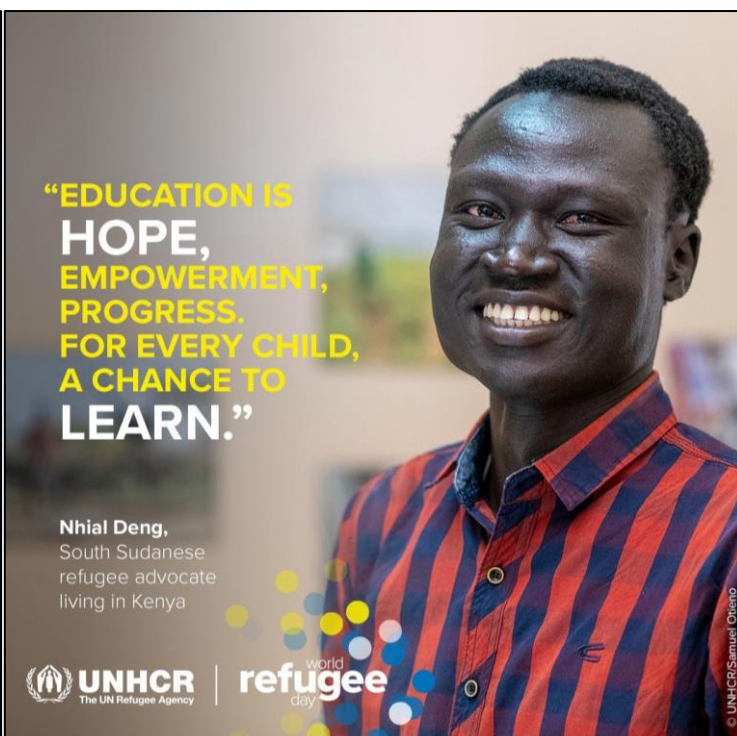


REGIONAL BUREAU FOR WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA EDUCATION NEWSLETTER



World Refugee Day 2021: *Together we heal, learn and shine*

On [World Refugee Day 2021](#), celebrated with the theme [Together we heal, learn and shine](#), UNHCR called for greater inclusion of refugees in **health systems, schools and sport**, to ensure that refugees have the opportunity to contribute to a stronger, safer and more vibrant world. Education helps people forced to flee build better futures and makes the world more resilient and peaceful.

Our vision is a future where all refugees are included in the communities that host them. Where refugees can participate in education and employment and become not only self-reliant but vital contributors to local economies. Expanding **access to secondary and higher education for refugees** is central to achieving this vision which is at the heart of both the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) and the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

Yet, right now, gaining access to higher education is still a battle against the odds for refugees with only 3% enrolled in higher education globally, and **less than 1% in the West & Central Africa region**.

In an effort to [close the higher education gap for refugees](#), UNHCR has launched a new campaign called [Aiming Higher](#) seeking to enable talented refugees to get into higher education by funding their scholarships for university and technical skills training, with the objective to increase the proportion of refugee youth enrolled in higher education to **15% by 2030** (see also UNHCR's [15by30 Roadmap](#)).

With the *Aiming Higher* campaign, UNHCR is urging the private sector to be part of the effort to give young refugees the chance they need to build their own futures.

UNHCR'S EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS



Innovative Partnerships for Refugees' Access to Higher Education, Vocational Training and Employment

Convinced that education can change lives, that lifelong learning is essential for everyone's personal and professional development, and that vocational training opens doors to employment, UNHCR in West and Central Africa is seeking new partnerships to support refugees' access to higher education, lifelong and vocational training, with the aim of improving their transition to employment and thus their autonomy and self-reliance.

[BIOFORCE] Localisation of Aid and Refugee Employment



Signing of the MoU between the Principality of Monaco, UNHCR and Bioforce.
 ©Manuël Vitali/Monaco

Improving training and employment prospects for refugee youth in their countries of asylum, and thus enhancing access to dignified livelihoods, are prerequisites for social cohesion and peaceful coexistence. Furthermore, strengthening the participation and representation of refugees in decision-making processes that directly affect them is key to **improving the humanitarian response** while **advancing the localisation agenda**, in line with the global commitments made at the [World Humanitarian Summit](#) in Istanbul in 2016.

This is why the **Government of the Principality of Monaco**, **UNHCR** and **Bioforce** have sealed a **four-year partnership (2021-2024)** to improve access for refugees and internally displaced persons to humanitarian and development work in West Africa. In line with the 2018 [Global Compact on Refugees](#), the project aims at giving forcibly displaced youth a central role in the preparation and implementation of assistance programmes intended for them, thanks to quality and certified vocational training designed to empowering them to respond to the humanitarian challenges faced by their host countries.

The three partners have already been working together in West Africa since early 2021 on a pilot initiative in which Bioforce has offered [scholarships to refugee women in Senegal](#).

Read the Press Release [here](#).



[AUF] Distance Learning Scholarships for Refugees

Building on its partnership with UNHCR, the AUF (Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie) is committed to **improve refugees' access to higher education**, including through the attribution of scholarships for the **Open and Distance Learning Courses (FOAD)**. These courses are offered in many French-speaking universities and in several fields of training. They enable students to obtain recognised university diplomas at different levels.



[CHAD] The French Embassy Supports University Studies for Refugees



The French Embassy and UNHCR teams signing the new agreement.

The French Embassy in Chad and UNHCR signed, on 22 June 2021, a new agreement for the funding of **5 two-year Master scholarships for refugee students**. Initiated in 2018, this partnership has already enabled 14 young people to continue their studies in Chad after their Bachelor's degree. This scholarship is currently the only one at Master's level accessible to refugees.

During the ceremony, which took place at UNHCR Office in N'Djamena in the presence of three young scholarship holders from previous years, H.E. the French Ambassador to Chad praised the perseverance of the refugees in their brilliant academic career but also their **strong commitment to their community**.

Meet Bello, whose motivation is boundless.

Bello is a Master's graduate in Business Law, thanks to a scholarship offered by the French Embassy in Chad. In addition to his academic achievements, he is a founding member of *Chad Innovation*, an inclusive business incubator, was the President of N'Djamena's refugee student association, and has worked at UNHCR's computer center, among other things. *"My studies in business law allowed me to meet people with an open mind. Studying really motivated me, opened my mind to new ideas and gave me social skills that I now use in my professional life."*

Read Bello's story [here](#).



Bello, a Central African refugee in Chad, completed his studies in Business Law with the support of UNHCR and the French Embassy. ©UNHCR/ Antoine Tardy

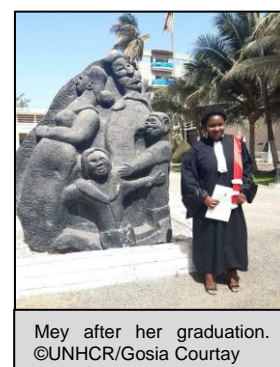
[GUINEA BISSAU-SENEGAL] Higher Education Gives Hope to Refugee Students



First DAFI graduate in Guinea Bissau. ©UNHCR

In **Guinea Bissau**, the very first DAFI student has graduated in June, in presence of UNHCR. The DAFI programme was launched in Guinea Bissau in 2017 and 13 students are currently receiving scholarships to pursue higher education in their country of asylum.

In **Senegal**, Mey, a young Central African refugee woman who just obtained her PhD in oncology at the Faculty of Medicine in Dakar, sets an example for other refugee women. Mey began her medical studies in Bangui, Central African Republic, in 2018 at 19 years old. As a third-year medical student, she fled hostilities in her country and sought refuge in Senegal to continue her studies. Her advice for refugee girls and women is *"to persevere, not to give up, not to take the easy way out, to continue studying, and to obtain all possible higher degrees."*



Mey after her graduation. ©UNHCR/Gosia Courtney

VOICES FROM THE FIELD



[NIGER] Refugee, Football Fan and Top of her Class



Hali is a young Malian refugee in Niger, she is deaf, and until the age of 10 she had never been to school. She communicated with her parents only through a few signs she had invented.

Thanks to UNHCR's support, Hali was included in a specialized school where she was able to learn sign language and receive an education, as do three other refugee children hosted in the same school.

Thanks to new **infrastructure**, a **school feeding programme** and appropriate **teaching and learning materials**, UNHCR's support allows the 185 students of this school to study in good learning conditions. A secondary school has also been created to ensure the children a complete education cycle up to the Baccalaureate.

Watch the video [here](#).

[NIGERIA] A Day in the Life of Bridget

Bridget is a young Cameroonian refugee who is settled with her family in Adagom Settlement, Cross River State, Nigeria. In her primary school, 52 of her 55 classmates are, like her, Cameroonian refugees.

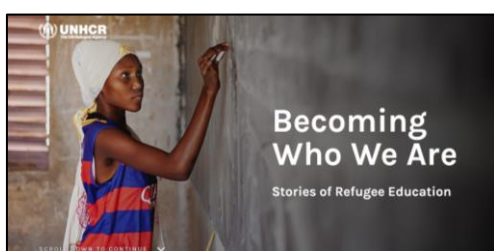
Actress, filmmaker and UNHCR's high profile supporter **Judith Audu** spent a day with Bridget, in one of the refugee settlements in Nigeria, a country hosting over 67,000 Cameroonian refugees who have fled the crisis in Cameroon and sought refuge in Nigeria.

Since their arrival, UNHCR has supported the Ministry of Education to ensure the immediate and smooth inclusion of refugee children and youth into the national education system by building **additional classrooms**, providing **teaching and learning materials** and ensuring adequate **teacher training** in schools located near to the refugee settlements.

Watch the video [here](#).



[GLOBAL] Becoming Who We Are: Stories of Refugee Education



UNHCR has launched a new platform, where you will be able to read about the stories and listen to the voices of refugees from different countries, explaining why **refugee education is an investment with life-, community- and world-changing returns**.

On this platform, you will access many testimonies of pupils and students, including from refugee camps in

Chad, as well as examples of good practices to increase refugees' access to education.

Access the platform [here](#).

CAPACITY BUILDING & EVENTS



[WEBINAR] Achieving Quality Education for IDPs

Inter-agency Network for
Education in Emergencies

At the end of 2020, according to the [2021 Global Report on Internal Displacement](#), a record 55 million people were displaced within their own country, including 23 million below the age of 18. Internally displaced children and young people are frequently denied access to quality education, due to discrimination and financial, legal, and security challenges.

This webinar will highlight the real-life day-to-day challenges young IDPs experience when seeking access to quality education, which is fundamental to their healthy development and future life chances. It will also reflect the perspectives of teachers who have been displaced, and the challenges they have faced both personally and professionally in attempting to support the learning of children and young people in their communities.

Date: 14 July 2021, 1pm UTC

The webinar will be conducted in English, with captioning in English and live interpretation in Arabic, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Register for the webinar [here](#).

[ROUNDTABLE] Meeting the Education Needs of Displaced Children

By the end of 2020 more than 82 million people were forcibly displaced – of which 33 million were under 18. Children and youth displaced by conflict and crisis risk dropping out of school and never returning, especially girls and learners with disabilities.

UNHCR and **Education Cannot Wait** are convening a high-level roundtable to spotlight the needs of displaced children who are at risk of being left even further behind as we prepare for a post-COVID-19 world. Planned within the framework of the Global Education Summit, participants will hear from refugee and IDP youth, reflecting on the role of the international community in supporting them to learn, and on their own vision for education for vulnerable displaced communities.



Date: 27 July 2021, 1pm UTC

Register for the webinar [here](#).

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