

# DAFI Tertiary Scholarship Programme

## Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative

### Executive Summary

The DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) scholarship programme offers qualified refugee and returnee students the possibility to earn an undergraduate degree in their country of asylum or home country. The DAFI programme was launched by the German Federal Government in 1992 and has been implemented by UNHCR ever since. It is the largest and oldest tertiary education scholarship programme for refugees worldwide.



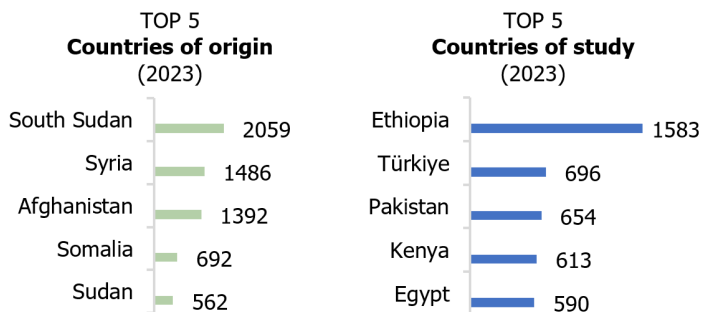
### Objectives

With the support of the DAFI programme, refugee youth have the opportunity to develop their skills and expertise, acquire academic qualifications and build a promising future for themselves. DAFI enables refugees to make an important contribution to their host communities, and the host countries' economy, or to the rebuilding of their home countries.

The DAFI programme also creates positive role models and encourages more families to send their children to primary and secondary schools with the prospect of higher education.

### Global Snapshot

Since its inception in 1992, the scholarship programme has reached over 26,300 students worldwide. In 2023, 9,312 young refugee women and men from 54 countries of origin were enrolled in DAFI scholarships in 59 countries.



### 15by30

In December 2018, the international community adopted the Global Compact on Refugees, which also aims to improve refugees' access to education. On this basis, UNHCR and partners have set the goal to achieve and exceed 15 per cent enrolment of refugees in higher education by 2030. The DAFI programme continues to be the cornerstone of UNHCR's strategy. Currently, enrolment of refugees in higher education around the world stands at 7 per cent.

### Selection Criteria

The DAFI programme supports socio-economically disadvantaged and academically deserving refugee and returnee students in their first country of asylum or their home country. Selection criteria include, amongst others, academic merit and a demonstrated commitment to community engagement to ensure the inclusion of highly motivated and diverse applicants.

### Implementation

The DAFI programme – particularly the selection of scholarship recipients and their support throughout their studies – is implemented by UNHCR and partners. This is done in collaboration with academic institutions, the respective ministries of education, and the German embassies.



### Scope of the scholarship

The DAFI programme is designed to provide recipients with secure and adequate living conditions, enabling them to focus on their studies, build networks, and participate in campus life. The scholarship covers tuition fees, study materials, food, transportation, accommodation, and other expenses. Additionally, scholarship holders receive tailored support for their specific situations, such as preparatory and language courses, psychosocial counseling, and organized networking opportunities. The aim is to support the students all the way to their graduation.

### Women in DAFI

In 2023, 42 per cent of DAFI scholars were women. The programme aims to achieve gender parity by 2025.

In addition to pursuing an equal balance of women and men in the DAFI programme, implementing partners and UNHCR are also working to strengthen skills development and dedicated pathways towards livelihoods for women.



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*As a woman studying engineering, a male-dominated field, this scholarship has helped me to become more confident. I now feel that I am capable of doing anything I set my mind to.”*

— DAFI Student

### Evaluation

In June 2022, an external evaluation of the DAFI programme was published. The results indicate that the programme:

- ✓ has a high graduation rate;
- ✓ is well-tailored to the needs of the recipients;
- ✓ has an indirect positive effect on the secondary education graduation rates among refugees.

The key recommendations from the evaluation are:

- Improve access to electronic devices and the internet.
- Enhance the programme's connections with internship and job providers.
- Further increase the participation of women in the programme.

### Funding

The German Federal Foreign Office is the largest donor to the DAFI programme. Moreover, the program receives significant support from private sector donations, primarily through the *Aiming Higher* campaign. Since 2020, other countries have also been able to contribute; Denmark and the Czech Republic have already made contributions. The demand for university scholarships significantly exceeds the programme's current financial resources. Therefore, efforts are being made to further expand financial support for the program, enabling more young refugees to access higher education.

Please kindly support the DAFI programme to help pave the way for a brighter future for the talented students.

- Thank you very much!



<https://www.unhcr.org/get-involved/join-campaign/aiming-higher>