

INSTITUTE OF
INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION



**International Conference
on
“Higher Education in Emergencies”**

**Université Libre de Bruxelles - ULB
(Campus du Solbosch, Building R42)**

Brussels, Belgium

16 – 17 December 2014

PROGRAMME

(updated on 15 December – subject to change)

16 December - 1st Day

Experts Have the Floor (afternoon)

14:00 **Arrival of participants and registration**

14:30 – 14:45 **Welcoming Remarks: Setting the Stage**

The co-organizers will set the context for the conference, which aims to share information, perspectives, and approaches on the critical topic of higher education in emergencies and represents just the beginning of a dialogue that will continue over time.

Several key questions will be posed for consideration throughout the conference, namely:

- How best to provide rapid educational responses in the field of higher education/tertiary studies in the context of complex emergencies?
- How best can all of the organizations and agencies working on this issue share information, exchange best practices, and advance collaborative action to protect students, scholars, and higher education systems during conflicts and emergencies?

Speakers: Magda Zaki (League of Arab States), Sjur Bergan (Council of Europe), John Law (British Council), Daniela Kaisth (Institute of International Education), Helena Barroco (Global Platform for Syrian Students)

Moderator: Erol Kulahci (Association des Universités Francophones)

14:45 – 15:40 Kick-off session – “Higher Education in Emergencies – why does it matter?”

Speakers will be asked to address the topic of “Higher Education in Emergencies” as it relates to their institutional status and area of expertise; panel members will be given the opportunity to make a comment or ask a question; debate will then be open to the audience with Q&A from the floor.

Speakers: Ita Sheehy (UNHCR), *Michelle Manks (Manager, Student Refugee Program, World University Service of Canada)**, Ambassador Stephen Wordsworth (CARA), Rasha Faek (Al-Fanar Media), Berend Jonker (On behalf of Scholars at Risk, Policy Officer for International Affairs of the University Assistance Fund - UAF), Biljana Dischlieva (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany)

Moderator: Barakat Sultan (Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution and Chairman - Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit, University of York)

*(*because flight delays Michelle may not be on time for kick-off)*

15:40 – 16:30 Breakout session –Higher education in emergencies: perspectives, approaches and best practices

This session is aimed at examining current and recent trends in higher education in emergencies. Participants will be invited to share facts, figures and data, explore how evidence-based practices might be used to inform policies and programs, identify gaps in relevant information and discuss what are the best practices for higher education in an emergency context. Throughout this session, a special emphasis will be placed on a number of key issues, such as: international protection; access to higher education quality programmes; standards specific to higher education in emergencies; funding etc

Speakers: Eddie Dutton (UNESCO Amman Office), Daniela Kaisth (Institute of International Education), Sansom Milton (Research Fellow, University of York), Dr. Neil Sparnon, (JC:HEM Chief Academic Officer), Inka Löck (DAAD, Germany), *Michelle Manks (Manager, Student Refugee Program, World University Service of Canada)**

Moderator: John Law (British Council)

(if flight delays Michelle will speak in this session instead of Kick-off),*

16:30 – 17:00 Coffee break

17:00 – 18:20 Simultaneous Workshops on two Case Studies: Kenya and Iraq

Workshop on Kenya

Leader: UNHCR and partners

Context:

Kenya has been a hotspot for higher education blended learning innovations in recent years. Since 2010, the Jesuit Commons Higher Education Programme (JC:HEM) began in Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya, offering two tracks of studies: a certified Liberal studies diploma and short-course community classes. Several cohorts of students have graduated from these programmes, several moving on to further graduate studies. In Dadaab Refugee Camp in northeast Kenya, two innovative programmes are being offered by the Borderless Higher Education for Refugees programme, providing 400 students with teacher accreditation and access to a range of degree programmes that are offered in a blended (online/on-site) method. The programme brings together Kenyan and Canadian Universities to provide a unique stackable offering for students in an isolated setting. In both Dadaab and Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya, a programme lead by the University of Geneva has been exploring the capacity of MOOCs and blended-interpret training to provide displaced communities members with qualifications and refined intercultural communication skills. These programmes have documented extensive lessons learned, looking at the nexus between providing academically rigorous programmes while also ensuring equitable access.

Workshop on Iraq

Leader: Institute of International Education

Context:

The Institute of International Education has participated in the rescue of persecuted scholars since its founding in 1919 when the Emergency Committee to Aid Displaced German Scholars was established. In 2002, IIE and its Trustees launched the [Scholar Rescue Fund \(SRF\)](#) to serve as a permanent, formalized response to this critical international problem. The Scholar Rescue Fund provides fellowships and safe haven for established scholars whose lives and work are threatened in their home countries. These fellowships allow professors, researchers and other senior academics with temporary refuge at universities and colleges around the world, enabling them to pursue their academic work and to continue to share their knowledge with students, colleagues, and the community at large. During the fellowship, conditions in a scholar's home country may improve, permitting safe return to help rebuild universities and societies ravaged by fear, conflict and repression. If safe return is not possible, scholars can use the fellowship period to secure a longer-term opportunity with support from IIE.

In 2007, to respond to a severe academic crisis, the Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund (SRF) launched the [Iraq Scholar Rescue Project](#). This project is assisting hundreds of Iraq's most senior and most threatened academics – through temporary academic positions at universities, colleges and other institutions of higher learning primarily in the Middle East and North African regions. This effort is generously supported by The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the U.S. Department of State, the Richard Lounsbery Foundation, IIE Trustees, among others. In doing so, the Scholar Rescue Fund hopes to contribute to the preservation of Iraq's vital intellectual capital and ensure that, when conditions permit, these scholars will be able to return home to rebuild their once flourishing academic communities.

In 2009, SRF published [Scholar Rescue in the Modern World](#), the first effort to share with a larger community the breadth and nature of the persecution of scholars around the globe. It is based on the data from the first five years of activity of the Scholar Rescue Fund (SRF). "Scholar Rescue in the Modern World" finds that life- and career-ending threats to scholars are widespread and egregious. Applicants and grantees have come from a wide range of academic disciplines and fields, and their countries of origin span almost all regions of the world. The report clearly states that there is much more we do not know, and recommends several new programs or activities to mitigate scholar oppression worldwide.

18h20 – Departure to the Jean Boghossian Foundation

18h30 - Evening

Social Event – Visit to the Jean Boghossian Foundation

17 December - Second Day

Morning Session – Experts have the floor (continuation)

09:00 – 10:30 Morning break-out session – “The Syrian case: programmes, needs, cooperation”

After the rapporteurs of the case study session held the day before on 3 different case studies share the main outcomes, participants will focus on the Syrian case and its regional and international ramifications.

After a panel of testimonials will provide a “glance at ongoing initiatives”, Q&A will follow.

The main purpose of this session is:

- To take stock and assess the ongoing higher education programmes for Syrian students;
- To map out the unmet needs;
- To identify avenues for cooperation and joint action.

Speakers: representative of UNHCR, MENA office, Arnaud Borchard (EU Commission-TBC), Emma Bonar (Norwegian Refugee Council in Jordan), Helena Barroco (Global Platform for Syrian Students), Adrian Melendez (Habesha Project), Joel Bubbers (British Council), Gabriela Bergan (European Students’ Union - ESU), Maria Carvalhosa (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation), Martina Sedlakova (SPARK)

Moderator: Daniela Kaisth, Institute of International Education

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee Break

11:00 – 12:30 Simultaneous workshops – Higher Education in Emergencies: cross-cutting issues

Workshop 1 – The role of MOOCs and other education technologies in Higher Education Emergency Programmes

Leader: League of Arab States

Speakers: Nezhir Orhon, Neil Sparnon, Barbara Moser-Mercer, Salah Abu Osbeh, John Roberts (through skype)

Workshop 2 – The Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region (the Lisbon Convention) and the Guidelines on the Recognition of Refugees' Qualifications

Leader: Council of Europe

Workshop 3 – “Higher Education in Conflict Emergencies in the Context of the post-2015 MDG and EFA Agendas”

Leader: Global Platform for Syrian Students

12:30 – 13:30 Working Lunch

**13:30 – 14:45 Breakout Session: Debate on “How to do more, better and faster?”
(Ways ahead, potential solutions and how can we expand Higher
Education opportunities in a sustainable way)**

After the rapporteurs of the workshops share the main outcomes, participants will discuss further on how to do more, better and faster to protect and promote Higher Education in Emergencies.

This debate will include some provocative ideas and will encourage participants to think out of the box and figure out innovative, comprehensive and sustainable solutions to address Higher Education in Emergencies.

Speakers: Catherine Gladwell (Refugee Support Network), Sansom Milton (Research Fellow, University of York), Stephan Deplace (Eurashe), John Law (British Council), Daniela Kaisth (Institute of International Education), Helen Murray (Open Society Foundation -tbc), Paolo Artini (UNHCR- Deputy Regional Representative for Europe), Rachel Westerby/Lisa Fischer (International Catholic Migration Commission, ICMC)

Moderator: Helena Barroco (Global Platform for Syrian Students)

14h45-15h15 - Wrap up : the General Rapporteur of the conference will share with the participants her main conclusions from the two working days. Comments from the floor. Next Steps

Rapporteur Général: Simone Susskind, Actions in the Mediterranean

15:00 – 15:30

Arrival of guests and registration

15:30-17h00 – Public Session –

Closing Session – “Higher Education in Emergencies –Moving Ahead, Roads Forward”

At this Closing Session, the General Rapporteur of the Conference will present the main conclusions and recommendations of the experts’ debates. Then a High Level Panel will discuss further the pressing challenge of “Higher Education in Emergencies” within a new agenda for global humanitarian action. A follow up to this meeting will be announced.

Rapporteur Général: Simone Susskind, Actions in the Mediterranean

Panel: Ambassador Jan Deboutte (Chairman of the Task Force –Belgian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe), Jean-Christophe Bas (Director of Democratic Citizenship and Participation, Council of Europe), representative of the League of Arab States, Sultan Barakat (Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution and Chairman - Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit, University of York), Sameer Abu-Eisheh (An-Najah National University, Former Minister of Education and Higher Education, Palestine),

Moderator: Gerard Doyle (Vice-Provost, Illinois Institute of Chicago)

Closing words by Jorge Sampaio, former President of the Portuguese Republic and Chairman of the Global Platform for Syrian Students

CLOSING VIDEO – Testimonials by Students/refugees

17:00 *Adjourn*