UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | Yemen

Refugee Education Factsheet

Ali, Amer, Ismail, and Saleh, Somali refugees, stand with their new back to school kits. ©UNHCR/Doane

Context in Yemen

Yemen is among the worst humanitarian crises globally, marked by conflict, economic collapse, and the breakdown of public institutions and services. Despite its challenges, Yemen also hosts over 60,000 refugees and asylum seekers.

While refugees can access public schools, barriers exist. Facing difficulty making ends meet, and with costs associated with schooling (school fees, uniforms, books, etc.), vulnerable refugee and asylum seeker families are often forced to make tough decisions. Difficult circumstances and opportunity costs can lead to children being pulled out of school to contribute to household income or boys' education being prioritized over girls' education.

Supporting refugee and asylum seeker education in Yemen: Aligned with the UNHCR Global Education Strategy, UNHCR remains committed to facilitating access to education for refugee and asylum-seeker children and youths in Yemen.

Primary and secondary education: UNHCR works closely with education authorities and partners to improve access to formal education on a non-discriminatory basis for refugee and asylum seeing children across Yemen. Support includes:

- Provision of school kits to refugee and asylum-seeking students facing financial hardship. These kits reduce the risk of school dropout in a context in which families find it increasingly difficult to provide their children with basic school supplies and uniforms.
- Individualized interventions, provided by case management partners, to follow-up on and ensure that at-risk children and youth can access and stay in education. Special attention is given to children with disabilities, ensuring they can access both formal and non-formal education, including through the provision of assistive devices.
- Personalized assistance to out-of-school children to support their reintegration into the education system. Support to access documentation and direct financial assistance to families is provided where appropriate.
- UNHCR supports accelerated classes offered in public schools, allowing students to catch up on missed education and transition back into the regular formal school system.
- UNHCR provides support to nine schools directly through assistance to teachers, provision of school materials and supplies, including textbooks, and maintenance work.

Access to education helps refugees and asylum-seekers to rebuild their lives, envision a brighter future, and promotes emotional well-being. It fosters hope and motivation, inspiring them to pursue their dreams despite the challenges they face. Importantly, refugee and asylum-seeking children attend public school, studying together with Yemeni children, fostering social cohesion and promoting integration.

Non-formal education: To expand education opportunities beyond traditional schooling, UNHCR supports non-formal education programs. These programs contribute to life skills and personal development for adults and children. For instance, the refugee committee in Kharaz camp organized pre-school language classes and adult literacy classes

Kharaz camp

Kharaz camp, established in 2001, is Yemen's sole refugee camp, currently hosting nearly 10,000 refugees.

With support from UNHCR, the camp offers education to refugee children, with over 3,000 students enrolled in both primary and secondary school levels. The curriculum follows the Yemeni national education system, providing refugees with a structured and consistent path to learning.

Khadra, a Somali refugee, attends school in Kharaz camp in Yemen. @UNHCR/Doane

2024 achievements:

Refugee and asylum seeker children enrolled in primary education	8,309
Refugee and asylum-seeking children who received material and other support to access primary education	7,289
Refugee and asylum-seeking children who received material and other support to access secondary education	432
Refugee and asylum-seeking children who received scholarships and other support to access tertiary education	129
Schools supported with maintenance or provided with education material	9

DAFI

The DAFI scholarship program continued to support scholarships for refugees in higher education. In 2024, 75 students continued with university and technical and vocational education.

In addition to financial assistance, students benefited from regular follow-up and guidance, which helped strengthen retention and promote academic success. The DAFI programme continues to play a vital role in supporting refugee youth to access tertiary education and pursue opportunities for self-reliance and long-term integration.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is grateful for the support of:

With additional flexible funding support from:

Sweden | España con ACNUR | Norway | Japan for UNHCR | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Denmark | Netherlands | France | Private donors Republic of Korea | Germany | Private donors Italy | Switzerland | Republic of Korea | USA for UNHCR | Sweden for UNHCR | Japan Private donors Netherlands | Belgium | Ireland | Australia for UNHCR | Australia | UNO-Fluchtlingshilfe | UK for UNHCR

For more details, please contact:
Tara Fischer, External Relations Officer, fischer@unhcr.org
Abdullah Babrek, External Relations Associate, babrek@unhcr.org
Ziyad Al-Sulayhi, Communications Associate, alsulaih@unhcr.org