




# SE FACTORY: CODING FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED LEBANESE AND SYRIAN YOUTH

 <b>LOCATION</b> Across Lebanon	 <b>DURATION</b> 1 April 2021 → 30 September 2022	 <b>BUDGET</b> EUR 59,856
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**PRIORITY AREA**  
 • Access to the Labour Market



**LEAD INSTITUTION**

**OBJECTIVES**  
 To train youth through the Software Engineering Factory (SE Factory), a coding programme under the Naway Network, to build and develop their coding skills with the aim to start or shift their careers into software development



**BENEFICIARIES**  
 507 Lebanese and refugee youths above 18 years, from low-income backgrounds, enrolled in the programme

	
378	129



**ACTIVITIES**

- 6 to 8-week part-time online Beginners Computer Science Courses (FCS) on the foundations of computer science with 507 youths,
- Intensive one-month English course,
- 12 to 16-week full-time Advanced Bootcamps of Full-Stack Web (FSW) Development Course including theoretical and practical coding training, soft and employability skills and the development of a functional website or application with 102 youths out of which 80 graduated,
- Presentation of the final projects by graduates out of which 69 found job opportunities during a virtual event with local and international employers

**LOUAI**  
 25 years old

“I completed a Bachelor’s degree in Engineering and joined the corporate world directly after. My experience at university was somewhat standardized and bureaucratic, so SE Factory’s FSW bootcamp was the perfect choice for a direct acquisition of the skills needed to work in this domain. Suffering from chronic anxiety and living in Lebanon during these tumultuous times was a challenge. I was underperforming in my studies and up until that time, SE Factory had no idea about how my anxiety was affecting me, and that was when I decided that I had to inform them about my personal struggles with mental health. With the tireless support, acceptance and understanding of my instructor and the whole team, I found a safe haven to fall back on within the SE Factory community. I felt a sense of belonging in a country where it’s hard for people who are different to fit in, which in turn restored my faith in the education sector. After graduation, I was interviewed by a multitude of SE Factory’s recruitment partners and I accepted a position at a FinTech company as a Full-Stack Engineer, where I maintain banks’ investment platforms, and where I am still employed today.”

**MAHMOUD**  
 28 years old

“I was not able to pursue my higher education but I knew I was passionate about computers, so I entered the workforce and took a job in professional IT. After seven years of experience, a friend of mine pushed me to take it one step further and enrol in SE Factory’s Full-Stack Web Development programme - which was a dream at the time. In order to attend the bootcamp, I had to quit my job since it was a full-time programme. It was a big risk, but this was my passion and I believed I had what it took to succeed and become a web developer. SE Factory offered to support me with weekly stipends in order to cover my expenses and have a chance at completing the courses. The programme differs from traditional university curriculum as it allows you to choose what you want to learn based on what you love, and the curriculum is flexible and prepares you for real life and working in the tech industry. Today, I am employed at an end-to-end management solution company for sports businesses, which hired me in part due to SE Factory’s reputable programmes and alumni. So, in the end, the risk was worth it.”



Implemented by



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
 German Academic Exchange Service



## REFLECTIONS FROM THE LEAD INSTITUTION

SE Factory offers an intensive Full Stack Web Development programme, equipping participants with industry-relevant technical skills and preparing them for immediate employment in the tech sector. Through a comprehensive curriculum and hands-on projects, students emerge as competent developers ready to contribute to the rapidly-evolving digital landscape. After the programme's inception, it became evident that each cohort brought its own unique set of backgrounds, diverse skills levels in web development and its own challenges. We adopted a flexible curriculum design and ensured our course structure was adaptable to accommodate varying educational and experiential backgrounds. Lessons learned can be summarized as follows:

- Recognizing educational barriers with refugee youth and addressing the gaps in refugee youth prior education is a must through a flexible curriculum incorporating English language resources,
- Recognizing that students have diverse learning styles and ensuring that the teaching methodologies cater to these variances can increase overall programme effectiveness,
- Ensuring that the technological infrastructure is robust and up-to-date is vital for a smooth learning experience,
- Establishing clear and open communication channels with students can help in promptly addressing concerns, clarifying doubts, and keeping them engaged,
- Having the flexibility to adjust the curriculum in response to industry demands ensures that students are job-ready upon programme completion,
- Creating a system where feedback, both positive and constructive, can be given anonymously might encourage more honest and actionable input.

Such programmes can have a significant community impact and can lead to reducing economic strain on the long-term. They offer skills that remain in demand even in economic downturns, ensuring graduates are prepared for a digital economy and providing them with broader societal opportunities through education.

Seeing a significant number of our students, from diverse backgrounds, complete the programme was a momentous achievement as we have not only equipped them with vital technical skills but also anchored them with hope and promising opportunities amidst challenging circumstances. Our strong reputation with top-tier companies both locally and abroad became a testament to the calibre and relevance of our curriculum. Significantly, in a time marked by a potential brain drain, our programme has ingeniously turned the tide. By facilitating the hiring of youth residing in Lebanon by companies from abroad, we have allowed them to access international opportunities without leaving their homeland. This unique approach ensures they can contribute globally while remaining rooted locally, a balance that's both impactful and fulfilling.

### YVONA NEHME

Programmes Coordinator, The Nawaya Network

