
73	54	50	Obtained Participation Certificate
77	57	33	Obtained Participation Certificate

Phase 2

In Phase 2, 73% of participants completed 85% of the programme and received a completion certificate. Remarkably, 91% of participants completed at least half of the programme.

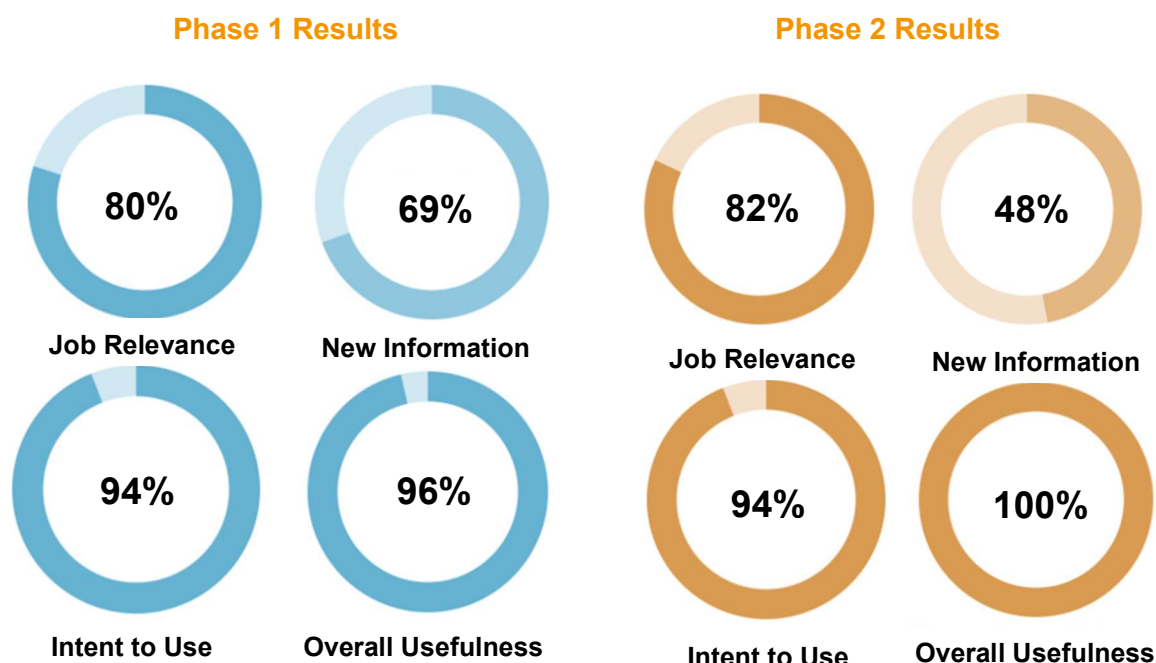
Percentage of learners completed the course (%)	Number of learners that completed the course	Met completion criteria for UNITAR Certificate (%)	Certification
73	16	85	Obtained Completion Certificate
73	16	75	Obtained Participant Certificate
91	20	50	Obtained Participant Certificate
91	20	33	Obtained Participant Certificate

Current research shows that average completion rates for online courses range between 0.7% to 52.1%, with a median value of 12.6%.⁴ This shows us that the completion rates for this programme were excellent.

⁴ Katy Jordan, "Massive open online course completion rates revisited: Assessment, length and attrition," *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning* 16, no. 3 (2015): 341–58, <http://oro.open.ac.uk/43566/>.

Job Relevance, New Information, Intent to Use, and Overall Usefulness

UNITAR standard programme evaluation indicators include “job relevance,” “new information,” “intent use” and “overall usefulness.” The UNITAR minimum target is to receive positive feedback from more than 70% of the participants. For each question, the participants were asked to rate their opinion in the scale of 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”).



Job relevance

Job relevance evaluates to what extent the programme was relevant to the participant’s professional roles. Participants were asked whether they agreed with the statement “The content of the course was relevant to my job.”

Phase 1

80% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed, with the weighted average of 4.21.

Phase 2

82% either agreed or strongly agreed, with the weighted average of 4.0.

“The course was more than amazing. I loved everything about it. User interface, interactive learning, quality course content. Thank you UNITAR!”

New information

New information evaluates to what extent the programme imparted new knowledge to the participants. Participants rated the statement: “The information presented in this course was new to me.”

Phase 1

69% either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, with the weighted average of 3.88.

Phase 2

48% either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

“The information presented in this course was totally new to me, and it was full relevant skills I have been looking for.”

“I would like to thank every member in this group for encouraging and motivating me to learn the basics of finance.”

Intent to use

Intent to use evaluates to what extent the participants intend to use their newly acquired knowledge.

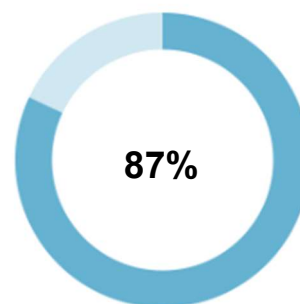
Participants rated the statement: "It is likely that I will use the information acquired."

Phase 1

94% either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, with the weighted average of 4.60.

Phase 2

94% either agreed or strongly agreed, with the same weighted average as Phase 1.



of participants preferred using EdApp

Overall usefulness

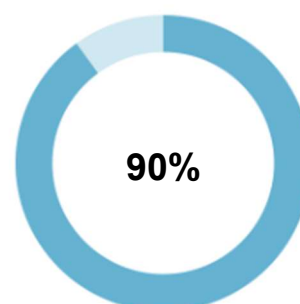
Overall usefulness evaluates the extent to which participants saw the programme as useful and was assessed by the statement: "Overall, the programme was useful."

Phase 1

96% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. In addition, 94% either agree or strongly agree that they would recommend this course to colleagues or friends.

Phase 2

100% either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement; 94% either agree or strongly agree that they would recommend this course to colleagues or friends.



of participants preferred in-lesson assignments

The responses to "Job relevance" and "Intent to use" exceeded the UNITAR minimum target of 70% positive feedback, allowing us to conclude that the programme provided a helpful learning experience aligned with the participants' professional roles and needs.

However, the response to "New information" was below the target. In the next cycle, UNITAR may need to modify the content to deliver more new information.



"I learned the pivotal role good leadership plays in inspiring people to work toward a common goal. I learned how to craft competitive and innovative strategy. I learned how to foster innovation, in all its forms, to ensure the future of my enterprise."

UDDAY JABBAR JASSAM
Operation & Maintenance Supervisor for Beecable
Manage Service Korek Telecom
Iraq

Effectiveness of the Programme Methodologies

Participants were asked to rate the following five statements on a scale of 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”):

- The programme was effective at using EdApp as a mobile microlearning platform to impart new knowledge, tools and resources to learners
- The programme was effective at responding to questions of learners
- The programme was effective at stimulating learner engagement in online discussions and webinars
- In-lesson assessments and assignments were useful to help you achieve the learning objectives
- Please rate your learning community as a forum for discussion, sharing of knowledge and exchange between learners
- The programme’s methodology was useful given the learning objectives

The minimum target was positive feedback from more than 70% of the participants.

Phase 1

More than 75% of the Phase 1 participants agreed or strongly agreed that the methodologies were effective, except for the statement “The programme was effective at stimulating learner engagement in online discussions and webinars.”

In particular, 87% answered positively on the use of the EdApp mobile learning platform; 90% indicated that the in-lesson assessments and assignments were useful.

	POOR	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	EXCELLENT	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
An alternate to face-to-face learning	0.00% 0	2.63% 1	34.21% 13	13.16% 5	50.00% 19	38	4.11
Mobile-enabled learning tool.	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	18.42% 7	42.11% 16	39.47% 15	38	4.21
Stimulating learning environment.	0.00% 0	7.89% 3	13.16% 5	36.84% 14	42.11% 16	38	4.13
Means to learn new knowledge and skills.	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	15.79% 6	39.47% 15	44.74% 17	38	4.29

Phase 2

Among Phase 2 participants, 88% either agreed or strongly agreed that the programme’s methodology was useful, given the learning objectives.



“It was a great experience, I learned a lot during the journey, and what made the training special is the variety in the participants backgrounds thus enabled me to make good connections.”

MOHAMMED AZZAM ALKHALAF
Technical Lead
Iraq

Lessons Learned

The 2020 programme was completed successfully despite pivoting to a fully online course, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. UNITAR identified the following opportunities and challenges for future iterations of the programme.

Opportunities

- **The Iraqi context is conducive to entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship.**
 - Compared to other conflict-affected countries where patchy internet access and other communication issues hinder organizations' ability to function, Iraq has thriving social and business networks, both online and offline. Throughout the 2020 programme, participants used social media to spread awareness of the programme and their own related activities. Social networks are also highly relevant to entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship, where sharing information about an organization, service or product, as well as interaction with the community an organization is servicing, is critical to an enterprise's effectiveness and success. Iraq's young population is well suited to utilize the new technologies and social networks in the country to address their communities' numerous and evolving needs through social entrepreneurship.
- **Online training creates new opportunities to connect and learn in times of uncertainty while expanding and diversifying the participant pool in Iraq.**
 - Transforming an in-person training to a fully online one was complex and time consuming, but it helped to significantly increase the number of people UNITAR could reach: the 2020 programme reached eight times more learners compared to the 2019 programme.
 - Participants could learn at their own pace and timing without any travel and infection risks. Unlike in-person trainings, delivering the programme online it made it easier for participants in rural areas to join. By bringing together youth from various geographical regions, the online programme promoted diversity and connected different cultural groups to exchange ideas and information – connections that are key for early-stage entrepreneurs and business leaders.
 - UNITAR will continue using such methodologies and new technologies to reach and connect more learners, while adhering to well-established online-training practices to maintain training quality.
- **The blended learning modality helped the programme run effectively with excellent completion rates.**
 - The programme's blended learning modality offered an interactive and engaging environment of learning and sharing by combining self-paced modules – including microlessons, assignments, and discussion posts – with live webinars and coaching and mentoring support. Content was presented incrementally in bite-sized microlessons with built-in exercises so that participants could absorb the information. Learning was reinforced through weekly assignments and interactions with peers and world-class experts. Local coaches offered regular support and animated the discussion; they facilitated meaningful participation.
 - The blended design helped the programme run smoothly and effectively despite the uncertainties caused by the pandemic. Participants showed high levels of commitment, completing the course modules and assignments, engaging in group discussions, and recording their video pitches. The course achieved excellent completion rates.

- **The large alumni network in Iraq provided the national and regional experts familiar with the local situation, who helped contextualize the learning content to Iraq.**
 - UNITAR's alumni network has grown since its launch in 2016. The national and regional coaches and mentors for this programme were drawn from the network and were invaluable in relating the programme content to the current situation in Iraq. They provided local examples and shared personal experiences and challenges in creating and running new businesses and start-ups. Local expertise is indispensable when working in conflict-affected areas, and the coaches and mentors helped make the programme highly relevant to the participants' needs.
 - The UNITAR alumni network is a community of like-minded youth who can help each other, exchange real-world experiences, and make bonds and friendships that will stay forever. Expanding the alumni network will broaden UNITAR's reach in Iraq for future programmes.
- **The diverse, multi-sectoral group of participants encouraged peer learning and collaboration.**
 - Participants brought diverse knowledge and experiences to the programme, and engaged through the learning communities. The multi-sector mix enriched the programme and proved effective in building trust and friendship and a network of like-minded Iraqi youth.
 - Furthermore, public-private partnerships are essential to long-term economic stability and growth in Iraq, as the public sector is responsible for creating an environment in which entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship can flourish. Such an environment can have a tangible positive impact on the socioeconomic development of Iraqi society.
- **The IT literacy of participants helped smooth delivery of the programme and contributed to participants' positive learning experience.**
 - Compared to the participants from the Horn of Africa programme, especially from Sudan and Somalia, the Iraqi participants had a much higher level of IT skills. Since the programme relied on technologies such as EdApp and Zoom, the high IT literacy helped the Iraqi participants maximize their learning.
 - IT literacy is also important for accelerating the development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Iraq. It empowers many aspiring youth entrepreneurs with opportunities to build their careers, which will contribute to the country's economy in the long run.



"It was an exciting and informative journey! I was able to understand how to accommodate SDGs in my social enterprise."

BAHAR ALJAMMOOR
Founder of Hewri
Iraq

Challenges

- **The political and security situation in Iraq makes it difficult for Iraqi youth to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams.**
 - The political and security situation in Iraq, while improving gradually, is still one of the key challenges for entrepreneurship and growth. Iraqi residents often face instability in their daily lives from regional conflicts, the legacy of wars, and political uncertainty, both domestic and international. A secure environment is indispensable for young people to seize business opportunities, fully concentrate on their pursuits, and realize their entrepreneurial dreams.
- **While largely out of the scope of the programme, nurturing local and national relationships with incubators, accelerators, and other institutions where young entrepreneurs can find a community of like-minded Iraqis is vital for their long-term success and growth.**
 - For future iterations of the programme, UNITAR will make efforts to build and nurture these local and national relationships.
- **Iraqi youth entrepreneurs face difficulties attracting initial seed funding for their business initiatives.**
 - One of the key barriers to materialising early-stage business initiatives is the difficulty accessing seed funding and investment. While there are known governmental and non-governmental schemes and funding, few youth entrepreneurs can access them due to local realities including corruption. The country's over-reliance on oil and lack of diversification also constrains the resource-dependent Iraqi economy's potential to supply investment. Combined with political insecurity, the Iraqi market holds inherent risk and volatility. Investors are particularly careful with their investment decisions, making it difficult for early-stage entrepreneurs to fundraise effectively.



- **The overwhelming majority of the programme participants suggested that a hybrid modality that includes some in-person engagement would be better than 100% online training.**
 - Delivering a fully online programme had tangible benefits including reaching participants from disadvantaged groups and rural communities. However, the participants indicated that in-person learning could have improved their chances to collaborate and materialize their business ideas. In-person learning provides better opportunities to engage, interact and, most importantly, to network and collaborate. These are especially important for early-stage entrepreneurs and business leaders and cannot be taken lightly.
 - For the future, UNITAR may wish to consider a hybrid modality that combines online and in-person training modalities. One suggestion is to use a two-phased approach, where participants complete the online modules through EdApp in the first phase; in the second phase, selected top participants with tangible business ideas could meet in person, where they receive targeted coaching and mentorship to materialize their ideas.
- **Technical problems and poor internet connectivity can disrupt online training.**
 - Both participants and the UNITAR admin team experienced technical difficulties during the programme implementation. Every day, 5-15 participants would contact UNITAR: their internet connections were interrupted so frequently that they could not actively engage in webinars, upload assignments, or watch course videos, etc. Such technical problems are critical and difficult to avoid. Since many participants are in fragile states and internet connectivity differs by location, future cycles may need to prepare strategies to address such technical limitations.
- **Sustaining participants' engagement can be more challenging in online training compared to in-person training.**
 - One of the key challenges with self-paced online learning is that learners need a higher level of personal motivation and commitment to complete the course. In online courses, it is easier for participants to lose interest and dropout. **In webinars, participants tend to be more passive compared to in-person sessions, where reactions of others are sensed easily.** It is even more difficult when participants have to turn off their webcams because of their low bandwidth.
 - Although the UNITAR programme provided forums for discussions and Q&A as much as possible, as well as group work during the live webinars, some participants commented that they could have been more active if it were in-person training.
- **Coaches and mentors are volunteering their time and energy, and their full engagement cannot be guaranteed.**
 - To sustain participant engagement and interest, UNITAR introduced national and regional coaches to minimize the risks of high dropout rates. The national coaches were provided with handbooks and referral notes and guidelines that emphasized their crucial role in regularly checking and maintaining the participants' motivation. While EdApp data show that coaches were largely helpful in maintaining participant engagement, all coaches were working professionals who were volunteering for this programme. Although almost half of them actively carried out their duties and responsibilities, the remaining half did not.

- **Time differences need to be considered for online delivery.**
 - Time differences were another challenge for the programme implementation team. The programme was limited to Iraq but with resource persons in the US and Ireland and UNITAR staff in Japan, it was a challenge to schedule webinars within acceptable hours for the learners and convenient to the resource persons. While online training can potentially increase the number of participants and participating countries, time zones of participants, experts and the admin team need to be considered in the future iterations of the programme.



"I am pleased to be part of UNITAR program its helping me a lot to have better understanding of SME (small-medium enterprise) businesses."

YASIR SALIM BAHLOL
Co-Founder of the Korean Beauty House for Skincare
Iraq

COURTESY OF UDDAY JABBAR JASSAM

"This course was amazing course for me because the content was related to my work, and well as it was interesting to me. I have learnt a lot of lessons through the course. Thank you UNITAR for giving us this opportunity."



June 2021

Annex I

Programme Agenda

Course Collection: Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Innovation				
Module	Module	Lessons	Delivery Dates	Module Overview
Understanding the Entrepreneur and (Social) Entrepreneurship		Introduction	19 Oct 2020	<p>You are introduced to UNITAR's Online Learning Ethos, Programme Overview, Structure, Assignments and Key Dates</p> <p>Identify your personal motivations to become a (social) entrepreneur; Learn the key phases and processes of entrepreneurship; Discuss entrepreneurship in the context of sustainable development; Explore case examples of (social) entrepreneurship from your home country.</p>
	Week 1	Lessons 1-5		
	Week 2	Lessons 6-9		
Finding a Problem Worth Solving	Week 4	Lessons 10-11	30 Oct 2020	<p>Learn the fundamentals of Design Thinking; Learn how to formulate a value proposition; Solve customer problems and identify new opportunities by applying creativity and ideation techniques; Develop experiments to test key business assumptions; Design a business model for your enterprise; Explore case examples from your home country.</p>
	Week 5	Lessons 12-14		
	Week 6	Lessons 15-16		
	Week 7	Lessons 17-19		
	Week 8	Lessons 20-22		
	Week 9	Lessons 23-24		
Building a Scalable Enterprise	Week 10	Lessons 25-26	30 Oct 2020 – 2 Jan 2021	<p>Develop Inbound and outbound demand creation strategies for your enterprise; Formulate financial projections and ratios; Identify traditional and new forms of funding for your enterprise.</p>
	Week 11	Lessons 27-30		
	Week 12	Lessons 31-33		

June 2021

Course Collection: Leadership, Strategy and Innovation Programme						
Module	Week	Lessons	Lesson Title	Delivery Week Beg.	Webinar/Video Release Date	Assignment Release Date
Introduction Developing Future Leaders & Managing Risk.	Week 1	Course Introduction Lessons 1-3	Introduction to UNITAR's Online Learning Ethos, Programme Overview, Structure, Assignments and Key Dates 1. UNITAR: Key Components of SDGs 2. UNITAR: Outline existing opportunities and challenges in promoting gender equality 3. UNITAR: Exploration of Post War Reconstruction of Hiroshima	29 th Jan.	Onboarding Video and Webinar: C. Gately	
	Week 2	Lessons 4-5	Webinar MF: Theories of Leadership, Cultivate your Leadership Styles, Leading with E.I. 4. UNITAR Lesson: Why Manage Risk? 5. UNITAR Lesson: Identifying Risk	5 th Feb	Leadership Webinar: M. Fors (Fri. Feb.5 th)	
	Week 3	Lessons 6-7	Webinar LH: The Art and Practice of Leading Innovation 6. UNITAR Lesson: Assessing and Prioritising Risk 7. UNITAR Lesson: Mitigating Risk	12 th Feb.	Innovation Webinar: L. Hill (Fri. Feb 12 th)	Assignment 1: Friday 12 th
Crafting SME strategy	Week 4	Lessons 8-9	8. CG: Competitive Analysis 9. CG: SME Competitive Strategy	19 th Feb.	SME Competitive Strat. Video	Soft deadline Ass.1 Feb 19 th
Innovation Mgt.	Week 5	Lessons 10-11	Webinar MF: Building and Leading a High Performance Team 10. CG: SME Growth Strategies 11. CG: Corporate Innovation Strategy	26 th Feb	Leadership and Building Teams Webinar: M. Fors (Fri. Feb 26 th) 1. Japan Case Study Video	Assignment 2: Friday 26 th
	Week 6	Lessons 12-13	12. CG: Theories of Innovation, Types of Innovation 13. CG: Business Model Innovation	5 th March	Innovation Video 2. Japan Case Study Video	Soft deadline Ass. 2 March 5 th
	Week 7	Lessons 14-15	14: CG: Managing the Innovation Pipeline 15: CG: Project Evaluation using Innovation Metrics and Measures	12 th March	3. Japan Case Study Video	Assignment 3: Friday 12 th
	Week 8	Lessons 16-17	16. CG: Workplace Initiatives to Spark and Support Innovation 17. CG: Building a Culture and Mindset of Innovation	19 th March	Hard deadline Ass.1-3 26 th March	Soft Deadline Ass. 3 19 th March

Annex II*Core Values*

Core Values	Additional explanation	Response
1) Generate Change Agents		
Number of people trained		127 youth participants (102 in Phase 1 and 25 in Phase 2)
Intensity of Training	Number of hours engaged (e.g., 100 hours). Type of training (hybrid, online, f2f)	<p>4-7 hours per week for Phase 1 and 4-6 hours per week for Phase 2</p> <p>Phase 1: Three modules with over 33 self-paced lessons, 4 assignments, 2 live webinars, one discussion per week and 1 pitch deck</p> <p>Phase 2: Three modules with over 31 self-paced lessons, 3 assignments, 5 live webinars and one discussion per week using Edapp discussion forum</p>
2) Engage in coalition building		
Disaggregated data by		
Gender	Male v.s. Female v.s. Others	Phase 1: 67 male, 35 female Phase 2: 14 male and 11 female
Stage of country development	How many participants are from developed v.s. developing countries. How many from LDCs/SIDS.	100% Iraq (developing country)
Urban vs Rural	How many from the capital v.s. others	50% rural, 50% capital
3) Build partnerships		
Number of partnerships	How many partnerships?	11
Quality of partnerships	Global, regional or local organizations?	4 Global, 3 National, 4 Local
	To enhance substance or financial contribution?	Substance
4) Boost relevance		
Feedback from participants	Use relevant quotes from participants	In the report
5) Enhance contextualisation		

Number and quality of coaches/mentors	How many coaches/mentors were engaged	31
	How many coaches/mentors were local or regional vs external?	31 regional (locals)
	How many coaches/mentors were former participants / alumnus of UNITAR programs?	31
6) Promote gender equality		
Number of female participants	How many and percentage	46 women completed/graduated from the programme
Number of participants who completed the gender modules	How many and percentage	60%
Gender marking	Give a rating from 0 to 3 using the following criteria.	2
	Gender-markers 0 - Outputs/Projects that are not expected to contribute noticeably to gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEEW) 1 - Outputs/Projects that will contribute in some way to gender equality but not significantly 2 - Outputs/Projects that have gender equality as a significant objective 3 - Outputs/Projects that have gender equality as principal objective	
7) Foster Innovation		
Diversity of modes of delivery	Short description of what innovative modes were introduced	Video-based case studies (3); self-paced lessons with built-in short videos; and live webinars
Adoption of innovative adult learning methodologies	Short description of what innovative adult learning methodologies were introduced	Microlessons with combination of short videos, video case studies, and built-in practical examples; Reflective Learning Log

8) Champion Ownership		
Quality of partnerships with local stakeholders	Short description	Local and regional partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported wide dissemination of the call for applications to recruit qualified candidates for the programme • Provided input on programme design and learning needs • Provided local know-how
Quality of the action plans	Short description of final outputs produced by the participants if any such as action plans	Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed comprehensive assignments including Reflective Learning Log • Prepared business models • Joined network with participants from different sectors.
9) Stimulate Sustainable Development		
Number of participants who successfully completed the SDG modules	Same as left	60%
10) Cultivate Financial Sustainability		
Funding Size	Same as left	USD 182,590