

Refugee Higher Education

Roadmap to the 2023 Global Refugee Forum and Beyond

The **majority of refugees are displaced for much of their education.** Less than half finish secondary school. Those who do need a chance to earn a higher education qualification.

An advanced degree or professional qualification can **position refugees to contribute** to their community, the country hosting them or their home country.

Only 6% of refugee youth are enrolled in higher education. Governments, higher education institutions, students and partners around the world are committed to expanding access. **Join them.**

At the 2023 Global Refugee Forum we need to see ambitious, multi-partner pledges that leverage expertise, innovation and financing to demonstrate actual gains in refugee student enrolment in higher education and greater support for higher education institutions (HEIs) hosting refugees in their first country of asylum, across the five pillars below. Specific gaps can be addressed by NGOs, international financial institutions, academic institutions, individuals, student groups, university networks, faith-based groups, UN agencies and governments. This briefing proposes a suite of concrete, needs-based pledges that can be customised and contextualised for short, medium or long-term implementation.

UNHCR DAFI
Scholarship
Programme

National
Enrolment

Technical &
Vocational
Education &
Training

Connected
Higher
Education

Complementary
Education
Pathways

High quality pledges are...

- Time-bound, costed, measurable and **needs-driven**.
- Prioritise needs of **students, institutions and governments in hosting countries**.
- **Joint pledges** between multiple partners that demonstrate shared commitment and encourage accountability.
- **Matching pledges** that amplify impact and respond to needs identified by host countries or partners.

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Global Changemaker Pledges

UNHCR invites global leadership to action the below high priority pledges, fill fundamental gaps in the refugee higher education space, and help to achieve the 15by30 objective:

Partnerships

- Higher education institutions **establish bilateral or consortia-partnerships** with institutions in hosting countries to support increased enrolment of refugee students.
- University networks commit to prioritise** refugee student enrolment across their membership through the creation of dedicated scholarships and/or targeted financial aid, recruitment in refugee hosting areas and support for member HEIs in refugee hosting countries.
- Design a **matching pledge** to respond to higher education needs identified in a **pledge by a refugee hosting country** at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum. See annex.
- Provide multi-year funding for the global **Peer-to-Peer Solutions Advisor Network** which is establishing a global network of refugee advisors who connect conflict-affected youth with education and livelihoods solutions.

Technical & Vocational Education & Training

- Match unrealised TVET pledges** made by refugee hosting countries at the 2019 GRF.
- Establish labour mobility pathways programmes tied to **technical and vocational education and training opportunities** in host or third countries.

Data & Evidence

- All universities** submit information on refugee enrolment in their institution via the [Opportunities Platform](#) to signal their contribution to the global 15by30 pledge.

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- Commit to support UNHCR to develop an effective, efficient, fit-for-purpose **global methodology and data collection platform** for refugee higher education enrolment.
- Undertake **global or regional research to build evidence** on the impact of refugee higher education on host country economies, national development objectives, sustainable development goals, gender inclusion in higher education.
- Develop a methodology and implement a **global mapping of higher education opportunities** for refugees in all regions.

Scholarships & Enrolment

- States pledge **multi-year or endowment funding for the DAFI scholarship programme**.
- Philanthropists **earmark a minimum of one percent** of their contributions to higher education to scholarships for refugees to attend home or third country higher education institutions.
- Support individual **four-year scholarships** for refugee student through the [UNHCR Aiming Higher campaign](#).
- Multi-institution initiative to create **new complementary education pathways scholarships** that provide comprehensive funding and long-term legal status in a third country.

Connected Higher Education

- Establish and provide **multi-year running costs leading to sustainable community ownership for connected learning tech hubs** where refugees cannot otherwise access higher education due to policy or logistical barriers.
- Multi-partner commitment to create **2,500 new connected higher education opportunities** in refugee-hosting communities.
- Global content platforms (Coursera, EdX, etc.) **create 500 diploma-level places for refugees** linked to labour market opportunities.

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- Individual universities or consortia **provide spaces for 2500 refugee students** to be able to study remotely through **trans-national education initiatives**.
- Corporations and/or private sector stakeholders **donate and distribute laptops** to all DAFI students.
- Equip refugee-run learning centers** with laptops in four countries.

Employment & Solutions

- Employers **create formal employment opportunities** for graduates of the UNHCR DAFI scholarship programme to transition to work.
- Companies commit to **providing sector-specific upskilling and training** to support refugee students to access formal, informal and remote work.
- Public or private sector employers create **dedicated internship, apprenticeship or on-the-job training opportunities** for refugee students and graduates.
- Multi-partner initiative to create **1,000 remote work opportunities** for refugee graduates.
- Provide **online internship opportunities** for refugee students and recent graduates.

Student Leadership

- Commit multi-year financial and technical support to the **Tertiary Refugee Student Network (TRSN)**.
- Provide financial and in-kind support to expand the **Global Refugee Youth Leadership, Public Speaking & Advocacy** initiative to serve refugee youth in all regions.
- Provide seed funding, connectivity and expert mentoring to **refugee-youth-led initiatives** tackling education and solutions needs in their communities.

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Humanitarian-Development Space & Responsibility Sharing

- International development banks ensure that **connectivity initiatives are expanded in refugee hosting areas** to enable better access to online learning.
- Development banks **earmark 5% of existing higher education scholarship programmes** to refugee youth.
- States **remove existing policy or regulatory limitations** on refugee access to higher education.
- Governments and higher education institutions **equalize fee structures and access to financial aid** and loans for refugee youth.
- Develop initiatives pledge support for **higher education systems strengthening** in refugee hosting countries to expand access to higher education and TVET for refugee and host community youth.

How to be recognized as a 15by30 mega pledge partner:

1. [SUBMIT A PLEDGE](#) on the GRF pledging dashboard.
2. Indicate Area of Focus as: Education/Tertiary
3. Indicate: "15by30" in the pledge description

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