



Press Release

Joint Report by the AUB Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education Calls for Renewed Attention to Address Less than 5 % Enrolment of Refugee Youth in Secondary Education

Beirut, Lebanon: Monday, 4 March 2019

During a joint event at the American University of Beirut, the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education and the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs released the results of mapping around the state of refugee education in Jordan and Lebanon to identify key challenges inhibiting access and completion of secondary, technical and vocational (TVET), and tertiary education. Attending the event were policy practitioners from various institutions in Lebanon, researchers, members of the press community, representatives from the American University of Beirut and the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education.

The study focuses on Syrian and Palestinian refugees as the two largest refugee populations in both countries, although the findings and recommendations are relevant and applicable to all other refugee populations living in the host countries as well. The findings from the study highlight four key challenges :

Finding 1 - Although the funding for refugee education has not been sufficient, it has been largely focused on the primary level.

Finding 2 - Significant gaps in access continue to persist at all levels of education, but most strikingly at the secondary level.

Finding 3 - Vocational education lacks data, investment and quality interventions. Vocational education institutions and programs in Jordan and Lebanon remain largely traditional and are not seen as a desirable education pathway for youth.

Finding 4 - While support for increasing access to higher education for refugees remains low, another critical challenge is its relevance to the labor market and the employability of refugees upon graduation.

While refugees' access to tertiary education needs to be addressed, with only 5-8% of Syrian and Palestinian refugees attending university in Jordan and Lebanon, the quality and relevance of education are also critical issues.

Speaking at the event, Maysa Jalbout, CEO of the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education said: "With this report, we hope to shed light on the urgent need for more funders to address the alarmingly low enrolment and completion rates of less than 5% at the secondary and tertiary education levels in Jordan and Lebanon. The report illuminates critical information all donors need to better understand the best ways to engage with organizations serving refugees."



مؤسسة عبدالله الغرير للتعليم
Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education



Issam Fares Institute for Public
Policy and International Affairs
معهد عصام فارس للسياسات
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From her part, Dr. Hana El-Ghali Education and Youth Policy Research Program Director at AUB's Issam Fares Institute, said "Continued research within the areas of education of refugees is critical in order to understand and address the rapidly changing needs within the sector. It is clear that there is room for further support and innovation in order to bridge the gap between primary education and higher levels of education for vulnerable populations in both Jordan and Lebanon. Investing in secondary, TVET and higher education for refugees emerges as necessity rather than a luxury as education may be the only thing that they can take with them anywhere they may go."

Innovative Pathways

Widening the scope of scholarships and exploring options of bridging the middle school years to secondary school, TVET and tertiary education remain among the most pressing needs in order to overcome the low rate of enrolment and the high rate of dropout among refugee youth. Exploring alternative pathways for refugee youth, particularly in light of the restrictive labour laws within each of the host countries, arises as an essential next step for all stakeholders. Both refugee crises are now considered to be protracted, and this will demand innovative approaches to address the education of refugees in both Lebanon and Jordan in order to ensure that these vulnerable populations are receiving what is rightfully theirs, the right to an education at all levels.

The Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education received a 27M USD grant from the Abdul Aziz Al Ghurair Refugee Education Fund in 2018 to develop and administer this initiative. The Abdul Aziz Al Ghurair Refugee Education Fund supports high-impact education programs at the secondary, vocational and tertiary levels of education for refugee youth in Jordan and Lebanon. The grants provided by the fund also support children of families who due to conflict in their home countries, temporarily reside in the UAE but are unable to afford school fees. The call for proposals for the second phase of funding is currently open until March 19th, 2019.

For further information on the findings and to view the full report, please visit www.aub.edu.lb/ifi or www.alghurairfoundation.org/en

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About the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education

The Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education, founded in 2015 and based in Dubai, is the largest privately funded foundation in the Arab world focused exclusively on education. It aims to improve access to quality education for high-achieving, underserved Emirati and Arab youth. Abdulla Al Ghurair pledged one third of his wealth to the Foundation and set out a target of reaching 15,000 youth over the next 10 years via secondary and higher education programs and scholarships valued at over US\$1 billion.

For more information, please visit: www.alghurairfoundation.org.

For Press Enquiries

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About the AUB Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs

The AUB Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs is an independent, research-based, policy-oriented institute. Inaugurated in 2006, the Institute aims to harness, develop, and initiate policy-relevant research in the Arab region.

The institute is committed to expanding and deepening policy-relevant knowledge production in and about the Arab region; and to creating a space for the interdisciplinary exchange of ideas among researchers, civil society and policy-makers.

Main goals

- Enhancing and broadening public policy-related debate and knowledge production in the Arab world and beyond;
- Better understanding the Arab world within shifting international and global contexts
- Providing a space to enrich the quality of interaction among scholars, officials and civil society actors in and about the Arab world;
- Disseminating knowledge that is accessible to policy-makers, media, research communities and the general public.

For more information, please visit: www.aub.edu.lb/ifi

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