

TAFAKUR

A dialogue based adult learning approach in
Jordan

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The innovation in this case study belongs to the Creating New Learning (CNL) dimensions of *new learning approaches, increasing social inclusion of learners, increasing the competences (skills and knowledge) of the learners needed for the labour market in the 21st century, changing mindsets and attitudes.*

This innovation encompasses the implementation of the Tafakur approach in two Adult Education Centres in Jordan to enhance the employability of adult learners as well as their community participation. The Tafakur approach is a training that engages learners in meaningful dialogue based on participatory methodologies, especially valuable for disadvantaged groups further away from education and employment. The programme consists of three phases that provide adult learners with skills and techniques needed to build a strong social and/or professional network that guides learners towards achieving their goals. Tafakur is a valuable approach which can help increase adult learning participation and activation.



6 Educators
(2022)



159 Learners
(2022)



4 Educators
(2023/2024)



62 Learners
(2023/2024)

The aim of the project

The primary objective of the project was to enhance the employability of adult learners as well as their community participation.

By designing the various learning activities, the teachers expected:

- Increased learners' employability
- Enhanced personal and professional competences
- Increased motivation for learning
- Promoted community participation and improved community life

About the innovation

The Tafakur approach consists of three phases.

- **Phase 1 'Tafakur Al Qabli' – Contemplation:** Learners engage in self-reflection, group activities, and short assessments to get to know each other and identify personal and community needs, develop life skills, and set goals for their training.
- **Phase 2:** Learners choose between two tracks: 1) the "Vocational Track," with professional program trainings based on needs and interests; and 2) the "Community Track," with trainings that help learners acquiring skills to plan and implement community initiatives.
- **Phase 3 'Tafakur Al Baaidi' – Thinking about work and life:** Specific learning content is provided based on the identified needs and activities from the first two phases, on topics such as project management, start-up development, CV writing, communication and leadership, etc. The learners complete this phase with an action plan to guide their next steps.

The innovation in this practice entailed the use of the Tafakur approach, a training method that involves learners in meaningful dialogue using participatory methodologies, founded in the approaches of Popular Education¹.

Outcome



Learners

- **The practice enhanced professional and personal skills, improved employability, and increased motivation to pursue further education.** The enhanced professional skills have allowed learners to set up their own project or business or find full time/part-time employment – whether this is working on sewing projects from their house or finding work in an established business due to the hands-on skills acquired. One learner said, *“I think it’s one of the most important courses I have ever participated in, I had no skills, as my colleague said, I was just a normal housewife. After participating in the soap production course, I start thinking about having my own project.”*



Enablers

- Motivated and qualified staff and management of the Adult Education Centres
- Collaboration with public and private institutions, with community-based organisations, civil society organisations
- Short trainings can allow for development of interest in following more training programmes, considered as taster training



Barriers

- Difficult access to the training for learners living far from the training centre
- Limited duration of the training program

Lessons learned

Dialogue-based methodology rooted in Popular Education. Rather than simply transferring knowledge through a theoretical and teacher-centred learning approach where the trainer takes on the role of an instructor, the Tafakur approach is based on a very participatory and dialogue-based methodology.

Personal awareness/ Discovering own needs in relation to community needs. The Tafakur approach has a strong emphasis on learners becoming aware of their own realities and current living conditions – at a personal level as well as members of their community.

Strong support structure throughout the learning journey. Through the participatory, interactive and inclusive approaches, including icebreakers, learners gain the confidence to actively participate. WhatsApp groups connect learners and facilitators and offer an informal space for questions and support.

Embedded in the community. The programme centres are very well connected to stakeholders in the community and labour market, such as community-based organisations, civil society organisations and individuals, but also universities and colleges, the private sector and governmental organisations, the main players in vocational education and the community influencers and leaders.

¹ DVV INTERNATIONAL *Tafakur for Development and Community Empowerment Manual, 2019 (google-translated from Arabic to English)*, <https://www.dvv-international.de/en/adult-education-and-development/editions/aed-762011/popular-education-and-reflect/popular-education-and-pedagogy>

You can read the full report [here](#).