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AS SYRIA CRISIS ENTERS FOURTH YEAR, IIE AND PARTNERS LEAD HIGHER EDUCATION RESPONSE

- **IIE Syria Consortium has coordinated over \$6 Million in support services for Syrian students and scholars to date**
- **New grants from the U.S. Department of State and Carnegie Corporation of New York**
- **The need for more universities and consortium partners is increasingly urgent**

NEW YORK, May 16, 2014 -- As the Syrian crisis enters its fourth year, the Institute of International Education and its partners around the world announce news and results related to the work of the **IIE Syria Consortium for Higher Education in Crisis**. The Consortium provides emergency support to Syrian university students and professors, as they will be so urgently needed to help rebuild Syria.

The crisis in Syria continues to have a devastating impact on professors, university students, and the education sector. University campuses have been bombed, most university students are unable to continue their studies, and many professors have been killed, kidnapped, or forced to flee. The “No Lost Generation” campaign highlights the horrific impact of the Syrian conflict on more than 5 million Syrian children, 3 million of whom are now out of school. This group, led by UNICEF, UNHCR, and other organizations, has issued an urgent call for improved access to education for all Syrian children, both inside Syria and in neighboring countries.

While the world struggles to meet the basic needs of millions of Syrian refugees, IIE and its partners are making sure that higher education is not neglected. Launched in 2012 at the Clinton Global Initiative, the IIE Syria Consortium has expanded in 2014, with original partners **IIE, Jusoor, Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT)**, and the **U.S. Department of State** joined by the **Global Platform for Syrian Students, Kaplan Test Prep International**, and the **University of California, Davis**. Thanks to new partners and funding, the Consortium has mobilized and coordinated over \$6 million in assistance and educational opportunities this year for Syrian students and scholars whose lives and academic work have been threatened due to the conflict.

The **U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs** has made a grant of \$250,000 and the **Carnegie Corporation of New York** has made a grant of \$500,000 to provide much-needed assistance to this effort, the latter in cooperation with the Global Platform for Syrian Students. These funds are enabling IIE and its partners to secure scholarships for Syrian students, offer grants to universities hosting Syrian students, and provide IIE Scholar Rescue Fund (IIE-SRF) fellowships to six Syrian scholars. To date, IIE-SRF has provided fellowships to nearly 50 threatened Syrian scholars thanks to private donors including the **Richard Lounsbery Foundation**, the **Alfred P. Sloan Foundation**, and the **Hite Family Foundation**.

The first IIE-SRF-Carnegie Scholar, a professor of computer science from Homs, arrived safely in February to a New Jersey campus with his wife and two small children, and started teaching immediately. The Carnegie grant will also support a ground-breaking research study with policy-relevant recommendations to meet the education needs of university age refugees from Syria.

In the United States and the UK, more than 30 Consortium members committed 100 scholarships for Syrian students, with a value of more than \$1 million. IIE has vetted 4,000 applications to connect students with these scholarships. For example, Tufts University recently awarded one full scholarship to a Syrian undergraduate student; Monmouth College is providing two full scholarships and eight partial scholarships to Syrian students, and is considering additional commitments; the University of Edinburgh is supporting two Syrian graduate students. The leader in scholarship commitments is the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), which since 2012 has awarded \$1.4 million in scholarship support to 37 Syrian students.

Students awarded Consortium scholarships can join the Jusoor Mentorship program, which pairs each student with a mentor to help them with the transition to university life and provide guidance and advice. Jusoor also conducts webinars for Syrian students and assists with resumes and summer job searches. Recognizing that many Syrian students have been prevented by the conflict from taking the tests required for admission to colleges in the United States, Kaplan Test Prep International has joined the effort, enabling IIE to connect 500 Syrian students with free on-line test preparation courses, valued at over \$1 million.

In Europe and the Middle East, the Global Platform for Syrian Students, established by former Portuguese President Jorge Sampaio, is coordinating a response by more than 30 universities that will create approximately 300 scholarships in 2014 worth nearly \$3 million. Administered through a separate process, current locations for these scholarships include Belgium, Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, Portugal, and Turkey with a possible extension to Latin America. Most recently, the organization coordinated an airlift of 45 Syrian students from Lebanon to Portugal, where they have been placed in undergraduate and graduate programs.

Recognizing that systemic solutions to address the destruction of Syria's higher education sector are also required, researchers from IIE and the University of California, Davis Human Rights Initiative are conducting a study of the higher education needs of university age Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, and Jordan. The goal is to produce policy relevant recommendations for governments and international organizations as they design educational programs for Syrian refugees.

In light of the continued violence and education emergency in Syria, IIE's Syria Consortium and the Global Platform urgently seek additional universities and partners who can help provide scholarships and safe haven for Syrian students and scholars.

For more details and information on how to join or support the Consortium, please visit: www.iie.org/syriascholarships.