

# Global Refugee Forum 2023 Pledges

Framework document



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**Complementary  
education pathways**

*This document has been prepared by the Global Task Force on Third Country Education Pathways and contains ideas for pledge building around complementary education pathways. The list is by no means exhaustive and is meant to inspire actors interested in making a pledge.*



*You can express your interest in making a pledge or being connected with other actors through [this form](#) or by scanning the QR code.*

*If you have any questions, please contact [hqdiprcps@unhcr.org](mailto:hqdiprcps@unhcr.org).*

## OVERARCHING GOAL

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Refugee students have unhindered access to tertiary education abroad.

### 1 LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS TO SUPPORT ENTRY AND EXIT FOR THE PURPOSES OF EDUCATION PATHWAYS

- **Reviewing** the legal infrastructure to identify possible entry routes/visas and necessary adjustments to existing visa regimes to allow refugee students entry for study purposes;
- **Waiving** visa requirements that prevent refugees from accessing foreign study programmes, including application fees and income requirements, as well as the need to prove return to their country of asylum or country of origin (dual intent);
- **Simplifying** application procedures and **expediting** visa issuance for refugee study, including by waiving procedural elements such as interviews, and biometric collection where embassy access is not possible;
- **Waiving** or reducing exit and/or overstay fees for individuals departing on complementary education pathways and expediting exit permit processing;
- **Designing** and launching programmes for refugee students additional to international student route that would be specifically tailored to refugee needs;
- **Ensuring** access to family reunification for refugee students departing on complementary education pathways;
- **Using** other forms of visa regimes, such as humanitarian visas to allow for easier access of refugee students;
- **Ensuring** progressive access to solutions through embedding the programming within existent migration frameworks;
- **Ensuring** refugee students are protected from refoulement at all stages of their study or subsequent integration.

## 2 TRAVEL DOCUMENT ISSUANCE AND ACCEPTANCE

- **Issuing machine-readable temporary/one way or Convention travel documents;**
- **Accepting** documentation, including travel documentation issued by a country of asylum;
- **Extending** travel documents at embassies and consulates on the receiving end;
- **Issuing** travel documents for an extended period of at least 5 years.

## 3 SUPPORT OF RECOGNITION, VALIDATION AND ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR EXPERIENCE, LANGUAGE SKILLS AND LEARNING

- **Using** innovative means of language credentialing including in-person interviews, reliance on Duolingo English Test;
- **Facilitating** access to qualification confirmation;
- **Accepting** alternative forms of identity confirmation beyond national passports;
- **Accepting** alternative forms of qualification confirmation and certification beyond traditional diplomas and transcripts, such as UNESCO qualifications passport, European Qualification Passport and other ways of confirming relevant background;
- **Supporting** acquisition/certification of alternative documentation confirming credentials and learning.

## 4 CONSULAR ACCESS

- **Concluding** cooperation arrangements between countries to act as proxy embassies, where the other is absent;
- **Contracting** third parties, including visa processing centers or migration agencies, to assist with application processing and document issuance;
- **Increasing** the digitalisation of procedures including by facilitating remote visa interviews, enabling online applications or the submission of supporting documents online or via mail;
- **Waiving** certain procedural requirements where the facilities required are unavailable;
- **Training** consular officers to ensure sensitivity and understanding of refugee situations to facilitate access to visa issuance;
- **Ensuring** access to consular services of the first country of asylum upon arrival to allow for extension of travel documents and any other residency documents to ensure continuous documenting and access to territory of first countries of asylum.

## 5 IMPROVE DATA AND DATA EVIDENCE

- **Collecting** relevant refugee data in the countries of first asylum (including information on education, skills, certification, language capacity and, where possible, aspirations for future study);
- **Developing** and implementing self-service tools for refugees to enter their credentials;
- **Ensuring** data collection on refugee students when entering countries of study and on their subsequent future;
- **Ensuring** systematic data collection, analysis, publication and reporting in a standardized format;
- **Building** States capacity to collect data;
- **Participating** in infrastructure building for data collection on beneficiaries of education pathways, through developing collaborative/multi-partner data collection tools/systems (including self-service), analysis and reporting on global trends;
- **Ensuring** regular monitoring and evaluation of programmes and pilots using a participatory assessment model and other M&E tools; ensuring M&E is included in the programme design, where relevant;
- **Working** with other actors and establishing data sharing agreements to facilitate the flow of information.

## 6 FUNDING

- **Ensuring** fee waivers for refugee students including admission, application, visa, document and language testing fees;
- **Funding** universities offering scholarships for refugee students; supporting development of levy models as well as facilitating refugee student employment;
- **Funding** living expenses and other incidentals in the scholarships;
- **Engaging** potential employers to hire and/or support refugee students in their studies;
- **Developing** study-work hybrid programmes with employers covering the expenses;
- **Ensuring** tuition fee waivers;
- **Using** community sponsorship models to fund the needs of refugee students;
- **Engaging** the air industry to develop miles programmes to fund flights or fare waivers for refugee students;
- **Funding** the support infrastructure from application to integration, including RLO diaspora groups and service providers;
- **Establishing** donation systems to pool individual donations and holding individual donor campaigns
- **Collaborating** with States and OECD to interpret DAC rules to include education pathways in existing funding mechanisms;
- **Expanding** innovative financing options such as loans and grants, crowdfunding campaigns etc. to finance infrastructure and beneficiaries.

# 7

## SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFUGEES

- For language and skills/credentialing services, ensuring adequate level and certification for more refugees to qualify for academic opportunities abroad;
- **Including** refugees in the programmes and partnerships on local development, such as access to secondary and tertiary education and training opportunities;
- **Using** remote teaching partnerships and frameworks to enhance relevant skills and credentials, including language;
- **Linking** scholarship recipients (e.g., DAFI scholars and others) with opportunities for continuous study;
- **Ensuring** training of soft skills and admission interviews through education organisations and partners on the ground;
- **Developing** cultural orientation and university fairs to prepare refugee students and increase their competitiveness;
- **Ensuring** gender equality and parity of access by creating opportunities specifically for women and girls (in all their diversity) and people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

# 8

## INFRASTRUCTURE BUILDING AND MAINSTREAMING OF COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATION PATHWAYS

- **Supporting** organisations on the ground with capacity building and strategy development on complementary education pathways activities;
- **Expanding** the TORs of relevant education and protection partners to work with potential beneficiaries to prepare them and support with administrative procedures (application, interview, departure);
- **Developing** connections and networks linking skills/learning with credentialing and certification, funding, administrative support and preparation for the admission process;
- **Ensuring** refugee admission is duly reflected in the universities admission policies (ex. through waivers, provision of psychosocial support and legal assistance as required etc.);
- **Engaging** corporate sector/employers with building education to employment pathways and financing these opportunities; •Linking pathways programmes and beneficiaries with the support structures at the destination side for successful integration;
- **Providing** training on complementary education pathways to various actors;
- **Ensuring** training and capacity building of various on the ground partners to provide necessary soft skills/preparedness training and administrative support.

## 9 INCLUDING EDUCATION PATHWAY BENEFICIARIES IN INTEGRATION AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES

- **Including** students arriving on education pathways in the existent infrastructure for support for asylum-seekers and resettled refugees including cultural adaptation, language training, socioeconomic and legal counselling and support;
- **Ensuring** university staff are aware of the existent structures and equipped to refer or directly advise refugee students on relevant legal and socioeconomic matters;
- **Ensuring** psychosocial support for refugee students through existing structures;
- **Supporting** family members accompanying the students or ensuring that those arriving at later date have access to support systems.

## 10 COMMUNICATION

- **Developing** visibility to showcase pathways for various audiences;
- **Developing** Communications with Communities strategies for sharing information and opportunities on pathways and for involving them in the design and feedback process of program development;
- **Engaging** with diaspora to disseminate information, identify potential beneficiaries/support needed for family reunification, seek out supporters and funders, as well as employers among these communities;
- **Sharing** clear and accurate information on admission requirements, programmes availabilities and limitations and status/application updates to applicants;
- **Building** refugee education/university fairs to showcase programmes and explain opportunities and processes on the regular basis;
- **Sharing** refugee specific initiatives in the [unhcr.services.org/opportunities](https://unhcr.services.org/opportunities) portal and developing and disseminating refugee-friendly, linked to context, materials on opportunities and requirements.