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UniRef Launches Pilot Project to Offer University Education for 100 Syrian Refugees



Classes begin on August 17 in Amman, Jordan, in partnership with IFRC, Red Crescent Societies and Jordan Red Crescent; 5-year mission will cover 5,000 refugees

Dubai, August 13, 2020: After two years of determined efforts, in partnership with the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) and the Jordan Red Crescent, UniRef (University for Refugees) is launching a pilot project to provide university education for 100 Syrian refugees in Amman, Jordan. This is part of a five-year mission that will cover 5,000 student refugees.

Yvelyne Wood, CEO and Co-founder of UniRef, says: “Despite the current pandemic, UniRef in partnership with the Jordan Red Crescent has worked relentlessly to provide professional trainings to the refugee population to give them access to the labor market and, eventually, lift themselves and their family out of poverty.”

The UniRef program is intended for young war victims who could become a lost generation if they are not given the opportunity to fulfill their potential. In the future, UniRef graduates could participate in the reconstruction of their country of origin or the economic development of their host country. This education program is free.

Dr. Fawzi Abdulla Amin, International, Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, commented: 'Beyond all the challenges of disaster response, we at IFRC are

committed to a strategy focused on reducing refugees' vulnerability and poverty. To achieve these objectives, we have joined hands with UniRef, an organization that shares the same values and goals. The IFRC purpose is to take action by saving the youth through education and we are fully committed to cooperate in the UniRef mission providing support for the young Syrian refugees living in Jordan, as well as for the host community.”

His Excellency Dr. Mohammed Al-Hadid, Jordan Red Crescent President, said: “We have been working along with our partners UniRef and the IFRC in Geneva on a proposal for an educational program for Syrian refugees in Jordan. This program will help prepare young people among the Syrian refugees and the most vulnerable in the local communities, to face life's challenges. We are confident this program will inspire refugee youth to develop new skills and capabilities in IT, Agriculture and Health sectors, giving them the education they need to build a better life for both them and their families. Diplomas will be certified by the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Health in Jordan.”

Yvelyne Wood, CEO and Co-founder of UniRef, says: “UniRef's goal is to enable young refugees to obtain a higher education diploma that will enable them to rebuild their lives. We strongly believe that providing access to higher education for refugees in Jordan constitutes a sustainable way to offer them valuable knowledge and skills that will facilitate their social and professional integration into society. We are all deeply committed to ensure a better future for young refugees whose lives have been tragically disrupted by persecutions, armed conflicts and forced displacements. In the long-term, our mission will contribute to better the living conditions for future generations.”

UniRef is a Swiss humanitarian non-governmental organization and recognized charity, founded in 2013 by Yvelyne Wood and Bryan Wood, and headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. The beneficiaries of the UniRef mission will be Syrian refugees living in Jordan's urban settings as well as Jordanians who are unable to cover their university costs.

According to UNHCR statistics, refugees stay on average between 7 and 15 years in refugee camps. Less than 3% of young refugees who are of studying age have access to university education.

According to the Jordan Red Crescent, 1.35 million Syrian refugees have found refuge in Jordan, while only 632,000 of them have been registered under the UNHCR. Around 85% of them live in Jordan's largest cities, including the capital city of Amman.