



SKILLFORCE
READY

Project Report

● Empowering Sudanese talent in displacement



Prepared by Maria
Sulaiman

Graphic Design
Hindu

Photography
Athar Mediau

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SKILLFORCE READY

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Executive Summary



Context and Problem:

Following the conflict in Sudan, unemployment among highly educated, displaced youth in Cairo soared to over 51%. Despite possessing robust pre-war professional track records, these individuals found themselves paralyzed by two primary obstacles: linguistic barriers (stuck at intermediate B1 English) and severe psychological trauma. Forced into a "survival mode" mindset, their career trajectories were abruptly halted. Skillforce Ready, envisioned and led by U.S.-Exchange Alumna Maria Sulaiman, was engineered as a direct, high-impact intervention to break this cycle of helplessness and successfully reintegrate this marginalized cohort into the global competitive workforce.

Under the strategic leadership of Project Director Maria Sulaiman, the program achieved a remarkable return on investment. Beyond a measurable 11.33% average increase in English proficiency, the final evaluation revealed a profound psychological shift: 92% of participants reported a transformative 60%+ improvement in positive learning mindsets. By the end of the grant period, the program successfully transitioned 33 displaced professionals from a state of post-war paralysis to being 'Skillforce Ready'—equipped with advanced Business English, STAR-method interviewing mastery, and the resilient professional identity required to secure international employment.

The Problem:

51% Unemployment.

The Solution:

3-step upskilling.

The Result:

33 professionals ready for the market



SKILLFORCE READY



Project objectives

01

Cultivate a resilient, growth-oriented learning framework by increasing participants' positive learning mindset by 50%.

03

Conduct rigorous, real-world corporate interview simulations to guarantee participants successfully pass industry-standard Job Interview Assessments.

Based on participant feedback and evaluation results, the training objectives were met with strong levels of engagement and knowledge retention. Re

02

Execute an intensive, blended Business English curriculum to drive a 25% to 50% professional proficiency increase, bridging the gap from Intermediate (B1) to Advanced (C1/CEFR) level.

01

Project Objectives



1.1 Background

In line with the guidelines of the Alumni Innovation Engagement Fund's (A U.S. Federal grant for U.S. Exchange alumni) strategic focus on English communication and economic prosperity, Founder and U.S.-Exchange Alumna Maria Sulaiman structured career reintegration pipeline for displaced Sudanese talent in Egypt. As cross-border commercial environments become increasingly dynamic and language-dependent, equipping high-potential candidates with advanced English and executive skills has become a key Sudanese-in-diaspora priority. This training responds to the growing need for:

Rigorous Business English training mapped directly to international workplace communication standards

Targeted capacity development aimed at equipping regional displaced talent with competitive workforce skills

A language-coaching curriculum structured to restore candidate confidence and professional autonomy

1.2 Program structure

01 Get-Ready

Minimizing production downtime through skilled maintenance practices

02 Get-Skilled

Building critical technical capabilities in-house

03 Get-Hired

Promoting a safety culture and long-term skills retention

1.3 Activities & Accomplishments

The training was designed to achieve the following objectives:

01 The Get-Ready workshop

Instill a proactive mindset toward equipment safety and functionality

02 The Get-Skilled training phase

Improve team collaboration in high-pressure operational settings

1.4 Target Group

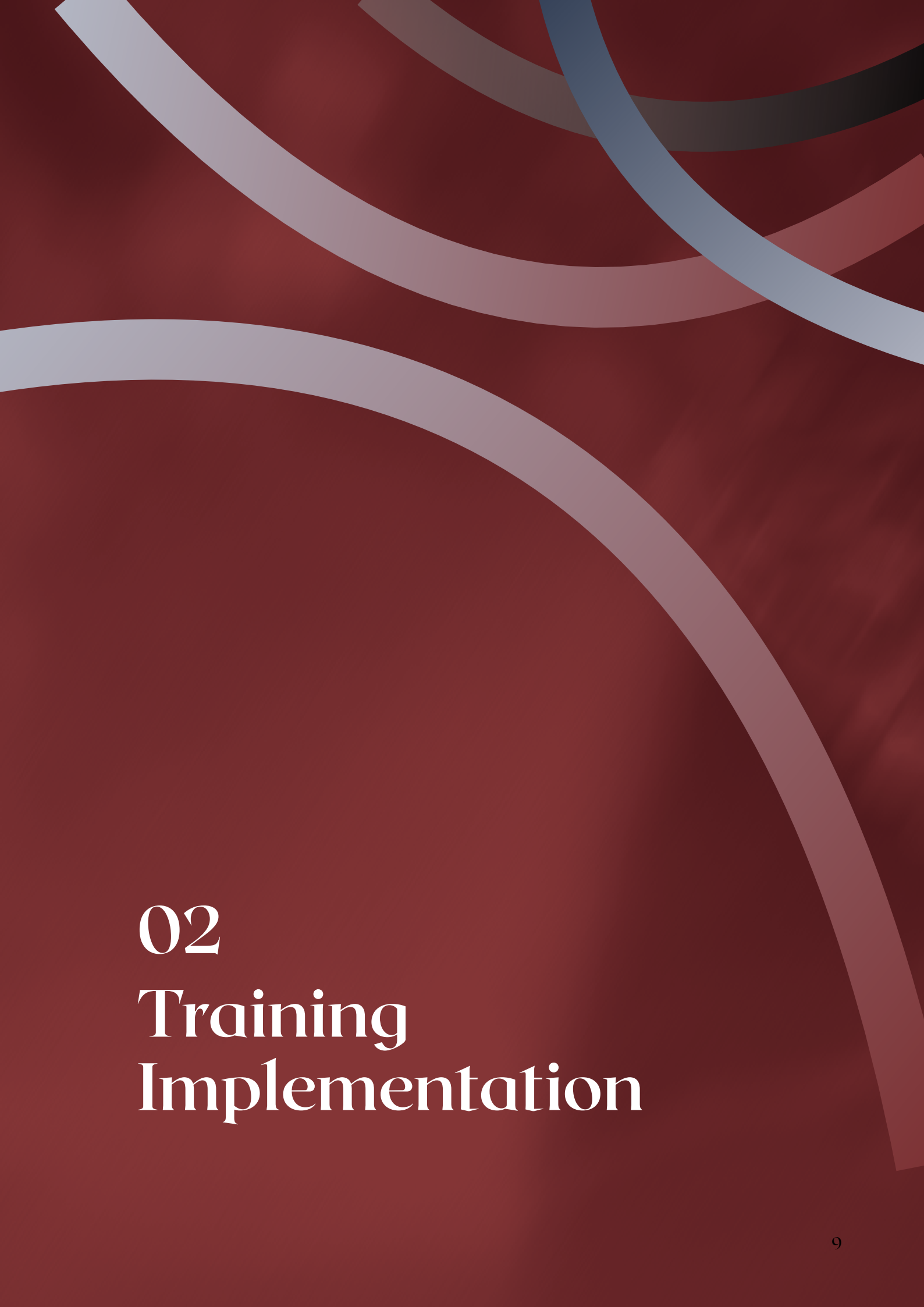
The program was aimed at war-induced, displaced Sudanese talent in Egypt following the below criteria:

a minimum of
intermediate English
Proficiency

Pre-war good
professional track
record

Post-war evidence of
professional proactivity

A total of 33 participants were selected based on criteria alignment and admission interview success.



02 Training Implementation



2.1 Training Details

Title

The Get-Ready
Workshop

Duration

5 days (Oct. 26–30,
2025)

Venue

Startup Haus Cairo &
TransformUs

Format

Intensive immersion workshops, 1-on-1
mentoring, hybrid presentations, and mock
corporate interviews.

Director

Maria Sulaiman, U.S. Exchange Alumna & Project
Director

2.2 Trainers and Facilitators

the program recruited a premium network of local and international
experts to deliver specialized, market-aligned coaching

Name	Role	Area of Expertise
Maria Sulaiman	Lead Language Coach	Advanced Business English & Professional Communication
Eman Darwish	Lead SEL Coach	Social and Emotional Learning
Athar Qureshi	Corporate Recruiter	Corporate Interview Simulations & Sourcing Strategies
Laila & Hussain	Coaches	Group coaching and career planning

2.3 Methodology

The training employed the following methods:



Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Input Sessions



Structured Peer-to-Peer Discussions & Knowledge Sharing



1-on-1 Personalized Mentoring Framework Exported



High-Stakes Job Interview Reversals and Mockups

2.4 Training Agenda

The training employed the following methods:

Day 1	Values and Self-Awareness	Empowering participants to reconnect with core values and manage emotions
Day 2	Overcoming Barriers and Strengths Awareness	Utilizing CliftonStrengths to navigate personal challenges and define clear, actionable professional goals.
Day 3	Decision-Making and Problem-Solving	Equipping participants with actionable strategies to reframe rejection, and overcome self-limiting beliefs.
Day 4	Relationship & Social Awareness Skills	Training participants on self-introductions, storytelling, and job-seeking conversations
Day 4	Professional Branding and Career Strategy	Enhancing digital presence via LinkedIn and exploring values-driven career decision-making strategies

2.5 Activity Highlights & Documentation



Day 1

Input Session

foundational input session fosters emotional readiness, ensuring candidates successfully transition toward empowerment.



Day 2

1-on-1 Mentorship

Participants paired with inspiring mentors based on participants' background studies and motivations.



Day 3 &4

Group Coaching

Targeted group coaching sessions help participants overcome emotional learning barriers and establish career goals



Day 5

Participant-led Reflections

A participant-led reflection illustrates the psychological shift laying the foundation for advanced upskilling.

All sessions were conducted with high engagement and positive energy, with an average daily attendance of 98%.



03

Participant Profile

A total of 28 employees from the Technical Division participated in the capacity building program. Participants were selected based on their roles in critical maintenance functions, recent audit performance, and tenure with Ingoude Company.

3.1 Participant Composition

Category	Number of Participants
Medical workers (Doctors, Pharmacists, Dentists)	14
The Tech & Systems Architects (IT Specialists, Engineers).	5
The Business & Strategy Minds (Mid-career professionals, Specialists)	4
Total	33

3.2 Professional Representation

Participants were carefully vetted and drawn from diverse professional backgrounds disrupted by the conflict. The cohort of 33 was selected based on strict criteria:

represented critical sectors including:

- Verifiable pre-war professional track records,
- a minimum of B1 English proficiency
- Demonstrated post-war proactivity

This rigorous selection criteria ensured a high-potential group primed for rapid upskilling.

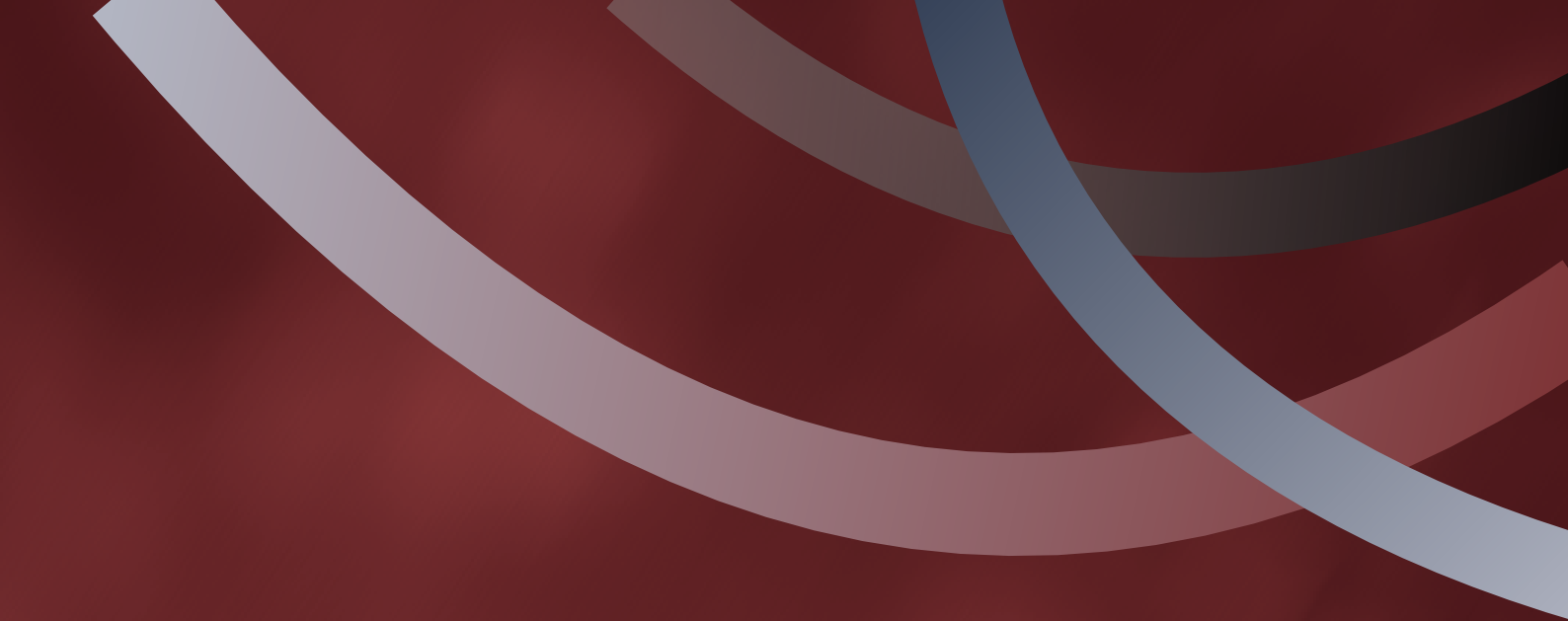
3.3 Program Inputs & Delivery

330+ Hours of 1-on-1 Mentoring	1,056+ Hours of Digital Upskilling	25+ Hours of U.S. Recruiter Coaching
Rebuilt emotional resilience	Bridged language gaps	Simulated corporate interviews

To guarantee market readiness, the program was executed with unprecedented density, delivering thousands of cumulative hours of targeted upskilling, coaching, and simulations.

Group Photo with Participants and Trainers



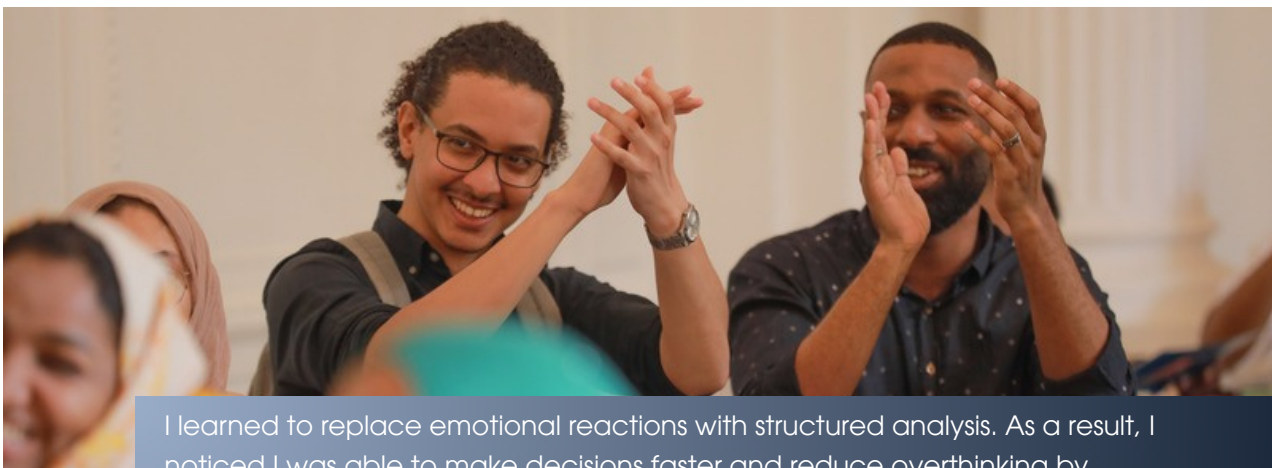


04

Project Outcomes & Impact

Driven by Maria Sulaiman’s adaptive leadership, the initial phase stabilized participants’ mental foundations through specialized trauma-informed mentoring, mitigating the despair of displacement.

4.1 Positive Mindset & Goal Setting



I learned to replace emotional reactions with structured analysis. As a result, I noticed I was able to make decisions faster and reduce overthinking by approximately 40% when dealing with professional challenges." Program Participant

Section	Cohort Achievement Rate
Goal-Setting Clarity	74% of the cohort (achieved 80-100% actionable clarity for their future career roadmaps)
Positive Mindset Shift	92% of the cohort (reported a 60%+ improvement in positive learning mindset)

The program successfully empowered candidates to shift from overthinking to intentional progress, breaking massive career transitions into manageable milestones.

The Capacity Building Training was designed with a focus on measurable skill enhancement, mindset shifts, and team collaboration. Throughout the 3-day program, learning outcomes were monitored through facilitator observation, simulation performance, and participant feedback.

4.2 English Language Proficiency

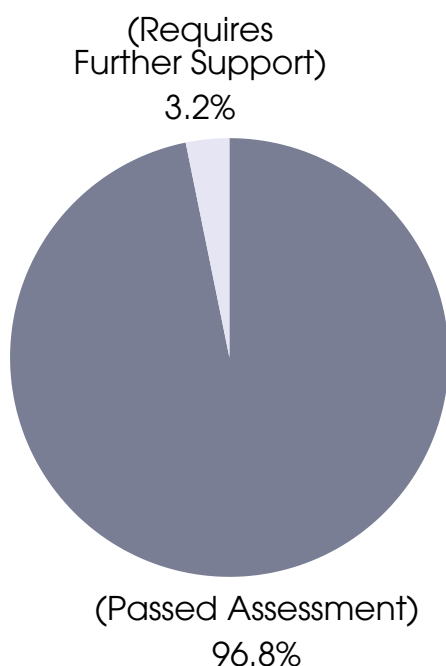
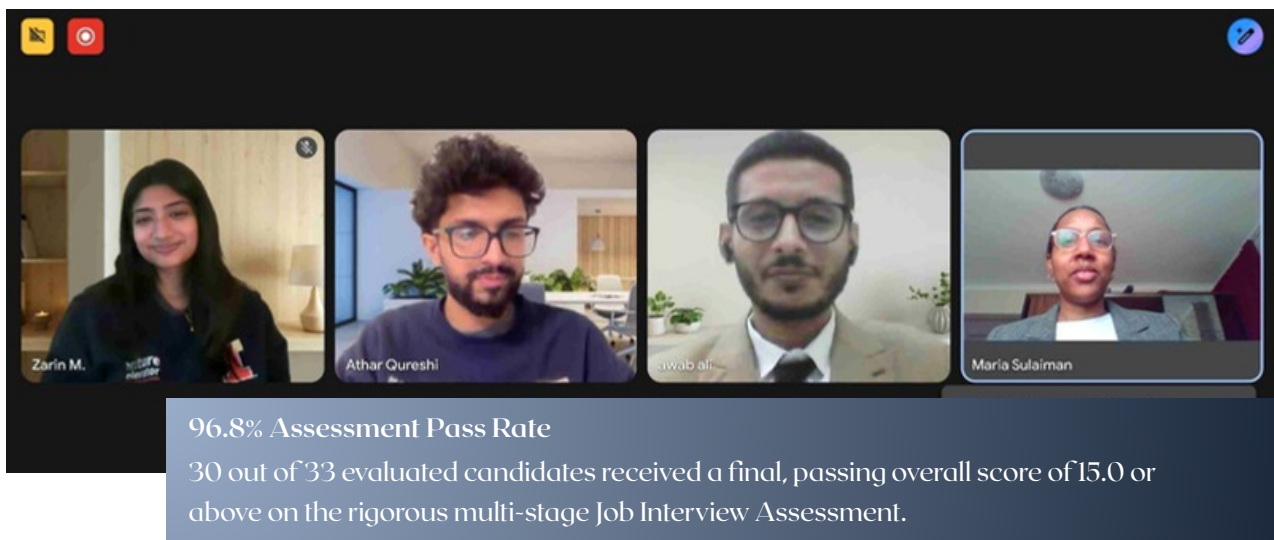


Despite the complex demographic distribution ranging from Elementary (A2) to Advanced (C2), the 36-hour hybrid Business English curriculum yielded exceptional, market-ready linguistic growth.

Global Proficiency Level Growth	Cohort Attainment Rate	Speed of Skill Acquisition
Overall Proficiency Advancement	33.33% (10 out of 30 evaluated candidates)	Validated the curriculum's aggressive efficiency, successfully elevating a full third of the cohort's global fluency rating.
Single-Level Leap (e.g., Intermediate to Advanced)	23.33% (7 candidates)	Successfully met the primary grant objective by advancing candidates one full proficiency tier, bridging critical communication gaps for corporate readiness.
Double-Level Leap (e.g., Elementary to Upper-Intermediate)	10.0% (3 candidates)	Achieved unprecedented acquisition speed, mastering two complete fluency tiers in just 8 weeks to rapidly reach market-ready status

To ensure participants could pitch their value globally, the “Get Hired” phase subjected the cohort to rigorous, multi-stage simulations evaluated by industry gatekeepers.

4.3 Job Interview Performance



Corporate-Level Practicality

To guarantee global market readiness, simulations were directly led by a U.S. Senior Recruiter with talent acquisition experience at industry giants like Netflix and Facebook.

Real-World ROI

20 participants successfully secured actual corporate interviews following the simulations.

Structured Job Interview Responses

Candidates transitioned from unstructured rambling to concise, high-impact behavioral pitching.

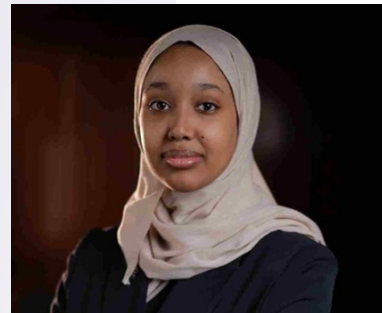
4.4 Reflection and Applied Insight



30 out of 33 evaluated candidates received a final, passing overall score of 15.0 or above on the rigorous multi-stage Job Interview Assessment.

"I didn't fully realize how much my inner dialogue shaped the way I showed up... Skillforce-Ready didn't just help me build skills. It helped me build awareness. And that has made all the difference."

Maab, Program Graduate



"I've been accepted at CCS Company! I want to thank Maria Sulaiman, who helped me believe in my skills and prepared me to win this offer. Thanks to the Skillforce program for giving me the opportunity."

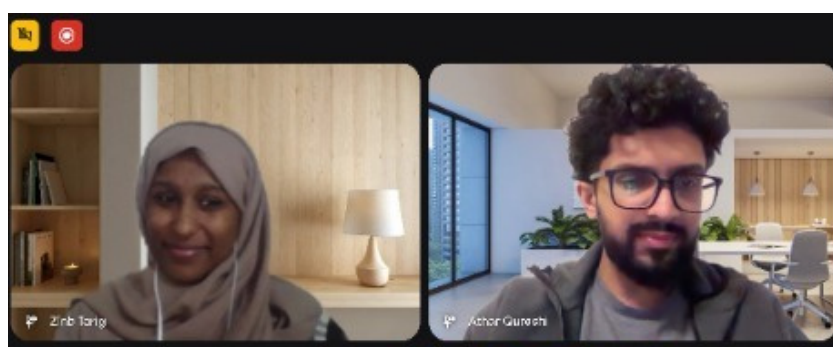
Ola, Program Graduate



4.3 Job Interview Simulations

During the high-stakes "Get Hired" phase, participants engaged in intensive corporate interview simulations led by U.S.-based Senior Recruiters. Participants successfully:

- Shifted from emotional, rambling responses to structured, data-driven answers using the STAR Method.
- Mastered the "Reverse Interview," confidently asking strategic questions to potential employers.
- Executed the "XYZ" resume format (Accomplished (X) as measured by (Y), by doing (Z)) to quantify their past impacts.



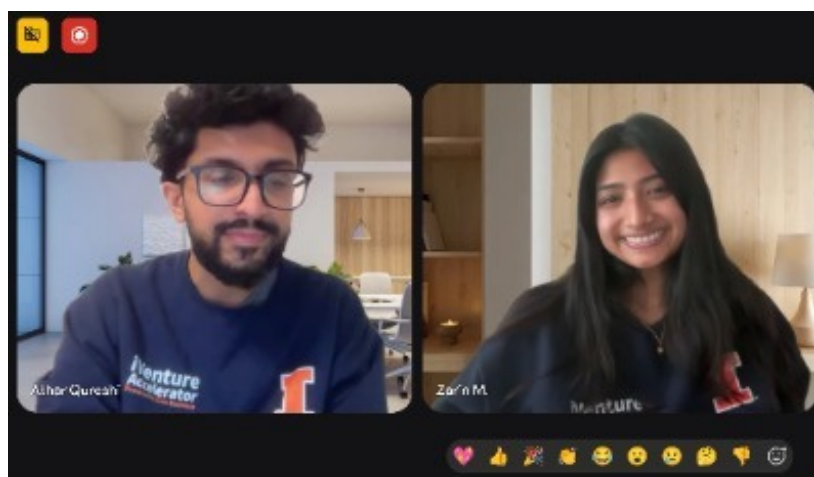
Mock Job Interviews (Phase 2)

Program participant
undergoing a mock
job interview with
T.Mobile Senior
Recruiter Athar Q

4.4 Practical Application & Outreach

As a capstone to the program, participants translated their training into proactive market execution and personal branding. Key application themes included:

- Deploying the Apollo.io framework to directly source and contact technical hiring managers.
- Elevating digital presence, resulting in 25 participants rapidly expanding their LinkedIn networks.
- Synthesizing their journey through a formal "Capstone Reflection" assignment.



Mock Job Interviews (Final Phase)



06

Partners, Advisors and Contributors

6.1 Strategic Institutional Partners

Startup Haus Cairo

Served as the strategic venue partner for the foundational "Get-Ready" immersion workshops

Transform US

Generously donated by a program mentor, this space hosted the "Get-Skilled" hybrid presentation session



6.1 Leadership & Global Advisory

As a U.S. Exchange Alumna, Maria architected the program's strategic funnel. She leveraged her personal displacement journey to build profound trust, directly steering 33 professionals toward global market readiness.

Maria Sulaiman
Project Director & Visionary



Providing critical high-level oversight, Nancy leveraged her extensive fellowship expertise to ensure the program's strategic execution aligned seamlessly with sustainable capacity building and global workforce reintegration standards.

Nancy Dickson
Strategic Advisor



Donated 25+ hours of premium executive coaching. By conducting rigorous corporate simulations and strategic Apollo.io outreach training, he validated the cohort's competitive readiness for international hiring panels.

Athar Qureshi
U.S. Senior Recruiter



5.2 Selected Participant Comments

"Mentoring structured my chaotic thoughts into actionable plans... replacing confusion with a prioritized roadmap for my future projects."

Munib Afifaldin



I started the SkillForce program at a B2 level, and now, thanks to your incredible support, guidance, and dedication, I've reached C1.

Tasabih Mohamed (but check)

"I was introduced to decision logs, which will help me avoid overthinking and stop making assumptions about what others think or will do."

Dania Baldo



5.2 Participant Highlights

“ After a long interruption, I assisted in and performed **my first operation** again, an important personal and professional milestone. ”

Hibatalla Elshikh



“I attribute my **success in the three scholarship interviews** to the intensive training received in the program. Meeting someone who believed in me and showed me how to use that potential became a turning point in my life.”

Maiada Gafar

“Today I'm overwhelmed with gratitude and pride as I share that **I've achieved C2 proficiency in the EF SET English exam with a score of 71.** I'm deeply grateful to Maria Sulaiman and Mariasoft-Skills, as well as the Skillforce-Ready Program, for the guidance, structure, and constant encouragement.

Awab Ali

