

REGIONAL BUREAU FOR WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA EDUCATION NEWSLETTER



A New School Year for the 5 Million Forcibly Displaced Children in the Region

The 2020-2021 school year has been completed for all countries in the West & Central Africa region, despite some delays and adjustments to the academic calendars due to the effects of Covid-19 closures that delayed the start of the school year in many countries.

During the 2020-2021 school year, more than half of refugee children in WCA did not attend school, with a **drastic drop between primary and secondary** (from almost **60%** enrolled in primary to only **15%** enrolled in secondary), while just over **1%** of the 18-24 had access to higher education and vocational training. Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, and Nigeria were the countries with the lowest average enrolment rates, while Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana were the countries with the highest ones.

This confirms the findings of UNHCR's 2021 global education report [‘Staying the course’ - The challenges facing refugee education](#), which focuses on secondary education, the crucial yet critically under-resourced stage for refugees towards greater independence and improved prospects in life.

Despite these challenges, refugee learners who have the chance to go to school are more than motivated to succeed. The proof is in their **end-of-year exam results**, which are as good as or even better than their national peers (see following page).

Read more about the situation of **refugee education in the WCA region** in the [2020-21 regional annual update](#) and access all the available data in the [regional annual dashboard](#).

UNHCR'S EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS



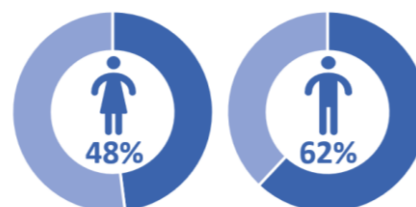
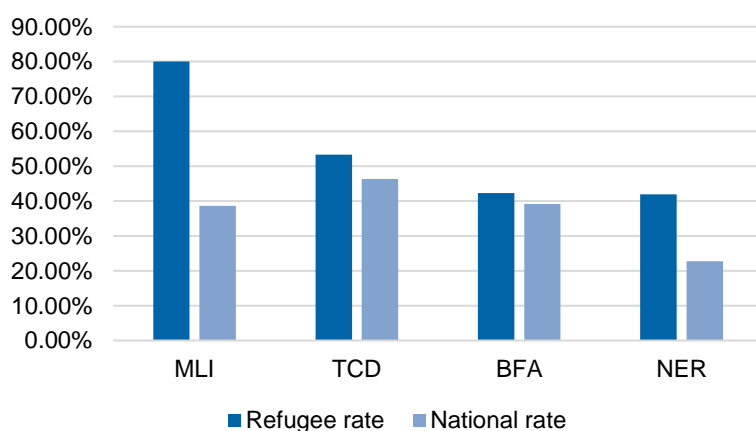
Focus on Refugees' End-of-Year Exam Results

Despite difficulties related to the Covid-19 pandemic, insecurity-related school closures, and structurally challenging learning conditions in the region, refugee students who are fortunate enough to have access to secondary school are giving their all to pass their end-of-year exams with flying colours.

[SAHEL] Refugee Results Above National Averages

In the Sahel region, the national success rates for the Baccalaureate, the exam at the end of the secondary cycle, for 2021, were relatively low, with an average rate below 50%. In the four countries of Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Chad, **1,238 refugee candidates** sat the national Baccalaureate, with an **average success rate of 53%**. In total, in the four countries, **660 refugee students graduated** from the Baccalaureate, **359 of whom were girls**. The success rate for refugees is higher than the national success rate in all four countries (although these figures should be put into perspective, as the number of refugee candidates is lower than the number of national candidates in the same country).

2021 Baccalaureate Success Rates



Success rates for refugee girls VS refugee boys

[CHAD] Testimonies of Refugee Candidates



Siddick Ibrahim Idriss, a 20-year-old Sudanese refugee in the Farchana region of Chad, prepared the Baccalaureate D Arabic series. To better face the exams, he worked in teams with five of his classmates six days a week. "We practice for the Bac every day even in the rain, because the classrooms built by UNHCR allow us to work all the time", says Siddick.

"I HAVE ALWAYS DREAMED OF BEING A DOCTOR, BUT THAT CAN ONLY BE POSSIBLE IF I PASS MY BACCALAUREATE. BEING A DOCTOR IN THE REFUGEE COMMUNITY IS A GREAT PRIVILEGE."

"I was married to a man when I was only 15 years old. I must admit that it was a very hard blow for me. I saw my future going up in smoke."

These are the words of Djamila Abakar Ibrahim, a Sudanese refugee living in Kounoungou refugee camp and a candidate for the Baccalaureate A Arabic series. Djamila, who was born in 1999 in Nyala and arrived in Chad following the Darfur conflict in 2003, hopes to return to her country one day to provide the necessary support and care to her community. This is what motivates her and sustains her dream of higher education.



"I HAVE UNDERSTOOD THAT ONLY EDUCATION CAN OFFER OPPORTUNITIES. SO, IF I DON'T STUDY, MY FUTURE WILL NOT BE BRIGHT."

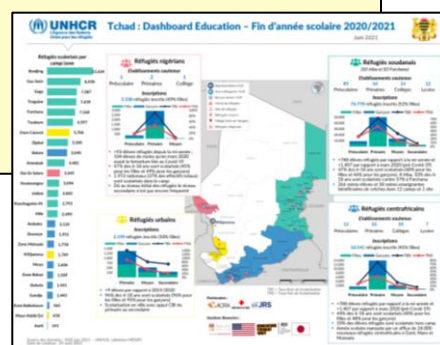
A look back at the refugee school year in Chad

At the end of the 2020/2021 academic year, a total of **100,856 refugees** were enrolled in school, from pre-primary to secondary. This represents an **11% increase** over the start of the school year and **713 more students** than in 2020 before the pandemic-related school closures. **Girls represent 51%** of the refugee population and **92% of refugee children are enrolled in the camps**. It should be noted that 17,475 Chadian students, including 5,089 in the camps, are also enrolled in UNHCR-supported schools.

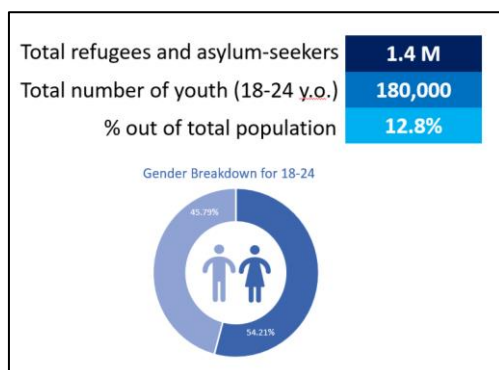
Despite the increase in enrolment, the challenges remain significant as **53% of refugees aged 6-18 are still not in school**, 2 percentage points higher than in March 2020. This increase in enrolment but reduction in the schooling rate can be explained by the **new influxes of refugees** from Sudan and the Central African Republic since December 2020, and who are gradually gaining access to schools, but in smaller proportions than the refugees already there. The **economic impact of Covid-19 on the refugee households** could also explain the slowdown in enrolment. Individualised follow-up and support courses are currently being set up in the reception areas to enable the integration of new children, the re-enrolment of those who have dropped out and the support of pupils at risk of dropping out.

The end of the school year was particularly marked by preparations for the national examinations for the **Brevet d'Etudes Fondamentales (BEF)** and the **Baccalauréat**. 1,804 refugees took part in the BEF (88% attendance rate), 221 more than in 2020. 1,156 candidates took part in the Baccalaureate (98% attendance rate), a slight decrease of 50 candidates. Girls represent 63% of the BEF and 61% of the Baccalauréat candidates.

Do you want more information on Refugee Education in Chad? Access the [End-of-Year Dashboard 2020/2021](#) [here](#) and the [Exam Results Dashboard](#) [here](#).



Complementary Education Pathways: How Higher Education Contributes to Achieving Durable Solutions for Refugee Youth

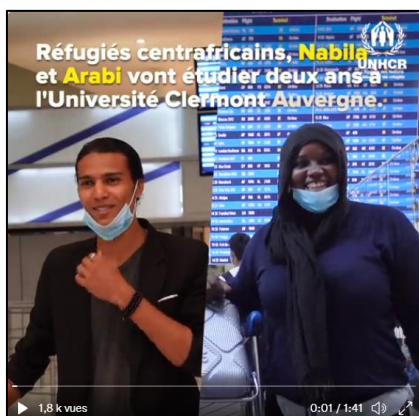


The Western and Central Africa (WCA) region is home to 1.4 million refugees and asylum seekers, of which almost 13%, representing 180,000 individuals, are between 18 and 24 years old.

To fully harness this demographic dividend and take advantage of the potential offered by youth to support economic development objectives in the region, it is essential to further support young refugees through improved education, training and employment opportunities.

Complementary Education Pathways are safe and regulated avenues by which refugees may move to a third country for the purpose of higher education, have their international protection needs met, while also being able to support themselves and reach sustainable and lasting solutions. UNHCR and partners are supporting complementary education pathways for refugee students from the West & Central Africa region through higher education scholarships and opportunities – Find out how with the portraits below.

[CAMEROON-NIGER] University Corridors to France: Two Refugee Students Welcomed by the University of Clermont Auvergne



Two Central African students, refugees from Cameroon and Niger, arrived in France to study for a Master's degree at the University of Clermont Auvergne. This project is the result of a collaboration initiated a year ago by the **University of Clermont Auvergne**, **UNHCR** and **Forum réfugiés-Cosi**.

This student mobility is carried out according to the model of the **university corridors**, a legal and safe admission route that allows refugees residing in a first country of asylum to pursue higher education in a third country. The scheme offers access to the university system, administrative and social support and financial assistance.

This project is supported by the French Embassies in Cameroon and Niger, Campus France, the City of Clermont-Ferrand, Crédit Agricole Centre France, Michelin and the Clermont Auvergne University Foundation.



Read the Press Release [here](#).

[CHAD] Refugees Access Bachelor's Degrees thanks to Campus France

Two young Central African Refugees have recently left Chad for France to pursue their university education through the **Campus France program**.

The two students, Ali Tchari (22 years) and Farouk Abakar Moussa (27 years), have both been accepted to pursue their bachelor's degree at the University of Strasbourg and University of Poitiers respectively. Ali will be studying History in first year while Farouk will be studying Communication and Information Management in the third and last year.



While the number of refugees eligible to attend university in Chad has reached over 3,100 since 2015, scholarship opportunities remain limited and **less than 2% of refugees aged 18 to 24 are currently enrolled at university.**

Ali and Farouk had both the chance to benefit from **UNHCR's scholarships in Chad** (the DAFI scholarship for Ali and UNHCR Mixed Movements scholarship for Farouk) for their undergraduate degree.

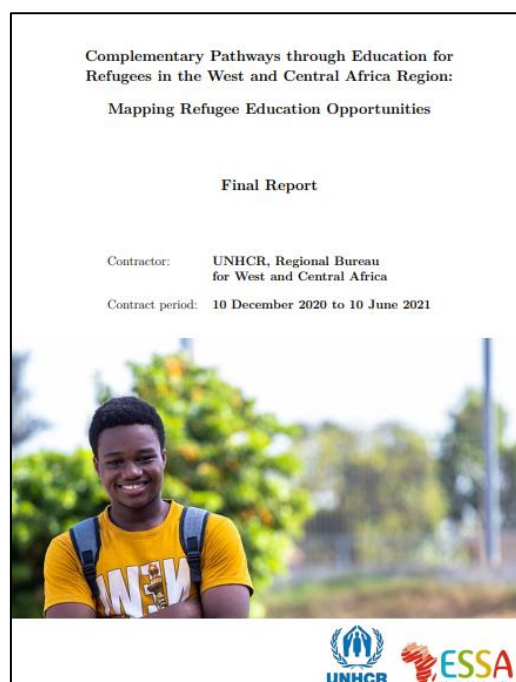
Ali (left) and Farouk (right) in front of their universities in Strasbourg and Poitiers, France.

UNHCR-ESSA Regional Report: Complementary Education Pathways in West & Central Africa

UNHCR Regional Bureau for West & Central Africa and Education Sub Saharan Africa (ESSA) have produced a comprehensive report titled [‘Complementary Pathways through Education for Refugees in WCA Region’](#).

This mapping provides comparable data between **21 countries in WCA** on **educational and vocational opportunities available for refugees** within the region. The report also links the refugee protection qualities of education-based complementary pathways with the direct contribution of skills-provision and capacity to countries in the region, rather than removing it to regions traditionally associated with complementary pathways.

In addition to providing international protection and durable solutions to refugees, **education pathways are considered an investment** in the region's capacity that could, in the long run, serve to address the very drivers of displacement in the region.



Access the Report [here](#).

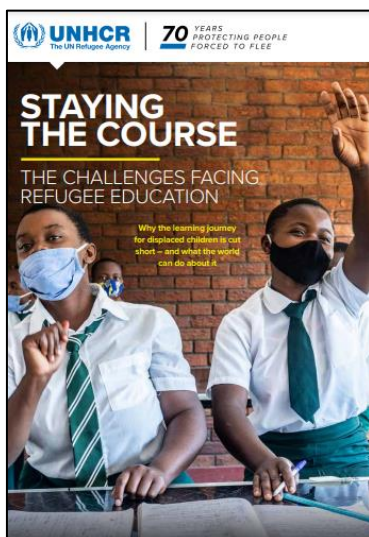
Additional Resources on Complementary Education Pathways

- Global Task Force on Third Country Education Pathways: [Website](#)
- Global Task Force on Third Country Education Pathways (2021): [Minimum Standards for Complementary Education Pathways](#)
- UNHCR, WUSC-EUMC, UNESCO (2020): [Doubling our Impact: Third Country Higher Education Pathways for Refugees](#)
- UNHCR (2019): [Complementary Pathways for Admission of Refugees to Third Countries](#)
- UNHCR, WUSC-EUMC (2017): [Building Educational Pathways for Refugees: Mapping a Canadian peer-to-peer support model](#)

EDUCATION RESOURCES



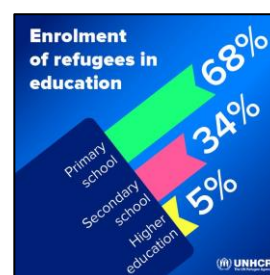
[UNHCR] Staying the Course: The Challenges Facing Refugee Education



UNHCR launched its 2021 Education Report, [Staying the Course: The Challenges Facing Refugee Education](#), which highlights the stories of young refugees around the world as they try to keep learning despite unprecedented disruptions triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to UNHCR data gathered in 40 countries, the 2019-2020 **gross secondary level enrolment rate** for refugees stood at only **34 per cent**. In almost every country, the rate trails that of host community children.

While COVID-19 has been disruptive for all children, the report points out that for young refugees who already face significant obstacles to getting into school, it could dash all hopes of their getting an education.



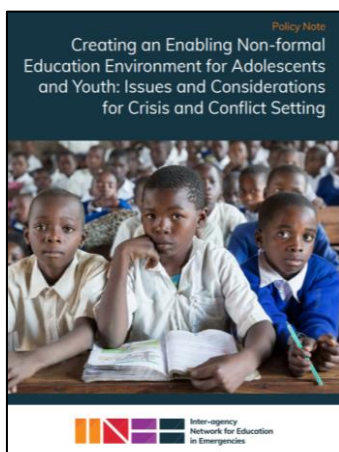
Read the report [here](#).

[Save the Children] Build Forward Better

[Build Forward Better](#) presents new analysis on which countries' **school systems are most vulnerable** to existing risks and future crises. DRC, Nigeria, Somalia, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Sudan, Mali, and Libya have education systems that are at 'extreme risk'.

The report also sets out what the global community needs to do to support ministries of education in those countries to prepare now. So that, even during emergencies, education systems can provide all children with good-quality, safe and inclusive opportunities to learn.

Access the report [here](#).



[INEE] Creating an Enabling Non-Formal Education Environment for Adolescents and Youth

This new policy brief offers recommendations to strengthen the policy environment within which non-formal education is delivered and highlights key considerations for those planning, designing and implementing non-formal programmes that seek to meet the core education and skill development challenges faced by **out-of-school adolescents and youth**, particularly those affected by conflict, crisis, or forced displacement.

Access the policy brief [here](#).

CAPACITY BUILDING & EVENTS



[WEBINAR] Teacher Wellbeing in Crisis Contexts: Sharing Good Practice, Lessons Learned and Opportunities for Change



INEE's [Teachers in Crisis Contexts \(TiCC\) Collaborative](#), in partnership with the LEGO Foundation, Education International, Oxfam, UNESCO, and the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, have come together to support a [Call to Action](#) to transform sector-wide support to teachers in crisis contexts.

Part of this work is to share examples of promising approaches and persistent challenges across policy, practice, and research related to four thematic areas: teacher well-being, teacher management, teacher professional development, and school leadership and governance.

Date: 14 October 2021, 3 pm UTC

Register for the webinar [here](#).



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