



UNITAR COVID-19 RESPONSE & RECOVERY PROGRAMME



MOBILIZING
RESILIENT SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEURS TO
ADDRESS FOOD
INSECURITY AND
UNEMPLOYMENT
FOR YOUTH IN IRAQ

PROJECT
COMPLETION
REPORT
2021



**UNITAR Covid-19 Response & Recovery Programme:
Mobilizing Resilient Social Entrepreneurs to Address Food
Insecurity and Unemployment for Youth In Iraq
2021 Cycle
Project Completion Report**

Information, examples and answers to your questions about the topics covered here can be found on our website, www.unitar.org.

Cover photo credit: UN Photo/Pernaca Sudhakaran

Published: June 2022

© Copyright UNITAR

The material contained in this report is subject to UN copyright protection unless otherwise indicated. Authorisation to reproduce such material should be obtained from the copyright holder.

Participant photos used with permission. All UN photos used with appropriate credit from the UN Digital Asset Management System. All other photos commercially licensed.



Acknowledgements

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) would like to express deep gratitude for the supporters and partners of the 2021 UNITAR COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme: Mobilizing Resilient Social Entrepreneurs to Address Food Insecurity and Unemployment for Youth in Iraq.

This programme was conducted with the full financial support of the **Government and People of Japan**.

We would also like to recognise

- Borderless Japan Corporation
- Embassy of Japan in Iraq
- GREEN CHARTER Foundation for Water and Environmental Consulting
- KAPITA Business Hub
- People Port
- Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University
- Sakura Home Service
- SANAD for Economic Development
- The Station Foundation for Entrepreneurship

Finally, we thank our resource persons, coaches, and mentors who graciously contributed their time and expertise to the programme.



Mihoko Kumamoto

DIRECTOR

UNITAR, Division for Prosperity



Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Executive Summary	5
Programme Overview	5
2021 Cycle Participants	6
Programme Structure	6
Outcomes	6
Lessons Learned	7
Programme Summary	8
Background	8
2021 Cycle Participants	9
Programme Structure and Methodology	11
Programme Methodology	16
Strategic Alignment: Sustainable Development Goals	18
Outcomes	19
Participant Engagement	19
Effectiveness of the programme methodologies	27
Lessons Learned	28
Annexes	32
Annex I	32
Annex II	34
Annex III	35
Annex IV	36
Annex V	37



Executive Summary

Programme Overview

The 2021 United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme: Mobilizing Resilient Social Entrepreneurs to Address Food Insecurity and Unemployment for Youth in Iraq sought to equip youth entrepreneurs in Iraq with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to turn ideas for a social or for-profit enterprise into a business model that meets the urgent domestic needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and promotes sustainable recovery. The programme was developed with the full financial support of the Government and the People of Japan and in partnership with representatives and organisations from the Japanese and Iraqi private sector.

Around the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has eroded years of development and progress. As a fragile state with over five million people in need of humanitarian assistance, Iraq bears the brunt of this global crisis, particularly in food insecurity, public health, and youth unemployment. Against this backdrop, entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship can mitigate such negative impacts while reinvigorating the economy and creating innovative solutions to “build back better” in the post-pandemic era.

UNITAR Division for Prosperity launched its first entrepreneurship training programme in Iraq in 2016. Since then, we have trained over 350 young leaders and innovators in Iraq. The 2021 cycle consisted of three phases and marked the beginning of a new “hybrid” learning model, which combined training in both online and offline settings.





2021 Cycle Participants

The 2021 cycle engaged a total of 181 youth entrepreneurs and innovators (57 women and 124 men) from different regions and sectors across Iraq – the largest number of participants in a single cycle since the programme began in 2016. The participants were motivated and passionate young professionals, citing reasons such as individual development, social commitment, and women’s empowerment as their motivations for joining the programme.

Programme Structure

The programme was divided into three phases and trained participants on the full cycle of entrepreneurship, from idea to market. Phase 1 focused on the fundamentals of entrepreneurship and innovation. From those who completed the phase, 30 outstanding participants were selected to proceed to phase 2, which delved into leadership, strategy, and innovation. The third phase was later added to accommodate an in-person workshop in Baghdad.

Participants learned through asynchronous and self-paced online modules, peer-to-peer discussions, assignments, mentoring and coaching, and live webinars by subject matter experts. The two-day in-person workshop in phase 3 included a business operationalisation hackathon and individual pitch deck development and presentation. Local, national and international experts and organisations were engaged in each phase to ensure the relevance and usefulness of the programme.

Outcomes

Overall, the programme achieved positive outcomes along UNITAR’s standard programme evaluation indicators (new information, job relevance, intent to use, overall usefulness), participant engagement, individual satisfaction, and effectiveness of the programme methodologies. Participants were asked to complete evaluation surveys at the end of each phase. Across the three surveys, a total of 65 responses were collected.

A total of 64 participants in phase 1 and 17 participants in phase 2 fulfilled the course requirements and received a certificate of completion. The overall course completion rates were 50% and 59%, respectively, in phase 1 and phase 2.





Participants' knowledge, skills and competency in all of the key themes significantly increased. At the end of each phase, the percentage of participants who rated their knowledge, skills, or competency of the themes as either moderate or high was 40 to 90 points higher than before the training.

In each phase, 83% (phase 1), 94% (phase 2) and 100% (phase 3) of the respondents indicated that overall, they found the course to be useful. Furthermore, 93% (phase 1), 77% (phase 2) and 93% (phase 3) of the survey responses expressed their intent to use what they learned. In particular, they intended to share the knowledge outside or inside of their workplace and use the knowledge to develop their own project or initiative that creates social/for-profit value.

Lessons Learned

The diverse learning methods and activities promoted participant engagement and generated positive learning outcomes.

The in-person workshop in Baghdad was the first in-person workshop UNITAR Division for Prosperity had held since the pandemic broke out and successfully marked the start of a new "hybrid" training model. **The hybrid learning modality helped increase motivation, networking, and collaboration among participants.** While the unpredictable situation surrounding COVID-19 remains a challenge for planning future in-person engagements, the hybrid model and flexibility in programme planning will be key to designing successful training programmes in the post-pandemic era.

New and updated elements introduced into the programme this cycle – including workshop-style webinars, the online conference, and the mentorship system – added value to the programme and were favourably received by participants.

For future programmes, UNITAR may consider further enhancing its training content and gear it towards practical exercises and case studies that are relevant to the Iraqi context.





Programme Summary

Background

Around the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has eroded years of development and progress. Iraq – a fragile state with over five million people in need of humanitarian assistance – bears the brunt of this global crisis, particularly in food insecurity, public health, and youth unemployment. Against this backdrop, entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship can mitigate such negative impacts while reinvigorating the economy and creating innovative solutions to “build back better” in the post-pandemic era.

With this in mind, the 2021 UNITAR COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme: Mobilizing Resilient Social Entrepreneurs to Address Food Insecurity and Unemployment for Youth in Iraq sought to equip youth entrepreneurs in Iraq with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to turn ideas for a social or for-profit enterprise into a business model that meets the urgent domestic needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and promotes sustainable recovery.

The programme was developed with the full financial support of the Government and the People of Japan and in partnership with representatives and organisations from the Japanese and Iraqi private sector.



350+
learners from Iraq
have joined the
programme since
its creation

The 2021 cycle consisted of three phases and marked the beginning of a new “hybrid” learning model, which combined training in both online and offline settings.

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Division for Prosperity launched its first programme in Iraq in 2016. Since then, UNITAR has trained over 350 young leaders and innovators in Iraq.



[UNITAR Programme was] challenging yet rewarding. It has been a great learning journey where I met like-minded individuals and mentors who pushed me forward and upward.

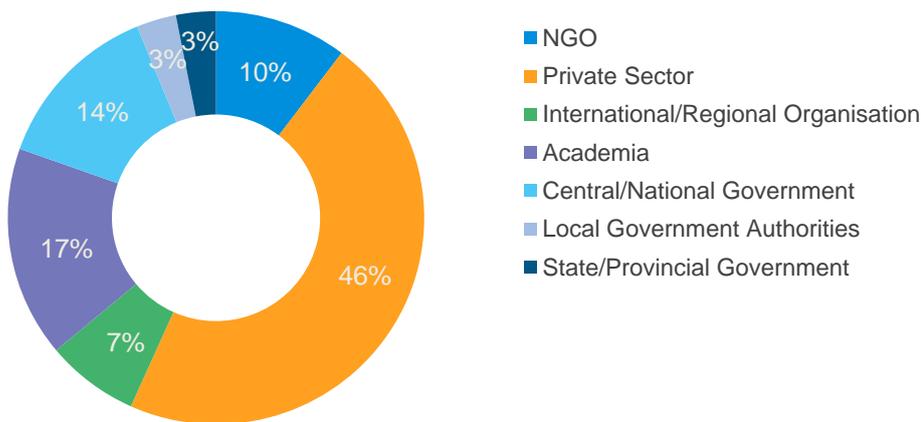
Sadeq Dhafer Al-moayed



2021 Cycle Participants

The 2021 entrepreneurship programme enrolled a total of 181 youth entrepreneurs and innovators in Iraq. The group included 57 (31%) women and 124 (69%) men from different sectors across Iraq. Sixty-four fulfilled the course requirements and received a certificate of completion for phase 1 of the programme.

Figure 1: Sector distribution of phase 1 participants

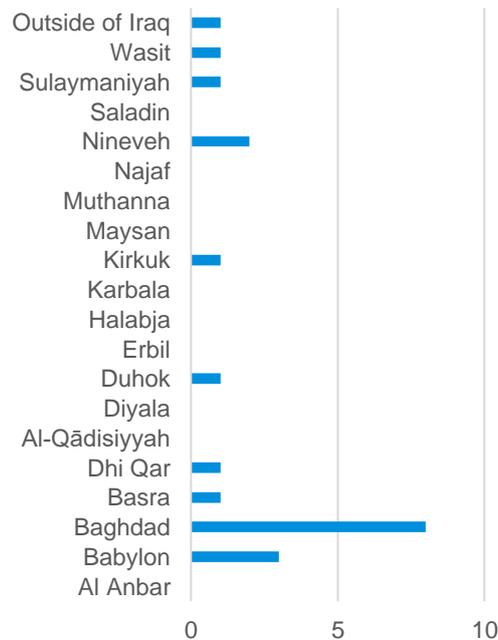


After a rigorous evaluation, 30 outstanding participants from phase 1 were selected to proceed to phases 2 and 3. Seventeen participants successfully completed phase 2 and nineteen participants attended phase 3, which was an in-person workshop in Baghdad.

The 2021 cycle accommodated the largest number of participants since the programme began in 2016.

Phase 2 participants¹ came from various regions across the country and represented more than half of the provinces in Iraq (10 out of 19 provinces), with one learner based outside of Iraq. While the largest number of participants came from Baghdad, capital of Iraq, the majority of participants were from other provinces, including Babylon, Basra, Dhi Qar, Duhok, Kirkuk, Nineveh, Sulaymaniyah, and Wasit. Participants were highly motivated towards individual development, social commitment, and women's empowerment.

Figure 2: Phase 2 participants represent 10 out of 19 provinces in Iraq



¹ Phase 1 participants were not asked their geographic location.



Motivation profile of participants

Category

Participant Voices

Individual development

“The biggest thing that pushed me to be an entrepreneur is that I want to be my own boss and be the owner of my business.”
(Mohamed AL-Rubaiyat)

Social commitment

“Trying out a business idea and see how it benefits people’s needs and adds value to their lives, and the energy and excitement of creating something new are all reasons and motivations for me to become an entrepreneur.” (Ha-ha Abdullah)

“My commitment is to continue spreading awareness and knowledge to serve the community and try to focus on quality education (Goal 4) and reduce inequality (Goal 10) from the SDGs.” (Says Alashqar)

Women’s empowerment

“One of the most significant reasons to become an entrepreneur is to start my business which will offer jobs for women and empower them, especially in the cities that are conservative. It is not only my project idea but my dream as well.” (Elf Ali)

Programme Structure and Methodology

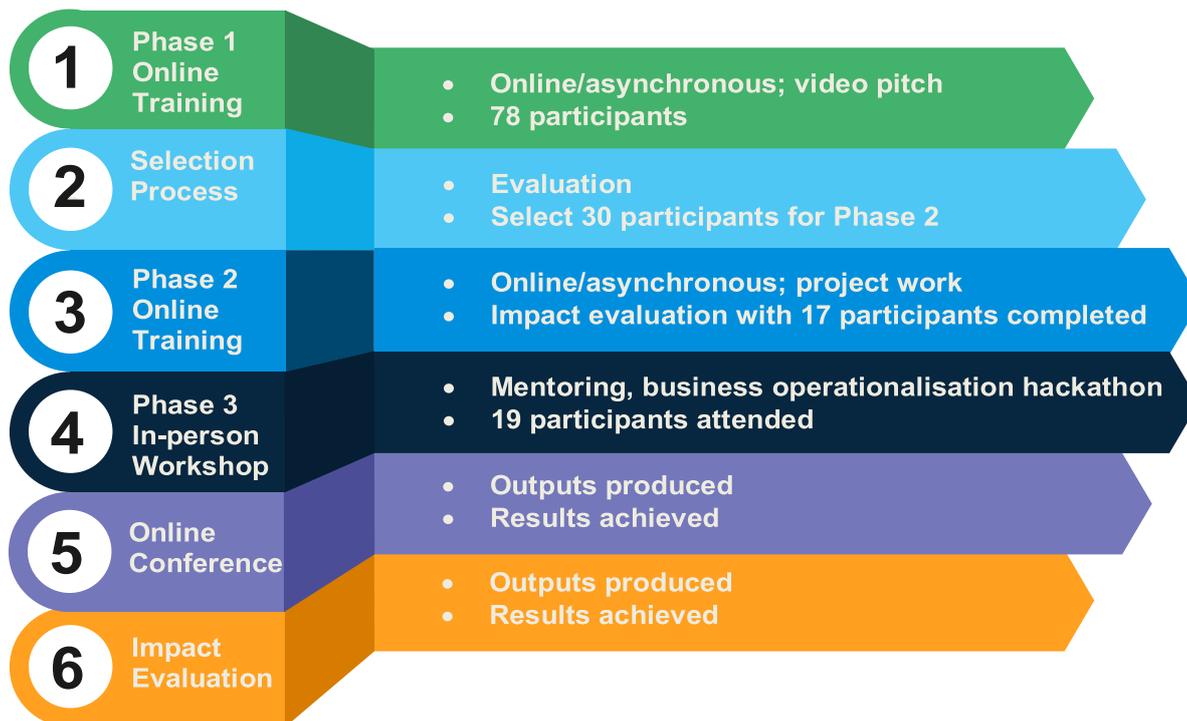
Programme Structure Overview

The 2021 cycle comprised of three phases and had a longer timeframe compared to previous cycles.

Participants were selected through an open call for applications based on

- gender and age
- position(s) of leadership and/or social innovation
- geographical and sectoral representation
- good oral and written English skills
- passion to learn by doing and highly motivated to succeed to address the challenges wrought by COVID-19 in food security, public health, or unemployment through self-led projects/enterprises.

Figure 3: 2021 Programme Structure



The Phase 1 of the programme introduced the participants to the fundamentals of entrepreneurship and innovation. Guided by subject matter experts, the course focused on the challenges and opportunities for entrepreneurship in the three key areas affected by COVID-19 in Iraq: food security, public health, and youth unemployment.

At the end of phase 1, participants were asked to submit a three-minute video pitch on their ideas for a social or for-profit enterprise. After a rigorous evaluation of the participants' performance in phase 1 and the video pitches, 30 outstanding participants were selected to participate in phase 2.



Phase 2 further delved into leadership, strategy, and innovation to encourage participants to prepare their enterprises for growth and development.

While the programme was initially designed to have two phases conducted fully online, a final third phase was added to accommodate a highly requested local in-person workshop, with appropriate safety measures in place and close monitoring of COVID-19 related updates. In phase 3, 19 participants attended a two-day in-person workshop in Baghdad, which included a business operationalisation hackathon. This was also followed by four online mentoring sessions facilitated by the subject matter experts.

At the end of the programme, UNITAR hosted an online conference “Empower the Youth: Fostering Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Iraq” in partnership with local entrepreneurship hubs and organisations. The two-hour session highlighted UNITAR’s work in Iraq over the past six years. Six speakers from Iraq presented on how to promote inclusive entrepreneurship in Iraq and support Iraqi youth and upcoming entrepreneurs in an equitable, inclusive, and sustainable way.

“ “ A unique learning experience filled with knowledge and sharing of information and experiences.
Ahmed Rafea



Phase 1: Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Phase 1 was conducted from 20 August to 23 October 2021, consisting of the following content:

- Welcome & Course Overview
- Women's Entrepreneurship
- Understanding the Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurship
- Identifying a Problem Worth Solving
- Building a Scalable Enterprise
- Meet the Sustainable Development Goals

Participants completed assignments designed to guide participant-led projects in entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. The participants also developed a pre-recorded video pitch of their idea as their application to phase 2 of the programme.

Assignments for Phase 1

- Assignment 1: Case study of a social, not-for-profit, or commercial enterprise
- Assignment 2: Formulate a value proposition
- Assignment 3: Designing a business model
- Assignment 4: Demand creation strategies
- Application for leadership, strategy, innovation: Develop and submit a three-minute pre-recorded video pitch of your social or for-profit enterprise opportunity



Through training, I was able to create an innovative model for recycling organic waste that reduces electricity and cooling costs.

*Abdulqadir
Hasan Ali*

Phase 1 Learning Objectives

- Explain (social) entrepreneurship and its importance to innovate, converge solutions and build back better
- Implement a design thinking methodology to identify and solve problems or needs through (social) entrepreneurship and innovation
- Evaluate (social) entrepreneurship in the context of Iraq's sustainable growth and development.
- Recommend entrepreneurship activities that contribute to local, regional and national food security.
- Discuss the key components of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Formulate and test each aspect of the business model for a social entrepreneurship venture
- Outline existing opportunities and challenges in promoting gender equality
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills to develop new and innovative business



Phase 2: Leadership, Strategy and Innovation

Phase 2 was conducted from 12 November to 24 December 2021, consisting of the following:

- Welcome & Course Overview
- Developing Future Leaders
- Crafting SME Strategy
- Innovation Management
- Risk Management
- Hiroshima's Post-war Reconstruction

The assignments were designed to strengthen participants' comprehension and skills in creating a competitive and innovative entrepreneurial project.

Assignments for Phase 2:

Assignment 1: Reflective learning log

Assignment 2: Competitive strategy

Assignment 3: Developing elements of an innovation programme

Phase 2 Learning Objectives

- Build leadership capacity in yourself and others to drive successful growth-oriented Enterprises
- Appraise your leadership style and motivations
- Develop your risk management skills
- Craft competitive strategies for Enterprise growth and development
- Foster a supportive Enterprise environment, structure and processes for innovation, in all its forms, to flourish
- Apply impactful communication techniques to various contexts
- Distinguish how interdependent political, social, and economic events may affect business decisions
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills to develop new and innovative business opportunities and strategically address complex and pressing challenges brought by COVID-19 pandemic, such as issues surrounding food security and unemployment

Phase 3: In-person Workshop and Mentoring Sessions

A two-day in-person workshop took place in Baghdad on 11-12 March 2022. A total of 19 participants (4 women and 15 men) attended the workshop. Three subject matter experts (1 woman and 2 men), 6 coaches (3 women and 3 men) and 2 staff (1 man and 1 woman) facilitated the activities. The workshop was conducted with appropriate COVID-19 safety measures in place and close monitoring of COVID-19 related updates.

The workshop agenda included a business operationalisation hackathon (group work) and pitch deck development and presentation (individual work).

On the first day, the participants were divided into smaller groups to analyse, discuss, and generate innovate solutions for specific challenges that were assigned to each group. The challenges included issues such as youth unemployment in Iraq, promoting justice, equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace, and food/water insecurity in Iraq. The first day concluded with group presentations followed by feedback from the experts.

On the second day, the participants developed and updated pitch decks for their own enterprises. They were given examples of successful pitch decks and introduced to the Pitch Canvas to structure and visualise their pitches effectively. Each participant then presented their pitch deck. At the end of the workshop, participants received their certificates of completion for the workshop from Mr. Kotaro Suzuki, Ambassador of Japan to Iraq.

After the in-person workshop, the subject matter experts followed up on participant projects through group mentoring sessions.



The learning model and content [at the workshop] were very useful... getting such a chance is priceless and gives [the participants] more confidence in the future along with gaining knowledge and experience they might use in the future at their start-ups.

Dr. Sameh W. Al-Muqdadji, Subject Matter Expert





Online conference: “Empower the Youth: Fostering Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Iraq”

UNITAR hosted an online conference “Empower the Youth: Fostering Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Iraq” on 25 March 2022. The conference was held via Zoom and simultaneously livestreamed on YouTube. It engaged local entrepreneurship hubs and organisations and was hosted in partnership with GREEN CHARTER Foundation for Water and Environmental Consulting, KAPITA Business Hub, SANAD for Economic Development, and The Station Foundation for Entrepreneurship.

The two-hour session focused on the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in Iraq. It reflected on the challenges and opportunities for capacity-building institutions and established entrepreneurs to promote inclusive entrepreneurship and support Iraqi youth and upcoming entrepreneurs in an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable way.

The event also commemorated six years of UNITAR’s work in Iraq, made possible with the financial support of the Government and People of Japan. Opening remarks were given by Mihoko Kumamoto, Director, UNITAR Division for Prosperity, and Mayuko Hori, First Secretary at Embassy of Japan in Iraq. Six speakers from Iraq shared their insights in two main sessions, each with an audience Q&A. The conference was moderated by Clare Gately, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland.

Sixty-five people joined the conference from across Iraq and the world.

Programme Methodology

The programme used a blended modality which combined online learning and an in-person workshop. Participants learned through self-paced e-learning modules, expert-facilitated webinars, local/regional coaching and mentoring, and assignments on participant-led projects. Participants were divided into learning communities to facilitate peer-to-peer discussion and knowledge-sharing.

Asynchronous and self-paced online learning

Due to the restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic, the first two phases of the programme were conducted fully online using an online learning platform, EdApp. The platform enabled asynchronous and self-paced learning in bite-sized lessons and hosted videos, quizzes, discussion forums, and additional resources and multimedia content to reinforce the learning.

Live webinars

Throughout the programme, the participants joined a total of 12 live webinars (six in phase 1, three in phase 2, and three in phase 3). This included programme milestone webinars facilitated by UNITAR staff (onboarding webinars) and topic-focused webinars facilitated by local and international subject matter experts.

Local coaches and experts

Twelve local coaches (five women and seven men) were selected from among Iraqi alumni from previous cycles of the UNITAR programme. The volunteer coaches played a crucial role by putting the local context into the learning materials, encouraging peer-to-peer interactions, facilitating the weekly discussions, and giving feedback on learner assignments. They shared their experiences and resources as fellow youth entrepreneurs/leaders in Iraq and guided the participants.

Four subject matter experts from Iraq, including two women, guided and mentored the participants in their field of expertise. The four experts facilitated the Baghdad workshop, gave presentations at the online conference, and mentored the participants. The experts were:

- Basima Abdulrahman (Founder and CEO of KESK)
- Marwan Jabbar (Vice President of Commercial Development and People at Miswag)
- Samar Al-Mafraji (General Manager at AMS/Iraq)
- Sameh W. Al-Muqdad (General Manager at GREEN CHARTER Foundation for Water and Environmental Consulting and CEO of SANAD for Economic Development)

International expert

Clare Gately, Professor of 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 and update the course content, coaches' guidelines, participants handbooks, multimedia content, and case studies.



Dr. Gately's webinar made me reconsider the basic principles and the ideas upon which my own enterprise was built. I'll try to make use of design thinking to generate more ideas and solutions.

Ali Alghadhbawi





Strategic Alignment: Sustainable Development Goals

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



Outcomes

The outcomes of the programme are measured by participant performance on the online learning platform and the results of three surveys that were administered to the participants after each phase. The surveys covered

- participant engagement
- individual satisfaction
- UNITAR's standard programme evaluation indicators (new information, job relevance, intent to use, overall usefulness)
- effectiveness of the programme methodologies

A total of 65 responses were collected across the three surveys.



I would like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude for all the efforts made to make the program a success. It was a stimulating and useful programme.

Anonymous

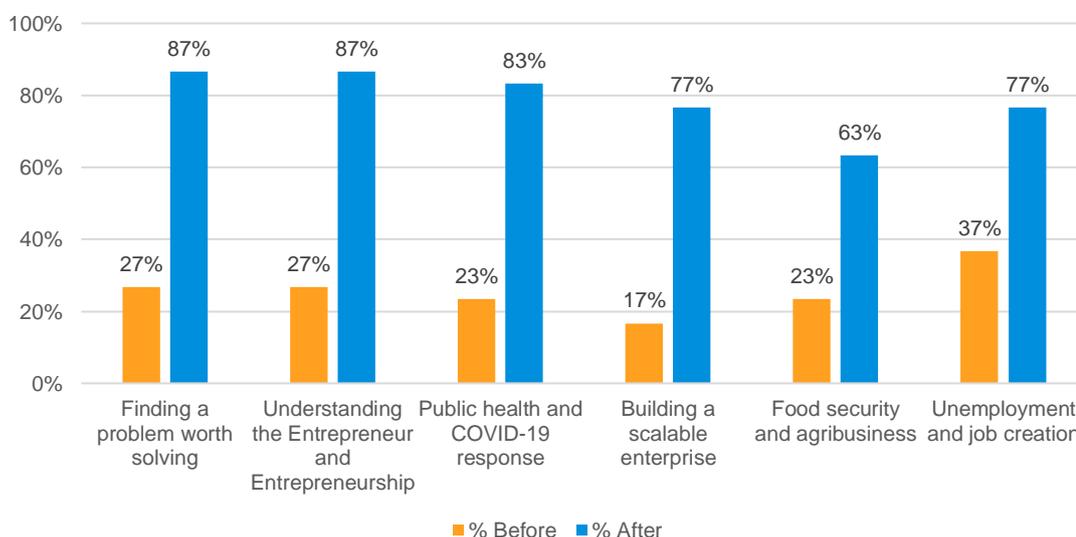
Participant Engagement

Knowledge and skill level changes before and after the programme

Participants rated their level of knowledge, skills or competency before and after the training programme. Respondents rated themselves on a scale of 1 ("Low") to 5 ("High") for each key themes.

Overall, the programme significantly contributed to increasing the participants' knowledge and skill levels. In phase 1, the number of participants who rated their knowledge, skills, or competency as either "Moderate" or "High" increased by 60 percentage points on four of the six key themes and 40 percentage points in the remaining two themes.

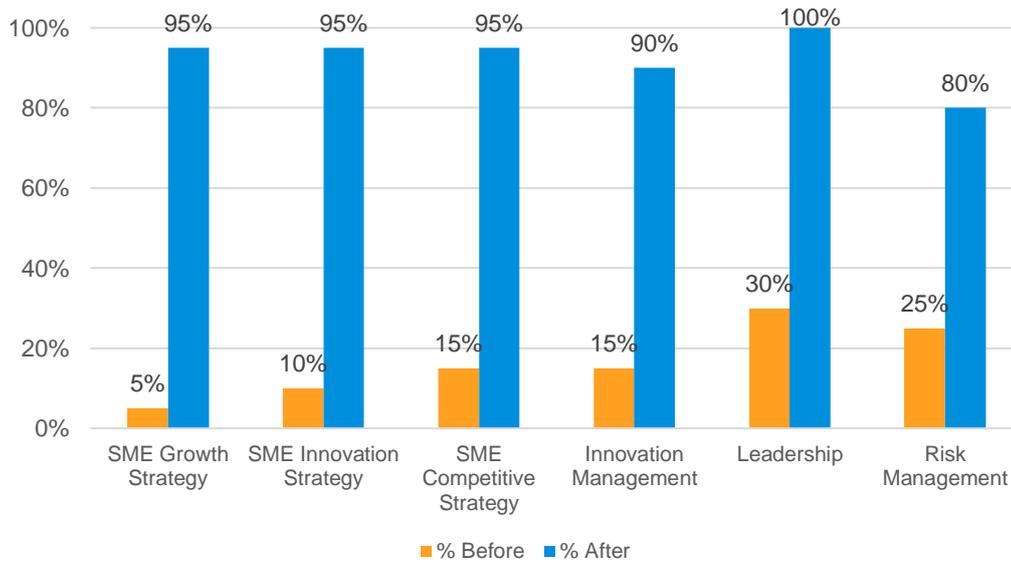
Figure 4: Percentage of participants that rated themselves with moderate or high level of knowledge, skills, or competency by key themes (Before vs. After Phase 1)





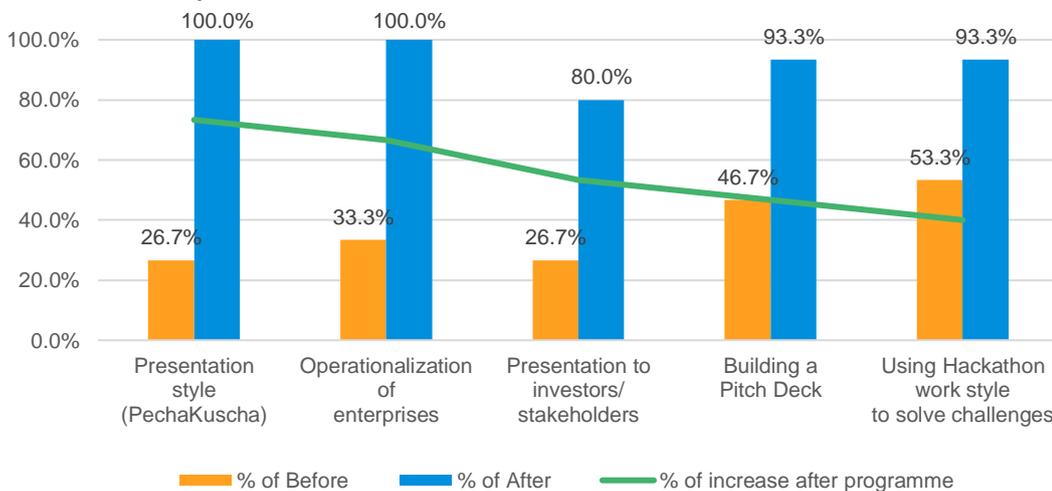
Phase 2 showed even more significant growth in participant knowledge and skill levels. Most growth was seen in “SME Growth Strategy”, in which 95% of the participants rated their knowledge, skills, or competency to be moderate or high after the training compared to 5% before the training (an increase of 90 percentage points).

Figure 5: Percentage of participants that rated themselves with moderate or high level of knowledge, skills, or competency by key themes (Before vs. After Phase 2)



In phase 3, knowledge and skills relevant to the learning objectives of the Baghdad workshop were evaluated. Among these, “Presentation style (PechaKucha)” and “Operationalization of enterprises” achieved the most growth, with 100% of participants rating their knowledge, skills, or competency to be moderate or high levels after the workshop compared to less than 30% before.

Figure 6: Percentage of participants that rated themselves with moderate or high level of knowledge, skills, or competency by key themes (Before vs. After Phase 3)





Overall completion rates

Phase 1

In phase 1, 64 participants (50% of participants enrolled) completed 70% of the online course and received a certificate of completion.

Figure 7: Phase 1 completion rate

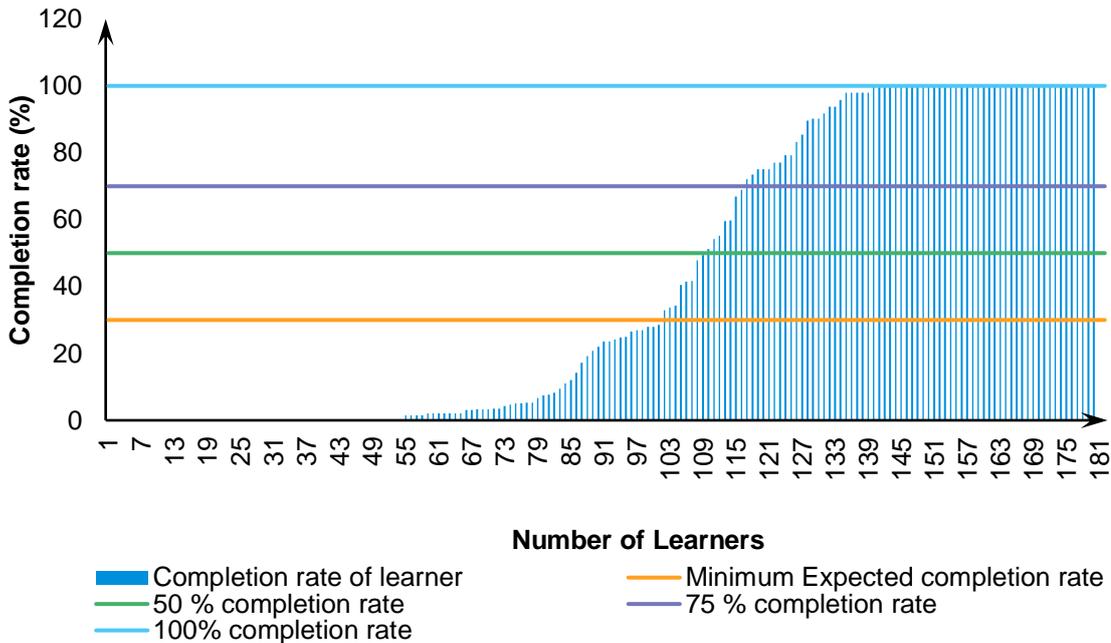


Table 1: Phase 1 completion rate and criteria for certification

Audience	Percentage of learners who completed the course (%)	Number of learners who completed the course (#)	Course completion criteria for certification (%)	Type of Certification awarded
Iraqi Learners Phase 1	32	41	100	Completion Certificate
	50	64	70	Completion Certificate
	55	71	50	Participation Certificate
	61	79	33	Participation Certificate



Phase 2

In phase 2, 17 participants (59% of participants enrolled) completed 70% of the online course and received a certificate of completion.

Figure 8: Phase 2 completion rate

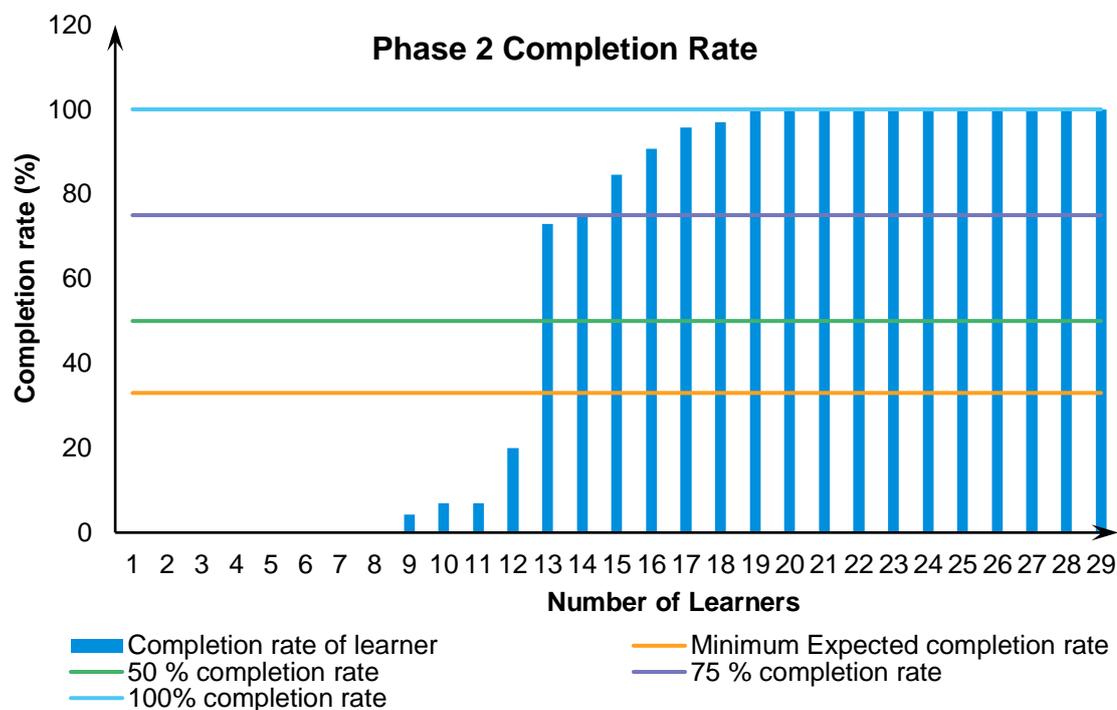


Table 2: Phase 2 completion rate and criteria for certification

Audience	Percentage of learners who completed the course (%)	Number of learners who completed the course (#)	Course completion criteria for certification (%)	Type of Certification awarded
Iraqi Learners Phase 2	38	11	100	Completion Certificate
	59	17	70	Completion Certificate
	59	17	50	Participation Certificate
	59	17	33	Participation Certificate



Time spent on the course

The online learning platform recorded the length of time spent by each participant on the course lessons. For both phases 1 and 2, the time spent by each participant varies greatly, from 6 hours to 400 hours. On average, each participant spent 34.2 hours to complete all required lessons in phase 1, excluding assignments and discussions. In phase 2, participants spent, on average, 6.2 hours to complete all required lessons.

The time spent by the participants may depend on factors such as their English language ability, level of commitment and motivation, and accessibility to high-speed Internet.

Figure 9: Time spent on the course (phase 1)

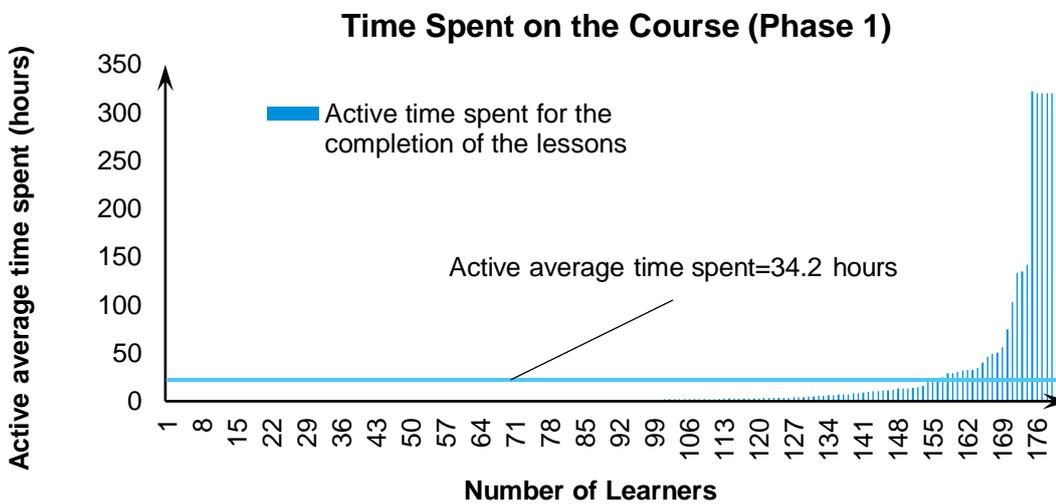
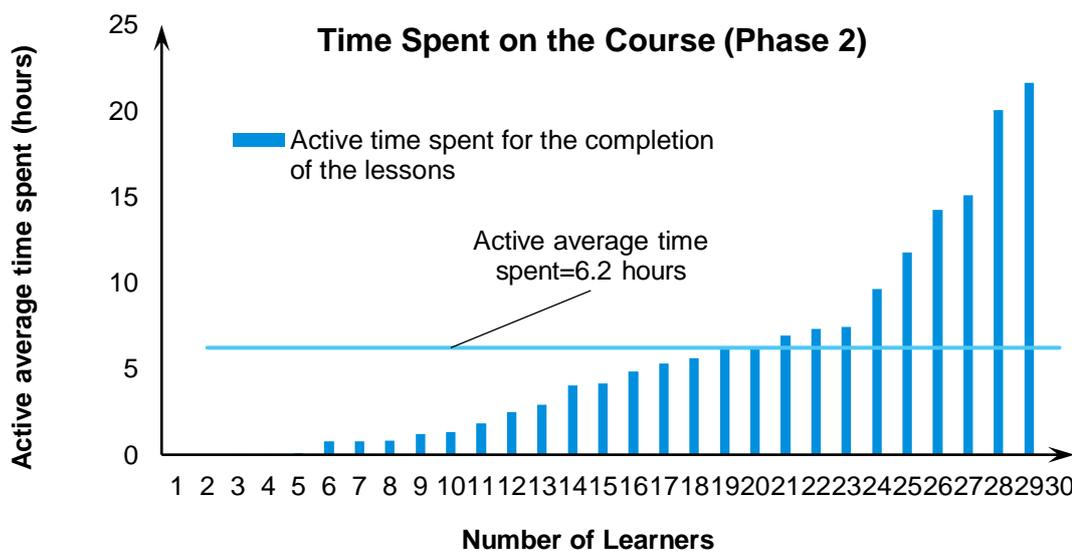


Figure 10: Time spent on the course (phase 2)





Individual Satisfaction

Learning objectives met: “I met the learning objectives of the course”

At the end of phase 1, **67%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

At the end of phase 2, **83%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

Network building: “I have made new contacts that will be of value to my career and/or in setting up a new enterprise”

The survey results indicate that the programme contributed to network building, which is one of the most fundamental aspects of entrepreneurship.

At the end of phase 2, **65%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

At the end of phase 3, **79%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

The improved result after phase 3 demonstrates the importance of in-person engagements for participants to establish meaningful connections with their peers and mentors.

Overall satisfaction: “I would recommend this course to a colleague or a friend”

At the end of phase 1, **80%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

At the end of phase 2, **95%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

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: “The content of the course was relevant to my job”

Job relevance evaluates to what extent the programme was relevant to the participant’s professional roles. The participants have diverse professional backgrounds and their entrepreneurial ventures are often not their main source of income, which may account for the relatively low percentage for job relevance in phase 1 and phase 3.

At the end of phase 1, **53%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
At the end of phase 2, **77%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
At the end of phase 3, **57%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

New information: “The information presented in this course was new to me”

New information evaluates to what extent the programme imparted new knowledge to the participants. As the programme targets aspiring and experienced entrepreneurs in various stages of their careers, entrepreneurs with mature businesses may not have considered some of the information presented as new to them. In future programmes, UNITAR may consider incorporating more content that will suit the training needs of entrepreneurs that are further along in their careers.

At the end of phase 1, **63%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
At the end of phase 2, **77%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
At the end of phase 3, **64%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.



All in all, this course totally exceeded my expectations and has helped me massively in building my social enterprise. It's one of the few online courses I've done where I found genuine value in each lesson.

Anonymous

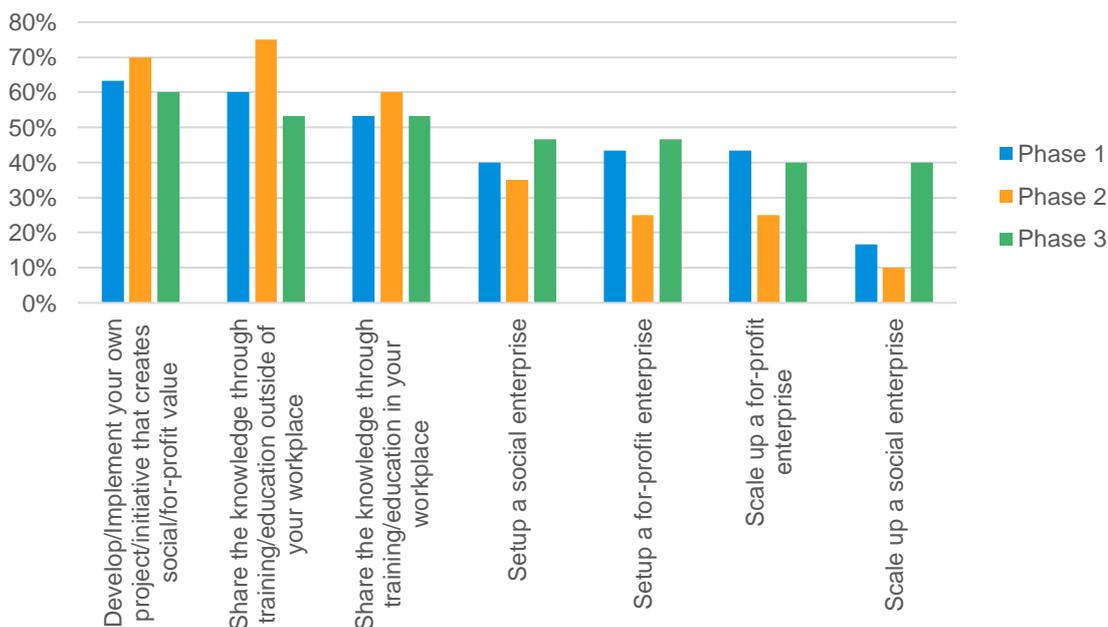
Intent to use: “It is likely that I will use the information acquired”

Intent to use evaluates to what extent the participants intend to use their newly acquired knowledge. Over 90% of responses in phase 1 and phase 2 indicated their intent to use the information acquired in the course.

At the end of phase 1, **93%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
At the end of phase 2, **77%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
At the end of phase 3, **93%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

The participants were also asked to complete the statement “I am likely to use the knowledge and skills gained from this course by...”. The top responses across the three phases were “Developing/Implementing my own project/initiative that creates social/for-profit value” (64%), “Sharing the knowledge through training/education outside of my workplace” (63%), and “Sharing the knowledge through training/education in my workplace” (56%). The responses confirm that the value of the programme is not only limited to the participants’ current professions but more likely to be used in diverse contexts in the future.

Figure 11: Application of knowledge and skills acquired (Phase 1-3)



Usefulness: “Overall, the course was useful”

At the end of phase 1, **83%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
At the end of phase 2, **94%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
At the end of phase 3, **100%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

The overwhelming majority of responses at each phase of the programme agreed on the overall usefulness of this programme, particularly reaching 100% of the responses at the end of phase 3.



Effectiveness of the programme methodologies

Perceived effectiveness of the programme referred to all learning methods used, including online lessons, webinars, and videos, and EdApp as a tool.

Overall Methodology

Participants were asked to rate on a scale of 1 (“Strongly disagree”) to 5 (“Strongly agree”) the statement “The methodology used, including online lessons, webinars, and videos was useful in meeting the learning objectives of this course”.

The participants responded more positively to phases 2 and 3, which included more multimedia content and in-person engagement.

At the end of phase 1, **63%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

At the end of phase 2, **88%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement

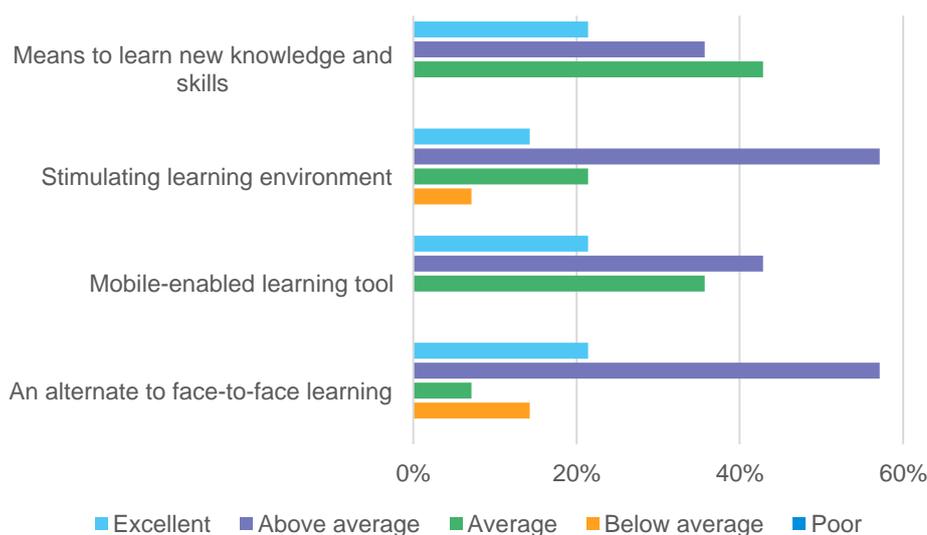
At the end of phase 3, **100%** either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

EdApp

Participants rated the effectiveness of EdApp as a learning tool along the following four aspects:

- an alternative to in-person learning
- a mobile-enabled learning tool
- a stimulating learning environment
- a means to learn new knowledge and skills

Figure 12: Evaluation of EdApp related elements (% of responses in phase 3)



Despite the high demand for in-person learning, most of the responses were positive about EdApp as an alternative to in-person learning and rated it above average or excellent as a mobile-enabled learning tool and a means to gain new knowledge and skills.



Lessons Learned

Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities

Selection criteria and procedures for ensuring participant diversity proved effective and necessary.

Hybrid learning, combining online and in-person activities, is favourably received by participants and conducive to increased motivation, networking, and collaboration.

Frequent mini-surveys and short polls are a vital source for immediate feedback from participants.

Increased interactivity in webinars encouraged active participation and improves motivation.

The online conference drew together key stakeholders comprising the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Iraq and helped to build and strengthen UNITAR's network in the region.

The mentorship system is conducive to a close and active follow-up of participant projects/enterprises.

Challenges

Stronger training interventions and a more structured framework should be considered to ensure coaches' active participation in the programme.

Planning and implementing in-person activities remain challenging amidst the ever-changing rules and regulations surrounding COVID-19.

Training content geared towards practical exercises and case studies in the Iraqi context should be further enhanced.





Opportunities

Selection criteria and procedures for ensuring participant diversity are effective and necessary.

Embracing the principles of inclusive entrepreneurship, the programme engaged Iraqi learners from diverse regions and sectors with different backgrounds and motivations for becoming an entrepreneur. This diversity can be attributed to the criteria for participant selection, which considered gender and geographical representation. For the two-day workshop in Baghdad, participants who are based outside of Baghdad were given accommodation to ensure geographical diversity even in an offline setting.

Gender equality was also a key consideration. We considered gender balance when choosing coaches and mentors, which resulted in 5 of the 12 coaches being women, as well as were 1 of the 3 experts at the Baghdad workshop and 2 of 4 the mentors engaged in the programme. Providing participants with the opportunities to network with successful women and increase the visibility of female role models in traditionally male-dominated fields added further value to the programme.

The hybrid learning modality, combining both online and in-person activities, is favourably received by participants and helps increase motivation, networking, and collaboration.

While accountability and active participation is more difficult to sustain in an online modality, announcing that there was an in-person training at the end of the programme increased participants' motivation and sense of accomplishment, which in turn enhanced the online learning experience. The in-person interactions allowed participants to build and expand their networks and pave a path for meaningful collaborations.



We hope that the share of the practical side of the lectures will be greater than the share of the theoretical side, and that it be appropriate and applicable within the Iraqi environment in particular.

Anonymous

The timing of the Baghdad workshop fit in well with the phase-based structure of the programme. While the programme initially enrolled 181 participants in phase 1, only 30 outstanding participants were selected to proceed to phase 2. This mechanism ensured that the most motivated and qualified participants were invited to the in-person workshop at the end of the programme.

In future programmes, we can continue to explore the use of hybrid learning that includes training in both online and offline settings as an effective modality.



Frequent mini-surveys and short polls are a vital source for immediate feedback from participants.

Mini-surveys and short polls in webinars allowed UNITAR to get frequent quick feedback from participants and identify new training needs that can be used to tailor programme content in a timely manner. While comprehensive surveys are needed at key stages of the programme, they tend to garner less responses and are infrequent. In contrast, 5-minute interactive survey/polls in webinars allows most participants to answer on the spot and initiates a two-way conversation to resolve any issues as they come up. The frequent short survey/polls enhanced UNITAR's reactivity and ensured that the participants played an active role in the programme design and implementation.



I would recommend a physical session from time to time for better discussion and brain storming.

Anonymous

Increased interactivity in webinars encourages active participation and improves motivation.

The UNITAR team received overwhelmingly positive feedback on interactive or workshop-style webinars, where participants are encouraged to speak and participate in the discussion throughout the session. While presentation-style webinars are informative, it is often difficult to encourage active engagement from participants aside from the Q&A.

The online conference drew together key stakeholders from the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Iraq and helped to build and strengthen UNITAR's network in the region.

The two-hour online session engaged local entrepreneurship hubs and prominent start-ups in Iraq and hosted a total of 65 attendees from different sectors across Iraq and the world. It was held in partnership with four local organisations: GREEN CHARTER Foundation for Water and Environmental Consulting, KAPITA Business Hub, SANAD for Economic Development, and The Station Foundation for Entrepreneurship. By using the networks and channels of the partner organisations, we were able to reach a diverse audience and bring together insights from diverse sectors and fields across Iraq.

The mentorship system helps close and active follow-up of participant projects/enterprises.

The programme engaged four local experts with 10-15 years of experience in the Iraqi entrepreneurial field to hold group mentoring sessions for the participants. Participants took advantage of the diversity of the mentors' expertise, including in e-commerce, sustainable construction, agriculture and water resources, and female leadership, and sign themselves up for mentorship sessions that they felt most closely aligned with their projects/enterprises. The mentorship sessions provided practical and contextualised advice for the participants and, in some cases, were held in the local language to allow for more nuanced conversations to take place. The mentorship system was favourably received by participants and some voiced that they wished the mentors would be engaged from earlier stages of the programme.



Challenges

Stronger training interventions and a more structured framework should be considered to ensure coaches' active participation in the programme.

The volunteer coaches engaged in the programme are qualified professionals selected from UNITAR programme alumni in Iraq. Before the programme launch, the coaches were invited to an onboarding webinar, where they were given an overview of their roles and responsibilities as a coach. They were also shown a demo of the online learning platform where they would be assisting the participants throughout the training. Coaches also received a guidebook with instructions for facilitating discussions and giving assignment feedback.

Despite the coaches' significant contributions to the programme, some of the coaches faced difficulty in carrying out their full responsibilities due to time constraints as a working professional and, in some cases, lack of motivation. To ensure the coaches' active involvement, stronger training interventions should be considered. A more structured framework and defined key performance indicators (KPI) may better set the coaches up for success. UNITAR may also consider holding regular coaching sessions throughout each phase to strengthen communication and interaction among the coaches and participants. With COVID-19 safety measures and procedures in place, offline meetings would also be highly beneficial.

Planning and implementing in-person activities remain challenging amidst the ever-changing rules and regulations surrounding COVID-19.

The in-person workshop in Baghdad was the first time UNITAR Division for Prosperity held an in-person workshop since the pandemic broke. It marked a successful start of the new "hybrid" training model. However, it was not without its challenges. Workshop planning and risk assessments were reviewed and amended regularly to accommodate the frequent changes in rules and regulations at country, regional, and organisational levels. COVID-19 guidelines were also strictly enforced on the day of the workshop.

Despite COVID-19-related restrictions being lifted and vaccine rates improving in most regions, the unpredictable nature of the situation remains to be a challenge for future in-person engagements. Using hybrid learning and allowing flexibility in programme planning will help UNITAR design successful training programmes in the post-pandemic era.

Training content geared towards practical exercises and case studies in the Iraqi context should be further enhanced.

The programme content combined both theoretical and practical aspects of entrepreneurship and innovation. The content was supplemented with Iraqi case studies as well as live webinars and mentoring sessions by local subject matter experts who had specific expertise within the Iraqi entrepreneurial landscape. Reflecting on participant feedback, however, we need more efforts in future programmes to further highlight practical exercises and case studies with a focus on the Iraqi context.



I think the course was great and it brought great info for beginners like me who had the practical knowledge but lacked a theoretical one.

Anonymous



Annexes

Annex I

Phase 1 Agenda: Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Module	Week	Lessons	Module Overview
Welcome & Course Overview	0	Lessons 1-4	Introduction to the course overview, structure, team, assignments, key dates, and EdApp
Understanding the Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurship	1	Lessons 5-8	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.
	2	Lessons 9-12	
Women's Entrepreneurship	1-2	Lessons 13-16	Understand the gender-specific constraints in entrepreneurship; Relate women's entrepreneurship to the SDGs; Craft strategies to tackle gender issues as an individual or a business
Identifying a Problem Worth Solving	3	Lessons 17-21	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; Identify early adopters for your new product/service; Develop inbound and outbound demand creation strategies; Explore case examples from your home country.
	4	Lessons 22-25	
	5	Lessons 26-29	
Building a Scalable Enterprise	6	Lessons 30-32	Formulate financial projections and ratios; Identify traditional and new forms of funding for your enterprise; Understand the opportunities and challenges of microfinance; Pitch your business idea to investors and other stakeholders
	7	Lessons 32-36	
	8	Lesson 37	
Meet the Sustainable Development Goals (Optional)	N/A		Introduction to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals; Learn how to mainstream the SDGs; Identify gender issues in the SDGs; Learn about the Twin Track Approach in addressing gender inequality; Case study in Bangladesh

Phase 2 Agenda: Leadership, Strategy and Innovation

Module	Week	Lessons	Module Overview
Welcome & Course Overview	0	Lesson 1	Introduction to the course overview, structure, assignments, and key dates.
Developing Future Leaders	1	Lessons 2-6	Identify 9 key elements of the leadership system; Appraise your own leadership style and reflect on your competencies and preferences in building teams and partnerships; Outline the key principles of social accountability
Crafting SME Strategy	2	Lessons 7-12	Learn how to appraise the competitive landscape and develop competitive strategies; Outline different mechanisms of growth for start-ups; Develop an innovation strategy; Explore Japan Case Study #1 on rebuilding a business in the post-war era
Innovation Management	3	Lessons 13-17	Identify contemporary theories and types of innovation; Learn international best practice in business model innovation; Manage the innovation pipeline; Evaluate innovation projects using metrics and measures; Outline types of workplace initiatives that spark and support innovation; Understand how to build a culture and mindset of innovation; Explore Japan Case Study #1 on social entrepreneurship
	4	Lessons 18-20	
Risk Management	5	Lessons 21-25	Outline the risk management process; Identify internal/external and known/unknown risks using different methods; Analyse risks and create a risk priority matrix; Create a risk mitigation plan; Explore Japan Case Study #3 on starting small to build a long-standing business
Hiroshima's Post-war Reconstruction (Optional)	N/A		Learn the history of Hiroshima city and the factors that led to its quick recovery following WWII



Annex II

Live Webinars and Online Mentoring Sessions

#	Phase #	Date	Webinar
1	Phase 1	20 Aug 2021	FEI Onboarding Webinar
2	Phase 1	10 Sep 2021	Food Security and Agribusiness (Dr. Sameh W. Al-Muqdadi)
3	Phase 1	24 Sep 2021	Entrepreneurship and Unemployment (Mr. Ali Al-Bawi)
4	Phase 1	1 Oct 2021	COVID-19 and Public Health (Dr. Fawad Akbari)
5	Phase 1	15 Oct 2021	Key Principles of Entrepreneurship (Dr. Michael Fors)
6	Phase 1	22 Oct 2021	Turning Ideas into a Plan: Business Model and Project Proposal Writing (Dr. Michael Fors)
7	Phase 2	12 Nov 2021	LSI Onboarding Webinar
8	Phase 2	19 Nov 2021	Introduction to Leadership Systems (Dr. Michael Fors)
9	Phase 2	3 Dec 2021	Creativity for Innovation (Dr. Clare Gately)
10	Phase 3	4 Mar 2022	Phase 3 Onboarding Webinar
11	Phase 3	9 Mar 2022	Group Mentoring Session #1
12	Phase 3	11 Mar 2022	Group Mentoring Session #2
13	Phase 3	18 Mar 2022	GIS Expert Sessions: Social Entrepreneurship (Borderless Japan)
14	Phase 3	23 Mar 2022	GIS Expert Sessions: Fundamentals of Start-up Finance (Dr. Michael Cortez)
15	Phase 3	31 Mar 2022	Group Mentoring Session #3
16	Phase 3	31 Mar 2022	Group Mentoring Session #4



Annex III

Baghdad Workshop: Agenda

UNITAR Business Operationalisation Hackathon in Entrepreneurship and Innovation
In-person workshop held on 11-12 March 2022 in Baghdad, Iraq

Day 1 Hackathon (11 Mar 2022)

09:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Session 1: Setting group challenge
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM	Tea break
10:45 AM – 12:00 PM	Session 2: Practical exercises
12:00 PM – 01:30 PM	Lunch break
01:30 PM – 02:30 PM	Session 3: Mentoring, Coaching Q&A Session
02:30 PM – 04:00 PM	Session 4: Group presentation (3 oral presentations, 3 feedback)

Day 2 Pitch Deck Revision and Final Presentation (12 Mar 2022)

09:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Session 1: Individual: Revision Pitch Desk Session Tea break
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Session 2: Presentation Session (4 mins presentation, 3 feedback)
12:00 PM – 01:30 PM	Lunch break
01:30 PM – 02:30 PM	Session 3: Presentation Session (3 mins presentation, 3 feedback)
02:30 PM – 04:00 PM	Session 4: Presentation Session (3 mins presentation, 3 feedback)
04:00 PM – 04:30 PM	Session 5: Feedback & evaluation
04:30 PM – 05:00 PM	Session 6: Certification and closing

Annex IV

Baghdad Workshop: Participant Presentations

	Name	Presentation
1	Ahmed Abduzahra Taha Al-Atbee	N/A ²
2	Ali Hasan Dhumad Alghadhbawi	Sustainable packaging
3	Ahmed Rafea Naji Alsaadon	Irona: HR solutions, training, and recruitment for career development
4	Duha Salwan Ibrahim Alsalh	Slick: Platform to provide training and employment opportunities for women
5	Usama Khaleel Ibrahim Al-Bayaty	Ethics.iq: Training and workshops to enhance work ethic and soft skills in the workplace
6	Mohammed Essmat Ibrahim	Kirkuk Online Food Service: Online food delivery app in Kirkuk
7	Mohammed Majid Ibrahim Al Hakeem	Green Field School: Vocational training in agriculture
8	Hayder Fadhel Jawad	Smart Home Iraq: Integration of solar energy with the smart home system to minimise waste of electricity
9	Hussam Falih Hasan Al-Buaoff	Clean energy
10	Mustafa Musa Jaber Alshamkhee	Recycling plastic waste and tires to produce indoor sports ground and playground
11	Rami Mohsen Jawad Al-Sultane	Shuaa Medical Tourism: Services and consultations for medical tourism and access to advanced hospitals
12	Ruaa Rabea Jameel Al-Obaidi	Mental health and guidance counseling in marriage and divorce issues
13	Sayf Mohammed Dhiya Younis Al-ashqar	Save the Source: Introducing modern technologies in the Mosul Central Library
14	Sadeq Dhafer Abdulqader Almoayed	Dijlah Water Sports: Water sports promotion and equipment rental
15	Elaf A. H. Hussein	She Can Too: Training and internship opportunities for women
16	Ahmed Talab Hussein	N/A
17	Ali Abdulkarim Noshi Alazzawi	Production of local fertilisers and biofuel using food waste
18	Sama Abbas Farhan Al-Delfi	N/A
19	Abbas Yahya Alwan Al-Jumaili	N/A

² Those marked N/A were unable to participate in the presentation portion of the workshop.



Annex V

Online Conference Structure and Topic Areas

1st Session: Profiling the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Iraq

Speakers

Mohamed Ameen

Programs Officer at The Station
Foundation for Entrepreneurship

Mohammed Jamal

Managing Director for Research at
KAPITA Business Hub

Sameh W. Al-Muqdadi

General Manager at GREEN
CHARTER Foundation for Water and
Environmental Consulting and CEO
of SANAD for Economic
Development

Topics

- Overview of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Iraq
- Overview of the challenges and opportunities in promoting inclusive entrepreneurship in Iraq
- Best practices and lessons learned to address the diverse needs of entrepreneurs from different economic/social backgrounds
- Challenges and opportunities in microfinance for Iraqi youth entrepreneurs

2nd Session: Profiling Iraq's Entrepreneurs

Speakers

Marwan Jabbar

VP of Commercial Development and
People at Miswag

Basima Abdul Rahman

Founder and CEO of KESK

Samar Al-Mafraji

General Manager at AMS/Iraq

Topics

- Challenges and opportunities in the e-commerce sector for Iraqi youth entrepreneurs
- Challenges and opportunities in renewable energy and green building for Iraqi youth entrepreneurs
- Gender equality in male-dominated fields
- Best practices and lessons learned at Miswag, KESK, and AMS/Iraq