Virtual skills school for refugees and displaced women and girls

Location: UNESCO Headquarters, Room 7

Date and time: Monday 20 March 2017, 16:00 – 17:50

Presenters: Anna Falth, UN Women
Meral Guzel, UN Women
Diana Rusu, UN Women

About the presentation:

The displacement of women and girls leads to disruption in their education and learning opportunities. Regardless of where in the world refugees are, they tend to face similar obstacles in accessing education and employment. Refugee women and girls have limited/no access to education. Adjusting to and taking advantage of economic opportunities in their host communities, and eventually leading post-conflict reconstruction upon return to their countries of origin require ongoing learning and skills development. While women's community centers are able to provide some of this training and knowledge at country level, virtual schools offer a globally recognized alternative to education and training.

UN Women will showcase a Classroom Without Walls that can transform learning experience for refugee women and girls. UN Women will demonstrate how it is possible to use one device to learn multiple subject, weather this is more theoretical material or practical, combined videos and exercises. A server that supports offline activities and can host a large number of learning courses and resources will be connected to a wireless router, recharged through solar charger whenever it is needed. This system is accessible, available and ready to use in refugee camps setting.

UN Women will showcase both: the hardware and the content. Gender equality and women's rights will be at the heart of all learning paths through four key journeys:

- Vocational trainings – for learners seeking to expand their technical and professional skills, particularly in emerging and non-traditional sectors.
- 21st century skills – for those to acquire core skills, such as breakthrough technologies, digital and financial literacy.
- Second chance education – for girls and women looking for a "second chance" to get into a path of increased opportunity and continued training.

- Change-maker activation – for companies implementing the Women Empowerment Principles teachers, parents, family members, community leaders.

Meet the presenters:

**Anna Falth** is the Manager of UN Women's EmpowerWomen.org. She initiated consultations for this global online platform in February 2013, and brought it to its global launch during the high-level segment of the UN General Assembly on 23 September 2013. Anna has over seventeen years working on women's economic empowerment issues.

**Meral Guzel** is Empower Women's Regional Coordinator for Europe and Central Asia. She focuses specifically on partnership building with the private sector, universities and other stakeholders. Prior to joining the United Nations, Meral established the Women Banking department at Turk Ekonomi Bankasi where she rolled out initiatives and functions from the ground up. She has also worked at the World Bank and the private sector across Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East. Her areas of expertise include women entrepreneurship and financial inclusion. Meral has three boys and speaks Turkish, English, French and Spanish.

**Diana Rusu** is a development professional and curator of information, leading practices and inspiring stories to economically empower women all over the world. She is the Community and Knowledge Management Specialist within the UN Women's Empower Women Team by day, amateur runner and spinner by night, always upbeat and positive.

Internet links related to the presentation:

welearn.unwomen.org (forthcoming)