

UNHCR - NGO Consultations: Innovation Session Brief

Session Leads/ Organizers: UNHCR Learn Lab (Jacqueline Strecker) & RET International (Marina Anselme, Chief Prog. Development & Evaluation Officer)

The Innovation Unit at UNHCR collaborates with UNHCR Divisions, bureaux, units and teams, the PoC, and partners from the Private Sector, Academia and other Development Agencies to creatively address complex refugee challenges. We use a three-step approach to nurture and facilitate innovation within UNHCR. We look for Innovations already happening within UNHCR and amplify them. We connect innovators within UNHCR to resources, to one another, and to external partners and mentors. We explore and adapt innovations outside of UNHCR to refugee-specific contexts.

RET International is committed to assisting communities to meet the educational needs, in the broadest sense, of young people made vulnerable by displacement, violence, armed conflict and disasters. RET was founded in December 2000 by the former UNHCR High Commissioner, Ms Ogata, as an independent, impartial and non-partisan INGO with no religious or political affiliation. RET works in crisis affected contexts using innovative, tailor-made and human rights-based approaches leading to protect young people, enhance their self-reliance and self-determination and support youth responsible civic engagement, as well as, to contribute to the stabilisation and the sustainable development of their communities.

Goal of the session: To familiarize participants with an innovation design process leading to solve concrete daily refugee life's challenges with a focus on livelihoods and education issues.

Length: 1 Hour

Methodology of the session: Through a meet-up approach, participants will collectively solve a refugee youth challenge (on livelihoods or education) using human-centered design and prototyping tools.

Description:

- (1) The session will begin with a quick introduction into innovative programs that RET and UNHCR have led, and will provide a summary of some of the cross-cutting challenges that persist. These challenges will also build from the outcomes of the Global Youth Consultations, and from the Lifelong learning and Livelihoods sessions held earlier in the day.
- (2) Session participants will be split into small teams and asked to redefine this challenge into a one-sentence problem statement. They will be asked to quickly explore the needs, assets, obstacles surrounding the challenge before beginning their first brainstorming exercise.
- (3) Individually, team members will brainstorm a series of potential solutions, before sharing these with the team. The team will then discuss and prioritize elements of their favorite solutions and creating a new design. As a team, they will be asked to identify some of the assumption imbedded within that solution and build a model or prototype to test the idea.
- (4) Teams will then have a dynamic interactive session where they test the models or prototypes amongst other teams - discussing and reflecting on if any of these ideas could help in truly addressing these challenges. The final ideas will be presented back to the session facilitators (RET and UNHCR) for reflections.

Overall participants will not only receive an opportunity to engage substantially with these challenges but will be immersed within a human-centered design process, learning first-hand about the approach and its potential to stimulate change in the field.