

UNITAR Building Bridges: Entrepreneurship and Project Planning in South Sudan
2020–2021 Cycle

Project Completion Report

January 2022

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wholeheartedly thank the people and Government of Japan for their financial support, without which this project would not have been possible. I also wish to express appreciation to the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and other partners for promoting the UNITAR South Sudan Programme among the youth and women in the various sectors from which participants were drawn.

Finally, I wish to convey my sincere appreciation to the UNITAR experts and resource persons, national coaches, staff, and participants who have – despite many challenges – made this particular programme a success.

I thank you.

Mihoko Kumamoto

Director

UNITAR – Division for Prosperity

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), Division for Prosperity launched the first programme for South Sudan in 2015. Since then, close to 200 participants from many different sectors (e.g., public, private, media, academia, national non-governmental and civil society) have completed UNITAR’s South Sudan training programme.

Developed with the full financial support of the Government and the People of Japan and conducted under the auspices of the Government of South Sudan, the 2020–2021 **UNITAR Building Bridges: Entrepreneurship and Project Planning in South Sudan** sought to improve the capacity of South Sudanese professionals in entrepreneurship and project planning. It supported the post-conflict reconstruction and development of South Sudan as it emerges from decades of devastating conflict and civil strife.

Shift to online

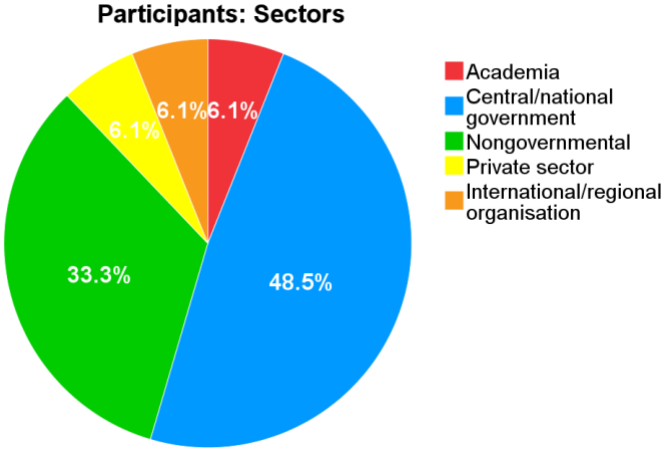
Because of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak at the end of 2019, the programme shifted entirely online. An online mobile learning management platform and other online engagement tools were used to ensure that the participants had an effective learning and capacity-building experience.

Participants & resource people

The programme drew 75 junior- to mid-level professionals – both female and male – from the public sector, academia, media, small and medium enterprises, and civil society and local non-governmental organizations. Of these, 50 participants who performed well and completed the minimum course requirements in Phase 1 progressed to Phase 2.

While the original programme structure involving two in-person workshops in Phase 2 was only intended for 15 participants, the shift to full online modality allowed UNITAR to accommodate a larger group (75 in Phase 1, and 50 in Phase 2) in the revised programme.

International experts, resource persons, and national coaches guided and helped participants manage their learning through the programme.



PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The programme was divided into two phases:

Phase 1 focused on fundamentals of entrepreneurship, organizational needs assessment, and leadership.

Phase 2 delved into project design and action plan.

Participants completed self-paced microlessons on a mobile learning management platform, EdApp, and assignments, and took part in peer-to-peer discussions and live webinars with subject matter experts. National coaches, selected from a pool of UNITAR South Sudan programme alumni, provided valuable feedback and guidance to the participants and added important local context to the course content.

Given that internet access is limited and expensive in South Sudan, UNITAR used a platform for low-data environments, chose learning materials that needed less data, and provided internet data bundles for participants, coaches, and local coordinators. This proved largely successful; participants voiced that they would not have been able to join the programme if not for the provision of internet data bundles.

OUTCOMES

A post-programme evaluation survey shows that the programme was rated highly satisfactory by the participants: 100% of the survey respondents believed that the information provided by the programme were relevant to their learning needs and will be used in the future. Participants also indicated a significant increase in their level of knowledge and skills in key topics. In particular, regarding the knowledge level of fundamentals of entrepreneurship, 12% of the participants rated their levels as moderate or high before the programme and this increased to 94% after the programme.

Respondents also rated the programme methodologies extremely favourably. At the end of Phase 2, 94% either agreed or strongly agreed that the methodology used, including online lessons, webinars, and videos, was useful for the learners to meet the learning objectives. The EdApp was also deemed effective; most participants said EdApp was a useful and stimulating mobile microlearning platform with above-average effectiveness.

The overall completion rate was also highly satisfactory: 55% of the participants enrolled into Phase 1 and 72% of the participants enrolled into Phase 2 completed more than 70% of the programme, thus meeting the minimum requirement for the completion of the course and receiving a UNITAR certificate.

LESSONS LEARNED

The online modality helped ensure that the programme was delivered safely and efficiently. UNITAR could accommodate more participants online compared to the in-person modality of previous programmes. As a result, almost four times the number of participants were enrolled into this year's programme compared to the 2019 cycle. Going online also helped enhance the geographical and sectoral representation of participants and coaches.

Key elements of the programme, such as the live webinars and support from the national coaches, as well as the provision of internet bundles, complemented each other to create a successful programme outcome. Close follow-up with individual participants and effective engagement tools are crucial to keep motivation high – among both participants and volunteer coaches – in a virtual setting, where it is often more difficult to ensure accountability and commitment than traditional in-person settings. Improved blended modality, combining elements of online and in-person trainings, will be considered for future programmes.

1 PROGRAMME BACKGROUND AND DESIGN

1.1 BACKGROUND

South Sudan's existence as a viable state is seriously threatened by the combined effects of a protracted civil war since the country's independence in 2011, gross underdevelopment, and high levels of poverty. It was against this backdrop that the UNITAR, through its Division for Prosperity, conducted the first programme for South Sudan in 2015. Since its inception, the programme was designed to meet South Sudan's need for socioeconomic development and serve as a global template for sustainable human development in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In spite of immense challenges, nearly 200 participants have completed the programme to date,

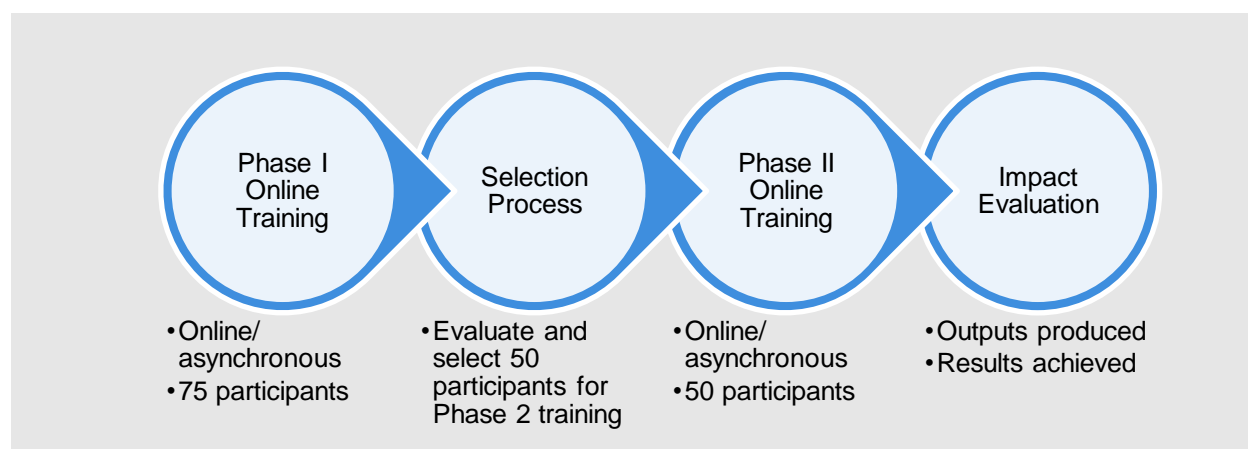
However, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in December 2019, with its social and economic repercussions, disrupted the timeline as well as the modality of the 2020–2021 cycle of the **UNITAR Building Bridges: Entrepreneurship and Project Planning in South Sudan** programme. The pandemic challenged and changed how people work, learn and interact with one another through physical isolation, home confinement, and an increased reliance on web-integrated technologies.

1.2 PROGRAMME DESIGN

The 2020–2021 programme two phases: Phase 1 for 75 participants selected through an open call for applications and Phase 2 for 50 outstanding participants chosen from Phase 1 (Figure 1.1). The phases allow us to effectively manage the learning content and enhance the programme implementation, given the large number of applicants. However, the pandemic and subsequent social distancing measures meant that the original structure and modality (which included in-person elements) had to be reconfigured to suit the new realities and the entire programme was shifted completely online.

Although remote learning may appear restrictive compared to in-person learning, it also offers innovative opportunities, as we saw in the near-total use of webinars and online mobile learning management systems such as EdApp even in the least developed regions of the world.

Figure 1.1: Revised 2020-2021 Programme Structure



1.3 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

An overarching goal of the 2020 programme was to empower South Sudan's youth (both women and men) and build their capacity to develop and run self-led social enterprises. Participants explored and learned about the impact of social interventions and enterprises on society.

The programme objective was to build skills and nurture attitudes of junior- to mid-level South Sudanese professionals for effective entrepreneurship, project management and leadership

Specifically, they would learn about

- key processes of project management and entrepreneurship to take on real-life challenges (e.g. food security, poverty reduction, access to education, youth employment, economic growth etc.) in South Sudan
- organizational needs assessments
- stakeholder identification, integration and engagement processes
- leadership styles in project management and entrepreneurship
- communication strategies
- Results Chain Framework and Business Model Canvas
Hiroshima's post-war recovery and the partnership between government and civil society in reconstruction

The training objectives of the South Sudan entrepreneurship programme were drawn from lessons learned since 2015 and the SDGs. A needs assessment at the beginning of the 2020 programme showed that these objectives continue to reflect existing needs and human development aspirations of South Sudan.

2 PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 EDAPP

To mitigate the pandemic's risks to participants and resource people alike, UNITAR adopted EdApp – a mobile learning management platform – to deliver the course. EdApp was chosen for its flexibility in accommodating different types of learners and its ability to encourage asynchronous and self-paced learning.

Coaches and participants could use their smartphones, tablets, and computers to access course content at any time, any place. Participants could learn at their own pace and easily revisit previous course content before moving on to the next to could get a clearer grasp of the content.

EdApp also has a built-in communication tool that we used for the discussion forums. In the forums, participants could share experiences and post comments for peers, coaches, and resource persons to review and reply to.

2.2 INTERNET DATA BUNDLES

UNITAR provided internet data bundles for all participants of the training programme, including coaches and local coordinators in both phases. internet provision was crucial for the programme because internet data in South Sudan is expensive and is a clear barrier to accessing the online training programme.

Each participant was given a SIM card loaded with 10GB of internet to complete the two asynchronous phases over three months. It ensured each participant had enough data to access the course at ease and participate in online webinars, interact with their coaches and UNITAR staff, and submit assignments on time with good quality.

2.3 PROGRAMME CONTENT

Each of the programme's two phases was made up of modules or thematic clusters, composed of microlessons, assignments, and quizzes. (See Annex I for the full list of modules.)

The 75 participants were divided into three learning communities (Figure 2.1). Each learning community was further divided into five small groups, each with a coach. This set-up facilitated interaction between coaches and participants and supported each participant.

Figure 2.1: Learning Communities for Phase 1

LC1: Mount Fuji

Peace, Development and Security, Trade and Industry, Broadcasting, Policy Service, International Cooperation, Human Resource Management, Youth and Sports, Reproductive Health, Procurement, Administration and Finance, Education and Instruction, Agriculture

LC2: Mount Hotaka

Community Resilience, Service Investment, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Education, Peace Building, Agriculture

LC3: Mount Kita

Peace and Education, Policy, Agriculture, Human Resource, Development Studies, Business Administration. Finance, Media and Communication

To receive a Certificate of Completion, participants were required to complete 70% of the entire course content.

2.3.1 Phase 1 Content

The following content was covered in Phase 1.

Introduction to EdApp (onboarding webinar and one microlesson): how to use EdApp (e.g. how to take part in interactive discussions, post assignments, or access study material)

Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship (one live online session and six microlessons): the essentials of entrepreneurship and how creative and sustainable entrepreneurial initiatives can transform communities in South Sudan.

Organizational Needs Assessment (14 microlessons): systematic analysis and reporting of needs, and how to use the assessment to improve existing interventions or explore new opportunities.

Introduction to Leadership (one live online session and four microlessons): personal leadership styles and social accountability in project management and entrepreneurship.

Weekly Discussions (seven weekly collaborative discussions): share ideas and interact with fellow participants, coaches, and resource persons on the modules and assignments.

Three Assignments (Figure 2.2): The three assignments together resulted in an Organizational Needs Assessment report. Preparing the Organizational Needs Assessment allowed each participant to pin down the problem worth solving, which they would develop into a self-led project proposal for Phase 2.

Figure 2.2: Assignments for Phase 1: Organizational Needs Assessment

- Part A: conduct organizational review
- Part B: conduct environmental assessment to identify conditions that can either hinder or enhance organizational performance
- Part C: identify needs

2.3.2 Phase 2 Content

The Results Chain (26 microlessons and a live session): how to develop and use the Results Chain for project planning and project implementation.

Business Model Canvas (BMC) (one live online session and 17 microlessons): examine the Business Model Canvas to configure a project development plan. Explore the BMC as an important and creative tool to design, refine, describe and pivot a business initiative.

Hiroshima Post-War Reconstruction (four multimedia microlessons): Hiroshima's path to reconstruction in the aftermath of World War II, and how government, private enterprise, and civil society engagement enhanced Japan's road to an impressive post-war recovery and reconstruction.

Weekly Discussions (asynchronous interactive discussions): cover the modules and themes in Phase 2 and promote transformative learning and collaboration among the participants.

Reflective Learning Log: Reflect on a personal or professional experience every two to three weeks (a total of three experiences) based on the four stages of Kolb's cycle of effective learning: experience, reflection, conceptualization, and planning.

Three Assignments (Figure 2.3): All three parts together would be used to build a project proposal or business model.

Figure 2.3: Assignments for Phase 2: Project Proposal or Business Model

- Part A: analyze data generated in the organizational needs assessment
- Part B: use the results from the data analysis to develop an intervention that can transform the conditions of beneficiaries
- Part C: demonstrate the impact of the intervention or business initiative on the customers or clients

2.3.3 National Coaches

UNITAR selected South Sudanese coaches with expertise in entrepreneurship and project planning in the local context. The coaches facilitated the participants' learning journey, offered guidance, advice and support, encouraged peer-to-peer interactions, facilitated weekly discussions and gave positive yet meaningful feedback on learners' assignments.

A total of eight national coaches were engaged for Phase 1 and five coaches for Phase 2. They were selected from a pool of UNITAR South Sudan alumni and came from different educational and occupational backgrounds, providing diversity in their expertise.

3 OVERALL EVALUATION

An online evaluation survey was administered to course participants at the end of Phase 2 to

1. Measure participants' knowledge and skills before and after the programme and how they intent to use them following the completion of the programme.
2. Assess participants' learning experience and the programme's relevance and usefulness.
3. Evaluate if the training programme has contributed to improving their performance.

The evaluation shows that the programme goals were successfully achieved. Participants indicated the programme content, assignments, discussions, interaction with resource persons, coaches, and UNITAR team as highly satisfactory.

3.1 OVERALL COMPLETION RATES

Despite challenges of learning online, the percentage of enrolled participants who completed the course was highly satisfactory: 54.7% of participants in Phase 1 and 72% in Phase 2 completed 70% of the course content (Tables 3.1.1 and 3.1.2).

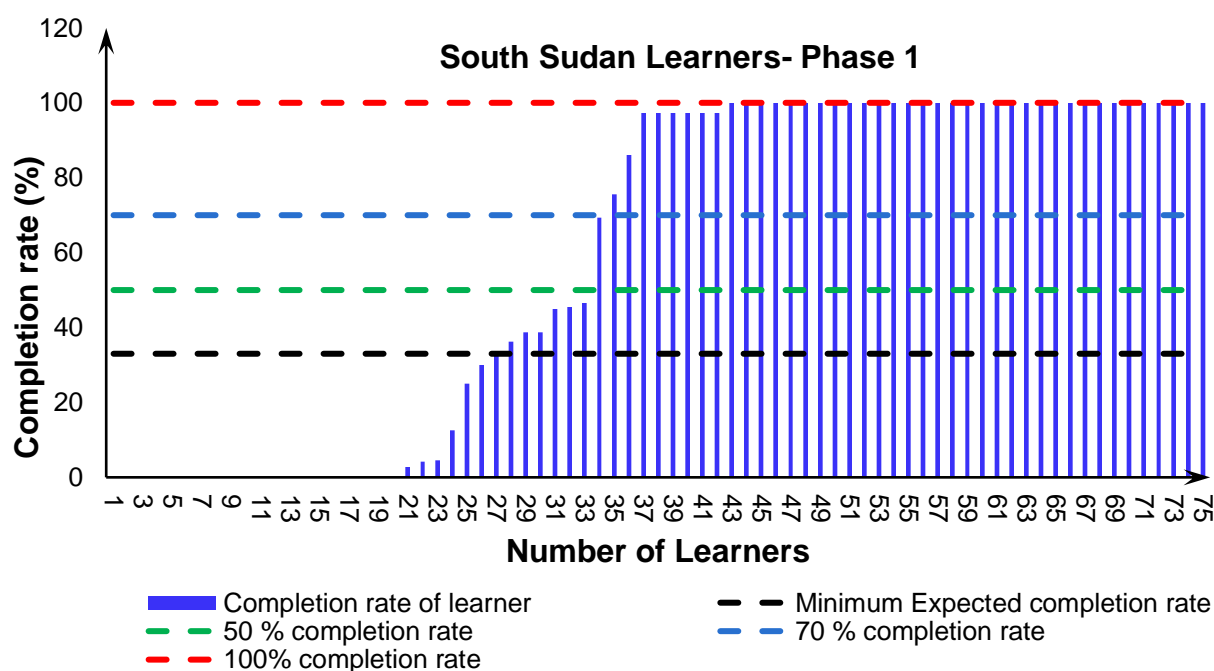


Table 3.1.1: Phase 1 Course Completion Rate and Criteria for Certification

Audience	Percentage of learners who completed the course	Number of learners who completed the course	Course completion criteria to get	Certification

	(%)		UNITAR Certificate (%)	
South Sudan Learners-Phase I	54.7	41	70	Obtained Completion Certificate
	56.0	1	50	Obtained Participation Certificate
	65.3	7	33	Obtained Participation Certificate

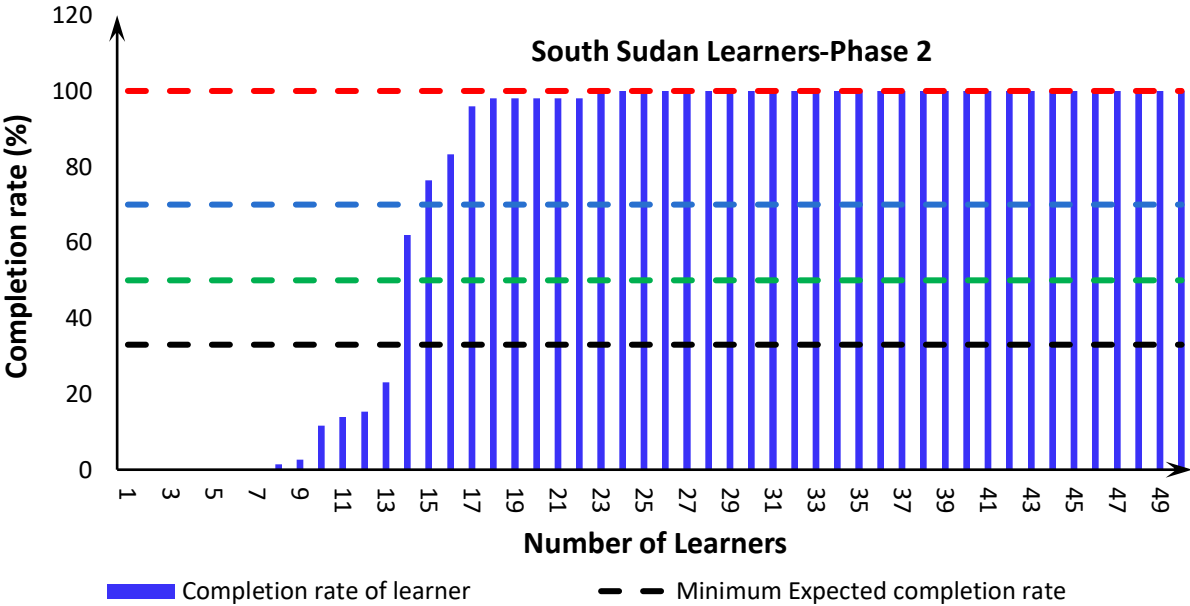
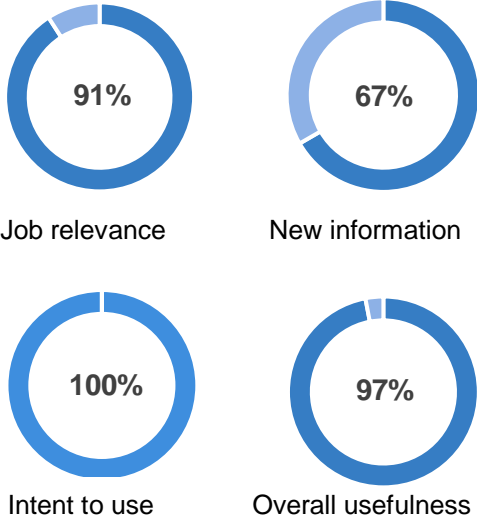


Table 3.1.2: Phase 2 Course Completion Rate and Criteria for Certification

Audience	Percentage of learners who completed the course (%)	Number of learners who completed the course	Course completion criteria to get UNITAR Certificate (%)	Certification
South Sudan Learners-Phase II	72	36	70	Obtained Completion Certificate
	74	1	50	Obtained Participation Certificate

	74	0	33	Obtained Participation Certificate
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3.2 TIME SPENT ON THE COURSE

On average, participants spent 2,290 minutes on the online modules in Phase 1, and 3,700 minutes in Phase 2 (Figures 3.2.1 and 3.2.2).

The selected cohort who progressed to Phase 2 may have already been proficient with EdApp and comfortable spending time on it, more committed to learning, and therefore more active than the initial group of 75 participants. Building on Phase 1, the content, coursework and assignments in Phase 2 were more challenging and comprehensive, requiring in depth understanding and time commitment to complete them. Therefore, we have seen participants dedicating more time and efforts in Phase 2.

Figure 3.2.1: Time Spent on Microlessons and Completing Course Work for Phase 1

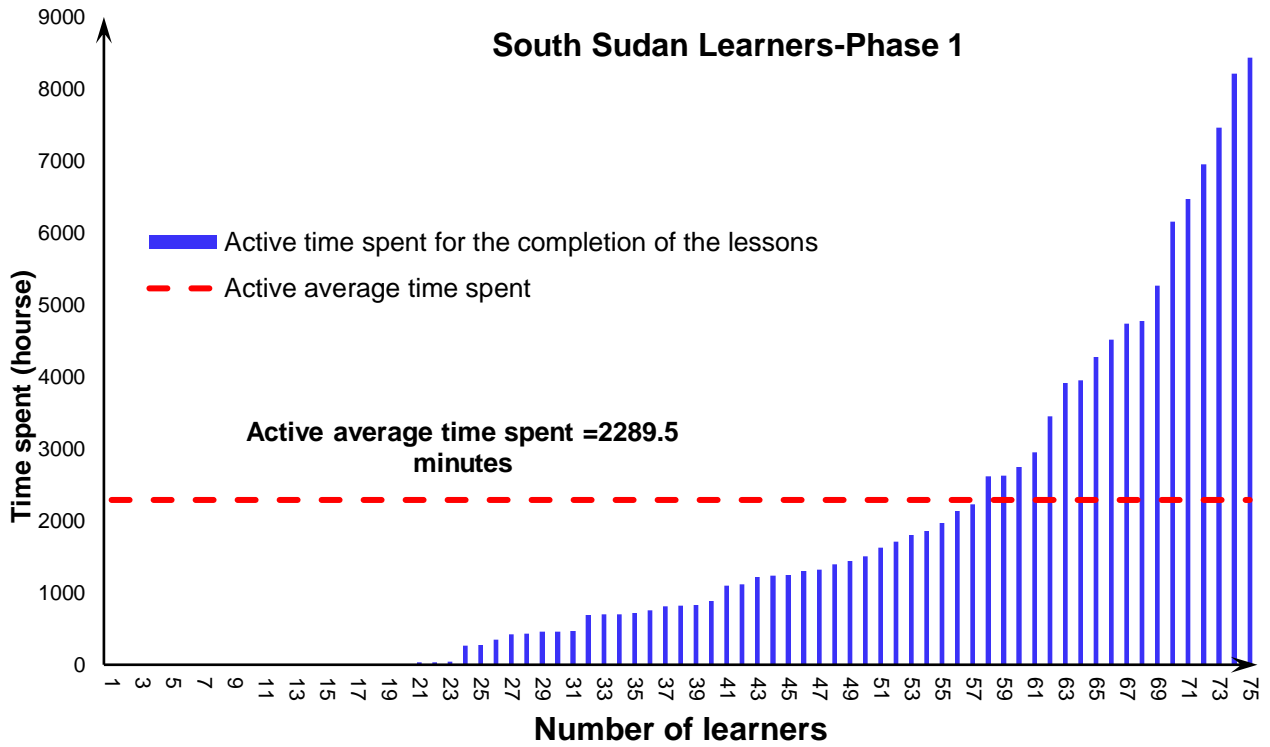
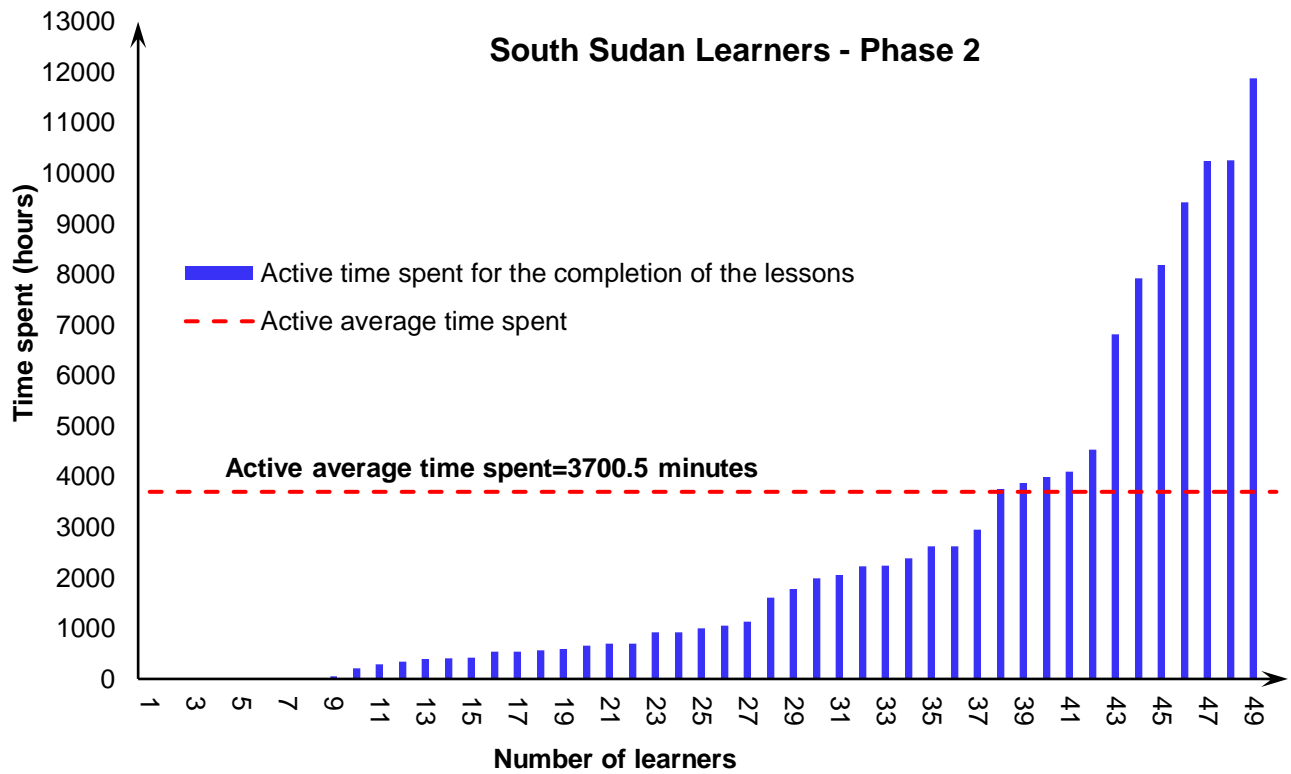


Figure 3.2.2: Time Spent on Microlessons and Completing Course Work for Phase 2



3.3 JOB RELEVANCE, INTENT TO USE, AND OVERALL USEFULNESS

Participants were asked to rate statements about the relevance of the programme to their jobs, their intent to use what they learned, and overall usefulness of the programme on a scale of 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). The UNITAR minimum target is to receive positive feedback from more than 70% of the participants.

The responses exceeded the UNITAR minimum target of 70% positive feedback, which allows us to conclude that the programme provided a helpful learning experience aligned with the participants’ professional roles and needs.

3.3.1 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. Participants were asked whether they agreed with the statement “The content of the course was relevant to my job.”

At the end of Phase 2, 91% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, with a weighted average of 4.48.

“I feel so empowered with the course; lessons are very much relevant with the work I am currently doing in the ministry. I’m indeed privileged to be one of the few beneficiaries in the country.”

“I am so delighted to enrol in the entrepreneurship programme because I am confident the knowledge and the skills I gained positioned me to better conduct the need assessment and environmental analysis of the institution I work for.”

“The programme was amazing; I learned a lot of things that I’m currently applying in my working environment.”

Tabitha Nyawal Lua



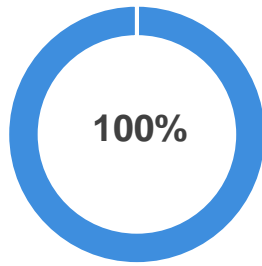
“Learning with UNITAR was educative and exciting though it was online but having a chance to apply what we learned on our various workplaces was very exciting to me.”

Baria Johnson

3.3.2 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 and skills. Participants rated the statement: “It is likely that I will use the information acquired.”

At the end of Phase 2, 100% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, with the weighted average of 4.82.



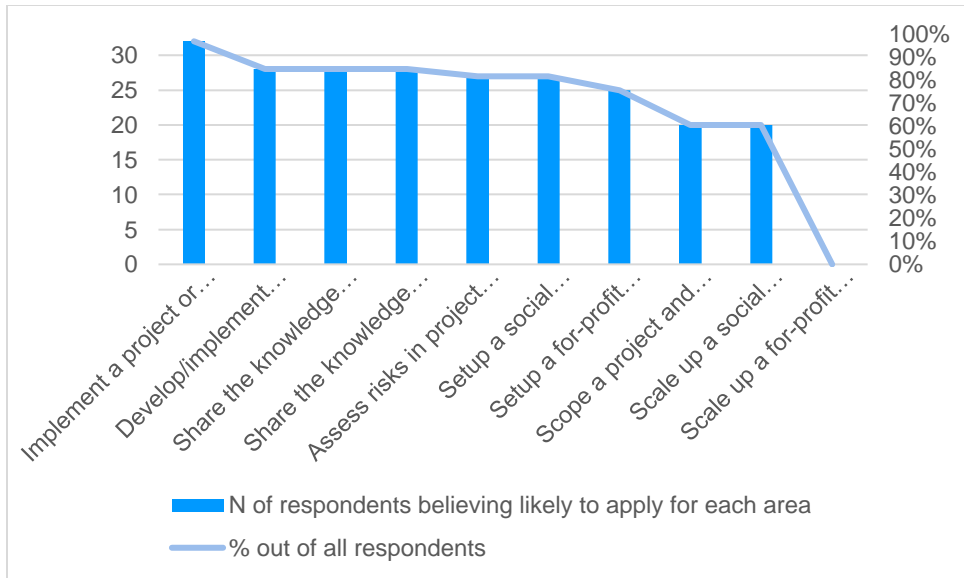
of participants believe that they will use the information acquired.

Participants indicated how they intend to apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills by choosing multiple options to complete the statement “I am likely to use the knowledge and skills gained from this course by ...” The 10 options were:

- Implement a project or lead a programme
- Develop/implement your own project/initiative that creates social/for-profit value
- Share the knowledge through training/education in your workplace
- Share the knowledge through training/education outside your workplace
- Assess risks in project implementations
- Set up a social enterprise
- Set up a for-profit enterprise
- Scope a project and pivot if necessary
- Scale up a social enterprise
- Scale up a for-profit enterprise

The greatest number of participants intend to use the what they learned to “implement a project or lead a programme.”

Figure 3.3: Application of Knowledge and Skills Acquired



3.3.3 Overall usefulness: “Overall, the course was useful”

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

At the end of Phase 2, 100% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, with the weighted average of 4.79. In addition, 97% either agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend this course to colleagues or friends.

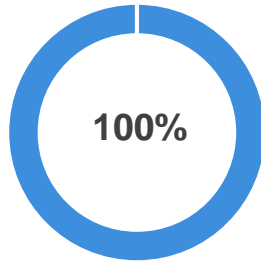
Table 4.3.3: Perceptions of Programme Effectiveness (keep or delete)

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Weighted Average
Likely to use information acquired	0%	0%	0%	18.18 %	81.82%	4.82
Programme was useful	0%	0%	0%	21.21 %	78.79%	4.79
Courses were relevant to my job	0%	3.03%	6.06%	30.30 %	60.61%	4.48
Methodology used, multimedia online lessons, webinars were effective	0%	0%	6.06%	39.39 %	54.55%	4.48
I met the programme learning objectives	0%	0%	0%	0%	57.58%	4.42

The results (Table 4.3.3) show that most participants considered the programme structure, content and methodology as useful, effective and relevant to their job.

3.4 ENGAGEMENT: KNOWLEDGE LEVELS BEFORE VERSUS AFTER THE PROGRAMME

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



of participants believe that they met the learning objectives of the course.

At the end of Phase 2, 100% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I met the learning objectives of the course” on a scale of 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”), with a weighted average of 4.42.

“The training really helps participants with a big dream of setting up entrepreneur by starting with what you have to experiment/prototype your idea or project/service until it works out. While it is a lifelong process until you start earning as a business, it is worth trying despite the difficulties of having no capital.”

At the end of Phase 2, all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “What I learned in the programme adds to my leadership toolkit and my ability to lead in the area of entrepreneurship or intrapreneurship” on a scale of 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”), with a weighted average of 4.73.

For Phases 1 and 2 combined, all participants agreed that the information provided by the programme was relevant to their learning needs and will be used in the future. This fulfilled the minimum target of 70% set by the programme.

[QUOTES]

Effectiveness in providing entrepreneurship-related knowledge and skills

“UNITAR courses have shown me 1) How to implement a project successfully and mobilize resources for it. 2) How to formulate a framework in an organization for improving performance. 3) How to achieve objective and succeed in project execution by planning and experimentation.”

Araham Arop Ayuel Kiir

“I was inspired by the module on social entrepreneurship, and I have identified a business opportunity related to my career in project management. I plan to establish a social organization for helping South Sudanese to solve social problems through poverty reduction and achieve a social return on investment for service delivery in the community.

Effectiveness in way of delivering

“The pace at which the lessons were released on weekly basis is satisfactory for me as I could assess the lessons in my own time without being worried or having the need to speed up.”

Impact and application in current life

“I had incomplete ideas on entrepreneurship. To bring it to life was a challenge. Now that I have this course, I feel like my missing experience on how to bring those ideas to life practically is answered.”

Developed other essential insights

“The Hiroshima case study was impressive to me. As I go about my daily routines at work using the knowledge, I see avenues to impact change in my environment. I feel like I have acquired a third eye’s view, and my mind stays fixed on possible solutions to the various issues facing us.”

Using the framework to reflect on an actual scenarios in the workplace and private life to change behaviours:

“The programme is an eye opener for me. It has added value and insights on how to implement my plans and how I can become independent, not working for others. It equipped and encouraged me so strong that I will be able to make something greater than ever before.”

“Motivation and acquiring knowledge made me feel I can do enough to be a creative individual.”

Bose Magok Ater

3.4.2 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. Participants rated the statement: “The information presented in this course was new to me.”

At the end of Phase 2, 67% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, with a weighted average of 3.82.

The feedback on “new information” did not reach the target minimum value of 70%.

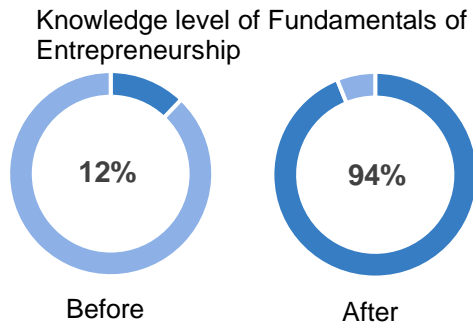
3.4.3 Learning by module

The participants rated their level of knowledge and skills on each of the key topics before and after the programme, on a scale of 1 (“low”) to 5 (“high”).

The programme effectively developed participants’ knowledge and skills on each topic. The most remarkable increase was in “Fundamentals of entrepreneurship.” The greatest increase in average level was “knowledge of case studies from Hiroshima’s post-war reconstruction.”

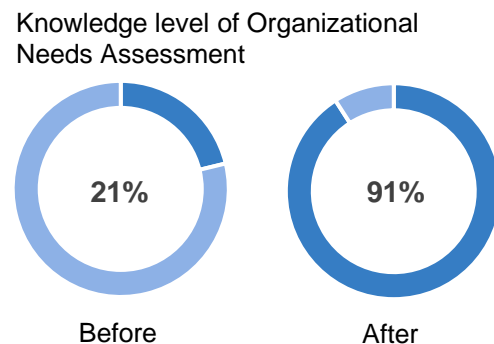
Fundamentals of entrepreneurship

Before the programme, 12% of participants rated their levels as moderate or high, with a weighted average of 2.42. After the programme, this increased to 94%, with a weighted average of 4.70.



Organizational needs assessment

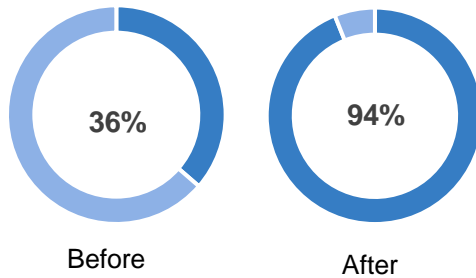
Before the programme, 21% of participants rated their levels as moderate or high, with a weighted average of 2.42. After the programme, this increased to 91%, with a weighted average of 4.67.



Teamwork and communication

Before the programme, 36% of participants rated their levels as moderate or high, with a weighted average of 2.94. After the programme, this increased to 94%, with a weighted average of 4.76.

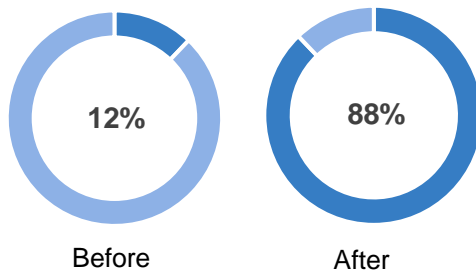
Knowledge level of Teamwork and Communication



Results chain

Before the programme, 12% of participants rated their levels as moderate or high, with a weighted average of 2.24. After the programme, this increased to 88%, with a weighted average of 4.39.

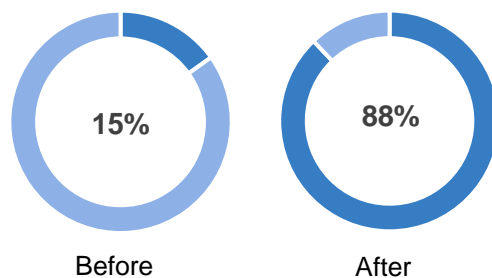
Knowledge level of Results Chain



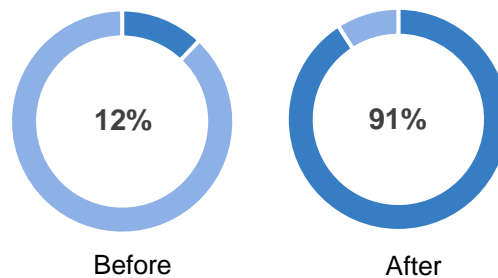
Business Model Canvas

Before the programme, 15% of participants rated their levels as moderate or high, with a weighted average of 2.3. After the programme, this increased to 88%, with a weighted average of 4.52.

Knowledge level of Business Model Canvas



Knowledge level of Case studies from Hiroshima post war reconstruction



Case studies from Hiroshima post-war reconstruction

Before the programme, 12% of participants rated their levels as moderate or high, with a weighted average of 2.21. After the programme, this increased to 91%, with a weighted average of 4.52.

[MORE QUOTES]

Learned from topics related to SDGs:

“I am impressed to have gone through the sustainable development goals and how it impacts our daily lives. If everyone makes efforts to contribute to these goals, it will make a huge impact on our entire society and country.”

“I am glad to have learned a lot from [the course]. It will help me raise awareness of the SDGs in our country.”

“I have learnt that some of the problems in my society have been outlined in the SDGs, for instance, eradicating poverty, zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, quality education, and gender equality. I am hoping to resolve some of these problems through my work.”

“I appreciated the topics covering the evolution of MDGs to SDGs, especially targets and indicators concerning gender.”



“My experience with the UNITAR Programme has been very insightful by broadening my understanding of Entrepreneurship and Project Planning. After the course, I am more poised to have a bird’s eye view of opportunities around me and open to taking risks, with contingency plans.”

Nathan Nyang Mayen

Learned from topic of need assessment

“The need assessment will facilitate better thinking of how to improve productivity and better serve the public, by identifying the needs to plan and implement effective projects, as well as to pass the knowledge to other people so that they are able to help themselves to progress in their endeavours.”

“Organizational needs assessment can identify priorities in my country about unmet service needs of a target population, employee’s training, and development needs, and potential customer engagement strategies and the gap between actual and desired performance and results.”

3.5 EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME METHODOLOGIES

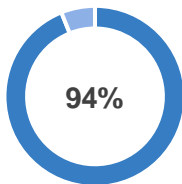
Participants evaluated the course methodology and rated their experience of using EdApp and other course elements on a scale from 1 (“poor”) to 5 (“excellent”).

The results show that most participants were satisfied with the programme; they rated the different elements of the programme as very good.

3.5.1 Methodology used in the course

Participants rated the statement: “The methodology used, including online lessons, webinars, and videos was useful in meeting the learning objectives of this course.”

At the end of Phase 2, 94% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, with a weighted average of 4.48.



Overall usefulness

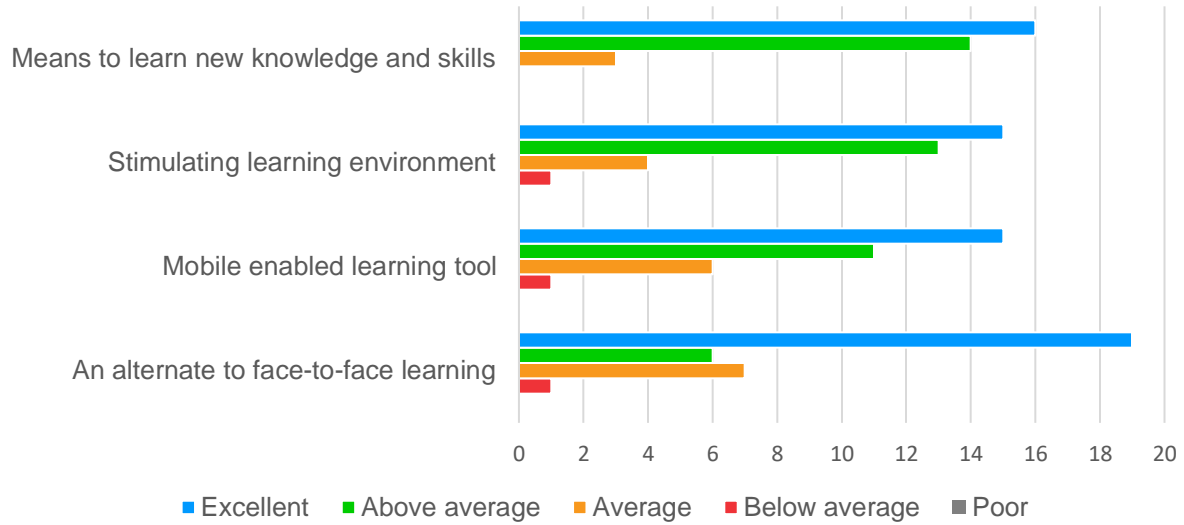
3.5.2 EdApp

Participants rated EdApp on the following four aspects:

- An alternate to face-to-face learning
- Mobile-enabled learning tool
- Stimulating learning environment
- Means to learn new knowledge and skills

Most participants evaluated EdApp as a useful and stimulating mobile microlearning platform with above-average effectiveness.

Figure 4.3.6: Level of Satisfaction with EdApp



3.5.3 Course elements

Participants rated the following course elements:

- Course lessons
- Course assignments
- Course discussions
- Learning community as a forum for exchange between learners and coaches
- Your interaction with the coaches within your learning community
- UNITAR team

Most participants rated all elements positively, as excellent or above average.

Figure 4.3.7: Level of Satisfaction with Programme Content and Structure

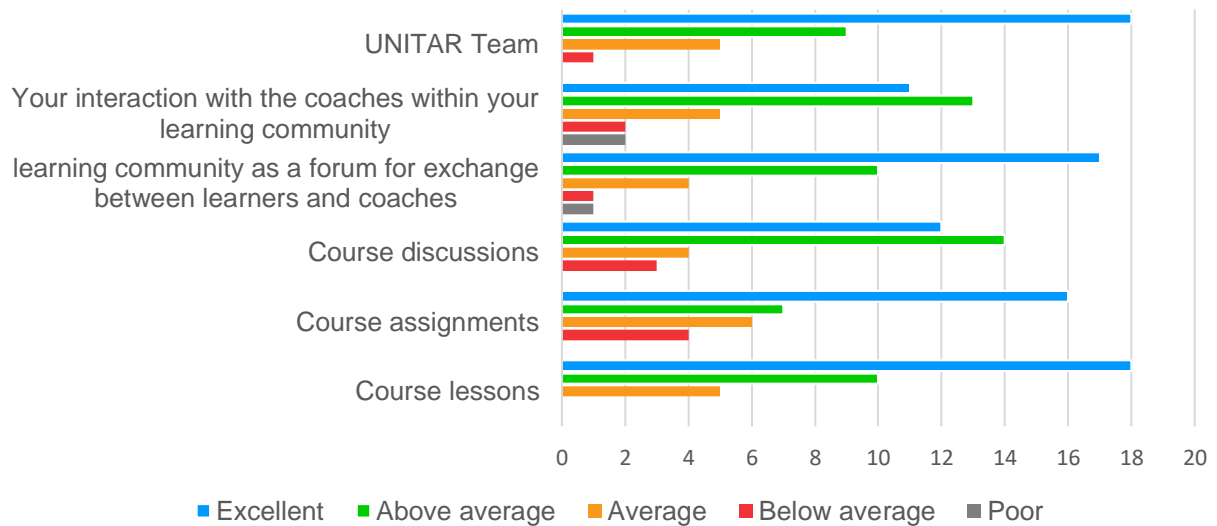


Table 4.3.4: Participants' Experience of the Programme

	POOR	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	EXCELLENT	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Course lessons	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	15.15% 5	30.30% 10	54.55% 18	33	4.39
Course assignments	0.00% 0	12.12% 4	18.18% 6	21.21% 7	48.48% 16	33	4.06
Course discussions	0.00% 0	9.09% 3	12.12% 4	42.42% 14	36.36% 12	33	4.06
Learning Community as a forum for exchange between learners and coaches	3.03% 1	3.03% 1	12.12% 4	30.30% 10	51.52% 17	33	4.24
Your interaction with the Coaches within your Learning Community	6.06% 2	6.06% 2	15.15% 5	39.39% 13	33.33% 11	33	3.88
UNITAR Team	0.00% 0	3.03% 1	15.15% 5	27.27% 9	54.55% 18	33	4.33

“As for the lessons, I find them well-structured and intuitive.”, “The topics were very educative as they were simplified.”

“This course is favorable for working person. It elaborates and enriches one with so much knowledge and skills.”

“The lessons showed a clear direction on how important the training will be interesting, interactive and beneficial to the trainees at large.”

“Being with the UNITAR programme was one of the best experiences I got. The training was terrific, and the learning platform was fully modernized with a simple understanding of the course and accessing the application. I wish I could get another opportunity to explore more knowledge from UNITAR!

Nicholas Manyang Makeny

4 LESSONS LEARNED: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

4.1 OPPORTUNITIES

The online modality makes the training available for a larger pool of participants across different regions of South Sudan.

Previous in-person programmes could not accept a large number of participants due to costs and the need to ensure quality delivery. Running the programme entirely online allowed nearly four times the number of participants to enrol compared to the 2019 cycle. Through EdApp, UNITAR could provide access to learning materials, track learner progress, facilitate discussion forums, and review assignments without sacrificing the overall quality of the training.

The online modality also allowed learners from different regions of South Sudan to take part. Out of the 75 participants enrolled in Phase 1, 69% were from Juba and the remaining 31% were from other parts of the country. Geographical and sectoral representation is crucial in enhancing inclusivity and diversity, but has often proved difficult to achieve especially for in-person training, as remote areas often lack the necessary infrastructure to conduct safe and adequate training. Thus, the greater diversity in participant profiles in the 2020 cycle led to an enhanced learning experience and peer-to-peer interactions.

Providing internet data bundles to participants effectively enhances inclusivity and ensures access to those who, for geographical and/or financial reasons, do not have stable internet.

Providing data bundles to participants and national coaches was indispensable for online training in South Sudan, where the IT infrastructure is grossly underdeveloped and which has one of the lowest internet penetrations on the continent. Only about 8 in every 100 people have access to the internet, and this is only true in major cities and towns. Although the country launched its first-ever 4G internet service in March 2021, the connection is still very slow, unstable, and expensive. Participants and coaches have voiced that they would not have been able to join the programme were it not for the data bundles.

UNITAR also used text and photo-based lessons rather than video. We may further cater to the low-data environment in South Sudan by providing downloadable learning materials suited for offline access, rather than materials that require online access on the learning platform.

While data bundles were very helpful, access to the internet is limited to certain areas, generally not in participants' homes, and devices used were often limited in their capacity for continuous online use. Participants noted that more downloadable materials would have allowed them to continue their learning even in areas with no internet access and use the materials as future references.

Following up closely with inactive participants allows us to provide individualized support for each participant and encourages them to continue the training.

Although high dropout rates are not unusual for online training programmes, we made a concerted effort to closely follow up with learners who had been inactive or had not yet started taking the lessons on the learning platform. In both phases, the local coordinator in South Sudan called the inactive participants to ask for reasons for their inactivity. The responses included time limitations, technical issues with learning platform or devices, and internet and electricity issues.

Based on these responses, UNITAR was able to provide tailored support to each participant, such as flexibility with deadlines, assistance with technical issues, and facilitating support through the local coordinator and national coaches in South Sudan.

Live webinars and interactive tools improve the overall engagement of the learners.

UNITAR hosted a total of seven live webinars (three in Phase 1; four in Phase 2). The webinars included thematic webinars with subject matter experts and milestones webinars, such as the onboarding webinar and the graduation webinar. The live webinars improved the participants' overall engagement with the programme; after each webinar, there was a spike in the completion rate of the weekly lessons. The content of the thematic webinars was customized based on participant questions and their areas of interest. Interactive tools, such as live polls, enhanced discussions and engagement among peers and with the subject matter experts.

4.2 CHALLENGES

Ensuring continuous engagement of national coaches requires consistent communication and close follow-up.

The volunteer national coaches are an essential part of the programme in ensuring participant engagement, providing local context to the learning materials, contributing to discussion forums, and reviewing learner assignments. The coaches are South Sudanese nationals selected from a pool of UNITAR South Sudan Programme alumni who were willing to participate as a volunteer coach for the 2020 programme. They took part in an initiation webinar and were given a coaches' handbook that outlined the guidelines for coaching.

While EdApp data show that the coaches actively participated in the discussion forums and reviewed the assignments, the coaches could not always engage in a timely manner due to time constraints as a working professional and motivation as a volunteer. This delayed the review of the assignments and participants could not benefit from instant feedback that would have given them time to further improve their assignments and kept their motivation high. In future programmes, UNITAR will consider engaging the coaches with even more regular communication and close follow-up of their activities to ensure accountability. Incentives may also be introduced to allow for their full engagement.

Online training tends to have lower completion rates than in-person training, as sustaining active online engagement from participants is challenging.

Online training is efficient, flexible, and can accommodate a large group of participants, but it is also not without its drawbacks. Online training generally tends to yield lower completion rates than in-person training due to the difficulty of sustaining active online engagement from participants. Ensuring accountability and commitment from participants as well as keeping their motivations high is more difficult in a virtual setting when participants only see their peers through a screen. Despite the use of discussion forums and other interactive tools, there is no instant feedback or encouragement that would naturally take place in a physical setting.

Out of the 75 participants initially enrolled in the programme, about half of them satisfied the minimum requirements for completing both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the programme. While this is a successful result by online training standards, UNITAR will consider diversifying the use of interactive tools and other highly engaging activities to sustain participant engagement and yield even better results in future programmes.

In-person training or meet-ups were highly requested by participants and coaches.

While EdApp was highly rated by participants as an effective learning tool, UNITAR received numerous requests from participants and coaches to conduct additional in-person training or meet-ups to augment the online learning experience. Many of the participants highly valued in-person interactions and creating an offline community in South Sudan. Many felt that a blended modality, with both online and in-person elements, would be most conducive to their learning.

While the COVID-19 situation in the country prevented UNITAR from organizing in-person training or meet-ups for this year's programme, an improved blended modality will be considered for future programmes.

Obtaining funding for their enterprises/projects is a frequent source of concern for the participants.

Participants frequently voiced their concern for the lack of funding options in South Sudan, where the private sector is chronically underdeveloped and the economic situation is often not conducive to entrepreneurship or introducing new projects. Providing seed funding or connecting participants with possible funding options abroad may be considered for future programmes.

Reaching vulnerable populations, particularly women, is challenging in a country like South Sudan, where women receive limited education and literacy rates are significantly low.

Out of the 38 learners who completed both phases, 30% were female and 70% were male. In order to garner female applicants, UNITAR engaged local coordinators and resource persons to distribute programme information to potential female candidates in various sectors and positions. However, in a country where education often remains inaccessible for women and girls due to high rates of poverty and prevalent traditional gender roles, it was difficult to reach women candidates who were qualified and capable of undertaking the training programme.

Frequent and significant currency fluctuations are commonplace in countries like South Sudan and therefore need to be taken into account when procuring local long-term services for project implementation.

Currency fluctuations happen regularly in countries like South Sudan, which affects the procurement of local long-term services to aid project implementation, such as internet data bundles. The contingency rate associated with the currency fluctuation needs to be taken into account for budgeting and hiring local vendors.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: PROGRAMME MODULES

Modules for Phase 1: Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship, Needs Assessment and Leadership

<p>1. Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants learn the key phases and process of entrepreneurial to identify opportunities, taking personal action and risk to mobilize resources to create a new enterprise of value.• They are exposed to examples from Iraq and Horn of Africa, and international best practice in social entrepreneurship and encouraged to reflect on and develop their own entrepreneurial style and capacity.	<p>2. Organisational Needs Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants gain the tools and techniques of environmental analysis and the P.E.S.T.L.E.S. to report of needs for integrating stakeholders, and learn to design good methods for collecting qualified data.• Organisational needs assessment is crucial to entrepreneurship. It comprised of three stages: pre-assessment, assessment, post-assessment.
<p>3. Introduction to Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants are exposed to contemporary theories and practices of leadership and governance.• They learn how to examines the characteristics and strategies for good governance, including through an emphasis on social accountability in leadership.• Participants are also demonstrated with methods for personal leadership and increasing their understanding towards a servant leader.	<p>4. Meet the Sustainable Development Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants are introduced with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals and how to mainstream the SDGs.• Participants learn the horizontal and vertical policy coherence strategies followed by relevant case studies to demonstrate how they can be put into practice.

Modules for Phase 2: Project Design and Action Plan

1. Results Chain	2. Business Model Canvas	3. Hiroshima Post-war Reconstruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants are exposed to theories related to the results chain to identify the logical relationship among resources and how to use them in an effective way to achieve the desired change.• Participants are given examples and summaries in understanding the structure of results chain planning and its cause-and-effect way of working.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants learn the business model as a means to understand the logic of how the enterprise creates and delivers values for its customers and users.• Participants gain the key tools of Business Model Canvas with nine different elements of the entrepreneurship operations to understand the logic of how they work in harmony to create a scalable, sustainable and profitable enterprise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants learn Hiroshima's path to reconstruction in terms of the reconstruction plan with consideration of challenges and factors promising to the rebuilding of the economy.• Participants are exposed to three case studies of Japanese business and companies struggling for paving a path for social entrepreneurship, in the aftermath of Hiroshima bombing, and how to building a sustainable business.