



Jesuit Worldwide Learning
Higher Education at the Margins



From Dream to Degree:

Connected higher education for scalable impact in refugee communities

16h00 - 18h30 | 29 September 2026

1 Rue de Varembe, 1202, Geneva, Switzerland

Event: 16h00-17h30 Reception: 17h30-18h30

“ **If you cannot take the refugees to the universities, at least you can bring the universities to the camp.** ”

– Isaac Ayuen
BA Sustainable Development graduate,
Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya

Higher education is a lifeline for refugees and other marginalised communities, empowering individuals to raise their voices, recover and rebuild their lives in dignity, enhancing self-reliance and expanding pathways for third-country solutions. Yet only 9% of refugees have access to tertiary learning opportunities, making it seem like an unattainable dream for most.

But it can be, if we work together. Experience shows how strategic partnerships and technology can overcome barriers to connect universities and refugees, no matter where they are.

Over the past decade, Jesuit Worldwide Learning (JWL) has brought together universities, international and local partners – including the Jesuit Refugee Service in multiple countries – and learners themselves, to provide youth in excluded communities – including over 21,600 forcibly-displaced and conflict-affected communities – with accredited, blended learning higher education programmes.

Please join us for a panel discussion to explore what barriers refugees face in accessing higher education and what concrete solutions can be applied to overcome these through sharing of our experience, research, as well as insights and solutions shared by persons who have lived experience of forced displacement.



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Leaving Syria interrupted my future for a while and I got into a point that I might not be having a future – until I found JWL. This opportunity made me feel that I do have still a future which I can plan for.

– Christine

BA Sustainable Development graduate
Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq

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Welcome and opening remarks

*Fr Peter Balleis, SJ, Executive President,
Jesuit Worldwide Learning*

Keynote address

*Ms Rez Gardi, Special Assistant to the High
Commissioner, United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees*

Moderator

*Mr Michel Anglade, Geneva Representative,
Jesuit Refugee Service*

Panel discussion

*Ms Mélodie Honen-Delmar, Director of Learning
and Research, Jesuit Worldwide Learning*

*Dr Marina Tsoi, Project and Study Program
Coordinator Jesuit Worldwide Learning/Catholic
University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt*

*Dr Alvin Leung, Senior Impact Evaluator,
Cambridge University Press & Assessment*

Closing reflections

*Mr Isaac Ayuen, Jesuit Worldwide Learning
graduate, Master's student, Sciences Po Paris*

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UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Register

After the panel discussion, please join us for light refreshments and continue the conversation.

