

ALBERT EINSTEIN REFUGEE ACADEMIC INITIATIVE



DAFI

PROGRAMME

Policy and Guidelines

In conflict and crisis situations, higher education serves as a powerful driver for change, shelters and protects a critical group of young men and women by maintaining their hopes for the future, fosters inclusion and non-discrimination and acts as a catalyst for the recovery and rebuilding of post-conflict countries.

New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (2016)

In line with national education laws, policies and planning, and in support of host countries, States and relevant stakeholders will contribute resources and expertise to expand and enhance the quality and inclusiveness of national education systems to facilitate access by refugee and host community children (both boys and girls), adolescents and youth to primary, secondary and tertiary education.

Global Compact on Refugees (2018)

The Education Section, Division of Resilience and Solutions, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), prepared the 6th edition of the DAFI Policy and Guidelines in consultation with the German Foreign Office and UNHCR colleagues and partner organisations at country and regional levels, and in Headquarters'.

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Abbreviations

DAFI	Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative
DRS	Division of Resilience and Solutions
HEI	Higher Education Institution(s)
ICT	Information and communication technology
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
PPA	Programme Partnership Agreement
ToR	Terms of Reference

INTRODUCTION

DAFI Programme

Refugee youth and young adults are confronted with many **barriers to accessing higher education**. These include lack of financial resources, differences in language of instruction, lack of certificates and recognition of certification, mobility restrictions and long distances to higher education institutions, lack of specialized academic or individualised support, limited access to information, including about policies governing access to higher education for refugees in host countries. As a consequence, only one per cent of refugees have access to higher education worldwide.¹

The Government of Germany initiated **the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI programme)** in 1992 and remains the programme's largest donor. A number of private-sector partners and foundations also support the DAFI programme.² UNHCR manages implementation of the DAFI programme, which has become a flagship model for expanding access to higher education and opening doors to self-reliance for refugee individuals and communities. DAFI continues to play a key role in minimising the interruption of individual educational pathways, allowing refugee youth and young adults to pursue higher education while ensuring that their rights and protection needs are respected. Over a 27-year period between 1992 and 2019, the programme supported more than 15,500 young refugee women and men to pursue their undergraduate degrees in refugee hosting countries across the globe.

The DAFI programme provides **scholarships** to young refugees to help them access and complete higher education in universities, colleges and polytechnics in their host countries, and in some cases, in the country of origin upon return. The scholarship covers a range of costs including for tuition and study materials, food, transportation and accommodation. The DAFI scholarship also provides academic preparatory, language and information and communication technology (ICT) courses, as well as psychosocial support, where needed. The comprehensive approach is designed to promote student academic achievement, skills development, well-being towards a rich and empowering overall higher education experience. DAFI students also have access to social networking, peer support, community engagement and internship opportunities, and country level DAFI Clubs and alumni networks.

The DAFI programme aims to support all sponsored students to successfully **complete their undergraduate studies** and to equip them with relevant skills and experience (i.e. community and voluntary work, internships, language courses) to be able fully embrace livelihoods and self-reliance options after graduation. DAFI students testify to the immense importance of achieving their undergraduate degree, as well as the added benefits from having access to a supportive DAFI community, opportunities for volunteer work, training and internships, and the development of leadership skills that allow them to contribute to the communities where they live and study.

¹ UNHCR. 2017. [Left behind: Refugee Education in Crisis](#)

² Among these private-sector partners and foundations are the SAID Foundation, Asfari Foundation, Hands-Up Foundation, the German UN Flüchtlingshilfswerk and the BASF foundation.

DAFI Policy and Guidelines

The **DAFI Policy and Guidelines** set out the principles, standards and procedures applicable to the DAFI scholarship programme, forming the basis for effective implementation under the management and oversight of UNHCR's Education Section in the Division of Resilience and Solutions (DRS), UNHCR country offices and, where applicable, programme partners.

The DAFI Policy and Guidelines apply to all programme countries. UNHCR offices are responsible for managing and implementing the DAFI programme according to the stated principles, standards and procedures. The Guidelines are designed to support UNHCR country offices and programme partners in annual planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting activities specific to the DAFI programme. The DAFI programme as a whole is managed in accordance with UNHCR procedures and programming principles set out in the UNHCR [Programme Manual](#)³. UNHCR's protection safeguards and principles, and community-based, participatory approaches should be applied throughout. The DAFI Rules and Regulations further elaborate the Guidelines and lay out policy pertaining to specific issues.

HOW TO USE THE DAFI POLICY & GUIDELINES

- ✓ Experienced UNHCR and partner DAFI focal persons with several years of implementation experience are advised to study this version of the guidelines as it contains new and more detailed guidance on all aspects of the programme.
- ✓ UNHCR country offices wishing to offer the DAFI programme are advised to read the section on [initiating a DAFI programme](#) and to consult with the Tertiary Education Team.
- ✓ UNHCR offices considering a DAFI programme for returnees in the country of origin are advised to read the respective guidance in Annex 1, Rules and Regulations as a starting point.

In light of different country contexts and displacement situations, these DAFI Policy and Guidelines and supporting tools and templates should be read through a country specific lens. Certain factors influence how and to what extent activities described in these guidelines will be realised in each country, such as the number of sponsored students, demand for scholarships, the number of higher education institutions in which DAFI students may enrol, the number of locations where students reside in the country, the size of the country and the country programme, capacity of the programme partner or country office, and the nature of the relationship and engagement with the Ministry of (Higher) Education. Furthermore, the programme may change from year to year, influenced, for example, by factors such as whether new scholarships will be awarded, whether more emphasis is put on employability preparation for graduating students or whether the focus is placed on community engagement and volunteer work. While programmes are tailored to individual countries, certain mandatory aspects must be adhered to across DAFI programme countries.

The 6th version of the DAFI Policy and Guidelines provide detailed guidance and activity recommendations for student selection, monitoring and support, alumni outreach, data collection and management, and is reflective of experience and promising practices at country and headquarters levels. The Guidelines are divided in three parts: programme framework, programme implementation and programme management. Each part includes practical guidance and recommended activities for UNHCR DAFI focal persons and programme partners.

Tools + Templates and the DAFI Programme Portal

A variety of standard tools and templates are available to ensure that UNHCR and its partners **apply harmonised approaches and monitor according to consistent indicators across DAFI programme countries**. The table below contains a comprehensive list of tools and templates intended to support an efficient workstream and increase consistency across programmes. The complete set of templates is available on the DAFI Programme Portal and may be obtained from the Tertiary Education Team. The DAFI Programme Portal

³ UNHCR's Programme Manual is available on the UNHCR intranet.

is accessible by invitation only. Contact the Tertiary Education Team to request access for the UNHCR focal person or programme partner.

DAFI Programme Portal – Tools and Templates	
Mandatory Forms	Optional Templates
Application Form	Pre-screening Datasheet
Selection Committee ToR	Interview Questions Template
Final Selection Report (do not alter)	Interview Assessment Form
Scholarship Agreement	Orientation Agenda
Discontinuation Form (do not alter)	Scholar Orientation Handbook
Project Performance Report (do not alter)	Recommendation Letter for Employer/Internship
DAFI Results Framework (do not alter)	Additional UNHCR resources, see below. ⁴
Alumni Survey (do not alter)	
Forms and templates may be adjusted to reflect country context and relevance EXCEPT those marked “do not alter”.	

⁴ UNHCR. 2011. [Age, Gender and Diversity Policy](#): Working with people and communities for equality and protection; UNHCR. 2019. [Refugee Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion 2019-2023 Global Strategy Concept Note](#); UNHCR. 2015. [Policy on the protection of personal data of persons of concern to UNHCR](#); UNHCR. 2018. [Guidance on the Protection of Personal Data of Persons of Concern to UNHCR](#); UNHCR. 2018. [UNHCR/HCP/2018/1 Policy on Age, Gender, and Diversity \(2018\)](#); for UNHCR staff, please also consider the [Data Protection Toolkit available on the Intranet](#). Please make sure that the programme partner staff that implement the DAFI programme have the necessary policies and guidance available.

PART I – PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK

Global Context

In 2016, 193 countries adopted the [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#) and its annex, the [Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework](#) (CRRF). Signatory States affirmed their commitment to sharing responsibility for finding sustainable solutions to forced displacement and their solidarity with those who are forced to flee. The Declaration explicitly recognizes higher education as a 'powerful driver for change' and that university scholarships expand education and self-reliance opportunities for refugees. The CRRF and the Programme of Action of the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) endorse the idea that participation in higher education generates positive change in conflict and crisis situations, fosters inclusion and promotes skills that are essential for recovery and rebuilding after conflict.

In 2015, UN Member States adopted the 2030 [Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). Among its 17 goals is Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 which promotes inclusive, quality and equitable education and lifelong learning, with specific reference to vulnerable groups. Key SDG documents such as the [Incheon Declaration](#) and the [Education 2030 Framework for Action](#) take a crisis-sensitive approach and commit specifically to education for children and youth, including refugees, in conflict-affected areas.

Ensuring the fair and equal participation for all in sustainable development, including those affected by conflict, crisis and forced displacement, depends on shared responsibility among host and donor governments, effective development partnerships, and rights-based approaches aimed to build resilience and facilitate comprehensive solutions with refugees. In line with the CRRF and UNHCR's [Global Strategic Directions for 2017-2021](#), UNHCR supports the inclusion of refugees in national education systems at all levels, including higher education. By including refugees in national education systems, all learners can benefit from improved infrastructure, equipment and teacher support, while refugees can obtain nationally recognized qualifications.

In the context of higher education, inclusion means that refugee students:

- ✓ pay the same registration fees and tuition as national students;
- ✓ have access to entrance examinations;
- ✓ have their previous education credits and certificates recognized, or equivalency conducted, for the purpose of entry and placement;
- ✓ have access to the same student services and resources as national students;
- ✓ have access to networks, recruitment and placement events as other national students; and,
- ✓ can compete for national scholarship programmes at Bachelor and Master level that are available for national students.

Strategic Priorities

The objective of the DAFI programme is to **promote self-reliance among young refugee women and men** by providing opportunities to earn a higher education qualification paving the way for future employment, entrepreneurship, other livelihoods, or postgraduate studies. The DAFI programme is also committed to **developing the civic, social and leadership skills of DAFI students** to promote human rights, gender equality, peace and non-violence, and community development in the societies and economies where they live and work. Providing **equal opportunities for young women and men** is a priority, and DAFI encourages all students to carry forward messages of equal rights, participation and opportunity for girls and women. The DAFI programme is aligned with UNHCR's policy on Age, Gender and Diversity.⁵ Overall, the programme aims to contribute to sustainable development, peace and stability in regions affected by conflict and displacement and to enable refugees to access solutions.

Strategic priorities of the DAFI programme:

- ✓ Promote **self-reliance and pathways to solutions** resulting from completion of an undergraduate qualification.
- ✓ **Empower young women and men equally** to contribute knowledge, skills and leadership, and to participate fully in peaceful coexistence, social cohesion, and the development of the communities where they live.
- ✓ Strengthen the **protective impact of education** by encouraging lifelong learning for refugees.
- ✓ Provide **role models for refugee children and youth** demonstrating the positive impact of education on individuals, communities and societies.
- ✓ Contribute to **post-conflict peace building** and reconstruction in the event that refugees return to their home countries.
- ✓ Promote social, economic and gender **equality**.

The provision of scholarships and access to higher education for refugees is increasingly recognised as an effective means to help refugees **build safe and sustainable futures** for themselves, their families and communities, irrespective of where they live.⁶

Despite consistently increasing global displacement,⁷ refugees have very few options to access durable solutions.⁸ This adds to the urgency to create opportunities and pathways to **solutions for refugees where they live**, and to support refugees to be respected, productive and engaged members of their communities.⁹ By including refugees in national higher education systems, the DAFI scholarship programme facilitates local integration—temporary or permanent—and contributes to social cohesion and the development of refugee and host communities. DAFI scholarships also benefit some refugees who have the opportunity to return to their country of origin, where conditions permit, and support the reconstruction and development of their home country.

Stakeholders

This section explains the roles and responsibilities of UNHCR, programme partners, the German Government and private donor partners to ensure successful collaboration on the implementation, management and advocacy for the DAFI programme.

⁵ UNHCR. 2011. [Age, Gender and Diversity Policy](#): Working with people and communities for equality and protection.

⁶ Including in the 2016 New York Declaration on Refugees and Migration, its Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, the forthcoming Global Compact and more broadly the Agenda for Sustainable Development.

⁷ UNHCR. Global Trends. [Forced Displacement in 2017](#).

⁸ [Solutions](#) are: voluntary repatriation, local integration, resettlement and family reunification.

⁹ UNHCR. 2017. [UNHCR Strategic Directions 2017-2021](#).

The Federal Republic of Germany

The Federal Republic of Germany, as the founding and principal donor to the DAFI programme, plays a pivotal role in promoting access to higher education for refugees. Its financial contribution and collaboration with UNHCR are based on multi-year agreements. The German Federal Foreign Office communicates with the UNHCR Tertiary Education Team on a regular basis regarding resource needs, implementation progress, results and advocacy.

The German Federal Foreign Office collaborates with UNHCR on:

- ✓ Determining annual resource needs and allocation;
- ✓ Increasing visibility of the DAFI programme;
- ✓ Promoting the importance of higher education for refugees;
- ✓ Interacting with and celebrating the achievements of refugee students;
- ✓ Reaching out to new and potential funding partners to further expand the DAFI programme and better respond to the needs of refugee students.

At the country level, UNHCR offices should collaborate with the German embassy or consulate on:

- ✓ **Selection of DAFI students:** UNHCR country offices should invite a representative from the German Embassy to sit on the Selection Committee tasked with choosing new DAFI scholars each year. UNHCR should ensure that the invitation and all background information reaches the German Embassy at least two weeks ahead of the Selection Committee meeting and student interviews.
- ✓ **Interaction with DAFI students:** UNHCR country offices should invite the German Embassy to participate in DAFI programme activities, such as graduation and networking events, annual workshops, and World Refugee Day activities. UNHCR and the German Embassy should circulate among refugee students information relevant to post-graduate study and scholarship opportunities, trainee placements, internships or employment opportunities available through German public and private-sector organisations, associations, foundations and businesses.
- ✓ **Promotion of an enabling environment for refugee higher education:** UNHCR and the German Embassy should jointly advocate for improved access to higher education for refugees. Efforts should target both host governments and development partners by making use of donor and inter-agency coordination mechanisms, such as UN Country Teams or national education sector working groups. In line with the [Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework \(CRRF\)](#) and the [Global Compact on Refugees](#), the German Embassy should encourage German development partners, for example, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)* GmbH, to include refugees in programmes, notably as regards education-to-employment or TVET projects.

UNHCR offices should share the following information with the German Embassy:

- ✓ Call for Applications schedule and relevant documents;
- ✓ ToR for the Selection Committee, interview questions and other documents supporting the selection of new students;
- ✓ Final Selection Report;
- ✓ Progress updates based on mid-year and year-end reporting;
- ✓ Invitation to the annual DAFI workshop and graduation ceremony;
- ✓ [DAFI Annual Report](#);

- ✓ DAFI multi-media communication and individual stories of interest.

Private-sector Partners

The Division of Resilience and Solutions (DRS) and the Division of External Relations (DER) at UNHCR headquarters coordinates funding complementary to the German Government's main contribution and is the entry point for potential private-sector funding partners. UNHCR regional or country offices should direct local funding opportunities and queries to UNHCR Headquarters

Private-sector and other donor partners should collaborate with UNHCR on:

- ✓ Increasing the funding base for the DAFI programme;
- ✓ Increasing the visibility of the DAFI programme;
- ✓ Promoting the importance of higher education for refugees;
- ✓ Promoting an enabling environment for higher education for refugees;
- ✓ Participating on the Selection Committee, DAFI graduation, Annual DAFI workshop and World Refugee Day events;
- ✓ Offering skills training, networking and information exchange, post-graduate study, employment, and internship opportunities for refugees;
- ✓ If country visits are planned, private sector and other partners should coordinate with UNHCR headquarters, which will support the visit together with the UNHCR regional and country office;
- ✓ UNHCR offices should share the DAFI Annual Report, multi-media communications and individual stories, and additional relevant updates with private-sector partner on a regular basis.

UNHCR Headquarters

The DAFI programme is managed at the global level by the UNHCR headquarters' Tertiary Education Team at the global level and implemented by UNHCR offices at the country level. The Director of DRS at headquarters is the budget holder of the DAFI programme. The Director remains ultimately accountable for the effective, results-oriented implementation of the programme. The Director entrusts the Representatives of UNHCR country offices with the responsibility for implementation of the DAFI programme against the programme rule, guidelines and standards at the country level.

Strategic and operational responsibilities are carried out on a daily basis by the Tertiary Education Team, under the supervision of the head of the Education Section in DRS. The Tertiary Education Officer manages the work of the headquarters' Tertiary Education Team.

The Tertiary Education Team has overall responsibility for:

- ✓ Results-oriented and evidence-based planning and budgeting on an annual basis;
- ✓ Implementation and technical support for all UNHCR regional and country offices;
- ✓ Implementation progress and budget monitoring across all countries against an agreed results framework and the DAFI Policy and Guidelines;
- ✓ Annual reporting;
- ✓ Learning and experience exchange across programme countries;
- ✓ Building and strengthening strategic partnerships;

- ✓ Advocacy to improve the policy environment for higher education for refugees;
- ✓ Communication and exchange with the funding partners.

STRATEGIC RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Strategic direction and advocacy:** The Headquarters Tertiary Education Team analyses the broader context of and policy environment for higher education for refugees including the translation of global development and humanitarian commitments in the [Sustainable Development Goals Agenda](#), [the New York Declaration and the CRRF](#), and the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) into strategic guidance and advocacy messages promoting higher education for refugees. The Tertiary Education Team participates in global and regional dialogue and initiatives relating to the provision and promotion of higher education for refugees. Based on situation analysis, country and regional reports on displacement situations, and DAFI programming in particular, the Tertiary Education Team adapts and improves technical and strategic guidance to support effective, results-oriented and evidence-based planning and implementation. The Tertiary Education Team actively promotes and facilitates coordinated and joint advocacy initiatives with other stakeholders to expand access to higher education for refugees.
- **Collaboration and partnerships:** The Tertiary Education Team engages with partners active in higher education for refugees and disseminates information from UNHCR's long-term experience with and promising practices in implementing the DAFI programme. Coordination with other scholarship providers, humanitarian, development and private-sector partners, higher education institutions, governments and UN agencies, is important to avoid duplication, ensure the protection of refugee students and promote the effective and efficient use of resources at all levels. Collaboration and partnership with providers of connected and blended learning programmes are important to leverage additional resources and opportunities.
- **Cross-programme collaboration:** At headquarters level the Tertiary Education Team collaborates with units in the Division of Resilience and Solutions and other Divisions to draw on a range of capacities and expertise for the benefit of the DAFI programme and refugee higher education, in line with the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees. The Education and Livelihoods joint task force capitalises on the synergies existing between the two units in areas such as transition to employment, private sector partnerships, market assessment and analysis, work placement opportunities, trends and skills development for the future of work, career counselling services, right to work advocacy, digital employment, entrepreneurship and business courses, and certificate recognition. The Education Section and Livelihoods Unit present joint workshops for DAFI programme staff and partners on an annual basis.
- **Visibility and fundraising:** UNHCR headquarters, in close collaboration with the German government, promote the visibility of and fundraising for the DAFI programme to respond to the continuously increasing need for quality higher education opportunities for refugees. This includes through a strategic communication approach incorporating online and social media visibility (website, Facebook, Twitter), annual reports, information sessions for public and stakeholder audiences, presentation at conferences, World Refugee Day and other events.

OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Budget allocation and monitoring:** The Tertiary Education Team allocates resources for programme implementation across the programme countries factoring the needs identified in the annual programme submissions by UNHCR country offices. The Tertiary Education Team monitors country disbursement and expenditure rates on an ongoing basis.

- **Implementation monitoring:** The Tertiary Education Team monitors DAFI programme implementation in accordance with the DAFI Policy and Guidelines, the DAFI programme indicators and against the annual programme submission for each country. The Tertiary Education Team monitors progress through close communication with the UNHCR DAFI focal persons at the country level, the DAFI Results Framework, programme reports and technical missions.
- **Technical guidance:** The Tertiary Education Team ensures that all UNHCR representatives and DAFI focal persons: (i) have the most recent version of the DAFI Policy and Guidelines; (ii) use the templates provided for harmonised programme management; (iii) adhere to the defined monitoring standards and principles; and (iv) abide by the programme implementation and management cycles. The Tertiary Education Team regularly provides UNHCR country offices: (i) technical updates; (ii) meaningful and quality feedback on reports and programme submissions; and (iii) information on lessons learned and promising practices. The Tertiary Education Team organises regional workshops bringing together the UNHCR and programme partners, DAFI focal points and relevant members of multi-functional teams.
- **Support and monitoring missions:** The Tertiary Education Team, in collaboration with the Regional Tertiary Education Officers in the Bureaux, undertake regular monitoring and support missions to DAFI programme countries to ensure adherence to the programme standards and to provide technical support. The annual mission schedule is developed with the relevant Bureau and the Head of the Education Section and is included in the Tertiary Education Team annual work plan. Terms of Reference (ToR) form the basis for each mission, and a full Mission Reports, including recommendations and assigned action points are shared with the UNHCR office and other relevant UNHCR staff (e.g. Livelihoods, Comprehensive Solutions, Community-based Protection and Programme, desk officers, Division Directors, etc.). While on mission, members of the Tertiary Education Team should:
 - a. Receive inputs on implementation of the current programme, teaching and learning conditions and needs and possibilities to expand the programme from UNHCR DAFI focal person and the programme partner, DAFI students and graduates, staff of the higher education institutions and the German Embassy.
 - b. Participate in multi-functional team meetings with UNHCR and the programme partners to discuss all aspects relevant to a successful DAFI programme, including selection, student support and monitoring, and post-graduation preparation, including from economic inclusion and protection perspectives.
 - c. Meet with UNHCR senior management, national education partners, higher education institutions and relevant development partners to explore ways to improve the DAFI programme and expand access to higher education for refugees.
 - d. Provide technical support and information on contextually relevant approaches and options, which may include connected learning, dedicated scholarship places for refugees, tuition subsidies or fee waivers.
- **Monitoring and reporting:** The Tertiary Education Team collects, cleans, analyses and reports on qualitative and quantitative programme data based on reports submitted by the UNHCR country offices and partners. Monitoring is carried out on a regular basis to inform results-oriented and evidence-based planning, budget allocation and learning. Monitoring encompasses: individual student data; programme implementation progress; adherence to the DAFI Policy and Guidelines; resource mobilization; programme impact; and, the policy environment. Each year, the [DAFI annual report](#) highlights achievements and unique aspects of individual country programmes as well as the overall global programme results.
- **Resource mobilisation:** The Donor Relations and Resource Mobilization Service (DRRM) and the Private Sector Partnership (PSP) Unit are responsible for donor stewardship and mobilisation of additional financial resources for the DAFI programme. The Tertiary Education Team provides technical advice and data for specific fundraising purposes. Effective resource mobilisation is central to the DAFI

programme's commitment to guarantee scholarship funding for the full four years of undergraduate study, to increase the number of scholarships offered, and to strengthen the quality of programme implementation for sustainable results.

- **Role of Regional (Tertiary) Education Officers:** The Regional (Tertiary) Education Officers are included on communication between UNHCR country DAFI focal persons and the Tertiary Education Team. Regional (Tertiary) Education Officers work closely with the Tertiary Education Team to provide technical support to country offices and facilitate mutual learning and exchange, including supporting the review of country programme submissions, mid-year review and year-end reporting. Regional Officers may be requested to undertake country support missions to ensure adherence to programme standards and Guidelines and to contribute a regional perspective. Regional Officers may have a role to play in supporting advocacy activities and partnership strengthening with higher education institutions and development partners.

UNHCR Country Offices

The Director of the Division of Resilience and Solutions delegates responsibility for implementing the DAFI programme to the UNHCR Representatives in programme countries. The Representative assigns responsibility for coordination, implementation, and management of the DAFI programme to a UNHCR staff member working in Education, Community Based Protection, Protection or Programme units, as appropriate, in the role of DAFI focal person. The UNHCR DAFI focal person works closely with colleagues in Programme, Protection and Livelihoods units.

The role of the DAFI focal person varies depending on whether the DAFI programme is implemented directly, by the UNHCR office, or through and with a programme partner. The choice of modality is in line with UNHCR's Resource Allocation Framework, giving UNHCR offices the authority to select the most appropriate implementation procedure, and is based on factors reflecting the operational context (e.g. number of refugees and locations), capacity of the UNHCR office, requirements for efficiency (achieve results in the most cost-effective manner) and effectiveness (achieve results in a timely manner) in supporting as many refugee students as possible in accordance with the DAFI Policy and Guidelines. Country programmes are recommended to engage a programme partner for DAFI programmes with enrolment of 20 or more students and where additional scholarships are likely to be awarded each year.¹⁰

Senior management in the UNHCR country office should ensure that the annual work objectives and work plan adequately reflect the time required to manage the DAFI programme. The work plan should be shared with all UNHCR staff involved in the monitoring, management and implementation of the DAFI programme. The DAFI focal person should organise and prepare regular meetings, manage effective communications and a review of tasks, roles and responsibilities to ensure transparency, accountability and effective implementation.

Cross-unit collaboration is essential for planning, monitoring and assessing DAFI programme implementation and achieving results. The DAFI focal person should establish close collaboration with colleagues from Community Based Protection, Programme, Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion and Solutions. A multifunctional team should support planning and costing the annual programme proposal.

Staff in country sub-offices working directly with refugee communities play a central role in communicating with refugee students, managing the call for applications, ensuring an accessible and inclusive application and selection process, pre-screening candidates in line with minimum requirements, monitoring student performance and well-being, facilitating community engagement, and advocating for labour market inclusion after the scholarship period. DAFI focal persons should ensure that staff in sub-offices receive all necessary

¹⁰ The rationale behind this recommendation is that UNHCR staff often assume additional responsibilities by managing and implementing the DAFI programme. Once the number of students receiving scholarships expands to more than 20, with new students selected each year, the workload of providing student support and monitoring activities, including financial transfers, managing the call for applications, selection process and enrolment in university of newly selected students cannot be managed effectively by staff who have other responsibilities.

guidance, information and support, and that they are included in all planning, monitoring, reporting and training activities.

STRATEGIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DAFI FOCAL PERSON

- Leverage the results and impact of the DAFI programme by linking education, youth, protection, labour market and solutions planning;
- Ensure non-discriminatory, participatory and age, gender and diversity-inclusive approaches to programme planning and design, including through the use of multi-functional teams;
- Ensure planning and budgeting is based on accurate data and is results-oriented;
- Ensure participation in the DAFI programme does not subject students to heightened risk, address protection considerations in a timely manner;
- Communicate and acknowledge the contribution of the DAFI programme to broader UNHCR protection and solutions strategies;
- Maintain a responsive relationship with the German Embassy and other donors;
- Strengthen collaboration and partnership with Ministries of (Higher) Education, higher education institutions and other stakeholders engaged in higher education for refugees to promote expanded access to affordable higher education for refugees;
- Promote the DAFI scholarship model and other innovative approaches with private sector and development partners in line with SDG 4 and the Global Compact on Refugees;
- Ensure programme visibility with the German Embassy, other donors, host government and national stakeholders, including media, development and private-sector partners at information sharing and DAFI student recognition events;
- Collaborate with UNHCR offices in the country of origin to develop DAFI-for-return programmes and on exchange of information on certificates and recognition of equivalencies;¹¹
- Participate in learning and knowledge exchange with other UNHCR offices and partners, independently and as facilitated by the Tertiary Education Team.

Programme Partner

Where the country office opts to implement DAFI through a programme partner, the partner should demonstrate experience in tertiary education and youth programmes in humanitarian contexts or bring other relevant expertise to the DAFI country programme. A solid track record of working with youth, higher education advocacy, positive performance monitoring and transparent budget management and reporting are crucial. Partners are selected through the Implementing Partnership Management Committee (IPMC) and in accordance with [UNHCR's Policy on Partner Selection and Retention](#).

The selected partner organisation will ideally be engaged for two consecutive programme cycles, contingent on successful implementation, and may be extended for a maximum of four years. The authority to sign partnership agreements for the DAFI programme implementation is delegated to UNHCR country office by the Division of Resilience and Solutions.

The partner organisation nominates or recruits a DAFI focal person with the appropriate experience and seniority. UNHCR should review the Terms of Reference for all staff hired using DAFI resources. The partner

¹¹ In compliance with UNHCR data and protection principles.

DAFI focal person should receive full support from the partner organisation and should have the use of existing management, human resource (HR), and organisational structures to support programme implementation. Appropriate staffing is important to ensure quality implementation and management of the programme and must be reviewed on a regular basis to monitor programme workload and effectiveness.

The UNHCR DAFI focal person should share responsibilities with the programme partner and jointly coordinate advocacy, partnership building, communication and visibility activities. The UNHCR DAFI focal person should work with the partner to formulate the annual work plan and budget, and to manage complications or programme adjustments as they arise.

The PPA must specify that the partner shall comply with UNHCR's [Refugee Education Strategy](#) as well as UNHCR's country education strategy, as applicable, especially when it comes to working in partnership with local education authorities and Ministries of Education. The PPA also specifies that the partner shall comply with the principles, objectives, activities and programme implementation and management framework as set out in the DAFI Policy and Guidelines and Rules and Regulations, including:

- DAFI programme planning procedures, including consultations with DAFI students and stakeholders, such as the Ministry of (Higher) Education and the higher education institutions;
- DAFI programme reporting schedule and the use of standardised indicators and reporting templates;
- DAFI programme monitoring procedures and context-specific monitoring activities with regard to student academic performance, well-being and protection, and the effective and efficient use of DAFI funds;
- Identification of the roles and responsibilities of the partner and UNHCR, participation in regular coordination meetings;
- DAFI programme annual work plan reflecting programme activities, responsibilities and implementation targets.

OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROGRAMME PARTNER

- Deliver on results outlined in the PPA, ensure efficient and effective use of resources to the full benefit of refugee students.
- Maintain accountability to DAFI students, UNHCR, and other stakeholders; provide timely response to complaints.
- Participate in relevant training and monitoring missions with UNHCR colleagues.
- Ensure participation in the DAFI programme does not subject students to heightened risk, address protection considerations in a timely manner.
- Establish a system for [student support and monitoring](#), ensure accurate record keeping and reporting, communicate novel, innovative or effective aspects of country DAFI programmes to UNHCR country offices and the Tertiary Education Team.
- Establish, maintain and strengthen partnerships with higher education institutions (HEI) and relevant government offices/ministries to improve the enabling environment for the DAFI programme. Agreements with higher education institutions and other training or language institutes may open up additional learning opportunities for DAFI students.

UNHCR Operational Responsibilities at the Country Level

Implementation by UNHCR <u>without</u> a programme partner	Implementation <u>through</u> a programme partner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adhere to UNHCR Programme Manual ✓ Prepare, launch and manage the call for applications and selection process ✓ Coordinate student orientation, support and monitoring activities ✓ Routine monitoring meetings with higher education institutions, develop MoUs with HIEs, as applicable ✓ Annual planning and budget preparation ✓ Manage student data; monitor implementation progress ✓ Timely mid-year and year-end reporting ✓ Alumni impact monitoring, alumni survey ✓ Prepare updates and briefings to UNHCR senior management and partners ✓ Routine communication with Ministry of (Higher) Education ✓ Communication with Headquarters staff ✓ Communication with the German Embassy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adhere to UNHCR Programme Manual ✓ Select programme partner (in consultation with Tertiary Education Team) ✓ Orientation for programme partner (with Tertiary Education Team) ✓ Define roles and responsibilities of the programme partner and UNHCR ✓ Ensure Programme Partnership Agreement (PPA) reflects all activities and indicators according to the DAFI Policy and Guidelines ✓ Technical support to the programme partner ✓ Oversight and monitoring on implementation and budget expenditure, including meetings with HEIs, students and teaching staff ✓ Quality control of all data management and programme reporting ✓ Coordinate annual planning and budget preparation ✓ Prepare updates and briefings to UNHCR senior management and partners ✓ Communication with Headquarters staff ✓ Communication with the German Embassy

Eligibility

The DAFI programme targets socio-economically disadvantaged and academically qualified young women and men who have been granted refugee status in the host country or deemed to be persons in need of international protection by UNHCR. The following persons are eligible to apply for DAFI scholarships:

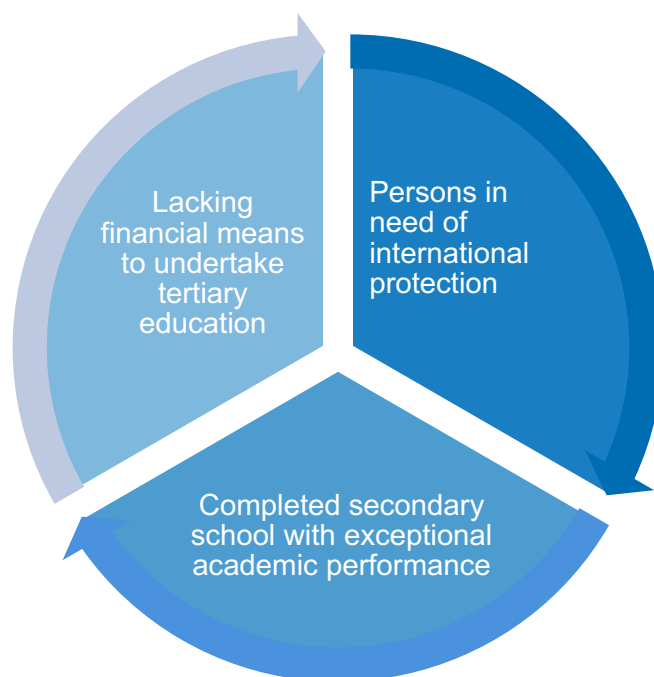
- ✓ Persons in possession of documents from their country of origin or country of asylum, confirming that they completed secondary schooling to a standard that would qualify them to undertake higher education in the country of asylum.
- ✓ Persons who were forced to interrupt their higher education due to flight and who have copies or original documentation of prior higher education in their country of origin, or can obtain an equivalency of such studies.
- ✓ Persons who do not have the financial means to support their higher education and are not eligible for scholarships available to nationals.

- ✓ In repatriation operations, returnees qualified to undertake tertiary education in their country of origin but without the financial means to do so.¹²

The DAFI programme is designed to address the specific challenges and barriers faced by refugees. As such, individuals lacking documentation confirming completion of secondary school or prior higher education in the country of origin are not automatically excluded from applying for a DAFI scholarship. Equivalency and other recognition processes may be available to satisfy application and admission requirements. UNHCR offices should modify the application and selection process to account for specific documentation limitations, and as required to prevent fraud when accepting education documentation.

Criteria for Student Selection

UNHCR offices and the programme partner must identify and communicate selection criteria to ensure that scholarships are awarded in a transparent manner. Criteria should target applicants who have the necessary skills and character traits to successfully complete their study programme, who would not have access to higher education or who would be exposed to additional risks without a DAFI scholarship.



Additional Criteria to Guide Selection of New DAFI Students

Gender balance

- ✓ The DAFI programme aims to give equal opportunities to women and men.
- ✓ Young mothers should be considered for a scholarship if they meet the requirements. Exceptions may be made as regards their age or the number of years that have passed since they graduated from secondary school in order to ensure all qualified women have the opportunity to be considered. Pregnancy is not a bar to application or acceptance. Student allowances may include allocation for children in single parent households.
- ✓ During the selection process, reasons for the lower academic performance of girls in upper secondary school should be taken into consideration, e.g. due to cultural restrictions, domestic labour or distance to school.
- ✓ In order to award an equal number of young women and men a DAFI scholarship, additional support such as language or academic preparatory courses, should be considered.
- ✓ If a strong female applicant who applied for a scholarship would otherwise be excluded because of her age, an exception to the age limit should be considered.

Persons with different needs

¹² Requires consultation with the HQ Tertiary Education Team.

- ✓ The programme takes into account the different needs of individuals with sensory, physical, cognitive and other abilities. The programme also recognizes the psychosocial impacts specific to refugees, such as conflict-related trauma, which may require specific types of support. Extra support services should be included in the annual budget as needed.
- ✓ Offices are encouraged to develop partnerships with higher education institutions that provide appropriate, safe learning environments, approaches, facilities and suitable housing to support persons with specific needs.

Non-discrimination, inclusiveness and diversity

- ✓ UNHCR offices should consider applicants with different protection, socio-economic and support needs, as outlined in the [UNHCR/HCP/2018/1 Policy on Age, Gender, and Diversity \(2018\)](#).¹³
- ✓ DAFI scholarship cohorts should be proportionate to the size of the various refugee population groups and other characteristics such as religion and ethnicity, to the extent possible.
- ✓ Scholarship assistance should be accessible to applicants from rural, settlement and urban refugee populations and take into account difference in learning achievement due to limited hours of teaching time, electricity shortages, no or limited Internet connection, limited access to educational material and resources, and reduced or less qualified teaching staff.

Field of study and employment prospects

- ✓ Applicants should be able to relate their choice of field of study to expected future employment, post-graduate study or business opportunities in the country of asylum or country of origin.
- ✓ All fields of study, however, are permitted and a variety of disciplines should be supported in order to increase the diversity of qualifications and opportunities of DAFI graduates, while also accounting for the preferences and options available to students during and following the period of study.
- ✓ Short-listed applicants may benefit from counselling (by UNHCR, the partner, the Selection Committee, or the higher education institution) on the chosen field of study if their previous educational results or language abilities do not match the requirements of their preferred course.

One scholarship per family

- ✓ DAFI scholarships may not be awarded to the sibling of a currently or former DAFI scholar. While it is evident that siblings may be equally qualified, the 'one scholarship per family' policy aims to ensure that benefits of the DAFI programme are distributed to as many refugee families as possible.
- ✓ Exceptions may be made where a female applicant would be disadvantaged by this rule and gender balance could not otherwise be achieved. The Tertiary Education Team must approve an exception.

¹³ Available on the UNHCR Intranet.

Degree Programmes

The DAFI programme aims to support young refugee women and men to acquire knowledge, skills and competencies leading to a first level, post-secondary Bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification, including short-cycle tertiary education or associate degree programmes. The rationale for supporting only first-degree study programmes is to ensure the DAFI programme has maximum impact in terms of: number of students supported; ability to motivate refugee youth to complete secondary education; and, facilitating access to those who do not yet have any higher education qualification.

A DAFI scholarship may be allocated for up to four years. Obtain approval from the Tertiary Education Team prior to awarding scholarships to applicants who wish to undertake study programmes with a duration extending beyond four years. Students considering programmes that can reasonably be expected to extend beyond four years may be supported by the DAFI programme on the understanding that funding will be limited to four years and the student will need to self-fund or obtain alternative sources of funding following the four years of DAFI funding.

Students who have been supported to enrol in a short-cycle tertiary education course or associate degree programme can apply for a DAFI scholarship to achieve a Bachelor's or equivalent diploma provided the entire study period does not exceed four years. DAFI scholarships may be provided to students who wish to enrol in connected or blended learning courses.

Higher Education Institutions

UNHCR advocates for all refugee students to have access to public tertiary education institutions on the same terms, conditions and tuition as national students. This is in line with UNHCR's strategy to promote inclusion of refugee children and youth in national education systems of the country of asylum. UNHCR offices should advocate with Government and other stakeholders to achieve inclusive, equal access to higher education for refugees.

Higher education infrastructure, quality, management and standards, costs and the range of available courses and degrees vary widely across countries and higher education institutions. The academic or professional degree obtained through the DAFI scholarship, where possible, should be recognised both in the country of asylum and regionally or internationally.

The [Global Compact on Refugees](#) underlines that “support will also be provided where needed to facilitate

The DAFI programme supports:

- ✓ **Programmes at International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 6, or Bachelors or equivalent level**—typically designed to provide participants with intermediate academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies, leading to a first degree or equivalent qualification. May include practical components. Traditionally offered by universities and equivalent tertiary educational institutions.
- ✓ **Short-cycle tertiary education ISCED level 5 courses**—usually designed to provide participants with professional knowledge, skills and competencies. Also referred to as technical education, community college education, technician or vocational training, or associate degree. May provide a pathway to the job market or to other tertiary education programmes.

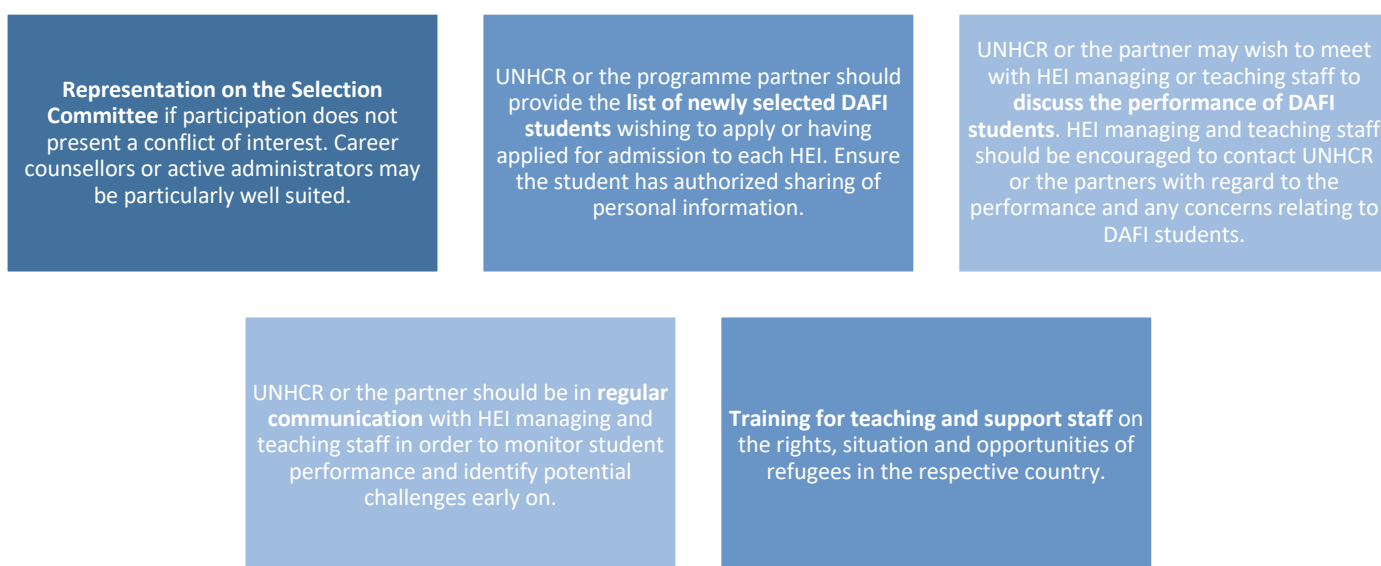
recognition of equivalency of academic, professional and vocational qualifications”.¹⁴ UNESCO supports Member States to ensure comparability and recognition of higher education qualifications with the aim of

¹⁴ Global Compact on Refugees, Art. 2.1 (69)

facilitating cross-border mobility and ultimately, to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4. Worldwide, [six regional conventions on the recognition of higher education studies and qualifications](#) have been adopted; four of the six make specific reference to refugees.¹⁵ To further strengthen the existing regional frameworks and Conventions, a [Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications](#) is under development, with explicit inclusion of refugees.¹⁶ The [European Qualifications Passport for Refugees](#) and the [Djibouti Declaration on Refugee Education](#) provide additional example of regional cooperation towards recognizing the importance of refugee education and education certification in the context of mobility.

Working with Higher Education Institutions

- Collaboration with higher education institutions (HEI) is critical to the success of the DAFI programme. HEIs may benefit from information about the status of refugee students, their protection needs and their right to access higher education.



- UNHCR offices are encouraged to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or other agreements with institutions where a number of DAFI students are enrolled.
- In line with the [Global Compact on Refugees](#), in countries with a large number of young refugee women and men qualified to enroll in higher education, UNHCR should discuss with HEI, the host government and development and private sector partners how to increase resources and expand the quality and inclusiveness of higher education to the benefit of refugee and national students alike.
- Country specific solutions and innovative approaches to strengthening the higher education sector should be sought in collaboration with development and private sector partners. UNHCR should provide technical input and feedback based on experience implementing the DAFI programme. The

¹⁵ Arab States and Latin American States Conventions do not.

¹⁶ UNESCO Member States are negotiating a Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications to underline the importance of universal qualification recognition and reduce obstacles faced by students, teachers, researchers and job-seekers outside their countries of origin.

Tertiary Education Team supports such efforts and should be advised of novel and promising practices.

A **formal agreement** is recommended if **ten or more students** are enrolled in any one institution and if enrolment is expected to continue over several years or cohorts.

The agreement may include details of the **number of places** allocated to refugee students under special conditions (e.g. at national fees, reduced foreign student fees or subsidised fees).

The agreement should indicate the **arrangement for communication and information sharing** on the attendance and performance of DAFI students, and should take into account limitations on sharing of personal data in doing so.

The agreement should describe the array of **support and services available to DAFI students**, such as counselling, mentoring, internship placements or psycho-social support.

The **Tertiary Education Team and Legal Advisory Section** can support drafting of agreements and should be kept informed of ongoing negotiations.

Considerations in Choosing or Recommending Higher Education Institutions

A number of factors contribute to creating an enabling and secure environment to support DAFI students to complete their studies. Consider:

- ✓ Accredited universities, colleges of technology (or polytechnics) and other institutions providing formal tertiary education programmes at the ISCED levels 5 and 6. Public institutions are generally preferred for offering lower fees and in line with UNHCR and DAFI objectives to support inclusion of refugees in national education systems. Where public institutions do not have sufficient places, facilities or resources to support the quality education of DAFI students, accredited, cost-effective private HEI may be relevant.
- ✓ Registration fees or credit point fees affect the average cost of scholarships and ultimately the number of scholarships provided; ensure refugee and DAFI students pay the same fees as national students.

- ✓ Adequacy of student support services for admission, registration, academic and career advice, counselling, access to information and communication technology (ICT) facilities, libraries, and science and teaching laboratories contribute to the quality of teaching and learning conditions and thus the overall student experience.¹⁷ Refugee students should have access to all social, sports, study and student association groups to facilitate their integration on campus and into the student community.

Protecting Higher Education from Attacks

The [Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack](#) issues principles and guidelines on how to protect higher education and universities from attacks and military use. UNHCR is a member of the Coalition Steering Committee. [Resources](#)

- ✓ [Protect Schools and Universities from Military Use \(2013, PDF\)](#)
- ✓ [Principles of State Responsibility to Protect Higher Education from Attack \(2014, PDF\)](#)
- ✓ [Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict \(2014, PDF\)](#)
- ✓ [Implementing the Guidelines: A Toolkit to Guide Understanding and Implementation of the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use During Armed Conflict \(2017, PDF\)](#)

In 2018, INTERSOS signed a MoU with new, continuing and graduated DAFI students and all the educational partners, protecting 33 universities from military use in Sana'a, Aden and Al Mukalla. The MoU is intended to solidify cooperation and support efforts to ensure that refugee students are treated comparably to Yemeni students with respect to tuition and fees. INTERSOS holds monthly meetings universities to maintain open channels for discussion, sharing of information and identifying solutions to challenges.

- ✓ Whether there are sufficient and sufficiently qualified, regularly paid academic staff to ensure that courses are taught according to schedule.
- ✓ Whether frequency of strikes or disruptions at certain universities interrupt courses or delay exams.
- ✓ Timely receipt of academic results is required for the continuation or renewal of the DAFI scholarship. HEI administrators should be aware of the requirement to receive reports on time and the consequences when results are not available (delay of student allowance payment and non-renewal of enrolment).
- ✓ The campus, classrooms and overall learning environment should minimise exposure to protection risks, discrimination or exclusion. Social cohesion, peaceful, safe and encouraging environments should be facilitated by the management and academic staff of the institution, as well as student councils and groups.
- ✓ Institutions should be chosen based on quality, learning environment, cost effectiveness, protection aspects and student preferences. Often, HEIs are concentrated in capital cities, providing students with more choice regarding course of study, a diverse environment, social and learning events organised by partners and donors, networking for internships and employment opportunities. Higher education institutions in more provincial areas, however, may not experience the same disruptions as those in the capital, may be closer to home and may offer better teacher-student-ratio or reduced cost of living.

¹⁷ UNESCO IIEP. 2017. [Quality management in higher education: Developments and drivers](#). Results from an international survey, p. 50.

PART II – PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

The Selection Process

Advance planning, scheduling and preparation are vital to ensuring a transparent, fair and efficient call for applications and selection process. UNHCR DAFI focal person and the programme partner shall outline the timeline for the call for applications and the selection process in the annual work plan.

ACTIVITIES

Data analysis

1. UNHCR offices and the programme partner should **analyse data from prior selection processes** to understand the likely profile of short-listed and selected applicants in terms of gender, location, country of origin, field of study and secondary school results, as well as providing a picture of the barriers preventing diverse applicants from applying, being short-listed or selected, and can facilitate adjustments to the selection process to achieve more equitable representation.
2. Existing **vulnerability and participatory assessments** may inform preparation of the call for applications and the selection process with a view to ensuring refugee youth and young adults from population groups or households with higher socio-economic vulnerability and differing needs have equal access to the application and selection process.
3. Barriers that prevent young **women from succeeding in a competitive selection** process should be identified. If academic performance among female applicants is generally lower than the required standard, targeted interventions such as supplemental academic support and preparatory courses may be relevant. Where cultural restrictions result in fewer female applicants, DAFI Club members, alumni, women teachers and community leaders may be effective interlocutors during discussions with parents, communities and students. Ultimately, candidates must be identified according to a weighing of their likely academic success alongside individual characteristics, skills and background.

Facilitating Gender Equity in the DAFI Cohort		
1 During the call for applications	3 During final selection	5 Scholarship package
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Engage former and current DAFI students as advocates and mentors ✓ Discuss benefits and opportunities with parents and refugee and community leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 50% of scholarships should be awarded to young refugee women ✓ Assess measures to increase eligibility ratio where requirements result in systematic exclusion of young women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Safe accommodation ✓ Flexible arrangements and support for students with children ✓ Access to bridging courses and academic support ✓ Local transportation
2 During the shortlisting of applications	4 Throughout the year	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Shortlist should include sufficient female applicants to facilitate selection of 50% women scholarship recipients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ DAFI students and alumni meet with refugee learners in secondary schools to advocate for staying in school and explaining the DAFI opportunity and benefits. 	

Postgraduate Opportunities

In line with the objectives of the Education and Economic Inclusion Task Force, education and livelihoods/economic inclusion colleagues at the country level should work together to:

1. Collect and analyse information about wage and self-employment opportunities, including employment regulations, work placement programmes and labour market gaps, to inform the selection process regarding student's proposed fields of study and career guidance for students.
2. Include highly qualified refugees in skills assessments and economic inclusion programming. Identify employment and recruitment opportunities as well as sectors where employment of DAFI graduates may be feasible under existing right-to-work policies.
3. Identify relevant partners from among Ministries of (Higher) Education, Labour, Economics, Planning and Employment, national employment agencies, international and national NGOs, public and private sector employers, workers associations, entrepreneurship incubators and recruitment firms.
4. Network with the Ministry of (Higher) Education, science and research foundations, and other national and international scholarship providers to identify scholarship opportunities for DAFI graduates wishing to continue with their post-graduate studies.

Coordination with Other Scholarship Providers

1. Ensure that calls for applications and the selection process are coordinated with other national and international scholarship programmes to avoid duplication and ineffective use of resources.
2. Inform the Ministry of (Higher) Education of the selection process schedule, where relevant.
3. Share shortlist of applicants with other scholarship providers to minimize duplication of selection or receipt of scholarships.
4. If applicants have more than one scholarship open to them, ensure they have access to adequate information on the rules, entitlements and limitations of each programme so that they can decide which scholarship programme best meets their needs.
5. Provide guidance to other scholarship providers on refugee protection, strategies for verifying or obtaining education documentation, solutions and promising practices.

Documentation, Equivalency Tests and Recognition of Certificates

1. Potential applicants should not be discouraged or prevented from applying due to lack of education documents or proof of prior learning and should not feel obliged or be encouraged to return to their country of origin to retrieve or obtain education certificates. Where relevant, include a message to this effect in the call for applications.
2. The UNHCR office and programme partner should identify resources, an experienced partner and a plan for addressing situations where original or certified education transcripts or diplomas are not available. Equivalency procedures, exams or fast-track verification processes should be identified in coordination with academic institutions or national authorities in the country of asylum. Where equivalency entities and services exist, UNHCR offices should support students to access services, including covering costs, as needed.¹⁸

¹⁸ [Existing regional conventions](#) on the recognition of studies, certificates, diplomas, degrees and others academic qualifications in higher education can be accessed through [UNESCO](#). See also the [European Qualifications Passport for Refugees](#).

3. UNHCR country offices may fund upper secondary equivalency assessment exam fees where necessary. If the country office cannot cover these costs and it is a systematic barrier to accessing the DAFI programme, contact the Tertiary Education Team.
4. If an equivalency test cannot be arranged, affected applicants may be advised to enrol in the final year or semester of secondary school and sit the school leaving examinations of the country of asylum in order to obtain a high school leaving diploma or equivalent. This may have cost implications, and, where possible, the UNHCR office should cover these costs. Contact the Tertiary Education Team for guidance.
5. Generally, applicants should cover costs associated with translation or certification of documents. Where the costs are prohibitively high, the DAFI programme budget may be used, especially in cases where students have been selected subject to submission of translated or notarized documents.
6. UNHCR and the programme partner should negotiate with the Ministry of (Higher) Education and higher education institutions to ensure the identification and education records required for refugees to register at HEI in the country of asylum are not restricting refugee access to higher education.

Call for Applications

The call for applications should be prepared and launched only after the number of new scholarships assigned to the country has been confirmed. Advertise the call for applications with ample time to complete the selection process in advance of the start of the academic year. UNHCR offices in countries where the academic year starts in the first quarter should consult the Tertiary Education Team for approval of new scholarships and funds distribution on an adjusted schedule.

ACTIVITIES

The Call for Applications should be:

- ✓ Announced widely in urban, rural, camp and settlement locations, including in secondary schools, youth development centres, refugee youth committees, and UNHCR and partner field offices.
- ✓ Shared through various channels and accessible formats, including print, electronic and social media, and UNHCR and partner websites.
- ✓ Available in the languages widely spoken in the refugee communities, as well as in the language of instruction used in the HEI.
- ✓ Open for four to eight weeks, depending on country targets.
- ✓ Inclusive of all information needed to apply including: eligibility criteria, selection process, number of scholarships available, documentation requirements, when, how and where to submit applications. Highlight guidance for applicants who may not have original education certificates or who lack education documentation.

An [Application Form](#) template is available on the DAFI Programme Portal and may be modified according to the requirements of each programme country.

1. Application instructions should identify what language the letter of motivation should be written in and what language the interview will be conducted in.
2. Application forms must be free of charge. Where feasible, an online application should be used. The Tertiary Education Team can support set up of an online application platform.

3. UNHCR or the programme partner should organise information sessions for interested refugee youth and parents or guardians to provide information on the application and selection processes, the 'scholarship package' (e.g. scholarship amount, individual allowances, admission process, accommodation, HEI, and fields of study), academic expectations and requirements, and should allow attendees to ask questions.
4. Where appropriate, applicants are encouraged to submit a final or provisional letter of admission from the HEI they wish to enrol at, with their application.
5. **Every applicant must be notified that their application has been received.** Notification should be made in writing, via individual text message or the most appropriate alternative means. In some cases, a batch notification may be useful and where an online application system is in use, an auto-reply message can confirm receipt of application. Sample text: "This message confirms receipt of your application to the DAFI Scholarship Programme. Due to the high volume of applications received you will be contacted only if you have been short listed for further consideration. Thank you for your interest and we wish you all the best of luck." Pending consideration of protection concerns, a list of submitted applications received may be posted in a public list.

Pre-screening

The pre-screening process should produce a short list of applicants in preparation for the final selection of a cohort that is diverse across refugee groups and locations and ensures that gender balance and students with different needs are represented. A transparent and fair pre-screening process supports justification of the decisions taken in respect of each applicant and provides information on the overall cohort of applicants.

ACTIVITIES

1. UNHCR DAFI focal person and programme partner assemble an appropriate number of multi-functional UNHCR and partner staff. Where DAFI is via direct implementation, other stakeholders may be considered.
2. Upon close of the application deadline, enter applicant data on the [Pre-screening Datasheet](#). Incomplete applications and those not meeting the minimum selection criteria for age and level of education should be eliminated. Late applications should not be accepted. Where it appears that an individual with a promising profile may be excluded due to oversight or mistake, seek clarification from the Tertiary Education Team.
3. Verify refugee and resettlement status with proGres registration information. Applicants with advanced resettlement cases (departure expected within one year) are not recommended for the DAFI programme. Given that resettlement departures can take years and given that a resettlement case is not an automatic determinant of actual departure, an active resettlement case is not be a bar to participation in DAFI. Protection considerations must be taken into account as well as the potential benefits that tertiary education can offer should resettlement eventually be realised.
4. Remaining applications should be considered against the selection criteria and cross-cutting aspects including age, gender, diversity, special needs, protection concerns, field of study, language and other capabilities that may support success in tertiary study. Consult the Tertiary Education Team for information about including protection and other considerations in the assessment.
5. The short list should have at least double the number of new scholarships available and should, if possible, have equal numbers of female and male applicants. Short-listed applicants who have already been accepted to a HEI may be prioritised in the final selection.

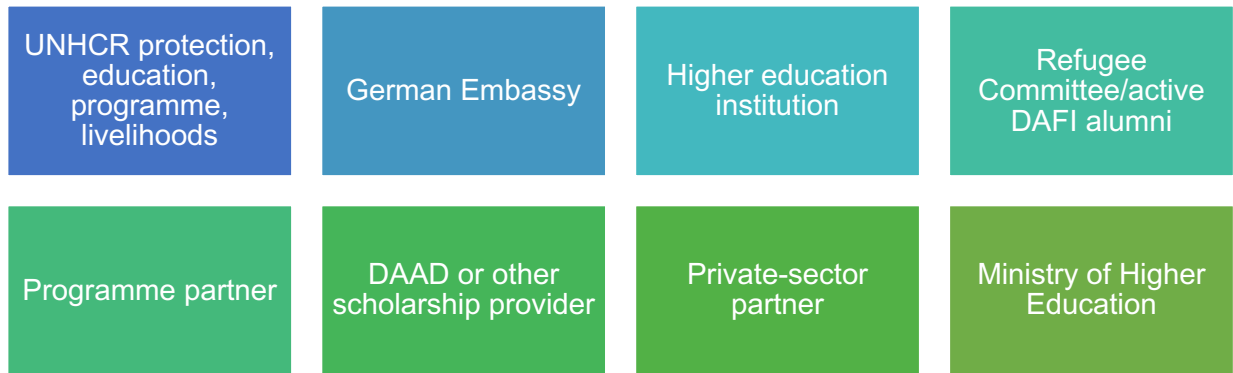
6. Reason for elimination of a qualified applicant at the short-listing stage must be indicated in the correct column on the Pre-screening datasheet. Where additional information not already provided with the application documents, such as socio-economic, family or specific needs data is required UNHCR or partner field staff may confirm via telephone or home visit.
7. The completed Pre-screening Datasheet is submitted with the [Final Selection Report](#) to the Tertiary Education Team. The Datasheet should also inform need for further verification or possible inclusion of non-short-listed applicants in subsequent intakes or on the waiting list.

Selection Committee

The Selection Committee is responsible for interviewing and assessing applicants' maturity, confidence, ability to articulate their motivation for applying to DAFI and likelihood of succeeding in their degree programme.

1. The Selection Committee should be made up of a diverse group of stakeholders in order to benefit from a range of expertise and perspectives and to facilitate an impartial and transparent selection process. UNHCR should serve as the Chair of the Committee. The German Embassy should be invited to participate. Additional Selection Committee members may be drawn from higher education institutions, partner organisations and agencies, government, private sector and other relevant bodies. The Selection Committee should be comprised of equal numbers of women and men and ideally, members should commit to serving at least two years on the committee. In countries with a large applicant pool or applicants in various locations, several selection committees or sub-committees may be formed.
2. Committee members must pledge to making unbiased determinations on behalf of the DAFI scholarship programme without actual or perceived improper influence or conflict of interest. They must evaluate the eligibility of all applicants without favouritism and make recommendations based on the objective criteria set for the DAFI scholarship.
3. [Terms of Reference \(ToR\) for the Selection Committee](#) describe the roles and responsibilities of the members and how the committee carries out its work including data protection and conflict of interest aspects. Selection Committee members must review the ToR prior to agreeing to serve on the committee in order to understand the committee's purpose and duties. The Selection Committee ToR should be updated with each annual selection process.
4. UNHCR DAFI focal person should confirm interview date(s) and participation of Selection Committee members as far in advance as possible. All committee members should receive the following documents at least two weeks prior to the interviews: Selection Committee ToR; datasheet of shortlisted applicants; individual applications including letter of motivation and certificates; interview questions and evaluation form; context-specific guidance notes on gender, protection, vulnerability and specific needs considerations, if applicable; logistical information for the interview. Where applicable, shortlisted applicants should be confirmed as not-enrolled with other scholarship providers or programmes in the country prior to the interview. According to capacity and preferences of the country team, application materials may be made available to Selection Committee members in digital or hard copy.

Composition of the Selection Committee



Interviews

The Selection Committee or sub-committees should conduct in-person interviews with all short-listed applicants. The interviews inform the final selection and provide an opportunity for applicants to present themselves and be evaluated face-to-face. Where accessibility, protection or other barriers present, interviews may be conducted via the most appropriate remote means (Skype, etc.).

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

1. The UNHCR DAFI focal person or programme partner shall invite shortlisted applicants to interview and shall provide each applicant with all the information she or he should need about the interview process in writing, including: date and time, documents to be presented, details of a UNHCR or partner contact person in case of questions or complications on the day, and information about subsidy for travel and accommodation for the interview, if applicable. Shortlisted applicants should not be disadvantaged or excluded from the interviews because of a lack of resources. If applicants are to be notified of invitation to interview via a public notice (i.e., list posted in a public place accessible to refugees), a contact person should be made available to counsel applicants not selected to the short list.
2. UNHCR offices and the programme partners identify the most suitable location for the interviews based on accessibility to refugees, comfort, security and resources needed to support an efficient interview process such as waiting areas and access to toilets and water.
3. Adequate preparation for the interviews is imperative to ensure a smooth interview process that supports transparency and impartiality. The UNHCR DAFI focal person and programme partner ensure that the [interview questions and assessment forms](#) are updated and adjusted to the specific country context, selection criteria and opportunities. The interview process must follow a consistent format including introductions and instructions to the student, opportunity for questions and clarifications, systematic collection of interview assessment forms and timely feedback to applicants.

Final Selection

The objective of the final selection is to identify appropriate applicants to be awarded the available DAFI scholarships based on weighing of selection criteria, gender, diversity, protection, vulnerability and specific needs aspects as well as the programme's objectives and academic performance.

ACTIVITIES

1. Each Selection Committee member shall complete an evaluation form for every applicant interviewed. The evaluation form is intended to reflect observations *in addition to* information already available in the application form and supplementary materials.
2. Applicants unable to produce original certificates or other required documents during the interview may be provisionally accepted based on the Selection Committee's recommendation to either obtain the certificates or undergo equivalency assessment or exam, as applicable.
3. The Selection Committee Chairperson shall collect all evaluation forms at the end of each interview. Once results have been tabulated, it may be necessary or desirable for the Selection Committee to discuss the final selection list depending on the size and competitiveness of the applicant pool. Deliberations of the Selection Committee must be minuted and included with the Final Selection Report.
4. The list of selected applicants and the waiting list should be shared with other scholarship providers prior to informing successful applicants to avoid duplication, as relevant.
5. The Final Selection Report is an important resource for auditors and evaluators, facilitates a process of transparent feedback to unsuccessful applicants and can inform planning for subsequent years. The Final Selection Report is accompanied by minutes of Selection Committee meetings, list of selected applicants, waiting list and an estimated budget for the scholarships to be awarded. The Final Selection Report must be signed by the Senior Education or Protection Officer or the Representative prior to submission to the Tertiary Education Team.
6. Successful applicants shall be informed in writing including contact details for the DAFI focal person and instructions as to the next steps in the process and relevant dates. Efforts should be made to avoid notification via public announcement and protection considerations must be taken into account where notification of applicants is to take place via public notice.
7. Unsuccessful candidates shall also be informed in writing of the decision and reason for their rejection. If, due to communication limitations, applicants are to be notified via a public notice (i.e., list posted in a public place accessible to refugees), a contact person should be made available to counsel applicants not selected following the interview stage.
8. Individuals on the waiting list should be informed in writing and, where possible, offered support to understand and consider other options. Applicants on the waiting list may be considered as replacement for selected students who are unable or choose not to accept the scholarship. Where scholarship places become available after conclusion of the selection process, the UNHCR DAFI focal person and the programme partner should contact applicants on the waiting list as early as possible.

Ensuring a Fair Selection Process

- ✓ In countries with a large refugee population, multiple locations where refugees live and a high number of new scholarships to be awarded, the interview process may need to be supported by several additional UNHCR and partner staff and other stakeholders, such as representatives from higher education institutions, forming sub-committees.
- ✓ In order to ensure a harmonised, standardised, high quality selection process, it is recommended that guidance be provided to all persons conducting interviews. The UNHCR or partner DAFI focal person may wish to convene a conference call or Webex meeting to introduce the DAFI programme, explain the selection process and to review the various templates and forms to be used throughout the interview process.
- ✓ Selection Committee members may also require guidance on: cultural profile and protection concerns facing refugee youth and young adults; introduction to selection criteria and DAFI priorities and objectives; interview protocol. Interview questions should be tailored to the relevant country context and protection considerations.

Scholarship Contents

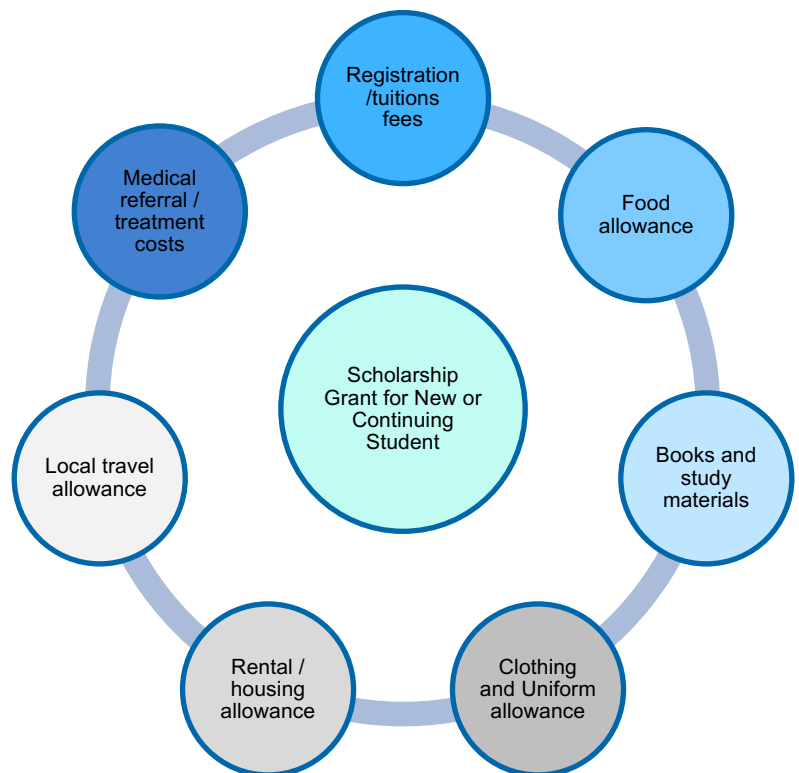
DAFI scholarships are designed to support each student to benefit from a modest but decent standard of living which meets their basic needs and allows them to focus on and successfully complete their tertiary studies.

DAFI scholarships are provided for up to four years to allow students to complete a standard undergraduate degree. Annual scholarship renewal is based on successful completion of the academic year or semester and promotion to the next academic year by the higher education institution. The scholarship grant comprises study and student allowances.

Study costs include registration fees and tuition paid to the higher education institution based on invoices received. Study costs also include other education-related expenses, such as books and learning materials, language and ICT courses, training relevant to employability, as well as additional costs for research programmes and internships. Costs may vary from student to student and from year to year depending on admission fees, whether an internship or research programme is planned, or an additional language course needed, for example. Partial scholarships—where student receive a portion of funding from another source—should be appropriately reflected in the annual DAFI budget and explained in the [programme proposal](#).

The **student allowance** is intended to defray the cost of food, accommodation, local transportation, and personal expenses, and is paid directly to the student. In some cases, accommodation costs may be paid to the institution or landlord. Health care for DAFI students should be covered under the same arrangements applicable to refugees in the country. If health services are not readily available to refugees in the location of study, UNHCR and the programme partner should include in the project proposal a plan to ensure that health services are available and paid for in a cost-efficient manner that can be adequately controlled and managed. UNHCR and the partner should analyse costs and budget requirements on an annual basis. Student allowances should be comparable to other higher education scholarship grants in the country. Allowances should be transferred to a bank account designated by the DAFI student and UNHCR offices and programme partner should identify the disbursement procedure best suited to the country context. Payment method and frequency is set out in the Scholarship Agreement to ensure transparency and predictability.

Components of the Individual Scholarship



Partial Scholarships Maximize Resources for Students with Financial Need in Burundi

In Burundi, 20 students receiving tuition-only scholarships at the University of Ngozi through the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie have been able to enroll as a result of DAFI support to cover additional costs such as accommodation, food, books, materials and transportation. The students will have the opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree over three years of study.

Data Protection Considerations

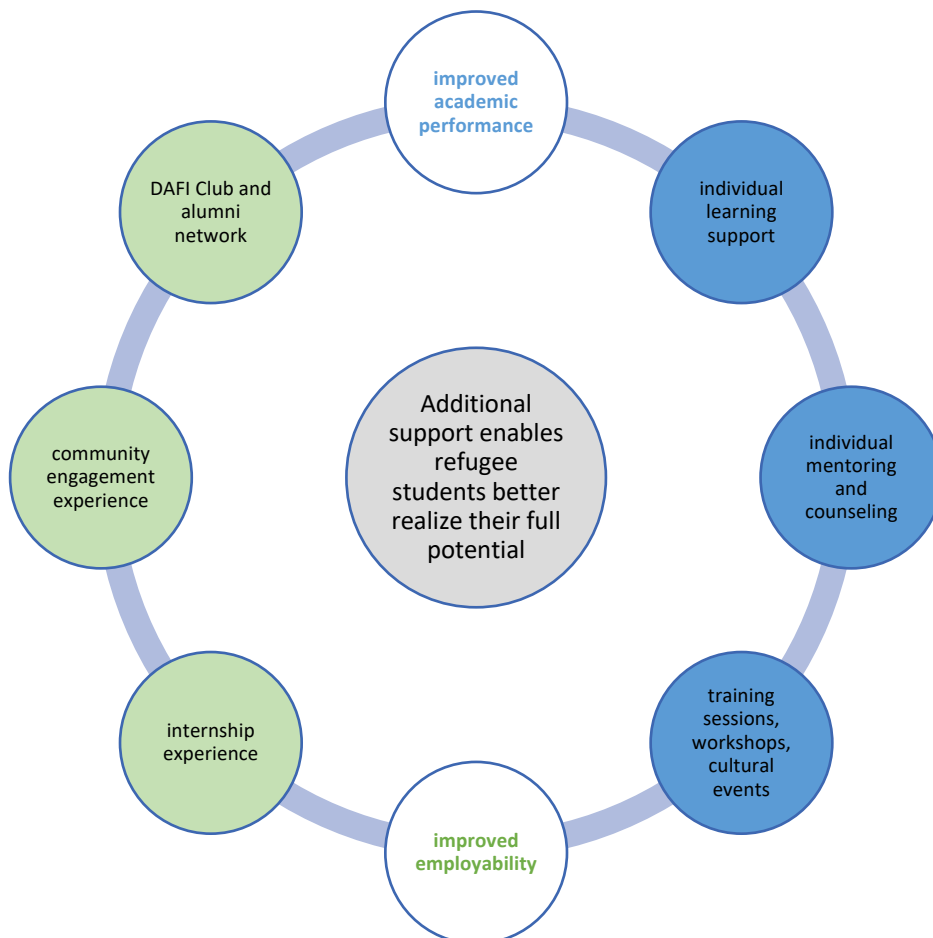
The DAFI programme is subject to [UNHCR's Policy on the Protection of Personal Data of Persons of Concern to UNHCR](#) (2015) and the [Guidance on the Protection of Personal Data of Persons of Concern to UNHCR](#) (2018). Through the Project Partnership Agreement, the programme partner commits to adherence to UNHCR's policy on data protection.

Data sharing is also addressed in the ToR for the Selection Committee. Practically speaking, this means that the application dossiers of all unsuccessful applicants shall be kept for a period no longer than three months from the endorsement of the Final Selection Report. Application files of all active DAFI students and DAFI graduates are considered permanent records and shall be kept by UNHCR offices, with physical records to be archived in line with the [UNHCR Access Policy of UNHCR Archives](#).

Student Support and Monitoring

Supporting students—academically, individually and financially—to successfully complete their tertiary studies is the core objective of the DAFI programme. It is incumbent upon the DAFI focal person and programme partners to identify factors that put students at risk of not advancing in their coursework. Programmes should ensure that the learning needs and additional resources students require target those risk factors and meaningfully support students to complete their course of study. Regular monitoring of student performance and progress takes place throughout the programme cycle.

Additional Support for DAFI Scholars to Promote Retention, Employability and Individual Development



Enrolment and Induction of New Students

ACTIVITIES

1. The first step in the induction of new DAFI scholars is the orientation programme, which UNHCR and the programme partners should jointly convene and which covers all aspects of the DAFI programme from its origin to its alumni network, entitlements and grounds for discontinuation, opportunities for support and professional development, as well as student responsibilities and obligations. The orientation programme should be built around a partial or full day [agenda](#) and the [Scholar Orientation Handbook](#).
2. In order to foster a connected student cohort, a group orientation programme is recommended. The orientation programme should review the scholarship agreement, additional support services students may need, next steps for enrolment, opportunities for training, student responsibilities, complaints mechanism and the role of the DAFI Club. It may be beneficial to invite a representative of the German Government to speak at the orientation. The DAFI Club should also take an active role in the orientation of new students.
3. The [Scholarship Agreement](#) must be signed by new and continuing DAFI scholars each year. The agreement enumerates the entitlements, duration, rights, rules and responsibilities of the sponsored student. The Scholarship Agreement must be signed before tuition or allowances may be paid. An original copy should be retained by UNHCR office, and a copy provided to the DAFI student and the programme partner.
4. The UNHCR DAFI focal person, the programme partner and, where applicable, the President of the DAFI Club or other student focal point shall include every new student on e-mail distribution lists, WhatsApp groups, and other communication channels used by UNHCR, the partner and the student cohort to share information efficiently and equitably.
5. It is the responsibility of the UNHCR DAFI focal person or programme partner to ensure that each student has safe, suitable accommodation taking into consideration market-based rental costs, distance from the university, security, and cost and time spent on daily transport. Newly selected students with specific needs may require additional support including with accommodation and transportation.
6. Where necessary, assist new students to enrol and access campus services. Enrolment support may be particularly relevant where original academic documents are not available, where recognition of prior credits is sought, or where special needs or accommodations are required. The UNHCR DAFI focal person or the programme partner should assist students to access campus orientation activities, key academic staff and other services available on campus including tutoring, language assistance, sports, health and counselling services.

Student Support

ACTIVITIES

1. DAFI students should be able to access academic and individual counselling at the higher education institution they attend. UNHCR or the programme partner may also have the capacity to provide counselling support to students, depending on staffing and expertise. If UNHCR or the partner are unable to offer counselling to students, alternative referral channels and partners should be sought. Students should be able to access the UNHCR or partner office during identified hours each week to seek counselling or to obtain a referral to a partner organisation.
2. Mentoring is one-on-one support provided by a more experienced person to a younger or less experienced person, usually related to education or employment, and can provide invaluable guidance

to students as well as enrichment for mentors. Mentoring may focus on a specific study area, community engagement, career planning, personal goals or other appropriate topics. UNHCR and the programme partner may wish to develop a list of possible mentors including from among UNHCR staff, DAFI alumni, partner staff, teaching staff, private sector partners and from within the refugee academic, research or business diaspora. Existing academic, business or social mentoring structures in the country may be tapped into and the DAFI club or alumni network may also be able to assume responsibility for organising mentor programmes.

3. Preparation for a mentorship programme is needed to ensure that mentors are appraised of and agree to the protection of personal information and confidentiality in their conversations with refugee students. They should also receive guidance on the DAFI programme, what is required and expected of students.

Individual Learning Needs

The UNHCR DAFI focal person and programme partner should plan for individual learning needs and challenges throughout the scholarship period. Each academic year may pose different challenges or requirements for different students. Personal situations or family circumstances may change, with accompanying psychological, social and academic impacts.

ACTIVITIES

1. Identification of learning needs takes place throughout the academic year. Learning needs may come to light in the context of the interview process or during orientation with new students, or later in the student's academic career. Preparatory or supplemental courses may be particularly relevant where studies have been interrupted.
2. Proficiency in the language of study is fundamental to good performance, confidence, finding an internship and competing in the labour market. Having an accredited language certificate in addition to the study diploma may enhance the student's profile when applying for jobs and post-graduate scholarships. This is particularly important when the student's first language is not the primary language or language of instruction in the host country. The UNHCR DAFI focal person and programme partner should form relationships with language institutes, such as the Alliance Française, the British Council and campus language centres, allowing DAFI students to access accredited language courses at no-cost or reduced rates.
3. Depending on background, students may have had limited or no access to computers, computer labs or Information and Communications Technology (ICT) centres prior to entering university. As a result, their speed or ability to complete certain assignments may be diminished. The UNHCR DAFI focal person and programme partners should determine, with students and teaching staff, whether additional ICT training is needed. Higher education institutions may offer introductory computer classes, while UNHCR and partner ICT staff, non-governmental organisations or knowledgeable peers may be willing to offer training on a *pro bono* basis. (See Annex I on the provision of computers/laptops to DAFI students.)

Student Monitoring

Monitoring the well-being, engagement and academic progress of DAFI students is a key component of DAFI programme management. UNHCR and the programme partner should actively engage with each student and seek opportunities to create sustainable relationships and build trust throughout each academic year.

In large programmes with DAFI scholars in several locations, it may be difficult to maintain close relationships with each student. Where possible, consolidating enrolment at several common universities can streamline the communication and monitoring function at the institutional level. Regular communication with academic

institutions, between UNHCR and the partner organisation, and with students can take place through periodic visits, phone calls, regular office hours, WhatsApp chats and other means. The DAFI Club can also play a role in maintaining regular communication among the students.

ACTIVITIES

1. Review the academic performance and assess well-being and engagement of each DAFI student at least once per semester, recording academic performance and extra-curricular activities of each student. Continuous monitoring is recommended to facilitate early identification of academic or personal challenges students are facing.
2. Changes in student status must be reported to the Tertiary Education Team, including when students are at risk of not advancing, repeat courses, wish to change degree programme, withdraw or where discontinuation is being assessed.
3. Visit higher education institutions attended by DAFI (and other refugee) students routinely. Visits should include meetings with management and academic staff as well as students to ensure lines of communication are open and concerns can be addressed early, as well as to observe the quality of the facilities and to follow up on any students concerns raised.
4. Schedule home visits to understand the living conditions and family situations of DAFI students, the adequacy of their student allowance, and any special needs evident, where appropriate. Regular communication with students on matters both scholarship and non-scholarship related is vital to ensuring that individual concerns and challenges are recognized or addressed at an early stage.
5. To prevent drop-outs due to academic failure, the UNHCR DAFI focal person and programme partner should work with students who are experiencing difficulty in their studies to identify the appropriate course of action to support improved performance. The UNHCR DAFI focal person, programme partner and student should put in place a plan to address challenges and to monitor performance improvement.
6. Where performance does not improve despite efforts and interventions, assess for discontinuation. (See [Discontinuation for Cause Form](#))
7. The PPA outlines permissible sharing of data between UNHCR and the programme partner and should further set out requirements for sharing individual student monitoring data and its use more broadly. The UNHCR DAFI focal person should be informed within one week of the partner identifying serious student academic performance problems or individual life events that impact student performance
8. In case of major life events such as a death in the family, pregnancy or birth of a child, change in home life, employment or other core life events, flexible arrangements may need to be sought with the higher education institution and additional support provided to support the student through the life transition.

Student Support Specialization in Ecuador

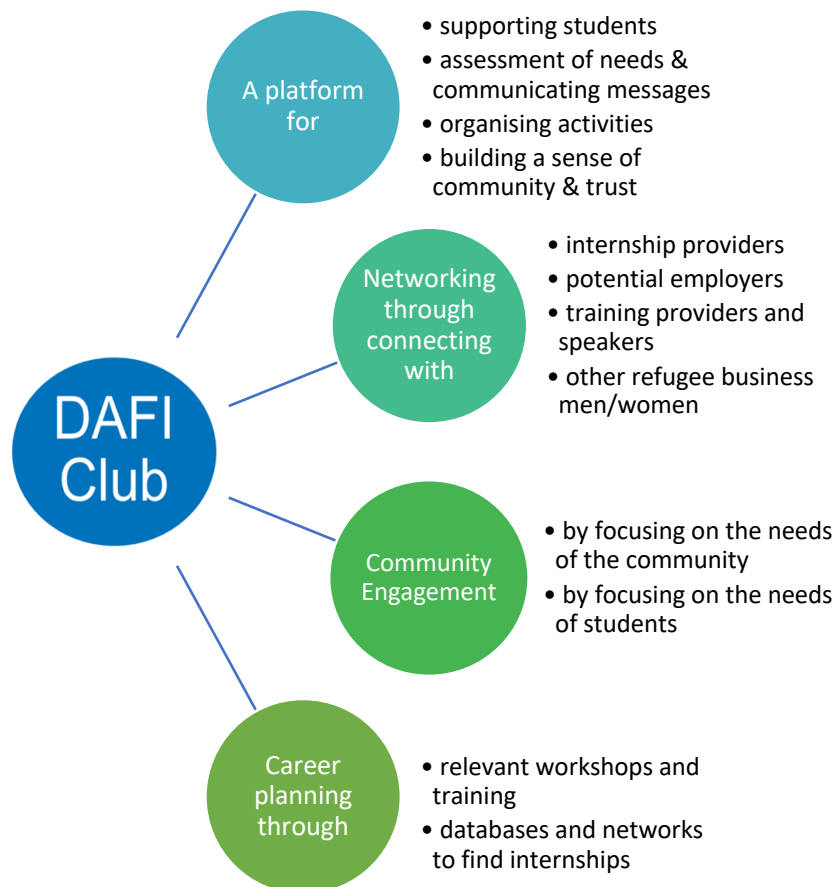
The DAFI programme in Ecuador benefits from the partner's strength in providing individual student monitoring and counseling. Following selection, HIAS assigns each scholar a psychologist responsible for monitoring their academic process and providing psychosocial support, coupled with follow up by livelihoods staff who provide assistance on internships, employment and business initiatives. Three scholars and their families are identified to participate in the graduation poverty alleviation model programme while all scholars' families can access support for psychosocial, livelihoods and social work areas to promote stability and wellbeing.

DAFI Club and Network

The DAFI programme provides multiple opportunities for students to develop as leaders and to assume roles and responsibilities in the communities where they live. The DAFI Club is an important starting point, providing students with a forum for organising themselves, taking on leadership roles, planning activities, expanding networks, career planning and skills development, community engagement, benefiting from peer-to-peer support, and articulating concerns and suggestions to UNHCR and the partner regarding the DAFI programme.

ACTIVITIES

1. UNHCR and the programme partner should support the DAFI Club by providing physical space for meetings. A line in the annual DAFI budget should be earmarked to support DAFI Club activities, for example, by providing basic materials and resources to facilitate Club activities, communications, etc. It may be desirable for the DAFI Club to submit a request for funding consideration prior to submission of the annual budget. Expenditures shall be controlled by UNHCR or the programme partner.
2. The DAFI Club may be utilised as a communications and feedback mechanism for the country the DAFI programme allowing students to jointly formulate recommendations for training needs, preparation of the annual DAFI workshop, communicating challenges or complaints, planning cultural events, creating study and peer-to-peer support groups, and organising community volunteering and visibility activities.



3. The DAFI Club may be organised as a single group or smaller sub-groups depending on the number of DAFI scholars and whether they live and study in multiple locations. The role of UNHCR and the programme partner in the context of the DAFI Club is that of facilitator: providing students with the framework to form a DAFI Club that reflects how they wish to govern and organise themselves, the objective and purpose of the Club and what kind of activities it will engage in. A first step is often the formation of a student communication network via a closed social media group, e-mail list, or WhatsApp groups.
4. UNHCR and the programme partner can also help to situate the Club as a forum for students to learn and exercise leadership, building skills towards career readiness as well as social networks.

Improving the Environment for Economic Inclusion of DAFI Graduates

Economic inclusion means refugees have access to the labour market and financial services, creating options for self-reliance and contribution to the host economy, and preparation for the future whether that means returning home, remaining in the country of asylum or finding a solution in a third country. UNHCR and programme partners can:

- ✓ Advocate with national and development partners for labour market integration or education-to-employment programmes to be accessible to refugees.
- ✓ Strengthen cooperation with private and public-sector employment agencies, employers and professional associations to support job placement and career counselling for DAFI graduates and alumni.
- ✓ Work with livelihoods and economic inclusion colleagues to ensure that highly educated refugees are included in labour market analysis.
- ✓ Ensure that DAFI students, graduates and alumni have access to information about the right-to-work in the country of asylum.
- ✓ Cooperate with **ILO and other relevant partners** to promote work opportunities for refugees based on the [Guiding Principles on Refugee and other Displaced Person Access to labour markets](#) and the [Recommendation concerning employment and decent work for peace and resilience](#).
- ✓ Coordinate with economic inclusion colleagues to develop a transition to employment and economic inclusion strategy as part of DAFI programme planning.

Community Engagement

The DAFI programme promotes community engagement (volunteering) as a means to expand and increase the agency of each DAFI student and his or her commitment to community leadership and development. Community engagement maximizes the positive impact of the DAFI programme beyond the individual student and increases visibility of the DAFI programme. Community engagement often offers opportunities for students to develop skills important for workplace readiness, to gain confidence and to identify where their passion or strengths lie.

ACTIVITIES

1. DAFI country programmes are encouraged to put in place a requirement for minimum community engagement hours each semester: 10 to 15 hours is recommended. The country community engagement approach, including programme expectations, should be presented as part of the student orientation programme. Additional costs and specific travel allowances may be included in the annual DAFI budget where necessary, including to support regular and equal participation of all students.
2. Student engagement activities are reported in the DAFI Results Framework and [Project Performance Report](#).
3. The DAFI Club can be a vehicle for identifying volunteering opportunities as well as monitoring student participation. Alternatively, students may identify their own project or the type of volunteering work they will do, which may be related to their field of study or a specific organization or cause. In some countries, existing volunteer structures or corporate outreach projects may provide an existing framework for students to participate in.
4. Students should be encouraged to use volunteering as a means to strengthen their CV and develop new skills. Volunteering activities should not interfere with academic study or performance; it may be appropriate to schedule volunteering during semester breaks.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CHECKLIST	
✓	Students should volunteer for 10 to 15 hours per semester
✓	Students should not receive incentive payments for volunteering
✓	UNHCR, partner or DAFI club may wish to maintain a database of volunteer options
✓	Students should receive feedback, evaluation or certificate upon completion
✓	Volunteering must not interfere with study time nor take place during exam periods
✓	Volunteer placements should offer a learning experience and add to the student CV
✓	Community engagement survey can be used to elaborate data on impacts

Annual DAFI Workshop and Additional Training

The UNHCR DAFI focal person and programme partners should encourage all DAFI students and alumni to participate in the annual DAFI workshop. Training opportunities should be a core element of the workshop, with content and presenters ideally identified by students or through the DAFI Club.

ACTIVITIES

1. The annual DAFI Workshop is usually a one to two-day event for new, continuing and graduating students, offering a combination of skills development, discussion, social and presentation events. Budget for the annual workshop may include costs for food and drink during the workshop as well as local transport allowances for the students.
2. The DAFI Club should play an active role in organising the event including identifying the theme, speakers and facilitators. Refugee academics and researchers as well as refugee business diaspora should be invited to share their experiences with DAFI students or facilitate sessions. Representatives of the German Embassy, German companies, chairpersons of the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry, representatives of German foundations and NGOs may also be invited to present or participate. Local and national government, academics, employers and other relevant stakeholders can also be included.
3. The DAFI Club, the DAFI focal person, programme partner and students may wish to build the event around a particular theme, such as: communication and interpersonal skills, non-violent communication, HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, workplace readiness, entrepreneurship, community advocacy, leadership, social cohesion, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), gender equality, peace-building, cultural heritage and customs, youth participation, or citizen education. The sessions should be dynamic, with active components, motivational talks and presentations.

4. One session during the annual workshop should be devoted to discussing student and scholarship-related issues with UNHCR and the programme partner.
5. The UNHCR DAFI focal person and programme partners, with the DAFI Club, should plan additional training opportunities throughout the year to build on topics introduced at the annual workshop, and in response to requests raised by DAFI students. UNHCR or other UN staff, partner staff, as well as DAFI alumni, refugee academics and local businesses, private-sector partners or refugee business diaspora may contribute by providing *pro bono* training or skills development.

INTERNSHIP CHECKLIST	
✓	Terms of reference in place setting out the role and tasks of intern
✓	Internship contract signed
✓	Contact details of supervisor filed
✓	Protection standards ensured
✓	Assessment of intern's performance at the end of the internship
✓	Availability of internship certificate
✓	A letter of recommendation provided where appropriate
✓	Internship provider included in the internship database

Internships and Career Guidance

The DAFI programme aims to support students to gain relevant work experience and develop skills during their scholarship years. Internships offer an important opportunity to develop a student's profile and readiness for work or entrepreneurship. In countries where refugees do not have the right to work, or only a limited possibility of formal employment, internships may be possible. Where internships for refugees are restricted or impossible, the UNHCR office and programme partner may provide or identify opportunities to gain work experience by engaging students in study-related, community-based or community service activities.

CAREER GUIDANCE CHECKLIST	
✓	Students receive information on options for employment or continued studies in the country of asylum, the country of origin or third country
✓	HEI and potential employers are informed about policies and regulations governing the employment of refugees
✓	HEI include DAFI and other refugee students in recruitment events and job fairs
✓	Students have an opportunity to discuss, draft and change career plans during the scholarship programme
✓	Annual workshops and weekly counselling hours are used to discuss career plans
✓	Mentors discuss career plans with students

ACTIVITIES

1. The UNHCR DAFI focal person and the programme partner should maintain information about national regulations governing refugee participation in internships and the possibility of transition to employment. UNHCR and the partner should jointly advocate with local government and internship providers to allow refugee students access to internship programmes.
2. UNHCR and the programme partner should make information available to DAFI students, potential employers and higher education institutions of the rules and regulations governing refugee employment in the country of asylum. Partnership with Livelihoods colleagues is essential.
3. Some programmes of study may have a required internship element, facilitated by the HEI. Where there is no such requirement, students should be encouraged to identify a relevant internship in the public or private sector. The UNHCR DAFI focal person and programme partner should identify additional opportunities for internships, provide letters of recommendation and other support to assist students to secure internship positions.
4. The DAFI focal person and programme partner can serve a vetting function, ensuring that identified internships are supervised and provide valuable learning and work experience. Internship providers

should be encouraged to supply Terms of Reference, contact details of the supervisor, evaluation of the intern's performance, a certificate of completion and letters of recommendation, where appropriate.

5. Funds to support regular and equitable participation in internships should be reflected in the annual DAFI budget.

Transition to Employment for DAFI Students in Pakistan

Inspire Pakistan, UNHCR's partner for higher education, provides group information and small-group counselling sessions to DAFI scholars during every student allowance distribution. Specific attention is given to providing guidance towards job opportunities in Pakistan and Afghanistan, the process to be followed in applying for jobs, developing a CV according to job requirements, researching organizations prior to interviews, and interview preparation. Skills development training sessions are provided with emphasis on communication and freelancing skills as Afghan refugees are not legally permitted to work in Pakistan. In 2018, Inspire Pakistan referred 42 student graduates for jobs and internships under the UNHCR-GIZ DAFI Plus Programme, which aims to bolster career readiness through skills development and on-the-job training.

6. The annual DAFI Workshop may provide an opportunity to facilitate DAFI students to reflect on, discuss and modify their career plans. A keynote speaker, mentor or academic counsellor may guide students through an exercise to develop an education or career plan. Students may also need to receive information about the possibility of returning to their country of origin and about the employment, post-graduate, entrepreneurial or other livelihoods opportunities in that country. Students should be encouraged to consider all relevant options when choosing a field of study as well as when evaluating post-graduation opportunities.

Post-graduate Support and Alumni Outreach

The period after graduation can be difficult for DAFI graduates, especially if they do not have immediate employment opportunities. Contact with other DAFI alumni can help them to navigate what can be a challenging time. Alumni should be encouraged to remain engaged with DAFI networks and to share their experiences. UNHCR or the programme partner should provide each graduating student with a letter of recommendation to support their next steps.

ALUMNI OUTREACH CHECKLIST

- ✓ Engage alumni as mentors, advocates for refugee education and facilitators for the annual DAFI workshop and training courses
- ✓ Provide alumni with letters of recommendation for employment or post-graduate studies
- ✓ Provide information on right to work in the country of asylum
- ✓ Make available updates on opportunities in countries of origin
- ✓ Provide alumni with information on post-graduate scholarship programmes
- ✓ Invite alumni to engage in community work, relief work, advocacy, awareness campaigns, or other activities

ACTIVITIES

1. DAFI alumni are an important and unique resource for UNHCR and DAFI students. Planning for and promoting the continued engagement of and collaboration with alumni should be included in the annual programme proposal. DAFI alumni should be invited to participate in DAFI Club activities, the annual DAFI workshop, refugee day celebrations, and the growing network of DAFI students, graduates and professionals.

2. UNHCR and the programme partner should regularly share information with alumni about employment, skills development or mentoring opportunities. UNHCR and the programme partner should maintain communication with DAFI alumni to understand the barriers they face or have faced regarding transition to employment, labour market inclusion or starting a business.
3. UNHCR and the programme partner may consider offering training or additional support on job search, preparing applications or interviewing. Routine communication with DAFI alumni supports participation in the annual alumni survey; feedback should be used to improve scholarship programme planning and implementation.

PART III – PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Planning and Annual Programme Submission

The Tertiary Education Team issues the annual DAFI planning and budgeting instructions in November of the preceding year. The instructions are based on the Annual Programming and Administrative Instructions issued by the UNHCR Division of Financial and Administrative Management (DFAM) (normally issued in October). The DAFI budget adheres to UNHCR's programme management cycle from January to December. UNHCR offices, jointly with the programme partners, and in consultation with the DAFI Club and other relevant partners, prepare the annual [Programme Proposal](#) and budget for submission to the Tertiary Education Team in early December.

EXPANDED DAFI ELIGIBILITY OPTIONS

- ✓ Where country offices identify a need for the DAFI scholarship programme to support repatriation, returnees or Connected Learning opportunities, please refer to the Rules and Regulations and approach the Tertiary Education Team for further information.
- ✓ Opportunity for a student to gain citizenship in the host country is not cause for termination of a DAFI scholarship.

ACTIVITIES

The programme proposal should be formulated based on current country data and incorporating lessons learnt from previous years. Where DAFI is under direct implementation, the UNHCR DAFI focal person and Programme colleagues design the programme and draft the submission. Where a partner is responsible for implementation, the programme partner should draw up the draft documents in consultation with UNHCR and in line with the Partnership Agreement. Consultations with the DAFI Club and alumni are necessary to capture the perspectives, ideas and contributions of students.

- 2 The draft submission should be reviewed by a multifunctional team to ensure all aspects and opportunities for protection, resilience building and solutions for DAFI students and alumni are considered. In all programme countries, planning and budgeting should be a joint process, involving UNHCR Programme, Protection and Livelihoods staff.

- 2 Planned activities, expected results and the budget request must be internally consistent. UNHCR Programme staff and the UNHCR DAFI focal person should ensure that the submission package, particularly if prepared by a partner, are complete before submission to the Tertiary Education Team. The programme documents serve as the framework for monitoring progress on implementation and results achieved.

DAFI PROGRAMME SUBMISSION PACKAGE INCLUDES:

1. Programme proposal (narrative)

Narrative description of the policy and protection environment, planned activities, implementation and monitoring arrangements, partnerships and advocacy plan.

2. Budget proposal (Excel)

Provides a detailed breakdown of funds requested to support implementation as outlined in the proposal and work plan. See [Budgeting](#)

3. Work plan

Detailed implementation and management activity plan with accompanying dates and responsibilities.

4. DAFI Results Framework

The DAFI Results Framework facilitates harmonized monitoring of all aspects of student participation including academic status, learning needs, internship, community engagement, and other activities.

Budget Principles and Process

The DAFI programme budget is set annually based on funding commitments by the German Government and other partners. The allocation of resources across programme countries balances needs identified in country programme submissions, changes in displacement situations and the addition or phasing out of countries. Priority is given to securing funding for scholarships for continuing and graduating students. The budget for continuing students shall be approved by January 15. New scholarships and accompanying resources shall be confirmed by March 15.

Accurate budget planning is essential to the efficient and effective distribution and use of available resources across all DAFI programme countries, with the aim to maximize the total number of refugee students benefiting from the scholarship programme. DAFI funding may not be rolled over from one year to the next and correct budget monitoring is crucial to ensuring that maximum expenditure rate is achieved and minimal funds remain un-used at the end of the programme year.

DAFI Programmes in Countries where the Academic Year Begins in January/February

- ✓ **Programme Management:** The schedule for planning, budgeting and monitoring procedures and activities is the same for all programme countries as set out in the DAFI Policy and Guidelines.
- ✓ **Programme Implementation:** The call for applications, selection process, enrolment of students in higher education institutions, student support and monitoring may follow a different schedule and UNHCR offices working on an academic year that begins in January or February should work with the Tertiary Education Team to confirm the process, dates and number of scholarships on an adjusted time frame.

ACTIVITIES AT COUNTRY LEVEL

1. The budget proposal shall include costs for tuition and student allowances, learning support, monitoring, workshops and training, the DAFI Club and alumni outreach, the production of media content and administrative costs, among other items depending on the programme. Budgeting to support activities must be sufficiently detailed to avoid over or under-spending. Efforts should be made to reduce overall costs where possible through advocacy, partnerships, agreements and innovative approaches.
2. The budget proposal is divided between funds covering continuing and graduating students, and new scholarships to be awarded in the planning year. Students identified to take up scholarship places vacated by scholars who withdrew or were discontinued may be considered in consultation with the Tertiary Education Team. The Tertiary Education Team can provide additional support and resources on annual budget planning, cost calculation and prioritisation. Please see below and also refer to the DAFI Programme Portal for additional budget instruction and resources.

ACTIVITIES AT HEADQUARTERS LEVEL

1. The MSRP Cost Centre for the DAFI programme is 96505. The budget submission consists of prescribed budget accounts, which fully reflect the scholarship package. Where country budgets are not internally consistent or comprehensive, the Tertiary Education Team shall provide technical support or request adjustments.
2. Once approved, the budget for each programme country for continuing and graduating students is uploaded to FOCUS by January 15 of each year to ensure timely payment of instalments to the programme partner and subsequent tuition payments to facilitate students to begin the semester according to schedule. The budget for continuing and graduating students includes tuition and student allowances, costs of individual learning needs, research programmes and internships, the annual workshop and activities in preparation for the post-graduation period. Monitoring and operational costs

associated with the provision of those scholarships through UNHCR or the programme partner are also included.

- Based on the overall needs, new scholarships requested and available funds, the Tertiary Education Team then allocates and confirms the number of new scholarships awarded to each programme country by March 15. Once the number of new scholarships is confirmed, the call for applications may be launched.

Budget planning example – Number of students

The DAFI programme in country X supported a total of 15 refugee students in 2012. Five are expected to graduate in August 2013. There is an identified need for 10 new scholarships in 2013. The budget for the 2013 year will include all costs that will be incurred for all ongoing, graduating and new DAFI students. Overall, the total number of scholarships provided in 2013 will be 25.

Example calculation*

2013	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Graduating students (Students in their final year)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5				
Continuing students	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
New Students (depends on available overall funding to secure a scholarship for the entire study period; numbers of new scholarships are allocated by the Tertiary Education Team by March 15)										10	10	10
Supported in that month	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	10	20	20	20

* Based on a typical academic year starting in October ending in September, including two semester breaks. Where the academic year begins in November, January or February, offices must plan accordingly.

Monitoring

DAFI programme implementation and impact are monitored at the headquarters level through a set of 35 global indicators that measure the programme objectives, outputs and results. All indicators are measured on an annual basis, disaggregated by gender and country to allow for cross country comparison and analysis of programme development over time. Data is collected through the DAFI Results Framework, the Final Selection Report, the alumni survey and other sources.

DAFI Programme Indicators

The indicators target country level implementation and management performance as well as Headquarters level performance and management. The programme indicators:

- ✓ Track the **academic performance** of DAFI students—how many students graduate, are promoted, repeat, withdraw and are discontinued.
- ✓ **Assess the monitoring of and support to students**—is there a monitoring and support plan, how often are higher education institutions visited, are additional language or ICT courses offered.
- ✓ Provide **oversight to the selection process**—is selection conducted according to the DAFI Policy and Guidelines, how many stakeholders are represented in the Selection Committee.
- ✓ Assess how students are **prepared for the period after graduation**—how many students complete an internship, is the DAFI club active, do students participate in community volunteering.
- ✓ Place new emphasis on **long term outcomes**—what do DAFI students do after graduation, how had DAFI impacted prospects for employment, resilience.
- ✓ Strengthen collaboration with Ministries of (Higher) Education and academic institutions to promote **inclusion of refugees in higher education**—how many times do staff meet with the Ministry, how many agreements are signed with higher education institutions.
- ✓ Monitor the **technical support** provided by the Tertiary Education Team to the DAFI programme countries—how many missions take place, how many workshops are facilitated.

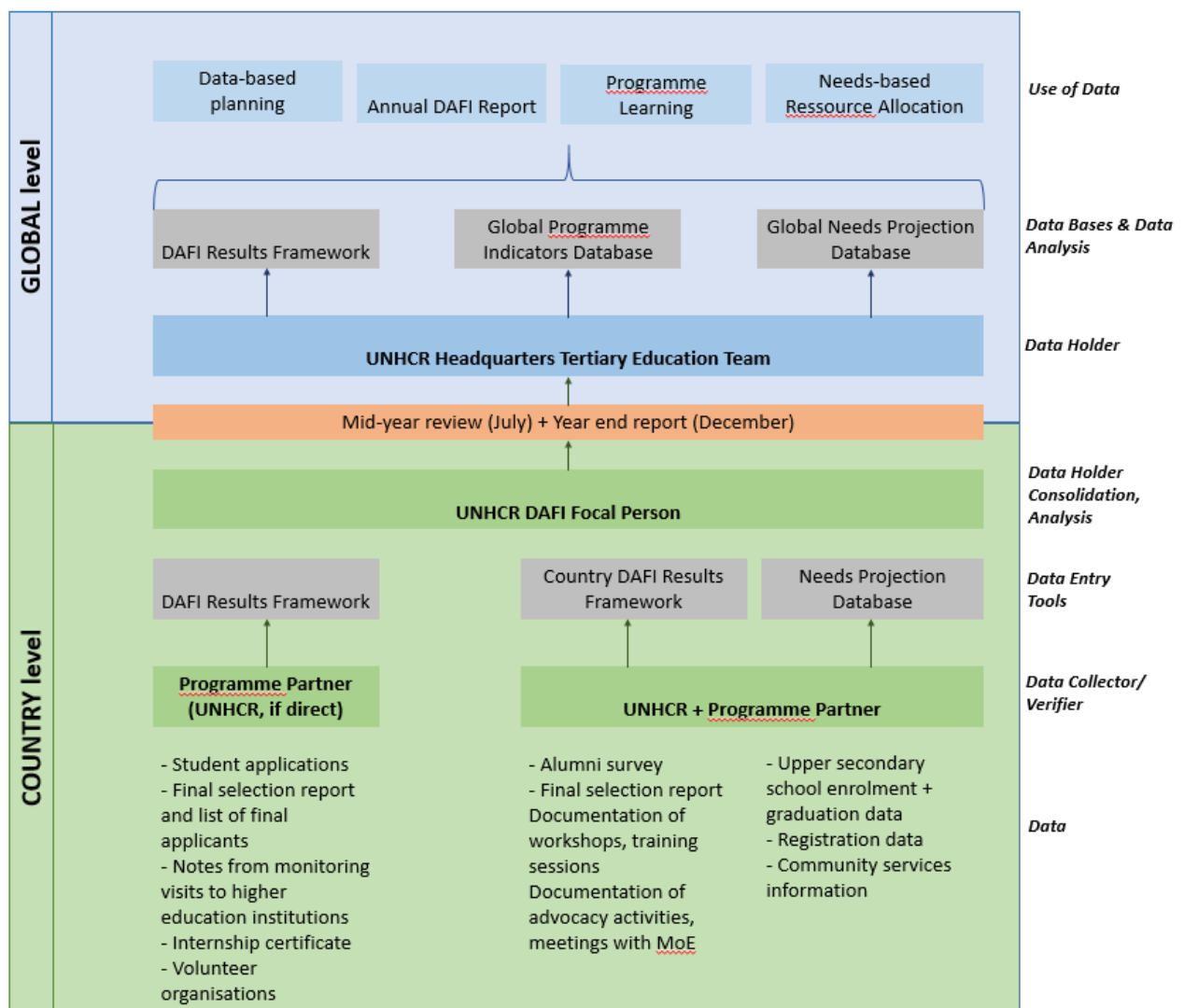
DAFI Results Framework

The DAFI Results Framework collects programme indicator data to support planning and programme development in line with the DAFI Policy and Guidelines. The DAFI Results Framework is updated every six months to reflect actual achievements. Global results are consolidated and analysed by the Tertiary Education Team to inform the Annual DAFI Report and internal quality control.

ACTIVITIES

1. Maintain accurate student records: The DAFI Results Framework contains current and historical data on DAFI scholars and should be used by country programmes to inform programming, monitoring and reporting. Every DAFI scholar is assigned a unique DAFI identifier composed of the UNHCR country code for the programme country and a number according to the sequence of acceptance to the programme. For example, KEN0013 where KEN is for a student in the Kenya programme and the numeric characters, 0013 for the 13th student in the programme overall.
2. Each number is assigned only once and cannot be re-assigned after the student has exited the programme. Students who are offered but do not accept a scholarship, do not respond or withdraw from the scholarship prior to enrolment at a HEI are not registered or assigned a unique DAFI code in the student database.
3. Student status (i.e. admission, graduation, drop-out, repetition of coursework or year of study, repatriation, etc.) is updated *at the time of status change*. Country programmes are required to inform the Tertiary Education Team of any change in student status and use only the [standard status codes](#) in indicating student status.
4. The DAFI Results Framework tracks results in terms of individual student activities such as participation in training courses, internships and community engagement/volunteering, language courses.
5. All communication involving student data, the number of scholarships in the programme country and the number of global DAFI scholarships available must be confirmed with the Tertiary Education Team prior to publication or communication with partners.

6. Programming decisions should be informed by regular data analysis to facilitate planning and programming based on identified needs and trends.
7. The UNHCR DAFI focal person must maintain a file for each DAFI student containing the student's original application form, certificates and record of academic performance, scholarship agreements signed annually, documentation of bank transfers or other record of scholarship or allowance disbursement and other relevant documentation. Every student file shall be kept for seven years following the student's completion or exit from the programme.
8. Following submission of the Project Performance Report and supporting documents, the Tertiary Education Team cleans student data submitted by the country offices in preparation for analysis of the global data set. Irregularities are raised with the UNHCR country DAFI focal person and the cleaned database is returned to the country office for further internal use.



Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms

Feedback and response systems are an important part of UNHCR's accountability commitment to affected populations and implementation of feedback systems is mandatory. Feedback and response allow UNHCR and partners to hear directly from persons of concern, better understand protection risks, and be accountable and transparent in programme implementation and outcomes. Feedback can be an important source of early warning information, programme challenges and potential breaches of the UNHCR Code of Conduct. Country programmes are required to have an actively monitored feedback and complaints mechanism in place.

Within the scope of the DAFI programme, there are three levels of complaint:

1. Country level complaint

Complaints should be directed first to the country-level DAFI focal person or partner via the country level complaints mechanism. The complaints mechanism, how to use it and what to expect following submission of a complaint, including a timeframe for response, must be communicated to applicants, students and alumni of the DAFI programme.

2. Headquarters level complaint

Where complaints are not resolved within a reasonable period or where the complaint is sensitive and requires handling outside of the country office, complaints may be directed to the Tertiary Education Team via the headquarters email address: hqeduc@unhcr.org. Complaints are reviewed and responded to within seven days. Complaints submitted via the Headquarters email address will, except in sensitive cases, be handled in conjunction with the country office with a view towards productive mutual resolution of the issue.

3. Inspector General's Office complaint

Complaints regarding misconduct or breaches of the [UNHCR Code of Conduct](#) may be addressed to the UNHCR Inspector General's Office (IGO). Complaints at this level include: allegations of fraud, corruption, embezzlement, sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse. Any person or entity may submit a complaint to the IGO on the basis of what they know or suspect has taken place. The IGO Investigation Service assesses complaints to determine whether a formal investigation is warranted. According to the nature of the complaint, this may entail seeking further detail or evidence from the complainant(s), verifying records, collecting information and assessing challenges and risks. Principles of confidentiality and the presumption of innocence are respected at all stages of the process. More information about the IGO complaint mechanism, including how to submit a complaint, can be found [here](#).

Alumni Monitoring

Communication with alumni is crucial to measuring the comprehensive and durable impacts of the DAFI programme. UNHCR aims to foster an active alumni network and to remain in contact with DAFI alumni a minimum of three years following completion of the programme to collect feedback from alumni that can inform improved programming for years to come.

ACTIVITIES

1. To monitor the impact of the DAFI programme, including evidence of employment, self-sufficiency, further study, publications, leadership roles, business ownership and community engagement, UNHCR offices and programme partners put in place strategies to remain in contact with DAFI alumni and to receive feedback and individual information from them. Information about and from DAFI alumni is captured in the alumni database. Experience shows that it can be difficult to maintain contact with graduates as they move on from the DAFI programme. Country programmes should identify benefits or incentives that may influence alumni to remain in contact with the DAFI programme, keep their contact details current and submit feedback when possible.

2. The Alumni Survey is administered annually and is designed to capture the outcomes and achievements of DAFI scholars, particularly focusing on how tertiary education and the DAFI scholarship influenced their self-reliance and impacted their families and communities. Results are submitted to the headquarters Tertiary Education Team, cleaned and compiled to inform global learning and programme design.

Projecting Tertiary Education Needs

To understand the overall need for tertiary education and DAFI scholarships among refugee populations, UNHCR offices should regularly collect and analyse higher education data. Education enrolment data can be challenging to collect reliably at every level of education; at the tertiary level it may be even more difficult due to the variety of programmes, locations, types of learning and lack of centralised bodies overseeing enrolment.

ACTIVITIES

Data should be jointly collected by the UNHCR DAFI focal person, programme partner and other relevant staff on a continuous basis. The UNHCR office and the programme partner determine the most effective means for collecting data necessary to inform planning, budgeting and implementation. Liaise with ICT and data teams to ensure data collection is efficient, non-duplicative and relevant. The following data sets should be considered in projecting tertiary education needs in general and scholarships in particular:

- Number of refugee learners in secondary school, disaggregated by gender;
- Number of secondary school leavers from previous years;
- Registered refugees who may be potential applicants for a DAFI scholarship given their age and educational level (ProGres data);
- Refugee women who may be eligible but who did not previously apply for DAFI;
- Refugees who have contacted UNHCR or partners to inquire about scholarships and/or higher education opportunities and meet the eligibility criteria;
- Refugees who have shown a commitment to community engagement or leadership and who have not had an opportunity to attend higher education;
- Number of graduates of accelerated or connected education programmes.

Expenditure Monitoring

DAFI funds may not be carried from one year to the next. All funds must be utilized in full to maximise opportunities and outcomes during the programme cycle. Expenditure rates are monitored quarterly and irregularities, exchange rate fluctuations, under or over-expenditure must be communicated to the Tertiary Education Team on a continuous basis.

The Tertiary Education Team is responsible for monitoring overall expenditure, expenditure trends in each country and globally, and for global budget accountability and reporting. The Tertiary Education Team uses MSRP to monitor country expenditure levels and in light of the fact that the majority of country programme budgets use a currency with fluctuating exchange rates to the US\$, the overall budget value is calculated at headquarters and regularly communicated to country level.

Reporting

Consistent, harmonized reporting is essential to responsive programming and accountability to persons of concern, donors, partners, host governments, and other stakeholders. Reporting instructions follow UNHCR global organisational and operational policy and are issued in June for the mid-year review and in January for the year-end reporting. Templates are issued by the Tertiary Education Team and form the foundation for harmonized global reporting, advocacy and visibility.

ACTIVITIES

1. Implementation arrangements, structures and processes, and partnerships differ across DAFI country programmes. The DAFI Policy and Guidelines and programme indicators provide guidance and benchmarks for quality implementation and a harmonised approach.
2. UNHCR Programme staff and the DAFI focal person monitor DAFI programme implementation against the agreed annual work plan and DAFI Results Framework. Where a programme partner implements the DAFI programme, monthly progress reports must be submitted to the UNHCR DAFI focal person.
3. Progress on implementation is reported to the Tertiary Education Team on a biannual basis through the mid-year review in July and the year-end report in February. The mid-year report consists of the updated budget and DAFI Results Framework. The Tertiary Education Team addresses irregularities and challenges in country programmes issuing technical notes, conducting workshops, webinars and technical support missions and is available for day-to-day consultation by phone or online.

Mid-Year Review

ACTIVITIES

1. The mid-year review supports systematic review of implementation progress, challenges, achievements and budget expenditure rates for the period 1 January to 30 June of each year. The mid-year review should be prepared jointly by the UNHCR DAFI focal person, Programme staff and the programme partner. The mid-year review reports against the budget, work plan and country DAFI Results Framework and may result in adjustments to the work plan and budget in response to challenges or unforeseen developments.
2. Particular focus of the mid-year review should be given to financial reporting and explanation of: a) expenditure during the reporting period; b) reasons for variations from planned expenditure; c) currency fluctuations and budget adjustments required; d) expected expenditure rate from 1 July to 1 December; e) expected over or under expenditure anticipated for the year.
3. Where reports are drafted by the programme partner, the UNHCR DAFI focal person and Programme staff should review reports in full prior to submission to the Tertiary Education Team.

Year-End Report

ACTIVITIES

1. The Tertiary Education Team distributes the template for the year-end Project Performance Report in January. In countries where the programme partner prepares the year-end report in line with the PPA, the report should be submitted to the UNHCR DAFI focal person in early February for review in advance of submission to the Tertiary Education Team. The UNHCR DAFI focal person and Programme staff ensure the quality and comprehensiveness of the year-end report and its timely submission to Headquarters.

2. Key messages of the year-end report should be summarised by the UNHCR DAFI focal person and shared with the German Embassy, partners and members of the Selection Committee. Confirm enrolment numbers with the Tertiary Education Team in advance of sharing.
3. The Tertiary Education Team will share observations regarding programme quality control with the UNHCR DAFI focal persons and where necessary, provide additional technical support.
4. Year-end reports form the basis for annual reporting to donors and the content of the global DAFI Annual Report.

DAFI Annual Report

The submission of a timely global annual report is a DAFI programme requirement and an important source of information, visibility and resource for advocacy for the DAFI programme and for tertiary education for refugees more broadly. The annual report highlights programme results achieved and challenges encountered, presents statistical and financial overviews of the programme, individual student stories, case studies from programme countries, photos of DAFI students, and a factsheet for each DAFI programme country.

The annual report is prepared by the Tertiary Education Team and, upon publication, country programmes should ensure that the annual report is shared with the German Embassy, partners and members of the Selection Committee, as well as students and other stakeholders in the programme country.

Learning Across Programme Countries

Sharing of knowledge and experience across countries, staff and partners is essential to the effective implementation of the multi-year, multi-country DAFI programme. Mutual learning is facilitated by the Tertiary Education Team through dissemination of promising practices, regional or sub-regional workshops on specific themes, and webinars, tools, templates, and guidance notes. UNHCR Regional Education Officers should facilitate additional structured exchange among programme countries. UNHCR DAFI focal persons should contact the Tertiary Education Team or the respective Regional Education Officer where there is need for input or support. UNHCR DAFI focal persons are also encouraged to reach out to each other to seek advice and share experiences.

Communication and Visibility

DAFI programme countries and headquarters staff support communication and visibility efforts to maximize advocacy for increased access to higher education for refugees, make progress towards achieving global and country goals for fundraising and partnerships, and ensure the positive impacts of DAFI are disseminated at community, national, regional and global levels.

ACTIVITIES AT COUNTRY LEVEL

1. Each year, UNHCR DAFI focal persons and the programme partner should identify two to three DAFI students, graduates and/or alumni who are willing to share their personal story with the UNHCR Communications or Tertiary Education Team. Individual stories, including written text and high-quality photos approved by the student, represent a valuable illustration of the individual impact of DAFI, highlighting the talent, resilience and determination of refugee students, and explaining the hurdles refugees face in accessing tertiary education.
2. DAFI students and alumni should be encouraged to contribute to external relations and visibility events, for example during World Refugee Day or the 16 Days of Activism, as speakers and advocates for refugee education and for the DAFI programme, where relevant, including during events in the refugee community and on campus.

3. UNHCR offices should use their social media accounts to highlight DAFI programme activities, such as the annual DAFI workshop, training sessions, community volunteering, graduation ceremonies and other activities in which DAFI students clearly stand out, by tagging [#DAFI](#) [@UNHCR_Education](#). When posting a tweet, UNHCR offices should mention the German Government as the main funding partner, where appropriate. The German Foreign Office should be mentioned in tweets by tagging [@AA_Kultur](#) [@AuswaertigesAmt](#) or [@GermanyDiplo](#) Student permission must be obtained prior to publishing photographs or names.
4. The use of the DAFI logo is mandatory and must be affixed to all DAFI-related documents and publications. The DAFI logo and DAFI-specific photos and other visibility materials are available on the [DAFI programme portal](#). The DAFI logo can also be downloaded from the UNHCR Intranet.
5. UNHCR offices are encouraged to feature the DAFI programme in their Operational Updates and Operational Factsheets.
6. UNHCR DAFI focal persons should prepare updated factsheets on the DAFI programme with the key achievements of the mid-year and year-end report to share with the Ministry of (Higher) Education, the Germany Embassy or other partners, as appropriate. Updates should also include individual stories of DAFI students, graduates and alumni where possible.
7. UNHCR DAFI focal persons, DAFI students or alumni and/or the programme partner should take part in conferences and workshops concerning higher education in the country.

ACTIVITIES AT HEADQUARTERS LEVEL

1. The Tertiary Education Team collects photos, stories, videos and other publications relating to refugee education and the DAFI programme and provides material to UNHCR offices on request to support their public relations efforts.
2. With the German Federal Foreign Office, the Tertiary Education Team organises World Refugee Day and other visibility events featuring the DAFI programme. The Tertiary Education Team promotes and facilitates inclusion of DAFI scholars in high-level refugee education and livelihoods events.
3. To enhance understanding of and engagement with DAFI at the German Embassies, the Tertiary Education Team gives presentations on the DAFI programme, highlighting how embassy staff can get involved with and support the DAFI programme.
4. The Tertiary Education Team is responsible for the production of the DAFI annual report, contributes to the preparation of the annual education report published by the Education Section, produces brochures and factsheets when needed and ensures that the DAFI programme is featured in education related publications and events.
5. The Tertiary Education Team manages the [DAFI Programme Facebook account](#) and features the DAFI programme on its Twitter account: [@UNHCR_Education](#).
6. The DAFI programme is featured with all relevant reports and documents on: [UNHCR's website](#).

Advocacy

UNHCR promotes equal access to quality, certified education for refugee children, adolescents, youth, and older learners alike through inclusion in national education systems in host countries.

In the context of the DAFI Programme two advocacy approaches are important (a) advocacy directly related to the implementation and enabling environment of the DAFI programme for it to achieve its intended results, and (b) advocacy for improved and expanded access to higher education for refugees more generally as a strategic goal of UNHCR and the country office. Both are guided by the goals to achieve equal access to education, economic inclusion and resilience, and comprehensive solutions for refugees.

The DAFI scholarship programme is a good practice model demonstrating the impacts of investment in higher education and inclusion of refugees in national systems.

In the course of communication with government, humanitarian, development and private sector partners, specifically in the context of the Global Compact on Refugees and UNHCR Strategic Directions, UNHCR offices have an opportunity to advocate for improved and expanded opportunities for refugees to access higher education. The [Global Compact on Refugees](#) emphasises the importance “to expand and enhance the quality and inclusiveness of national education systems to facilitate access by refugee and host community children (both boys and girls), adolescents and youth to primary, secondary and tertiary education”. Common advocacy themes include:

- ✓ Increasing the number of study places available for refugees at public higher education institutions;
- ✓ Recognition of prior learning and certificates for education obtained in locations other than the host country;
- ✓ Reduction or removal of registration fees and tuition for refugees;
- ✓ Improved learning and teaching conditions for all students and educators;
- ✓ Economic inclusion of qualified refugees in wage or self-employment and financial services;
- ✓ Access to undergraduate and postgraduate scholarships for refugees.

ACTIVITIES AT COUNTRY LEVEL

1. UNHCR offices should define advocacy priorities with regard to the DAFI programme and post-secondary education. Advocacy priorities should be formulated based on analysis of the particular barriers and challenges to higher education for refugees in the country. Planned advocacy activities should be clearly stated in the [programme proposal](#).
2. If tuition is an obstacle, UNHCR offices and the programme partner should focus on advocating for reduced fees as a priority. Tuition absorbs the major portion of the DAFI budget, reducing the total number of scholarships available worldwide. Particularly where refugee students are required to pay higher international student tuition rates, advocacy for reduced or removed tuition and fees is advised. Activities to this end are accounted for in the DAFI programme indicator measuring the “% of country programmes where refugees pay the same tuition fees as nationals” as an outcome of regular engagement with the Ministry of (Higher) Education, higher education institutions and other advocacy efforts.
3. Additional advocacy priorities and outreach activities may include: (i) forging relationships with local business and private sector partners to create opportunities for internships, career placement, mentoring, and contribution of resources; (ii) negotiating for a number of tuition-free enrolments for refugees at higher education institutions; (iii) negotiating with national or international scholarship providers to include refugees in scholarship programmes and to dedicate a number of scholarships for refugees at undergraduate and postgraduate levels; and (iv) advocating with development partners and/or the private sector to generate support around specific higher education needs in the host country (e.g. library and science laboratory improvements; scholarships for young women; etc.).
4. Based on identified advocacy priorities, UNHCR offices should develop a plan for regular contact with relevant interlocutors—such as the Ministry of (Higher) Education, higher education institutions, the German Embassy, UNESCO and other development partners and scholarship providers active in refugee higher education—including concrete activities and approaches to achieve the advocacy goal—such as regular attendance at national education sector meetings, adopting Memoranda of Understanding with higher education institutions, outreach to development or private sector partners, presentations by DAFI students at business, technology or education forums (Rotary Club, academic conferences, etc.).

5. Advocacy material and talking points should be prepared and available for UNHCR senior management to present in relevant meetings and events. Bureaux/HQ staff on mission should be briefed on country advocacy priorities and requested to support advocacy messages with relevant partners while on mission.
6. The Tertiary Education Team should provide UNHCR offices with guidance as well as practical examples from other country programmes.
7. Strengthen the relationship with the Ministry of (Higher) Education (MoE): UNHCR offices, senior management and the UNHCR DAFI focal person should continuously work to strengthen the relationship with the MoE. The MoE should be represented in the [Selection Committee](#), regularly receive updates about the DAFI programme (every six months), be invited to graduation ceremonies and other DAFI events where feasible and meetings should regularly take place to discuss the DAFI programme and refugee higher education. When on mission the Bureaux/HQ Tertiary Education staff should schedule a meeting with the MoE. Ideally the MoE nominates a contact person for UNHCR and the programme partner to work with on a regular basis, e.g. regarding the [Selection Committee](#).
8. Participation in education sector working groups: UNHCR offices should be represented in the local education sector working group or Local Education Group (sometimes called the LEG).¹⁹ Generally, the LEG meets on a regular basis to discuss the development, implementation, monitoring and funding of the national education sector plan. Participation in national education sector meetings is central to UNHCR's efforts to promote inclusion of refugees at all levels of the national education system and is integral to the partnership and comprehensive response approach promoted by the CRRF and the Global Compact on Refugees. A key partnership, underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2016, between UNHCR and the [Global Partnership for Education](#) (GPE)²⁰ involves working together to support the inclusion of refugees in national multi-year education sector plans. UNHCR sits on the [GPE Board of Directors](#) and participates in GPE Committees. GPE works through the Local Education Group at country level.
9. UNHCR offices should reach out to partners that promote safe, enabling environments for quality teaching and learning in higher education. These include academic staff unions at individual higher education institutions or national teachers' unions, depending on the country context. Unions are important partners in promoting better and expanded access to higher education for refugees. UNHCR's Education Section collaborates with [Education International](#) to connect with country level academic staff unions to support refugee higher education.

Initiation of a DAFI Programme

1. UNHCR offices that have identified a need for and wish to implement the DAFI programme should approach the Tertiary Education Team, which will support the country team to evaluate the situation and develop a proposal, using a preliminary checklist to facilitate an initial analysis of needs and implementation modality.
2. The Education Section, Tertiary Education Team and the country office will jointly determine the appropriateness of initiation of a DAFI programme taking into account the country policy on refugee

¹⁹ Local Education Group (LEG) is a term that refers to an in-country multi-partner collaborative group, whose mandate is to engage in education policy dialogue, alignment and harmonisation around the planning, implementation and monitoring of national education sector plans. Generally led by the government, the specific composition, title and working arrangements of such a group vary according to context. The LEG is a forum for consultation between the government and its partners.

²⁰ GPE is a multi-stakeholder partnership focused on supporting and financing education in low and lower middle-income countries, contributing to the achievement of SDG 4. It brings together developing and donor countries, multilateral agencies and nongovernmental organisations, representatives of the teaching profession, the private sector and foundations supporting the education sector in developing countries, specifically the development, implementation and monitoring of national education sector plans.

education, capacity of the UNHCR office, possible programme partners, security and political stability, pool of eligible applicants, quality and costs of higher education, overall strategic direction of the country office and scope and quality of existing education programmes.

3. Upon agreement, the UNHCR office should draw up a programme proposal. The proposal may be submitted at any time and will likely be included in the following year planning, though mid-year initiation is also possible.

Phase-out of a DAFI Programme

1. The Tertiary Education Team assesses the profile of DAFI country programmes on a continuous basis, for example, in light of fluctuations in the size of refugee populations, and solutions planning such as cessation, voluntary repatriation or local integration. Phase out of a DAFI programme is considered in consultation with the Regional Office, Bureau and the country office.
2. Preparations for phase-out must be planned for with a sufficiently long timeframe, adequate information management and a clear timetable. Students already enrolled in the DAFI programme should continue to receive their scholarship through completion of the study programme. If a UNHCR office closes before students have completed, the Regional Representation or Office should provide the necessary support and oversight to the programme partner in-country until all students have graduated.
3. In the event of a phase out, all DAFI students and alumni should receive in writing the contact information for the Regional Representation and/or Headquarters. This should also be disseminated through social networks such as the global DAFI Facebook group or other country or regional networks. The partner should remain the DAFI focal contact until the programme ends and should support UNHCR's efforts to collect data from former DAFI students, where possible.
4. The phase-out should be discussed with the host government and partners, including a request to open national scholarship schemes to refugees or to support refugee access to higher education in other ways.
5. All data sets and documentation from DAFI students and alumni must be transferred to the tertiary Education Team for data preservation purposes. The entire process will be supported by the Tertiary Education Team.

End.