



Impact Report 2019



The [MIT Refugee Action Hub \(ReACT\)](#) launched in May 2017 when the challenge of refugee education was presented at MIT Solve. With your generous support, ReACT has since created two new free educational opportunities for a number of refugee and displaced learners where they live: the [Certificate in Computer and Data Science Program \(CDSP\)](#) and a track in the MITx MicroMasters program in [Data, Economics, and Development Policy \(DEDP\)](#).

Designed specifically for the needs of refugees and other displaced persons to continue their education and career pathways, ReACT's blended programs combine online learning with practical experience. The CDSP track begins with a two-week in-person Immersion and Acceleration Workshop (IAW), where students learn from MIT faculty and student coaches and connect with each other to work in labs and on activities modeled after MIT's hands-on learning approach. Onsite workshops, providing academic support, are also available to students in the DEDP program as they complete a set of MITx graduate-level online courses. Both programs match learners with paid industry internships, activating a variety of new professional pathways. In fact, 75% of newly employed ReACT students attribute their success to participation in the programs, while several others are pursuing graduate education opportunities.

On behalf of the dedicated students, faculty, and staff at ReACT, we thank you for your support and invite you to celebrate and reflect on the achievements of this inspiring community of learners.

“The MIT community and technological innovation can become an inflection point and change a curse into an opportunity.”

Hala Fadel MBA '01

**ReACT Co-Founder
Chair of the MIT Enterprise Forum Pan Arab Region**

ReACT brings to life the vision of its faculty founder, Assistant Professor Admir Masic of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, a former Bosnian refugee who knows firsthand the power of education to improve lives.

Read Masic's powerful [story](#) of how a good education gave him “the ticket to a better life.”

Drawing on MIT's strengths in global impact and educational innovation, ReACT's mission is to design and deliver new learning opportunities for displaced populations where they live.



HOW FAR WE'VE COME

OCTOBER 2017

Within two weeks of announcing the call for applications to our Certificate in Computer and Data Science Program (CDSP), ReACT received 500 submissions from 16 nationalities in 20 countries; 37% of applicants were women.

JANUARY 2018

The first cohort of CDSP students met in Amman, Jordan at the Immersion and Acceleration Workshop to kick off their participation in the year-long program.

JUNE 2018

ReACT announced a [partnership with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab \(J-PAL\)](#) on the MITx Data and Economic Development Policy (DEDP) Micro-Masters program. We received applications from 35 countries around the world, and ReACT offered 8 of the refugee applicants admission to the program.

"I get very emotional about this new DEDP/ReACT initiative, because we're building something that could impact so many lives around the world, and will give refugees a very unique, extremely powerful opportunity," Masic said. "With this new collaboration, we're providing concrete pathways for those who believe in education as a key for a better life."

Innocent Tshilombo, one of the learners enrolled in the DEDP program, [shares his story](#).



JULY 2018

ReACT joined MIT Open Learning.



JANUARY 27, 2019

The first CDSP cohort of 17 learners graduated.

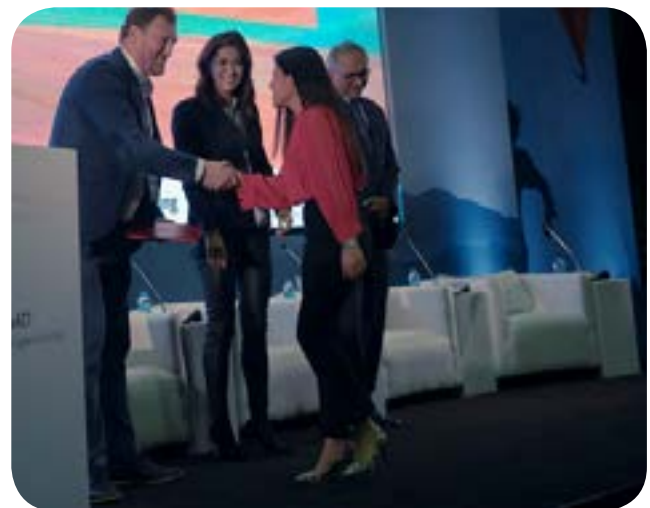


**JANUARY
2019**

The second CDSP cohort of 31 students attended the Immersion Acceleration Workshop in Amman, Jordan. Refugees make up nearly 70% and women 55% of the new class.

"I'm very excited that ReACT and the MIT community are able to offer this program again. In the past year, we have been learning along with our students, and tuned and tweaked the program to make it better and more impactful. This year we look forward to [empowering] more refugees from around the world and activating their talents and potential, so they can learn more, do more on the global stage, and inspire their communities as well."

- ADMIR MASIC



ReACT BY THE NUMBERS



of pilot CDSP cohort graduated



of newly employed students attributed their new employment opportunity to ReACT, and more than three-fourths of all the students are now considering entrepreneurship or a start-up as a career option



internship to job conversion



of alumni volunteered as mentors and TAs

Demand has doubled since the initial round of applications. The second application process, announced in the fall of 2018 received over...



applications from



countries



of applications were from women.

REACT CREATES COMMUNITY

A 2-week Immersion Acceleration Workshop incorporates MIT's mens et manus approach and builds community among ReACT students. 92% of surveyed ReACT graduates report a high to moderate connection with their classmates and program staff.

I had the chance to meet MIT professors and students, to feel the MIT team spirit, to be a part of a life changing experience, to appreciate and be appreciated. With every lecture of my DEDP MicroMaster, I think about solutions and researches to be made, I connect to the content and feel empowered by the knowledge that I gain.

Ruba Aldaher

Student, MicroMasters Program in Data, Economics, and Development Policy



The two winning teams from the pilot class's MIT Entrepreneurship Bootcamp had the opportunity to present their ideas at Oasis500—a ReACT partner and startup accelerator in Jordan. The winning business concepts addressed Wi-Fi connectivity issues in refugee camps and looked to develop mental health support groups.



LEARNER ACHIEVEMENTS

Empowering female learners



100% of ReACT students passed 6.00.1x compared with 57% of all certificate-seeking courses. The average final score for ReACT students in 6.00.2x was 92%. Female ReACT students outperformed the MOOC student universe – receiving a 93% average in 6.00.1x.

ReACT empowers me as a mother for the advantage of my children and my community. **Enas Obeidallah**
a 2018 ReACT graduate with over 10 years of technical and management experience

Another ReACT CDSP student, 23-year-old Manda Awad, enrolled in 6.00.1x: Introduction to Computer Science using Python while living in Jordan as a refugee from Palestine and found that some of the course concepts were not covered in the computer science curriculum that she was receiving at the University of Jordan. ReACT inspired Awad to propose integrating the MITx 6.00 series coursework into the University of Jordan engineering department's computer science curricula.



"I want to take what I have learned and teach other students, particularly women," she says. Awad plans to launch a "Women who Code" group at the Zaatar refugee camp in Jordan.

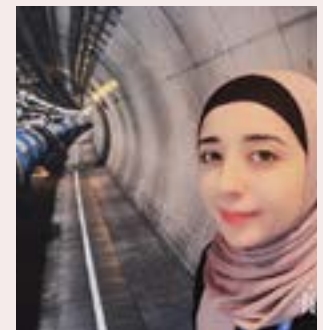
Creating new employment pathways by connecting students to paid internships



Muhammad Enjari, a 39-year-old petroleum engineer who fled Syria with his wife and three children at the beginning of the Syrian revolution before settling in Jordan, recalls: "I have a degree in petroleum engineering but in Jordan I could not find a job."

Enjari completed 6.00.1x, as part of the CDSP curriculum, with a 100 percent on the final exam and final course grade. With the skills he learned through this coursework, Enjari began a new job as a paid intern in computer engineering with Edraak, a MOOC platform similar to edX for Arabic language students.

As an intern at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), ReACT graduate Fatima Alrashdan worked on the Large Hadron Collider, a high-tech circular particle accelerator with superconductors that are constantly monitored. Applying the computer science and data analysis skills that she developed during the 6.00 edX course series, Fatima constructed data analysis code in Python following advanced coding conventions. For Fatima, ReACT's blended learning model opened new professional and academic doors, inspiring her to apply to electrical engineering and computer science doctoral programs abroad.



ReACT student and Syrian refugee Hashem Bulbol completed a three-month internship with the tech development team at Kirontech, an internationally recognized AI and technology hub. He shares, "The internship with Kirontech was a whole new experience for me, especially the atmosphere of companies, business and real work...I was finally seeing what my knowledge and skills would do in the field." Hashem continues to work on KironAI projects with his in-house mentor, Sandro Ephrem, drawing on his ReACT education to develop a Raspberry Pi microcontroller, a device that detects a series of handwritten digits and pronounces them audibly.

REALIZING A DREAM

ReACT began as Admir Masic's dream. In two short years, ReACT has helped to realize the dreams of many—including those of over 50 refugee and displaced learners from around the world.

Thank you for supporting our continued efforts to improve access to education for displaced populations worldwide.

“We are confident that these strategies could have a global impact when it comes to quality education delivered in challenging contexts.”

Admir Masic



Your support to ReACT enables us to deliver new learning opportunities to people from displaced populations and provide access to education and a better life.

THANK YOU.