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# **Recommendations from the Education International Conference "Providing Education to Refugee Children: Fast Track to Equal Opportunities and Integration"**

# Achieving the Right to Quality Education

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## **Role of National Public School System**

Recommendation 1. Education is a human right and should be provided to all children for free by the governments. If private sector actors have a role it must be strictly regulated.

Recommendation 2. Make sure refugees have access to information ABOUT the education system.

Recommendation 3. Make sure refugees have access to education at their own level of learning. Both children, youth and adults.

Recommendation 4. On the issue of education in transit countries, it is important to recruit representatives for the refugees to define what the refugees know, need and want.

Recommendation 5. Support the initiative to create a European Union committee for the refugee education.

Recommendation 6. Financing of education should be prioritized and governments must be supporting teachers and building and supporting teacher competence.

## **Opening doors to Further and Higher Education**

Recommendation 7. Trust the professionals and give the teachers the mandate to assess prior learning.

Recommendation 8. Regarding e-Learning, make sure that there is skilled support (technical and content) and an infrastructure that works.

## **The Disadvantaged among the Disadvantaged**

Recommendation 9. provide assessment at the earliest opportunity possible with corresponding individual education plans and appropriate support.

Recommendation 10. maintain pressure on national governments to implement complex strategy for girls’ education including:

a. working with families to address cultural, economic and political barriers (e.g. early/forced marriages);

b. to encourage young women/girls participation in education;

c. financing adequate sanitary facilities not only in the refugee camps but in every transit and host country.

Recommendation 11. create opportunities and time for sensitive, appropriate effective communication between teachers/schools and other agencies, and refugee children and their families; for teachers to share learning and best practice with one another thereafter.

## **Preventing Young People from Going Astray**

Recommendation 12. EI and education unions should promote and advocate for Global Citizenship Education that fosters the values of human rights, democracy, intercultural understanding and solidarity for all education levels through a learner-centred, practice-oriented approach.

Recommendation 13. EI and education unions should advocate for equal access for all young people to their social and economic rights, including social and health service provision at education institutions, in order to prevent young people going astray.

# Supporting Teachers

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## **Addressing Teachers’ Shortages**

Recommendation 14. Develop multiple pathways into teaching, including opportunities for career switchers, with appropriate support so those entering the profession are adequately prepared.

Recommendation 15. Provide compensation to those teachers working with refugee students.

Recommendation 16. Provide extra support for students in high levels of need, who may require lower student teacher ratio.

Recommendation 17. Allow temporary employment of volunteers and casual teachers.

## **Teaching in Refugee Centers**

Recommendation 18. Develop a supportive policy framework for voluntary teachers, contract teachers and casual teachers to mitigate the large demand for teachers in these settings and allow the recruitment of more teachers and the integration of qualified refugee teachers.

Recommendation 19. Develop participatory processes in the camps with the involvement of key stakeholders, including refugee students, parents, teachers and support staff to identify needs and develop a contextually relevant strategy which mobilizes existing assets in the camps.

Recommendation 20. Map existing resources in the camp which can support education of refugee children, including space, personnel, opportunities for community partnerships and that recognize and build the agency of refugees themselves and empowers them. Adopt an appreciative inquiry mindset, look for things that are positive and good in the setting.

Recommendation 21. Develop multidisciplinary approaches to teaching that enable teachers to teach out of field and across the curriculum.

Recommendation 22. Review the curriculum so that it is contextually relevant, helps students develop skills that empower them in that setting and build the resilience for their continued journey until resettlement. Develop competency based curriculum that builds competencies for conflict resolution and peace building, vocational and technical skills, music and sports, life skills, including those that allow students to heal from the trauma experienced in their journey. Plan for appropriate pedagogies to help students develop those skills in ways that empower them and build their character, emotional development and cognitive skills, for example, using project based learning, engaging in problem based pedagogy, entrepreneurship education, design thinking and other approaches to build the resiliency, creativity, leadership and entrepreneurial skills of students.

Recommendation 23. Ensure availability of facilities, bathrooms, teaching materials, that can support effective deployment of the pedagogies mentioned above.

Recommendation 24. Give serious consideration to integrating refugee children into mainstream schools, rather than segregating them into schools for refugees in camps or otherwise.

## **Teacher Professional Development and Support**

Recommendation 25. Implement a whole school approach to learning and teaching that includes children and parents.

Recommendation 26. Provide time for professional development and to share good practices.

Recommendation 27. Guarantee effective parental involvement.

Recommendation 28. Establish effective involvement of teacher unions with a focus on the development of effective pedagogies and effective teacher support.

Recommendation 29. Create communities of learning, using technology to document good pedagogical practices and to facilitate exchanges with teachers in schools bridging geographic distance.

Recommendation 30. Prioritise effective professional development for instruction in multilingual classrooms.

Recommendation 31. Professional development should always continue.

## **Giving Refugee Teachers Work Opportunities**

Recommendation 32. Have refugee teachers teach in teams with host country teachers. They can in this way serve as cultural resources to communicate with refugees, while gaining valuable experience and support that allows them to professionalize.

Recommendation 33. Providing mentorship and support.

Recommendation 34. Hire refugee teachers as teacher assistants, who work under the supervision of a fully accredited teacher. It is important to protect them from potential exploitation in relationships that stall their progress towards full qualification.

Recommendation 35. Create bespoke programs, competency based, that allow multiple pathways to gaining and demonstrating the necessary competencies to receive accreditation.

Recommendation 36. Involve teacher unions in the mobilization and development of this new teacher force.

Recommendation 37. Assist refugee teachers in finding documents which accredit the education completed in the home country, so they can receive equivalencies when appropriate.

# The Global Perspective

## **International Instruments Safeguarding the Rights of Refugees**

Recommendation 38. Education international and its affiliates should engage in campaigns that promote the ratification, implementation, and enforcement of international instruments including those relating to labour and children’s rights and standards.

Recommendation 39. Education International and its affiliates should engage in campaigns that aim to turn the tide on public opinion on refugees by re-thinking their communication strategies, particularly through social media and in collaboration with other stakeholders and NGOs.

## **Reaching out to Unaccompanied Minors**

Recommendation 40. Education unions should support regional (e.g. European), national, and local authorities to ensure that unaccompanied minors are provided with effective protection and assistance in a comprehensive and sustainable way, in line with international standards. In this regard, a special attention should be given to a) promoting cross border collaboration and dialogue among unions and relevant authorities in view of efficient family reunification procedures and b) providing unaccompanied minors with long-term educational and work perspectives that would guarantee a successful integration process and transition into adulthood.

Recommendation 41. Education unions should a) develop the capacities and raise awareness of teachers and education personnel on the ground regarding the national legal framework and protection system for unaccompanied minors and b) build partnership with relevant national and local actors to develop safe and inclusive school environments, where unaccompanied minors are offered adequate guidance and support in their integration process, in order to prevent children from disappearing, being excluded from society and protect them from danger.

## **Burden or Blessing**

Recommendation 42. Education stakeholders need to work with wider public services to ensure an effective transition for refugees into their host communities. Education should be seen as the core of all support services.

Recommendation 43. Both refugees and host communities should be supported with effective information, advice and guidance to ensure successful relationships are built between those involved. Education should be seen as the key safe space where this can happen.

## **Sustainable Funding for Quality Education For All**

Recommendation 44. Education International should provide a checklist to support affiliates to lobby for more contributions to the “Education Cannot Wait Fund” and the 0.7% goal in development assistance budgets of donor states.

Recommendation 45. In order to increase effectiveness and transparency of information, Education International can conduct a mapping within the European Union, Africa, and the Middle East in two areas:

Available resources – Which countries are able to provide help and for whom?

Needs – Which kind of support is needed, such as basic needs (emergency funding for refugee camps, schools, food, water, supplies), know-how (training for teachers, manuals, teaching materials, teaching methods), and strategies/policies.

Recommendation 46. Education International members need support in accessing the funds provided by the European Commission. EI and ETUCE can act as facilitators and organize meetings with EU fundraising specialists in order to advise the teachers’ unions on this subject.

Recommendation 47. The outcomes of the conference should consider financial aspects. To support education unions at the national level, Education international should provide a check-list focused on what the governments must do to develop integration policies and development aid actions.

# Confronting the Professional Challenge

## **Supporting the Development of Host Country Language and Values**

Recommendation 48. Evidence based approaches to support language development should be used, informing programs of teacher professional development to build the necessary capacities for effective language instruction, in pull out sessions and in integrated classes. Supportive actions for effective language development would include using teaching assistants with mother tongue for provisional support or maintenance.

Recommendation 49. Teachers have to engage in frequent and effective dialogue with parents that can help them appreciate and communicate respect of the home culture and values, while helping the family navigate and access the codes of participation and power in the host country.

## **Personalization of Instruction**

Recommendation 50. Develop teacher capacities and appropriate assessment instruments that enable the development of an individualized learning plan for each refugee student.

Recommendation 51. Promote teacher autonomy and competency to support the language development of students in the mother tongue as well as language(s) of the host country, as well as the capacity to communicate through the common languages of music and sports.

Recommendation 52. Nurture a social and institutional context that provides teachers a community for learning, support and continuous improvement, social support, a collaborative environment with colleagues and members of the community, adequate support personnel, such as social workers, psychologists and others who can provide holistic attention to the needs of refugees and make appropriate linkages with other agencies that can support the needs of their families.

## **Educating the whole child**

Recommendation 53. Teach teaching. Restructure the work of teaching so it is collaborative, across subjects, project based, and deploying innovative pedagogies.

Recommendation 54. Teacher coaching. Use multiple modalities of professional development, not just short courses, which are common, but also coaching and mentoring, school based professional development, self-studies, shadowing other teachers and team teaching.

Recommendation 55. Develop appropriate linkages for frequent interaction across teachers in various classrooms in various schools, and also between school staff and communities and other organizations of civil society, such as agencies that provide support services to students and their families.

Recommendation 56. Involve students actively in their own education, including in identifying learning needs and devising learning activities to meet those needs.

## **Advancing Global Citizenship Education**

Recommendation 57. Develop global citizenship curriculum across disciplines and at all grade levels which can support effective global citizenship. Different systems may follow diverse pathways to do this, some may adopt a national global citizenship curriculum, others may adopt national standards, others may create processes that invite the creation of multiple global citizenship curricula. These should foster agency, empowerment, understanding of and active respect for human rights and for actions that lead to sustainable development as articulated in the Sustainable Development Goals.

Recommendation 58. Create a global citizenship portal with resources that can support initiatives across countries, and that enable and support cross-country exchange of experience and collaboration.

Recommendation 59. Develop appropriate linkages with academia, international development institutions, and other organizations that can support high quality global citizenship curriculum and professional development.

# Creating a Favourable School Environment

## **Building Harmonious School Community**

Recommendation 60. Foster inclusive and open partnerships with parents and others through building trust and effective communication across the whole school community on the school values and leadership.

Recommendation 61. Effective distributed leadership supported by inclusive, participatory structures building a positive school environment and ethos.

Recommendation 62. Relationships with faith-based institutions can promote integration that is underpinned by understanding. Positive relationships with community police could be helpful in reframing the perception of authority figures and public institutions. Provide language classes for parents who require support to learn the language of the host country. Great need for larger number of mother tongue teachers.

## **Combating Racism and Xenophobia**

Recommendation 63. Develop/Ensure that curriculum that is critical, culturally sensitive and inclusive and includes training for educators to avoid biases. Curriculum should be broad to provide time and freedom to address these issues.

Recommendation 64. Ensure teachers’ professional standards of practice preclude racist and xenophobic activities. School charters should be developed and implemented.

Recommendation 65. Develop a repository of classroom-ready material that may be used by teachers to combat racism and xenophobia including media awareness and critical thinking. Tools should be inter disciplinary, readily available and teacher friendly.

Recommendation 66. Develop partnerships with community organizations and municipalities to provide resources for families and children outside of the school system.

Recommendation 67. Use extra-curricular and/or co-curricular activities to aid in the integration of students and parents.

Recommendation 68. Staff should reflect the diversity of the school community.

Recommendation 69. All members of the education community must be part of the solution including teachers, parents, students, administrators and unions.

## **Developing Effective Models of Trauma Counselling**

Recommendation 70. Systematic training of teachers and school staff to be able to identify signals of behavioural problems/traumas and establishment of multidisciplinary team of experts as resource persons and in order to develop coordinated response/comprehensive interventions at school and with relevant authorities/social services.

Recommendation 71. Build “safe schools” models with spaces for dialogue and extra-support programmes for young people reaching 18 years old who are presenting behavioural and psychological problems.

# Education Unions Taking Responsibility

## **Establishing Partnerships**

Recommendation 72. Establish networks of teachers/teacher unions who are experienced in working on migration issues by encouraging existing teacher activities, empowering teachers at local level. Where networks of CSOs or NGOs exist already, there is a need to tap into or to link to these networks with a view to benefit from each other and to overcome issues of misinformation or lack of information exchange. The network should have a holistic approach and connect with school boards, universities and get everybody together who works on education and migration issues.

Recommendation 73. The networks should reply to the need to engage regional boards, cooperate with CSOs and NGOs, youth parliament, school boards, Red Cross activities, including religious and community leaders who are also close to the refugee community, etc. for the unions to gather the support and form coalitions.

Recommendation 74. Create multi-stakeholder coalitions at local level with parents and students, including the learner experience to ensure children and young people can learn in a safe and healthy environment that allows them to receive quality education.

Recommendation 75. Link to activism, incentivize union activists on the topic; strengthen the dialogue between organizations and empower trade union activists to use the existing experience. For EI that means:

* + - Engage and encourage member organizations to engage in coalitions, recognizing that the partnerships need to reflect the context of national situations.
    - Develop a strategy for cooperation
    - With a view to address different levels of recommendations, establish umbrella coalitions at international and national level to support and promote the establishment of local level coalitions.

Recommendation 76. Empower members to engage or build coalitions at local and national level, bringing together multiple stakeholders

Recommendation 77. Engage and develop networks across countries that share common challenges

Recommendation 78. Convene resources of parents’ and students’ organisations, teachers and teacher representatives to strengthen collective actions vis-à-vis local and state authorities.

## **Sustainable Development Goals**

Recommendation 79. Make the SDGs known and ensure their customization (e.g. union plans, national action plans, policies, legislation).

Recommendation 80. Put pressure on governments and the international community through targeted advocacy for:

Education financing

Investment in teachers (recruitment, continuous professional development, remuneration, etc.)

Recognition of qualifications of refugee teachers

Recommendation 81. Unions and Education International should participate in national, regional, and global consultations, supported through research, empirical evidence and strengthened and sustainable partnerships.

Recommendation 82. Education International should delineate where international partnerships and relationships already exist and provide a timeline as to when and where intervention meetings will occur.

## **Supporting Global Networks**

Recommendation 83. A global teachers virtual online network could enhance the professionalism of teachers by providing opportunities for them to extend their professional support agencies. Such a network should be established on a safe, secure, non-commercial basis providing a multilingual communications platform within a trade union sponsored and monitored network.

Recommendation 84. The network would be useful in enhancing the engagement of teachers with their unions and encouraging teachers to participate and support other union activities.

Recommendation 85. Education International should develop such a global online support network for teachers to facilitate professional interaction. The network should be flexible enough to accommodate the needs and interests of teachers, irrespective of the country in which they work or the language or cultural background of the teachers. It should be designed to be accessible to teachers on a non-cost basis to encourage and facilitate teachers participating in all socio-economic circumstances.

Recommendation 86. The network should be built on the work already done by unions, agencies and regional networks.

Recommendation 87. Associated with the network, Education International should develop a Teacher’s Professional Passport which would provide a portable record for each individual teacher of their skills, interests, knowledge and professional achievements. Education International should try to ensure that the passport was recognized as a valid and accurate record of the professional status of the individual teacher.

Recommendation 88. Establishing such a network would necessitate addressing a number of issues including access (open or restricted), legal issues (personal data and copyright), and partnerships (non-commercial and non-exploitive).