

Concept Note:

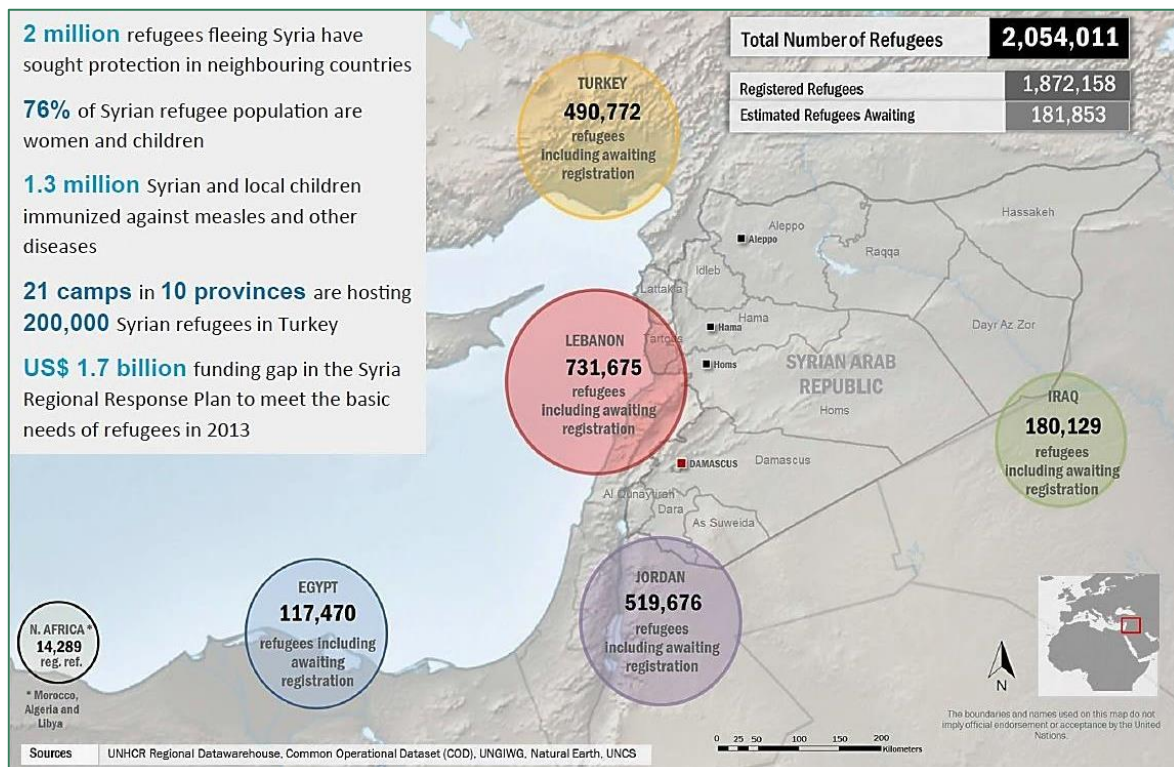
Regional Conference

Exploring an Education Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis

Background

The conflict in Syria has lasted well over two years and there are no signs of an imminent end to hostilities and indeed no signs that the refugee flows will be ending soon. Indeed, the UN's Syria Regional Response Plan (RRP) for the latter half of 2013 states that '[b]ased on arrival trends since the beginning of the year, it is estimated that the number of Syrian refugees in need of assistance across the region may reach 3.45 million by the end of 2013, hosted in camps and, for the most part, in local communities.'

The on-going conflict has resulted in severe internal displacement and the arrival of over 2.1 million refugees in neighbouring countries. This figure includes only registered refugees and numbers of unregistered refugees are considered to be very high. The majority of refugees are in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, together hosting about 1.8 million refugees, with another 300,000 in Iraq and Egypt.



With the conflict already in its third year, there is a strong likelihood that refugees will remain in neighbouring countries over the long-term. This requires a holistic and coordinated education response looking at the needs of refugee and host communities, the resources that exist in the region and those that can be leveraged internationally. This response must transcend the humanitarian and development divide. In the absence of effective international action, there is now a real danger that Syria's youth and children will

become a lost generation – and that the quality of education in host countries will deteriorate. The implications will be felt for years to come, as this generation seeks employment without adequate skills and knowledge, exacerbating the long term effects of the crisis in terms of economic and social instability.

Given the scope and impact of this humanitarian crisis, particularly upon children and their access to education, UNHCR and UNESCO, in collaboration with ODI, CfBT Education Trust, American Institutes of Research (AIR) and the Inter Agency Network for Emergency Education (INEE) propose to convene a regional conference on access to education for Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries. The conference will take place the second week of December in Beirut and will seek to bring together a range of stakeholders which includes but also goes beyond the small number of major international bodies which are currently engaged with this issue. The conference aims to be a platform for informed in-depth discussion on the challenges refugees and host countries face, generating practically useful ideas and recommendations for donors and implementers, and starting a monitoring mechanism.

Objective

The conference will cover three main areas related to developing a regional education response to the Syrian refugee crisis: **1) policy and practice challenges** (highlighting the challenges country by country), **2) research and technical requirements** (what info/data/research are needed to feed into planning processes and responses) and **3) financing** (what are the funding needs and how will this funding flow to the different countries in a coordinated manner).

The conference will include high-level attendees to help draw attention to the effects the Syrian refugee crisis has had on children and youth education. However, it will bring together technical experts who are actively engaged in responding to the refugee crisis and its effects on education, as well as a few global education experts. This conference is the first step and will not provide all the answers, but will instead help clarify additional data and analysis requirements country by country, generate tangible recommendations (e.g., future research, technical systems to collate data or share good practices, etc.) and outline resourcing requirements.

This conference will look at questions and gaps on the current status of education delivery for refugees in the host countries and provide a strong foundation for a second conference planned for March 2014. The second conference will benefit from the information; resources and coordination commitments achieved from the first conference and will help move dialogue towards more concrete actions to address existing gaps in assessment, research, and implementation strategies.

Joint Hosts

UNHCR and UNESCO

Location and Date

Beirut, Lebanon 11th and 12th December 2013 (?)

Invitees

Ministers of Education, Ministers of Finance, Permanent Secretaries (Ministry of Education, Directors of Planning (Ministry of Education), high-level regional and headquarters representatives of foundations, bilateral and multilateral donors (humanitarian and development), philanthropists, UN agencies (UNESCO, UNHCR and UNICEF), NGOs and FBOs with active programmes in the region, regional and international private sector representatives, technical advisors and research institutions and organisations.

Outline Programme

DAY 1				
TIME	SESSION	PRESENTERS / FACILITATORS	PARTICIPANTS	
08.00 - 09.00	Registration			
09.00 - 09.15	Opening remarks	Representatives of UNHCR/UNESCO	All	
09.15 – 09.45	Opening address, the refugee crisis and country level challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High-level address by the UNHCR Special Envoy, Angelina Jolie, outlining regional challenges 	<u>Speaker and Moderator:</u> Angelina Jolie	All	
09.45 – 11.00	Session 1: Regional overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional overview prepared and presented based on country desk review and inputs from countries prior to their participation in the seminar 	AIR/ODI/CfBT presenters UNHCR/UNESCO/UNICEF panel Q&A	All	
11.00 - 11.30	Coffee			
11.30 - 13.00	Session 2: Technical/Policy Break-Out (CfBT lead; UNHCR/UNESCO support) Theme break-out A. Short presentation by the facilitator capturing <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. key areas from regional overview that apply to the thematic area 2. overview of thematic areas, global developments in this area, practical implementation suggestions etc B. Facilitated discussion on good practices, needs and gaps	Research/Technical Break-Out (AIR lead; UNHCR/UNESCO support) A. Short presentation by the facilitator capturing <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. key areas from regional overview that apply to the thematic area 2. overview of thematic areas, global developments in this area, practical implementation suggestions etc B. Facilitated discussion on good practices, needs and gaps	Advocacy, Partnership and resource mobilization(ODI lead; UNHCR/UNESCO support) A. Short presentation by the facilitator capturing <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. key areas from regional overview that apply to the thematic area 2. overview of thematic areas, global developments in this area, practical implementation suggestions etc B. Facilitated discussion on good practices, needs and gaps	Cross-country approach
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch			

14.00 - 15.15	<p>Session 3: Panel Discussion on Technical, Policy, Research & Funding Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel Presentation thematic areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Technical/Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - curriculum and language of instruction - refugee teaching force - education in camps - education in local schools - secondary education - non-formal education ○ Research/Technical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion of what research/technical support is needed to feed into planning process to help close gaps in knowledge - What additional data and analysis are needed to enable a better informed and more effective response? - How can data and information be systematically collected, made accessible to all stakeholders and incorporated into policymaking and programming? ○ Advocacy, Partnership and resource mobilization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how to build better partnership and cooperation - Human and financial resources mobilization: best strategies - Advocacy: How to better communicate the Syrian crisis 	Panel approach (UNHCR, CfBT, AIR, ODI)	Ministry of Education staff technical donors UN agency NGO staff international and regional research organisations
15:15-15.45	Coffee		
15.45-17.15	<p>Country team discussion on needs and gaps based on thematic areas:</p> <p>technical/policy, research, advocacy/partnership/resource mobilization</p> <p>Based on the cross cutting thematic areas of the day prepare a country presentation on successes, needs and gaps</p>	UNHCR/UNESCO	Country teams
17.15 - 18.00	Summary of main points of day one		All

DAY 2			
TIME	SESSION	PRESENTERS / FACILITATORS	PARTICIPANTS
08.30 - 09.00	Coffee		
09.00 –09:45	Recap of main discussion points from Day 1; outline of key deliverables for day 2		All
09.45– 11.30 Plenary (country presentations)	Session 2: Country presentations based on day 1 county group discussions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel Presentation from country level representatives on the needs for planning/programming in the thematic areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Technical/Policy ○ Research/Technical ○ Advocacy, Partnership and resource mobilization 		Research/Technical Support Ministry of Education staff technical donors UN agency NGO staff international and regional research organisations Ministers of Finance, bilateral and multilateral donors, GPE, philanthropists, private sector, UN, INGOs, NGOs
11.30 - 11.45	Coffee		
11.45 - 13.00	Presentations of experts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good practices implementation strategies from a country perspective • Good practices implementation strategies from a regional perspective 	T	All
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch		
14.00 – 15.30	Presentations of experts : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross border issues: accreditation • Cross border issues: curriculum 		All
15.30 – 16.00	Country discussions Revisit the morning presentation based on expert presentations Summarize lists of needs and gaps to fill	UNHCR/UNESCO	Country teams
16.00 - 16.30	Coffee		
16.30 - 17.00	Conclusions of conference Statements of needs in areas of technical support and financial support to be forwarded to March conference and possible fundraising event	UNHCR / UNESCO	All

17.00 – 17.30	Closing ceremony		All
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