



Educational Pathways for Refugee Students

Comparing Higher Education Interventions for
Refugees in Germany and Lebanon

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Refugees in Germany and Lebanon

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this study was to understand how refugees go from acquiring education in the form of non-formal educational training to transitioning into formal higher education in accredited, degree granting institutions. Among all refugees on the globe today, only 3% will manage this pathway and successfully go on to tertiary level studies. That is a shameful fact when considering the 37% global average for tertiary educational attainment (UNHCR, 2019c). Yet time and time again, refugees with a renewed educational perspective have proven to be among the most resilient types of learners who make critical economic and social contributors to their host countries, despite the extraordinary odds and massive challenges they must overcome.

In this report we “map the landscape” of refugee movement from non-formal into formal higher education, using Lebanon in the Middle East and Germany in Europe as comparative case studies. Non-formal education occurs in the form of short courses, workshops and seminars that provide qualifications on the way to advancing into formal education. Formal education occurs in the form of recognized courses of study at accredited institutions that can bestow credentials that are accepted by national education authorities. Hybrid programs fall in between both formal and non-formal education provision and serve as bridges in the transition from one type to the other.

Since 2015, Germany and Lebanon have both experienced large influxes of refugees into their countries, including students seeking to have their previous education credentials recognized for continuing into higher education. By the end of 2018, Germany served as host to over 1.06 million refugees, along with nearly 370,000 asylum-seekers (UNHCR, 2019b). This posed a massive infrastructure challenge to the country, arguably reminiscent to the Balkan Crisis of the 1990s and even the post-World War II period when ethnic Germans returned to the country. In Lebanon, by contrast, the refugee influx from the ongoing war in Syria on its eastern border has perhaps been even more

immediate and dramatic event. In Lebanon, with the Syrian Civil War raging on next door, the country’s local population quickly increased by 1.5 million new refugees (UNHCR, 2019a), posing yet more difficulty to a country already struggling with myriad competing challenges. Today, Germany and Lebanon host the fifth and seventh largest numbers of refugees globally (UNHCR, 2019b). How both systems have responded, and non-formal to formal education in the tertiary education sector in particular, is the subject of this report.

Drawing on 12 case studies of non-formal, hybrid, and formal education providers in Germany and 7 case studies of non-formal, hybrid, and formal education providers in Lebanon (plus two scholarship providers), this study addressed four main research questions:

1. What pathways are available for refugees to move from non-formal into formal education in the contexts of Germany and Lebanon?
2. What similarities and differences exist among the pathways in Germany and Lebanon?
3. How can this mapping exercise be useful to refugees and researchers in the field of international education and refugee studies going forward?
4. What recommendations can this research generate?

Not surprisingly, while this study found some similarities between the non-formal to formal education trajectories in Germany and Lebanon, many more differences arose in the two contextually different settings. In both countries, there were not always distinct characteristics between the pathway programs provided by formal education, hybrid education, and non-formal education institutional categories, and there is also overlap

between different pathways. This was mostly because often an institution provided more than one support mechanism for refugee students that would be common across different types of institutions. But many differences also emerged.

The context of higher education in Germany and Lebanon is distinct, which affects the type of programs offered by various institutions. The main challenges refugee students face in Germany is learning the German language. In Lebanon, the main challenges are posed by financial constraints in the form of tuition to study. While the cost for higher education is a significant barrier in Lebanon, as it is in most countries, tuition is free in the German higher education system, and students have relatively easy access to funding through their studies. The other contextual difference between the two countries pertains to refugee-host relationships in the context of higher education. Although the scholarship programs in Lebanon were originally designed and targeted for refugees, many of them allocated and expanded significant support to marginalized host communities as well as to refugees, to mitigate potential tensions over stretched resources. In Germany, although tension, fatigue, and negative attitudes toward refugees have been reported as well, the programs discussed in the report were explicitly for students of refugee background because of their focus on German language test preparation, which is reflective of Germany's policy of requiring students to pass a German language test to submit applications for higher education institutions, and to gain employment. In Lebanon, by contrast, the types of support provided were more diverse, although several initiatives, included English language support as one mechanism for assisting their students in the pathway programs.

Interviewed institutions in both countries offered additional academic and non-academic programs that could be considered holistic to help retain students of refugee background in pursuing their higher education. Most programs focused on strengthening academic skills, while others offered 'softer' academic skills workshops, such as how to conduct presentations and how to write papers. Providers in Lebanon generally



seemed to pay more attention to psychosocial and cultural challenges than did providers in Germany.

The majority of the programs in both countries were geared to traditional students, who have completed and earned high school diplomas. In Germany, students of refugee background who were accepted into the programs often were those who already held equivalently assessed foreign high school diplomas. These programs then focused on equipping students with German language skills so they could apply for higher education institutions. Most of the refugees enrolled in the programs started the program right after they officially applied for asylum in Germany. In Lebanon, with some exceptions, the majority of the programs in the study required students to already have passed the Lebanese Baccalaureate, usually by the time they were a certain age and with no discontinuation of education for more than a year or two. In Germany, most programs did not specify age limits or maximum

gaps in students' education. These students could still be considered "traditional" because they had already obtained foreign high school diplomas.

In both countries, funding and management of pathway programs were identified as challenges. The programs in both countries faced difficulties planning for the lack of sustainable, multi-year funding. The overall management of the pathways in Germany was more centralized, and financing of the various programs came primarily from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and in some cases from the providers themselves. In Lebanon, by contrast, most of the programs relied on multiple sources of external funding, and consequently, external funding agencies had significant influence in managing the program.

In both Lebanon and Germany, there was a general lack of systematic follow-up about whether students had completed higher education or their status after leaving the support program. In Lebanon, the formal scholarship programs generally had better follow-up mechanisms than the less structured pathway programs. In Germany, the majority of interviewees reported difficulties in keeping track of students once they had completed the pathway program.

Non-formal education is a promising yet underfunded sector in Lebanon as it pertains to refugees, but there is evidence that this form of education may be emerging as a bridge or support to higher education for displaced students there. A number of organizations and institutions, ranging from scholarship providers to universities themselves, are beginning to recognize that providing non-formal education and other supplementary forms of support increase the likelihood of Syrian and other talented students to successfully enter and graduate from higher education programs. In Germany since 2015, but also well before it, recognition of the right of new arrivals to education and the advantages they bring to the economy and society have been actively promoted by organizations from the federal level (i.e., DAAD) down to individual States, independent funding agencies, and civil society. While political tensions challenge integration efforts, as they

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do in many countries, support for students of refugee background can be regarded as robust and likely to persevere.

Research looking at equitable access for refugees and displaced persons into higher education is a quickly growing area of intense interest. Understanding the specific constraints that shape refugees' choices and the opportunities and interventions available to them needs robust further study. Finding pathways into, or back into, education is one of the most critical support areas to offer refugees around the world if we are to avoid the tragedy of lost generations. Our diverse societies stand to gain mightily by incorporating and utilizing the enormous potential of otherwise disaffected youth. Even if the statistical figures right now on the numbers of refugees who will access higher education may seem small relative to the many other challenges facing humanity at the moment, if the promise of education for social good is indeed to be realized, all pathways that lead into educational opportunity must be recognized and utilized, including for refugees into university study and onto fulfilling productive professional lives. This study has been an effort to help in that most important goal.



INTRODUCTION

Since 2012, the global refugee population recorded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has nearly doubled. By 2019, 70.8 million people globally had become forcibly displaced; 25.9 million among those were refugees (UNHCR, 2019a). These are the most alarming figures recorded in the agency's history, and the highest since the end of the Second World War. Nearly half of all refugees are under the age of 18, and 84% live in developing regions. Among this population, only 3% will ever manage to enter or reenter tertiary level studies (UNHCR, 2019b). Although this figure is slightly higher in certain geographic contexts, it still falls far below the global average for tertiary educational attainment of 37%.

Although finding shelter and safety is the primary concern for refugees following displacement, the need

for education is inherent to successful integration and resettlement (Ager & Strang, 2008; Stevenson & Willott 2007; Shakya et al. 2010; Naidoo 2014; Refugee Support Network 2012). Resuming an educational routine can help counteract aspects of the trauma caused by forced migration (Crea, 2016; Dryden-Peterson, 2015). Research has found that refugees with a renewed educational perspective are often among the most resilient learners and are often even more determined and ambitious than their domestic counterparts (Mangan & Winter, 2017; Shakya et al., 2010) despite the extraordinary challenges and legal, administrative, personal and professional hurdles they face. Some of these challenges include often having to learn a new language, undergoing educational credential evaluation, navigating a new academic system, adjusting to the expectations and norms of a new society, and dealing

with prolonged physical and emotional trauma (Joyce, Earnest, de Mori, & Silvagni, 2010; Stevenson & Willott, 2007; Stroud 2019; Zeus, 2011). To counteract this at least in part, helping to give students of refugee background access to education can be part of facilitating critical opportunities for the promotion of peace, security, and development (Hayes, McGhee, Garland 2019).

Many refugees are young and hungry for opportunities to pursue education. Without such opportunities, the global community risks creating so-called lost generations unable to fully contribute to society in the best cases and regarded as potentially dangerous in the worst case (Glees, 2015). In some parts of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, the promise of the Arab Spring in the early 2010s gave way to intractable internal conflict and instability and has driven displacement and flight. This upheaval has intensified the migration of refugees and asylum seekers in many directions across the Middle East as well as toward Western Europe. Turkey alone hosts 3.68 million refugees (UNHCR, 2019b), and a total of 6.44 million refugees are currently hosted in Europe.

Within Europe, Germany has been a desirable destination in light of its generous social system and liberal immigration policies (Streitwieser, Miller-Idriss, and de Wit, 2017). By the end of 2018, Germany hosted over 1.06 million refugees, along with nearly 370,000 asylum-seekers (UNHCR, 2019b). Among the influx, 76.2% were males between the ages of 18-25 (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2018). At first, Germany could only cope with processing and sheltering new arrivals, but over time it also began to direct them into retraining and educational and professional pathways.

In Lebanon, the refugee influx from Syria, its eastern neighbor, dwarfed Germany's challenges. Lebanon hosts the largest number of refugees relative to its national population (UNHCR, 2019a). After 2015, Lebanon's population of 6.1 million grew by a staggering 25% with the arrival of 1.5 million Syrian refugees. This influx heavily taxed an already

struggling nation and an overburdened and weakened infrastructure. While the Lebanese government has steadily been encouraging repatriation of Syrians to areas where fighting has ceased, it has also made some access to education possible (UNESCO, 2017). A number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) emerged in Lebanon to address the difficulties faced by refugees in the country, including many that had not been addressed by the Government of Lebanon.

Today, Germany and Lebanon, respectively, host the fifth and seventh largest numbers of refugees globally (UNHCR, 2019b). To date, there has been insufficient research into equitable access routes for refugees and displaced persons seeking entry into higher education. There is also an incomplete understanding of the specific constraints that shape refugees' choices or the opportunities and interventions that might be available to them to advance their education (Hatton, 2017; Waite, 2016; Streitwieser, Loo, Ohorodnik and Jeong, 2018). Finding pathways into, or back into, education is one of the most critical needs for support among refugees. Even if the numbers of those who seek higher education opportunity remain statistically small, and even if mechanisms exist to help refugees secure access, they need to be identified and utilized. Research must disseminate this information to help refugees. This study is an effort to accomplish that purpose.



The main goal of this project was to map the landscape of pathways by which refugees move from non-formal education into formal education in the Middle East and Europe, utilizing Lebanon and Germany as comparative case studies.



IMAGE BY VERA YOUNG

Study Group at Bard College Berlin

THE STUDY

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The project highlights existing non-formal and formal education initiatives and provides detailed examples of both to illustrate how they became established, which populations they serve, what challenges they have faced and overcome, what some of the outcomes of their efforts have been, and how a better understanding of their work can provide both researchers and practitioners with recommendations for future initiatives.

This study had three main purposes: a) to map the landscape of non-formal to formal higher education pathways that help refugees and displaced populations in Lebanon and Germany; b) to conduct a deeper analysis of the role of and relationships between primary stakeholders, including the education providers, funders, partners, and, most importantly, students; and c) to compare the findings in both countries and point out important broader implications.

DEFINITIONS

Non-formal education

The definitions of non-formal education are varied and broad, but for this study we utilize the UNESCO's definition:

The defining characteristic of non-formal education is that it is an addition, alternative and/or a complement

The study therefore focused on exploring the following four research questions:

1. What pathways are available for refugees to move from non-formal into formal education in the contexts of Germany and Lebanon?
2. What similarities and differences exist among the pathways in Germany and Lebanon?
3. How can this mapping exercise be useful to refugees and researchers in the field of international education and refugee studies going forward?
4. What recommendations can this research generate?

to formal education within the process of the lifelong learning of individuals. It is often provided to guarantee the right of access to education for all. It caters for people of all ages but does not necessarily apply a continuous pathway-structure; it may be short in duration and/or low intensity, and it is typically provided in the form of short courses, workshops or seminars. Non-formal education mostly leads

to qualifications that are not recognized as formal qualifications by the relevant national educational authorities or to no qualifications at all. Non-formal education can cover programmes contributing to adult and youth literacy and education for out-of-school children, as well as programmes on life skills, work skills, and social or cultural development (UNESCO, 2011).



In Germany, integration begins with language acquisition.



Formal education

Formal education, on the other hand, meets a much narrower set of criteria. Once more we use the definition provided by UNESCO:

Education that is institutionalized, intentional and planned through public organizations and recognized private bodies and, in their totality, make up the formal education system of a country. Formal education programmes are thus recognized as such by the relevant national educational authorities or equivalent, e.g. any other institution in co-operation with the national or sub-national educational authorities. Formal education consists mostly of initial education. Vocational education, special needs education and some parts of adult education are often recognized as being part of the formal education system (UNESCO, 2011).

Hybrid programs, or bridges between non-formal and formal education

A bridge refers to the possibilities and process that enable a refugee student to manage the transition from non-formal to formal education.

BACKGROUND: NON-FORMAL AND FORMAL EDUCATION IN GERMANY AND LEBANON

Germany

This process involves mechanisms that are available through both non-formal education and formal education providers across the country. In Germany, integration begins with language acquisition. The most recent data from the OECD (2018) indicates that refugees in Germany who obtain at least an intermediate level (B1 CEFR certification) have significantly greater chances of becoming employed

than those who lack this credential. Attaining educational stability in Germany, as in most host country settings, involves learning the language, having credentials approved or renewed, adapting to the social and academic system sufficiently to succeed in it, and otherwise transitioning into society.

In Germany, non-formal education does not produce formal qualifications that are recognized by the relevant national educational authorities. Often run by non-governmental and/or non-profit grassroots organizations at the community level, these non-formal pathways provide language and counseling services taught by volunteers and volunteer service providers. In some cases, they offer “non-formal” certificates of attendance at the end of a course, which are not formally recognized within the German educational system. Organizations of this type may also offer outside benefits, such as doctors’ visits or counseling services. Yet, non-formal education providers can function as highly relevant actors that help students of refugee background access low-threshold services without the obligation to commit to regular participation and other conditions, and that help these students become aware of and successfully master the transition into formal education programs.

In Germany, since the early 2015-2016 so-called “refugee crisis” the focus has shifted from how best to accommodate newly arriving refugees to more recently deciding how to help them successfully integrate into German society through education and employment.

By contrast, formal education in Germany functions as a specific trajectory into the German higher educational system, which requires prospective students to have a recognized higher education entrance qualification and demonstrate language proficiency through an examination. This criteria for the language exam can be met through participation in formalized educational programs that focus on language training and higher education.

Lebanon

Watenpugh, Fricke, and King reported in their 2014 study on access to higher education among Syrian students and scholars in Lebanon that the “overwhelming majority of displaced Syrian university students in Lebanon are not continuing any form of higher education or advanced training” (p. 13). According to Lebanese University (LU) statistics, enrollment of Syrian nationals dramatically decreased from more than 6,000 in the 2010-2011 academic year to less than 3,000 in 2013-2014 (LU 2014). According to MEHE (2018), enrollment of Syrian nationals in higher education in Lebanon dropped about 50% after the start of the Syrian crisis in 2010. Ministry data reports a slight increase in the last few years, which may be linked to the protracted nature of the crisis, the increased availability of scholarships, and greater awareness of higher education pathways in the country.

According to El-Ghali et al. (2019), financial, legislative, institutional, and socio-political factors can explain the low enrollment rates of refugees and displaced youth in higher education (p. 6). Many of these challenges to higher education access are common among refugee populations more generally, while others are unique to Lebanon.

Palestinians and Syrians face many similar challenges in trying to access higher education in Lebanon; however, certain differences and nuances are specific to each population. Financial challenges and economic hardships either directly or indirectly play a role in “determin[ing] whether a refugee can access and complete their education” (p. 18; see also Watenpugh, Fricke, & King 2014).

Legislative barriers include “the legal and policy restrictions...that impact educational opportunities for refugees, such as the ability to obtain the certification of the equivalency documents and residency status” (El-Ghali et al. 2019, p. 18). Residency status, for instance, limits prospects for future employment and constrains decisions by refugees and displaced persons about whether to attend higher education in Lebanon. According to the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), “higher education is almost futile considering the lack of employment opportunities following graduation”

Financial, legislative, institutional, and socio-political factors help explain the low enrollment rates of refugees and displaced youth in higher education. Many of these challenges are common among refugee populations more generally, while others are unique to Lebanon.

(Eldawy 2019). Institutional barriers at the university policy level also present major challenges to access (El-Ghali et al. 2019). These include “language of instruction, academic difficulty, integration into the educational institutions, and administrative requirements” (p. 18). Without proficiency in the languages of instruction, Syrians struggle to compete with Lebanese students (Loo and Magaziner 2017). It should be noted that most institutions teach in English, some in French and only a few in Arabic. This is not a well-known fact for those who are unfamiliar with the Lebanese system. Socio-political factors, historical tensions, and “popular attitudes” toward refugees also constrain access to higher education for Syrian refugee students in Lebanon. Part of this is due to socio-political tensions between Syrians and Lebanese and perceptions toward Palestinians (e.g., historical memory of Palestinians contributing to civil war). These perceptions trickle into university policies and practices, creating reluctance among Lebanese universities to offer support to displaced students (Watenpugh, Fricke, and King 2014). Much of this is due to the prioritization of vulnerable Lebanese, compounded by socio-political tensions and perceptions toward refugees (p. 33).

METHODOLOGY

DATA COLLECTION METHODS, PROCEDURES AND ANALYSIS

The two primary qualitative data collection methods for this study were (1) document analysis; and (2) in-depth interviews with non-formal education /formal education/ hybrid providers.

First, we gathered data through desk research using the internet and by conducting a comprehensive literature review of current non-formal education interventions (support programs) and formal education providers that target refugees in general. We then specifically focused on the cases of Lebanon and Germany. The review ran the spectrum from grass-roots efforts to well-known and established programming. Based on this initial desk review and document analysis, we identified the list of leading non-formal education and formal education providers in both countries and contacted them to arrange in-depth interviews.

In the two settings we used a semi-structured interview protocol that included a set of identical questions that were asked of all interviewees in each context, and additional country-specific items. This enabled us to

obtain both specific data for each country and broader information to allow for cross-country comparisons. The length of interviews varied but generally lasted 30 to 60 minutes. All interviews were conducted between March and November of 2019. We conducted interviews in person and by phone or web call with program coordinators at each selected organization in the two case study countries. All interviewees consented to the study orally or by signing a George Washington University Institutional Review Board human subjects consent form. Using the semi-structured interview protocol noted above, the researchers transcribed pertinent information for each question, including key quotations.

RESEARCH DESIGN

To build the framework for our study, we grouped organizations into three broad categories: formal higher education institutions, non-formal education institutions, and a third category that we called hybrid institutions. While these categories at times overlap, we have tried to organize them as distinct entities for sake of clarity and in light of the complex educational landscape in both countries.



INCLUSION CRITERIA

Identifying the three categories of formal, non-formal, and hybrid pathways to higher education is in itself a key outcome of this study. We further found some commonalities and differences between the German and Lebanese contexts.

It is important to note that while these categories at times overlap, we have separately categorized them to clarify the complex educational landscape that we observed in both countries. Some organizations, like Kiron, have been listed under different categories depending on the country context. Below, we develop these categories in more detail.

Formal education entities

Our search for formal education entities was primarily limited to German and Lebanese university institutions that are accredited by their respective governments and that provide traditional, state-recognized bachelor's and master's degree programs. In Lebanon, however, we also classified the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) as a type of formal education entity because it manages accredited education programs that provide pathways into formal university study.

Non-formal education entities

Our search at the non-formal education level produced a more diversified set of entities in both countries. In Germany, non-formal education included programs offered by for-profit businesses, often in the form of branches at a national level; and programs provided by non-profit organizations at the local level. Charitable organizations and religious organizations were among the institutions that offer language training. In the German case, we did not limit our search to institutions that focus only on language training for refugees, but we also sought a broad range of examples that would fit in our framework.

Our search further revealed that certain institutions offered language training specifically to prepare students to take university entrance certificate tests. These tests include the Goethe Institute Certificate,

the telc C-1 test, the DSH test, and the TestDaF.

However, while these institutions offered prep classes, some of the non-formal education institutions were not recognized testing centers and did not administer final examinations.

In Lebanon, the search at the non-formal education level similarly revealed a range of registered institutions or organizations, such as NGOs, foundations, intergovernmental institutions such as the EU, non-profit organizations, and corporations that provide regulated or non-regulated certificate, non-degree, or supplementary support programs. Not all of these entities are recognized by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) and therefore fall outside of the formal Lebanese higher education system. The programs they offer provide pathways into formal higher education by offering supplementary support such as language instruction, college entrance exam preparation, or tutoring. Many programs also provide non-formal certificates (e.g., teaching certificates) that lead to formal higher education or professional opportunities that would otherwise be available only to graduates with formal degrees. Some organizations, like Kiron in Lebanon (described in detail below), offer standard courses or Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that can later be applied toward traditional university credit. Still other organizations offer alternative credential recognition. Some of these organizations may be teaching the Lebanese accredited curriculum, but because they are not accredited by the Ministry to provide education in Lebanon, they function as non-formal higher education institutions or organizations.

Hybrid educational entities

Our hybrid category of providers includes entities that offer a wide and complex range of programs that overlap with the formal and non-formal categories.

GERMANY

In Germany, we differentiated between non-formal institutions that offer no testing facility and those that do. We categorized as formal education/hybrid those language institutions that not only offered the necessary

language classes but also offered the associated competency test. These hybrid models also include universities or other entities that offer supplementary support in addition to their formal programs. This supplementary support may take the form of buddy programs, opportunities for refugees obtaining a guest status to listen in on lectures, and cultural and leisure activities (excursions, day trips, museum visits, volleyball etc.). These programs may be run by students or interested employees acting in a volunteer capacity. This trend by universities to go beyond their traditional mandate of teaching and research has been dubbed as a university's third mission (Pausits, 2015).

LEBANON

In the case of Lebanon, hybrid entities are formal, accredited institutions of tertiary education that provide a combination of traditional, state-recognized bachelor's and master's degree programs and certificates, as well as non-degree programs not recognized by the

formal regulatory bodies in the state. Hybrid entities may provide supplementary support such as tutoring, language support, and academic counseling, as well as continuing education programs, alternative certificates, recognized non-formal credentials, and financial support.

A number of scholarship providers in Lebanon also offer supplementary support to increase the likelihood of students successfully accessing and remaining in higher education. We therefore included this as a separate category of scholarship and financial support, noting that there may be some overlap with other categories. Scholarship or other financial support providers reduce the financial burden to refugees so they can pursue higher education. This category includes managing entities that are registered institutions or organizations, such as NGOs, foundations, intergovernmental institutions like the EU, non-profit organizations, or corporations, as well as merit- or needs-based scholarship or tuition remission programs.

ORGANIZATIONAL CASE SELECTION

Detailed descriptions of each program in Table 1 below are in Appendix 1 and 2.

Table 1. Organizational Case Selection in Germany and Lebanon

	Germany	Lebanon
Formal Higher Education Providers	Goethe University Frankfurt University of Rostock University of Münster Free University Berlin	Lebanese International University Arab Open University UNRWA
Hybrid Providers	Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband (German Adult Education Center) Evangelischer Verein für Jugendsozialarbeit Frankfurt (Protestant Association for Youth Social Work Frankfurt) Kiron Germany Study in Germany, Rostock e.V WiPDaF e.V. Münster	American University of Beirut (AUB)

	Germany	Lebanon
Non-Formal Education Providers	Diakonie Rostocker Stadtmission e.V. Refugee Academy e.V.	Kiron (Lebanon) LASER Unite Lebanon Youth Project (ULYP)
Financial/Scholarship Providers	German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD); state-level Some foundations	SPARK HOPES

Germany

Our research in Germany yielded a broad base of 11 examples of formal, non-formal, and hybrid institutions. We then focused on four particular cities within this group as case studies to better illustrate the pathways to higher education access for refugee and asylum-seeking students in the country. This approach enabled us to more efficiently observe the interplay between different organizations. The focus on case study cities also made it possible to identify and analyze in greater detail how formal education, non-formal education and hybrid providers collaborate, and whether state or non-state entities facilitate that collaboration. The four cities selected each have a vibrant university community: Berlin, Münster, Frankfurt, and Rostock.

We selected these cities based on criteria related to the number of inhabitants, location within the country (former East or West), density of refugees and asylum seekers in the city, migration history of the city, range of initiatives available for our study, and access to interview subjects.

Lebanon

Our research study in Lebanon yielded nine examples of formal, non-formal, and hybrid institutions, along with institutions providing financial report. In Lebanon, a much smaller country than Germany, many outreach organizations work throughout the country; they are not confined to only one locality. The refugee population is also less broadly distributed. For

Table 2. Categorization of Formal, Non-Formal, and Hybrid Education Providers in Germany and Lebanon

Formal Education Entities	Non-Formal Entities		Hybrid Educational Entities
Primarily limited to German and Lebanese university institutions that are accredited by their respective governments and provide traditional, state-recognized bachelor's and master's degree programs. ¹	Germany	Lebanon	Providers that offer a wide and complex range of programs that overlap with other categories.
	For profit businesses, non-profit organizations, charitable organizations and religious organizations. Organizations that offer language and other skills training for refugees.	Registered institutions or organizations such as NGOs, foundations, or intergovernmental institutions, non-profit organizations, or corporations that provide regulated or non-regulated certificate, non-degree, or supplementary support programs.	

1. In Lebanon, we also classified the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) as a type of formal education entity as it manages accredited education programs providing pathways into formal university study.

example, Syrian refugees are concentrated in localities that already have large populations of Syrians. The organization Kiron in Lebanon, as just one example, serves multiple regions. Funding differences also distinguish Lebanon significantly from Germany. While Germany has large-scale support from the DAAD, which enables support at both the local and national

levels, as well as State-level and foundational support, differences in funding structures in Lebanon, on the other hand, determine how organizations can work in certain localities. For example, the organization Laser can only serve the northern region of the country because of its funding structure, while the organization Kiron can have a broader scope of outreach.

CASE I: GERMANY, NON-FORMAL TO FORMAL HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS

In this section we briefly describe the context for refugees in Germany, provide a short description of the organizations interviewed, and discuss the main findings from Germany according to themes identified when we analyzed the research data. The table below includes

basic information on each organization we profiled, in order to provide sufficient information for understanding the discussion of thematic findings that follow. Detailed information on each provider, based on our in-depth interviews, can be found in the Appendix 1.

Table 3. Essential Information on Each Provider in Germany

Type of provider	Non-Formal Entities	Purpose of Program	Supports
Formal Higher Education Providers	<i>Goethe University Frankfurt</i>	Academic Welcome Program for highly qualified refugees" (AWP) language classes from the B1 level for the DHS test to enter higher education.	German language classes to prepare students for formal university education.
	<i>University of Rostock</i>	International House language classes; also courses in the "Study in Germany e.V." offering counseling services (law clinic), tutoring, buddy programs.	To prepare students from B1 through C1 level for the TestDaF language exam. The summer MINTSA program offers STEM course preparation.
	<i>University of Münster</i>	Language program starting at B1 level, with mixed refugee and international students; tutors and "Trauma Awareness" classes for teachers.	Support from B1 to C1 in preparation for taking the DSH language examination. Is also linked up with the Job Center and the University of Applied Sciences.
	<i>Free University Berlin</i>	Offers a Studienkolleg (prep college) and specialized preparation courses just for refugee students.	Students in the preparation courses sit for the external university qualification exam that also enables them to obtain a language proficiency certificate.

Type of provider	Non-Formal Entities	Purpose of Program	Supports
Hybrid Providers	<i>Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband</i>	The Volkshochschulen (VHS) are particularly active in refugee integration efforts. The VHS' in Germany offer a great variety of language learning programs, from more informal low-key through very formalized courses preparing students for a C1 language proficiency.	The VHS' in Germany have German language learning programs at the higher language levels. Some receive trauma training.
	<i>Kiron Germany</i>	Since 2015, supports primarily refugees through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to qualify for accredited HEIs; recently also offers professional and vocational training services.	The transition of refugees from the online program to full matriculation at a German university is organized within a formal partnership between the organization and the university.
	<i>Evangelischer Verein für Jugendsozialarbeit Frankfurt</i>	Established over 50 years ago and well-connected throughout Germany, the "Verein" has long helped newcomers and refugees adjust and find footing in Germany.	Offers counseling, financial advising, and language classes and other specialized courses, toward accessing a university-level education.
	<i>Study in Germany, Rostock e.V.</i>	As a language center, Study in Germany, Rostock serves all international students, including refugees.	Provides language assistance from the beginner integration course level through the C-1 level and is a recognized testing center offering the DaF-Test on site.
	<i>WiPDaF e.V. Münster</i>	Offers language classes in co-operation with the University of Münster and also independently.	With necessary documentation, incoming refugee students are placed in the WiPDaF in the integration course.

Type of provider	Non-Formal Entities	Purpose of Program	Supports
Non-Formal Education Providers	<i>Diakonie Rostocker Stadtmission e.V.</i>	The Rostocker Stadtmission is part of the Rostocker Diakonie (social welfare organization of Germany's Protestant church). It serves as a bridge between non-formal and formal type education providers, thus a hybrid.	Offers help to refugees through its mentoring project, consulting services, social workers, and test preparation from the A1 to C1 levels and assistance receive the qualifications for vocational training.
	<i>Refugee Academy</i>	Established in 2015 with a seed grant from the Curry Stone Foundation, the Academy is dedicated to new forms of integration and interaction of refugees without stigmatizing or ghettoizing them.	With the help of volunteer teachers, the Academy provides services and native-language education classes, small learning projects (often in the form of architectural design programs), digital literacy training, and other services.
Financial/Scholarship Providers	<i>German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)</i>	Largest funder of university programs aimed for students of refugee background.	Integra and Welcome programs are open to all eligible accredited higher education institutions.

POLITICAL AND LEGAL CONTEXT IN GERMANY

Germany currently hosts 1.6 million people whose residence status is linked to a refugee background. Among the adult population, 73% are male adults and 27% are female (BAMF, 2019a). 87% percent have filed for asylum on the basis of war, persecution or forced recruitment (IAB, 2019).

90% of refugees new to Germany have no prior knowledge of the German language (Brücker et al., 2016), but claim a heterogeneous vocational and higher education level, although on average their educational level is lower than that of the general domestic population (IAB, 2019).

Since the fall of 2015, asylum applicants who have been determined to have positive prospects of being granted

asylum have been legally entitled to attend so-called integration courses while still in the asylum application process. All others must wait for their case to be determined before they become eligible to participate in an integration and German language course. The integration course consists of language (600 hours) and orientation courses (100 hours), which prepare refugees to acquire an intermediary level of language

90% of refugees new to Germany have no prior knowledge of the German language (Brücker et al., 2016), but claim a heterogeneous vocational and higher education level, although on average their educational level is lower than that of the general domestic population (IAB, 2019).

proficiency. Intensive language courses with a shorter total duration of 430 hours are offered to those who are already more experienced in the German language or are faster learners. At the end of the integration course refugees can take the German Test for Immigrants (A2-B1), which verifies their ability to communicate in a simple and connected way in everyday situations (B1-level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Other courses are sometimes offered, particularly for those who cannot access the integration course. Reasons for non-access include a lack of childcare, which is more often an issue for female refugees from certain cultures. Also impacted are those with pending asylum applications in protracted situations, such as those who are appealing the dismissal of their asylum application. Other types of courses are described later in this section.

MASTERING A HIGHER LEVEL OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

After successfully passing the integration course, refugees can then work toward a C1 proficiency level to be eligible to study at a university. Unlike the integration course policies, displaced people are generally entitled under state law to access higher education preparatory courses irrespective of the status of their asylum procedure.

According to the DAAD, very few refugees have in-depth knowledge of the German university system, let alone knowledge of German at an academic level. For this reason, language preparation at universities is often provided in combination with specialized academic courses that are considered a prerequisite for successful studies at the university.

Foreign high school credentials or diploma must be verified before refugees commence or continue their studies, in order to determine which language and subject requirements a refugee meets. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) covers the fees for universities to verify whether the diplomas are

equivalent. The non-profit organization uni-assist e.V. evaluates the documents on the basis of the ANABIN (recognition and assessment of foreign educational qualifications) database. More than 180 universities in Germany base their decisions on ANABIN data, although institutions individually decide whether to accept foreign certificates. Established over the past 10 years, the ANABIN database contains information on 180 countries, 25,000 institutions, 22,000 university degrees and 25,000 individual case reports. In addition, refugees are entitled to participate without charge in the Test for Foreign Students (TestAS), which they can use to demonstrate their professional aptitude, and in the online language placement test onSET.

According to the DAAD, very few refugees have in-depth knowledge of the German university system, let alone knowledge of German at an academic level. For this reason, language preparation at universities is often provided in combination with specialized academic courses that are considered a prerequisite for successful studies at the university (DAAD, 2017).

With a budget of 100 million Euros for the period 2015-2019, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) programs INTEGRA (integration of refugees into higher education) and WELCOME are administered by the DAAD and finance university language and university readiness. The programming is provided to enable refugee students to successfully integrate into the German higher education system and to take up or continue their studies.

In addition, 39 Studienkollegs have been funded. The Studienkolleg is a preparatory college that is geared toward students with a foreign higher education entrance qualification, which is not recognized as equivalent to the German university-entrance diploma (dubbed as an indirect higher education entrance qualification). These preparatory classes include both language and topic-related courses to prepare students for the university qualification exam. They are not, however, available in all states. While the DAAD program is by far the largest program, other pathways to higher education are available. These include but

are not limited to the “Garantiefonds Hochschule”, a federal program, that gives advice and counseling to young people from other countries who come to Germany as refugees or through other migration channels, for example by marriage or a student visa. This issue will be further touched upon in one of the case studies below.

Another inclusive program is the special training of the Otto-Benecke-Stiftung, which is a very limited but open pathway that enables those who lack a higher education entrance qualification to obtain both language proficiency and the aforementioned entrance qualification. This program is very limited in scope and available only in three states.

THEMES FROM THE GERMAN CASE STUDY

In this section we highlight the main themes that emerged from our initial analysis of non-formal, hybrid and formal providers as well as the interviews we conducted with them.

CHALLENGES

Multiple sources (Brücker et al. 2016; Schammann and Younso 2016; Ebert and Heublein 2017; Levantino 2016, Ebert and Heublein 2017; ApolinarSKI and Poskowsky 2013; Morris-Lange 2017; Joyce et al. 2010) have identified challenges faced by refugee populations in Germany. In alignment with their observations, this research project has identified two sets of challenges: those related specifically to the institutional and organizational side, and those related to the refugee students’ side. Although additional challenges exist that are inherent to specific organizations, the purpose of this section is to provide an analytical overview of major findings that emerged from the interviews. These perspectives are exclusively drawn from observations made by program directors and administrators interviewed in our study. The subjectivity and position of those interviewed must be acknowledged as a possible limitation of this study. We also wish to stress the importance of a follow-up study that can give voice to the refugee students themselves who are targeted by and affected by these providers and their policies and programs.

LIMITATIONS RELEVANT TO THE EFFORTS OF INSTITUTIONAL PROVIDERS

Administrative processes

On the institutional side, several institutions cited administrative ineffectiveness and backlogs as

notable challenges. Specifically, the interviewee from the Volkshochschulverband (VHS) said that the institution does not agree with “the process or politics” from above and coming from either the state or federal level, of selecting students and is challenged by a lengthy administrative process if the goal is “shutting people out of the opportunity for education.” Prior to 2015, refugees or asylum-seekers in Germany had no right to integration courses. It was only after legal changes made at the end of 2015 that things changed for citizens of five countries (Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, and Syria). In these cases, the asylum process must already have begun at the time individuals from these countries sought to participate in language courses. Recent policy changes in 2019 have again restricted access to these courses for people of many countries .

Retention of teaching staff

A second major challenge described during the interview process relates to the large number of incoming students with very little German language knowledge. In the VHS context, this means that the most basic German course are overcrowded, resulting in overburdened teaching staff. The low staff pay and precarious contracts, in combination with a high demand for teachers at public schools at the time, meant that many VHS teachers were recruited to work in public schools, which offered better pay and regular employment status. This has left the VHS struggling to find teachers.

Students of varying levels in the same course

A third challenge pertains to the students enrolled in language classes, who come with widely varying

levels of German language proficiency. According to the VHS contact, classes outside of big cities are often very heterogeneous. This presents a particular challenge for the teacher, who must find an instructional level acceptable to all participants. Some programs address this by administering an internal placement test to newcomers to ensure that their language level is on par with that offered by the program.

Inter-organizational competition and differences

According to one interviewee at the WipDaF, a significant challenge relates to competition from other language programs in the city of Münster, with language providers lately competing over a decreasing number of new refugees to retain their staff and institutional capacities. This has negatively impacted the ability of WipDaF to place students in courses with others of similar ability and background. The number of language program options is so great that it can be difficult for some course providers, such as those in Münster, to secure enough participants to even hold a course. The competition for students therefore translates to a lack of student enrollment and can also negatively

impact the organization's ability to offer classes that accommodate specific needs, such as employment-related material that might benefit refugee students.

By contrast, the university-based program in Rostock administers an internal placement test to channel students into the course level that best suits their needs and their German language level. Students in the "Study in Germany" program also take the internal placement test. However, the interviewee did not necessarily see this as a challenge; rather, different organizations may have different teaching styles that may impact a student's test results. Students are given assistance in their particular area of deficit to help them perform on par with other students in the program.

Acknowledgement of credentials by formal education providers

Although students present credentials when possible to document their study in their country of origin and their language placement level once in Germany, there is a discrepancy between the quality and level of education within language learning institutions in Germany. At least one provider (Kiron) reported challenges with obtaining recognition of its non-formal program from some formal education providers. Obtaining this recognition would facilitate the transfer process for Kiron's students into accredited university programs. Although Kiron has learning agreements with many higher education institutions throughout Germany, there is a long lead time between establishing contact and signing the memorandum of understanding to put in place the learning agreement.

FOLLOW-UP SYSTEMS

Data protection laws and administrative efficiency

German privacy laws significantly impact an institution's ability to share, publish and track information on students. In light of the goal of many organizations to implement a best practices framework moving forward, the limitations of data privacy laws create a significant barrier to implementing an effective follow-up system. This feedback was obtained from interviewees at many different organizations involved in this study.

IMAGE BY STEVEN ROSEN PHOTOGRAPHY



Ekhlash Ahmed at IIE PEER Forum.



Interview participants across the board cited the lack of responsiveness of former students themselves as a serious detriment to their ability to build an evaluation process.



The purpose of a follow-up or monitoring system is to ascertain if the refugees who participated in different language programs with the goal of attending higher education have in fact succeeded in attaining this goal. According to the interviewee from the DAAD, it is also difficult to obtain feedback because of the lack of responsiveness by the refugee students. This lack of responsiveness then becomes magnified by data privacy laws. The representative from the University of Münster noted that successfully communicating with students is a problem not only for those who complete the university's requirements after having been enrolled students, but even more so for students who leave the city to attend other universities after graduating from the university's language program. This inability to effectively monitor is compounded because incoming students are not filtered by their refugee status when they enroll in a language school. The interview participant at the Evangelischer Verein in Frankfurt reiterated the difficulty of evaluating the success of a program through its follow-up system. Indeed, all interview participants in numerous programs cited tracking former students as a major difficulty. Both the Universities of Rostock and Frankfurt in their respective programs for international students and refugees described difficulties establishing a follow-up system.

Lack of student responsiveness

Interview participants across the board cited the lack of responsiveness of former students themselves as a serious detriment to their ability to build an evaluation process. The interviewee from the University of Rostock, for example, said that when students experience difficulties, they are in close contact with program coordinators and teachers, but once they progress toward their individual goals, they become harder to track. Even in a successful framework, like that offered by the Evangelischer Verein in Frankfurt, the ability to track students is limited by the non-responsiveness of refugees. This not only impacts evaluation mechanisms but limits the program's ability to collect information on best practices.

Several institutions are working to establish an alumni program for former students of refugee background, in particular those who have gone on to higher education, to better track their performance and pathways. A limitation for an alumni tracking system, however, is that those who do not foresee a successful pathway are less likely to respond to a follow-up survey.

Building an intercultural environment

Multiple language providers indicated that overcoming cultural barriers was a significant challenge, which they took active steps to address. Specifically, the challenges lay with encouraging integration among students, not only in the classroom with other international students but also in the community and place of study or employment. While many refugees and other students tend to interact socially with those of their own kind, one interview participant saw the willingness to go beyond borders as a crucial step to success, especially for refugees. Recognizing this, several organizations are taking active steps to incorporate inter-cultural learning inside and outside the classroom. This is done by excursions to different sites in the region, celebrations of German and other international holidays, and buddy-programs or other matching mechanisms.

Ensuring program sustainability

Two different approaches to teaching students of refugee background were identified through the interviews. Either

the refugee students were taught as a distinct collective entity independent of other international students, (i.e.: as an entity on their own); or, they were taught as part of a collective entity of international students within the language program. Furthermore, the inclusivity brings other ramifications with it. While some universities teach the refugees separately and run programs that are solely dependent on 'refugee' earmarked budgets, other stakeholders, such as the University of Münster follows an inclusive approach, in which the students of refugee background are taught in the same class as other international students, and "don't even have to disclose themselves as refugees, if they don't want to."

CHALLENGES REFUGEES FACE ON THE PATHWAY TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Psychological and cultural challenges

The interview process revealed several important challenges that refugees face in their path toward higher education. Interview participants agree that a main challenge for refugees in the educational system relates to their lives and experiences outside of the classroom. They may have experienced trauma and difficulties integrating into a new community, living situation, or lifestyle. They may also be negatively impacted by stress relating to family worries, personal situations, or an uncertain future. Studies have also shown that refugees often suffer from depression due to these combined traumatic experiences, which impacts their ability to study and follow their initial educational goals. There is also a cultural component that is not sufficiently recognized by the German educational system: Muslim holidays such as Ramadan are not recognized on the German academic calendar. During Ramadan, it may be difficult for Muslim refugee students to attend classes, but this is not significantly addressed in the planning done by language learning providers. Female students face particular challenges when children are involved. Muslim women may be more inclined to withdraw or drop a study plan to return home to care for their children. However, these challenges are not necessarily insurmountable. One interviewee (Study for Germany) maintained that despite hurdles, education can provide a way to focus energy and find a successful path forward.

Conflict between the Job Center and educational pathways

A second major challenge for refugee students identified in our interviews relates directly to the relationship between the Job Center (public institution that pays out flat cash benefit, intended to secure basic subsistence and housing), where refugees can go for employment assistance, and language programs. Numerous interview participants noted that for students of refugee background pathways into higher education are often permanently interrupted because refugees are legally compelled to take a job position. This often conflicts with their studies and compels them to drop out. Some organizations, such as Study for Germany, are aware of the conflicts between language lessons and Job Center obligations; while they understand that the Job Center specifications must be followed, they also indicate that it may be possible to find a workable solution for both parties.

Expectations management

Multiple interview participants observed the need to recognize that the educational pathway to higher education for refugees may not afford them the opportunity to pursue the field of study they originally planned. An example that was repeated during the interview process related to the study of medicine. Many refugee students, especially those from Syria, hope and intend to study medicine. However, placement opportunities to study medicine in Germany are extremely limited. An interviewee from the University of Rostock indicated that in the academic year 2019-2020 there were only eleven spots for Medicine allocated to international students, and two seats in the field of dentistry.

The University of Rostock, a formal institution, tries to navigate this divergence between a refugee's educational goals and the stark reality of available study openings by encouraging refugees to apply while understanding that spaces are extremely limited. Refugee students must compete with international students (all non-European students) for a very limited number of seats. Usually this cap does not exceed 5% of total available placements, and in the case of highly sought-after fields like medicine, a GPA of 4.0 equivalent

is the prerequisite. University counsellors therefore encourage refugee students to develop a “Plan B.” Other areas of study in high demand are Computer Science and Electrical and Mechanical Engineering. These three paths of study are also prioritized by students of refugee background but, again, placement is extremely competitive. The University of Rostock has in place an academic integration project to provide extensive support systems to refugee students who are navigating this path. On a similar note, Study for Germany also works with students to explore pathways beyond these three concentrations.

This section describes the organizations interviewed and then discuss the main findings according to the themes identified for this study. In this section we briefly describe the context for refugees in Lebanon, provide a short description of the organizations interviewed, and discuss the main findings from Lebanon according to themes identified when we analyzed the research data. The table below includes basic information on each organization we profiled, in order to provide sufficient information for understanding the discussion of thematic findings that follow.

CASE II. LEBANON: NON-FORMAL TO FORMAL HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Table 4. Essential Information on Each Provider in Lebanon

Type of provider	Name of Institution	Purpose of Program	Supports
Formal Higher Education Providers	<i>Lebanese International University (LIU)</i>	LIU is focused on creating access to higher education for first generation students who might otherwise not join the professional workforce.	LIU serves as a promising laboratory to examine non-formal to formal higher education activity for vulnerable, first generation populations in Lebanon.
	<i>Arab Open University (AOU)</i>	Established in 2002, AOU is an open university with eight branches throughout the Arab World. The AOU in Lebanon has a Continuing Education Center offering a one-year certificate and workshop-based training.	Provides a formal BA program through its different faculties, as well as a continuing education center for workshops and one-year certificates.
	<i>UNWRA</i>	The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA) has 65 accredited formal schools in Lebanon, which provide formal primary and secondary education to Palestine refugees.	Since the 1950s, the UNRWA has supported access to higher education for Palestinian children and youth and offered university scholarships and other complementary support to Palestinian refugees to transition into formal higher education.

Type of provider	Name of Institution	Purpose of Program	Supports
Formal Higher Education Providers	<i>American University of Beirut (AUB)</i>	AUB is a private, American-style formal university founded in 1866. It also offers non-formal, hybrid, and scholarship programs specifically aimed at supporting refugee access into higher education.	Offers accredited formal BA and MA degrees, but also non-formal curriculum and certificate programs through its PADILEIA bridge program with Kings College; its LEAD Initiative for undergraduate/graduate STEM scholarships for Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian students; its Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program; University Preparatory Program; and its MEPI – Tomorrow's Leaders program.
	<i>Kiron (Lebanon)</i>	Established in 2015, Kiron is an "online learning platform for refugees worldwide and underserved communities in the Middle East".	Free online courses offered as a bridge to continue or begin studying at the formal university level. For Lebanon, we categorize Kiron as a non-formal education provider because it is a non-accredited NGO that offers a non-formal certificate but provides a clear pathway/bridge into formal higher education
Non-Formal Education Providers	<i>LASeR</i>	The Lebanese Association for Scientific Research (LASeR) is a non-governmental organization founded in 2009. Recently it launched 13 new Master programs at Lebanese universities and has offered more than 600 scholarships to Syrians. It offers non-formal diplomas, language support, and supplementary academic services to facilitate entry into higher education.	LASeR provides scholarships and empowerment programs, training, seminars, and workshops to Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian students. It also partners with Southern New Hampshire University to offer English courses, a Teaching Diploma at the Lebanese International University, and preparation programs for access to online higher education at the Open University.
	<i>Unite Lebanon Youth Project (ULYP)</i>	Founded in 2010, ULYP aspires to unite Lebanon into a country where citizens "co-exist, unite, and work together for a better future". It is a non-formal institution that provides supplementary support for eventual access into formal higher education	Their flagship Bridge University Preparatory Course program provides SAT prep and college counseling to marginalized 10th and 11th grade students in Lebanon, including to Syrian and Palestinian refugee youth.

Type of provider	Name of Institution	Purpose of Program	Supports
Financial/ Scholarship Providers	SPARK	A Dutch NGO founded in 1994 currently supporting Lebanese HEIs through Bachelor-level scholarships for Syrian refugees seeking access to higher education.	SPARK recipients have graduated from LIU and JU and have received certificates from AUB's Continuing Education Program.
	HOPES	Launched in 2016 and funded by the European Union's Madad Fund, HOPES is co-administered with the British Council, the German Academic Exchange Service, Campus France, and Nuffic. It is a non-formal program that provides English courses, academic counseling, and support funding for innovative short-term education projects and scholarships to promote higher education access.	HOPES supports Syrian students at the MA level, and at the BA level supports Palestinian refugees from Syria, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, and Lebanese nationals. Some of its services include academic counseling, university-based study skills courses, and language courses.

THEMES FROM THE LEBANON CASE STUDY

This section highlights the main themes that emerged from our review of non-formal, hybrid and formal education providers, and the interviews we conducted with personnel in the Lebanon-based organizations profiled above.

MAPPING PATHWAYS TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR REFUGEES IN LEBANON

There are a number of typical and atypical pathways for refugees to different higher education institutions in Lebanon. The institutions offering a typical pathway usually target traditional students and require refugee students to hold a grade 12 certification that is recognized by the Lebanese authorities in order to pursue a formal higher education. Atypical pathways to higher education bring in non-traditional students who do not necessarily have the grade 12 certification, are older than the typical university-age student, or have discontinued their education and are now returning to higher education. An atypical pathway may lead to a formal or a non-formal higher education certification. Figure 1 maps the programs targeted by this study and

the pathways they support, highlighting the students targeted.

Some of the hybrid institutions, which offer formal and non-formal programs, serve both traditional and non-traditional refugee youth who are pursuing a typical or atypical pathway. Most of AUB's scholarship programs (MCF, AGFE, MEPI and UPP) that support undergraduate or graduate studies work with traditional students to provide a typical pathway of higher education leading to a nationally recognized degree. Other AUB programs explicitly target non-traditional students leading to an atypical pathway that may eventually, though not necessarily, lead to formal higher education. For example, the digital skills training program at AUB's CCECS supports students in accessing formal, non-formal, or vocational education or work opportunities. According to the AUB, "a small proportion of students use such skills to move on to formal higher education opportunities."

The Arab Open University, which was initially classified as a formal higher education provider, supports both

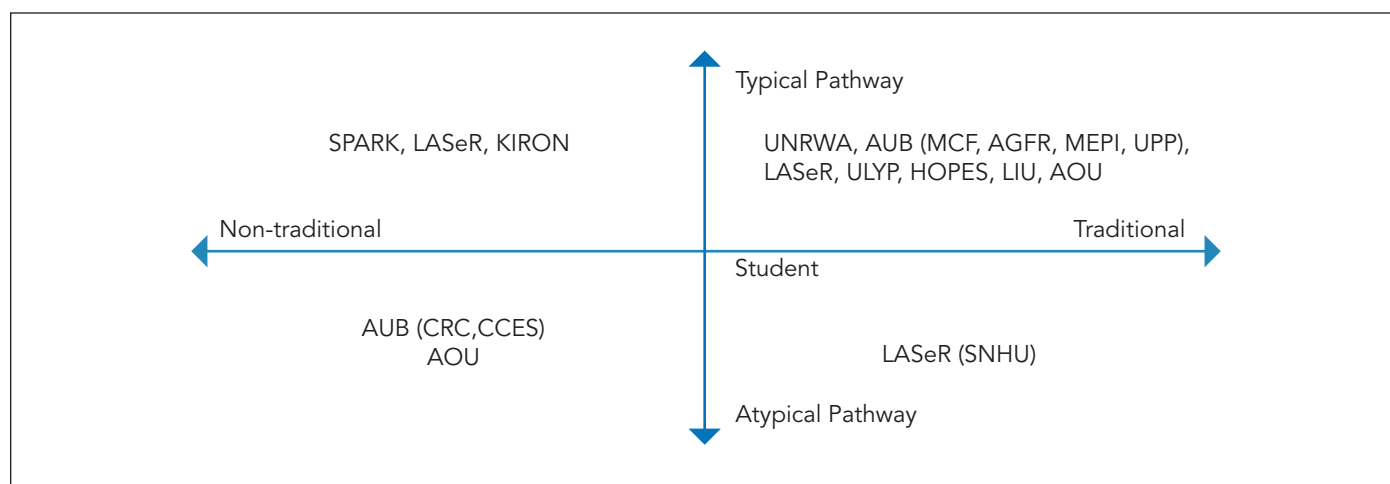


Figure 1. Programs and Pathways of Lebanese Higher Education Provision

traditional and non-traditional students through two types of pathways for refugees that lead toward degree-bearing programs or continuing education programs that offer institutionally recognized certificates. AOU's mode of working with refugees is unique, in that allows non-traditional students to be admitted into its typical pathways. For example, AOU accepts students who have been disconnected from education for over two years and are older than 28 into their undergraduate study programs.

LIU, HOPES, UNRWA and ULYP all offer a typical higher education pathway, in that they primarily provide financial support to traditional students who are pursuing a degree program at a local university where most students have completed an undergraduate or grade 12 education. LAsER presents an interesting example, in that it provides various types of support or programs for refugees pursuing higher education. Some of LAsER's programs work with students who have not completed their grade 12 diplomas or have received the coalition grade 12 diploma; this latter diploma is not recognized in Lebanon and thus presents a barrier for the accessing formal higher education in the country. The organization's partnership with Southern New Hampshire University in the United States enables it to run an online higher education program that can lead to a higher education certificate but is not recognized by Lebanese authorities because it is online. Nevertheless,

this SNHU option provides hope to students who otherwise would be ineligible to pursue any form of higher education in Lebanon because they lack the necessary grade 12 diploma. LAsER also provides scholarships to traditional students who pursue typical pathways to higher education at local universities.

It is important to note that there are always exceptions, in which a non-traditional student following an atypical pathway toward non-formal higher education successfully makes the shift toward a typical pathway leading to formal higher education. One program at AUB's CCES offers such opportunities:

For our college-readiness program, participants explicitly want to complete higher education. They feel their ability to do that has been truncated because of their displacement and other challenges, particularly financially, but also academically. Or they feel there are hoops they have to jump through, so they join our program because it is explicitly designed to help them in accessing and succeeding in their higher education. We only accept students who have that intention.
(CCECS Programs Administrator)

The outcomes of each pathway vary depending on the provider, the status of the student (traditional or non-traditional) and the financial support provided. Students enrolling at institutions that offer formal higher



Let's say there's a woman who has a high school diploma, but she is 38 years old, and she is ready to get higher education, but she lacks the financial means for that. Why should we not accept her? Such a degree will change her life.



education, like AUB, LIU and AOU, pursue a degree that is recognized by national legal authorities. AUB and AOU, like LAsER and Kiron, also offer non-formal education programs that do not lead to a recognized degree but do provide certificates that are considered proof of further learning. In some cases, students who enroll in these non-formal education programs may transition to a formal higher education programs at a local university. Other organizations, like HOPES, SPARK, LAsER, ULYP and UNRWA, provide financial support that allows refugees to enroll in formal higher education programs leading to a degree recognized by Lebanese authorities. Therefore, the pathways to higher education tend to be rather fluid, allowing for transfer from one pathway to another.

GENDER BALANCE

Gender balance has been reported in most of the programs offering formal higher education. Gender discrepancies have been reported in non-formal education programs, which tend to enroll more women

because they offer flexible scheduling. Regardless of the pathway taken, these organizations are ensuring refugees' right to an education. Although the pathways for many refugees may be disrupted, it is important to understand that some of them would be traditional students if they were still in Syria.

FUNDING

Funding is critical in understanding the pathways that are possible through different organizations, institutions and programs. Funding to support refugees' pathways to higher education may come from external or internal sources, or both. Most of the organizations identified, whether formal or non-formal, receive external funding to support higher education for refugees. Only a few of the private universities participating in the study offer scholarships that do not depend on external funding. All of the participating organizations and institutions indicated that their funding agencies set some of the criteria for accepting refugees. For example, some funders may set age limits, such as not accepting students over 30, that may restrict the pathways of some refugees. This restriction overlooks the unusual nature of refugee students who may have discontinued their education for reasons beyond their control. Therefore, a student who is older than 28, although eligible for higher education, may be unable to pursue this pathway due to limited funding, regardless of their academic standing. As the rector of AOU explained, "Let's say there's a woman who has a high school diploma, but she is 38 years old, and she is ready to get higher education, but she lacks the financial means for that. Why should we not accept her? Such a degree will change her life."

Additionally, external funding creates a sense of dependency in which education institutions and organizations are not capable of extending support to students or offering their usual programs unless there is sufficient financing.

Internal funding provides the institutions and programs offered to Syrian youth with a sense of empowerment, so they do not need to depend on externalities to run their programs. This was the case, for example, at two local universities in our study offering formal higher



If you compare the number of scholarships available with the number of students, there are not enough scholarships



education. The funding came from the university's owners in one case and from a foundation in the other. This has allowed both institutions to be more flexible on admissions criteria, which are usually restricted in other programs by age or number of years out of study.

CHALLENGES

Family responsibilities

Many of the refugees seeking higher education or a transition into higher education have family responsibilities including providing care and/or financial support. Some refugees, primarily males, are working informally to support their families as the primary breadwinners. Work commitments, which are essential to the livelihoods of the students and their families, often become a barrier for pursuing higher education because students channel time and effort toward their job rather than their studies. Some female students reportedly find it challenging to juggle child care and other household responsibilities while committing to a program of study. "The majority of dropouts from the programs we support are female. For example, if they have children or if they get pregnant, they leave," explained a scholarship provider.

These work and family factors become more pronounced at the graduate level. One local university in our sample reported that almost 50% of their graduate refugee students dropped out in the past

year. It may be that graduate students have less at stake than undergraduate students in obtaining an advanced degree because they already have a degree or diploma. Additionally, graduate students tend to be older than and thus have more family responsibilities.

Relocation

Relocation and mobility of refugees is another key factor that impacts refugees' completion of or participation in non-formal and formal higher education programs. Refugees tend to be quite mobile, particularly if they must migrate for work. For example, many refugees work in agriculture, which may require families to relocate when seasons change. As a result, youth who are enrolled in higher education programs are affected by the relocation of the family. Some students even relocated to Europe, which may be perceived as a good opportunity to further pursue a pathway to higher education.

Insufficient funding

Insufficient funding presents both a challenge for institutions to continue to support refugees and a barrier for the refugees themselves in pursuing a pathway to higher education. Limited financing for services like transportation may also hinder refugees' participation in some programs. "If you compare the number of scholarships available with the number of students, there are not enough scholarships," explained a scholarship provider.

Academic preparation

Disrupted or inadequate academic preparation presents yet another barrier for some refugee students in pursuing a pathway into higher education, particularly into formal education. Interviewees at a number of institutions offering formal higher education for refugees attested that it is difficult to accept non-traditional students, particularly those who have been cut off from education for some time, because their rate of success is expected to be low. Institutional representatives expressed concern that investing in non-traditional students is too expensive, given that many of these students drop out because of academic difficulties or problems with integrating into university life. An interviewee at a hybrid institution explained the

importance of proper evaluation of program candidates: “The worst thing that can happen to these programs is when students drop out either because they couldn’t integrate or because academically, they are not at the university’s level.” Refugee students who fail or perform poorly at school tend to drop out, but organizations like UNRWA work closely with refugee youth to change the perception of failure and instead orient these students into Technical and Vocational Educational Training (TVET), which may then lead to formal higher education.

Refugees’ nationality

The nationality of refugees presents a major barrier to a pathway into higher education in Lebanon. A large number of Syrian students and refugees from other countries, particularly Palestinians, are at a disadvantage in eligibility for scholarships and other support programs. A limited number of programs primarily target Palestinians, such as those offered by UNRWA and ULYP, two institutions whose missions are to serve Palestinian refugees. Previously the only programs for refugees in Lebanon were those provided to Palestinians through UNRWA. When the Syrian crisis started, however, many NGOs and humanitarian organizations came to Lebanon to offer scholarships and interventions that targeted Syrians only. When these organizations came to Lebanon to create programs, they did not take into consideration the context of refugees in the country. “Scholarships for refugees should not be a competition based on the nationality of the refugee,” explained an UNRWA representative. Organizations like UNRWA advocate for inclusivity that include Palestinians, as well as Iraqis and other refugee nationalities and stateless individuals present in the country.

Types of certifications

Finally, the types of certifications offered to refugee students and the pathways these certifications lead to also present challenges. For example, students enrolled in specific majors in formal higher education may not be able to pursue a relevant line of work in Lebanon after obtaining their diploma or degree. Yet that is not true for all refugees: Palestinians are authorized to practice nursing in Lebanon, but employment for Syrians is restricted. Organizations like UNRWA try to

focus on supporting students who pursue a profession within the health sector. In other cases, students receive a certificate upon completion of their program, but this certificate may not be recognized by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and thus will not provide any credits toward a formal higher education diploma or certificate. Refugee students may therefore not see the value of pursuing such a certificate. For some refugees, particularly Syrians, it is also important that their certification is recognized back in Syria, to which they may return. This is particularly the case for diplomas obtained through formal higher education since there is a discrepancy between the number of credits required for a higher education degree in Lebanon and in Syria. Consequently, some students may need an additional year of credits at a university in Syria before their degrees obtained from Lebanon can be recognized.

SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Financial, psychosocial, and skills-based support

All of the programs supporting a pathway to higher education for refugees offer support mechanisms that allow refugees to succeed in their pursuit of higher education. Some of these programs offer direct support through financial and psychosocial support (PSS), while others offer referrals to organizations that may provide such support. Other programs that offer a formal higher education pathway, such as AUB’s MCF and AGFE programs and AOU, provide PSS that is available to all students at the university, and in some cases even specifically target refugees enrolled in their programs. Kiron offers a unique form of psychosocial support online. Other forms of support include skills-based support, including English language support, such as the UPP program at AUB, LIU, SPARK and HOPES; or IT skills support, such as AUB’s UPP and CCES programs. These programs can include English language, IT, English for Math, and English for Science instruction, as well as critical thinking training and projects.

College readiness programs/bridge programs

A number of providers recognize that barriers faced by students from displaced backgrounds go well beyond financial need. Many students lack the skills to pass the



43% of our college readiness program students receive scholarships and are currently enrolled in higher education in Lebanon

Lebanese Baccalaureate exams, lack certain academic skills, struggle with language barriers, or do not have the required information or resources to apply to study. College preparatory and readiness programs address such barriers. These tend to begin in upper secondary level, usually in grades 11 or 12, and focus on supporting students to successfully transition into higher education.

Several programs provide support to enable refugees to transition successfully into higher education; examples include the Bridge program offered by AUB's UPP, ULYP, EU-HOPES' HEAAPS program and AUB's CCECS's college readiness program. These programs often focus on increasing students' academic skills so they can successfully pass the Lebanese Baccalaureate. ULYP's Bridge program and AUB CCEC's College Readiness Program focus on a broad range of academic skills needed to pass the examination. AUB's College Readiness Program provides students with academic skills for two semesters (8-9 months) and helps them access scholarship opportunities. Graduates of AUB's College Readiness Program receive non-credit bearing certificates from AUB. As a CCECS representative explained, "We had 43% of our college readiness program students receive scholarships and are currently enrolled in higher education in Lebanon."

Some students are determined to complete higher education but feel their ability to do so has been compromised due to their displacement and financial situation. Some programs offer college counseling and career guidance; at ULYP, for example, volunteers provide college counseling and mentorship to help students through the university application process. A number of programs—typically formal programs such as AGFE, MCF and UNRWA—provide refugee students with academic counseling and peer mentorship, usually by linking refugees with other students at the institution or program or with peers in similar majors. Several organizations that work directly with refugees provide academic support, particularly for students facing academic challenges. Almost all of the organizations, particularly those offering formal higher education programs, try to be flexible.

The modes of support differ significantly across the organizations. KIRON, for example, provides self-directed and self-paced courses that help refugee students reinforce certain academic skills for university study. However, these courses at Kiron do not produce credits that can be applied once students successfully enroll at a local university. Finally, UNRWA provides specialists in career guidance at the secondary school level and helps students attend university fairs and special events with schools.

Other programs provide English language preparation. For example, HOPES created the Higher Education English Access Program (HEEAP), a 100-hour English course administered by the British Council. Many HOPES beneficiaries are selected upon passing the Aptis, an exit test designed and certified by the British Council. Additionally, HOPES advises its prospective applicants through Education Desks or counseling on how to apply for a HOPES scholarship.

Civic engagement and leadership programs

Finally, support for refugees who seek formal and non-formal higher education includes civic engagement and leadership programming. SPARK's community-based Civic Leadership Component, for example, has five stages focused on how to address issues in the community, how to solve problems, or how to be potential leaders in society. AUB's MCF also provides an extensive program on capacity building that includes workshops, leadership training, professionalism practice (e.g., email etiquette), time management, and stress management. Any student enrolled in higher education would benefit from such services, but refugees tend to be more vulnerable than other students, and thus find such programs essential for success. The Appendix to this report includes a table of the different support mechanisms offered by each of the organizations mapped within this study.

MEETING STUDENTS "WHERE THEY ARE"

There is a promising trend of providers trying to meet students "where they are" by tailoring pathways to the students' needs and barriers. However, some gaps remain.

Selection and eligibility

Although required documents vary, the organizations in our study mostly require refugee applicants to submit previous academic credentials and residential permits or UNRWA refugee status documentation. One problem yet to be resolved is that higher education institutions generally do not seem to make the admission process as flexible and creative as it needs to be for refugees, but rather adapt the admission process of traditional students and then try to fit refugee students into them. Often this is due to concerns around retention or because of funding requirements. Some providers are mitigating restrictions by being more flexible in other areas of the selection process; for example, by taking a holistic approach to assessment. Despite being relatively strict about the grade level of applicants, AUB's College Readiness Program takes a holistic look at applicants during the selection process and pays attention to need. For example, AUB College Readiness Program recipients must be facing "displacement-related" or financial barriers and otherwise be unable to obtain higher education.

Other providers, such as HOPES, mitigate restrictions by acting as brokers between students and other institutions. For example, while HOPES requires MA applicants to demonstrate credential equivalency, especially if they received a BA from Syria, the organization tries to coordinate with the equivalent department in Syria. Additionally, HOPES does not require applicants to prove residency before being accepted. Instead, the university partner facilitates residency by first registering students informally and then providing them with a "pre-admission" document so they can register. For Kiron, applicants must provide proof of refugee status; however, they do not have to be registered officially as refugees.

A promising trend among providers is their consideration of civic engagement and civic leadership for eligibility. This of course ties into the emphasis of the programs offered. Several organizations and programs put a great emphasis on civic engagement and leadership programs along with providing financial scholarships. The most notable examples are the LEAD-AUB organizations, which include the Mastercard Foundation, STEM scholarship in Al Ghurair, Tomorrow's Leaders, MEPI, EU-HOPES, and SPARK. Although these programs now include Syrian refugees, they were originally designed for students from other countries who would be able to meaningfully contribute back in their countries of origin.

The HOPES selection process is based on academic merit, performance based on grades and transcripts, language proficiency (especially for English literature applicants), research, and voluntary work. At the interview stage, HOPES puts together a diverse panel of experts, including Lebanese University professors, teachers from each major, UNHCR and EU representatives, the scholarship fund director, and the project director.

Gaps for traditional and non-traditional students

A major gap in meeting students "where they are" is that providers rarely tailor supports to non-traditional students or students who have been out of school for several years. Although gaps in schooling are



For SPARK, the maximum dropout rate in Lebanon is 10-12%, and the majority of those who leave are female students who become pregnant.



highly common among students whose education has been disrupted by war, many providers have an aversion to addressing non-traditional student needs. Scholarship programs that are the most concrete and direct pathways to higher education almost always prefer “traditional” students, who usually do not have an education gap of more than two years. Only a few programs encourage or accept “non-traditional” students, or those who have been out of education for many years, although exceptions exist. AOU, KIRON, LASER and SPARK clearly do not have age limits. Strict criteria on age and education gaps limit support for many refugees whose education trajectory has been truncated through no fault of their own. Yet organizations prefer traditional students so they can maintain a high retention rate.

Gaps in addressing gender barriers

Most of the programs in this study accept more women than men, yet dropout rates are often higher for women because of family and life circumstances. There are similar patterns at SPARK and AOU. For SPARK, the maximum dropout rate in Lebanon is 10-12%, and the majority of those who leave are female students who become pregnant. A best practice at SPARK is flexibility, and this organization makes an effort to figure out the reasons why students are considering dropping out and to provide them with options.

Retention

HOPES has a 97-98% retention rate, which is higher than those of HEEAP and other MADAD-funded projects. This may be due to a number of reasons. HOPES provides support to students throughout their studies, they have a tough selection process, and they provide a fully funded degree, in contrast to HEEAP, which only provides a 100-hour course. Kiron’s dropout rate is fairly high. One contributing factor is that many students already have jobs, and the program requires a high level of commitment of three hours, three times per week. Kiron hopes to raise retention for the next cohort, but they struggle to define and measure student activity.

Certification and recognition

For HOPES, the master’s degree is recognized by the government of Lebanon, but Syria has a different system of recognition. Whether a degree is considered equivalent or recognized in Syria depends on its focus. Beneficiaries who receive a professional master’s degree would need one year of study in Syria to obtain equivalency. If they receive a research master’s degree, they do not need any equivalency or additional studies. According to HEEAP website, the HEEAP Aptis test leads to a certificate of completion that beneficiaries can present to universities and employers. However, this certificate is not officially recognized by Lebanese universities (unlike the IELTS).

Follow-up upon graduation or completion

The extent of follow-up after graduation or program completion varies by different pathways as well. A formal scholarship generally has a better follow-up system than do other, less structured pathways. Even with established pathways, follow-up mechanisms do not systematically go beyond graduation. Sometimes follow-ups are done simply at the alumni relationship level but do not keep track of where students may have gone for further studies or work. Syrian refugees in the MENA region are generally not allowed to work in professions that higher education graduates seek out, and they are also not likely to be able to return to Syria in the near future.

Consideration of the host community

Most organizations and programs in our study serve

both refugees and host communities, although the proportion between the two populations varies by program. Our interviews indicate that organizations are aware that they must extend support to both marginalized host communities and refugees to prevent unnecessary tensions from arising. While some organizations (e.g. SPARK, LIU) serve significantly more refugees than marginalized Lebanese, many organizations also serve both populations or have different schemes between refugees and hosts. For example, the EU-HOPES program supports undergraduate studies for Lebanese students and graduate studies for Syrian refugees, with similar or larger numbers of Lebanese students.

Perceptions of providers toward Syrian students

Program administrators generally described Syrian refugee students' academic aspirations and efforts as positive and said they have a good sense of community. But some administrators also felt that Syrian refugee students exhibited a lack of teamwork and support for each other and were overly

competitive because of their difficult experiences.

In conclusion, it can be said that non-formal education is a promising yet underfunded sector in Lebanon when it comes to refugees. Primarily, the non-formal education sector in Lebanon exists largely for primary and secondary school students from Syria. For example, 75,000 Syrian children attend Syrian-led non-formal education centers, which have so far shown promising impact (Hayes et al. 2019). Hayes, McGhee, and Garland (2019) recommend applying non-formal education values and approaches to the higher education sector for students whose education was disrupted in Syria. There is evidence that non-formal education may be emerging as a bridge or support to higher education for displaced students in Lebanon, as well. A number of organizations and institutions, ranging from scholarship providers to universities themselves, are beginning to recognize that providing non-formal education and other supplementary forms of support to increase the likelihood of Syrian students entering and remaining in higher education.



Student Group at Bard College Berlin.

IMAGE BY ANDREA RIBA

COMPARISON OF THE CASES

Drawing on the case studies in Germany and Lebanon, we found some similarities but more differences between the pathways to higher education in the two countries. We compared the two countries using the following five themes: (1) support provided through the pathway programs; (2) selection and eligibility of students in the pathway programs; (3) context of higher education; (4) funding and management of the pathway programs; and (5) follow-up mechanisms and refugee students' trajectories beyond the pathway programs.

First, interviewed programs offered support to address the most significant challenges students of refugee backgrounds may face in pursuing higher education opportunities in each country—namely, German language ability in Germany and financial constraints to pay tuition in Lebanon. In both countries, there are not always distinct characteristics between the pathway programs provided by formal education, hybrid, and non-formal education institutional categories, and there is also overlap between different pathways. This was mostly because often an institution provided more than one support mechanism for refugee students that would be common across different types of institutions. In Germany, all of the providers focused on equipping

refugee students with German language proficiency, whether they were formal, hybrid, or non-formal higher education institutions. This was reflective of Germany's policy of requiring students to pass a German language test to submit applications for higher education institutions. In Lebanon, the types of support provided were more diverse, although several initiatives, such as AUB's UPP and CCES programs, LIU, SPARK, and HOPES, included English language support as one mechanism for assisting their students in the pathway programs.

Interviewed institutions in both countries offered additional academic and non-academic programs that could be considered holistic to help retain students of refugee background in pursuing their higher education. Some pathways programs focused on strengthening academic skills. In Lebanon, for example, AUB's UPP was designed to enhance refugee students' skills in IT, English for Math, English for Science, critical reading, and statistics to better prepare them for higher education opportunities. In Germany, Goethe University Frankfurt's AWP offers subject-specific courses, including biology, math, business or history, to students who have passed the German language proficiency exam; AWP also offers academic skillset



workshops, including how to conduct presentations and how to write papers. Providers in Lebanon paid more attention to psychosocial and cultural challenges than did providers in Germany. Some psychosocial support programs provided direct support to students, and many provided referrals to specialized organizations in Lebanon. Also, most of the programs in Lebanon provided some form of non-academic support for students through forming support networks or cultural heritage groups. In Germany, interviewees did not perceive psychosocial challenges as being significant enough to require additional specialized support.

Second, the majority of the pathways described by interviewees from both countries were geared to traditional students, who have completed and earned high school diplomas. In Germany, students of refugee background who were accepted into the programs often were those who already held equivalently assessed foreign high school diplomas. These programs then focused on equipping students with German language skills so they could apply for higher education institutions. Most of the refugees enrolled in the programs started the program right after they officially applied for asylum in Germany. In Lebanon, the majority of the programs in the study required students to have already passed the Lebanese Baccalaureate, usually by the time they were a certain age and with no discontinuation of education for more than a year or two. There indeed were exceptions, such as AOU, KIRON, and LASER, that had no age limits, and there were some college readiness programs that started their support at Grade 11 or 12 to help students pass the Lebanese Baccalaureate. A few programs in Lebanon, including those sponsored by ULYP, UNRWA, and AUB, that began with providing basic education support to successfully transition refugee students into high school. In Germany, most programs did not specify age limits or maximum gaps in students' education. Still, these students could be considered "traditional" because they already had obtained foreign high school diplomas.

Third, the context of higher education in Germany and Lebanon differs somewhat, which may affect the

type of programs offered by various institutions. While the cost for higher education is a significant barrier in Lebanon, as it is in most countries, tuition is free in the German higher education system, and students have a relatively easy access to funding through their studies. This contextual factor led to the development of the different pathway programs in Germany described in this report. The other contextual difference between the two countries pertains to refugee-host relationships in the context of higher education. Although the scholarship programs in Lebanon were originally designed and targeted for refugees, many of them allocated and expanded significant support to marginalized host communities as well as to refugees, to mitigate potential tensions over the stretched resources. In Germany, although tension, fatigue, and negative attitudes toward refugees have been reported as well, the pathway programs discussed in the report were explicitly for students of refugee background because of their focus on German language test preparation.

Fourth, in both countries, funding and management of pathway programs were identified as challenges. The programs in both countries faced difficulties planning for the lack of sustainable, multi-year funding. The overall management of the pathways in Germany was more centralized, and financing of the various programs came primarily from the DAAD and in some cases from the providers themselves. In Lebanon, most of the programs relied on different sources of external funding, and consequently, external funding agencies had significant influence in managing the program. Two local universities in Lebanon had their own internal financing, which made their admissions criteria more flexible for students of refugee background.

Fifth, in both Lebanon and Germany, there was a general lack of systematic follow-up on what students do after leaving the educational program. In Lebanon, the formal scholarship programs generally had better follow-up mechanisms than the less structured pathway programs. In Germany, the majority of interviewees reported difficulties in keeping track of students once they completed the pathway program.

The table below summarizes the differences between the practices and perspectives of the organizations profiled in each country.

Table 5. Practices and Perspectives of Programs for Refugee Students

Theme	Common Practices	Lebanon	Germany
Support provided through pathway programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No clear distinctions between formal education, hybrid, and non-formal education pathway programs; overlap in different pathways because institutions often provide more than one support mechanism. • Institutions offer additional holistic academic and non-academic programs considered holistic to ensure retention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse types of support offered by different providers, although addressing financial challenges through scholarship support as well as English language support is commonly provided to students in pathway programs. • Most organizations offer psychosocial support, either directly or indirectly through referrals to specialized organizations. • Institutions offer additional academic and non-academic programs that could be considered holistic to ensure retention of refugee students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal, hybrid, and non-formal providers all focus on helping refugee students become proficient in German language. • Psychosocial support is not prioritized as such is not perceived as a challenge that would require additional specialized support.
Selection and eligibility of students in pathway programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the pathways are geared to traditional students, who have earned high school diplomas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some institutions make exceptions for non-traditional students, such as waiving age limits for support or offering college readiness programs to students who lack official grade 12 diplomas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most programs do not specify age limits or restrictions based on how many years students' education has been interrupted.
Context of higher education		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher education costs are a significant barrier. • Many scholarship programs allocated or expanded significant support both to refugee students and to students from marginalized communities in host countries to reduce potential tensions over stretched resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition is free in the German higher education system and students have relatively easy access to funding throughout their studies. • Despite tension, fatigue, and negative attitudes toward refugees in Germany, pathway programs are explicitly for refugees because of their focus on German language text preparation.

Theme	Common Practices	Lebanon	Germany
Funding and management of pathway programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding and management of pathway programs present challenges. The programs face difficulties in planning with the lack of sustainable, multi-year funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most programs rely on various external funding sources (with limited self-financing of programs). Funding agencies have significant influence in managing the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While management of refugee access to higher education is coordinated by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) with funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the funding for Integration Courses comes from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). According to Germany's Basic Law (Constitution), the BMBF sets general education policy for the country but education policy is at the State (Laender) level has autonomy over educational decision making at all levels.
Context of higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General lack of systemic follow-up of whether students have completed higher education or their status after graduating from programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal scholarship programs generally have better follow-up mechanisms than the less structured pathway program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers find difficulties in keeping track of students once they complete the pathway programs.

BROAD IMPLICATIONS OF BOTH STUDIES

The findings from our two case studies in Germany and Lebanon have several helpful implications for designing quality educational programming that will increase opportunities for refugee students to successfully access higher education.

First, in designing pathway programs, institutions need to carefully consider both the evolving contextual and policy changes in a country and the needs and expectations of refugee students. For example, in both countries, many providers shared students' desire to choose medicine as their major course of study. However, in Germany, only a very small number of spaces for medical studies are available, and admissions are extremely competitive. In Lebanon, refugees will not be able to practice medicine once they graduate because of labor market restrictions. Future pathway programs should take into account these and other factors when

planning and designing programming for refugees.

Second, in both countries, institutions and programs we interviewed typically supported students who were considered as traditional students rather than non-traditional refugee students, who would have discontinued education trajectories because of funders' restrictions or their concern of potential higher dropout rates of non-traditional students. Attention therefore must be paid to including students whose education was discontinued or their initial education plans upended because of displacement and family demands.

Third, the findings have implications for the monitoring systems of pathway programs for refugees. Closer follow-up of students of refugee background beyond their completion of each program is necessary in order to better understand how they use their higher education studies or degrees in their new host countries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and implications of this study, we make the following recommendations to formal education, non-formal education, and hybrid providers in Germany and Lebanon. While our recommendations are general for both countries, we have also included specific points for each country's environment when applicable.

1. Programs should be designed with and for refugee students, considering their long-term and short-term (and often changing) goals and needs.

- Evaluation research should be conducted to analyze the perspectives of students of refugee background in each country and program context. This research should focus on findings that could help providers design future student-centered pathway programs that will be truly beneficial for students of refugee background.
- Programs should be more flexible and adaptable to integrate students of refugee background feedback and perspectives throughout the program implementation and monitoring.

2. Programs should be designed to be more inclusive of non-traditional students. For example, providers could pilot a pipeline or program specifically geared toward non-traditional students of refugee background.

- In Germany, pathway programs also need to become more diversified and to start at the secondary education level as a way to retain potential students of refugee background in the education system as they transition toward higher education.
- In Lebanon, providers also need to be more flexible in their student selection and eligibility criteria for pathway programs in order to include more non-traditional students (i.e., older students and students who have been out of school for a number of years). Funders must

facilitate this inclusion by providing incentives to providers and additional supplementary supports to help non-traditional students remain and succeed in these programs.

3. Programs should develop a robust and comprehensive follow-up mechanism with students of refugee background to assess not only short-term program goals (e.g., number of students who have completed the pathway program), but also mid- and longer-term goals (e.g., number of students who have successfully enrolled in and completed higher education degrees)

4. Programs must take a longer-term view to ensure the sustainability of their programming.

- In Germany, courses offered for students of refugee background need to be integrated into the classes offered for international students in order to destigmatize students of refugee background and to properly retain expertise of running the programs in the regular higher education system.
- In Lebanon, programs need to be broad enough to integrate different populations, but also flexible and adaptable enough to differentiate among populations and individuals. This is important in light of the political and economic situation in Lebanon and its effect on youth in Lebanon, including both displaced persons and nationals. This will help reduce the stigma toward refugee populations and at the same time address the needs of at-risk domestic Lebanese youth.

5. Pathway programs need to take a more holistic approach to meeting both academic and non-academic needs of students of refugee background.

- In Germany, programs need to take into consideration psychosocial and cultural challenges that students of refugee background

may experience in pathway programs and the foreign higher education system in general.

- In Lebanese universities, there needs to be more flexibility around what constitutes merit. Are there ways of placing more value on civic engagement activity, as opposed to just test scores? Are there possibilities for more interview-based approaches, rather than traditional applications?

6. Programs need to be mindful of financial constraints and family responsibilities that students of refugee background may have in choosing to pursue higher education opportunities.

- In Germany, more direct discussions are necessary between Job Centers and pathway program providers in order to help students focus on their education rather than on ensuring

they remain eligible for welfare benefits. A national directive, binding all Job Centers equally across different geographic locations, would help in this regard.

- In Lebanon, the providers we met with confirmed that many students of refugee background in the program worked informally or had family responsibilities for childcare. Understanding the needs of these students and allowing them into programs could expand opportunities for non-traditional students and for those who are pursuing higher education.

7. Programs need to consider the labor market regulations in each country in order to more fluidly provide admissions to specific field of studies.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

Based on the agreed-upon scope and goals of this project, the study focused on mapping various pathways to higher education for refugee students from the perspective of the providers with whom the research teams were able to speak. The first limitation of this study is a lack of the refugee students' perspective. Future research should investigate the pathways to higher education from the perspective of the students of refugee background themselves in both Germany and Lebanon.

More research is needed to explore the tensions between the goals of the funders, the providers, and the students themselves. Ultimately, these tensions lead to numerous unresolved questions. What are the primary purposes and objectives of non-formal-to-formal higher education programming? Are the main objectives employment and development? Should these programs focus less on the goal of education and more on the right to education? Grappling with these questions will help providers refine program objectives and determine the right balance between socioeconomic and political realities affecting students and their dreams. What should students

specialize in once they enter higher education? Should specialization be geared toward shortages and gaps in certain fields (e.g., nursing), or should providers support students in studying what they wish? How can non-formal education facilitate these differing goals?

The study focused on the pathways to higher education within the tertiary education system in two very distinct national contexts. While some interviewees in Lebanon, including those from UNRWA and SPARK, discussed their shorter-term vocational programs, we could not address the well-running TVET system in Germany in greater detail in this report due to various constraints. Future research should include broader pathways to the tertiary education system for refugees that may serve refugees better, depending on their residential status. For example, the "3+2 regulation" in the German Residence Act that has been in force since August 2016 is designed to prevent asylum applicants from having to leave the country during vocational training. This opportunity, under certain conditions, allows refugees not only to finish their apprenticeship but to continue to work for two years if their asylum application is rejected.

CONCLUSION

This report describes the results of a detailed investigation into a wide range of non-formal, hybrid and formal educational providers in Germany and Lebanon, as well as in-depth interviews with the directors and program managers in each of them. In doing so, we have responded to four research questions: (i) What pathways are available for refugees to move from non-formal education into formal education in the contexts of Germany and Lebanon? (ii) What similarities and differences exist among the pathways in Germany and Lebanon? (iii) How can this mapping exercise be useful to refugees and researchers in the field of international education and refugee studies going forward? (iv) What recommendations does this research generate?

Adoption of UNESCO's Education for All mandate and focusing on emphasizing lifelong learning through the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 4 have triggered a resurgence of non-formal education programs all over the world (Rogers 2005, p. 171). In his work, Rogers has expressed concern about the lack of coherent definitions or theories around non-formal education. Non-formal education means different things to different people (Rogers 2005), and in some ways it has become a "catch all title" (Evans & Smith 1972, p. 12), which is never helpful if it dilutes an understanding of deeper problems. This lack of conceptual coherence and theoretical justification affects whether or not non-formal education programs that claim to ascribe to lifelong learning principles are actually being carried out (Rogers 2005, p. 172). It also affects evaluation of programs that are currently labelled non-formal education.

While this study has revealed the promising non-formal education practices currently available to students of refugee background in just Germany and Lebanon, wider study of other regions such as Latin America, Asia, and Africa and much greater research effort is needed to ensure that these various programs can meet the lifelong learning principles envisioned, which perhaps are more urgent than ever given the current global refugee crisis.



Lok Darjee at IIE PEER Forum.

IMAGE BY STEVEN ROSEN PHOTOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Non-Formal, Hybrid and Formal Education Providers in Germany

The following organizations were selected for inclusion in the case study. They are highlighted in this section to provide an overview of who they are and how they are relevant to the refugee dynamic.

Formal Education Providers

As an overarching frame for the broad non-formal education, formal education and hybrid educational support providers in Germany that are described below, it is important to begin by acknowledging the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). The DAAD is the primary player and largest funder of university programs aimed at students of refugee background. The DAAD added supporting refugee access to higher education to its portfolio in 2015 through a 100 million Euro grant it received from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for 2016-2019. The DAAD's support focuses on developing and promoting professional and linguistic skills of refugees who seek higher education access through programming provided at preparatory colleges and universities. The DAAD currently partners with 130-140 higher education entities in Germany through two programs: the Integra program (integration of refugees into higher education") and the Welcome program.

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

Interview with Katharina Fourier, head of the department for "University Programs for Refugees" at the DAAD, which is in charge of the programs Integra and Welcome.

The promotion of professional and linguistic preparation for students of refugee background at preparatory colleges and universities was a new thematic focus for the DAAD in 2015, while international students has long been an area of focus. The integration of refugees into the financial portfolio, with the sum of 100 million euros through 2020, came with multiple issues, such as legal frameworks, which involved consultation with many HEIs.

According to estimates, there are 20,000-25,000 refugees regularly enrolled in German universities. In addition to these programs geared toward students of refugee background in Germany, the DAAD has several programs already in progress, in adjacent (3rd country programs) where refugees already receive a study stipend. These programs run parallel to what is currently in place in Germany and include programs such as Higher and Further Education Opportunities for Syrians (HOPES), for which the DAAD provides a stipend to students in Jordan. The DAAD is active in a network with the Ministries of Science of the Länder, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, and the Foreign Office, to discuss refugee-related issues. Although the reduction of countries of origin that receive direct access to language preparatory courses have an immediate impact upon learning opportunities, the DAAD maintains distance from political decisions. But even with these new frameworks it still enables refugees, unlike the integration courses, to participate in the university preparatory language programs independent of their legal residence status, and their involvement is only limited by the minimum threshold of language proficiency of B1. This opportunity is also extended also to those who are still in the asylum application process. This does not mean however, that no barriers exist. Some language learners may still have to travel wide distances to be able to participate in a language course—a challenge that can also be compounded by additional financial issues.

Goethe University Frankfurt

Interview with Julia Jochim, Academic Welcome Program for highly qualified refugees (AWP) at the Goethe University.

The AWP is a preparatory program for refugees who plan on studying at an institute of higher education. Launched in the winter semester of 2015-2016, the program is designed to offer German language classes from the B1-level, with the final goal of taking the DSH Test, which is one the German language test. The

organization is active in the Frankfurt/Hessen network of actors in this field, and also meets on an informal basis in a working group atmosphere with other Frankfurt-based organizations. To access the course, a direct university entrance diploma is required, as well as proof of A2 level proficiency. Even with this however, AWP recommends that students demonstrate language proficiency at the B1-level. The program directors are currently reviewing ways to better measure the impact of their program and have considered using the result of the C-1 language test as a measurement of success. Ms. Jochim positions the AWP program as the next to last step before the start of formal university education. The AWP is a university-oriented program with a formal structure, however while they are in the program, the participants are not matriculated in the university system. In terms of a preceding step, this would be those non-formal organizations that are helping with German language classes, or other authorities, that are responsible for integration language classes. The German language teachers in the program have not had any special training specific to working with refugee students but have wide experience with international students and also frequently work with international students from the Middle Eastern Arabic-speaking countries. In the past, a meeting with a psycho-social counselor had been organized to explain psycho-social problems that refugees may face, and ways that these issues might come up during classroom time, and what the teacher can do if something like this occurs. Finally, in terms of funding, the courses are paid for by the DAAD, and the program has two full-time employees. While the program has no volunteer teachers or colleagues, there is another project within the Goethe University where students give German courses for refugees on a volunteer basis after receiving a two-day training to learn about how to teach German and gain an overview of what types of learning methods exist.

University of Rostock

Interview with Eva Nahrstedt, Rostock International House - Refugee Affairs Officer.

The program for refugees was established in 2015 through the International House at the University

of Rostock in response to the influx of refugees in the area. The German language courses offered at the university's language center start at the B1-level through the C1 level as a preparatory mechanism for the TestDaF language exam. Program participation is dependent on the applicant's ability to demonstrate B-1 language level, a recognized high school diploma equivalent, an acceptable residency status, and successful completion of the language center's internal entrance exam. Although the program accepts other international students, the refugee students have priority in the program. The program also works with its partner "Study in Germany e.V." to offer courses to refugees, with the goal of successful completion of the entrance exam to attend the University of Rostock or another higher educational institution in Germany. The Rostock International House program offers the refugee students a wide spectrum of opportunity. In addition to instruction and educational counselling services and tutoring, students can also participate in a "buddy program" active throughout the year that offers opportunity to participate in social events with others in the program. There is also a Summer school opportunity for refugees, MINTSA, for pre-semester prep classes in STEM areas. Requirements for participation in this program include a formal application process, as well as proof of the B2 German language level.

As part of this broad spectrum of opportunities for refugee students, the student-run Law Clinic Rostock for Public and International Law (LCR) also offers counselling for refugee students throughout the asylum-seeking process. The main goal of the program is to offer refugees innovative spectrum of opportunities to provide a positive and successful learning environment to transition them as seamlessly as possible to higher education. For the university, the refugee students are also an important target group and part of the international student body within the university. Inherent to this is the advancement of integration both within the university as well as the urban environment. Refugees can find out about the program through multi-media channels, recommendations and referrals, as well as through network partners. The teaching staff for this program is composed of experienced teachers,

qualified to teach for the DaF course and test. These are paid employees, who are supported in their teaching efforts by volunteer tutors, who are usually students studying to be teachers. Finally, language courses are funded with generous grants from the DAAD, which include funds secured through Project Integra and Project Welcome. The program also receives state funds from the Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania's Ministry of Education and is a recipient of funds through the university Provost's sourcing.

University of Münster

Interview with Dana Jacob, head of Department, International Office "Die Brücke."

The University of Münster program organizers anticipated the influx of refugees at the beginning of the year 2015 and that there would be a need for language instruction and higher education opportunity. In September 2015, the first students began the program. The language school operates as a separate entity and is not part of the university language center. The criteria to participate in the language course is the B-1 level, and prospective students must provide documentation to confirm they have attained this level of proficiency. In the class itself, refugee students mix with other international students taking classes. The end result of this influx of refugees was that the university had to raise its overall capacity to address all student needs. This translated into increasing (wo)manpower as well but was not directed specifically toward refugees. The students in the language courses at the university work toward the DSH-Prüfung, for which the university offers prep courses that run through three semesters. Specifically, the B-1 class is repeated by all incoming language students, and then they take B-2 and C-1 to go into the DSH test. The university language school has an approximate 2/3rds pass ratio for its language proficiency exam, and test-takers have one chance to repeat the test free of charge after an unsuccessful first result. The language classes are 90 percent funded by the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) – which is also administered by the DAAD – with the remaining portion funded by DAAD's federal INTEGRA budget. The language teachers have teaching competency at a high level, and are qualified to work with

all international students, and the university language school was also sponsored financially by DAAD to enable teachers to participate in "Trauma Awareness" courses. Tutors are also available to help the students. Refugees find out about the university program either by word of mouth, or by looking at the Website, which can be searched in German or English. Although the university tries to implement a follow-up system for the refugees to monitor their progress, and does know that after finishing their class, some students attend the University of Münster and some go to other universities in Germany, the effort to maintain contact with them is difficult. This is especially the case when the students move in so many directions: some fall off of the academic pathway; others take on a (dual) vocational training, and others go in a different direction. They do make a written effort to connect with the students, but have trouble re-establishing contact with students. Data protection & privacy is also a prohibiting factor inherent to this.

The university and its language program are well-networked, especially as its language center is for all international students, and not just designed for the refugee population. The university program participates in networks with the city of Münster and has a close relationship with the University of Applied Sciences as this mutual relationship makes sense for both organizations. At the beginning of the refugee influx there was also a cooperation with the Job Center, and the university had a booth at their events. Because the relatively small size of the city of Münster, and the large university presence in the city, the university maintains high visibility independent of the network structures. With every fifth person living in the city being a student, the university is omnipresent. As in other programs, as language school students, the refugee students have the right to access pre-university student funding "Schüler-Bafög" (max. 708 € per month).

Free University Berlin

Interview with Dr. Florian Kohstall, head of the Welcome Initiative.

The program offered to refugees by the Free University Berlin is multi-faceted in that refugees not only have

the opportunity to prepare through a Studienkolleg, but also through specialized preparatory classes. These hybrid courses are comprised of both language and specific subject material- and are attractive to many students of refugee background. The teachers of the Studienkolleg are both paid employees, as well as on an hourly basis, and all have been trained in the IDA-Seminars of the International DAAD Akademie. To participate in the Studienkolleg a B-2 language level is required. In the preparatory classes, the B-1 language level is required. Unlike the Studienkolleg, the refugees are not in competition with all other international students for placement spots in the preparatory classes. This is accomplished by having the students in the preparatory classes sit for the external exam that enables them to obtain a credential, while also circumventing direct competition with other international students for a very limited number of Studienkolleg places. The preparation for the university entrance qualification through the preparatory classes may take longer than a year in light of the lesser German language level of some refugee participants. Some students need two years to finish the course material. The preparatory classes program offered by the Free University Berlin is specially designed for refugees and was established in the fall of 2015. Each year 150 students participate in the program after presenting a high school diploma from their home country along with either a direct or indirect higher education entrance qualification. The other prerequisite is the B-1 German certificate. The goal of program participation is to sit for the C-1 level exam which, according to Dr. Kohstall, has a 2/3 pass ratio. The university also has an established Buddy Program whereby university students meet and accompany the refugees, as well as a university academic counselling program for the refugees available in German, Arabic, Persian, and English. The University also offers the possibility of participating in courses with a 'guest' status capacity. This status enables students to attend classes or seminars, however only around 10% make use of it.

Although it is not officially recorded from which institutions incoming refugee students have come in terms of the German language lessons, the

Volkshochschule is thought to be an important actor that might precede the FUB in terms of building the pathway. However, regular contacts to the Volkshochschule do not exist. The Free University Berlin is exploring the possibility of establishing a formal follow-up mechanism to be able to determine if a student has been able to enter the higher educational system after passing through their program. This is an important detail to evaluate the success of the program, which is currently done by reaching out to former participants individually but the idea of establishing a more formalized alumni program is being discussed. Future planning also includes raising the level of program participants so that when the students are qualified, a program can be introduced whereby both international students will be included in classes with refugee students. However, this type of planning also depends on availability of teachers, class sizes, etc. The Free University Berlin is part of different network structures: at one level the institution is networked with other universities and institutions of higher learning in Berlin. At another level, they are networked at the European level with institutions such as the European University Association. They are also networked and in contact with the DAAD, and the Otto-Benecke Stiftung. Kohstall notes, "We are very interested that those students of refugee background who attend our preparation program also stay for their regular studies afterwards." The courses for the refugees are paid for through funding from the DAAD, and in the case of the FUB, there is also funding from the Berliner Senate for the refugee classes.

Hybrid Education Providers

Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband (German Adult Education Center)

Interview with Celia Sokolowsky, Project Director.

The German Volkshochschule or VHS (adult education center) system does not operate with a top-down structure but rather as part of a national system but operating on the state-level. This means that Volkshochschulen are autonomous entities that work within the independent structures of the different German states. Although they exist nationwide, they are

established with different formats and have different frameworks. Some, such as those in Hamburg or Frankfurt or Munich are very big organizations while others, such as the school in Helgoland, work at a much smaller level and are staffed by volunteers and teachers on an hourly basis. The Association acts as a service institution, essentially as a lobbyist to serve the interests of adult education and the Volkshochschulen in Germany. Germany's Volkshochschulen are particularly active in refugee integration efforts, and as such the political environment has come to recognize the important role they play in this effort. Officially the VHS institution stands for education for all people and is not in agreement with many specific conditions placed on who is able to study and who is ineligible. Another point of contention is the ongoing confirmation of documentation that has to occur before a student is accepted into a language course, which is a difficult and lengthy administrative process. In addition to the integration course, the VHS also offers courses explicitly for groups of refugees. These courses are also funded from the same source, the BAMF, and called initial orientation courses that were developed specifically for those asylum seekers whose case has not yet been determined. This course length is 300 hours and addresses only the most basic language needs. This course is on offer in different states in Germany, but not in all of them. Another program that has been discontinued in December 2018 was the entry-level German course, funded directly by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). In contrast to the integration course, the course was open to all, as a low threshold offer, without obligatory attendance parameters. Between the summer of 2016 and the end of 2018, around 31,500 people benefited from the entry-level German course.

The individual states also offer their own state-specific programs. For example, in Berlin (a city but also one of Germany's 16 states), the state put programs in place to address the needs of refugees not allowed to participate in the integration course. In this case, however, each state has autonomy over its own program, and some federal states are more widespread in their offer than others. States such as Bavaria, for

example, select according to a refugee's likelihood of staying in Germany. The opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to learn German is not uniform throughout Germany. Yet, in spite of these limitations, the VHS' in Germany have an open German language learning program at the higher language levels but are responsible for their own financing sources with regard to these programs and there are definite limitations to the financial sponsorships possible. The work with refugees started at the VHS a long time ago and is run by volunteers. These offers are often linked to others, such as a learning circle, called "Lerncafé", or in association with a cooperation with local library facilities. The Lerncafés are also supported by volunteer teachers, who often coordinate with social workers at the refugee residences, to increase awareness among refugees of these learning opportunities. The VHS, as other language course providers receive a stipend pro eligible refugee attending a course.

After the refugees have completed the integration course with a B-1 level, they then fall off the radar of the individual VHS. This is because in the eyes of the VHS, the refugees are seen as customers. The VHS do not track their personal or professional development on a general nationwide basis. However, statistical data is available for the pass ratios of their courses, and the information on this is stored by the BAMF, which also publishes this data. The Volkshochschule has an advantage in terms of name recognition, as it is quite known to people in the community. In order to support further advertising initiative, the VHS has provided flyers and signs as advertising tools in different settings, but also has digital communication channels. The concept of networks for the VHS setting is better addressed at the local, community level. For the VHS structure, a lot has to do with working within the networks to be able to complement the opportunities offered in other language programs. Often, each provider in the network, such as the Red Cross, or Caritas, or AWO, offers its own language class/program to participants. The goal of this is to provide informational exchange to offer the best possible framework opportunity for language learning. Related to this, sometimes the AWO will offer a specific employment-related language course, while the VHS will

offer the integration course. The association of VHS also offers a voluntary service portal which is designed to network volunteer teachers for refugees to network with each other nationwide. They also offer legal counselling, through which the volunteer workers can obtain refugee-related legal advice.

VHS teachers do not take special courses to become more highly qualified to teach refugee students but have the opportunity to obtain an additional qualification on the theme of trauma, such as how to recognize and address signs of trauma. While some teachers are funded, other teachers work on a volunteer basis. Finally, in terms of securing financing for VHS courses offered to refugees, funding streams include the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and the Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, among other lower level funding sources.

Kiron Germany

Interview with Heba Ledwon (Head of Academic Partnerships), and Luise Müller (Chief Product Officer at Kiron Open Higher Education and Interim Head of Academic Partnerships).

Kiron is an organization that works with underserved communities through online learning opportunities. Founded in 2015, its vision is to foster equal learning availability for everyone. At its core, Kiron offers Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and its main mission is to serve the refugee community by offering a pathway to access higher education. Specifically, the organization started with a focus on higher education, but since 2019 has also worked to expand its focus to offer refugees additional opportunities for academic, professional and personal growth. Kiron has identified the need to expand from assisting refugee access to higher education now also into the professional environment. This led to the newer focus on professional or vocational training services. Quality assurance is very important for the organization as well as its many stakeholders. In terms of tracking the success rate of student participants, Kiron sees its success rate tied to course completion rates. According to Ms. Ledwon, while other education providers achieve a 7-8% completion rate,

Kiron achieves a 29-30% completion rate.² Kiron is an active participant in different network structures and has also built a network around its university partner base. “Young Universities for the Future of Europe”, and “Universities for Responsibility,” are two examples in which Kiron plays an active role. Among others, an important network participation occurs with the Council of Experts of German Foundations for Integration and Migration (SVR).

After completion of the Kiron program, students move directly to institutes of higher education, and ideally to those institutions with which Kiron had established formal partnerships. However, Kiron may differ from other providers in that it does not ask or require a certain language level to sign up for classes. Kiron courses have already been approved on other platforms, and thus all teachers have already been approved by the education provider. However, Kiron also has in place modules that provide instruction insight in the field of online teaching. The transition of refugees from the online program to full matriculation at a German university is organized within a formal partnership between the organization and the university. This can take the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – however, as of the year 2019, no significant numbers of successful transition can be reported. The Learning Agreement is for the benefit of the students, but also for the academic institutions. In this way the courses are always recognized, which reassures the students as well. Kiron relies on a diversified fundraising approach. This means that donors come from all different kinds of groups. For example, the organization receives donations from German and international funders, and from German and international foundation, as well as corporate funders.

Evangelischer Verein für Jugendsozialarbeit Frankfurt (Protestant Association for Youth Social Work Frankfurt)

Interview with Dr. Heinz Möglich, Educational Advisor, Garantiefonds Hochschule.

The Frankfurt office of the Evangelischer Verein für Jugendsozialarbeit is part of a nationwide federal

2. Please note: this figure was not independently verified, and specific details were not provided to support this claim.

program with about 20 offices throughout Germany. The Evangelischer Verein works in all of the German states and gives advice/counselling to young people from other countries who come to Germany, either as refugees, or through other migration channels such as through their marriage or a student. The counselors talk to prospective students, review their documentation/certificates, and discuss and build an educational plan for them. That is the advice-giving/counselling side of the program. They also have a financial support program, which allocates money as needed on an individual basis so students may participate in language courses, a Studienkolleg, or other types of specialized courses. To be able to secure funds from these programs, applicants must either be refugees, or returned settlers (Spätaussiedler) from former German settlements prior to World War II, to be able to be allocated finances.

The program mission seeks to help students attain a university-level education. In recent years due to the refugee stream primarily from the Middle East, there has been an over-proportional number of students from Syria because of the ongoing civil war. The situation and countries of origin of student applicants is very much dependent on political situations. For instance, large numbers of people emanating from the former Soviet Union and Belarus, Kazakhstan, etc. termed "Spätaussiedler" came to Germany previously, while currently refugees are the main focus of their programming. The Evangelischer Verein was established over 50 years ago with the goal of providing financial help and mentorship to people who newcomers to Germany. On a national level, the program has assisted and offered financial help to ca. 12,000 refugees since its inception. There is no special prerequisite to receive counseling prior to applying for the program. Upon application, students must have a language level certificate and demonstrated motivation to study further. Counselling is offered to every individual prior to and post-acceptance into the program, with the goal to identify and realize educational opportunities accompanied by a planning framework to achieve academic goals. A C-1 test is used to measure success; the current pass ratio is 80-82%.

The program is networked regionally and has a wide range of offices and resources available. An important network partner is the Youth Migration Services, of which there are about 450 offices in Germany, which is also in contact with the migration office for adults. The NGO also participates in networks in the Frankfurt area, as well as at the state of Hesse. Another important partner for the organization is the Central Office for Foreign Education, which is responsible for making the final decision for foreign diplomas or certificates of education. In terms of pathways to higher education, this organization is located "right at the door of the university," with the main goal being to help the participants get through the courses and tests with the help of an advisor, so that they can study at the university level. The organization does not have its own teachers but positions students in language classes that fit the profile of the student. Most teachers have studied German language and literature or have additional qualifications. The participants of the language classes where refugee students are sent to learn are usually completely occupied by students who want to apply for university. The language courses are paid for through the Otto-Benecke-Stiftung.

"Study in Germany, Rostock e.V."

Interview with Adnan Harb, Educational Consultant.

This organization, focused on integration with an intercultural lens, provides language assistance from the beginner integration course level through to the C-1 level. It is also a recognized language testing center that offers the DaF-Test on site. As a language center, Study in Germany, Rostock serves all international students, including refugees. The organization maintains all quality assurance standards and is networked with both state and non-state actors, as well as local, regional and national partners, as well as organizations in other countries. All teaching staff are qualified teachers who have studied German language and literature or other relevant concentrations. In addition to being paid employees, they have taken it upon them to helping refugees get oriented, providing relevant information necessary to succeed in transitioning into the community on a volunteer basis. This involves helping

with information on health insurance, applications, form filling, etc. Certain teachers have also taken extra courses related to dealing with students and trauma. However, this is not their main focus as teachers, and in cases where this is an issue, students are referred to qualified specialists for counselling and treatment. The organization is well-financed and receives funding through cooperation arrangements with universities, as well as funds from state and national entities, and is also sponsored through different foundations and endowment organizations, like the DAAD and the Otto Benecke Stiftung

WiPDaF e.V. Münster

Interview with Rita Lakatos, Managing Director.

The WiPDaF organization was established in 2003 and operates as an independent organization that offers language classes in cooperation with the University of Münster as well as independently. By January of 2016 with the refugee influx it began offering language instruction to the first arrivals. While the organization does not keep official statistical data on refugees' countries of origin, it is impacted by the geopolitical reality in Germany due to mobility into their region. With the necessary documentation, incoming refugee students are placed in the WiPDaF in the integration courses. The classes have a maximum of 20 students but prefer to keep the numbers smaller because of space restriction and because the course providers feel the teaching situation is more comfortable and effective in smaller groups. Students pay through various means, from self-financing to Rotary Club grants. The WiPDaF maintains a close connection with contacts at the University of Münster. During the time period of heavy refugee influx at the university, Frau Jacob reviewed student credentials & documentation herself and made the decision to send certain students to the e.V. for language instruction.

The methodology in course organization was originally designed to work for those participants who wanted to progress to higher education: in this respect, the organization has tried to keep course participants as homogeneous as possible in order to improve and

maximize the learning situation. Now with reduced numbers of arriving refugees, it has become impossible to offer more homogenous course levels, for example courses designed for those who are fast-track learners. However, in light of the many course offers that Münster has, the e.V. has only been able to offer one such course. Finally, in light of the organization's mission statement, its goal is to prepare students for higher education and provide a more advanced level of language instruction to enable participants to make a seamless transition into university studies.

Non-Formal Education Providers

Diakonie Rostocker Stadtmission e.V.

Interview with Dr. Jenny Hahs, Head of Department: social integration assistance & refugee work.

The Rostocker Stadtmission is part of the Rostocker Diakonie organization. The Diakonie is the social service arm of the Protestant church in Germany. Their work with education, youth, refugees, and the elderly plays an important role for the social welfare programs of the city. Within this framework, multiple initiatives are also available for the refugee population in Rostock, including the mentorship project and other consulting services for refugees and social workers who assist them and their families. Refugees who would like German language tutoring work with Diakonie volunteers on an informal basis to accommodate their language needs. Test preparation therefore ranges from the A to C1 levels. The Diakonie also serves those learning to take tests to qualify for vocational training. The Diakonie Rostocker Stadtmission has a solid network of partners who serve as consultants for refugees in collaboration with other social welfare organizations throughout the city. The Diakonie also participates in a roundtable every two months for information-exchange mechanism with religious, social welfare, Red Cross, and other representatives from migration counselling offices. The specific work with refugees was started by the organization in 2015, parallel to the swell of refugees entering Germany and the EU.

Although no official numbers are available, the program has helped about 150 refugees and asylum seekers

since inception. While there are no official courses held for refugees at the Mission, they offer language study and tutoring for German language and other subjects on an as-needed basis. Tutors work on a volunteer, as-needed basis; some may be former teachers, and others may be students at the university. The Diakonie Stadtmission acts as a link on the pathway to higher education through its wide range of offerings and well-tuned network of providers. A primary referral contact for the Diakonie Stadtmission is the University of Rostock International office, which helps refugees navigate the pathway toward higher education. If there are questions and a desire to continue studying, the Diakonie provides contact info and acts as a link to the University's program. Finally, while the Diakonie offers no specific courses per se, it offers tutoring assistance on an as-needed basis. Tutors work either on a volunteer or hourly basis and are often fellow students form areas of study concentration that reflect the needs and interests of the refugee students themselves. While there are no specific prerequisites for its tutors, the organization prefers former teachers or students in light of the difficulty of learning the German language.

Refugee Academy

Interview with Thorsten 'Teekay' Kreissig, founder.

The Refugee Academy is a Berlin-based non-profit organization that is dedicated to "new ways to think about refugees – ways that do not stigmatize or ghettoize but support new forms of integration and interaction." The organization was established in 2015 with a seed grant from the Curry Stone Foundation and continuing support from the founder's private sources. The Academy is not accredited or recognized as a degree granting organization of any kind but provides services for refugees with volunteer teachers (in total 100 over the course of its existence) and committed civil servants, as well as city tours and other kinds of classes to help refugees understand the country and culture. Much of the work of the Academy uses design as a tool for social change, particularly for marginalized communities. The academy provides native-language education, which goes against the conventional wisdom in Germany that stresses the need to learn

the German language first as a gateway into any other opportunities. That is a unique approach. Their goal is to make learning fun through learning in the refugees' mother tongue, and then set up small and manageable learning projects, often in the form of architectural design programs. Some of their programming in language training, digital literacy training, and other areas, was experimental and sometimes short-lived. For example, an IT class and later a math class, either due to personnel changes from within the organization (largely due to their volunteer status) or as a way to adjust to the needs of newly arriving refugee students.

The Academy has chronically struggled with funding, legal requirements (such as not having a dedicated lawyer on staff), with restrictions imposed by financial requirements by the City of Berlin's revenue office, and with location and space problems. It has not been able to secure any funding from the federal or state government. Temporarily the Academy was offering classes above a Red Cross intake center but eventually had to give up the space due to security concerns. As such, the organization has had to be flexible and creative and partner frequently with other organizations in the greater Berlin areas in order to adapt and continue its programming. One such organization has been "Die Ulme", a villa converted to community type center on the outskirts of the city. The Academy estimates that it has helped approximately 800-1000 students of refugee background, but it has not kept statistics, to get sufficient language learning assistance to then transition to another school or program to earn credits that could be applied in a formal educational institution. In this regard, they helped some students of refugee background to prepare for the university-entrance diploma or the general certificate of secondary school, as well as several doctors to prepare for the medical language exam. Although the founder is no longer involved in the organization, his legacy is best expressed in his own proud words, "At the Refugee Academy we took our students to conferences, trained them in civil engagement, we taught them not to focus on their refugee story, but to focus on their strengths. We flipped around their image of themselves. Many language classes focused on them being refugees, but we wanted them to know they bring competencies, a

complete life, disconnected from it at home, but connect your capacities what you know, and connected with other organizations where they could.”

Appendix 2. Non-Formal, Hybrid and Formal Education Providers in Lebanon

Formal Education Providers

There are 49 Formal higher education institutions (HEIs) in Lebanon: Forty-eight are private and one is public. The formal education providers included in our case study, two of which are higher education institutions, are the Lebanese International University (LIU), the Arab Open University (AOU), and The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA).

Lebanese International University (LIU)

Interview with Dr. Anwar Kawtharani, Dean, School of Education.

Established in 2001, LIU (formerly Bekaa University) has nine campuses, in Al-Khyara, the western Bekaa valley, Beirut, Saida, Nabatieh, Tripoli, Mount Lebanon, Tyre, Rayak, and Halba-Akkar (LIU 2019). According to its website, LIU is committed to “creating access to higher education for first generation students who otherwise would not have the opportunity to join the professional workforce” (LIU 2019). With this mandate in mind, LIU serves as a promising laboratory to examine non-formal to formal higher education activity for vulnerable, first generation populations in Lebanon.

Arab Open University (AOU)

Interview with Dr. Yara Abdallah, Rector.

According to its website (n.d.), AOU is a “non-profit Open University in the Arab world” conceived in 1996 by HRH Prince Talal. It was opened officially in 2002 in partnership with the Open University of the UK, and now has branches in eight Arab countries and a total of 28,460 students. The main Lebanon branch is located in Beirut and provides a formal BA program through the different faculties, as well as a continuing education center offering workshops and one-year certificates.

Syrians pursuing formal education can obtain a Bachelors’ degree at AOU. It is funded by external funding and supported by AOU financial aid. AOU also provides a Continuing Education Center, offering one-year certificates (not transferable for college credits) recognized by the MEHE as a certificate of higher education and workshop-based training (e.g., IT skills).

UNWRA

Interview with Michel Salameh, Project Manager – Scholarship Unit.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA) has 65 accredited formal schools in Lebanon, which provide formal primary and secondary education to 31,706 Palestine refugees and 5,254 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) (UNRWA n.d.). Since the 1950s, the UNRWA has also supported access to higher education for Palestinian children and youth. The UNRWA offers university scholarships and other complementary support to Palestinian refugees to help them transition into formal higher education.

Hybrid Education Providers

For this category we selected the American University of Beirut (AUB), where several non-formal and hybrid programs are offered.

American University of Beirut (AUB)

Interviews with Dr. Malek Tabbal, Leadership, Equality, and Diversity (LEAD) Initiative Director; Ms. Maha Haidar, Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program Director; Ms. Brooke Atherton, Center for Civic Engagement & Community Service (CCECS) Programs Administrator; Ms. Hiba Baalbaki, Abdullah Al Ghurair Foundation for Education (AGFE) Program Coordinator; Dr. Samar Harkous, University Preparatory Program (UPP) Director; Mr. Ziad Shaaban, Continuing Education Center (CEC) Director; and Dr. Hani Hasan, MEPI-Tomorrow’s Leaders, Director.

AUB is a private, American-style formal HEI that was founded in 1866. AUB offers refugees the opportunity to obtain formal, traditional Bachelor and Master

degrees. In consideration of the barriers faced by refugees, AUB also developed a number of non-formal, hybrid, and scholarship programs. As one example, AUB offers a non-formal curriculum and certificate program through the Partnership for Digital Learning and Increased Access (PADILEIA), which is a non-formal bridge program offered by AUB's CCECS. The program provides a Foundation Certificate, which "prepares Syrian refugees and vulnerable host community youth for entry into higher education" (Abou Melhem, 2018). The curriculum was developed by AUB and King's College and is provided in portable Ghata classrooms. Students take two semesters of foundational courses, which are taught both in-person and online. Graduates receive "a non-credit-bearing university certificate from the AUB, and more importantly, become prepared to enter or re-enter university" (Abou Melhem, 2018).

In addition, the AUB offers the Continuing Education Program (CEC), a non-formal education program that grants annual teaching certificates and other certificates and diplomas to approximately 1,000 Syrians. AUB's LEAD Initiative offers undergraduate/graduate STEM scholarships for Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian students. Through its AGFE program, AUB provides "high achieving and underserved Emirati and Arab youth access to high quality education and allows them to solve real world problems by giving them the chance to fulfill their educational dreams" (Reda, 2020). Other AUB programs include the Leadership, Equality, and Diversity (LEAD) Initiative, the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program, University Preparatory Program (UPP), and MEPI – Tomorrow's Leaders.

Non-Formal Education Providers

For this organizational category, we conducted case studies on Kiron, LASER, Unite Lebanon Youth Project (ULYP), and EU-HOPES.

Kiron (Lebanon)

Interview with Ms. Lea Batal, Country Manager Lebanon.

Kiron is an NGO founded in 2015 and headquartered in Germany (Kiron n.d.). According to its website, it is an "online learning platform for refugees worldwide and

underserved communities in the Middle East" (n.d.) Kiron's online courses are free and offered as a bridge to continue or begin studying at the formal university level. Kiron provides a certificate but not a degree, and students must fulfill the admission requirements set by the university into which they transition. In this study we categorize Kiron as a Non-formal Education provider (in the case of Lebanon) because it is a non-accredited NGO that offers a non-formal certificate but provides a clear pathway/bridge into formal higher education.

LASeR

Interview with Dr. Mustapha Jazar, President.

The Lebanese Association for Scientific Research (LASeR) is a non-governmental organization founded in 2009 "in response to the lack of services offered to university students, professors, and everyone seeking access to higher education" (n.d.). According to its website, LaSeR provides scholarships and empowerment programs, trainings, seminars, and workshops to Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian students to enable them to become community change agents. Furthermore, LaSeR offers Bachelor, Master, and Ph.D. loans to these students. Recently, LaSeR launched 13 new Master programs at Lebanese universities and has offered more than 600 Syrian scholarships. In addition, the organization partnered with Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) in the United States to offer English courses to its students, a Teaching Diploma at the Lebanese International University (LIU), academic and soft skills workshops, and preparation programs for access to online higher education at the Open University. LaSer is an Non-formal Education provider because the primary entity is a non-formal organization that offers non-formal diplomas, language support, and supplementary academic support to facilitate entry into higher education.

Unite Lebanon Youth Project (ULYP)

Interview with Ms. Melek El Nimer, Founder and Chief Executive.

According to their website, ULYP was founded in 2010 "to propel a paradigm shift in Lebanon from a nation

that is divided...to one where people can co-exist, unite, and work together for a better future. ULYP does this through...giving equal access to quality educational programs” (n.d.). Their flagship program is the Bridge University Preparatory Course. Bridge provides SAT prep and college counseling to marginalized 10th and 11th grade students in Lebanon, including to Syrian and Palestinian refugee youth. ULYP is a non-formal provider because it is a non-formal institution that provides supplementary support, such as SAT and college counseling. The organization provides a clear pathway to formal higher education.

Scholarship/Financial Support Providers

SPARK

Interview with Ms. Samer Zeidan, Project Officer.

SPARK is a Dutch NGO that was founded in 1994 and aims to facilitate Syrian students’ access to higher education through the provision of Bachelor-level scholarships. According to their website, SPARK’s scholarship scheme hopes to help Lebanese HEIs “with their response strategy amid the Syrian crisis... to contribute to studies and career prospects of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and to help build community cohesion” (n.d.). SPARK recipients have graduated from LIU and JU and have received certificates from AUB’s Continuing Education Program.

HOPES

Interview with Ms. Nayla Abi Nasr, Country Manager.

HOPES is an organization launched in 2016 and funded by the European Union’s Madad Fund and co-administered by the British Council, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Campus France, and Nuffic (HOPES-MADAD website 2017). HOPES is a non-formal program that provides higher education English courses, academic counseling, support funding for innovative short-term education projects, and scholarships. The organization mainly targets refugees from Syria to study at the Master level, but also includes Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS), as well as Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon (PRL) and Lebanese nationals at the Bachelor level. HOPES is a non-formal

provider because it is a non-formal education institution that offers non-formal support such as academic counseling, university-based study skills courses, and language courses through the Higher Education English Access Programme (HEEAP), a program within HOPES that is administered by British Council.

However, through LASER, the British Council also offers MOOCs and Small Private Online Courses (SPOC), which are internationally accredited online degree programs. It should be noted that the British Council’s LASER program is differentiated from the above-mentioned organization LaSer, the Lebanese Association for Scientific Research. The LASER program consists of two key components: Component one is 100 hours of face-to-face English and academic skills courses, delivered by the British Council, while Component two consists of short online courses (MOOCS and SPOCS) as well as internationally-accredited online degree courses (non-formal) in partnership with Amity University and the Open University.

IIE’s Student Emergency Initiatives

Education in emergencies is one of the most underfunded sectors in humanitarian aid with higher education often considered a luxury. Through our Student Emergency Initiatives (SEI), IIE provides students impacted by armed conflict or natural disaster with an opportunity to start or carry on their higher education to foster economic development, improve public health, and build safer communities in crisis-ridden countries. IIE SEI includes IIE’s Platform for Education in Emergencies Response (PEER), the IIE Consortium for Higher Education in Crisis, the IIE-Julia Stasch Scholarship for Refugees, and the IIE Emergency Student Fund.

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