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EDU-SYRIA
A SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



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CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF
EDU-SYRIA AND GIZ CONFERENCE

SYRIAN STUDENTS IN JORDAN: TIME TO START OVER

AMMAN, 24 FEBRUARY 2019



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I. ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

EDU-SYRIA and GIZ conference entitled “Syrian Students in Jordan: Time to Start Over (Amman, 24 February 2019)” aimed to bring together students, academic institutes, experts in the field of refugees and migration, international and local non-profit organizations, and governmental officials, scholars, and representatives from the civil society. The conference was under the patronage of H.E Minister of Higher Education in Jordan, and attended by H.E. Ambassador of the European Union to Jordan, the Cultural Attaché at the German Embassy in Amman, and Head of the GIZ Employment Portfolio in Jordan. Additionally, there were more than 120 participants including representatives from ministries, international and non-governmental organizations, universities, and Syrian students in Jordan.

The conference main goal is to address the importance of higher education scholarships in helping refugees to overcome the unfortunate repercussions the crisis has imposed on them, and in assisting them to become inspiring individuals that will succeed in rebuilding Syria and their host communities. The conference discussed Syrian refugee youth higher education and work opportunities, needs and obstacles they face in Jordan. Moreover, it highlighted the factors and enablers to help Syrian youth to start over in Syria.

This Conference was a result of several workshops for Syrian students held at Zarqa University, Luminus Technical University College, Zaatari Camp and German Jordanian University from 10-14 February 2019.

Hence, these conclusions and recommendations have been agreed upon by the Syrian student participants at the conference, and they serve as a message from the Syrian Youth to policy and decision makers, to take into consideration when creating fund programs and donation projects.

The conference had four main sessions; each of them addressed an important aspect related to the Syrian crises. In what follows, a summary of the main outcomes of each session is provided.



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II. TOPIC 1: REFUGEES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The first topic highlights the refugees' situation in higher education in Jordan, the importance of scholarships to Syrian youth, and the difficulties they face. Furthermore, it addresses the needed requirements to improve the value of their education. The following main points summarize the session outcomes and recommendations.

- (1) Recognize the significance of scholarship programs funded by The European Union and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) in supporting the education of Syrian refugees in Jordan and vulnerable Jordanians in host communities. These programs preserve secure future for the generation suffering from the Syrian crisis and its consequences.
- (2) Highlight the common problem that Syrian refugees in Jordan, who were already studying in higher education institutes in Syria, and not possessing an official transcript to accredit their disrupted studies in Syria.
- (3) Acknowledge the fact that medical studies scholarships (e.g. surgery, nursing, applied medical studies) are highly needed for Syrian youth to rebuild the country.
- (4) Encourage scholarship programs to provide sufficient monthly or per semester stipend and transportation allowance for students, as the majority of refugees are in poverty conditions. Those students also assist their families, and live in urban areas.
- (5) Emphasize that refugee students need English language courses, as the higher education system in Jordan main language is English, while most of them are weak in English since Arabic is the main language of the Syrian higher education system.
- (6) Recommend that refugee students in master studies need mentoring programs, either locally or internationally, to assist them in conducting researches hence improving their research capabilities and skills.
- (7) Strongly Advocate increasing the number of the scholarships dedicated for Syrian refugees, as the number of refugees who need higher education is large in comparison to the available scholarships. This will shape a secure future for youth refugees and prevent them from becoming a lost generation.
- (8) Recommend removing any age limitation in the scholarship requirements for many refugee students.
- (9) Support different types of learning programs especially blended learning programs.
- (10) Encourage the provisioning of practical training for students before or after graduation, in cooperation with the private sector, to help them build experiences in their field of studies. This will produce qualified graduates to the job market.



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III. TOPIC 2: ENABLERS TO START OVER IN SYRIA

This topic presents the conditions and procedures needed to enable Syrian refugees to go back to their home country and contribute toward rebuilding its infrastructure. In particular, the following main issues have been discussed and should be taken into consideration:

- (11) Highlight the security risks and compulsory recruitment in military service that prevent the majority of male refugee from going back to Syria.
- (12) Emphasize the need of safety and human rights assurance in Syria.
- (13) Acknowledge that the destroyed infrastructure in Syria is a concern. Actions should be taken to ensure the availability of basic needs such as universities, schools, medical centers, shops, hospitals, etc.
- (14) Assist the returning youth in finding job opportunities upon their return, especially that job opportunities in Syria are too little.
- (15) Encourage the humanitarian international organizations to support the psychological rehabilitation of the conflict victims.
- (16) Support women empowerment.

IV. TOPIC 3: VOCATIONAL TRAINING TRANSITION TO WORK

This topic highlights the vocational training diploma significance for refugee youth and its vital role to the labor market.

- (17) Highlight the importance of vocational training and education, as it has short duration in comparison to the Bachelor degree. This enables graduates to join the labor market faster.
- (18) Promote entrepreneurship among Syrian graduates as an important and effective concept among young people in Jordan.
- (19) Encourage the support toward business incubators and entrepreneurship platforms, especially inside refugees' camps, to enable the refugee youth to create their own business.
- (20) Urge donors to allocate part of the provided fund to support entrepreneurship and startups projects, as these projects provide income sources and secure job opportunities to both Jordanians and Syrians. This contributes toward solving the unemployment problem among the young generation.
- (21) Recognize that the vocational education is not well accredited in the Syrian culture although it is highly significant to creating qualified workers.



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V. TOPIC 4: YOUTH VOICES

This topic is dedicated to voice Syrian and Jordanian messages and the main requests in mitigating the Syrian crises to the global community.

- (22) Recognize the need of educated people to rebuild Syria.
- (23) Emphasize the necessity of restoring the destroyed infrastructure (hospitals, schools, universities) and provision of basic needs (e.g. electricity, water, utilities) for Syrians to be back.
- (24) Strongly advocate donors to support entrepreneurship and startup projects that can start their operations in Jordan and extend to Syria.
- (25) Acknowledge the cohesion of Jordanian and Syrian communities, as they have many similar aspects, and they face the same challenges.
- (26) Acknowledge the successful integration of Syrian students in Jordanian educational institutes.
- (27) Urge the donors to support more Jordanian students from host communities, who are affected by the Syrian crises.