



CONFERENCE

18TH – 19TH JUNE 2019
BERLIN



CONCEPT NOTE

FINANCING MODELS AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

19th June 2019, 14h00 to 15h15

Format

The moderator will briefly review how financial barriers hinder access to higher education for refugees before turning the floor to the speakers to introduce promising practices or novel approaches to financing higher education for refugees or building strategic partnerships. The session will then be open for questions and inputs from participants. A moderator will facilitate the session and a rapporteur will summarize the results.

In Brief

The workshop explores how financial barriers to higher education for refugees can be minimized or overcome through partnership and financial and in-kind commitments by a variety of actors. This relates to the financial limitations refugees face regarding the cost of higher education but also as a result of restricted access to employment and livelihoods. Access to quality higher education for refugees can also be examined in the context of the sustainable development of host countries, overall commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and SDG 4 on inclusive and quality education specifically.

The workshop convenes a discussion to explore existing strategic and financial partnerships, identify promising practices for strengthening partnerships and highlight ways for new partners to engage in financial investments towards expanded access to higher education for young refugee women and men.

Background

With only one per cent of refugee youth having access to higher education compared to the global average of 37 per cent among non-refugees, the challenge to expand access to higher education to a greater number of refugee youth is urgent. Achieving access to higher education for a higher percentage of refugee youth will only be possible through strategic partnerships accompanied by solid financial and in-kind commitments across the international community, as affirmed in the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).

Financial support to enable refugee youth to access higher education is offered through initiatives including scholarship programmes (such as DAFI, HOPES, Al Ghurair and a few other in-country scholarship programmes), tuition and fee waivers, cost of living allowances, accommodation in university facilities, free language and preparatory courses and the like. Thus far, however, a relatively limited number of actors are sustainably engaged in this space.

Several promising examples demonstrate how the innovative merging of contributions and commitments can result in comprehensive programmes that meet the full needs of refugee student entering higher education. The workshop will examine promising practice examples such as:



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- Expanding partnerships between UNHCR and foundations and civil society built around shared goals, and cost-sharing to maximize available scholarship places for refugees. Examples from Burundi and Japan.
- In country and third country scholarship programmes that capitalize on the strengths of civil society, academic institutions and local government to provide full scholarships with protection safeguards and extensive student support.
- A new contribution platform to support expanded access to higher education for refugees that allows individual and private contributors to connect with cohorts of refugee students.

Framing Questions

1. How does financial investment in refugee higher education impact, and ideally support, host country education systems, higher education needs among host country youth, and ultimately make progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals?
2. What are some novel ways that partners can engage in higher education for refugees through financial and non-financial contributions? What scholarships programmes for refugees exist worldwide?
3. How can commitments to refugee higher education be aligned with pledges to enhance responsibility sharing under the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Refugee Forum? How can and do strategic partnerships move beyond scholarships to open avenues to higher education in other ways?
4. What emerging partnerships can be supported, enhanced, replicated to produce or access resources to expand refugee access to higher education? Are there partners that are missing or whose potential has not been fully tapped into?

Moderator

Martin Thümmel, Head of Division – Coordination Staff for Refugees and Migration, German Federal Foreign Office, Germany

Speakers

Eunice Akello, Programme Manager at Windle International, Uganda

Aki Takada, Associate Director managing the Syrian Scholars Initiative at the Japan ICU Foundation, USA

Michael Corlin, Senior Adviser with Education Cannot Wait, USA

Rapporteur

Tom Odhiambo Joseph-Christensen, Tertiary Education Associate and DAFI Programme Finance Manager, Denmark