

Panel Overviews

The conference will feature three panel discussions: economics, education and case studies, and social capital. After these panels, the conference will wrap up with participants and professionals working together in sessions to identify concrete projects the global Syrian community can develop and lead to address the previously discussed challenges.

Panel 1: Getting Syrians Back to Work— Restoring Dignity and Livelihood through Enterprise

A tremendous number of Syrians, including both those internally displaced and refugees, are facing economic hardship. Hunger, sickness and homelessness are now widespread. Youth at their prime have had their lives stopped abruptly in their tracks. Human potential is being wasted, and, even worse, the suffering is growing more extreme every day.

This panel seeks to explore practical solutions for the economic crisis the Syrian people are now enduring. How do we help Syrians who remain in Syria sustain their local businesses? What can we do to help Syrians who have moved to new countries, from Lebanon to Greece, establish micro enterprises? How can we help instill a culture of entrepreneurship among Syrian youth in order to keep the Syrian economy going?

Panel Moderator: Abulsalam Haykal: Founder, Haykal Media

Speakers:

- Kinan Bahnassi: Project Director, Labour Market Observatory at United Nations Development Programme
 - Karim Samakie: Investment Associate, Oasis 500
 - Ayman Tabaa: Chairman, Syrian Economic Forum
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Panel 2: Giving our Children a Chance— Addressing Syria's Education Crisis through Non-Traditional Solutions

A large number of children in Syria have had their education disrupted either as a result of their schools being destroyed or due to other factors that prevent them from attending school. Others have fled the country and are experiencing difficulties in enrolling and staying in the local school system. This panel explores alternative education methods for Syrian students both inside and outside Syria. How can safe access to education be provided for children in

conflict zones? What can be done to enable children to continuously and easily complete their education in a way that meets international standards and attains full accreditation?

In addition, the panel highlights the importance of vocational training and how to encourage youth vocational education to supplement traditional education. This, in turn, enables Syrians to cope with the conflict and accelerate the recovery. How can a viable vocational training programme be built at the national level? How can Syrian refugees be engaged through vocational training programmes to be self-reliant?

Panel moderator: Susan Nicolai: Head of Project, Development Progress, ODI

Speakers:

- Alexandra Chen: Regional Conflict & Child Protection Advisor, Mercy Corps
 - Massa Mufti-Hamwi: Education Management Consultant
 - Shiza Shahid: Executive Director of the Malala Fund
 - Professor John Akker: Global Higher Education and Employment Specialist
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Panel 3: Nation Building and Civic Engagement: Towards an Effective Civil Society in Syria

A well-developed strategy for empowering and institutionalizing the nascent Civil Society in Syria is critical to ensuring that Syria becomes a well-functioning democratic state. Over the past two and a half years, Syria's emerging civil society has managed to carry out massive humanitarian efforts, filling many gaps left by the state and civil institutions, despite monumental challenges. However, the focus of the Syrian Civil Society— whether inside Syria or around the world— needs to shift to supporting reconciliation and rebuilding of the Syrian social fabric during a painful transitional phase in the short to medium term. Eventually, it needs to become a core player in state building.

The panel seeks to highlight real cases of effective civil society in Syria today as well as explore how we might support the rapid development of civic engagement, especially in the context of the bleak social, economic and political realities in the country.

Panel Moderator: Fadi Salem: Director, Governance and Innovation Director, DSG

Speakers:

- Reem Al-Assil: Activist
- Mary Kaldor: Professor of Global Governance at the London School of Economics
- Lina Sinjab: Syria Correspondent, BBC

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
2. an online searchable database for our members to find each other

Below, please find a description of the workshops:

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.

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 refugees 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.

Economy: 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.

Employment: 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.