

# IMPACT REPORT 2024

B Na'amal

REFUGEES WORKING REMOTELY

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# **Director's Message**

As I reflect on 2024, I am moved by the incredible progress we have made at Na'amal. This year has reaffirmed our unwavering belief that talent is everywhere, but opportunity is not. Through our work, we have continued to bridge that gap—empowering refugees and under-resourced communities with the skills, mentorship and access to work, allowing them to thrive in the digital economy.

Since its establishment, Na'amal has trained 1,900 individuals globally, from refugee and host communities, equipping them with the skills to thrive in the digital economy. Evaluations of our projects have shown that 98% of our participants reported gaining relevant digital skills, and women reported a sixfold increase post-training. More importantly, 60% of our graduates secured paid remote work within six months.

In 2024, we also launched Na'amal Agency, a bold step in creating work opportunities for Na'amal's alumni —successfully matching 40 of Na'amal's talent with 22 high-impact tech projects, averaging \$800 per project. This work not only provides meaningful income but also reinforces the value of refugee talent in the global workforce.

None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of our partners, funders, clients and the Na'amal community. As we look ahead to 2025, we remain committed to expanding opportunities and ensuring that displaced and underserved communities are not just included—but are co-creating future of work.

We are the catalysts for change. Together, we are proving that the future of work must—and can—be inclusive. Thank you for being part of this journey.

Corraine Charles

Lorraine Charles Founder & Executive Director, Na'amal

# About Na'amal

## Empowering Refugee and Underrepresented Talent for the Digital Economy

Na'amal is a mission-driven organisation dedicated to creating sustainable digital livelihoods for refugees and underrepresented communities. By providing high-quality training, mentorship, and direct employment pathways, we equip individuals with the skills, confidence, and connections needed to thrive in the global workforce.

Our work is built on the belief that talent has no borders. We bridge the gap between displaced professionals and remote job opportunities, ensuring that individuals facing systemic barriers to employment can access dignified, meaningful work. Through strategic partnerships with leading institutions including the Conrad Hilton Foundation, the World Bank, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Emerging Talent, Mercy Corps, Jobtech Alliance, Digital Opportunity Trust, the Centre for Global Equality, Arm, Robert Bosch Stiftung (Bosch Foundation) and Cambridge Social Ventures—Na'amal delivers impact-driven programs that foster professional development, digital inclusion, and economic resilience.

At the heart of our approach is a commitment to holistic empowerment. Our training programs integrate professional and technical skills with remote work readiness, freelancing support and mentorship. Meanwhile, the Na'amal Agency creates direct employment pathways, connecting skilled refugee talent to paid project-based work opportunities from global businesses, proving that displaced talent are not just capable but essential to the future of work.

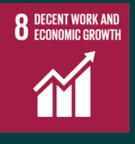
Aligned with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, Na'amal actively contributes to:



Through skill-building and career development initiatives



By fostering inclusive economic participation for women



By increasing access to remote employment opportunities.



By advocating for fair hiring practices and digital inclusion.

# **About the Impact Report**

The Na'amal 2024 Impact Report presents an overview of our work, highlighting the reach and impact of our training, mentorship, employment initiatives as well as our research and advocacy efforts. It reflects our commitment to creating sustainable digital livelihoods for refugees and underrepresented communities, demonstrating the tangible outcomes of our programs and advocacy efforts.

This report showcases key achievements, including the **expansion of our training programs, the development and growth of the Na'amal Agency**, and **our efforts to shape policies and industry practices** through **research** and **advocacy**. It also highlights the partnerships and collaborations that have enabled us to connect more individuals to meaningful, income-generating work in the digital economy.



Some learners from our 2023/2024 program in Ethiopia in collaboration with DOT Ethiopia in class.

As we look ahead to 2025, this report serves as a roadmap for scaling our initiatives, strengthening our networks, and continuing to bridge the gap between refugee talent and global employment opportunities. Through transparency and data-driven insights, we aim to engage stakeholders, foster collaboration, and drive meaningful action toward a more inclusive digital workforce.

Through **research, advocacy,** and **partnerships**, Na'amal is shaping a more inclusive global digital workforce, ensuring that refugees and underrepresented individuals are not just included, but also valued.

# **Impact at a Glance**

#### **Remote Readiness program: Empowering Talent**



# Impact at a Glance

Na'amal Agency: Expanding Access to Digital Employment

22

high-impact tech projects for refugee professionals following the launch of the Na'amal Agency.

40

learners connected to remote work opportunities.

\$800

average earning for refugee professionals with hourly rates ranging from \$15 to \$40.



**Research and Advocacy: Driving Systemic Change** 

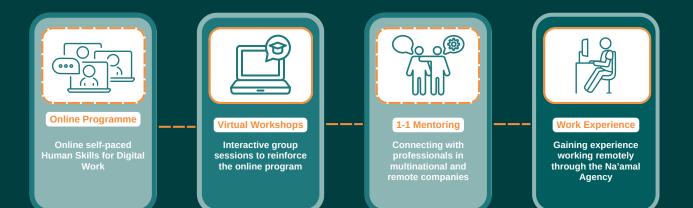


**SEASON 2!** 

of Voices of Resilience launched! This season features nine insightful episodes with professionals and industry experts shaping the future of work.

Na'amal's Remote Work Readiness program Overview: A Holistic Approach to Digital Livelihoods

Na'amal uses a structured approach to equip refugees and underrepresented individuals with the skills, confidence, and connections to succeed in the digital economy. Here are the programs we offer:



## 1. Professional Soft Skills for Remote Work

A strong foundation in soft and professional skills is essential for success in remote and digital employment. Our training includes:

- An asynchronous online course covering topics such as **communication**, **collaboration**, **problem-solving**, **time management**, **productivity**, **data security**, and **cross-cultural teamwork**.
- Virtual workshops led by experienced trainers, focusing on practical activities, discussions, and real-world applications.

This training builds **confidence, adaptability,** and **professionalism,** ensuring participants are prepared for diverse digital work environments.



#### Empowering Talent: Training, Mentorship, and Pathways to Meaningful Work

In 2024, Na'amal strengthened its commitment to equipping refugees and underrepresented individuals with the skills, confidence, and connections needed to thrive in the global digital economy. Through a holistic approach that integrates professional skills training, remote work readiness, freelancing preparation, and one-on-one mentorship, we have supported hundreds of learners in building sustainable careers. Our flagship programs in **Kenya**, **Ethiopia**, and partnerships with **MIT** and **the World Bank** have provided participants with the tools to navigate the digital workforce. Additionally, the launch of the **Na'amal Agency** and partnership with **EqualReach** has created direct employment pathways, proving that refugee talent are not only capable but also essential in the digital economy. By bridging the gap between skilled individuals and global employers, we are not just preparing people for jobs—we are transforming lives through sustainable digital livelihoods.



Some learners in our current cohort in Ethiopia during a relaxing day exploring Addis Ababa with some of the Na'amal team.

## **1.Remote Work Essentials**

We provide live workshops and coaching to prepare learners for the remote job market. Training includes:

- Optimizing CVs, LinkedIn profiles, and online presence.
- Leveraging job boards, networking, and outreach.
- Interview preparation and virtual communication skills.

This program equips learners to secure remote roles confidently.

## 2. Freelancing Training

Our specialized training supports success in freelancing and digital entrepreneurship by covering:

- Navigating platforms like Upwork, Ureed, Gebeya, and Workana.
- Creating strong client proposals.
- Using AI tools ethically for freelancing and portfolio-building.
- Exploring alternative income streams and content creation.

Participants gain skills to independently build sustainable freelance careers.

## 3. One-on-One Mentorship



Learners are matched with industry mentors from multinational and remotefirst companies to gain:

- Guidance on remote work, confidence-building, and career growth.
- Real-world remote team experience and professional networking.

This program provides continuous support, industry exposure, and valuable career connections.

In 2024, we successfully delivered the following programs:

#### The Workforce Readiness Programme in Kenya (2023-2024)

Refugees in Kenya face systemic employment barriers, with **70% unemployed** before Na'amal's Workforce Readiness program. I<u>n partnership with the ILO</u> <u>PROSPECTS program</u>, we provided **60 refugees** in **Turkana**, **Garissa**, and **Nairobi** with **digital skills**, **career mentorship**, and **job placement support** (Sept **2023–Mar 2024**). The results have been transformational:

• Overall satisfaction with the program was extremely high, with:



In partnership with **GiveInternet**, we provided laptops to individuals, ensuring they had the necessary tools to fully engage in the program.

In partnership with DOT and with the support of the **Conrad N. Hilton Foundation**, we launched **Digital Livelihoods in Ethiopia (2023–24)** and its follow-up, **Accelerating Digital Livelihoods in Ethiopia (2024–25)**.

The Digital Livelihoods Programme in Ethiopia (2023–2024)

This **11-month** program **(May 2023 - March 2024)** created remote employment pathways for 30 participants, including refugees and host community members from **Eritrea, Yemen,** and **Ethiopia**.

**Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT) Ethiopia** and **DOT Jordan** delivered technical training in **full-stack web development** and **digital skills**, with **DOT Ethiopia** providing local, on-the-ground support.

Na'amal complemented this with Remote Work Readiness Training, personalized mentorship, and targeted job placement assistance. All participants received **laptops** and **data bundles**. The program successfully connected participants to remote work opportunities, equipping them with essential technical and professional skills to succeed in the digital economy.



Some learners from our 2023/2024 program in Ethiopia in collaboration with DOT Ethiopia at their graduation.



Learners improved in at least one skill area, particularly through technical and soft skills training. 86%

Participants felt confident using Na'amal's resources to navigate remote work platforms.



Reported increased self-

confidence in job applications

and independent work.

**60%** 

Graduates secured remote paid work within six months via Appen, Na'amal Agency, and freelancing platforms. Participants saw increased household income, with women's earnings tripling, significantly reducing employment gender gaps.

21%

## Accelerating Digital Livelihoods in Ethiopia (2024–2025)

Building on the success of the previous program in Ethiopia, we launched an expanded version in June 2024 with the goal of:

- Training **30+** new participants through an **11-month** hybrid learning model.
- Strengthening mentorship and career coaching by leveraging Na'amal's global network.
- Increasing job placements through the **Na'amal Agency, Appen,** and **employer partnerships**.

This program is expected to conclude in **April 2025**. To tackle the challenges that still hold many back, Na'amal continues to provide laptops and internet access to those who need them. We also supported refugees in securing the IDs they need to work legally and get paid, removing a major barrier to employment.

Through the Na'amal Agency and partnerships, we are expanding job placement opportunities, helping more participants take their first steps into the global digital workforce.



Some learners from our 2023/2024 program in Ethiopia in collaboration with DOT Ethiopia at in class.

## Soft Skills and Career Readiness Training with MIT Emerging Talent (2024)

Since 2020, Na'amal has partnered with **MIT Emerging Talent** to equip learners with both technical and essential soft skills for digital careers. Building on the success of the **MIT Refugee Action Hub (ReACT)**, this program provides world-class education to underrepresented and displaced communities.

In 2024, we trained **20** learners in the **MIT ReACT Computer and Data Science Certificate program**, enhancing their communication, teamwork, and professional skills for remote work. Interactive sessions fostered confidence and adaptability for the digital workplace.

## Training is Not Enough: Refugees Need Decent Work

Na'amal's training equips individuals for digital careers, but job access remains challenging. In 2024, we launched Na'amal Agency to connect refugee professionals directly with global employers, creating sustainable employment pathways.

## Na'amal Agency: Creating Real Opportunities for Refugee Talent

The Na'amal Agency is a bold initiative connecting skilled refugee professionals with global businesses to drive economic empowerment, career growth, and digital inclusion. Using an impact-driven sourcing model, we've matched 40 refugee and under-resourced professionals to 22 high-impact tech projects, earning an average of \$800 per project at rates between \$15-\$40/hour.

Our first project—a digital accessibility assessment system for UK businesses demonstrated the technical depth of our teams, including website development, algorithmic triaging, and full-stack data management. Since then, our talent has contributed to AI training, branding, software development, and data analysis across sectors like education, health, and research.

Stories like those of **Susan Achiech, Jerry Ekuwam Lokoroi,** and **Yonatan Aschalew** show what's possible when opportunity meets talent. Their journeys —from automation to web development—reflect the transformative power of remote work and the resilience of refugee professionals driving global innovation.



Our inaugural project team: Susan (top left), Jerry (bottom left), Yonatan (bottom right).

## Shaping the Future: Research, Advocacy and Systemic Change

While Na'amal's training and employment initiatives directly impact individuals, long-term change requires transforming the broader ecosystem. By generating evidence-based insights, amplifying refugee voices, and engaging with key stakeholders—including employers, policymakers, and digital labour platforms —Na'amal is driving a future where talent is recognized beyond borders, and digital livelihoods become more accessible, inclusive, and sustainable.

## World Bank-Funded RCT Research on How Remote Work Transforms Refugee Employment (2024–2026)



With funding from the World Bank, Na'amal, in collaboration with researchers from Harvard University, launched Opportunities Across Borders, the first-ever randomized controlled trial to explore how refugees can successfully access online work. This study seeks to answer two key questions: Can digital jobs help integrate refugees into the global workforce? And how do these opportunities shape employment, income, and migration decisions? Using a combination of surveys, coaching session observations, and in-depth interviews, the research tracks employment outcomes, income changes, skill development, and mental well-being.

Program delivery wraps up in March 2025, with data collection continuing through the year and a final impact report set for 2026. The findings will offer key insights for policymakers, employers, and organizations developing long-term employment solutions for displaced people.

Talent Has No Borders - Na'amal & Finn Church Aid Study



In 2024, Na'amal and Finn Church Aid (FCA) released "<u>Talent Has No Borders:</u> <u>Creating Connections for Refugees and Other Displaced People to Decent</u> <u>Digital Livelihoods</u>" a report on digital employment for refugees. It explores opportunities and challenges, highlighting efforts by NGOs, businesses, and global organizations to integrate refugees into the digital workforce.

Despite growing initiatives, barriers like unstable job prospects, limited infrastructure, and legal uncertainties persist. Based on interviews with key stakeholders, the report emphasizes collaboration to create tailored employment pathways. It showcases refugee resilience, innovative programs, and best practices, reinforcing Na'amal's mission to bridge displaced talent with global job markets.

Building a Collaborative Future: The Jobtech for Refugees Community of Practice

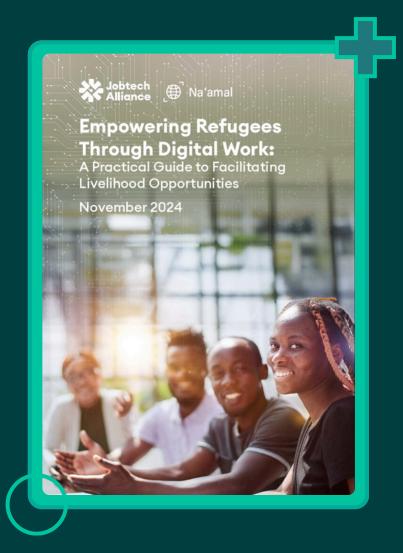


Participants of the Jobtech for Refugees Community of Practice (J4R CoP).

In 2024, Na'amal, in partnership with Jobtech Alliance, launched the <u>Jobtech</u> <u>for Refugees Community of Practice</u> (J4R CoP)—a global initiative dedicated to expanding digital work opportunities for refugees. This growing community brings together digital labour platforms, refugee-led organizations, policymakers, and funders to collaborate, exchange knowledge, and drive meaningful change in the refugee jobtech space. Through regular online meetings, members share research, best practices, and lessons learned from their work. In 2024, J4R CoP also convened two in-person meetings in Nairobi, bringing together key stakeholders to deepen collaboration and strengthen collective efforts.

A key achievement of J4R CoP in 2024 was its research on Digital Employment Pipelines for Refugees, which led to the publication of "<u>Empowering Refugees</u> <u>Through Digital Work: A Practical Guide to Facilitating Livelihood</u> <u>Opportunities.</u>" This handbook provides practical strategies to create sustainable digital livelihoods for refugees and explores four key employment pathways—freelancing, remote work, digital entrepreneurship, and content creation.

While this handbook offers practical guidance for immediate action, a full research report will be released in 2025, providing deeper analysis and long-term recommendations.



# The 2024 Migration Summit: Driving Action and Redefining Opportunities for Displaced Communities

Since its inception in 2022, Na'amal has been at the forefront of the <u>Migration</u> <u>Summit</u>, co-founding this global convening alongside the <u>Massachusetts</u> <u>Institute of Technology (MIT) Emerging Talent</u> and <u>Karam Foundation</u>. Now in its third year, the Summit has become a powerful platform for driving action, reshaping narratives, and unlocking opportunities for displaced communities worldwide.

In 2024, the Summit streamlined its format into a focused week of virtual events (June 24-28), complemented by in-person engagements (June 24 - July 22). The event saw an impressive **690** virtual participants, **500** in-person attendees, **192** organisations, and **102** expert speakers from **65** countries, underscoring its growing global influence.



The Kakuma Digi-Connect event at the Migration Summit hosted in Kakuma refugee camp.

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A major focus was on redefining migration narratives, shifting perceptions from victimhood to agency (see the <u>2024 impact report</u>). Na'amal played a crucial role in advancing discussions on digital livelihoods, workforce readiness, and remote employment, equipping businesses with actionable insights to create inclusive, diverse workplaces. The session "<u>Empowering Talent, Strengthening</u> <u>Businesses: The Opportunities of Impact Outsourcing</u>" explored how a comprehensive approach—from training to employment—has successfully generated substantial income and opportunities for displaced individuals. One of the key outcomes of this year's Migration Summit is the <u>Employers' Guide</u>, a practical resource designed to assist businesses throughout the recruitment and hiring process.



#### Amplifying Refugee Voices: The Voices of Resilience Podcast

In 2024, Na'amal launched <u>Season 2 of the Voices of Resilience podcast</u>, themed "The Future of Work for Refugees." Building on Season 1's focus on personal stories of resilience, this season explores how digital tools, AI, and remote work are reshaping economic opportunities for displaced people. Featuring voices from both refugee professionals and experts in migration, jobtech, and digital work, the podcast spotlights the potential of refugee talent in a rapidly changing world.



Guests include Chris Maclay (Jobtech Alliance), Susan Achiech (Na'amal alumna and founder of Tech-Femme), Giselle Gonzales (Equal Reach), and Simon Marot (AYAN), each offering insights on overcoming displacement, seizing opportunity, and challenging stereotypes.

Through storytelling, Na'amal continues to shift narratives, influence policy, and elevate refugee voices in the global workforce.

#### **Expanding Advocacy and Driving Conversation**

Beyond the podcast, Na'amal drives the digital livelihoods conversation across platforms. With over 7,500 LinkedIn followers, we share insights, research, and advocacy content to engage the jobtech ecosystem and promote inclusive employment.

Our work has been featured in **<u>The National</u>** and **<u>Forced Migration Review</u>**, and we regularly contribute to global conversations through conferences, panels, and policy forums—building a future where displaced individuals are seen, heard, and given the opportunity to thrive.

## Advocating for Inclusive Digital Employment

Lorraine Charles, Founder and Executive Director of Na'amal, has been a leading voice in advocating for inclusive employment opportunities through various high-profile podcast engagements. On the <u>Youth Employment and</u> <u>Mobility</u> podcast hosted by **Caroline Njuki** of the ILO, she highlighted the transformative role of soft skills and mentorship in preparing displaced talent for the digital economy.



Podcast Episode

S4, EPISODE 3 - OPEN ACCESS: UNLOCKING GLOBAL REFUGEE TALENT(w/ Lorraine Charles, Na'amal)

**Remotely Speaking Up** 

On <u>Remotely Speaking Up</u>, hosted by **Dr. Rochelle Haynes**, she explored how open access to global job markets can unlock refugee talent and the importance of inclusive hiring practices. On <u>PND Global</u>, hosted by **Craig Zeller**, she discussed how remote work can drive economic empowerment and social integration, demonstrating the far-reaching impact of digital employment opportunities.

Over the past year, the Na'amal team has actively participated in key **global conferences** to advocate for inclusive digital employment and showcase our work. On February 28-29, 2024, at **The Conduit Solutions Lab: Refugee Summit** in London, UK, Lorraine Charles and Giselle Gonsales from EqualReach presented Na'amal's and EqualReach's impact sourcing model as a sustainable solution for refugee employment.



Lorraine Charles presenting at the ILO Conference on Decent Jobs for Youth in Kigali, Rwanda.

On May 7-8, 2024, at the event <u>Driving an Inclusive and Productive Digital</u> <u>Transformation for Decent Work</u> in Nairobi, Kenya—hosted by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the ILO, and the Government of Kenya—Dhruvi Joshi, program Coordinator for Kenya, on May 22-23, 2024, Lorraine spoke at the <u>ILO</u> <u>Conference on Decent Jobs for Youth</u> in Kigali, Rwanda, participating in the panel "Harnessing the Potential of the Digital Economy for Forcibly Displaced Youth", where she emphasized the importance of soft skills and defining decent work in the digital space.



Dhruvi Joshi presenting at the Driving an Inclusive and Productive Digital Transformation for Decent Work event in Nairobi, Kenya.

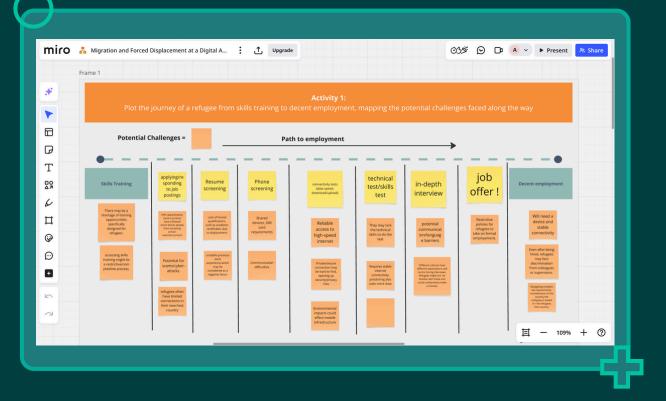
As the year progressed, Na'amal continued engaging in high-profile discussions on digital livelihoods and youth empowerment. On August 12, 2024, **Isra Alvi**, program Coordinator, spoke at "**From Clicks to Progress: Youth Digital Pathways for Sustainable Development**" which explored how youth can drive change through digital skills and technology.



Isra Alvi presenting at the From Clicks to Progress: Youth Digital Pathways for Sustainable Development event in Nairobi, Kenya.

On October 15-16, 2024, Lorraine Charles presented the research, **"Digital Freelancing as a Pathway for Refugee Economic Empowerment,"** at the **"<u>Symposium: From Evidence to Policy"</u>** in Nairobi, Kenya, hosted by **ReBuild** in collaboration with the **World Bank**, the **IKEA Foundation**, and **International Rescue Committee**.

On November 8, 2024, at the **reSHAPE** event hosted by **The British Academy in London**, Lorraine contributed to a panel discussion on **"Advocacy and Academia: How Research Can Advance Social and Economic Causes"**, underscoring how Na'amal bridges academic insights with real-world impact. These engagements reinforce our ongoing efforts to influence policy, forge meaningful partnerships, and drive systemic change in the digital employment landscape.



Na'amal also engaged in **academic discourse** to bridge research and real-world impact. On October 29, Lorraine Charles delivered a lecture to Master's students at **The Edinburgh Futures Institute at the University of Edinburgh** as part of the **"Migration and Forced Displacement in a Digital Age"** module. The session titled **"Training to Work: Realising dignified work for refugees in the digital economy"** explored the potential of digital livelihoods for displaced people, mapping both opportunities and the challenges they face on the path to decent work.

Through these engagements, Na'amal continues to influence policy, foster collaborations, and drive systemic change, ensuring that refugees are not just participants in the digital economy, but key contributors to its growth.

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# Looking Ahead: Scaling Impact and Expanding Opportunities in 2025

## Programme Expansion and Innovation

In 2025, Na'amal will continue to deliver high-quality training through our ongoing digital livelihoods program in Ethiopia, ensuring refugees and host communities gain the skills, confidence, and networks needed to access meaningful remote work. Alongside this, we will launch <u>a new initiative</u> in partnership with **EqualReach**, supported by the **Robert Bosch Stiftung**, to further expand access to digital employment through technical mentoring, soft skills certification, and employer engagement.



To keep pace with an evolving digital landscape, we will update our curriculum, incorporating new tools and technologies to improve learning outcomes. A key focus will be on training participants to use AI effectively, helping them develop the digital literacy and problem-solving skills required to compete in the modern job market.

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A major development in 2025 will be the launch of our **Technical Mentoring program**, designed for participants pursuing technical roles.



This structured initiative will simulate real-world, team-based project environments, allowing mentees to gain hands-on experience through weekly challenges focused on software development, UI/UX design, data analysis, and system integration. Participants will also develop critical workplace skills by working within agile and scrum methodologies, mirroring the workflows of professional tech agencies. Each team will be paired with an industry mentor, receiving weekly feedback and project-based learning experiences.

## Expanding Access to Meaningful Digital Work

A key priority for 2025 is scaling the Na'amal Agency, enabling more refugee and underrepresented professionals to secure remote work with global businesses. We will launch the **Refugee-focused Digital Agency Accelerator program** in Uganda, supporting delivery partners to integrate refugee tech talent into their workforce through the Na'amal Agency model. This initiative will equip organizations with the tools to identify, assess, and onboard refugee professionals, ensuring they meet industry standards for remote work.

We will also explore a social **BPO (Business Process Outsourcing)** model, working with partners such as **Konexio Africa** to create impact-driven work opportunities that leverage refugee talent for large-scale digital projects.

## Research and Advocacy: Amplifying Voices and Driving Systemic Change

Na'amal and EqualReach, supported by the Robert Bosch Stiftung, will conduct targeted research on gender disparities in remote employment. This research will refine our program design, track impact, and inform advocacy efforts aimed at creating fair and inclusive digital jobs for refugees. Our studies will address key barriers such as access to training, platform restrictions, and fair working conditions.



Some of our learners from our 2023/2024 Kenya program during a group picnic with the Na'amal team.

In 2025, our advocacy initiatives will expand significantly by:

- Launching Season 3 of the Voices of Resilience podcast, featuring stories from displaced professionals, employers, and thought leaders.
- Developing engaging, shareable digital content including articles, videos, infographics, and interactive discussions to raise awareness and inspire action.
- Utilizing global events, panel discussions, and strategic media partnerships to advocate for refugee inclusion in the digital workforce.
- Providing employers with tools and guidance to effectively hire and support displaced talent, embedding inclusive hiring as a strategic practice.

These collective efforts aim to create a more inclusive, sustainable future of work for forcibly displaced and underrepresented communities.

