

MENTORING FOR RESILIENCE: SUPPORTING MICRO- ENTREPRENEURS IN TIMES OF CRISIS

PROGRAMME SNAPSHOT

- **Client:** SANAD Fund for MSME (through the Technical Assistance Facility)
- **Years:** 2019 to 2020
- **Number of participants:** 15 mentors and 15 micro-entrepreneurs
- **Participating country:** Lebanon

Adapting mentoring to support
vulnerable entrepreneurs in
Lebanon

THE OBJECTIVES

The SANAD Lebanon Mentoring Programme was delivered in partnership with the SANAD Fund for MSME and Lebanese microfinance institutions Al Majmoua and Ibdaa. Over nine months, the programme supported 15 micro-entrepreneurs, both Lebanese nationals and refugees through one-to-one mentoring with trained local mentors.

The programme set out to:

- Build the leadership capabilities of mentors and strengthen the pool of The Human Edge-trained mentors in Lebanon.
- Provide personalised support to refugee and Lebanese entrepreneurs, helping them build confidence and resilience.
- Strengthen the sustainability of micro-businesses, contribute to job creation and support Lebanon's broader social and economic development.
- Foster the social inclusion of vulnerable entrepreneurs through relationship-based support.

THE CHALLENGE

Shortly after the programme's launch, Lebanon faced a period of intense instability due to political unrest, economic collapse and the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. These overlapping crises disrupted daily life and placed enormous pressure on both mentors and entrepreneurs, many of whom were already in vulnerable situations.

To respond effectively, the programme team adapted its approach to better respond to the emotional and practical realities participants were facing.

OUR APPROACH:

The SANAD Lebanon Mentoring Programme was designed as a high-touch, relationship-based initiative, grounded in the core principles of trust, personal growth and local relevance. It included **Mentoring Awareness Sessions** and a **kickstart workshop** to onboard and train local mentors and pair them with prepared entrepreneurs. A **structured ongoing support** to ensure mentoring relationships were sustained and meaningful and a tailor **"Circumstantial support"** to better respond to the emotional and practical realities participants were facing. To respond effectively to unfolding events and lockdowns, the team **adapted the delivery of key activities**, including shifting the Refresher Session to a virtual format.

Human-centred design

Grounded in relational mentoring, trust-building and deep contextual understanding to foster personal and entrepreneurial growth.

Capacity for impact

Equipping both mentors and mentees with the skills and confidence needed to engage fully in the mentoring process.

Circumstantial support

Tailored guidance was offered to help participants navigate the emotional and practical challenges brought on by Lebanon's crises.

On-going support

Supported mentoring pairs with regular check-ins and facilitated events to strengthen relationships and ensure lasting outcomes.

KEY OUTCOMES FOR PARTICIPANTS

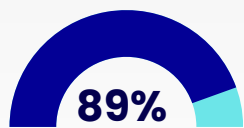
Personal Growth and Strengthening of Leadership



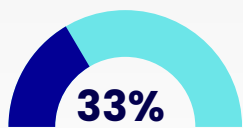
100%
of entrepreneurs reported the mentoring helped them think more positively in times of crisis



100%
of mentees plan to stay in touch with their mentor after the programme has finished



89%
of mentees said it had a positive impact on their personal lives



33%
of the mentees said that the most significant change they experienced thanks to that programme is an increase in self confidence

Mentor insights



100%
of mentors reported that the programme was beneficial to them



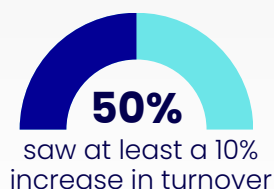
Many mentors noted their growth in emotional intelligence, adaptability, and the ability to support others in uncertain times.

Contact us to explore how relationship-based support can drive inclusive economic growth and empower communities facing complex challenges.

KEY OUTCOMES FOR PARTICIPANTS

Business Growth, Sustainability, and Success

Despite the national crises, 75% of mentees who completed the programme reported still running a micro-business.



- Most businesses were funded through loans or generated income

Economic Growth, Job Creation and Retention

- While job creation was limited due to external crises, the programme helped safeguard micro-enterprises by keeping them afloat and adaptable.
- Mentors offered contextualised support, helping entrepreneurs rethink offerings, adjust pricing and manage anxiety.
- Mentoring also helped refugees and vulnerable individuals navigate social integration through relational support and shared networks.

In one of Lebanon's most volatile periods, this mentoring programme provided a vital human anchor for both mentors and entrepreneurs. It strengthened the capacity of mentors, supported micro-businesses to remain operational and helped individuals build the emotional and strategic resilience needed to weather uncertainty.

By focusing on people first, especially those on the margins, the SANAD Lebanon Mentoring Programme ultimately demonstrated that mentoring can offer more than business advice: it can offer belonging, belief and a path forward in times of crisis.

**Looking to support vulnerable entrepreneurs in fragile contexts?
Partner with us to design mentoring programmes that build resilience,
confidence and business stability, even in times of crisis.**

Contact us now!