



**International Workshop**  
**Setting up a Rapid Response Mechanism for Higher Education in Emergencies**  
**to deliver more, better and faster**

*MONDAY, January 20, 2020*

*Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation – Lisbon, Portugal*

*DRAFT PROGRAMME (Subject to change)<sup>1</sup>*

❖ **REGISTRATION- 09h00 AM – 09h30 AM**

❖ **OPENING SESSION – 09h30 - 11h00**

- **WORDS OF WELCOME BY PRESIDENT JORGE SAMPAIO**
- **KICK-OFF PLENARY – 09h35 -10h15**

**WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN NOW TO ENABLE THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR REFUGEES TO DELIVER ON ITS TRANSFORMATIVE PROMISE?**

Providing higher education opportunities in emergency situations and in conflict affected societies is not only a matter of realizing rights and granting protection to the critical 18-25 years old youth bracket, but it is also a question of charting a strategic vision for the future of conflict affected societies. Yet higher education has long been a neglected sector from a policy, a practitioner and a financial perspective. In any case, according to UNHCR, just three per cent of refugees attend university compared to a global average of 37 percent. But the new international frameworks – the SDGs Agenda, the Agenda for Humanity, the New York Declaration, the Global Compacts on Refugees (GCR) and Migrants -, represent true turning opportunities. Against this backdrop, how can we fast track higher education and make it an independent and self-regulated entry-point of the triple nexus – humanitarian, development and peace- agenda? What kind of road-map is needed to reach the new announced target of having 15% of refugees acceding to higher education by 2030? How can the role of higher education be strengthened as a catalyst for recovery? How to ensure sustainable financing for higher education in emergencies? These are questions to be raised in this session as a quick off of the one-day debates.

As the official inauguration of the Workshop, this session will feature some high level personalities. Names to be announced soon.

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<sup>1</sup> The final Programme will be available on 10 January 2020 – (see [www.globalplatformforsyrianstudents.org](http://www.globalplatformforsyrianstudents.org))

- **OUT OF THE BOX MOMENT – 10h20 -10h45**

### **NEW INNOVATIVE IDEAS IN THE PIPELINE – THE YES! FUND**

After a quick presentation of the YES! Fund, a number of partners from various backgrounds will share their thoughts on the potential of this new initiative and why they have decided to embrace it.

- **CALL TO ACTION - 10h50 – 11h30**

### **DOING MORE, BETTER AND FASTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES – A PLAN OF ACTION**

The Rapid Response Mechanism for Higher Education in Emergencies and Conflict-affected Societies (**RRM**) is a multi-stakeholders project **in the making**, aimed at providing **more, better and faster academic opportunities** for students in crisis situations at large, who are either in vulnerable situations or face humanitarian emergencies created by wars, conflicts and natural disasters. The RRM is designed upon the experience gained from an emergency scholarship program for Syrian students launched in 2013 under the leadership of Mr. Jorge Sampaio, former President of Portugal, in the framework of the Global Platform for Syrian Students. Furthermore, the RRM is also based on exchanges held with international partners since 2014 and on lessons learned and best practices available.

Against this backdrop, in this session the RRM will be presented as a unique, informal platform for dialogue and cooperation on higher education in emergencies and conflict-affected societies. Bringing together a variety of partners and stake-holders, the RRM aims to become the main multilateral platform linking the academic community, philanthropies, the private sector, humanitarian and development players and political decision makers at national, regional and global level. It will have 5 main core missions: provide a platform to strengthen academic capacity to respond to crises, foster collaborative responses, generate untapped resources, improve understanding and accountability as well as inspire political commitment so that higher education is viewed both by governments and donors as a top priority during crises.

This Session will bring together a number of high level speakers closely involved in the making of the RRM and in the scholarship programme for Syrian Students. Names to be announced soon.

#### **❖ COFFEE-BREAK – 11h30 -12h00**

#### **❖ NEW STUDY OUT - 12h00 – 13h00**

- **PRESENTATION OF A REPORT ON“HIGHER EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES”**

In the aftermath of the first ever Global Refugees Forum, held in Geneva on 17-18 December 2019, this Report is intended to be a contribution for stakeholders around the world – be it international and regional organizations, the academic community, national and local governments, philanthropies, civil society organizations, the private sector, humanitarian and development players – to come together and through collaborative and coordinated actions engage in a joint journey to unleash the transformative power of higher education in conflict affected societies and among displaced populations.

The presentation of the Report will be followed by Q&A.

#### **❖ LUNCH BREAK – 13h00-14h30**

## ❖ **BREAKOUT SESSIONS - 14h30 - 16:00**

### *Two simultaneous sessions*

- **What is the role of a coordination mechanism and what are its main priority tasks to enable higher education institutions to deliver a systemic response in times of crises?**
- **What are the sources of financing and financing models for higher education in emergencies?**

## ❖ **COFFEE-BREAK – 16h00 – 16h30**

## ❖ **CLOSING – 16h30 -17h30**

During the Closing Session, after a one-on-one conversations with some amazing refugees and forced displaced students, a panel of high level speakers will deliver summary remarks with priorities ahead. Names to be announced soon.

## ❖ **DINNER – 19h30**

A NEW YEAR solidarity dinner will be held at SANA METROPOLITAN HOTEL. Participants are warmly invited to sign up.