

Quality Assurance as a Catalyst for Refugee and Displaced **Student Integration in Tertiary Education** 

Moderated By: Fabrice Hénard and Amir Radfar Alongside: Bernice Kula-Kula and Nina Shahverdyan 10 June, 2024

Forum 2024 - Workshop 5: Quality Assurance as a Catalyst for Refugee and **Displaced Student Integration in Tertiary Education** 



Social Responsibility through Quality Assurance of Tertiary Education

10-12 June, 2024







### Welcome!

Introductions & a bit about us.

What we will be discussing today.

### **Expert Moderators:**





#### **Student Moderators:**







## **Student Testimonials**





Nina Shahverdyan and Bernice Kula-Kula





# Displaced & Refugee Higher Education Students - UNHCR Approaches



Goal: Achieve enrolment of 15% of refugee youth in higher education by 2030, resulting in roughly 600,000 refugee youth with access to higher education.

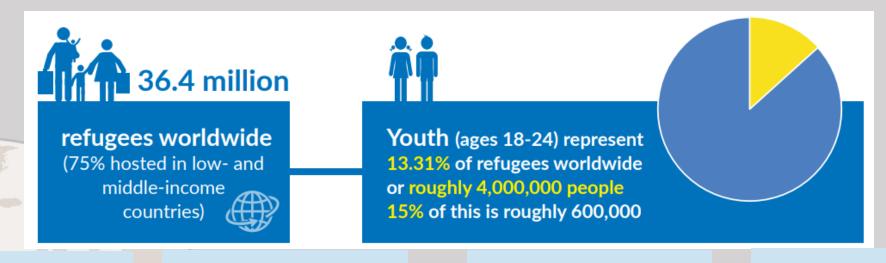


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### Displaced & Refugee Higher Education Students - State of Play



7%

Refugee youth enrolled in higher education (262, 664). 1%

Refugee youth enrolment rate in 2019.

42%

Average higher education enrolment of all youth globally.

**15%** 

Target refugee enrolment in higher education by 2030.





#### Displaced & Refugee Higher Education Students - The Benefits for All

## Return on Investment in Higher Education

#### · High private and social rates of return

 Benefits of investment in tertiary education include higher employment and earnings, productivity growth and innovation, greater social stability, more effective public sector bureaucracies, increased civic engagement, better health outcomes (World Bank)

#### Highest economic returns

 The economic returns for tertiary education graduates are the highest in the entire educational system (17 per cent increase in earnings compared to 10 per cent for primary and 7 per cent for secondary education completion) (World Bank).

#### Greatest returns for women

 Women with a secondary school education may earn twice as much as those with no formal education, and women with a tertiary degree may make 3x as much (World Bank).

#### Knowledge of higher education opportunities improves secondary school retention of refugees

 An independent evaluation of UNHCR's DAFI scholarship programme (<u>UNHCR 2022</u>) found the greatest retention effect among girls and refugees in camps/settlements.
 Furthermore, financial support for refugee scholars remains fundamentally linked to high graduation rates.

## Underinvestment in tertiary education contributes to wealth inequality

 in addition to greater wealth inequality, within and between nations, underinvestment is linked to talent loss, hindered economic growth, low workforce skill capacity, and low quality teaching and learning at all education levels (World Bank).

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Q INGAAHE (A)



### Displaced & Refugee Higher Education Students - The Current Roadmap

#### > STAGES OF INCLUSION IN NATIONAL ENROLMENT

Policy

Refugees face significant prohibitions on access to formal secondary or tertiary education, lack of recognition of foreign academic qualifications, no right to work, limited access to education finance or movement restrictions, fees applicable to non-nationals.

Refugee youth may enrol in higher education, sometimes under the same conditions as nationals, but face different fees and admission conditions depending on country of origin, type of identity documentation or record of prior learning. Refugees do not have the right to work after graduation.

Refugee youth can access postsecondary education under the same conditions as host country youth, universities are wellinformed of equal access policies and refugee youth have the right to formal work after graduation, including business ownership.

Access opportunitie There are limited to no higher education opportunities available to refugees.

Processes to satisfy identity and proof of prior learning requirements do not account for conditions of displacement.

Higher education opportunities and required documentation processes tailored to refugees' needs are available, but there is not necessarily a consistent framework for admission. HEIs and development partners coordinate to strengthen higher education systems with refugee inclusion in mind, refugees and hosting areas are involved in design and implementation.

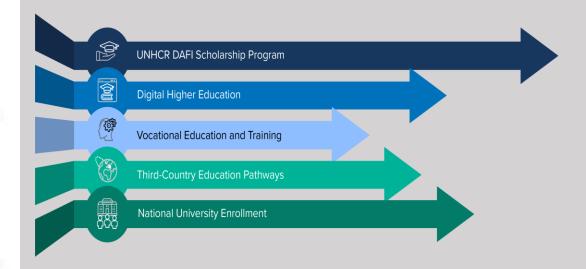
Pipeline to and through

Refugee youth may participate in informal or parallel secondary education but do not have access to national secondary leaving exams nor certification.

Refugee youth may access formal secondary education, participate in secondary leaving exams and receive certificates of completion, but not necessarily under the same terms and fees as nationals.

Refugee youth may access formal secondary education and certification processes under the same conditions as nationals.

Additional support is also available to account for refugees' needs and circumstances.







## Displaced and Refugee Higher Education Students – QA as a Driver to Better the current Situation

- Refugee Youth are enrolled in HE at a staggering low rate.
- There are benefits for all stakeholders involved in HF.
- HE is a crucial tool in for progress in places that are struck by emergencies/conflict.
- There is a current roadmap by the UNHCR to bolster efforts for refugee HE efforts.



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## **QA AS A DRIVER FOR REFUGEE** STUDENT PROGRESS

*QA AT THE HEART OF THE* 

#### Language Learning

Boston University, in the US, has implemented language courses specifically aimed at facilitating refugee students. Internal QA at the university level ensures that these programs are effective in their objectives.

#### Registration and **Enrollment**

For students that do not have access to evidence of credentials from their home country, registration should not be impossible. Regional QA networks and precedent should be leveraged to benefit vulnerable students (i.e. European Qualifications Passport for Refugees).

#### **Social Integration**

Universities should engage networks of students to enact outreach and projects that foster cohesion with different groups of students. In the UK, student led initiatives are currently underway, in which universities could also potentially collaborate.

#### Global Cooperation

Regional Conventions (such as the Addis Convention) have clauses/articles that address refugee and displaced students. Said global cooperation could be incorporated into national qualification and credit recognition frameworks.

#### Professional Integration

In Germany, stakeholders in education have found that internships have been key in establishing professional networks and developing transferable professional knowledge for displaced students.

#### **Admin and Staff Training**

QA in training staff and administrators at universities is crucial for the success of displaced students. Flagship projects, such as the Refugee Educator Academy, have been designed to support educators working in migration and crisis contexts. QA for such training programs could act as drivers to ensuring efficacy.

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## Displaced & Refugee Higher Education Students - 5 themes to be explored



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Developing
Inclusion
Policies
Through QA

QA in
Registration
and
Enrollment

Access to
Internships
and
Traineeships

Support Services and Integration Preparedness of Educators and University Admin





## Theme 1: Developing Inclusion Policies Through QA

- 1. How can QA policies be adapted to recognize and credit the diverse educational backgrounds and experiences of refugees more effectively?
- 2. What QA criteria should be established to evaluate the adequacy of support structures (like language support and financial aid) for refugees in HEIs?





## Theme 2: QA in Registration and Enrollment

- 1. How can QA systems promote and monitor flexible registration and enrollment processes that accomodate the unique situations of refugee students?
- 2. In what ways can QA frameworks encourage the development of bridging programs that facilitate quicker integration of refugees into relevant educational and training programs?









## Theme 3: Access to Internships and Traineeships

5- What quality assurance standards can be developed to ensure internships and traineeships are accessible and adapted to the needs of refugee students?

6- How can quality assurance processes help overcome barriers (like language and cultural differences, special services by universities, etc.) that prevent refugees from accessing meaningful internship opportunities?





## **Theme 4: Support Services and Integration**

- 1. What role should QA play in ensuring that educational institutions provide comprehensive support services for refugee integration (e.g., mentoring, counseling)?
- 2. How can QA mechanisms ensure that partnerships between universities, businesses and community organizations effectively support the integration of refugees?





## Theme 5: Preparedness of Educators and University Admin/Training and Awareness for Staff

- 1. How can QA frameworks encourage continuous professional development administrators and faculty on the needs of refugee students?
- 2. What training should be mandatory for educators and administrative staff to effectively support refugees in navigating the academic environment and accessing available resources?
  - Components to think about:
    - financing
    - resource mobilization to provide access to available funds
    - And/or potential development programs for the universities





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## thank you

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