

Education Activities for Refugees

August 2019

BACKGROUND – EDUCATION FOR REFUGEE STUDENTS

Jordan continues to provide refuge to displaced populations from the region and around the world. Youth comprise a large number of the refugees in Jordan. Out of a registered population of 751,860 refugees as of 15 July 2019, 223,585 (30 %) range between the ages of 18-35 years old, and 359,945 (48%) refugees are between 0-17 years old.

Refugee children enjoy free access to national basic education systems as mentioned in the [Education Strategic Plan 2018-2022](#). However, refugee children face specific issues in terms of documentation (specifically for non-Syrians), a lack of resources and school materials. At present, there are limited opportunities available for refugees wishing to access tertiary education; whether for graduates of secondary school, or students who were forced to interrupt their university studies due to conflict. As reflected in [UNHCR Global Education Strategy](#), tertiary education is an integral part of UNHCR's Education Jordan Strategy 2017-2019, and is considered within the continuum of the education cycle. Tertiary education includes all types of post-secondary education, such as education at colleges and universities which leads to degrees, as well as training that is technical, vocational, professional/para-professional and results in certificates and diplomas.

In 2019, the education Working Group (WG) and the tertiary education WG were merged in Jordan to provide a forum for partners to coordinate activities, share best practices and ensure that opportunities provided in Jordan are based on evidence and meeting the needs of the beneficiary population on basic, secondary and tertiary educational levels as well as exploring cross sector coordination with livelihood sector.

Membership includes: UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNRWA, British Council, DAAD - German Academic Exchange Service, the European Union, Edraak/Queen Rania Foundation, Erasmus+ Programme, German Jordanian University - EDU Syria, GIZ – Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, Luminus Education, JRS - Jesuit Refugee Service, IIE - Institute for International Education, NRC - Norwegian Refugee Council, Intersos, HI, SPARK, KIRON, War Child, IMC, World Vision International, CARE, We Love Reading, Relief International, Caritas, Madrast, SCJ, HOPES, JCEE, JOHUD, Libraries Without Borders.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

While responding to essential needs will remain a priority, the prolonged nature of displacement necessitates a strategic approach to allow youth to realize their future aspirations in order to gain the skills they need to be able to contribute to rebuilding their countries. Through partnerships with donors, academic institutions, foundations, and in coordination with the inter-agency education working group, UNHCR in Jordan is supporting the following priority areas:

1. Refugee Inclusion in Education Strategic Plan (ESP) Implementation

UNHCR has been playing a key role in ensuring access to quality education for all refugees and ensure refugee mainstreaming in the 2018-2022 Education Strategic Plan, which is consistent with the goal set forward in the [Jordan Response Plan \(JRP\)](#), as well as with the [2030 International Education Framework for Action \(2015\)](#). These documents highlight some critical policy priorities consistent with international agreements such as the sustainable Development goals, particularly SDG4, (Quality Education). UNHCR will work closely with UNESCO and the Ministry of Education along with donors and other UN sister agencies to support the implementation of the ESP as well as the Education Gender Strategy action plan.

2. Inter-Agency Coordination

UNHCR, together with UNICEF and UNESCO, ensures coordination and joint advocacy with donors and the Government of Jordan on education, to continue to provide a platform to discuss and address the needs of refugee youth. The Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) ensures regular participation and inputs from refugee communities to determine education needs and gaps and promoting access and quality of education for all refugees.

3. The DAFI Scholarship Programme

UNHCR's DAFI programme in Jordan has been implemented for several years and is the primary conduit for tertiary education. The programme has developed solid relationships with national universities where students are enrolled, facilitating registration, tuition fees payments procedures, students' performance and other special support the university administrations provide to students. UNHCR Jordan was awarded a new 40 slots for the scholastic year 2019-2020, and the call for application will include all refugee youth of all nationalities.

In 2018, 41 DAFI scholarships were provided to Syrian refugees with the funding support of German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and SAID Foundation. As of mid-2019, there are a total of 651 DAFI students, from Syrians, Iraqis, Sudanese and Yemenis Nationalities are enrolled in Jordanian universities: The University of Jordan, The University of Jordan-Aqaba, Al-Bayt University, JUST, Yarmouk, Philadelphia, Hashemite University, Al Balqaa University, Alhussein Bin Talal University, Applied Science University, Muta, Aqaba University for Technology, Zarqaa, Jarash, Jadara, Israa, Irbid National University, Amman Arab University and AlZaytouna University.

In 2018 a new cash program (JOMOPAY Wallet) was introduced to DAFI students in Jordan as a pilot project. Since refugees can be denied opening bank accounts due to documentation requirements, they can receive and transfer money through mobile wallets by presenting either a UNHCR asylum seeker certificate, a Ministry of Interior Service card or a national passport. Since the introduction of mobile wallets, 670 DAFI students from different nationalities have been able to receive their book and transportation stipend directly through their smart phones. To discover some of the beneficiaries of the DAFI programme and their stories, please click on the links here: [DAFI programme](#), [UNHCR website](#) and [Facebook](#).



Figure 1: DAFI students at the First Lego league Arabia in 2019.

4. Combined Scholarship Resettlement Programme – Complementary Pathway

In partnership with UN Member States, UNHCR works to provide opportunities for tertiary education in third-countries that incorporate a road map to resettlement, following the conclusion of academic studies. In 2015,

2016 and 2017; the Czech Republic, Japan, France and Romania have come forward to provide scholarships within their own domestic educational institutions. In 2019 the available 3rd country tertiary education opportunities are: JISR-JICA in Japan, SRP-WUSC in Canada, Chevening in the UK and the Slovakian Universities scholarship in Slovak Republic.

UNHCR supports in facilitate focus group discussions, acts as a member in the interviewing and selection panels, the scholarships/sponsorships announcements and information through UNHCR channels and social media, and to provide any legal-protection counselling prior to departure. Some 240 refugee students from all nationalities have benefited from the third-country scholarships/sponsorships from 2014 through 2019.

5. Strengthen Coordination with Ministry of Higher Education and Universities

In Jordan several initiatives have been launched recently to find ways to strengthen the Connected Learning approaches to benefit both Jordanians and refugees. Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium (CLCC), co-led by UNHCR and the University of Geneva (InZone), aims to support the provision of quality higher education in contexts of crisis and through a blended learning approach that combines face-to-face and online learning. In December 2018, UNHCR together with the Jordanian Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) organized the first “[Connected Learning Roundtable](#)”.

In 2019, 30 faculty members from Jordanian private and public universities will be trained on the utilization of the connected learning approach in most of their academic programs facilities which ensures flexibility, interactive learning, having access to Open Educational Resources (OER), differentiated-learning, and tracking the students’ progress.

6. Innovative Learning Approach (Connected Learning Hubs)

UNHCR Jordan, with the support of Google.org and Learning Equality, and in partnership with JOHUD, IRD and CARE, has established 10 learning hubs countrywide to provide the necessary education for young learners. [The Connected Learning Hubs](#) aim at strengthening quality of education by leveraging robust digital learning resources. Tools will be used as a compliment to the local curriculum, accessed by learners and trained refugee and Jordanian coaches in community learning centers. This initiative develops a foundational technology platform, high-quality content base, and deployment model for delivering digital education to refugee learners with an offline diversity of educational backgrounds, language needs, and learning contexts.



Figure 2: Refugee and Jordanian learners at the Connected Learning Hubs.

In Zaatari camp, there are two blended learning programs provided for youth at Al-AIBayit University campus:

- 1) CHAMS organization in coordination with UNHCR provides 7 months condensed training on CODING.
- 2) (PADILEIA) project - a digital learning project with UNHCR, Kings College London and Kiron.

In Azraq camp, effective connected learning programs being implemented for refugee youth as follows:

- 1) Ideas Box is a mobile “pop up” multimedia center and learning hub that provides educational and cultural resources.
- 2) In-Zone (University of Geneva), to deliver a range of digital skills training programme to support future life choices and employability, and to offer blended learning courses in different subjects.

7. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

The Education unit facilitates TVET programs to enable refugees to get a job after the training. On the other hand, the aim of such trainings is also to build capacities of refugees while in Jordan, in case of return to their Country of Origin (COO) or in case of resettlement to a 3rd country.

8. Community-Based Education

UNHCR along with local NGO partner Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD) provides Education Assistance to the most vulnerable, marginalized and at high risk of exploitation Syrian and Non-Syrian refugees as well as host communities. The special education project provides country wide services for children with special needs and learning disabilities, and raise awareness on importance of Education through special education centers (60 cases), home-based special education-Portage (184 cases), Parents group counselling (100 cases) and homework support classes (400 cases). The projects also aims at building capacity for caregivers and parents to provide targeted services for children with mild, moderate and severe disabilities and parents equipped with knowledge and skills to deal with children and those with disabilities.



Figure 3: Home based intervention session for a Syrian child with disabilities provided by a caregiver serving.

9. Facilitate Access to Education for Non-Syrian Refugees

Aligned with SDG4 to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all, and in reference to the ESP 2018-2022 inclusive approach, UNHCR in partnership with JOHUD is providing, countrywide, support to 850 non-Syrian refugee students. This includes: school fees, transportation cost and school kits (school bag, stationary, uniform, sport uniform and shoes).

MAIN CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION FOR REFUGEES

- a. Access to Education: Challenges include a lack of certification/documentation, limited mobility, language barriers, high tuition fees, complicated higher education application processes and recognition of prior learning experience at all levels, Basic, Secondary and Tertiary.
- b. Limited existing education opportunities: Scholarship opportunities are limited and there is a need to provide more individualized, demand-driven opportunities, together with the provision of technical and vocational training and other learning streams.

- c. Protection concerns: Mainstreaming protection concerns and cross cutting issues in the education response, including discrimination in gender and nationality, bullying, and double shifted schools.
- d. Education Services for learners with special needs: among the refugee population in Jordan the percentage of people with diverse disabilities is 27,217 (3.6%) which reflects the need for various services of education, whether at centers, home based education or as awareness sessions and campaigns.

UNHCR Education Global Report – [Refugee Education in Crisis](#).

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