



Funded by the European Union



MY_HOPES_STORY





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HOPES GIVES HOPE

THE STORY OF HOPES

MY_HOPES_STORY is the story of hope brought about by the €12 million regional HOPES (Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians) project, funded by the European Union, through the EU's Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the 'EU Madad Fund', and implemented by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) together with the British Council, Campus France, and Nuffic.

The HOPES project was developed as a response to the Syrian crisis and its devastating consequences for the entire region. The conflict in Syria, now in its tenth year, remains unresolved despite the numerous efforts of key international players to find a solution. With more than seven million Syrians internally displaced and around five million refugees from Syria¹, the toll of this enduring crisis on the Syrian population as well as on neighbouring countries has been severe.

Within this unstable economic and political context, the adverse effect of the influx of a large number of university-age refugees from Syria on the higher education systems in the region has presented a significant challenge. As a result, access to higher education institutions (HEIs) has been limited for these young people, only a small percentage of whom have the financial means to continue their studies. Furthermore, the majority of post-secondary-age Syrian students currently enrolled on higher education programmes are struggling to adapt to the academic systems of their host countries.

Recognising that the academic needs of Syrian and host-community young people are of paramount importance, tremendous efforts have been made at different levels to address these challenges and to avoid a lost generation of students, an issue that has lasting implications for their future and for that of their country.

Since its launch in 2016, HOPES has sought to improve prospects for students of post-secondary age and to provide access to quality higher education opportunities for refugees from Syria as well as for young people in the host communities in Egypt, Iraq-The Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey.

HOPES was a multifaceted project which provided full academic scholarships at bachelor's and master's levels, university-based English-language and study skills courses, academic counselling, funding for innovative short-term education projects and national and regional stakeholder dialogues.

The support of the European Union continues in Lebanon through the €8.4 million follow-up HOPES-LEB project (Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians and vulnerable youth in Lebanon). HOPES-LEB (April 2020 - December 2023) is funded by the European Union, through the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, the 'EU Madad Fund', and implemented by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Campus France and Nuffic. It aims at improving livelihood prospects through higher education opportunities for vulnerable Lebanese youth and refugees from Syria in Lebanon thus increasing their chances for a better future.

The MY_HOPES_STORY publication aims to enhance understanding of the approach adopted by the HOPES project by illustrating some of the outcomes, achievements and lessons learned since May 2016. MY_HOPES_STORY also highlights some of the success stories of the project, encompassing the testimonials of participating students, partners and other key stakeholders who have been kind enough to share their impressions.

«MY_HOPES_STORY is the story of hope.»
As Louay, one of the many HOPES scholarship holders, observed, 'HOPES really gives hope...'.

¹ Source: <https://www.unhcr.org/syria-emergency.html>

Contents

Interview with Dr. Carsten Walbiner, HOPES Director: Looking back on four years of HOPES	1
HOPES at a glance	3
Chapter 1: HOPES Scholarship Fund and academic counselling	4
The HOPES Scholarship Fund	5
Profiling the HOPES scholarship holders	10
Country profiles	11
Academic counselling	17
Chapter 2: Higher Education English Access Programme (HEEAP)	18
Profiling the HEEAP students and teachers	22
Country profiles	23
Chapter 3: Call for proposals	28
Overview of the funding for innovative short-term education projects	29
Along the path towards the future: innovative projects funded by HOPES	30
► Improving access to higher education	31
► Integration of refugee students and vulnerable youth into higher education	46
► Beyond higher education	58
Chapter 4: Information, networking and stakeholder dialogues	66
Creation of the HOPES identity and community	67
National stakeholder dialogues and regional conferences	69
The HOPES community – an enduring legacy	70

INTERVIEW WITH DR. CARSTEN WALBINER, HOPES DIRECTOR: LOOKING BACK ON FOUR YEARS OF HOPES

Why was HOPES developed?

HOPES was one of the first responses of the EU to the Syrian crisis in the sphere of higher education. Focusing on improving access to further and higher education opportunities for refugees from Syria and for young people in the host communities in the region, HOPES was developed in line with the main objective of the 'EU Madad Fund', to foster the self-reliance of refugees, helping them to thrive, not just survive, and to assist the countries and communities hosting them.

How was the HOPES project consortium formed?

The partners in the consortium have a shared commitment to international cooperation in higher education and have worked together before. The formation of the HOPES project consortium built on this cooperation, reflecting the strong will of the partner organisations to join their efforts in this emergency situation.

What are the key achievements of HOPES?

HOPES awarded over 1000 full academic scholarships at bachelor's and master's level. 26,333 students received academic counselling and 8,514 benefited from English and study skills courses. HOPES also provided funding for a wide range of innovative, short-term, local initiatives and supported networking and knowledge-exchange at national and regional levels.

The innovative, short-term education projects funded under the grant scheme of HOPES involved a great variety of local and regional bodies—higher education institutions, governmental organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This ensured that there was a strong sense of ownership of the projects at the local level, harnessing the readiness to help which is strongly in evidence in the host communities despite the challenges presented by the influx of refugees. By enabling this responsiveness by host communities to the varied needs of refugees and local young people, these 'bottom-up' initiatives created timely solutions to problems arising at the micro-level and had an impact on the ground which is often unattainable through large projects.

Through national stakeholder dialogues and regional policy conferences, HOPES brought relevant stakeholders together to focus on topical issues and to find common solutions to shared challenges. The two regional conferences held in Beirut, Lebanon and Amman, Jordan brought together key players from different parts of the region and from Europe to exchange experiences across borders. Facilitating such comprehensive stakeholder engagement, which transcends the local level, was another key achievement of HOPES.

While refugees from Syria share common challenges with other students studying abroad, such as language, cultural and financial barriers, they are also displaced and traumatised, and often face hostility and discrimination. How has HOPES responded to the varied needs of refugees and of young people in the host communities, giving hope to the beneficiaries of the programme?

The HOPES Education Desks in each of the five countries provided a source of academic support for students as well as a means of referring them to other support services as required. The low dropout rate of beneficiaries of HOPES indicates our success in this endeavour.

Other interventions developed through HOPES in response to students' needs included the provision of short vocational training courses of 2–3 months' duration across disciplines. In addition, the short-term projects included, for example, the development of guidelines to support the participation in higher education of students with disabilities. HOPES also supported student-led initiatives, such as courses in statistics and research methodologies which were developed by students for students.

What 'added value' has HOPES provided for the higher education sector in the region and for the response to the Syrian crisis?

Prior to HOPES, most of the scholarships that were available across the five countries were at undergraduate level. By providing scholarships at master's level, HOPES gave opportunities to many students who had completed their undergraduate degree but who could not find a job, enabling them to advance their studies and improve their employability. HOPES also significantly enhanced the provision of English-language training courses, delivered locally by selected teachers who received training and support. As a well-established presence in the region without a political agenda, the HOPES initiative was also able to forge relationships and build trust between key players in the sphere of higher education and beyond through the networking activities organised as part of the project.

Even within stable, developed, high-income countries, the higher education sector is often challenged to make the case for state investment, with healthcare, housing, and other pressing priorities taking precedence. Within the context of the enduring humanitarian crisis caused by the conflict in Syria, some people might likewise view investment in further and higher education in the region as a luxury. Given the challenges entailed in upholding Syrians' basic human rights, how would you justify the funding of HOPES?

This has become a protracted crisis and so education has necessarily become a part of refugee life. Accordingly, there is a need for a sustainable, long-term solution to educational provision. Highly educated people are better able to integrate into host societies. However, with youth unemployment at 33%–35% in the region, ensuring that higher education opportunities translate into job opportunities is a challenge, which HOPES has helped to address.

What lessons can be learnt from your experience of the project?

HOPES demonstrated the importance of capacity building for improving refugees' situations as well as the imperative to provide local ownership of the initiatives undertaken in order to harness the goodwill and the innovative thinking that abounds in host countries. Recognising that local young people are often not any better off than refugees of post-secondary age, HOPES also demonstrated the necessity to attend to the needs of host communities as well as of refugees themselves.

HOPES AT A GLANCE

The HOPES project was designed to mitigate the impact of the Syrian crisis and to improve the situation of refugees from Syria and of youth in the host communities in Egypt, Northern Iraq-KRI, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey by directly addressing their educational needs through the following core activities:

Academic Counselling

Education Desks located in the five target countries and communication tools offered academic counselling and information about access to tertiary education opportunities;

Scholarship Fund

HOPES provided several hundred full academic scholarships to students at bachelor's and master's levels, as well as for vocational training and diplomas, with a particular focus on those who had to interrupt their studies in Syria due to the conflict;

Higher Education English Access Programme

HOPES provided university-based English-language and study skills courses for refugees and young people in the host communities;

Call for Proposals

HOPES provided funding for innovative, short-term education projects which have been implemented by local and regional educational institutions;

Stakeholder dialogue

HOPES organised national stakeholder dialogue events and regional policy conferences.

As at the end of the project, the key outputs of HOPES included:

1,026 FULL SCHOLARSHIPS

26,333 STUDENTS COUNSELLLED

8,514 HEEAP COURSES

431 IELTS PREPARATION COURSES

19 UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

283 ENGLISH TEACHERS TRAINED

32 PROJECTS FUNDED

36,683 YOUNG PEOPLE REACHED

2 REGIONAL CONFERENCES

20 NATIONAL STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES

799 PARTICIPANTS

204 STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

communicated to students in the region through the 'Higher Education Study Programmes' online catalogue.

Promotional campaigns and communication tools
205,303 PERSONS REACHED

298,626
page views

789,320
reach

365,351
impressions

24,163
views



1

HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FUND AND ACADEMIC COUNSELLING

1.1 THE HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The high tuition fees and living expenses that Syrian students face in host countries can prohibit access to higher education. Many refugees from Syria cannot afford these costs and have limited time to study because they are obliged to seek employment to support their families. Since the vast majority of the target group of refugees and vulnerable youth in the host communities do not have sufficient financial resources at their disposal to cover fees, scholarships were provided through the HOPES Scholarship Fund to enable them to undertake further studies. The HOPES scholarships covered the cost of students' registration, tuition and examination fees and provided a monthly living allowance to contribute to basic expenses incurred, such as food, housing, local travel during the semester and the purchase of books.



Mohannad Ahmad Essa

25-YEAR-OLD SYRIAN LIVING IN JORDAN. AWARDED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A MASTER'S IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AT AL AL-BAYT UNIVERSITY, JORDAN.

'Before receiving the HOPES scholarship, I used to work in jobs with very low income and struggled to meet my basic needs and pay academic fees. The HOPES programme helped me achieve my dream to pursue my master's studies in Business Administration at Al Al-Bayt University, a dream that was unreachable.'



Amal Youssef Al Numerat

27-YEAR-OLD JORDANIAN. AWARDED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A MASTER'S IN PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING AT YARMOUK UNIVERSITY, JORDAN.

'Completing higher studies was my dream since secondary school, but I could not study because of the financial situation. I was almost depressed and hopeless, and honestly I used to cry at night for not being able to achieve my dream, until you came and gave me back hope. I thank you so much for helping me achieve part of my dreams.'



Amer El Absi

26-YEAR-OLD SYRIAN LIVING IN LEBANON. AWARDED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A MASTER'S IN ARABIC LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE AT THE LEBANESE UNIVERSITY, LEBANON.

'I have known all the difficulties every Syrian young man would face, especially financial issues with high rental fees and too little job opportunities. Also, we have no resources to support us in pursuing our studies. I will never find the right words to describe how HOPES supported me and helped me to continue my academic career.'



Jinane Ayoubi

34-YEAR-OLD LEBANESE. AWARDED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A BACHELOR'S IN ARABIC LITERATURE AT THE LEBANESE UNIVERSITY, LEBANON.

'I was faced with many difficulties as a married woman with children who must be her priority. The HOPES project stood by my side, supported me and always encouraged me. Also, with its financial help, I had time to follow my studies and I was ranked first during the three past years. The HOPES program really deserves appreciation and recognition as an academic and humanitarian program of excellence. I would personally like to express my love and appreciation towards you.'



Elias Gerges

21-YEAR-OLD LEBANESE. AWARDED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A BACHELOR'S IN STATISTICS, APPLIED MATHEMATICS AT THE LEBANESE UNIVERSITY, LEBANON.

'The absence of my father has been the biggest difficulty. The fact that my mother had to work to provide for my brother and I, had pushed me to strive and work hard to make my mother proud and feel that her work and fatigue did not go to waste. The HOPES scholarship has helped me by removing such a burden weighing on me and by ensuring my needs without having to neglect my academic duties.'

1.2 PROVIDING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The HOPES scholarships provided access to courses at institutions which have rigorous quality-assurance mechanisms in place, offering studies at a range of levels from short vocational training up to master's level.

HOPES cooperated closely with the main providers of scholarships who were already active in the region, most notably the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), which runs the DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) in partnership with the German Government,² to ensure the complementary of initiatives. In Turkey, HOPES cooperated with the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), a governmental institution that assumes a central role regarding all scholarship provision for refugees from Syria.

In Turkey and Northern Iraq-KRI, the majority of the HOPES scholarships were allocated to undergraduate studies due to the enormous demand for places at this level of study in these two countries. In Lebanon, scholarships were provided for study at both bachelor's and master's level at the Lebanese University, with the bachelor's scholarships catering for students in the host community and the master's scholarships primarily for refugees from Syria.

During the HOPES project, scholarships were also provided to enable participation in short vocational training courses and diploma-level study at specialised institutions in KRI and Egypt in response to the specific needs of the Syrian community in these countries. In Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey access to technical and vocational education was provided on a large scale by other institutions and partners, such as the Dutch NGO SPARK.³

Scholarships were also made available in Jordan and Lebanon to both bachelor's and master's students who needed to undertake one or two more years of study in order to obtain their qualification. This was in recognition of the fact that a high number of Syrians and vulnerable students in the host communities who were self-financing did not have the financial means to complete their studies without additional support.

The development and maintenance of strong relations with key stakeholders (including other international scholarship-providers active in the region and, at the national level, ministries of education and higher education institutions) was central to the success of the HOPES Scholarship Fund. It was due to the success of this partnership-working that the HOPES Scholarship Fund was complementary to other offerings, enhancing the number of available scholarships and providing support when necessary.



Reflections on the HOPES programme by Ms. Maren Kroeger, Tertiary Education Officer, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Copenhagen

'The higher education scholarships that HOPES provides are crucial tools for refugees of post-secondary age from Syria to have access to higher education. With UNHCR DAFI scholarships supporting undergraduate degrees and HOPES scholarships enabling students to pursue a master's degree, UNHCR staff at the national level point to the benefits of the higher education continuum being covered. As the programmes complement each other, the productive working relationship the two providers have established is crucial.'

The close cooperation benefits those whom it concerns in a variety of ways. In Jordan, the HOPES programme aligned its policies to that of the DAFI programme, which helped people of concern to navigate the scholarships system more easily and transfer from one programme to the other. In Lebanon, KRI, Egypt and Jordan, HOPES and UNHCR staff support the dissemination of each other's calls for applications and engage in the selection of new scholars as members of the selection committee. In Egypt, the UNHCR facilitated meetings and community gatherings that enabled HOPES staff to further disseminate information about the programme.

HOPES and the UNHCR are important partners in advocacy and partnership too. For instance, in Egypt, programme staff collaborated on events and stakeholder dialogues, while in Turkey the two programmes regularly updated each other in Higher Education Working Group meetings. In Lebanon, the UNHCR benefitted from HOPES' good relationship with the Lebanese University to establish closer working relationships as well, efforts that advance higher education for refugees overall.

The successful working relationship is not limited to country level. The UNHCR and the HOPES programme have collaborated on several global advocacy events, bringing the complementary expertise of each organisation together: the UNHCR its refugee protection mandate and the HOPES programme its strong partnership with academic institutions and the capacity building networks. The small-scale project-funding that HOPES made available to academic institutions and NGOs was a very necessary support to test innovative approaches and offer better preparatory programmes for higher education.

The HOPES programme illustrated, through setting a successful example, the significance and positive impact of enabling refugee youth to continue in higher education beyond an undergraduate degree. Looking ahead, refugee youth worldwide would benefit from an extension of the programme to other nationalities to allow them become change-makers abroad and at home.'

² See <https://www.unhcr.org/en-ie/dafi-scholarships.html>

³ See <https://spark-syria.eu/home/>

1.3 THE HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FUND PROCESS



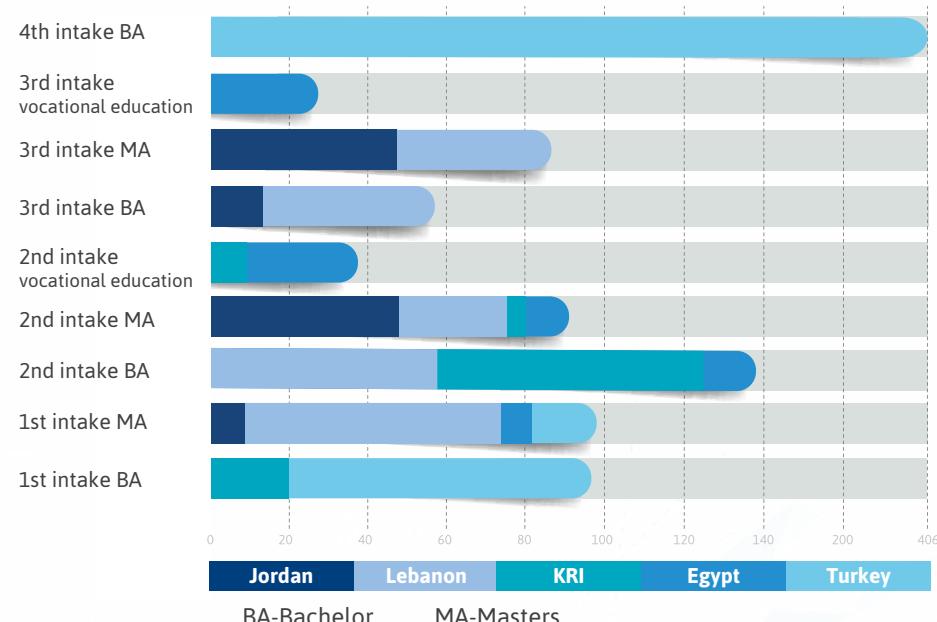
All applicants for a HOPES scholarship were required to complete a three-stage application process, consisting first of a paper-based pre-selection and eligibility check. In the second stage, applications were assessed in relation to academic merit and the applicants' motivations. During this stage, the applicants' personal background and vulnerability were evaluated along with their achievements. Finally, candidates were invited for interviews before a specialised selection committee consisting of university professors, representatives of the HOPES project and international stakeholders and partners, such as the UNHCR. The cooperation with the UNHCR in particular ensured that due consideration was given to vulnerability during the selection of students.

1,026 FULL SCHOLARSHIPS

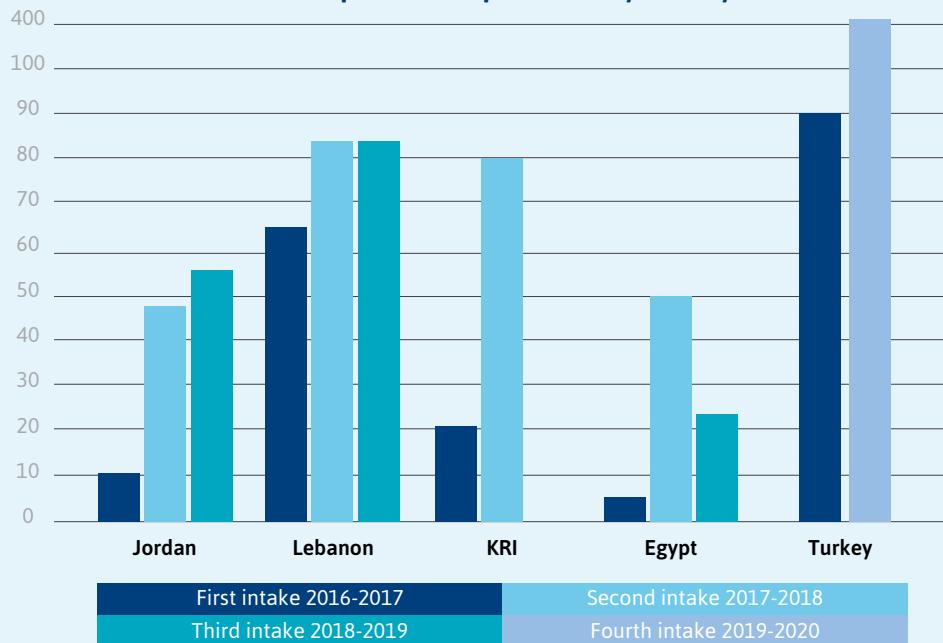
Since the commencement of the project in 2016, 1026 scholarships were awarded in four intakes, tripling the HOPES consortium's initial target of awarding 319 scholarships throughout the project's life-span.

In Turkey, an additional intake for the academic year 2019/2020 was made possible due to exchange rate fluctuations that occurred throughout the project. Together with the partner YTB it was decided to fund an additional 406 Syrian BA students for one academic year. These students were completing their last year of BA education, having previously been funded by YTB's own scholarship programme.

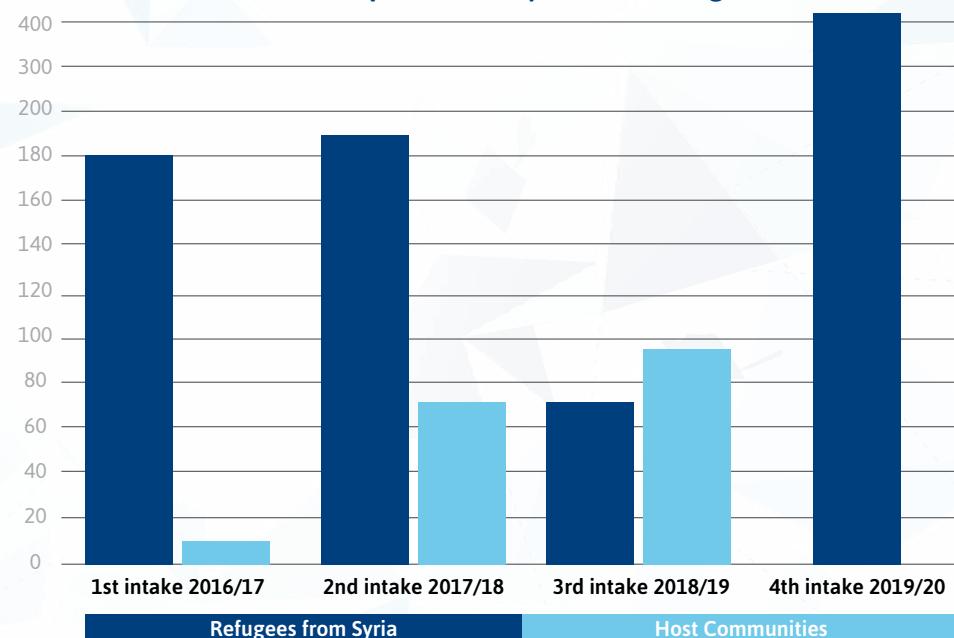
HOPES scholarships awarded by intake, level of study and country of residence



HOPES scholarships awarded per intake by country of residence



HOPES scholarships awarded by intake and origin of students



1.4 HOPES EDUCATION DESKS AND SUPPORT PROVIDED

The students were guided and accompanied by the HOPES counsellors throughout their entire academic journey.

When students successfully underwent the scholarship selection process, the counsellors supported them with enrolling in the higher education institutions. Throughout their studies, students were continuously monitored by the HOPES' counsellors, who also acted as a contact point for any personal or academic issues that they faced. An external evaluation of the HOPES project highlighted the low dropout rates of the HOPES students. This bears testimony to the rigorous process through which they were selected, to the close monitoring of scholarship holders' academic progress through the HOPES Education Desks; to HOPES' responsiveness to students' emerging academic needs and to the adequacy of the stipends awarded. Students were required to provide regular progress reports, grade transcripts and recommendation letters by the institutions at which they were studying. The low drop-out rate also bears testimony to the strength of student-engagement in the HOPES project. They were also proactive in participating in HOPES' activities as well as in drawing on their own expertise to help one another.

Another key characteristic of HOPES is that it enabled the students to enrol in extra-curricular courses aimed at strengthening their academic profile. Some of these were designed by students for students. For example, in Lebanon, a group of advanced HOPES students presented HOPES with a proposal to support a 24-hour workshop on research design, taught by a professor from the Lebanese University, to help Syrian and host-community students who lacked the academic expertise required for postgraduate study and research. Through this student-led initiative, HOPES students helped to ensure that their peers were equipped to write their theses.

1.5 VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY WORK

The HOPES scholarship holders were encouraged to contribute to their community by undertaking 120 hours of volunteering with organisations, providing them with valuable personal and professional experience. The participating students reported that this helped them to better understand the context in which they live and widened their perspectives, enabling them to contribute to society and helped them to enhance their employability.

HOPES scholarship holders volunteered in a wide range of settings, undertaking a range of tasks including:

- ▶ Providing support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for blood tests for people in need (undertaken by students of medicine);
- ▶ Tutoring, including giving English and computer lessons at public schools and helping high-school students in camps to apply for scholarships;
- ▶ Organising training and recreational activities, workshops and events, for example for orphans during Ramadan;
- ▶ Distributing parcels of food and clothes to people in need, including the elderly;
- ▶ Setting up mental health awareness and breast cancer awareness booths in universities;
- ▶ Helping with the running of the 'Back to School' campaign;
- ▶ Recycling and street cleaning.



Basel Abdulbari Abbara

28-YEAR-OLD SYRIAN LIVING IN LEBANON. AWARDED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A MASTER'S IN ARABIC LANGUAGE AT THE LEBANESE UNIVERSITY, LEBANON.

'HOPES helped me a lot by paying my annual tuition fees, securing the necessary financial support, and through the wonderful treatment from the HOPES administration. The beautiful treatment gave me the motivation to continue and succeed. If it were not for the HOPES project, I certainly would not have been able to complete the master's degree.'

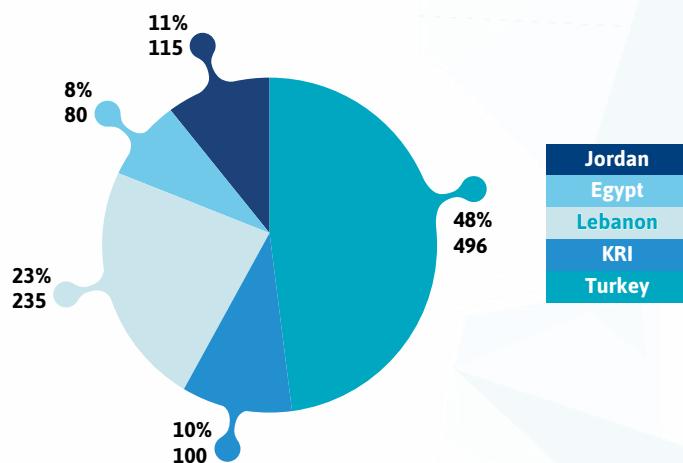
1.6 FROM THE STUDENT-PERSPECTIVE

In order to obtain a more detailed picture of the challenges faced by students in the region, the HOPES consortium collaborated with three other institutions and projects that receive funding from the EU ‘Madad Fund’ (the Dutch NGO SPARK, the German Jordanian University and the British Council’s Language and Academic Skills and E-Learning Resources (LASER) programme)² to conduct two so-called ‘perception surveys’ of their student-beneficiaries in 2017 and 2018. The main aim of these surveys was to obtain insight into students’ satisfaction with their study and scholarship programmes as well as to identify the major factors that contribute to poor academic performance and dropouts. The survey was conducted amongst EU ‘Madad Fund’ scholarship holders in all five countries in which HOPES is active. Key findings suggest that:

- ▶ EU ‘Madad Fund’ scholarship holders have a high level of satisfaction with their communication with their scholarship providers and with the support that they provide as well as with how the scholarship is transferred to them;
- ▶ Scholarship holders require resources for studying (e.g. books, laptops, Internet) and training in specific software packages;
- ▶ Scholarship holders have an interest in learning English for their studies and to enhance their job opportunities, which resulted in HOPES organising an IELTS course for scholarship holders;
- ▶ While the majority of scholarship holders did not consider dropping out, those who did, mainly did so for financial reasons;
- ▶ Financial strain causes students to look for jobs or to work while studying, which adversely affects their overall morale and attendance on their course;
- ▶ Scholarship holders have a high level of satisfaction with their chosen study field.

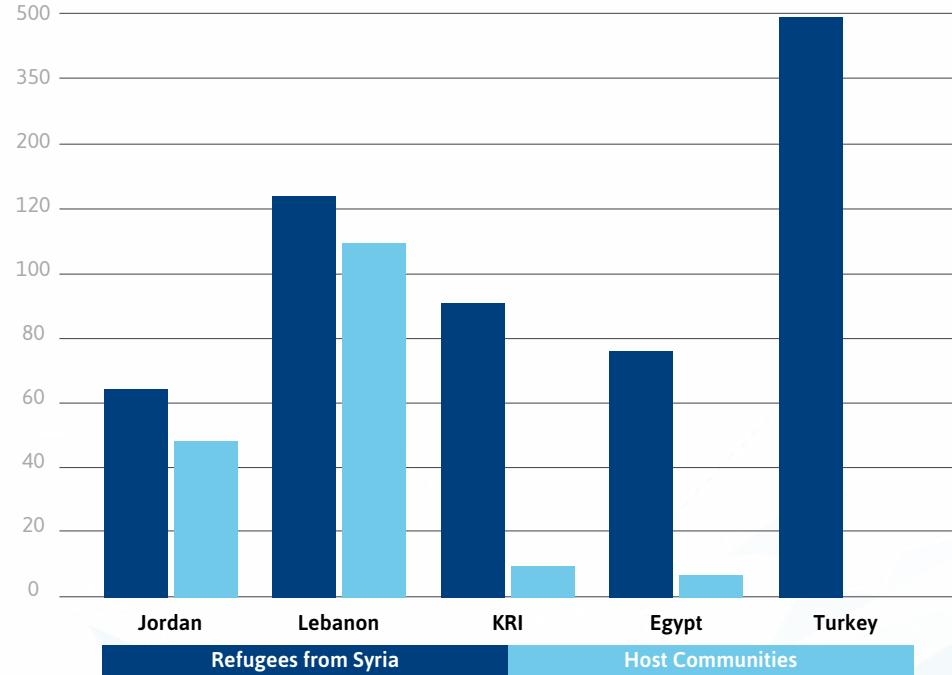
1.7 PROFILE OF THE HOPES SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS

HOPES scholarship holders by country of residence

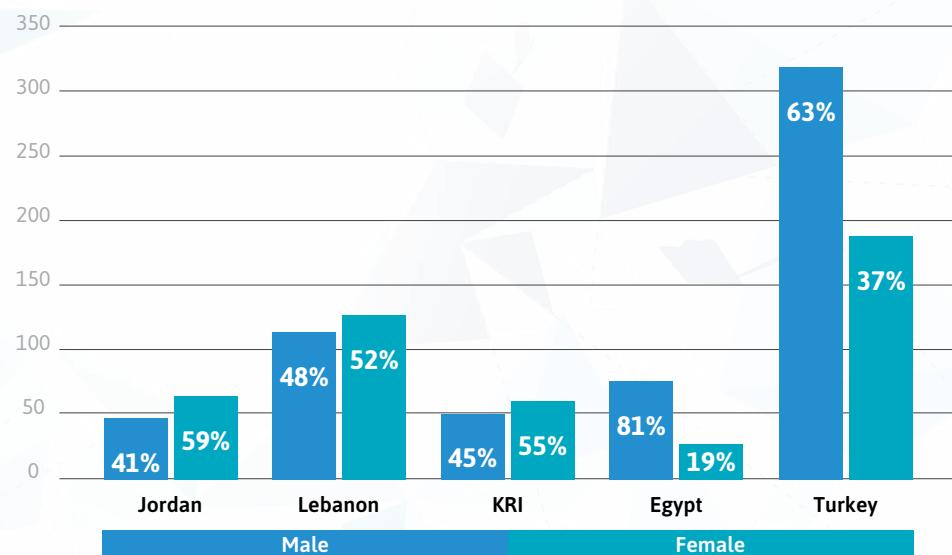


² See <https://spark-syria.eu/home/>, <https://edu-syria.eu/>, and <https://syria.britishcouncil.org/en/laser>.

Breakdown of HOPES scholarships by origin of the students and country of residence



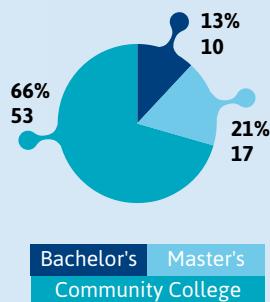
Gender-breakdown of HOPES scholarship holders by country of residence



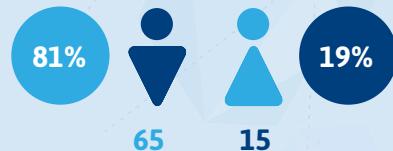
Country Profiles

Egypt

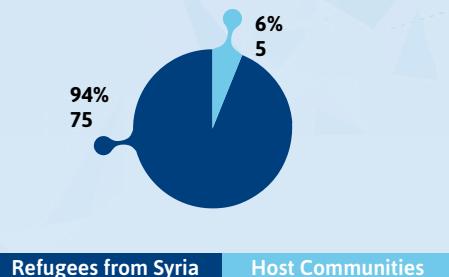
HOPES scholarship holders by level of study



HOPES scholarship holders by gender



Breakdown of HOPES scholarships by origin of the students



HOPES partner higher education institutions

- ▶ Ain Shams University
- ▶ Alexandria University
- ▶ Cairo University
- ▶ Don Bosco Institute
- ▶ Helwan University
- ▶ Mansoura University

Maha Jwid Moujbel

34-YEAR-OLD SYRIAN LIVING IN EGYPT. SHE RECEIVED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A MASTER'S IN ACCOUNTING AT AL-MANSOURA UNIVERSITY.



'I came to Egypt with three children and my parents. For the first time in my life, I felt so weak, especially because I was in a foreign country. Here, I had bigger responsibilities and more concerns. I sat on my own for long hours to gain back my strength and to think about a solution to the distress, especially since I was the only provider for my family. I gave English lessons to Syrian students inside my home and succeeded in attracting a large number of students who needed lessons because of their deteriorating educational level due to the conditions of war. I heard about the HOPES scholarship, and immediately applied for it because I was dreaming of pursuing my higher studies. This is the most beautiful success story in my life.'

HOPES was a reward for my strain. It made me forget the bitterness of the years and cruelty of the days, by helping me achieve dreams that I long-wanted to make a reality—that is to pursue higher studies in my field of specialisation.'

Diaalrahman Abdulhamed Aldakhllallah

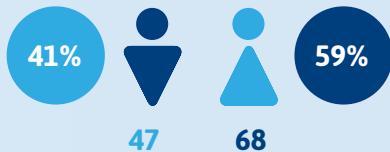
34-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN EGYPT. WITH THE SUPPORT OF A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP, HE IS STUDYING FOR A MASTER'S IN ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY AND TRAUMATOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALEXANDRIA.



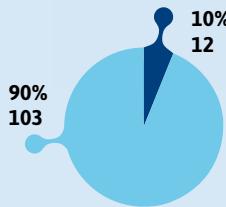
'I had my Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery from Libya, then I worked for two years in the orthopaedic field in Althawra University Hospital in Albeida, Libya. At the same time, I worked with a war-related organisation in Gernada, Libya. Then I moved with my wife and three children to Egypt. I worked in the beginning in a private clinic as I did not have an official job in Egypt. With the very long time-shifts of 12 hours and the low salary, it was difficult to work and study at the same time. It is very difficult to raise my children with school requirements and the monthly allowance, which is only sufficient for one person. Despite all of this, I finished my four semesters with no single delay and I used the summers to train myself in the hospital to enhance my experience and to collect data for my research from the patients. HOPES provided me with tuition fees for the university that I could never have paid myself. In addition, the monthly allowance provided some support for me and my family. Once I have my Master's degree, I hope that I can continue at the doctorate level in Egypt or elsewhere.'

Jordan

HOPES scholarship holders by gender



HOPES scholarship holders by level of study



Bachelor's Master's

Breakdown of HOPES scholarships by origin of the students



Refugees from Syria Host Communities

HOPES partner higher education institutions

- ▶ Amman Al Ahliyya University
- ▶ German Jordanian University
- ▶ Al Al Bayt University
- ▶ Al Zaytoonah University
- ▶ Balqa Applied University
- ▶ Hashemite University
- ▶ Irbid National University
- ▶ Isra University
- ▶ Jerash University
- ▶ Jordan University of Science and Technology
- ▶ Mutah University
- ▶ Petra University
- ▶ Philadelphia University
- ▶ Princess Sumaya University for Technology
- ▶ University of Jordan
- ▶ Yarmouk University
- ▶ Zarqa University

Hala Mohammed Redaideh

32-YEAR-OLD FROM JORDAN. SHE WAS AWARDED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A MASTER'S IN EUROPEAN HISTORY AT YARMOUK UNIVERSITY.



'I live with my family consisting of four brothers, one of them married, a married elder sister and my mother. After the death of my father, my mother, who was young at the time, became responsible for six members of the family, all of whom were in school. I am the youngest. My mother could not enrol me in the school I dreamed of, but my brothers and I completed our secondary education in public schools and were able to pursue our bachelor's studies. My family has been one of my greatest supports in life. Receiving the HOPES scholarship was my greatest achievement. I am very proud to be a student-representative of a European Union scholarship grant. In addition to providing the financial support I needed during my studies, HOPES gave me strength and psychological support, believing in me and my abilities. HOPES did not only represent hope for many students but the spirit and the life-force that supported every young and ambitious student aspiring to excel and serve their countries.'

Nayef Ali Ali Al Sayed

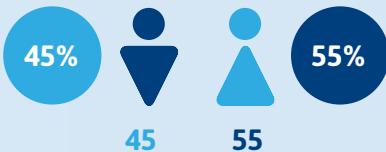
23-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN JORDAN. HE RECEIVED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP TO STUDY FOR A BACHELOR'S IN PHARMACY AT AL-ISRA UNIVERSITY.



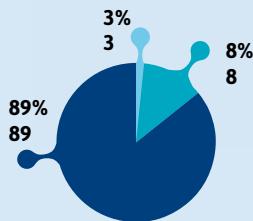
'I was born and lived in a big family until I was 18 years old. I have not seen my family for 6 years now because of the war and crisis in my country and because of the harsh circumstances but technology has made the world feel like a town, and I am always in touch with them. It saddens me, but I learned a lot from living abroad, I faced many difficulties and I became more experienced and stronger. I started the pharmacy programme in Yemen, where the war also broke out. I decided to move to Jordan to continue my studies, and was faced with many difficulties, because Yemen and Jordan were very different, in terms of curricula, teaching methods, lectures and students. This programme helped me pursue my studies in the hardest period of my life. I used to feel that everyone around me saw me as a loser, and thought that I will not succeed in my studies. However, I challenged myself and everyone, and didn't fail, but succeeded and proved to myself and others that I am a successful man, and that there's no room for failure in my life.'

Northern Iraq - KRI

HOPES scholarship holders by gender

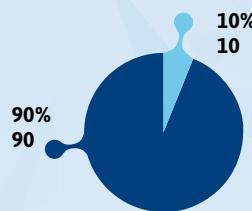


HOPES scholarship holders by level of study



Bachelor's Master's
Community College

Breakdown of HOPES scholarships by origin of the students



Refugees from Syria Host Communities

HOPES partner higher education institutions

- ▶ Bayan University
- ▶ Duhok Polytechnic University
- ▶ Erbil Polytechnic University
- ▶ Hawler Medical University
- ▶ Irbil Technical Institute
- ▶ Salahaddin University, Erbil
- ▶ University of Zakho
- ▶ Human Development University in Suleimaniya

Gofand Moussa Othman Khalaf

23-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN ERBIL. SHE RECEIVED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A MASTER'S IN PUBLIC LAW AT SALAHEDDIN UNIVERSITY.



'I come from a family of 13 members and in such a large family, we couldn't have everything we wanted. Perhaps, it was the reason that pushed me into education and the will to obtain a high-level certificate and have a good life. We had to seek refuge in the KRI just like other Syrians.'

I did not stop dreaming. My dreams had no boundaries. I always imagined myself pursuing my master's and doctoral studies after graduation, but I used to remind myself that the circumstances didn't allow me to at the time, and that I would wait several years in order to save for my study expenses. I am currently working on my thesis under the title of "The Legal Status of the Political Refugee", a study on the framework of international agreements. I have chosen such a dissertation topic to show the status of refugees, their rights, obligations and legal status. I would like to thank the HOPES scholarship that made me and my parents cry with joy, that helped me realise what I used to imagine, that turned my dreams into reality. My willpower and strength are not about succeeding but excelling, not only for myself, but for all the Syrian girls that I represent and that I want to encourage, who will see that nothing is impossible and that it is possible to overcome challenges.'

Ibrahim Ahmad Cheikh Buzan

27-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN THE KRI. HE RECEIVED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A BACCALAUREUS IN AGRICULTURE AT SALAHEDDIN UNIVERSITY.



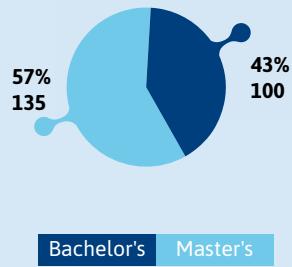
'It was difficult to resume my studies after I had left Aleppo University for four years and worked in the construction field. However, I had the will and determination to complete my studies and accepted the challenge again. The HOPES project helped me complete my bachelor and covered my expenses during two years. I was first in my class although I faced difficulties in the English and Kurdish languages, and I was able to be the first within the Department for three consecutive years. I hope to develop the agriculture sector in my country and aspire to complete my master's studies.'

Lebanon

HOPES scholarship holders by gender



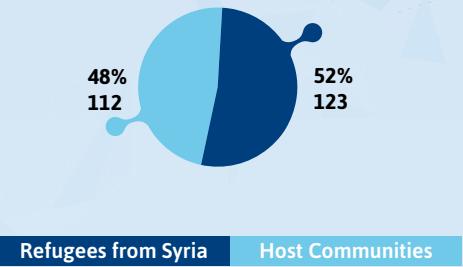
HOPES scholarship holders by level of study



HOPES partner higher education institutions

- The Lebanese University

Breakdown of HOPES scholarships by origin of the students



Reflections on the HOPES programme – by Prof. Zeinab SAAD, General Coordinator, International Relations Office, and Ms. Carole Bou Assi, Administrative and Legal Assistant, International Relations Office, the Lebanese University, Beirut

'The Lebanese University (LU), is the only public University in Lebanon and it encompasses the greatest number of Syrian refugee students pursuing their studies in higher education. The HOPES programme has helped the Syrian students to continue their studies at the Lebanese University without financial worries.

The collaboration with the HOPES programme and different institutions that are partners in this project has allowed the exchange of culture and knowledge regarding the refugee crisis and subsequently has sprinkled peace and tolerance between all the participants in this programme.

The LU experience in the HOPES programme has developed the openness of the University to the laws and regulations of other countries regarding the refugee crisis in the Middle-East region.

Moreover, the LU has benefitted from implementing this programme by learning to outline the main issues related to the problem of refugees in the field of higher education, which could be applied in future HOPES projects or similar projects aiming to help student refugees to pursue their studies in higher education by providing them with the necessary funding and facilities, without them worrying about the need to have paid work to cover the necessary fees.

In addition, the benefit of implementing this project at the LU is reflected in the successful integration of the Syrian students into the LU academic programmes and social community.

Furthermore, the added value of HOPES in the context of helping the higher education sector to face the refugee and Syrian crisis was noticed in the cooperation established with the Lebanese University, in particular with the academic and administrative staff, working together as one team sharing the same vision and objective in helping student refugees and Lebanese students in need. We have to mention here the active and fruitful role of the HOPES team, which is always ready to give the advice needed and to support the success of the project. Helpful, dynamic and cooperative, these qualities encourage the Lebanese University to develop its cooperation with the HOPES team.'



HOPES EMPOWERS



Marwan Al Omari

24-YEAR-OLD PALESTINIAN REFUGEE FROM SYRIA WHO HAS LIVED IN LEBANON SINCE 2013. HE RECEIVED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A MASTER'S IN ENGLISH LITERATURE AT THE LEBANESE UNIVERSITY.

'I believe it is the generous opportunities that were given by the European Union that support those like me to study and live an honourable life. The HOPES project is very supportive and fills the self with great motivation. Whenever I meet the HOPES team, I feel motivated to overcome such difficulties and challenges I face in my daily life. Fortunately, I have achieved a lot in two years. I have contributed to computational linguistics and natural language processing research with 5 research papers that are published in international journals. I have also volunteered in two organisations to help refugees in need of sharing food and acquiring knowledge in the English language. From my participation, I have learned that, even though I am a refugee, I can still help others, and I will continue to do so in my surrounding community. Nothing could stop a soul with hope, showing that people in poverty like me can also have a voice and a role in society the same as anyone else in the community.'



Lea Mounir Abou Naoum

20-YEAR-OLD FROM LEBANON WHO IS STUDYING FOR A BACHELOR'S IN MEDICINE AT THE LEBANESE UNIVERSITY WITH THE SUPPORT OF A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP.

'I completed my primary and complementary education in a boarding school after my father's death, and finished my secondary education with distinction in the official exams. With my mother's and brothers' and sisters' motivation, I saved money to cover the university expenses of my first year.

Receiving the letter of acceptance of my application to the HOPES scholarship was proof that if I wanted to achieve my goals in life, everything will help me achieve it along the way.

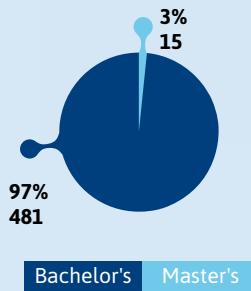
This scholarship has motivated me to do my best and work harder to get into the Faculty of Medicine. Today, I am ready to start my fourth year at the Faculty of Medicine, and I am proud to say that the HOPES programme has accompanied me during two years, helped me achieving autonomy and independence, and given me a chance to do the best I can and to build a better tomorrow. The HOPES programme has alleviated the psychological pressure that I was living under to cover the university expenses and get rid of heavy burdens. It has shown me that material poverty is not an obstacle to achieving my dreams as long as I choose the medical field as a mission and not a profession.'

Turkey

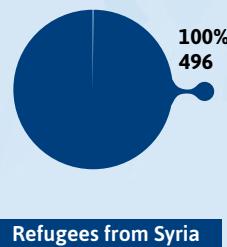
HOPES scholarship holders by gender



HOPES scholarship holders by level of study



Breakdown of HOPES scholarships by origin of the students



HOPES partner higher education institutions

- ▶ Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB)

Reflections on the HOPES programme, by YTB

The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) works to establish stronger economic, social and cultural relations with Turkish citizens living abroad and with the sister communities. In addition to the duties taken towards the diaspora, YTB is also using its most important means of public diplomacy to facilitate international student mobility, known as *Türkiye Scholarships*. The programme offers a significant opportunity to youth all around the world, but especially to those coming from the disadvantaged countries in terms of accessing higher education.

In response to the Syrian crisis, Turkey has made various efforts to ensure the uninterrupted process of learning from primary, to secondary to tertiary education. Within this context, YTB has prompted 3 models in the higher education sector of Turkey, namely covering the tuition fees of all of the Syrian students who attend a university; the “*Türkiye Scholarships*” programme; and different collaborations entered into with international partners.

With regards to the HOPES project, collaborative action was taken to improve the prospects of Syrian youth and to ensure well-educated and qualified human resources, as the graduates of this successful programme are expected to assume active roles in the future.

YTB's collaboration with HOPES constituted an exemplary model and highlighted opportunities that could be introduced in refugee situations all around the world.

As part of these efforts to ensure a greater number of enrolments in higher education and to integrate Syrian youth into the national education system of Turkey, HOPES became an important project partner for YTB. As the interest among Syrian youth in higher education opportunities increased and was reflected in the record number of applications in each year for Turkey scholarships, the HOPES project became a significant facilitator for YTB in its exploration of the potential of financing additional scholarship grants. The number of Syrian students at undergraduate and graduate levels reached 27,000 as of 2019 in Turkey. These scholarships had significant impacts on the attainment of a rate of 7% for overall higher education accession among Syrian youth in Turkey, while the accession rate in tertiary education for refugees worldwide remains only at 1%.

YTB highly appreciates the efforts extended by the HOPES programme to facilitate the enrolment of Syrian youth in tertiary education. The good practices have the potential to transform the lives of youth and host countries. Cooperation between YTB and HOPES has the potential of going beyond these figures in terms of the transformation created in young individuals' lives.'

1.8 Learning from the ground

The HOPES scheme highlighted the important contribution made by the provision of scholarships to facilitating access to higher education for refugees from Syria and for youth in host communities.

It also showed that, more broadly, scholarships can improve such vulnerable students' self-confidence, life-satisfaction and future-prospects.

In addition, the HOPES Scholarship Fund enhanced the capacity of participating institutions to respond to the needs of these vulnerable students, demonstrating that the rigorous selection of candidates, their well-considered placement in higher education institutions, and the availability of assistance throughout the duration of their scholarships are key to minimising student dropout.

In terms of the student experience, there is a need for the provision of psychological support and for scholarships to be of flexible duration in order to maximise the successful progression of all students regardless of the challenges they face.

Furthermore, financial support for students is necessary to enable them to focus on their studies rather than having to undertake paid employment, and for students to have access to job or training opportunities after graduation.

The provision of funding for research would also be desirable, enabling postgraduate and postdoctoral students to reach their full potential.

1.9 Academic counselling

One of the main objectives of the HOPES project was to establish a mechanism through which academic counselling and support, and the provision of information about existing opportunities for further and higher education, could be provided to students, serving as a focal point for information-seekers. Many young refugees from Syria are not familiar with the tertiary education systems in their host countries and seek information on further training and higher education opportunities.

To respond to these needs, the academic counselling provided under HOPES covered a broad range of services, encompassing the provision of information about academic study, further training opportunities and available funding. The counselling services provided were not limited to activities funded by HOPES but also included other educational opportunities in the region, including, for example, alternative scholarships, language courses, online study, postgraduate study opportunities, technical and vocational education courses and information on admission procedures and entry requirements. They were also available for interested students in the host communities affected by the crisis.

The academic counselling services were provided through the five HOPES Education Desks established in major cities in the countries participating in the project and serving as focal points for all refugees from Syria, disadvantaged students from the host communities and HOPES students.

HOPES offered academic counselling services through the following modes of provision:

- ▶ Face-to-face meetings at the HOPES Education Desks;
- ▶ Via telephone;
- ▶ Via e-mail;
- ▶ Information sessions held at several institutions, universities and in other places that were easily accessible for refugees;
- ▶ Social media, e.g. the HOPES Facebook page;
- ▶ The HOPES website;
- ▶ An online catalogue of scholarship opportunities.⁵

By the end of the project, over **26,333** individuals received academic counselling through the HOPES Education Desks.

2,500
in Jordan

7,392
in Lebanon

5,451
in Egypt

4,756
in Northern
Iraq-KRI

6,234
in Turkey

The establishment and running of the HOPES Education Desks showed that career guidance is necessary in order to help students to choose their speciality, select a course which will maximise their future employment opportunities and apply for courses and scholarships. The need for the use of language and media which are familiar to refugees and vulnerable youth in the host communities in order to support close interaction with them was also clearly evidenced.

Notwithstanding the immense value of establishing the HOPES Education Desks in major cities, there is also unmet demand for the provision of academic counselling that is more responsive to students' various geographical locations through, for example, the hosting of information sessions on an outreach basis.

⁵ See <http://www.hopes-madad.org/online-scholarship-catalog/>

2

HIGHER EDUCATION ENGLISH ACCESS PROGRAMME (HEEAP)



2.1 Overcoming the language barrier to education

A lack of appropriate language skills can represent a barrier for refugees from Syria who are seeking to access higher education. They have often come from a fully Arabic-medium education system but find themselves in countries with education systems in which courses may be taught in English or in another foreign language. This can further reduce the already low participation-rate in higher education amongst the community of refugees from Syria.

Success in further and higher education often depends upon proficiency in English in order to pass entry tests, to gain access to scholarships, to participate in programmes taught in English and to gain access to international programmes and opportunities. A lack of English can limit access to education in general and particularly to prestigious courses taught in English.

Within this context, the Higher Education English Access Programme of the HOPES project aimed to equip current and prospective students from Syria and the host communities in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey with the English-language skills needed to enter, and be successful in, the local higher education system, in turn helping them to access employment opportunities in their host country and internationally.

The programme was designed building on the British Council's experience in the 'Language for Resilience' initiative⁶, an approach to language-support programming based on research into the language needs of refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and the KRI.⁷

'HOPES, to me, is a bridge that draws two Arab cultures closer to each other. HOPES has taught me and the students tolerance, respect and humanity. It has made us see the world through a broader lens and perceive our surroundings with great insight.'

LEILA SAAD, HEEAP TEACHER, BEIRUT ARAB UNIVERSITY, LEBANON.

'The programme was initially tailored to meet the needs of Syrians, but I personally believe that it's equally effective for Lebanese students. I highly recommend the HOPES programme, for it gives our students (Syrian and Lebanese) hope for better job opportunities requiring the use of the English language in any given context.'

DR. HIBA GHANDOUR, HEEAP TEACHER, LEBANESE UNIVERSITY, LEBANON.

'These students are great. Their dedication, cooperation, and self-realisation were great. Being in class made them stronger. Their goal was to be able to cope. A step to their future could be reached with a rope and this was granted to them by the HEEAP courses offered through HOPES.'

MU'ATHA AL-KHATIB, HEEAP TEACHER, ARAB OPEN UNIVERSITY, JORDAN.



Anmar Alwani

29-YEAR-OLD SYRIAN LIVING IN EGYPT AND PARTICIPANT IN THE HEEAP COURSES.

'The HEEAP English courses offered by the HOPES project helped me improve my English-language skills and enhance the way I deal with my everyday English on various occasions. Language can open many horizons and offer opportunities such as being able to get a high score in the IELTS exam and being able to apply for many important scholarships abroad.'

⁶ See <https://www.britishcouncil.org/language-for-resilience>.

⁷ See https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/language_for_resilience_report.pdf.

2.2 Approach

Many joining the HEEAP's comprehensive and tailor-made programme had low levels of English, so at the core of the syllabus was an internationally published textbook through which the four skills, reading, writing, listening, speaking, were developed in an activity-based, communicative way. This was supported by workshop materials designed specifically for this group, the development of which was informed by input from students, teachers and university officials on the language needs and concerns of the target group of refugees and vulnerable youth in the host communities. The workshop materials included an introduction to online study, guidance on how to write academic and scholarship applications in English and English skills for academic interviews. Authentic scholarship application forms and interview questions were used as the basis for the design of the workshop sessions. These proved popular amongst the students and teachers across the HOPES project, with requests being made for the development of additional tailored content.

Blended with this in the syllabus was the British Council's online LearnEnglish Select course, which provided around 40 hours of interactive online study to be undertaken by the student outside of the classroom in their own time.⁸ The course was designed to provide students with English-language skills for the workplace and to enhance their employability, thereby enabling them to secure a job and then perform effectively in it.

Prior to entry to the HEEAP courses, students took an online placement test in order to ensure that they were placed in a group at the most appropriate level, ranging from beginner level to advanced. The classes, which comprised not more than 25 students, provided 100 hours of face-to-face class tuition with a local teacher, selected by their institution and trained by the HOPES project. On completion of the course, students took a computer-based test that provided an accurate assessment of their level of proficiency in the four core skills.⁹ The certificate obtained can then be shown to potential employers and educational providers, a growing number of whom recognise it. The aim of the HEEAP was to help the student improve by around one level of the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) after one course of study.

'The project was like an eye opener for different aspects related to teaching approaches and techniques. Learning the language was not easy for Syrian students as some of them had difficult circumstances. Therefore I challenged myself to approach them personally to help them overcome these difficult situations. Luckily I was able to help them improve and see the difference in themselves. In this project, I put everything I have learned about education into action and was very careful to keep the class interesting. In return, my students showed their appreciation in a variety of ways.'

RANA NIDAL, HEEAP TEACHER,
JORDAN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY, JORDAN.

⁸ See <https://www.britishcouncil.in/english/courses-adults/workplace/learnenglish-select>.

⁹ See <https://www.britishcouncil.org/exam/aptis>

2.3 HEEAP partner institutions

While it was the original intention of the HOPES consortium to run the HEEAP programme with just 13 partner institutions in the region, a network of 19 partners was in fact developed, with varying sizes of student intakes based on the local context and needs, in order to better reach Syrian communities across the region. The participating institutions, mainly universities and colleges, along with one NGO, were selected on the basis of the number of Syrian students and potential students in the local community, the institutions' track-record on working in partnerships and their level of enthusiasm to support the goals of HOPES. All partners identified the need to provide the refugee community with additional English-language training support in order to help student-refugees to be successful within the local higher education system. See the lists of partner institutions in the country sections below.



Mazen Khaldoun Abou

28-YEAR-OLD SYRIAN LIVING IN EGYPT AND PARTICIPANT IN THE HEEAP COURSES.

'The HEEAP course offered by the HOPES project helped me by giving me the chance to put into practice what I have learned by encouraging and guiding me on how to make a presentation. Through role-plays and doing conversations in the class, I became more confident in speaking English, and it became easier for me to understand English speakers, and that helps me a lot with the online courses and it will give me more choices to find a better job.'

'Everyone involved in this project has developed one way or another due to the different activities related to it. Teachers, for instance, have developed professionally speaking through receiving capacity-building workshops in teaching English as a second language and also throughout their journey of teaching in this project.'

SAMAH ELSAID MUHAMMAD,
ASSISTANT LECTURER, HEEAP
PROJECT COORDINATOR,
MANSOURA UNIVERSITY, EGYPT.

'Being with these students with difficult circumstances like war, immigration and some financial issues taught me a lot as a teacher and as a human.'

SASHA MOAYAD ABZAKH , HEEAP
TEACHER, AL QUDS COLLEGE,
JORDAN.

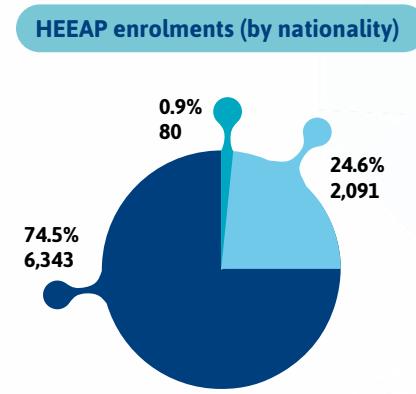
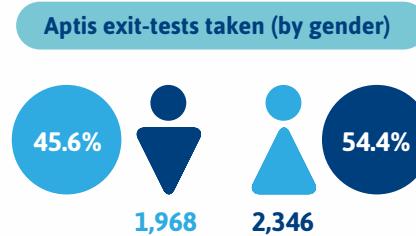
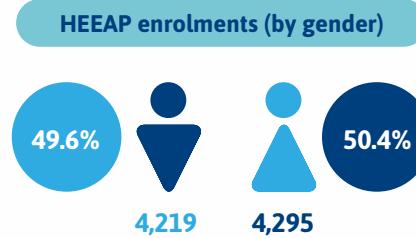
2.4 Teacher training

The provision of teacher training by HOPES to those delivering HEEAP courses in the partner institutions in the region was key to its success, serving to build the capacity of institutions and communities to accommodate refugee students. The HOPES project provided up to one week of training to teachers from the partner institutions selected by the project.

The training focused on communicative teaching methodology, activity-based learning (as utilised in the HEEAP curriculum), and sensitivity towards vulnerable students and the language needs of Syrian students, a particularly important component of the training provision in Turkey, where teachers often had no experience of teaching non-Turkish speaking students.

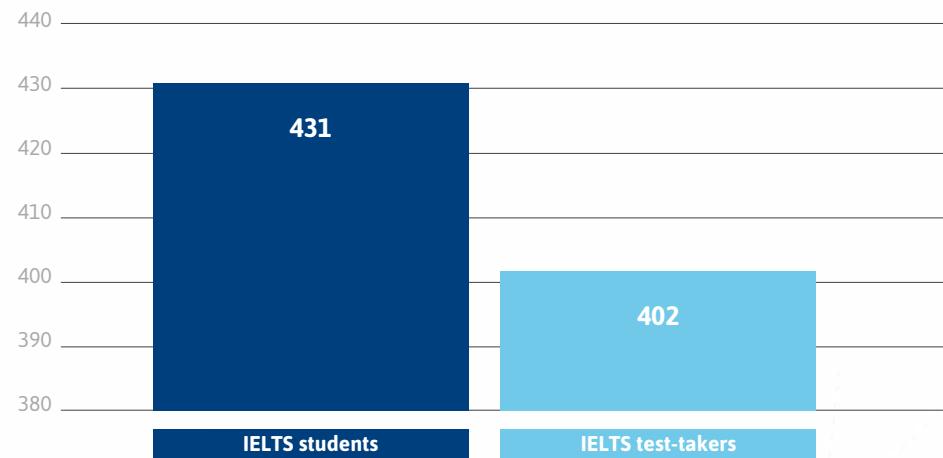
Through HOPES, a network of over 283 teachers was trained across the four countries and 19 partner institutions, a network which now forms an online community through teachers' WhatsApp and Facebook groups.

2.5 PROFILE OF THE HEEAP STUDENTS



Refugees from Syria
Host Communities
Other Countries

IELTS students and test-takers



The chart below illustrates the positive evaluation by students of the HEEAP courses

Students' satisfaction with HEEAP courses

The online course was useful to me.



Overall, the course was a positive learning experience for me.



The course has helped me with English needed for my university studies.



The course will help me in the future.



I liked the mix between the online and face-to-face sessions during the course.



My English language skills have improved as a result of this course.



Country Profiles

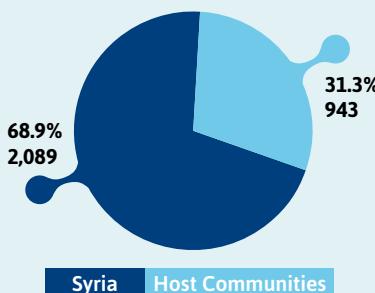
Jordan

HEEAP enrolments (by gender)



60 English Teachers Trained

HEEAP enrolments from Syria and host communities



HEEAP partner institutions

- ▶ Al Quds College (Luminus Technical University College)
- ▶ Al Zaytoonah University
- ▶ Arab Open University
- ▶ Jordan University of Science and Technology

Omar Khodr Awad Al Ali

24-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN JORDAN SINCE 2011. HE STUDIED FOR A BACCALAUREUS IN ACCOUNTING FROM JERASH UNIVERSITY AND PARTICIPATED IN THE HEEAP COURSES.



'After the security situation worsened due to the war, I travelled with my family to Yemen.'

I stayed in Yemen until the Yemeni war broke out and moved to Jordan, to a new environment and new traditions. After I was admitted to university, I started practising sports because I was passionate about it and became a sports trainer. However, I found it really hard to access the sports-related educational content, because there was no Arabic content online. This is when I decided to learn English and develop my language skills. Thanks to the interactive teaching methods, the HEEAP course helped me to develop my skills of transmitting information to others, and to increase my self-confidence when speaking in English. Through these courses, I was able to read what I wanted in sports training books, to access international content and to communicate with non-Arabic speakers. I plan to become an accredited sports trainer in international centres and to complete my higher studies to become a university doctor.'

'The name of the project, «HOPES», really tells what this project gave us all as teachers and students. HOPES has paved the way for its students to build the last bridge that leads them to achieve their academic goals, which is something they would never have been able to fulfil without HEEAP. On the other hand, I, as a teacher, have won the best prize. HOPES honoured me with the opportunity to change loads of students' lives.'

Mohammad Yasser Al Samman, HEEAP teacher and coordinator, AlQuds College.

'HOPES is not a traditional project funded by a normal agency. It is rather a humanitarian project that takes care of youth and considers them the agent of change. HOPES supports them to build the world. Therefore, HOPES should continue providing the young refugees with the hope they need to lead a peaceful life.'

Naima Al-Husban, HEEAP Coordinator, Arab Open University.

Walaa Audi Abazeed

30-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA WHO HAS BEEN LIVING IN JORDAN SINCE 2013. SHE RECEIVED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP TO PURSUE HER MASTER'S IN ARABIC LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE AT HASHEMITE UNIVERSITY. SHE ALSO PARTICIPATED IN THE HEEAP COURSES.



'I chose this field of studies because I am passionate about learning languages. I also always loved the English language since childhood. However, when I stopped studying for four years because of the situation in my country, my language-level decreased because I was not doing any practice, which constituted an obstacle in the labour market, in which the English language is the primary requirement, and to obtaining scholarships that required a specific language-level I hadn't reached. The HEEAP course was a great experience of which I took advantage, and that helped me take the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) to get into Jordanian universities, and pursue higher studies. Then, I got the HOPES scholarship to pursue my master's studies. The feeling that I can refer to the HOPES programme for help in case of any issue at university gave me reassurance that I am protected. I can say that the HOPES programme gave me hope and the motivation to chase my dream and reach my goal, as well as the opportunity to become an active member of society with better possibilities.'

'This project gave hope to many young people from Syria who sadly had to leave their homes, properties, and their memories. These young people, because of HEEAP, were given the chance to build new educational opportunities and memories with hope.'

Dr. Mohammad Mohairat, HEEAP Coordinator, Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan.

'The teacher-training sessions that were held just at the beginning of the programme were useful because the trainees were provided with the appropriate classroom teaching strategies and they were taught how to follow students' assignments and progress online. The Syrian students who have attended the courses have got the chance to learn the appropriate English needed to communicate with English-speaking people on different occasions. Some graduate students also joined the course in preparation for their postgraduate studies. All in all, the project exemplified a humanistic model that supported individuals who were really in need of it.'

Dr. Fathi Migdadi, HEEAP Coordinator, Jordan University of Science and Technology.

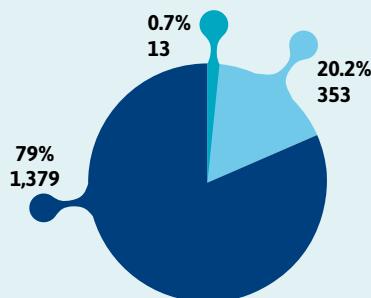
Lebanon

HEEAP enrolments (by gender)



96 English Teachers Trained

HEEAP enrolments from Syria and host communities



Syria Host Communities Other Countries

HEEAP partner institutions

- American University Beirut
- Arab Open University
- Beirut Arab University
- Lebanese International University
- Lebanese Organization for Studies and Training
- Lebanese University
- Modern University of Business and Science

Mazyad Alali

41-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA IN LEBANON. A CERTIFIED ASSISTANT IN MEDICAL SCIENCES, HE STUDIED FOR A BACHELOR'S IN MEDICAL LABORATORY AT THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE, ALEPPO UNIVERSITY AND PARTICIPATED IN THE HEEAP COURSES.

'I have big ambitions to reach higher levels in English, and to take advantage of any offers and scholarships that would be offered in the future, for education has no age. Ever since I had joined the HEEAP English course, my dream has been rising to the surface every day, and my love of language growing day by day. I refuse to plummet into despair; what is important now is that I follow my will, love and passion for the English language, because I will not stay a refugee forever, and will not live in a camp with my family and children forever, but I will rather improve my life with new opportunities and a new life.'



Samah Kharmanda

26-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA IN LEBANON. SHE STUDIED FOR A BACHELOR'S IN ARABIC LITERATURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALEPPO AND PARTICIPATED IN THE HEEAP COURSES.

'I faced many difficulties with the language due to the great difference between the Lebanese and Syrian educational systems. The HEEAP course within the HOPES project gave me a lot of encouragement to speak more English. Language is the key to many doors in our time, and the majority of educational and professional opportunities require that a person has the ability to speak at least two languages. I am seeking to enhance my English language skills more and more, and to take the IELTS exam in order to achieve my ambition to continue my studies, and get better career opportunities. I consider fear as the greatest obstacle against learning, which we must not give in to; and I advise students who are facing the same difficulties to insist on learning and never stop trying even if they have failed many times.'

'The HOPES project embedded the will in students at LIU to have a genuine interest in learning English, improved their job prospects in their majors, and enabled them to improve their social standing. In addition, most of the students were very keen to develop their knowledge in their academic fields and to explore new ideas. This was interpreted in the attendance rate which maintained consistency. The HOPES project came in the wake of the implementation of LIU's tailored initiative, Project SEAD (Social, Emotional Academic Development), a Teaching Diploma programme which uses a systematic approach with efficient and sustainable resources and education systems. There was considerable complementarity between the goals of each programme in developing quality education between teachers, administrators and students.'

Dr. Anwar Kawtharani, Ed.D., Dean of School of Education, Lebanese International University.

'During preparations, I met a lot of Syrian students through direct contact. I also used to contact them through WhatsApp when needed and reach out to them during the session. I also knew about some of the life circumstances and issues affecting these students, where most of them had to work at night or during the day to provide for their families, or the stories of some girls who changed from being spoiled girls to women responsible for their parents and families. As for Lebanese students who benefitted from HEEAP, they had outstanding and remarkable success in the sessions. Such experience had helped us prepare language teachers and establish a structure within the Department of Languages in the Faculty of Education to improve the language preparation.'

Dr. Wajiha Smayli, Head of the Department of Languages, Faculty of Education—Branch I, and General Coordinator of HEEAP, Lebanese University.

'Amidst all the dire conditions and searing conflicts in the world, and specifically in our region, came HOPES. Students learned and flourished as a community: a family where each of its members got to voice their nostalgia for their good old past, their concerns about the dimly lit present, and their aspirations for the new hopeful future! I would never forget the tears of joy and the twinkles of pride that I could see in the eyes of the students, and their teachers too, upon the completion of the 100-hour course. The certificates they held tightly in their hands were sound proof that education is their sole self-defence in this cruel world.'

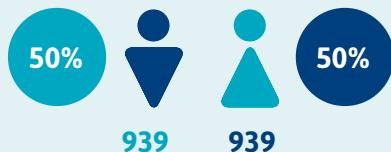
Dr. Rola A. Kazem, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Lebanese University.

The Arab Open University, Lebanon, offered the HOPES project through HEEAP to Syrian refugees in Lebanon and helped 278 enrolled students to study English at levels ranging between A0–B1 during the spring and summer semesters. Lessons learnt were that refugees welcome the opportunity of help, and work in strenuous circumstances to prepare themselves to face the new situations imposed on them and to try to face their diaspora armed with knowledge, albeit to a limited level, of international English.'

Professor Hayat Al-Khatib, Associate Dean, Faculty of Language Studies, Arab Open University.

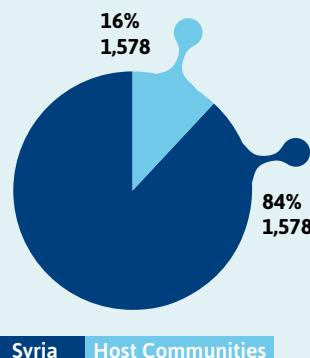
Egypt

HEEAP enrolments (by gender)



25 English Teachers Trained

HEEAP enrolments from Syria and host communities



HEEAP partner institutions

- Ain Shams University
- Alexandria University
- Mansoura University

Saleh Ajam



20-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN EGYPT. HE STUDIED FOR A BACHELOR OF MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AT SADAT CITY UNIVERSITY AND PARTICIPATED IN THE HEEAP COURSES.

'Listening and speed-reading were my weakness-points in English. The interactive way of teaching English in the HEEAP courses within the HOPES project was the right solution for helping me overcoming these barriers. The year I spent with HOPES was just a continuously successful journey for me. I believe that the great outcome we all had from the HOPES project really deserved the time and effort we made. We feel proud of ourselves now. Away from the English language, this successful experience helped me to become more self-confident and to try to push myself to do things I thought I was not capable of.'



Sara Imad Al-Maarrawi

20-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN EGYPT. SHE STUDIED FOR A BACHELOR'S IN MEDICINE AT AL-AZHAR UNIVERSITY AND PARTICIPATED IN THE HEEAP COURSES.

'I love learning languages and am passionate about scientific research, namely biomedical research...I faced some difficulties when I first started developing my English-language skills in improving my speech fluency or my English accent as correctly as possible. Language is important because it allows the student to keep pace with modern sciences and new scientific research studies. The HEEAP course offered by the HOPES project has helped me overcome the language-barrier in terms of speech fluency through interaction between the students and the supervisor. In addition, it helped me improve my listening skills. In the framework of the course, I took the IELTS exam and got a score of 7, which qualifies me to apply for higher-level study scholarships or student-exchange programmes.'

'As a teacher, I started adapting the teaching methods I already have to best suit the needs of the students who have just witnessed one of the world's most traumatic experiences. I also learned how to apply new methods to deal with a class of refugees who have been uprooted from their country and are now starting a new life in a hosting community. Listening to their testimonies helped me as a researcher. It inspired me to start research about the situation in contemporary Syria. I developed an MA thesis in literature and dedicated it to analysing the artistic representations of the Syrian revolution. The programme offered me a chance to deal with people from a different country, and to inspire and be inspired by them. Thanks to working in this project, I am now a better person on a personal and professional level.'

Nesma Sami, HEEAP teacher, Ain Shams University.

'It has been one of the most challenging and eye-opening experiences in my career so far. To deal with traumatised students is no easy job. Teaching them is like skating on thin ice. For most of them, the future is unknown. I knew that these courses are not about teaching English as much as they are about changing students' mindset. I have used extra-curricular materials to implicitly tell students that there could be some light at the end of the tunnel. My indirect aim was to encourage them to enjoy their time and turn over a new leaf. One of the most joyful aspects of teaching mixed classes, where Syrian and Egyptian students exchange perspectives on various topics, is cultural hybridity. All in all, HOPES is a unique experience that I had long waited for. I was thrilled when I was finally given this chance.'

Mohamed Galal, HEEAP teacher, Alexandria University.

'HOPES provided me with the chance to help and to make a difference. One of my unforgettable moments in this project was when my students were writing me their feedback and one of them wrote «you gave me a voice». At this point I felt that I am on the right track, I am not only helping them to be better in English but I am also helping them at a personal level. HOPES is not only about language, it has another humanistic aspect. It helps the students to make friends, to make contact with people from different cultures, and to exchange knowledge. In addition, it helps them to overcome their trauma. I strongly believe in the motto of the project which is «HOPES gives hope». As a teacher, I have learned a lot from the programme: I became aware of a different culture and I have helped in changing the life of many of my students.'

Fatma Zoghof, HEEAP teacher, Ain Shams University.

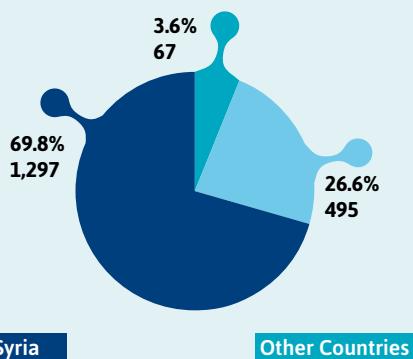
Turkey

HEEAP enrolments (by gender)



102 English Teachers Trained

HEEAP enrolments from Syria and host communities



HEEAP partner institutions

- ▶ Adana Alparslan Turkes Science and Technology University
- ▶ Gaziantep University
- ▶ Istanbul University
- ▶ Karabük University
- ▶ Mersin University



Joanna Kuruçaylioğlu

30-YEAR-OLD FROM TURKEY. SHE STUDIED FOR A MASTER'S IN INTERNATIONAL LAW AT RZESZOW UNIVERSITY, POLAND, AND IS UNDERTAKING DOCTORAL STUDY AT ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY. SHE PARTICIPATED IN THE HEEAP COURSES.

'I am Turkish and Polish and was born in Poland and moved to Turkey in 2009. My major is in international law. I would like to be the first Polish barrister in Turkey. It is a tough way but I believe in myself and I know that I can achieve any goals by being a persistent and diligent person.'

The HEEAP course within the HOPES project offered me an opportunity to speak in English. By learning a new language, we are not just learning the meaning of each word, actually what we are doing is an acquisition of method which allows us to understand the culture of different countries and to be more tolerant and accept various points of views.'

'Having lived abroad myself for 19 years, I understand how hard it can be at times to live in a foreign country and that is without the shadow of war and displacement. Many of the students have difficult circumstances at home, often they are living apart from their families, or they have family members or children for whom they may be the sole provider or carer or they may be juggling one or multiple jobs alongside their higher education studies.'

The HOPES project is important for a number of reasons beyond the scope of language learning. Firstly, it provides more than just a place to learn English. It is a place to come together with those who, while they may come from a variety of backgrounds, have a shared experience in their life here as students in Turkey.

As the project is also open to a smaller number of non-Syrian students, it also fosters understanding and friendship with local students and those from other countries, which helps break down prejudice and misconceptions about the experiences and plans of refugees from the crisis. On a personal level, what I have learnt from this course is that with such opportunities, students living in difficult circumstances can thrive. These students seize the opportunities presented with both hands and strive to be the best they can. Despite the hardships which they have faced and continue to deal with, they bring joy and laughter to every lesson.'

Joanne Bates, Director of Studies, School of Foreign Languages, Istanbul University.

'I believe that the biggest added value of HOPES for my Syrian students has been to equip them with English-language and related academic skills for their higher education journey and for later in their professional career. For me, it is to get acquainted with Syrian people and to get to know their culture and way of life. I usually refer to my students from the HOPES project when I talk to my Turkish students, trying to motivate them to be more focused and driven against all odds.'

Cengiz Turan, PhD, Adana Alparslan Turkes Science and Technology University.

'It was a valuable experience to deal with students coming from different backgrounds. It helped me to be able to understand and identify Syrian students' needs as well as their weaknesses in learning English. I believe the project also helped those students who found it difficult to reach sources that would promote their language learning.'

Tuğba Akbaş, Teacher, Karabük University.

2.6 LEARNING FROM THE GROUND

Through the experience of running the HEEAP programme, from student and teacher feedback and from the HOPES national stakeholder dialogues, many lessons have been learned about how to provide successful English access programmes and language-support to refugee students. Two key recommendations relate to the creation of a range of study pathways for students with different abilities and goals and the expansion of the number of course providers in each country in order to respond to issues regarding the location and timing of courses.

Additional lessons learned include the following:

- ▶ Generally, awareness should be raised among Syrian students about the importance of the English language in their host countries. Students are often reported not to fully comprehend the necessity for English-language skills in order to succeed academically or to gain employment in their host country, as this was not the case in Syria.
- ▶ As much flexibility in course locations and timing as is practical should be offered to allow students to fit courses into their already challenging lives/schedules. Ideally, courses should be offered where students are, for example, in refugee camps and/or communities.
- ▶ In order to help refugee students to commit to courses over time, stipends as provided in HOPES to cover travel and subsistence costs are important.
- ▶ Students need a pathway of courses from beginners' level to IELTS preparation, as well as courses on English for specific/academic purposes tailored to students' academic or professional goals.
- ▶ For many students, learning online is a new experience. For courses incorporating e-learning, an introduction to using IT should either be provided in the pre-course induction or as the first part of the course.
- ▶ Teachers themselves often need a lot of training and support to manage blended learning approaches in environments where this is something new.
- ▶ Teaching methodologies should focus on communicative skills as this is what Syrian students often feel they lack confidence in.
- ▶ Training should be provided in the specific needs of Syrian students: language learning issues, but also training on dealing with non-academic issues in the classroom arising from trauma and the challenges presented by the need for social adjustment.
- ▶ Language support should be cross-cutting and comprehensive, and it should be provided to all refugee students at each stage of their academic journey to help them achieve their academic and career potential in their host community.

'With these HEEAP courses, our lecturers found out that teaching Syrian students is a pleasure because of their being open to learning new things and their talent for learning a new language. Refugees from Syria and young people in the host communities have benefitted from a wide range of educational offers, including academic counselling, language courses (of which we are a part), full academic scholarships, and higher education short courses. Institutions like Istanbul University, with the support of the "Madad Fund", have tried to provide innovative educational offers to improve their own capacity. HOPES is a project that needs to be continued in the future.'

School of Foreign Languages, Istanbul University.

3

CALL FOR PROPOSALS



3.1 OVERVIEW OF THE FUNDING FOR INNOVATIVE SHORT-TERM EDUCATION PROJECTS

The provision of funding for innovative, short-term education projects, which would benefit refugees from Syria as well as vulnerable youth in the host communities, was a central achievement of HOPES. Through two calls for proposals, the HOPES consortium sought to enhance the responsiveness of further and higher education institutions in the region to the Syrian crisis by funding a wide range of synergistic ‘bottom up’ projects which would have sustainable impact in the areas of innovation in teaching and learning, online and blended learning, lifelong learning and flexible learning. The breadth of the calls was designed to ensure that the funded projects would build upon the existing stage of development of institutions at the local and national levels, complementing the implementation of other ongoing initiatives and strategies.

Through the provision of this funding, HOPES aimed to build the capacity of institutions in host communities to provide access to further and higher education for refugees and host community students in the short, medium and long terms, and to enhance the learning experience of existing students with a view to reducing the possibility of a “lost generation” and to improving graduate employment outcomes.

In particular, the range of blended/online learning opportunities which the HOPES calls for proposals helped to generate can be a basis for a new, sustainable mode of educational provision for refugees and youth in the host communities. More broadly, recognising that crises require creative responses, the HOPES calls for proposals stimulated partnerships between different stakeholders and encouraged them to share their knowledge and experience.

3.2 APPROACH

A total of €1.5 million was made available through the two calls for proposals to fund projects throughout the region. In addition to tertiary education institutions, eligibility to apply for funding was extended to local organisations, ministries and authorities involved in the education of refugees. Institutions and organisations from outside the region were able to take part as associate partners.

Information sessions on the calls, detailing the eligibility requirements, application processes and reporting requirements, were organised in Egypt, Jordan, KRI, Lebanon and Turkey, to which relevant stakeholders were invited. Applicants were required to demonstrate the responsiveness of their proposal to local needs. Successful projects were allocated a budget of between €6,000 and €60,000 to cover a period of activity of up to 18 months. The implementation of the projects was monitored through monthly surveys, financial and technical interim and final reports. A site-visit to each lead-institution was conducted.

3.3 THE PROJECTS

A total of 327 project proposals were submitted in response to the two calls for proposals, of which 32 were funded.

Projects funded (by country)

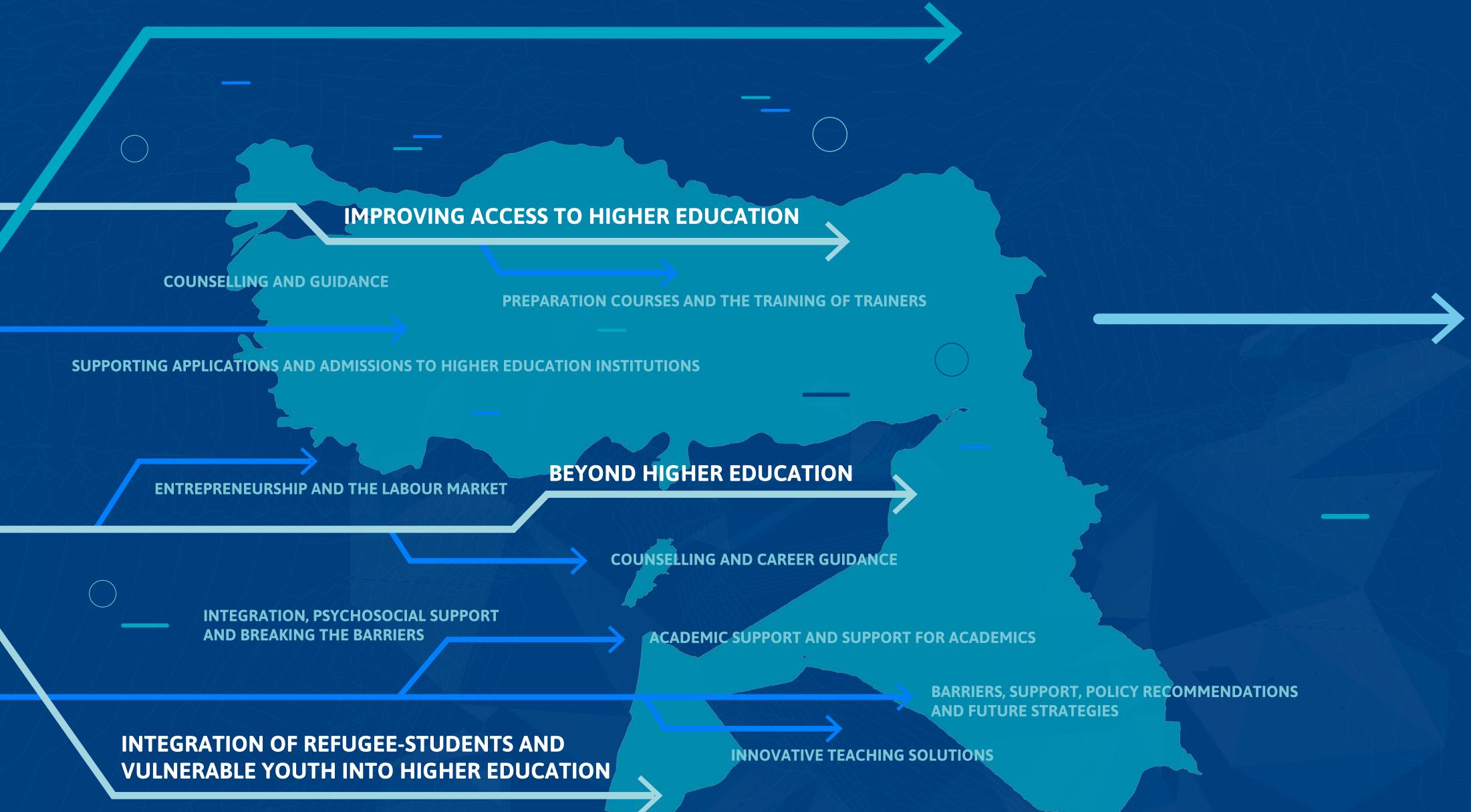


3.4 LEARNING FROM THE GROUND

Key lessons learned from the implementation of the projects include:

- ▶ The network of beneficiary institutions has the potential to become a sustainable association of institutions which work with refugees from Syria, which could contribute to policy debate on the education and integration of vulnerable groups.
- ▶ The broad range of innovative approaches piloted under the call for proposals could be eligible for future funding from a range of sources, not only as educational initiatives, but also as initiatives for integration, social innovation, employment, entrepreneurship and other related areas.
- ▶ Future calls for proposals could usefully focus on employability and entrepreneurship.
- ▶ While many of the projects funded were characterised by a high degree of innovation, others were less innovative but nevertheless delivered valuable and sustainable results. This indicates the value of supporting innovation through calls for proposals without making this a mandatory requirement.
- ▶ The local partnerships forged through the implementation of the projects fostered a deep understanding of local needs and circumstances and reinforced the local ownership of projects as well as increased their relevance and sustainability.
- ▶ Project consortia should incorporate plans to mitigate student dropout into the project planning phases. The mitigation measures should be positive, incentivising students' continuation.

ALONG THE PATH TOWARDS THE FUTURE



IMPROVING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION



PREPARATION COURSES AND THE TRAINING OF TRAINERS

Improving the Syrian refugee's education environment to raise candidates' scientific level at selective refugees' camps over Duhok and Erbil areas

Lead institution

Bojeen Organisation for Human Development (BOHD)

- 📍 Duhok and Erbil, KRI
- 💶 Funding €58,000
- 📅 October 2018 – April 2019

Objective

To improve the success rate of refugee students in the camps in the Duhok and Erbil areas in secondary schools by 30% and to empower them to access and pursue higher education.

Beneficiaries

323 grade 12 students;

100 teachers;

310 parents.

Activities

- ▶ Orientation seminars and training workshops for student refugees in grade 12;
- ▶ Training of teachers;
- ▶ Meetings with parents;
- ▶ Distribution of 1,435 curriculum books;
- ▶ Training of students on effective methods of studying, time management and self-management;
- ▶ Orientation visits to Duhok and Erbil universities.

As a result of these activities, participating students' performance improved by 60%.

JRS higher education project

Lead institution
Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)

- 📍 Jabal Hussein, Amman, Jordan
- 💶 Funding €60,000
- ↗ September 2018 - September 2019

Objective

To enhance the knowledge, skills and leadership capacity of refugees in Jordan, enabling greater access for refugees and vulnerable host community members in Amman to tertiary education and the labour market.

Beneficiaries

341 disadvantaged refugees from Syria and local young Jordanians;

703 beneficiaries attended community events;

In total

1,639 young Syrians and Jordanians were reached through all the activities.

Activities

- ▶ Preparation courses for higher education: English, computer skills, case management;
- ▶ Providing access to online higher education courses;
- ▶ Advice and support for national and international scholarships;
- ▶ Stipends for students;
- ▶ Community events: educational, cultural exchange and dialogue and artistic workshops to facilitate cultural exchange and social integration.

'541 English students, 19 computer students and 71 case-management students have finished their courses and become active within their community in different ways. Searching for new opportunities internally and externally opened up for them the gate of the future. What we learnt from our professional and post-secondary education project was that with an outreach team you can maybe target more and more vulnerable students who may have constraints even to find areas of support, and may be to try again with an accessible facility to target refugees with special needs. At a personal level, we found that there is a really big interest in others' future even in difficult situations. HOPES was the motivator to support those vulnerable students who were suffering from the limitation of access to their future. Syrian beneficiaries expressed their feelings when they finished, saying that these kinds of support really gave them hope to keep moving forward in our life and to continue our learning for a better world.'

Mohammad Shoboul, Project Director J03, Jesuit Refugee Service, Jordan Country Office.

Qais Madi

36-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN JORDAN.

'Before my journey started with JRS in August 2017, I had been frustrated as a refugee since 2016. At that time, I felt all the doors were closed in front of me and how much life is difficult under the name of 'Refugee'. I knocked on the door of JRS to seek help and support to improve my level of education, particularly in English. That for me is the most significant thing in life, to achieve success in my career. In addition to the knowledge-journey at JRS, I gained true friends of different nationalities (Syrians, Sudanese, Jordanians, and Iraqis). These friends for me are "lifetime friends".'

Nadia Owais

27-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN JORDAN.

'The study is unique because in the classes there are many different nationalities combined. There we ate together, played, laughed, learned, succeeded, and became an integrated small home. My success there was only because everyone supports me and encourages me as my family and wishes me the best. JRS changed me and changed my life. JRS introduced me into the world and I achieved my goals and ambitions.'

Improved access to education of Syrian post-secondary-age young people in urban settings in Turkey

Lead institution
Yuva Association

📍 Istanbul, Turkey
€ Funding €60,000
↗ December 2018 - September 2019

Objective

To provide safe, participatory and inclusive learning spaces and learning support through high-quality education.

Beneficiaries

Young Syrian students and disadvantaged members of the local community aged between 17 and 29 years

Hasan Alabou

23-YEAR-OLD UNIVERSITY STUDENT FROM ALEPO, SYRIA, RESIDING IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY.

'Since I arrived in Turkey in 2016, I had difficulties because I was not able to understand people. I could not continue my education due to the language barrier. My life changed completely after participating in the course offered by the Yuva Association. I am now capable of understanding people and I have brilliant knowledge of the Turkish language. This course provided me with the opportunity to progress in my education. Also, I can find a job more easily having learnt the Turkish language.'

Muhammed Raif Sevvas

21-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA, RESIDING IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY.

'I learned a lot from the Yuva Association's TÖMER course, about rules, official correspondence and figurative meaning. In fact, a TÖMER certificate was required by the corporation where I work and I got a great score of B2 in the exam. In short, in my opinion, the training organised by the Yuva Association changed not only my life but also the lives of many teenagers because it was tailor-made for us and at the same time included numerous youngsters free of charge.'

Activities

- ▶ TÖMER Turkish language preparation courses
- ▶ Preparation programme for the University Entrance Examination for Foreign Students (YÖS)
- ▶ In-kind educational support covering TÖMER and YÖS examination fees
- ▶ Counselling and mentoring
- ▶ Provision of information about the Education Preparation Programme (TÖMER and YÖS)
- ▶ Organisation of career days
- ▶ Enrolment students in the Public Education Center (PEC) database and obtention of certificate from the General Directorate for Lifelong Learning
- ▶ Support for participants to access higher education
- ▶ Development of resources to support students' learning and progression into higher education;
- ▶ Focus groups to ensure the responsiveness of the courses to students' needs;

Courses encompassed non-formal interactive teaching, such as role-play and theatre, and were supported with digital learning resources.



217 students

100 students

256 students

2,400 sessions

3,995 students

7,041 calls

210 students

166 students

26 students

Pre-academic programme for Syrian refugees and disadvantaged Jordanian youth (PAP)

Lead institution

Al-Ahliyya Amman University

- 📍 Amman, Jordan
- 💶 Funding €60,000
- 📅 November 2018 - September 2019

Objective

To provide a one-year-long pre-academic programme for refugees from Syria and disadvantaged Jordanians to enable them to achieve the necessary educational level to enrol in post-secondary academic programmes, enhancing their future employment prospects.

Beneficiaries

38 students (27 refugees from Syria and 11 disadvantaged Jordanians) between 17 and 38 years of age.

Activities

- ▶ Administration of the student recruitment process (including interviews and preliminary examinations);
- ▶ Student-orientation;
- ▶ Delivery of the pre-academic programme (PAP) comprised of four courses; on learning skills (e.g. learning strategies for critical reading, note-taking, examination preparation and time management); English-language skills for academic study; computer skills and academic-writing skills.
- ▶ Hosting of graduation ceremony and closing event.

**Shereen Hani Mohamad
Bahaeddine Salah**

32-YEAR-OLD FROM AMMAN, JORDAN.

'I didn't pursue my university studies despite my excellence in general secondary education. I was discouraged and depressed about not finding any opportunity that would support my ambitions, capacities and excellence. My parents, husband and friends gave me moral support, but I had no financial support until I heard about the EU-supported HOPES project. I applied to the programme with a positive attitude, love and determination to succeed and excel. I improved my written and spoken English language; I now have quick command of the computer and Microsoft Office software skills. I took the learning-skills course which gave me excellent skills in terms of time management, prioritisation, problem-solving skills, critical thinking, etc.'

The programme was comprehensive in that it provided both educational materials and stationery, as well as being delivered by elite lecturers. Also, Al-Ahlyyaa Amman University offers all the amenities for students and is an exemplary and distinguished educational environment. I hope I will have the chance to study there in the near future and become a lecturer there in the distant future.'

**Ammar Yaser
Mohamad Mansour**

20-YEAR-OLD FROM DAMASCUS, SYRIA, LIVING IN JORDAN.

'I am ambitious, curious, and optimistic, and have great willpower. I love technology and am passionate about computer science, artificial intelligence and programming engineering. I have many ideas that I can build upon and execute in the future, which would contribute to the prosperity of society and the country. This project helped me to improve my English-language and academic skills. It also gave me a vision of college life.'



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The pass to the higher education for refugees (P.A.T.H.)

Lead institution

Bursa Provincial Directorate of National Education

- 📍 Bursa, Turkey
- € Funding €58,092
- 👉 December 2017 - April 2019

Objective

To increase the number of Syrian refugees, from both inside and outside of formal education in Bursa, enrolled higher education by:

- ▶ Establishing flexible administrative procedures and streamlining the admissions process to university for refugees;
- ▶ Improving refugee students' competency in the Turkish language to equip them to successfully undertake the YÖS University Entrance Examination for Foreign Students;
- ▶ Improving the skills of teaching staff working with refugees in high schools;
- ▶ Generating support for, and a consensus about the value of, refugees' education.

Beneficiaries

288 refugees from Syria in Bursa;

589 participants in various meetings, seminars and conferences, of whom

168 were participating students and

30 of whom received acceptance from universities.

Activities

- ▶ Organisation of preparatory meetings with high school principals and teachers in 5 central districts;
- ▶ Delivery of Turkish language courses (540 hours with B2 Level Certificate) and YÖS university entrance examination preparation courses (240 hours) for 120 11th and 12th-grade students in 3 schools;
- ▶ Production of online resources for students;
- ▶ Hosting of teacher-training seminars for 26 Turkish and English teachers in public secondary schools and conferences;
- ▶ Dissemination of tools and visual materials on the website and social media.

Pre-session course for high-school graduation of Syrian refugee students with low grades to enrol in diploma study at Duhok Polytechnic University

Lead institution

Duhok Polytechnic University (DPU)

- 📍 Duhok, KRI
- 💶 Funding €54,000
- 📅 October 2017 - April 2018

Objective

To prepare post-secondary school graduates with low grades for enrolment in a diploma or bachelor's degree course at Duhok Polytechnic University after passing an intensive two-term pre-session course.

Beneficiaries

120 post-secondary-school students
(refugees from Syria and from the host community) with low grades

Activities

- ▶ Survey of post-secondary school students with low grades in the target cohort;
- ▶ Recruitment of students and identification of DPU courses correlated with students' preferred study fields;
- ▶ Allocation of students to a DPU campus (Bardarash, Akri or Zakho);
- ▶ Provision of an intensive, two-term, pre-session course of 16 weeks' duration:

1st term modules: English language, Kurdish language, information and communications technology (ICT), and mathematics.

2nd term modules: selection from advanced modules such as management, accounting, finance, journalism, law, engineering, medical sciences and agriculture, as appropriate to their chosen field of study.

'After implementing this project, the strategy team at DPU believes that including Syrian refugees in addition to the host community and IDPs [internally displaced people] is beneficial. Dealing with the HOPES team during meetings and conferences strengthens our belief in our duty to bridge the gap between secondary and higher education for refugees. It has also led us to build a good and transparent relationship with more EU partners in order to lend a hand to people in need nearby. Working with HOPES broadens the experience of our team, experience that has been used effectively in the implementation of other projects concerned with Syrian refugees, such as OPATEL and CHANCE.'

Through this project, HOPES and DPU tried to prepare refugees from Syria for enrolment in higher education by bridging the gap as much as possible, in addition to securing places (fully or partially) for successful candidates at DPU to complete their diploma or bachelor's degree. The first aim was fully achieved via the project implemented. However, the sustainability of the project has unfortunately failed due to the limitation of the financial resources of students themselves or of DPU. At DPU we still believe that funding the HOPES-DPU project participants will help the refugees more than implementing another project, as any project without a sustainable goal will not give the complete picture of the support needed.'

Dr. Ammar Isam Edress, Head of Geology of Petroleum and Sediments Department and Project Manager of HOPES-DPU, Duhok Polytechnic University.

Hakki Hammoud Massir

20-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN KRI.

'I am just like the majority of Syrian students. I have faced many difficulties, starting from the change of academic environment and the difference in the language and academic system. Therefore, what we needed most were opportunities that allow us to join the university. The programme implemented by the Duhok Technical University gave us great help in adapting to the environment, improving our English and Kurdish languages, and preparing for the academic system in KRI. However, after we completed the programme, we faced many challenges, including the difficulty of joining the university for financial reasons, since studying was not free; and we had to wait for the programme's support in order to complete our studies. Through the programme, the project offered us moral and academic support as well as transportation and housing, in addition to lectures that tackled academic topics of great interest to us in seeking to continue our university studies.'

Ali Lutfi Hajo

23 YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA
LIVING IN DUMIZ CAMP 2
IN DUHOK, KRI.

'The project was organised and the teachers were amazing at giving lectures. They made every effort to support us morally by giving us advice, and negotiating to resolve issues faced by the participants. We would like to thank them, but we hope that the HOPES project will find a solution for us to enter universities.'

Providing access to quality education for Syrian students in Domiz Camp 1 schools

Lead institution

Bishkoreen Organization

- 📍 Duhok, KRI
- € Funding €7,092
- ↗ March 2019 - June 2019

Objective

To train qualified teaching staff to ensure the responsiveness of teaching methods to the learning needs of refugees and host-community students on a sustainable basis with a view to:

- ▶ Increasing studying opportunities in higher education institutions for every secondary-level student;
- ▶ Preparing qualified teaching staff to guarantee the sustainability of qualified teaching methods for targeted refugees and host-community students;
- ▶ Promoting students' participation in higher education in order to re-build their society once they are able to return to their country of origin.

Beneficiaries

11 teachers in Domiz Camp 1 schools

140 students benefitted from the training.

Activities

- ▶ Identification of teachers with a particular focus on 12th-grade teachers;
- ▶ Preparation and delivery of the one-month training course;
- ▶ Observation of teaching practice of participants;
- ▶ Meetings with parents to enhance their support for students' enrolment in higher education;
- ▶ Evaluation of the project.

'Bishkoreen is proud to have its first experience through education as an actual partner with HOPES. The collaboration was straightforward, and the feedback we received to facilitate the implementation of the project helped us a lot, especially since we are not a very experienced institution. We particularly appreciated being invited to the HOPES regional conference in Jordan as it was an added bonus for us, increasing our knowledge and allowing us to exchange with donors and other organisations and projects in this field.'

In particular, we have learned that strategic planning before starting project implementation and following an action plan are key to the success of any project. This is what we learned from dealing with the HOPES team, especially in relation to sending a detailed action plan before proceeding with, for example, taking approvals and consent forms before filming. This procedure was not followed in other organisations, but we took written approvals from the beneficiaries before we started the project. This simple procedure had prevented many problems before they occurred.

The seriousness and high goals that HOPES sought were appreciated and accepted by everyone, whether organisations or parents of students in the camp, especially that, in all its projects, HOPES aims to address all the issues related to students, whether these relate to the preparation for university or to their university studies. Education is not only about the curriculum, it is also about everything related, including the parents of the students, the curriculum and the teachers as well as solving the obstacles faced by all parties. This was a good experience for us.'

Wafa Khaled, Programme Manager, Bishkoreen Organization.

Bahri Mohamad Hanane

27-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN KRI.

'Since I arrived in Iraqi Kurdistan seven years ago, my main challenge was speaking the language, but I have mastered it well now. It's a very good project because it helps students, especially those in grade 10, because they understand the teachers' method and curricula.'

Aya Ramadan Hajo

16-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN KRI.

'I am a student in grade 10. I used to study in Afrine School and moved to Dirik School for preparatory education. It was difficult for us to adapt because of the language, traditions and study preparation, but the situation has got so much better now. This year the project presented training for secondary education students, as well as training on curricula to make studying easier for us. We thank you for such help, and hope you keep supporting us until we achieve our goals.'

Providing fundamental ICT skills for Syrian refugees (PFISR)

Lead institution

Yarmouk University

- 📍 Irbid, Jordan
- 💶 Funding €53,375
- 📅 December 2017 - June 2019

Objective

To provide refugees from Syria with fundamental ICT skills that pave the way for them to pursue ICT-related degrees and internationally accredited professional certificates, and to establish their own businesses in ICT.

Beneficiaries

188 students



Activities

- ▶ Delivery of 9 bespoke training courses on computer networks, computer maintenance, and web design, each of 45 hours' duration delivered over an 18-month period;
- ▶ Participating students were required to develop their own projects, details of which are provided on the project website (www.pfisr.info).
- ▶ Delivery of 9 training-of-trainers courses to ensure peer to peer learning and the sustainability of the project;
- ▶ Dissemination of information about the project.

‘With the help of the HOPES grant, we have been able to increase our students' and Syrian refugees' chances of success. Without a doubt, it has played a key role in achieving the educational dreams of many student refugees. To meet the needs of our students, we have different ICT courses in our programmes. Our classes are taught by trained professionals. With this background, the Information Technology (IT) and Engineering faculties understood the students' levels and adjusted the process of teaching.

In fact, these programmes met the needs and broadened the perspectives of young refugees from Syria who were attending classes. From a student-pathway perspective, pathway continuity is interrupted between preparation for transitioning from one degree to the next, and from study towards the labour market. The students have been immediate beneficiaries, gaining basic skills for their qualifications in the labour market and for higher education. Vulnerable Syrian refugees and Jordanians need continuous support with fundamental ICT courses to bring them up to the level required for successful participation in higher education. Such has been the success of some participants in understanding the digital economy and participation as a digital remote worker, digital entrepreneur, or simply as the operator of a web workshop or other digital platforms that graduates can practise their competencies in higher education and jump local barriers to work.

In the context of this grant, it gives us an opportunity to pursue active engagement with Syrian youth and stakeholders to develop innovative solutions maximising options for Syrian youth towards multiple future scenarios.

Dr. Anas AlSobeh, Assistant Professor, Yarmouk University

Qualifying Syrian youth to enter higher education

Lead institution
WATAN Foundation

📍 Gaziantep, Turkey
€ Funding €59,983.88
↗ January 2018 - February 2019

Objective

To support Syrian youth in improving their key and transversal competencies in languages and ICT to enable them to continue their education at university level and to increase their chances of integration into the Turkish labour market.

Beneficiaries

55 Syrian youth between 18 and 32 years of age;

Over 90 orphaned children up to the age of 12 in Al-Sham Orphanage.

Activities

- ▶ Selection of institutes and students;
- ▶ Delivery of TÖMER, TOEFL and International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) courses:
15 students completed all stages of the C1 level in the Turkish language and applied for the TÖMER test,
16 students completed the preparatory course for the TOEFL examination, **10** of whom applied for the TOEFL test and **15** completed the ICDL preparatory course;
- ▶ Provision of a professional course in Microsoft Office (11 students);
- ▶ Provision of language and ICT courses and workshops for children facilitated by **14** participating students who were trained to conduct volunteering workshops.

Science education: a key to university access for refugee girls

Lead institution
Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CCECS), American University Beirut (AUB)

Partners
Science and Mathematics Education Center, Department of Education, AUB;
Kayany Foundation.

📍 Lebanon
€ Funding €59,894.21
↗ September 2017 - May 2019

Objective

To strengthen the pipeline to higher education for Syrian refugees aged 14-25 years, with a particular emphasis on preventing female students from dropping out.

Beneficiaries

296 refugees from Syria between the ages of 14 and 25 (90% female);

54 refugee students from Syria participated in AUB's college readiness programme;

49 teachers working with Syrian refugee students.

Activities

- ▶ Delivery of training to science and mathematics educators to increase their capacity to teach the Lebanese curriculum to refugees in English and to develop students' critical thinking;
- ▶ Establishment of science laboratories in two all-girls intermediate Ghata schools in informal tented settlements;
- ▶ Delivery of accredited science education on a weekly basis to young refugees from Syria, which was tailored to the 7th, 8th and 9th-grade refugee students' needs;
- ▶ Delivery of the Summer Science Reinforcement Programme and the PADILEIA (Partnership for Digital Learning and Increased Access) college-readiness programme to 9th-grade student refugees from Syria for the Brevet examination;
- ▶ Enabling the schools to maintain Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) accreditation, thus keeping refugee girls who otherwise could not access schooling in the pipeline to higher education;
- ▶ Development of a resource for educators and educational leaders, entitled "Meeting the Challenge of Language When Teaching Science and Mathematics in Lebanon: Ideas, Strategies and Resources at a Glance".

'Based on shared priorities of facilitating access to, and success in, higher education for refugee and host-community youth affected by the Syrian crisis, the American University of Beirut Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (AUB-CCECS) engaged with the HOPES project in almost all of HOPES' strands of activity, in particular as a recipient of grant-funding through the call for proposals; partnering to offer the Higher Education English Access Programme (HEEAP) to students in our intensive college-readiness programme; referring young people from our educational programming to benefit from the student counselling and apply for scholarship opportunities provided by HOPES; and participating in national and regional stakeholder dialogues.

Throughout this varied experience we learned many lessons, a few of which we would like to share here:

- The necessity of situating interventions related to access to higher education within, and in relation to, the pipeline to higher education, building upon existing frameworks for primary and secondary education and student-support programming for young people aspiring to higher education.
- The challenges faced by projects with funding of less than 5-10 years to create sustainable interventions. Many experts in teacher professional development argue that a minimum three-year programme is needed to create sustained effects on teacher practices and student outcomes. Furthermore, the uncertain future of many scholarship programmes poses a major challenge to the young people who rely on those scholarships to access higher education.
- While considering the unique contextual factors, we should approach our work in response to the Syrian crisis in a way that builds upon credible research and previous practices in relevant fields.

Through its regional and multi-faceted approach to addressing access to higher education in the context of the Syrian crisis, HOPES has contributed to a facilitating environment in which the relevant actors and stakeholders can interact and identify synergies to further our shared objectives. The HOPES team has also created a platform to elevate the voices of students as well as local universities and NGOs to be heard by regional and international funders and policy-makers, especially EU governments.

An example of this was the event, "Inspirations for the Future: A Conversation with Syrian, Jordanian, and Lebanese Youth", held as a precursor to the Brussels II conference on the Syrian crisis response. Centering the voices of the young people who are the most affected and the dedicated staff supporting refugee and host-community students in the neighbouring countries has been a distinguishing characteristic of the HOPES approach. Our various points of collaboration with the HOPES project enhanced our efforts and provided positive spaces for mutual learning.'

Mrs. Brooke Atherton El-Amine, Civic Engagement Programmes Administrator, Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service, American University of Beirut



Lubna Karbooj and Rama Rajab

9TH-GRADE STUDENTS AT THE KAYANY FOUNDATION SCHOOLS.

'Conducting experiments in the labs was very useful as it allowed us to put into practice the theory and to understand more. We discovered that learning is fantastic and that we wanted to keep on learning.'

COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE

“Education is a must” call centre project

Lead institution

**İnsani Gelişme Vakfı
(Human Development Foundation)**

📍 Istanbul, Turkey

€ Funding €57,570

↗ November 2017- January 2019

Objective

To establish a call centre to guide, mentor, and support refugee students of post-secondary age to access higher education.

Beneficiaries

550 calls were received from refugees from Syria of post-secondary age or who were not able to finish their higher education in their home country.

174 students participated in information seminars.

Partners

Bahçeşehir University Center for Migration and Urban Studies

Activities

- ▶ An assessment of the educational needs of refugees from Syria of post-secondary age;
- ▶ Formation of an Advisory Board which determined the remit of the call centre;
- ▶ In-depth interviews conducted with the Ministry of Education and the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities;
- ▶ Organisation of a meeting of 35 stakeholders involved in meeting the educational needs of Syrian refugees in Turkey;
- ▶ Establishment of the infrastructure for the call centre; Recruitment and training of call centre staff;
- ▶ Promotion of the call centre’s services (e.g. through 500 posters, 1000 brochures to NGOs across 20 districts in Istanbul and Gaziantep, where 5 information seminars were also held and a video on social media);
- ▶ Service-delivery through the call centre, which opened on 17th July 2018;
- ▶ Hosting of a workshop on “Syrians’ Access to Higher Education in Turkey.

Information provided through the call centre

- How to apply to a university;
- University admission procedures;
- The YÖS university entrance examination for foreign students;
- The transfer of qualifications;
- The provision of scholarships;
- Dormitories and accommodation;
- Language-learning opportunities;
- Vocational training courses.

SUPPORTING APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS TO HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Supporting refugee application and admission to higher education institutions in Turkey (SUPREF)

Lead institution
Istanbul University

📍 Istanbul, Turkey
€ Funding €7,600
📅 October 2017 - March 2018

Objective

To increase Syrian youth's access to, and participation in, higher education in Turkey through:

- ▶ Awareness-raising amongst prospective students and academic staff;
- ▶ Building the capacity of higher education institutions;
- ▶ Provision of information and guidance to prospective students and NGOs working with refugees.

Beneficiaries

69 refugees from Syria

Activities

- ▶ Mapping the legal and institutional framework for refugees' access to higher education institutions;
- ▶ Identification of the barriers to refugees' access and participation;
- ▶ Production of information sheets, guidelines and online tools;
- ▶ Dissemination of information to prospective students and other stakeholders;
- ▶ Hosting of focus groups, workshops and participation in conferences.

Integrating Syrians into Turkish higher education through recognition of qualifications (REFREC-TR)

Lead institution

UNESCO Chair on International Migration, Yasar University

📍 Izmir, Turkey

€ Funding €35,524

↗ December 2017 - February 2019

Partners

Izmir Provincial Directorate General of Migration Management (Izmir DGMM), Turkish Ministry of Interior,

Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)

Objective

To develop a comprehensive, functional and tailor-made tool for the recognition of the qualifications of refugees from Syria within Turkish higher education;
To undertake research on the integration of refugees into Turkish higher education;
To produce evidence-based guidelines for higher education institutions on this.

Beneficiaries

313 students from Syria without documented qualifications.

Activities

- ▶ Testing of NOKUT's "Qualifications Passport for Refugees";
- ▶ Conducting interviews with 11 refugees from Syria in partnership with the Turkish Red Crescent Sultanbeyli Community Center and Refugees Association;
- ▶ Delivery of a training programme on recognition processes for qualifications to 44 stakeholders from higher education institutions, NGOs, and policy organisations;
- ▶ Undertaking evidence-based research on the integration of refugees from Syria into Turkish higher education, including interviews with representatives of Turkish higher education institutions on their procedures and policies in this area;
- ▶ Production of the publication, 'Refugee Students in European Higher Education: Comparative Country Cases' in which the integration of refugees into higher education in Norway, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom and Turkey was examined;
- ▶ Development of guidelines for Turkish higher education institutions on refugee integration.



Integrating Syrians into Lebanese higher education through recognition of qualifications

Lead institution

**Issam Fares Institute for Public Policies and International Affairs,
American University of Beirut (AUB)**

Partners

Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)

📍 Lebanon
€ Funding €47,843.42
↗️ October 2018 – September 2019

Objective

To build the capacity of Lebanese higher education institutions to support the integration of students from Syria through:

- ▶ The development of a tool for the recognition of qualifications and through evidence-based, qualitative research on the topic;
- ▶ The provision of career guidance and counselling services to Syrian students already enrolled in universities;
- ▶ The provision of information to students about the opportunities available to them in higher education;
- ▶ The development of guidelines for partner institutions on the implementation of the career guidance and counselling component of the project.

Beneficiaries

271 students from Syria

11 higher education institutions (with a high enrolment rate of refugees from Syria), scholarship providers, admission officers and MEHE personnel.

Activities

- ▶ Stakeholder consultation;
- ▶ Development of a recognition tool to facilitate admission to Lebanese higher education by refugees from Syria;
- ▶ Delivery of training to admissions officers and MEHE personnel on the recognition of refugees' credentials;
- ▶ Recruitment of Syrian youth to participate in the implementation and validation of the recognition tool at three Lebanese higher education institutions;
- ▶ Evidence-based qualitative research to explore how to better integrate refugees into Lebanese higher education. Integration was discussed from three different aspects, namely access to higher education institutions, inclusion and the feeling of belonging to the university's community, and academic performance. The study included surveys, interviews and focus groups;
- ▶ Production of a report on the research;
- ▶ Validation of the research findings through a national policy dialogue;
- ▶ Organisation of an event to disseminate the project's findings;
- ▶ Development of guidelines on the provision of career guidance and counselling to refugees for higher education institutions;
- ▶ Production of a video on the project.

INTEGRATION OF REFUGEE STUDENTS AND VULNERABLE YOUTH INTO HIGHER EDUCATION



ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND SUPPORT FOR ACADEMICS



Elite dialogue II: dialogue with Syrian refugees in Turkey through Syrian academics and postgraduate students



Lead institution

**Türkiye Mülteci Konseyi
(TMK; Turkish Refugee Council)**

Partners

Migration and Integration Research Center, Turkish German University

- 📍 Ankara, Turkey
- € Funding €53,170
- December 2017 - March 2019

Objective

To identify and improve understanding of the problems and challenges faced by Syrian postgraduate students and academics in Turkey with a view to developing sustainable strategies and policies for their integration, welfare and employment, and to enable them to act as mediators between the Syrian refugee community and Turkish society and institutions.

Beneficiaries

80 Syrian academics;

1,058 participants from 48 districts in Turkey;

Higher education institutions, NGOs, governmental institutions.

Activities

- ▶ Organisation of 4 workshops in Karabük, İstanbul and Mardin with the participation of 80 Syrian academics to discuss the legal and academic status of postgraduates and academics from Syria along with issues related to the social problems they face;
- ▶ Implementation of an online survey with 1,058 participants from 48 districts in Turkey on the education, livelihood and economic prospects and the social integration of undergraduates and postgraduates from Syria;
- ▶ Hosting of a closing workshop in İstanbul;
- ▶ Publication of a final report of the research.

AJYAL – an initiative to support arts education

Lead institution

Ettijahat – Independent Culture

- 📍 Lebanon
- 💶 Funding €60,000
- 📅 November 2018 - September 2019

Objective

To provide educational resources to Syrian artists and cultural practitioners living in Syria, the Arab region and Europe through a higher education grant system and an online educational video series.

Beneficiaries

9 Syrian and Palestinian artists from Syria;

12 jurors who participated as members of the selection committee;

At least 3,000 Arabic-speaking people, primarily young Syrians who were given access to SOBOL, a free educational series published on YouTube through Ettijahat's channel.

Activities

- ▶ The development of online resources for academics (e-ARTing) 'SOBOL' encompassing 8 videos of approximately 20 minutes' duration featuring interviews with experts in areas such as theatre, cultural mapping and music;
- ▶ Provision of AJYAL scholarships;
- ▶ Partnership-working with higher education institutions.

The programme attracted a diverse range of candidates representing numerous different fields of study, genders, social and economic backgrounds and geographical areas inside and outside Syria. This confirmed Ettijahat's hypothesis that young artists across the sector sorely needed (and will continue to need) Ajyal and other similar programmes. Feedback thus far has been overwhelmingly positive. This is primarily due to the fact that no programmes similar to Ajyal exist elsewhere in the Arab region. Grants for youth education in the arts are generally absent, with other institutions preferring to support established and older artists.

Ajyal has proven to be an extremely successful experiment in how Ettijahat can create networks for Syrians within the education and arts sectors. Ajyal addresses the vulnerability and fragmentation which are so widely felt across Syria, particularly through the online video platform. It is especially effective in addressing the polarisation between those who have remained in Syria and those who have relocated. Meanwhile, as the first grant-making programme of its kind in the region, Ajyal has responded to clear needs within the educational and civil society sectors.

The support of HOPES has been of extraordinary value for several reasons. First, as the only educational programme with an arts dimension, Ajyal has benefitted immensely from the vote of confidence and exposure offered by HOPES. In addition, HOPES has invited Ettijahat to participate in special seminars and talks to discuss alternative methods for supporting Syrians during times of crisis. These platforms have been invaluable in enabling Ettijahat programme staff to learn from their peers in the field, connect with like-minded education professionals and collaborate with other pioneers working in education development within the context of Syria. Finally, HOPES has been extremely supportive of Ettijahat's decision to support students, emerging artists and vulnerable groups in the first grant mechanism of its type in the region. This is very encouraging when Ettijahat looks to the future.

Furthermore, Ettijahat enjoys the transparent nature of the relationship it has had with HOPES, both on an institutional level and on a team-to-team level; they are available, enthusiastic and more than willing to link Ettijahat with other institutions in the same field. Ajyal has been Ettijahat's first programme to focus exclusively on education. Ettijahat has learned a tremendous amount about the educational sector in its preparation, design and implementation of the programme so far, looking at the needs of young people, methods of delivery in the education sector, existing frameworks for support and methodologies used by other non-governmental organisations. Ettijahat has benefitted significantly from learning from others in this field. None of this would have been possible without the support of HOPES.'

Abdullah Alkafri, Executive Director, Ettijahat-Independent Culture.

INNOVATIVE TEACHING SOLUTIONS



Empowering Syrian undergraduates to join MicroMasters programmes (SYMPRO): toward career-focused and affordable graduate studies

Lead institution

Yarmouk University

📍 Irbid, Jordan

€ Funding €8,000

↗ January 2018 - December 2018

Objective

To equip undergraduates from Syria and Jordan with the skills needed to obtain a [MicroMasters degree](#) (equivalent to 25% - 50% of a master's degree) offered online via edX, a MOOC platform, in two demanding fields: data science (analytics) and cyber security.

Beneficiaries

12 undergraduates from Syria and Jordan

Activities

- ▶ Survey of undergraduates' skills needs;
- ▶ Design and delivery of empowerment programmes: 'Introduction to Data Science' and 'Fundamentals in Cyber Security';
- ▶ Supporting participating students through weekly meetings, assignments, etc;
- ▶ Registration of students on MicroMasters courses on data analytics, big data and cyber-security. The programmes, validated by companies, are designed to be career-focused as well as affordable and accessible, facilitating affordable access to higher education that would enhance the students' employability;
- ▶ Increasing students' access to online graduate-level MOOC resources;
- ▶ Organisation of a certificate ceremony.

Blended learning for teachers' professional development in Lebanon

Lead institution

Centre for Lebanese Studies, Lebanese American University (LAU)

- 📍 Lebanon
- 💶 Funding €59,995
- 📅 September 2018 - September 2019

Objective

To provide teacher professional development (TPD) opportunities for education practitioners working in Lebanon, which would support the accommodation of refugees, children and young people from disadvantaged and marginalised backgrounds.

Beneficiaries

29 educational practitioners working across Lebanon in public schools, UNRWA schools and informal settings as well as trainee teachers from the Lebanese University;

100 direct beneficiaries including representatives from the MEHE, the Lebanese University, the Centre for Educational Research and Development (CERD), UNRWA, UNHCR, and Lebanese and Syrian NGOs, as well as teachers, academics and other stakeholders in Lebanon.

Activities

- ▶ Design and delivery of a blended learning teacher professional development programme accredited by LAU and UCL combining face-to-face learning and a massive open online course (MOOC) building on a pre-existing, five-year, multi-institutional research project conducted by UCL, the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the Lebanese American University;
- ▶ Provision of a six-day intensive summer school training workshop to enhance teachers' capacity to work with refugees and disadvantaged students in challenging environments;
- ▶ Documentary filming and development of communication tools;
- ▶ Hosting of closing event of the project and dissemination of results.

Partners

The Relief Centre, University College London (UCL)

'Across the institutions the trainee teachers were so interested in using digital tools and learning how to use them in their classes. They had three different goals. First, to learn about digital tools for education, second to learn how to use those different tools, and third to learn how to integrate those tools correctly in their teaching and learning experience through the creation of digital exercises for their own students. Their final objective was to teach in different ways in order to give their students a deeper knowledge of the content taught.'

Knowing that we are not too familiar with MOOCs in the Arab region, and that in some countries we do not trust online learning, one lesson learned from this experience will be to start MOOCs along with face-to-face tuition in order to make learners more comfortable. Another important thing learned from this experience is the need for Arabic MOOCs.

This project provided added value in the context of higher education because it gave access to graduates to a MOOC and to a face-to-face session which led them to develop themselves professionally and initiated them into the logic of a lifelong learning strategy as part of the sustainable development goals of our new millennium. The MOOC was inspiring for all teachers around the world who are working in challenging situations, and especially for the Syrian teachers. The trainee teachers acquired a good level of academic attainment, the whole project was very well prepared, and the whole team was very professional. Hoping that this experience will be duplicated in Lebanon in order to integrate little by little all school teachers, especially the public school teachers in Lebanon.'

Dr. Rima Malek, Educational Technology Specialist, Lebanese University.

Teacher training for technology: opening higher education for Syrians through improved teacher knowledge

Lead institution

SAFA for Professional Training & Development

Partner

EDaura

📍 Amman, Jordan

💶 Funding €59,190

↗ December 2018 - September 2019

Objective

To transform teaching and learning by preparing local educators to effectively integrate educational technologies into their teaching practice and by this means to ensure that graduates are better prepared for graduate study and employment.

Beneficiaries

Blended module:

14 trainers; 148 teachers who attended at least once;

3,543 students, 55% of whom were refugees from Syria.

Online course:

650 teachers.

Activities

- ▶ Transformation of Safa's pilot teacher-training curriculum into online and face-to-face packages;
- ▶ Curriculum design for the blended module;
- ▶ Distribution of the produced packages through the platform of EDaura - an education technology provider;
- ▶ Campaign on social media to encourage 150 teachers of refugees and marginalised host-community students to apply for the train-the-trainer sessions; Trainers' and teachers' recruitment and selection for the blended module;
- ▶ Face-to-face training of 150 teachers and provision of a peer-to-peer learning space on the EDaura platform. The training course encompassed:
 - An introduction to technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK);
 - Technology selection (SECTIONS framework);
 - Building innovation with technology;
 - An introduction to problem-based learning (PBL);
 - Leadership inside the classroom.
- ▶ Monitoring and evaluation of the blended module;
- ▶ Curriculum design for the online course;
- ▶ Designing and building the [online course](#) using a course authoring tool (Adapt Learning);
- ▶ Developing the quality assurance processes for the online course.

Sami Ismail Raji Zeidan, 42-year-old teacher from Jordan.

'The project offered me many benefits and I have gained many skills. I first underwent a training course on how to train teachers on the application of modern teaching strategies, then, on how to integrate modern technology tools with such strategies to achieve and employ e-learning in the education sector. Also, the project helped me gain active communication skills, public speaking, team-work skills, group-work management, role and function distribution, and adequate feedback-provision. The project also helped me discover new methods and ways of employing modern technologies in the education sector. We have witnessed positive and welcoming interaction from our colleagues in the field and students in handling this platform, the educational materials it suggests and the software that contributes to providing students with many skills and knowledge, thus increasing the quality and efficiency of education and improving its outcomes.'

'The project added a lot to our experience. Throughout the project we built a lot of new connections with the local community working to aid the Syrian crisis. We became more aware of the capabilities and limitations of the community we are targeting. Our blended course helped us create our online course and make it more appealing to our target audience. Thanks to HOPES, today SAFA is stronger than before and more knowledgeable in how to better help the Syrian refugees prepare for higher education and compete in the global market.'

Nidal Khalifeh, CEO, SAFA for Professional Training & Development

BARRIERS, SUPPORT, POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE STRATEGIES

The educational challenge: identifying barriers and seizing opportunities in higher education for Syrian refugees in Jordan

Lead institution

Centre for Strategic Studies, University of Jordan

📍 Amman, Jordan

€ Funding €57,800

↗ January 2018 - December 2018

Objective

To provide a comprehensive analysis of the circumstances and conditions of refugees from Syria enrolled in higher education in Jordan, identifying the barriers to access and successful participation and the opportunities for overcoming these barriers.

Beneficiaries

Survey of 1,675 students from Syria in 18 public and private higher education institutions in Jordan;

Representatives from local and international stakeholder organisations, policy-makers, higher education institutions;

More broadly, young refugees and higher education institutions.

Activities

- ▶ Survey of students from Syria designed and conducted;
- ▶ Interviews with academics and administrative staff undertaken;
- ▶ Focus groups of students from Syria to gain insight into the challenges they face and the opportunities available to them;
- ▶ Focus groups of representatives from local and international stakeholder organisations to provide insight into their perspective on enabling refugees from Syria to access higher education;
- ▶ Focus groups of policy-makers and representatives of higher education institutions in order to gain understanding of their policies and procedures in relation to students from Syria;
- ▶ Preparation of the [report](#) on the research;
- ▶ Organisation of a conference to discuss recommendations for evidence-based policy and practice.

INTEGRATION, PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND BREAKING THE BARRIERS

A training of trainers on psychological development of the refugee youths

Lead institution

Arab Open University

📍 Amman, Jordan
€ Funding €8,000
↗ November 2018 - December 2018

Objective

To conduct training workshops with Syrian and Jordanian university students between the ages of 18 and 25 on psychological development in order to help them to develop emotional intelligence, leadership skills, and social and creative thinking skills which will enable them to positively participate in their community.

Beneficiaries

**23 Syrian and Jordanian university students
(13 refugees and 10 host-community students)
between the ages of 18 and 25.**



Activities

- ▶ Development of interactive training material;
- ▶ Selection of the trainees;
- ▶ Delivery of 5 training workshops on psychological development and self-management, social and leadership skills, logical, arithmetic and innovative skills, linguistic and verbal skills, communication and dialogue skills and technical and artistic skills.

'Since the beginning, the participants were enthusiastic to be engaged in the project and showed the ability to help other refugees by explaining to them the rules and laws of the host country, how to apply to higher education institutions, and how to get a job. The participants indicated the importance of the project in constructing and forming the refugees' personalities, involving them in the Jordanian community, and enabling them to use technology to communicate with others.'

During the implementation of the project, there was recognition of the importance of the development of their personalities in order to be integrated into the host country. Some of the benefits acquired from this project included equipping the participants with the training skills to support refugees' psychological development, to improve their ability to get a job, to enhance their communication skills, and to help them to develop a rounded personality. Participants also learned about how to deal with people who faced problems during the war, and how to improve their practical and educational skills.'

Dr. Hussain Abu Rayash and Dr. Bahjat Altakhynah, Arab Open University, Jordan.

Bring future back: disability-based experience of Syrian students in the higher education system in Turkey (UDISES)

Lead institution

Disability Applied Research Center, Istanbul University

📍 Istanbul, Turkey

€ Funding €7,910

↗ December 2018 - June 2019

Objective

To investigate the experience of, and problems encountered by, students from Syria with a disability in higher education;

To support them to solve these problems and to participate in university and national disability networks;

To disseminate the success stories of the participants.

Beneficiaries

228 beneficiaries were reached including representatives of universities, NGOs and government institutions.

Activities

- ▶ The organisation of workshops to identify problems and produce solutions;
- ▶ Enhancement of the accessibility of the university website for Syrian and international students with a disability;
- ▶ Partnership-working with Syrian and Turkish NGOs, universities and municipalities in relation to disability and migration;
- ▶ Organisation of panel discussions;
- ▶ Collection and dissemination of the success stories of participants through various media including booklets, social media, a short documentary film '[Bring Future Back](#)' ;
- ▶ Presentation of the project's results at public meetings and international conferences;
- ▶ The [website](#) of Istanbul University's Disability Students Unit was enhanced with a section on international students, enabling them to find information in English and Arabic.



The Bring Future Back project started with interdisciplinary collaboration between the Faculty of Political Sciences and the Disability Research Center at Istanbul University. The aim of the project was to understand and bring to the fore the problems experienced in higher education by young refugees with disabilities from Syria and to search for opportunities for them. The project started with a lack of robust data and with limited knowledge about the dimensions of structural violence that Syrian youth with disabilities experience.

The desire for mutual learning and solidarity with Syrian refugees and disabled youth all through the project stimulated outreach to a significant number of disabled Syrian students and student networks. Our openness to learn about their experience and problems and our desire to listen to them, the provision of a high-profile platform where Syrian disabled students could express their desires and problems in front of important decision-makers and officials had tremendous impact on the success and value of the project.

Both project researchers and volunteer students disseminated the project material and presented the findings at several national and international conferences, such as the Migration Studies Society conference at the University of Oxford, UK. The project seminars, website recordings, and the final academic report brought the problems and opportunities for higher education of Syrian students with disabilities to the attention of state and societal actors at both the national and international level.

The HOPES grant scheme, funded by the "EU Madad Fund", provided us with the opportunity to raise awareness (both academic and social) on disability, migration, and access to higher education for Syrian youth with disability. It also promoted urgent calls for a principled and ethical shift of the general perspective from a needs-based approach to a rights-based approach to the upholding of the right to higher education of disabled migrants and refugees.'

Prof. Dr. Nurcan Ozgur Baklacioglu, Project Manager, IU Faculty of Political Sciences, Istanbul University; **Prof. Dr. Resa Aydin**, Senior Researcher, Disability Applied Research Center-ENUYGAR, Istanbul University; **Apak Kerem Altintop** and **Elcin İstif İnci**, Junior Researchers, Faculty of Political Sciences, Istanbul University.

Yasser Hashem

27-YEAR-OLD SYRIAN STUDENT, TURKEY

'When I had to drop my studies in 2012 due to the war, I was in my third year, then I spent 7 years living and working in a hospital under siege. One week before being displaced, I was shot during the bombing of the hospital I worked in. I came to Turkey 9 months ago and received healthcare in a military hospital in Ankara. I sent my university documents to 20 Turkish universities. One of them was Kocaeli University, in which I have to start from the first year. I'm learning the Turkish language here in Istanbul.'

My first day on campus is the best day at my university: a comprehensive pilot project on social cohesion and support for academic success of Syrian refugees

Lead institution

**İltica ve Göç Araştırmaları Merkezi
(IGAM; Research Centre on Asylum and Migration)**

- 📍 Ankara, Turkey
- 💶 Funding €59,810
- 📅 November 2018 - March 2019

Objective

To support the social integration and academic success of Syrian refugee university students at Karabük University;

To set up a good-practice model for future partnerships between NGOs and universities;

To gather data on the challenges that impede the integration of refugee students and Turkish students.

Beneficiaries

215 students;

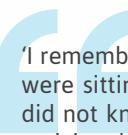
50 buddy students;

25 team leaders;

36 participants in the tandem storytelling.

Activities

- ▶ Orientation programme: Organisation of orientation week, introduction to Karabük University, a campus tour, informative conferences, cultural city tours and trips, and the provision of Museum cards, designed to help new students to adapt to their host city and university;
- ▶ Mentoring programme: Buddy mentoring through which Syrian students were "buddied" with Turkish students to provide academic, Turkish-language skills and social support;
- ▶ Organisation of "Tandem Story-Telling" sessions for Syrian and host-community students increasing their openness to other cultures, reducing prejudice and fostering social cohesion through story-telling in two languages;
- ▶ Development of social media pages.



'I remember our first meeting with students, they were sitting separately. Syrian students were sitting on the one side and Turkish students were sitting on the other side. They did not know each other, but at the end of our last activity, which was the story-telling activity, they were talking and joking with each other. Also, they helped each other with their exams and courses as if they were a team. Even after the project's completion, they helped each other as if we were still managing the project. In my opinion, through the story-telling activity they bonded strongly and understood each other. One Turkish student came to me and said he had prejudices about Syrians in Turkey, but it changed, and he understood their life-conditions were tough. I feel very lucky to have been a part of this project. Authorities should be more involved in higher education and support it. After higher education there should be another system to integrate students into business life. There should be more projects like HOPES for supporting higher education.'

Irem Aynagöz, Project Coordinator, IGAM

Afra Edibe Şenel

20-YEAR-OLD FROM TURKEY

'I was born in the USA then came to Turkey when I was 6-7 years old. Now I am studying Architecture at Karabuk University.'

My parents are Turkish so in Turkey I didn't have the challenges like others but during my early times in Turkey of course I had a problem with socialising because of the culture shock. The project helped me a lot. Now I have friends from different nationalities, which is awesome. It helped me to like the city, Karabuk. It showed me I can do different things that I cannot imagine that I could do.'



Psychosocial support-services for Syrian refugee students in Erbil

Lead institution

Hawler Medical University

📍 Erbil, KRI.

€ Funding €8,000

↗ April 2019 - December 2019

Objective

To establish a psychosocial support centre and provision of psychosocial support services for refugee students from Syria and other students from the host community in Erbil in order to deal with psychological, social and psychiatric problems among the students.

Beneficiaries

200 refugee students from Syria and the host community.

Activities

- ▶ Establishment of a centre for psychosocial support at Hawler Medical University and staffing of the centre with an expert team of specialists and academics, including psychiatrists, psychologists and a social worker;
- ▶ Holding psychological education seminars and workshops to raise awareness about mental health issues amongst students;
- ▶ Providing recreational and rehabilitation aids to help students be independent and active in the community;
- ▶ Providing psychotherapy sessions.

Path of hopes

Lead institution

Abdullah Gül University (AGU)

📍 Kayseri, Turkey

€ Funding €60,000

↗ November 2018 - September 2019

Partners

Nuh Naci Yazgan University; Erciyes University; Open Arms Kayseri.

Objective

To increase the number of refugees and vulnerable youth in the host community enrolling in further or higher education programmes by:

- ▶ supporting their transition into further or higher education;
- ▶ breaking down stereotypes about Syrian and Turkish communities to foster social integration;
- ▶ building the capacity of the participating partners to support refugees.

The Youth Factory is a youth-oriented centre at AGU that trains youth, brings skills to life, provides an international vision, encourages young people to be creative and innovative, enables them to participate in social life and express the pleasure of learning and producing together. Young people are desperately in need of learning more about universities and coaching. One piece of feedback given by the director was quite interesting: "thanks to the crises we learned how to teach our language to a foreigner and we developed materials and methods that were not in existence before at all." Another shining example is actively engaging our Erasmus+ and EVS (European Voluntary Service) volunteers in the project. This created an intercultural dimension and also fostered the good practice of creating synergy among EU funds.

It was such a great learning experience both for our organisation and our beneficiaries. Before the project, we didn't have any experience of working with refugees but we had the chance to interact with them directly, work in the field, and understand their constraints and needs much better. It was also a great opportunity for us to strengthen our societal impact. Although our project was a non-academic project, it was very nice that we had the opportunity to get to know other HOPES projects that showed us various forms of working with refugees and inspired us for our future project ideas. The project created a great path for us in collaborating with CSOs [civil society organisations], and we are signing a protocol for further cooperation with MUDEM (Refugee Support Center in Turkey) that will enable our students to develop projects, be an intern and to contribute in the society and also enable our academics to undertake common research. It was such a great learning experience with lots of challenges and opportunities and unforgettable memories left behind.'

Zeynep Tuğçe ÇİFTÇİBAŞI GÜÇ, AGU Youth Factory

Beneficiaries

92 refugees from Syria and vulnerable youth in the host community;

99 participants reached through workshops;

Youth-workers in Kayseri, higher education institutions and organisations.

Activities

- ▶ Analysis of the educational profile and support needs of 92 refugee students from Syria and of youth in the host community from two secondary schools in Kayseri;
- ▶ Preparation of a report on this analysis;
- ▶ Design and delivery of guidance sessions, entitled "Pathway to University", on regulations, students' rights and responsibilities, higher education programmes, the recognition of prior learning, scholarships and other opportunities to over 90 Syrian and Turkish students;
- ▶ Dissemination of guidance via social media to more than 500 Syrian and 10,000 Turkish youth;
- ▶ Hosting of training workshops on intercultural learning, social entrepreneurship and conflict transformation living for 80 vulnerable youth;
- ▶ Providing 5 "training of trainers" sessions for youth-workers from 3 universities and 20 organisations;
- ▶ Providing networking opportunities and peer-support sessions for participants.

A photograph of a person's hands writing on a stack of papers. The image is overlaid with a blue-toned geometric pattern consisting of triangles and polygons.

BEYOND HIGHER EDUCATION

COUNSELLING AND CAREER GUIDANCE

The diagram consists of two main sections. On the left, a large teal arrow points from the title 'COUNSELLING AND CAREER GUIDANCE' down to a box containing project details. On the right, a smaller teal arrow points from the same title down to a box containing a list of activities.

Higher education and career mentoring for Syrian youth (HEM4SY)

Lead institution Hasan Kalyoncu University	Partner Helpzone
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📍 Gaziantep, Kilis, Hatay and Şanlıurfa, Turkey
€ Funding €59,500
📅 December 2017 - September 2018

Objective
To empower Syrian and host-community youth of post-secondary age between the ages of 18 and 24 to build their own careers by fulfilling their educational needs and providing career mentoring.

Beneficiaries
1,491 young people aged between 18 and 24;
Teachers and youth leaders, universities, chambers, municipalities, the Provincial Directorate of National Education, civil society organisations.

Activities

- ▶ Analysis of the current situation/needs assessment in 4 provinces (Gaziantep, Hatay, Kilis and Şanlıurfa) regarding 230 Syrian and vulnerable youth;
- ▶ Provision of 5 days of career training and mentoring to young people;
- ▶ Establishment of an education and career mentoring centre in Hasan Kalyoncu University in Gaziantep in order to support young people to continue their education, obtain suitable employment and advance their career;
- ▶ The provision of mentoring and coaching for Syrian and Turkish youth in order to encourage them to pursue higher education and to enhance their employability in the 4 provinces;
- ▶ The provision of Turkish language courses in Gaziantep, Kilis, Hatay and Şanlıurfa;
- ▶ Selection and training of a group of 10 youth leaders for follow up with the alumni club for youth and of 17 teachers;
- ▶ Establishment of an interactive web portal (resources and guidance on education and employment opportunities in the region);
- ▶ Hosting a networking seminar (75 persons including representatives from the private sector) on communication and employment.

HOPE 4 EDUCATION

Lead institution

Nişantaşı University

📍 Turkey
€ Funding €59,296
↗ January 2018 - November 2018

Objective

To support students from Syria to advance their personal and career development through the provision of information and advice, and of innovative certified technical and vocational educational training.

Beneficiaries

50 students from Syria completed certified technical and vocational education;

500 students from Syria from 10 universities were informed about the opportunities for career development and the benefits of higher education.

Activities

- ▶ Hosting an information day on the training and support available through the project;
- ▶ Development and dissemination of resources through seminars, social media and handbooks;
- ▶ Design and delivery of short training courses;
- ▶ Facilitation of dialogue between Turkish and Syrian students through "Çay Talks";
- ▶ Hosting of the "Support Education 4 All" seminars to raise awareness about the importance of higher education for students from Syria;
- ▶ Development of certified short courses on:
 - Academic Administration and Structures;
 - Business Career Planning;
 - Entrepreneurship;
 - Teamwork, Communication, Problem Solving, Intercultural Dialogue.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE LABOUR MARKET

Certificate programme for Syrian refugees (CPSR)

Lead institution
Istanbul Aydin University (IAU)

- 📍 Istanbul, Turkey
- € Funding €46,900
- ↗ October 2017– August 2018

Objective

To increase the employability of students from Syria and to support their integration into higher education through the provision of activities and training courses incorporating job-specific modules.

Beneficiaries

82 young people from Syria aged 18-25 participated in the programme;

Over 8,500 young people were reached through outreach activities and social media.

Activities

- ▶ Student outreach activities;
- ▶ Recruitment and selection of students from Syria residing in Istanbul who had graduated from high school and had a good level of proficiency in English, but who had been unable to progress to higher education;
- ▶ Development and delivery of 10 weeks of training courses (7 hours per week) on financial management, computer programming, and marketing strategy to young refugees;
- ▶ Hosting of life-skills and career development workshops;
- ▶ Hosting of a closing ceremony and panel discussion on “Increasing the Employability of Syrian Youth”;
- ▶ Evaluation surveys and interviews.

Transferring e-business fundamentals to Syrian refugees (TEFSR)

Lead institution
Yarmouk University

- 📍 Irbid, Jordan
- 💶 Funding €39,250
- 📅 December 2018 - June 2019

Objective

To provide Syrian refugees with the necessary skills to set up and operate an e-commerce business using the latest open-source technologies, and to equip them to pursue degree-level study in higher education in the disciplines of ICT and business administration.

Beneficiaries

121 students from Syria and Jordan

Activities

- ▶ The provision of courses on web-development and e-commerce;
- ▶ The supervision of students' projects;
- ▶ The provision of training courses for trainers;
- ▶ Creation and management of the [project website](#).

Mohannad Al Issa

25-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN JORDAN.

'When I first came to Jordan, I was wounded due to Syrian aerial shelling in 2013. I completed my Bachelor's in Business Administration at Irbid National University, and graduated in 2016. Then I joined the Master's in Business Administration at Al Bayt University. I am a sociable person and I love volunteering. I am perseverant, ambitious and always looking for the better.'

The project has helped me to adapt to Jordanian society, to get along with Jordanian friends with no clashes, to improve my English language, to enter the job market, to undertake my own project "Be Leader" and to earn income that fulfils my basic needs, to become self-sufficient, to obtain training certificates that were useful for my project, to upgrade my CV, to acquire many skills and to meet new friends who work in the same field.'

Mohammad Faysal Mouhayen

27-YEAR-OLD FROM SYRIA LIVING IN JORDAN.

'I came to Jordan in 2013 and started working in business as an entrepreneur. I faced many challenges, such as difficulty getting my official documents to register at the university, the inability to pay my university tuition fees, difficulty reconciling study and work, instability resulting from difficulty in finding a home that meets my needs, the suffering, the stress, and the exhaustion I've been through, difficulty adapting to the host community and difficulty mastering English.'

The project helped me to acquire a lot of skills that enabled me to go into the job market, get a trainer's training certificate for my ability to transfer my skills to educated students, spend my free time acquiring skills that have benefitted me later, gain experience that helped me set up a maintenance project which increased my salary, integrate with Jordanians which enriched the cultural exchange between us and master English.'

Soft skills training for Syrians in Northern Iraq

Lead institution

MSELECT

- 📍 Erbil, Iraq
- 💶 Funding €59,616
- 📅 December 2017 - December 2018

Objective

To provide training in soft skills to Syrian refugees in Iraq to enable them to thrive in the workplace.

Beneficiaries

311 Syrian refugees living in northern Iraq (across Erbil and inside camps in Qushtapa, Baserma, Darashakr, Domiz and Kawergosi).

Activities

- ▶ Selection of trainers;
- ▶ Delivery of a series of internationally certified soft skills courses, which were accredited by the World Bank/International Finance Council;
- ▶ The training consisted of 20 mini-diploma workshops and Business Edge™ courses (each of 1–2 days' duration) comprised of the following modules:
 - Planning and controlling work;
 - Communicating effectively;
 - Problem-solving;
 - Decision-making.



Customer focus and cashier online simulation training and certification in Arabic/English

Lead institution

Luminus Technical University College (LTUC)

- 📍 Jordan
- € Funding €60,000
- ↗ November 2018 - September 2019

Objective

To enhance the customer service and cashier skills of Syrian and vulnerable Jordanian students and employees in the retail, hair and beauty, and hospitality sectors in Jordan.

Beneficiaries

3,563 Syrian and vulnerable Jordanian students and employees.

Activities

- ▶ Translation into English and Arabisation (translation and cultural contextualisation) of the online simulation cashier training and customer focus training and certification programme developed by the Dutch Simulation Crew organisation;
- ▶ Training and certification of 2,000 registered Syrian and vulnerable Jordanian students at Luminus;
- ▶ Training of 1,500 employees (70% certified) of companies linked to the Employment Hub of Luminus;
- ▶ Provision of the “Train the Trainers” programme to 50 high performers enabling further peer-to-peer training to be delivered in the future to ensure sustainability;
- ▶ Strengthening of the link with the retail, hospitality and hair and beauty industry in Jordan in order to increase the job opportunities for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanian youth.

'Luminus Education has worked with HOPES on several diverse projects from higher education qualifications to language development and employment skills. Each of the projects has facilitated the engagement of vulnerable youth to provide life-changing opportunities and skills development. The HOPES team has been a very supportive partner, willing to discuss ideas and accommodate changes when unforeseen circumstances radically impact plans! This partnership approach has allowed Luminus to deliver high-quality projects that have a real impact on the lives of the youth involved and their families. The most recent project involved translating and contextualising two simulation games into Arabic and English, which over 2,000 students have been able to access free of charge. As many of the most vulnerable students work and study this has allowed them to undergo relevant employability skills training in a fun context and allowed us to trial the use of simulations as a way of delivering learning, not a common approach in the region. Lessons learned will inform the integration of these simulations and others into the mainstream curricula to provide a blended learning delivery format which in turn will widen access. Everybody wins! Thank you HOPES!'

Dr. Amanda Kelleher, Director – International Education, Luminus Education.

ENTREPRENEUR: Building entrepreneurship capacities for Syrian and Jordanian higher education students in northern Jordan

Lead institution

Yarmouk University

- 📍 Irbid, Jordan
- 💶 Funding €52,420
- 📅 June 2018 - May 2019

Objective

To create entrepreneurs through building an on-campus innovation platform for Syrian refugee and Jordanian university students in northern Jordan.

Beneficiaries

105 Syrian refugee and Jordanian university students.

Activities

- ▶ Needs-analysis undertaken;
- ▶ Development of an implementation plan, and of a quality and evaluation plan;
- ▶ Creation of the project website and Facebook page;
- ▶ Designing and delivering training courses on entrepreneurship and relevant cutting-edge technologies;
- ▶ Establishment of an on-campus business incubator to host innovative ideas;
- ▶ Connecting the young entrepreneurs with business acceleration programmes to help them to start their own businesses;
- ▶ Organisation of a competition for innovative ideas from students;
- ▶ Hosting the closing event;
- ▶ Video production.



'By including both Syrian and vulnerable Jordanian students, the project contributed to social integration between these target groups in the host community.'

A particular strength of this project lies in its sustainable approach present on several levels. From the infrastructure perspective, the business incubator with its technical facilities is strategically positioned within the existing entrepreneurship centre at the university and so will continue to fulfil its purpose after the project has finished. Furthermore, the training materials developed specifically for this project will be readily used for other training opportunities and are also freely available through the project's website. In terms of personnel, the project has contributed to capacity-building by forging new relationships with the industry and will enable the trained students to transfer their knowledge to their peers after the end of the project.'

Dr. Mwaffaq Otoom, Director of International Relations and Projects, Yarmouk University.

4



INFORMATION, NETWORKING AND STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES

Communication, dialogue and networking were fundamental pillars of the HOPES project's endeavour to provide better access to quality further and higher education opportunities for vulnerable youth from Syria as well as for those from host communities across the region. Through the adoption of a cross-cutting, people-oriented and comprehensive communication strategy, the HOPES team was able to successfully achieve the objectives of supporting the efficient implementation of the planned activities as well as the widespread dissemination of information about the project, its achievements and impact.

The overall goal of the communication strategy was two-fold.

On the one hand, its purpose was to disseminate information about the HOPES scholarship fund, academic counselling, the HEEAP language courses, the calls for proposals, and the available educational opportunities, as well as HOPES activities, achievements and outcomes.

On the other hand, it sought to provide a networking platform for policy dialogue, knowledge-exchange and collaboration and to build a HOPES community and network which would foster a sense of belonging to the project among both students and institutions and enable them to participate, to voice their opinions, and to share their expertise and learning.

The strategy also aimed to highlight the key role played by the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the 'EU Madad Fund', in the sector of higher education within the context of the Syrian crisis.

4.1 CREATION OF THE HOPES IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY

Through the communication strategy, the HOPES team sought to reach a wide range of stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels. These stakeholder groups encompassed refugees from Syria of post-secondary-age, young people in the host communities affected by the large influx of refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey and Northern Iraq-KRI, government officials and representatives of further and higher education institutions.

4.1.1 THE HOPES VISUAL IDENTITY AND LOGO

In order to ensure that all of the HOPES communication campaigns, activities, tools and publications reflect a unique, consistent and distinctive image with which the project as a whole is associated, the project team created a HOPES branded visual identity. This symbolized the HOPES project as well as reflecting its main objectives and the values of the partners, enhancing the image and reputation of HOPES amongst students and institutions.

4.1.2 PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS AND INFORMATION TOOLS

Throughout the project, student-focused and institutional communication campaigns were designed and implemented to provide information to relevant stakeholders about the opportunities open to them, and to promote and disseminate the outcomes of the HOPES project at the national, regional and European levels.

The promotion of the activities and the dissemination of the outcomes of the project were carried out through various platforms and networks, using announcements, factsheets, mailshots, WhatsApp messages, focus groups, outreach meetings, information sessions, participation in student fairs, the organisation of award and graduation ceremonies, as well as short documentaries. The activities were strongly people-oriented – **for the people, about the people and giving a voice to the people** – and revolved around the students, their stories and their achievements.

4.1.3 COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE HOPES WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The myriad communication campaigns and activities which were undertaken throughout the project were underpinned by the official HOPES project website (www.hopes-madad.org). This was the cornerstone of the HOPES communication strategy, providing a platform to raise awareness about the higher education opportunities available to students. In addition, HOPES social media channels were key to strengthening the HOPES community, stimulating discussion and enabling outreach to students and institutional stakeholders.

HOPES social media channels

Facebook: **HOPES-Madad**

Twitter: **@HOPES-Madad**

YouTube channel: **HOPES-Madad**

4.1.4 ONLINE CATALOGUE OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

One of the key aspects of the HOPES communication campaign was the dissemination of information about the study programmes and scholarship opportunities available in the region. While social media provided an important channel for promoting opportunities, the online catalogue of further and higher education study opportunities, which was hosted on the HOPES website (at www.hopes-madad.org/online-scholarship-catalog/), represented a particularly important resource. In creating this online resource, the HOPES team responded effectively to the strong demand from students and prospective students for information on opportunities for study in the region, and enabled the five HOPES Education Desks to provide up-to-date information and advice to students directly and through information sessions.

4.1.5 THE HOPES COMMUNITY'S SUCCESS STORIES

The HOPES alumni webpage (www.hopes-madad.org/alumni) provided a forum for the promotion of students' success stories and achievements. More broadly, the publication of articles and of the stories of students who benefitted from the HOPES project and the 'EU Madad Fund' helped to strengthen students' sense of affiliation to the HOPES project, supporting the development of an enduring HOPES alumni network in the future as well as highlighting the added value of HOPES.



Ansam Adam Kamel Alnadi

25-YEAR-OLD JORDANIAN AWARDED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A MASTER'S IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AT THE JORDAN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

'My favourite achievement is that I am a HOPES family member. The HOPES scholarship provided me with hope, and still does. It taught me the love of volunteering, made me feel that I have importance and proved to us that our love for learning is valued despite our financial challenges.'

HOPES communications - Key stats

205,303
person engaged with

6,916
contacts in the
HOPES database

HOPES online engagement



HOPES website

298,626
page views



Facebook

789,320
reach
(7,452 likes)



Twitter

365,351
total impressions



YouTube channel

24,163
views

4.2 NETWORKING

The HOPES team attached great importance to networking, which was supported through one-to-one meetings and presentations to a range of institutions and stakeholders in each of the five participating countries in the region. In addition, the HOPES team participated actively in national, regional and international networks as well as in national tertiary education groups and committees seeking to enhance collaboration and to foster synergies with other initiatives. The attendance of HOPES representatives at a range of meetings and conferences, both within the region and across Europe, also played an important role in disseminating the achievements of the HOPES project through presentations and exhibits. More broadly, through the organisation of focus groups and workshops, HOPES provided platforms for knowledge-exchange and networking, supporting engagement with key institutional stakeholders as well as with students.

4.3 NATIONAL STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES AND REGIONAL CONFERENCES

In response to the Syrian crisis, a range of measures were taken by national and international stakeholders in the region, including the identification of the challenges faced by students from Syria, the exploration of new pedagogical approaches and the design of tailored educational programmes to better address their educational needs.

Within this context, 20 national stakeholder dialogues and 2 regional conferences were organised with 779 participants through the HOPES project across the five participating countries, providing a platform for discussion and knowledge-exchange with a view to enhancing collaboration and supporting the coordination of targeted interventions in response to the Syrian crisis in the further and higher education sector in the region.

These events brought together representatives of EU delegations, ministries of education, and further and higher education institutions as well as students and other key stakeholders. The inclusion of students amongst the delegates participating in these events ensured that the student voice was heard and that the needs of students were understood.

The first round of national stakeholder dialogues was devoted to understanding the impact of the crisis on countries across the region, mapping the challenges presented and the responses to these challenges and exploring opportunities for new approaches to be adopted at the national level.

The recommendations which emerged from these dialogues supported the development of a blueprint for future dialogues and conferences, the two being inextricably linked. In addition, the outcomes of the national dialogues fed into the regional conferences, which in turn informed subsequent discussions and debate at the national level.

The topics for discussion during the dialogues and conferences were selected on the basis of the needs and priorities identified by participating stakeholders, supporting in-depth discussion about approaches to enabling both refugee students and institutions to overcome the challenges they face as well as supporting the exchange of knowledge and experience, networking, and the development of recommendations for future policy.

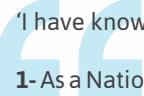
The reports on the national dialogues and regional conferences are available on the HOPES website at www.hopes-madad.org/national-stakeholder-dialogues/.



Malek Mohammad El Awad

28-YEAR-OLD SYRIAN LIVING IN LEBANON. AWARDED A HOPES SCHOLARSHIP FOR A MASTER'S IN ARABIC LANGUAGE AT THE LEBANESE UNIVERSITY.

'The HOPES scholarship has supported me and encouraged me until I reached my goal. It played the role of a mother who cares for her children. If it were not for HOPES, I would not be where I am today. It was the only saviour, for me and for other students, and I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation towards it, and towards the HOPES team who did not hesitate to help us.'



'I have known HOPES in 3 contexts:

- 1- As a National Coordinator of the Erasmus+ programme in Lebanon. HOPES being part of the Madad programme it represented an EU sister programme that complemented the activities of the Erasmus+ programme.
- 2- As an evaluator in some of the rounds of selection of projects to be funded by HOPES.
- 3- As a partner in many meetings, seminars and roundtables that addressed issues of common interest.

My comments are all based on these contexts and on our follow-up of HOPES activities in Lebanon.

When the spillover of the Syrian crisis was at its peak and started to strike Lebanese society very strongly, the HOPES project under the EU-funded Madad programme came at the right time to ease the severity of this crisis, to respond to the repercussions in education caused by the large influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon and to cope with the multitude of tense relations between refugees and hosting communities.

With its tens of small projects, HOPES managed to provide educational support to both refugees and host communities in the field of training, counselling, teaching, upskilling and employability enhancement.

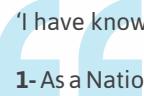
HOPES complemented the Erasmus+ capacity-building projects in the fields of recognition, research for better solutions, integration and connected learning. HOPES offered financial support to a generation of youth striving to stay connected to education, hoping not to be lost and dreaming to be able to reconstruct their country and reshape their future.'

Dr. Aref Alsoufi, Director of National Erasmus+ Office, Lebanon

4.3 THE HOPES COMMUNITY - AN ENDURING LEGACY

Through the national stakeholder dialogues and the regional conferences, as well as through the communication, networking and dissemination activities that the HOPES team implemented, the HOPES project forged a community that spans national and international borders. It is the sense of belonging to this community which will endure beyond the lifespan of the project, with the friendships and connections made supporting on-going collaboration and cooperation at the local, national, regional and international levels to address the on-going challenges which the Syrian crisis presents both for refugees and for the local people in host communities.

The support of the European Union continues in Lebanon through the €8.4 million follow-up HOPES-LEB project (Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians and vulnerable youth in Lebanon). HOPES-LEB (April 2020 - December 2023) is funded by the European Union, through the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, the 'EU Madad Fund', and implemented by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Campus France and Nuffic. It aims at improving livelihood prospects through higher education opportunities for vulnerable Lebanese youth and refugees from Syria in Lebanon thus increasing their chances for a better future.



'Everyone involved in this project has developed one way or another due to the different activities related to it. Teachers, for instance, developed professionally speaking through receiving capacity building workshops in teaching English as a second language and also throughout their journey of teaching in this project. Students were given the opportunity to develop both academically, by improving their English, and also socially through the integration activities we included as part of their learning process throughout the project.'

Also, meetings with stakeholders, national dialogue events, and even regional conferences were all great opportunities for networking and meeting with experts in higher education and civil society actors. This had a good impact on the local community of the host institution of the project, in this case, Mansoura University.'

Samah Elsaïd Muhammad, Assistant Lecturer and local Project Coordinator, Mansoura University



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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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More Information about the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, the EU Madad Fund: The EU Madad Fund was established in 2014 in order to allow for a coordinated response to the Syrian crisis and to provide Syrian refugees and host communities in the countries neighbouring Syria with the needed support. To date, the EU Madad Fund has mobilised 2.2 billion Euro for projects in the spheres of education, livelihood, health, protection and water management.

Find out more: https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/content/home_en

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