

UNESCO Chairs / UNITWIN Networks Consultation Report Form (Draft)¹

Under the III World Higher Education Conference (WHEC 2021)

Basic information

Date of consultation	[10/07/2021]		
Location of consultation	online platform through Microsoft teams		
Hosting UNESCO Chair or UNITWIN Network (include webpage if applicable)	UNESCO Chair in Bioethics, Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt http://irac.asu.edu.eg/unescochair/		
Name and email address of key contact person	Ass. Prof. Sonya Azab, sonyamohamed@med.asu.edu.eg , sonyaazab@gmail.com		
Complete name, title, and affiliation of moderator(s)	1. Ass.Prof: Sonya Azab, Associate professor of forensic medicine & toxicology, Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University (ASU) ; Holder of UNESCO Chair in Bioethics, ASU, Cairo, Egypt 2. Dr. Eman Abd-El Hakim, Lecturer of forensic medicine & toxicology, Faculty of Medicine, ASU 3. Dr. Hanan El-Sayed, Lecturer of forensic medicine & toxicology , Faculty of Medicine, ASU		
Language of Consultation	Arabic & English languages		
Time spent in consultation (minutes)	90 minutes		
Number of participants	12		
Participants' profiles (please, briefly describe the composition of the group)	Most of the participants have medical background, however, they represented different specialities, positions, universities, and countries. The meeting included FAIMER fellows, staff at public and private universities, postgraduate and undergraduate students, representative members of higher education authorities and the Regional Office of UNESCO in Cairo . All of them shared their outstanding expertise and experiences.		
Countries represented by participants	Egypt, Iraq, Sudan, KSA		
Stakeholder groups (please mark with a "x" as appropriate)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professors/ Researchers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students/Youth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Higher education managers/authorities
	<input type="checkbox"/> NGO/civil society	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International organizations	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy makers/government
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private sector
			<input type="checkbox"/> Others (please, specify):

¹This template includes some elements used by the consultation developed by [The Futures of Education](#) initiative.

Which theme did you choose for this consultation?

- Theme 1: Impact of COVID-19 on higher education
- Theme 2: Higher education and the SDGs
- Theme 3: Inclusion in higher education
- Theme 4: Quality & relevance of programmes
- Theme 5: Academic mobility in higher education
- Theme 6: Higher education governance
- Theme 7: Financing higher education
- Theme 8: Data and knowledge production
- Theme 9: International cooperation to enhance synergies
- Theme 10: Preparing for the future of higher learning
- Other (please, specify):

Synthesis of contributions

Kindly synthesize that best summary reflecting the ideas provided by all participants. There is no need to identify participants. Responses should not exceed 1,200 **words**, including the three responses. As an average, each response would have a limit of 400 words. If necessary, add attachments. Remember that question 1 is general, but question 2 and 3 should refer to the specific theme you have chosen (see list in **Annex 1**).

Question 1: *What should be the present and future role of higher education to favour wellbeing of humans and sustainability of societies?*

- It is important to increase the awareness of the international sustainable development goals in HE institutions as this will help to fasten the development process and achieving these goals.
- All programmes and curricula should be formulated to meet the market needs and the existing problems in each country rather than following international trends.
- Universities should encourage lifelong learning and tailor condensed certified courses (Micro credentials) that should be continuously updated to enable the graduates to improve their skills and to meet the requirements of their jobs. Stakeholders should be engaged in the establishment of these courses according to the community needs.
- HE programmes should include courses for personal development (e.g. soft skills programs, group dynamics, critical thinking, ...). This help to increase the employability of the graduates.
- Partnerships between universities and organizations should be encouraged (either national, regional, or international) as an important mean for capacity building and knowledge transfer.

Question 2: *What are the main **challenges/problems/gaps** in relation **to Impact of COVID-19 on higher education?***

COVID-19 pandemic enforced all schools and HE institutions to shift to distant learning without prior preparation or training for teachers or students in many places. This revealed several challenges and problems as the following:

1. Defective infrastructure (internet, computers, online platforms)
2. Teachers and student were lacking skills to adapt with online learning
3. Curricula and courses were not designed to match with distant learning.
4. It was challenging to use e learning for education of skills, especially skills that need personal interaction (as clinical teaching). At the same time it was challenging to teach skills through face to face learning while keeping safety measures in presence of large number of students
5. Lack of interaction between the tutor and the students during the online sessions
6. Stressful conditions and situations were important barrier for many students to engage in the e learning
7. It was challenging to design an organized schedule for online lectures that suites both of tutors and students especially when they are from several countries with variable time zones.
8. Students found themselves enforced to be independent and responsible for their learning without prior preparation or training, which made them resistant to this sudden shift.
9. Online exams represented great challenge since teachers were not trained to design online exams or to measure its validity. In addition to technical challenges that was a great obstacle, some of the used applications and software programmes were threatening to the privacy of users' personal computers. Also, it was not applicable to use online exams for testing practical and clinical skills

Question 3: What needs to **change** or be **created** to face these challenges **within** and/or **outside** higher education institutions?

Although of the sudden and obligatory shift to the distant learning, it was a good experience that will help to plan for effective educational strategies. The main recommendations were:

- Blended learning may be the most efficient method to gather advantages of both distant learning and face to face learning. Total digitalization of education is not applicable since direct contact is essential for teaching skills, especially in certain fields as medical education and engineering.
- Distant learning became a necessary method for education all over the world, therefore, HE institutions must provide the required technical support and increase the skills of both the teacher and the student to adapt with it.

- Faculty capacity building and adopting faculty development programs are important to train faculty staff to use the technology to fulfil the intended learning objectives and to engage students in virtual environment, especially with the large numbers of students in our schools.
- To ensure the validity of assessment in distant learning, teachers can implement different methods of continuous assessment through the online courses.
- Social and psychological support to the students at time of crisis and pandemic is necessary.

Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were particularly emphasized during this consultation?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 1: No poverty | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 2: Zero hunger | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal13: Climate action |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 3: Good health and well-being | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 9: Industry, innovation, and infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal14: Life below water |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal 4: Quality education | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 10: Reduced inequality | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal15: Life on land |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 5: Gender equality | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal16: Peace and justice strong institutions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation | | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal17: Partnerships to achieve the goals |

You may provide additional feed back...

Are there any other issues that should considered in relation to higher education challenges and options in your community, your region, the world?

Is there any other comment you wish to share with UNESCO or the organizers of the WHEC2021?

List of participants

[Please, include the moderator (s)]

Mr./Mrs.	First name	Last name	Title/organization	Email address (if the participant wishes to receive information about the WHEC2021)	Indicate with an "NO" if the participant DOES NOT want to be publicly identified as participant in this consultation.
Prof	Ashraf	Ghalib	Professor of Surgery, Cairo University; President of El Galala University, Egypt.		
Prof.	Samar	Abd El Azeem	Professor of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology, Ain Shams University, Egypt; Certified UNESCO Trainer; Fellow FAIMER Philadelphia; Director of ASU MENA FAIMER Institute		
Prof.	Mona	Abdel- Aal	Professor of public health, ASU; Executive director, Education Strategy Administration Director, Faculty of Medicine e learning Center, ASU		
Prof.	Omaima	Zubair	Ass. professor of Family and Community Medicine, and Director of Scholar and cultural division at College of Medicine, University of Mosul, Iraq; FAIMER FELLOW 2020.		

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Dr	Noha	Magdy Elrafie	Forensic Toxicologist, Faculty of Medicine; and Acting Director of Ain Shams University Projects Unit - IRAC Sector; ASU-MENA FRI 2019 fellow and 2021 faculty, IFI 2021 fellow		
Dr	Sherif	ElSeginy	Teaching assistant of Forensic Medicine and Clinical Toxicology, Ain Shams University; Vice Director of the ASU International Relations Office - IRAC Sector		
Miss	Doaa	Elgendy	6th Year Medical Student, Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University		
Ms	Heba	Shama	Program associate UNESCO Regional Office in Cairo.		
Prof	Ali	Sabbour	Professor of vascular surgery, Ain Shams Medical School; Former director of the Extended Modular Program, Ain Shams Medical School; Member of the Planning committee _ Supreme Council of Universities, EGYPT		
Prof.	Nadia	Badrawi	Professor of Paediatrics, Cairo University; President of the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE); International expert in Quality Assurance; Board Member of the Planning	nadia@badrawi.com	

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			Committee, Medical Sector, Supreme Council of Universities, Egypt		
Prof.	Alyaa	Lotfy	Professor of oral biology. Faculty of Dentistry, King Abdulaziz University -KSA; and MIU Egypt; FAIMER fellow 2020		
Prof.	Elhadi	Miskeen	Assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology, University of Gezira-Sudan; and University of Bisha-KSA MD, TUFH, FAIMER fellow 2020		