

## Working Group Overviews

The conference will feature five working sessions. Each conference participant will have the opportunity to select which session to participate in during the final 90 minutes of the conference. The objectives of these sessions are twofold:

- To work collectively to develop strong project proposals
- To identify how participants can play a role in implementing these projects

One of the primary objectives of our conference is to create opportunities for participants to get involved in creating solutions for the challenges Syrians are facing. These sessions are meant to facilitate that and should be a highlight of the event. We hope you are as excited about them as we are!

Two of Jusoor's main programs this year came out these sessions at last year's conference: (1) our refugee education program and (2) an online searchable database for our members to find each other (launching soon!)(break)(break)

Below, please find a description of the workshops:

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### **Education: Emergency Funding for Syrian University Students in the UK**

Working Session Facilitator: Christine Gilmore, Doctoral Candidate at University of Leeds

The civil war in Syria is threatening the financial security and well-being of hundreds of Syrian students enrolled in higher education institutes (HEIs) in the UK. Having lost access to vital sources of funding from Syria, these students now face rising debts and, in some cases, expulsion from their universities. This working group will discuss how to strengthen a proposed project underway to develop a coordinated response to support Syrian students among the government, universities, and NGOs in the UK.

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### **Education: Scaling Jusoor's refugee education programme**

Working Session Facilitators: Amr Al Khateeb, PhD Student in Marketing at Henley Business School, University of Reading; Alexandra Chen: Regional Conflict & Child Protection Advisor, Mercy Corps

Jusoor's refugee education programme in Lebanon, which is providing basic education and uplifting activities for Syrian refugees, is now reaching 150 children. The magic of the

programme is that it has been run by volunteers from around the world who are eager to get involved. Meanwhile, there are well over 300,000 Syrian school-aged refugee in Lebanon now, the vast majority of whom are not in education programs. This working group will look to address how Jusoor can dramatically expand the scope of its programme.

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### **Jobs: Preserving Syrian Businesses**

Working Session Facilitator: Iyad Alajdad, Head of Investment Banking at Generation Alfa

Due to current unrest many of Syrian businesses were lost, disturbed or relocated. Together; Syrian businessmen and qualified workforce escaped Syria to more stable countries. Although this forms a serious drain of knowledge and capital in the short term, it could also be an opportunity to spare those resources and grow them away from the current unrest so that they are ready to contribute and invest in Syria once it settles and form an anchor economic power during the re-building phase. This working group will address the idea of creating a fund and expertise house that is supported by various investors to co-invest with Syrian businessmen who are building their operations outside Syria in a fashion similar to that of private equity funds.

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### **Economy: Scaling Jusoor's Career Development Program**

Working Session Facilitator: Aziza Osman, Career Development Program Lead

The Career Development Program was launched in 2012 to address the growing unemployment of Syrians fleeing the country. The competitive job market makes it hard for Syrians to find employment outside of Syria. Through workshops and mentorship, Jusoor trains Syrians on the fundamentals of choosing a career and competing in today's job market. Our mentorship program targets Syrians seeking advice in a specific field by pairing them with experienced mentors who clarify the job role, define the industry's market and refer job opportunities. This group will discuss the importance and urgency of mentoring Syrians and propose ways that encourage professionals to volunteer as mentors and adopt mentorship as ongoing endeavor. In addition, we hope to be able to institutionalize the program and invite more companies to support employment efforts for young Syrian job seekers.