

Creating a Global Governance Enterprise to Address Syrian Refugees

For any country in the world, an issue as monumental as the provision of primary education for refugees can be really daunting; with 57 million primary school-aged children out of school, the task is indeed overwhelming. Creating a viable, replicable and universally appealing global governance network can begin to alleviate this issue and form a cohesive strategy to overcome the obstacles in winning this battle. Creating value through participating in the global governance network (GGN) is the only way to attract the necessary partners that will lead to ultimate success. We must propose a value-creating strategy to entice all sectors – Private, non-profit, and public. We will focus our GGN towards increasing enrollment and retention for Syrian refugees, in hopes that the GGN can be scaled and replicated for primary school-aged children in all conflict-affected areas. Our vision of change begins with three propositions that will create unique value in many ways to each entity that participates:

1. Providing a greater abundance of schools and/or alternative methods of delivering education to reach more children
 2. Bringing more educators and a streamlined curriculum to the region
 3. Offering a higher sense of security and peace of mind, which will encourage more children to engage in education
- Sales, demand, and growth are the metrics that the private sector relies on to build and sustain successful organizations. These metrics are achieved in many different ways, but almost all firms must eventually venture into new markets or explore new products to extend their offering and sustain sales growth and demand. In our vision, we stated that these partnerships would offer new exposure to new markets. Having exposure to new markets often creates more future demand in a geographical area or product market that was untapped. Private sector organizations that participate in our GGN draw value from proliferating brand awareness to a new region. Syria, Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon are a few stakeholders in this initiative. These nations have a total combined population of over 100,000,000 people. Global companies that can add relief and resources to our GGN such as IKEA, Home Depot, Lowes do not currently operate in these regions. This is an opportunity to build a case study for expansion into a new market and grow the global footprint.[1]

Private companies can also find value by operating in a new region with an initiative such as ours and determining whether they will pursue future commercial operations in the region while simultaneously engaging in global humanitarian efforts. It is a win-win-win situation that saves future resources if the area tested is deemed unworthy of expansion. Rather than rolling out a full-fledged expansion effort, the firm will have a case study in place with statistics, demographics, and data on the region to determine if commercial expansion into the region is a viable option based off of the partnership with our GGN.

As I outlined in the previous paragraphs, the most apparent value of our partnership comes from 2 possible scenarios: First, the long term investing that comes in the form of marketing and increased brand awareness through growing the global footprint to a large population in a developing region. This will hopefully give our partners a competitive and/or first mover advantage in this region. Secondly, the investigating comes from building business cases through the work we accomplish that will help determine long-term strategy and expansion into regions. The organization is actually reducing long-term risk by having this due-diligence in place. Both scenarios offer a viable value proposition to private companies, especially those companies who continually look for growth areas and opportunity for new market expansion.

Needs Assessment

As a result of almost three years of massive and brutal kind of conflict in Syria, progress made in more than a decade's time in Syria has reversed in the case of children's primary education. The numbers of children out of school rise by the day. The education system has collapsed the most where areas have been hit in the hardest way by conflict and violence in a profound manner. Whatever is left behind by the education system of Syria does not bear much resemblance to conditions that existed before the crisis. In many of the communities, existing schools are not able to accommodate in an adequate manner new students who belong to different parts of the nation and have been displaced. The result is that classrooms are left to be overcrowded, teachers are not able to disseminate their lessons in the proper way and learning resources such as book, facilities of sanitation, desks and other fixtures and furniture are highly insufficient. In addition, there is a severe lack of teachers as most have flown away from their communities in fear of conflict to save their lives. Schools are meant to be safe havens; they are meant to be places where children do not fear anything but feel safe secure, remain indifferent to the conflicted world outside in order to concentrate on their studies and make the process of learning meaningful for their future lives. Yet, during the critical situation in Syria, many school going children, even as young as ten years old, have faced arrests or detainment on their way to school, been targets of snipers and often become victimized in the brutal crossfire between the parties under war.

Many have seen their school grounds transform into battle fields, demolished and reduced to nothing but rubble, converted into shelters for the militants or even the displaced. Most of the children have been unfortunate enough

to witness some terrible and horrifying scenes of violence such as the killings of their class fellows and teachers in front of their very own eyes. As the conflict increases and the number of displaced people increase, the task becomes even more challenging to provide the refugee children with even basic education. It cannot be denied that education holds the power to bring a real and lasting change in the lives of children who have suffered through the conflict in Syria.

Research conducted by UNHCR shows that 169,177 Syrian refugee children belonging to the age group 5-11, equivalent to Kindergarten and primary education level, make up 20.3% of Syrian refugee population found in Lebanon. Out of the total population of these refugees, children from the age group 12-17 equivalent to intermediate and secondary education levels, amount to 12.8% which is 106,673 young adults. This adds up to about 275,850 children of school age. The current Syrian refugee education system is still working against certain monetary and regulatory limitations. The government is not agreeing to back the semi-public primary school education of Syrian refugees. A huge amount of Syrian refugees are unable to pay for the fees of private schools. Admission in public schools involves a payment of \$60 for the school materials by the student. Children of Syrian refugees are allowed to go to both private and public schools. Even if Syrians have missed out on two or more than two years of school, they will still be granted permission to attend school. Syrians will also be given the right to find employment in Lebanon.

Only over fifty percent of Syrian refugees in both Lebanon and Jordan are below the age of 18. In Jordan, the Syrian refugees whose families are in the custody of both a white card and a UNHCR registration certificates provide the evidence that their registration with the Jordanian authorities are affirmed with free accessibility to public institutions. Incidentally, the custody of the white registration card is the need that was added when the year 2013 started by the orders of Government of Jordan, in preparation of the academic year to come.

The entering of the Syrian children plays out in different ways, either via integration into Jordanian classrooms, or another shift in the evenings or afternoons for Syrian students that are taught by Jordanian teachers on temporary basis. In either of the cases, the Syrians are educated according to the Jordanian curriculum. Research has shown that Jordanian teachers seem to be very optimistic about their experience of teaching Syrian children. They describe them as being very polite, eager to learn and courteous as they like to take in all the information for everything that can help make their lives better.

According to UNICEF, however, maximum Syrian children in Jordan are not attending school.[3] In April 2013, around 42,000 were admitted in public school systems. This reflected almost 20-25 percent of school-aged refugee children. Keeping in view the immediate influx, it is least likely that local school systems could take in more than 250,000 Syrian refugee pupils that have migrated to the country. According to UNHCR, "a crisis in refugee education looms across the region". Amongst those Syrian pupils who are going to school, a large majority is admitted at the primary level. Since Syrian refugees have to provide a Jordanian registration card and the UNHCR card to get their children admitted in schools, delays happen that can be almost a month long. Along with this, parents are not well-informed, there are miles between their houses and schools that are taking in refugees and there is a lot of pressure from the government to manage the education system.

In Lebanon, lesser number of children is found to be admitted in public and private systems in the past academic year. However, UNICEF along with UNHCR provides the fact that there will be 300,000 Syrian children of school going age seeking admission in schools in the coming academic year. Similar to Jordan, Lebanese schools have started functioning in double-shifts that will be funded by UNHCR to facilitate the increasing number of children that are of school going age. Although in Jordan, families believe that they will go home soon and they need their children to supplement the house income. The schools are crowded, there is insufficient educational support, there is lack of access to schools nearby, and difference of language in the Lebanese curriculum specifically creates barriers to enrollment. These factors allow them to lose interest in educating their children. Children that are younger and enrolled for primary education may be capable of adapting to these challenges better than those students in middle and high school. For them, the idea of adopting a foreign tongue and exploring a different curriculum in preparation for an excessively unknown and unstable future seems troubling.

One of the problems faced and heard of but hard to measure concerns the "emotional reserves" or emotional support from parents. They are the ones who take the decision of enrolling their children in schools that have a different curriculum and are located in unfamiliar places. When the child gets in trouble, maybe because of social integration or lack of comprehension, parents have to find a way to be supportive towards them. At the same time, they have to deal with refugee bureaucracy, look for a way to feed the family and stress about the people who are left in Syria.

Before the crisis even began back in March 2011, a healthy database of primary or basic educational records could not be brought forward by Syria. It is estimated that a ninety seven percent of children of primary age were attending school along with sixty five percent attending secondary school. The rate of literacy was high all around

the country, that is, more than ninety percent in both men and women. In fact, the regional average literacy rate was surpassed by the literacy rate of Syria was of the same level as that of Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. It has even been accounted to be higher than Iraq and Egypt. The overall national investment of Syria in its education sector has also been said to rising in a steady manner. The education budget of the Syrian government has risen from a fifteen percent to nineteen percent of the gross domestic product between the years 2004 and 2009. Public schools suffer great difficulty in finding space to take in Syrian refugee students within the standard school teaching hours. Students usually have to get admission in grades lower than the ones they are actually supposed to be in. On top of this, a lot of poorer families avoid getting their children enrolled in schools because of the money required for everyday transport. It is often difficult to submit the official school records needed to appear in examinations as their records are not easily accessible.

There are many cases reported of Syrian refugee children being bullied in schools. The Lebanese authorities prefer teaching Syrian syllabus to the refugee children and base end of term examinations on these syllabuses. Dislike towards Syrian refugee children has been also noted as some instances are reported in which Lebanese families have preferred to withdraw their children from the school that has admitted Syrian refugee children. Since employment opportunities in Lebanon are already scarce, the addition of Syrian children in the employment race is taken as a threat to the job market and a disturbance in the already constrained economic, social and political structure of the country.

There have been very few programs carried out to assist the young Syrian refugees in finding opportunities that would polish their skills for future employment. In addition, the Syrian refugee children are sometimes required to work in order to survive and help their families instead of going to school. The education system in the Arab world is faced by a number of challenges which need to be addressed as they bring forth various complex issues that are many times interrelated. In the Arab education system, a number of people such as policymakers, researchers and educators are involved in the advancement of introducing educational reforms.

Solutions need to keep in strict view all those challenges that come as a package in countries affected with conflict. Before there was conflict in Syria, more than four million children had already left their primary education in countries affected by conflict. The greatest numbers are found in Sudan, Iraq and Yemen.

Additionally now, with many hundreds and thousands of children in Syria that are out of school, the region is left to face perhaps the biggest crisis in its education sector to date. For such children, maximum aid is needed on urgent basis so that their education may be supported as an integral part of the process of humanitarian response on overall grounds. An approach based on longer terms is direly needed in order to provide support to educate all refugees and children who have been displaced internally in the region inclusive of all Palestinians.

Program Structure

Program Purpose:

The objective of this Global Governance Enterprise is to increase the enrollment and retention of primary school-aged Syrian children in school. It is paramount to the future of the region that the proportion of children who are currently not enrolled in school is brought back down to or close to pre-crisis levels. A number of companies as well as national/international non-profit organizations are working to provide education to Syrian refugee students in Lebanon. But the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) is the main facilitator as it has enrolled the highest number of Syrian refugee students in the general education public schools. UNRWA has enrolled almost 7,000 Palestinian children to its schools along with the ones coming from Syria. Approximately 45,000 helpless children that include Syrian population, defenseless Lebanese population and Lebanese returnees, have been given to non-formal education by multiple stakeholders, to assist them in revising courses that can ease their re-admission in schools and also aid in enrolling Syrian students in Lebanese schools.

Role of government and private sector:

It is not just the responsibility of the governments alone to work on the improvement of the quality of education.

The private sector of the region would be the most prone to getting benefitted through achievements of higher learning due to the fact that the young people and children are just like their potential pool of workers. There is an urgent need for the government to exchange a more stable and structured dialogue with the private sector and various educational institutions to not just discover how educational outcomes can be aligned with the needs of the job market in an improved manner, but also to explore in a continuous manner practices for sharing and collaboration of more effective investments from the corporate end in the field of education, elaborate partnerships and strengthened efforts for the drawing of resources from the corporate sector and competencies.

In order to make sure that such dialogues remains ongoing and efforts of joint nature continue to take place positively, proper mechanisms for implementation and check and balance need to be put in place. Newer and better types of partnerships between the public sector and the private sector need to be built so that governments could get some meaningful assistance in raising the number and quality of educational opportunities and improving the

process of learning. Efforts need to be made from governments' end for the encouragement of the private sector to be supportive about bring innovation in the system of education, to come up with creative plans of financing education and to upscale the level of initiatives takes in field of training and education.

Research has revealed that a country can secure a prosperous future by providing better facilities to their children in the field of education at an early stage. Remarkable improvement has been noticed in the provision of early childhood education, for example, their academic performances have improved, learning abilities have increased, and they have increasingly contributed to the labor market. It is also an extremely cost-effective endeavor in which if investments are made at early stages, the economic returns increase. For example, estimation has been made regarding the enrolment rate being raised to twenty-five percent would potentially lead to a bright future of raising the income 6.5 times higher than per capita provision cost of access to preschools. An approach is needed that is multi-sectoral in kind and is inclusive of the nonprofit sectors, the development world and the private sector so that this gap can be addressed, especially in those children who are extremely poor. The question is what kind of financial incentives can be provided that could account for the acceleration of the progress being made in making the early childhood education of great quality and childhood care easier to access and afford, for example, in the form of vouchers or cash transfers.

Program Activities:

The GGE would get start off with the organization of educational activities as soon as things like food and shelter have been sorted out. All initiatives will be taken in accordance with EFA (Education For All). However, it is very important that community is involved for which the GGE will take special action on the retention of ownership by the community. Community groups of Syria such as the committees of existing schools, groups for women and leaders in general of the community can help in solving a lot of the problems such as making the people realize the need for a school. This will take place in coordination with personnel of the Syrian camp management and community services.

The GGE will build and implement educational programmes that entail staff carrying responsibilities in specific. This will motivate the establishment of schools for training and guiding purposes and committees for the management of primary education. Some of the primary tasks of the GGE would be to gather labor workforce for constructing, maintaining and repairing classrooms, toilets, furniture and other necessary fixtures along with security for the schools. Safety and security is key to ensuring attendance in schools. The majority of Syrian refugee primary school-aged children report that they would like to go to school but they say their key reasons for non-attendance (or drop out) are violence and harassment en route to and from school. Lessening the risks and increasing security can be accomplished by minimizing the travel required to get to a school. The proximity of the schools in relation to the refugee camps will be a crucial factor in the results of this project.

The vision of increasing education enrollment and retention for primary school aged Syrian refugees is a tall task. However, with the correct collaborations and partners it can be done. Creating a global governance enterprise to combat this crisis takes contribution from a broad spectrum of organizations, corporations, governments, people communities, and more. People will be assigned with duties as specific as carrying out the mobilization of supplementary materials for the school and resources for volunteering at the school and other activities for provision of primary education.

The existing schools or structures to serve as schools in off peak hours would be brought to action. A multiple-shift structure would be implemented which means that Syrian children will attend the already existing local schools in the afternoon or evenings after the local children have completed studies. Promoting a multiple-shift system in host countries as a way to educate Syrian refugees will maximize teaching resources and give the Syrian students the opportunity to learn amongst their peers. Using a multiple-shift system will also require significantly less resources since the structures and many resources already exist. The implementation of this is easier than building new structures and the shift system can begin quickly if the local communities are willing to collaborate and engage in this enterprise.

In order to create more schools, the modular building system used in the US will be replicated. The purpose of this would be to solve the problem of overcrowding and lack of formal education spaces. Utilizing modular prefabricated buildings is a timely and relatively cost effective alternative to expanding the existing structures or building entire new facilities.

For increasing the enrolment rate in schools and prevention of drop out, GGE will organize teachers' visits to homes and the volunteers of the community. Special emphasis will be placed on girls' education in order to ensure equity in gender. Advocacy will be made an integral part of the community and an advisory committee will oversee the educational programmes. For the promotion of primary education, the GGE will also initiate pre-schools through the support of the community with volunteers from the teaching community. This step would account extremely important for the promotion of girls' primary education.

Enrolment of children in primary schools along with their retention all through the eighth grade will be promoted by the GGE and efficient use of school resources will be ensured along with attendance of teachers. If there is a danger of drop out predicted, mentoring systems will be organized based on voluntary systems and also, one on one tutoring with the children after school. If there are problems pertaining to absenteeism, for any reason at all such as clash of timings of water supply or food distribution, administrators will liaison with the groups of communities. The primary school development plan will be prepared and updated by the senior staff of the school along with the head teachers.

Providing a sufficient amount of teachers and a central curriculum is critical to the GGE to meet the educational needs of the children in Syria. Refugees will be sought out with a teaching background. Syrian adult refugees who have experience in teaching can be a valuable resource. Utilizing Syrian teachers will allow the workforce to increase at a fast pace, as well as support their livelihoods. It will also help to promote a greater interest in the success of the program because these teachers will be educating their own children, neighbors, and relatives. It is important that refugees who are educated are made a part of the GGE be it in the role of teachers, administrators, community heads, etc. This will lead to less dependency on the economy, a sense of collaboration for the community and increased familiarity between students and teachers.

A curriculum on emergency basis would have to be developed that will entail proper activities and most of them would be recreational at the initial stage. Before a formal curriculum can be built, the status of Syrian children's education would be taken into consideration before they were displaced with focus on their teachers' memory and the educational materials they might have brought along. Monitoring and evaluation would be done at every step of the implementation process of the curriculum with omission of any kind of controversial elements. Help from people who are well-versed in the language of instruction would be taken for the identification and elimination of any messages that pertain to hatred and anarchy.

As soon as it would be possible, a formal designing of the curriculum would take place through consultative sessions with refugee educators along with the people from the education ministry of the country and our enterprise's implementing partners. The language of the curriculum would have to be that of country as well as the language of instruction but additional time will be given to the country hosting. These actions will take place in accordance with the rules of EFA and CRC.

The UNHCR has set standards for school timings which are at least four hours of active schooling time in a day. This is for classes up to fourth grade. At least six schooling hours are required for grade 5 and above and this takes into account a single shift system to be operational. This will require building proper timetables.

An eLearning project in order to reach a large and diverse group of young refugees from different backgrounds and varying levels of education would be developed. It is difficult to educate Syrian child refugees using traditional teaching methods because many hurdles must be addressed including language barriers and high drop-out rates found inside and outside of the camps. Not having adequate infrastructure, materials or teachers makes this task even more difficult. By integrating ICT tools such as computers and portable devices young students would have the ability to access education in a safe environment.

Outcomes and Potential Challenges

Outcomes in learning cannot undergo improvement if the dearth of teachers and the level of quality teaching are not being addressed in an effective way. According to a report by UNESCO, the second largest share of the global gap in teaching is found in the Arab states, the largest being the sub Saharan Africa. This region needs to work on the creation of additional five hundred thousand posts and make replacements for the one million teachers who are in process of quitting their jobs so that the goal of universal primary education can be achieved by the year 2030. Among many countries in this region, this priority is shared to fill the void of teachers with highly qualified and capable graduates as well as re-training of teachers who are already in service.

The one way for educating Syrian refugee children has been to enroll them with Lebanese pupils in regular public schools. This has been complemented by creating, in a particular number of schools, a system of double shift while Syrian pupils go to institutions during the midday. This is the time when the Lebanese children have gone home after getting done with their Lebanese curriculum lessons. Lebanon has also seen the creation of private institutions just for Syrian students, mainly utilizing the existing school grounds in the afternoon hours, with some of them adapting the Syrian curriculum for instructions.

For any type country, the most integral and initial step is to systematically collect and make use of data on the outcomes of the various learning processes. There are a number of wide gaps in the data pertaining to student assessments which need efforts on a more global level for support in improvement of the measuring process of these learning outcomes data. One out of three Syrian refugees is found to be either literate or illiterate which shows that overall they are not very well educated. Only about three quarters of the Syrian refugees have obtained primary education whereas university level education has been obtained by only 3%. Both the Syrian refugee men

and women have been observed to possess same level of education though it has been noted that the women are somewhat less educated than men.

In Lebanon, child labor has usually been found in family-based farming, informal sector and street business. Although there is no certainty provided through national surveillance, the results extracted from small-scale quantitative researches and qualitative studies show that there is an increment in child labor. Significant reasons for this can be the lack of attendance at schools and the failing socio-economic state. The government has strengthened its policy and legislation concerning the practice of child labor in an attempt to bring the situation under control.

Another reason that can be counted as the factor behind the increase in child labor is the large amount of Syrian families who are taking refuge from the war in Syria. It goes without saying that these children are being sent into the field of employment and hard labor by their parents or families in order to financially contribute to the household as stated by Syrian children in the survey. This happens to be the major factor behind the laboring of these children as the financial state of these refugee families is extremely poor. On the other hand, 15% of the Syrian laboring children said that the reason for them to be working is because of the lack of a breadwinner in the family. It should also be noted that most of the Syrian children indulging in child labor were found to be boys. Only a few Syrian girls were observed to be working. With such hopeless state of living, the extended time period of crisis and the continued increase of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, child labor is predicted to increase furthermore. Though the public schools in Lebanon are not often overcrowded but the rise of Syrian refugee entering Lebanon has in turn increased the amount of students in schools. This has created an imbalance in the student-teacher ratio and it is anticipated to increase in Bekaa and the North. The increasing number of students create further disturbance for a school system that is already weak and is in need of adequate equipment, skilled teachers, safe infrastructure and healthy environment. This has rather become a challenge for the communities.

The following are some of the most important challenges that the GGE would have to face:

- It has come to notice that the absorption capacity of public education systems has a limit of about 90,000 pupils. This leaves behind more than two-thirds mass of Syrian students without getting any opportunity to study.

- Then there is the problem and chance of classes being overcrowded especially in areas where there is a disadvantage to Lebanese population. Their areas cannot be claimed where their youth belongs in order to attain educational benefits.

- For Syrian pupils, a new curriculum would have to be adopted. For some very important subjects like math and science at the secondary or intermediate stage, the instructions are given in French or English and the Syrian students are alien to both. In addition, mandatory learning of one of the two languages exists starting at the primary level of school – something which cannot be expected from Syrian children. Plus, mainstreaming has led to more demands on the staff due to a growth in numbers of students along with the heterogeneity of students' past preparedness and learning. The creation of double shift school systems with Syrian students going to school at midday does increase academic opportunities for Syrian refugee children. However, it has its downside of being expensive because of salaries that need to be paid to extra teaching staff or pay more to the existing one. It may even have further negative impact such as below:

- Less time to learn for both the Syrian or Lebanese students and expansion of the learning process as well as teaching activities.
- Lack of "soft" interest grabbing topics, like music and art and more focus upon academics.
- This arrangement may also lead to hurdles like making sure good teachers as well as supervisors for the second school shift are present for double shifts.

With a couple of exceptions, Syrian refugee pupils going to schools in Lebanon are given lessons according to the Lebanese curricula that has certain differences from the Syrian curricula as defined below:

- Science and math are instructed in English or French at the secondary and intermediate levels. The adoption of Lebanese curriculum is not a problem in particular for primary level students and students of grades 1 and 2. The learning of another language begins at grade 3 or above and studying Math and Science in a fully simple language starts to become a problem for a mass of students who are alien to it. In many scenarios, while the teachers go on educating these subject matters, the pupils are to stay within the classroom even when they are not actively learning and participating. From a fully logical perspective, this situation seems counterproductive and carries all seeds that result in the unsatisfactory position of the school, dropouts, and, eventually, parents refraining from admitting their children to such schools, especially the older ones. This is where the monitoring and evaluation aspect of the GGE would come into play. Teachers and parents along with other students are doing their best to provide full educational support to Syrian pupils so that their integration can be made easier into the school.