

# Educate A Child

**H**er Highness

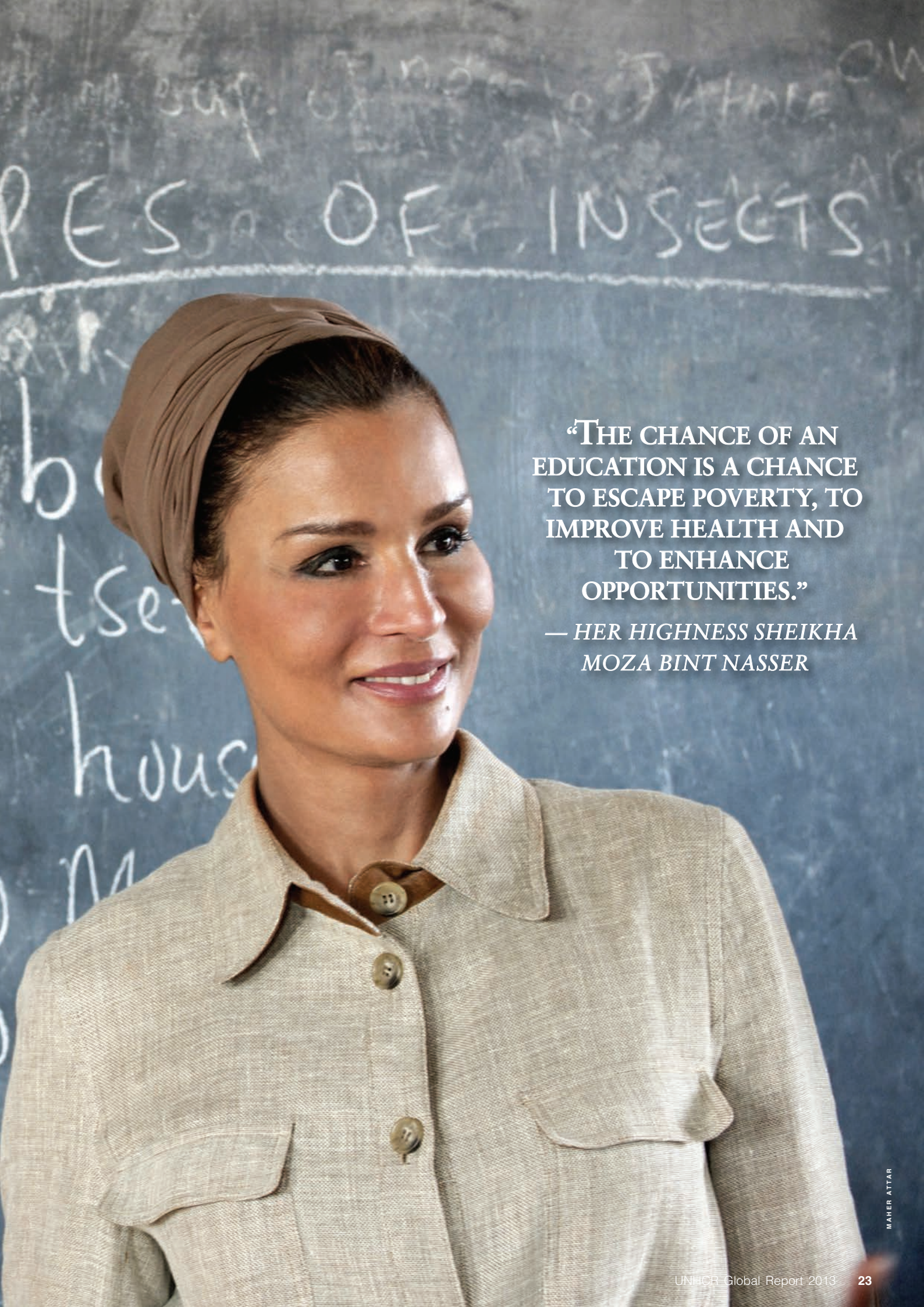
Sheikha Moza bint Nasser of Qatar is driven by her passion for education and her belief that education can enhance opportunities and transform societies. Economic opportunity, democratic rule and gender equity all require an educated society. That is why she is dedicated to ensuring that every child has access to quality education and can go to school in a safe environment.

In support of her commitment to the universal right to education, Her Highness Sheikha Moza has set up a number of international initiatives that protect and promote access to schooling. Educate A Child (EAC) is a programme of the Education Above All Foundation, a global initiative founded and chaired by Her Highness, and an extension of her mandate as a UNESCO Special Envoy on Basic and Higher Education, a UN Millennium Development Goal Advocate and a Steering Committee member of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Global Education First Initiative.

Inspired by Millennium Development Goal 2, which addresses universal access to primary education by 2015, Her Highness and EAC are working with global partners such as UNHCR to bring quality education for the hardest-to-reach children, especially those affected by poverty, conflict, displacement and cultural barriers.

The programme is turning commitments into concrete actions by collaborating with global and local experts to provide quality primary education to every single child.

Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser visiting Horseed School in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya.



**“THE CHANCE OF AN  
EDUCATION IS A CHANCE  
TO ESCAPE POVERTY, TO  
IMPROVE HEALTH AND  
TO ENHANCE  
OPPORTUNITIES.”**

**— HER HIGHNESS SHEIKHA  
MOZA BINT NASSER**

Shelters for new South Sudanese refugee arrivals in Kakuma, Kenya



UNHCR/A. KAUN

In the desert surrounding Kakuma refugee camp in north-eastern Kenya, rows of white tents stretch beyond the horizon, the strong wind already testing their durability. It is another hot afternoon and the camp is quiet, as most people are resting to escape the heat. Set up to accommodate new arrivals from South Sudan, this part of Kakuma refugee camp has yet to build health clinics, wells or schools. You might expect exhausted refugees to ask for more water, food or medical care, but when asked about what they most need, a group of young men are unanimous in their reply: "education!" ●

UNHCR's Education Strategy 2012-2016 is anchored in the understanding that providing education services is not a stand-alone effort, but an integral part of the Office's core protection and solutions mandate. Ensuring access to education, as well as assuring a high quality of education, are central objectives. The strategy promotes the concept of life-long learning, covering early childhood education, primary, secondary and tertiary education, as well as non-formal and adult learning programmes. It also emphasizes the importance of partnerships for sustainable and quality service delivery, particularly with Ministries of Education, UNICEF, NGO partners, and the refugee community. More than ever, UNHCR recognizes the need for constructive collaboration in meeting the long-term education needs of refugees.

In 2013, 20 priority countries were engaged in the implementation of the education strategy. Furthermore, 2013 saw an 84 per cent increase in primary school enrolment in 59 countries where refugee education programmes exist. This progress results in part from funding received from donors such as Education Above All (EAA) Foundation.

The roll-out of UNHCR's Refugee Education Strategy 2012-2016 is complemented by the EAC Programme, which has provided additional resources and support for 12 countries to focus on out-of-school children and retention at the primary school level.

However, significant challenges need to be overcome before UNHCR and its partners can hope to achieve 100 per cent enrolment in countries where refugee education programmes exist. These include overcrowded classrooms, a high proportion of unqualified teachers, and limited opportunities for post-primary education.

Despite the material struggles of life in exile, education often stands out as a priority for displaced communities, who are eager

to develop skills for the future. However, for a variety of factors, including household economic constraints, cultural perceptions (especially relating to girls), special needs, a lack of qualified teaching personnel, or lack of access, many refugee children remain out of school.

The EAA Foundation is one of UNHCR's key supporters in its work to extend quality primary education to as many refugees as possible around the world: so far, it has pledged more than USD 18 million of a total programme budget of USD 37 million for EAC activities in 12 countries (Chad, Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, Malaysia, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria), Uganda and Yemen), which aim to reach over 225,000 children overall.

Through this programme, a number of corporations and foundations have contributed matching grants, partnering with UNHCR to reach out-of-school children. In 2013, UNHCR received major contributions from the LEGO Foundation (Denmark), the *Stichting af Jochnick Foundation* (Sweden), AC Milan (Italy), as well as a number of donations through UNHCR's national fundraising partners, such as Australia for UNHCR, *España con ACNUR*, the Japan Association for UNHCR, *UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe* and USA for UNHCR (see also *Private Sector Support* chapter).

These partnerships have allowed UNHCR country operations to focus on some of the most vulnerable children in refugee situations, and design effective activities to enrol and keep them in school. Thanks to EAC support, in 2013 over 1,600 classrooms were constructed and rehabilitated in 10 countries; the capacity of over 5,000 teachers was improved through training; over 14,000 children were able to go to school through cash grants; and textbooks and learning materials were made available, enhancing the quality of learning and teaching.

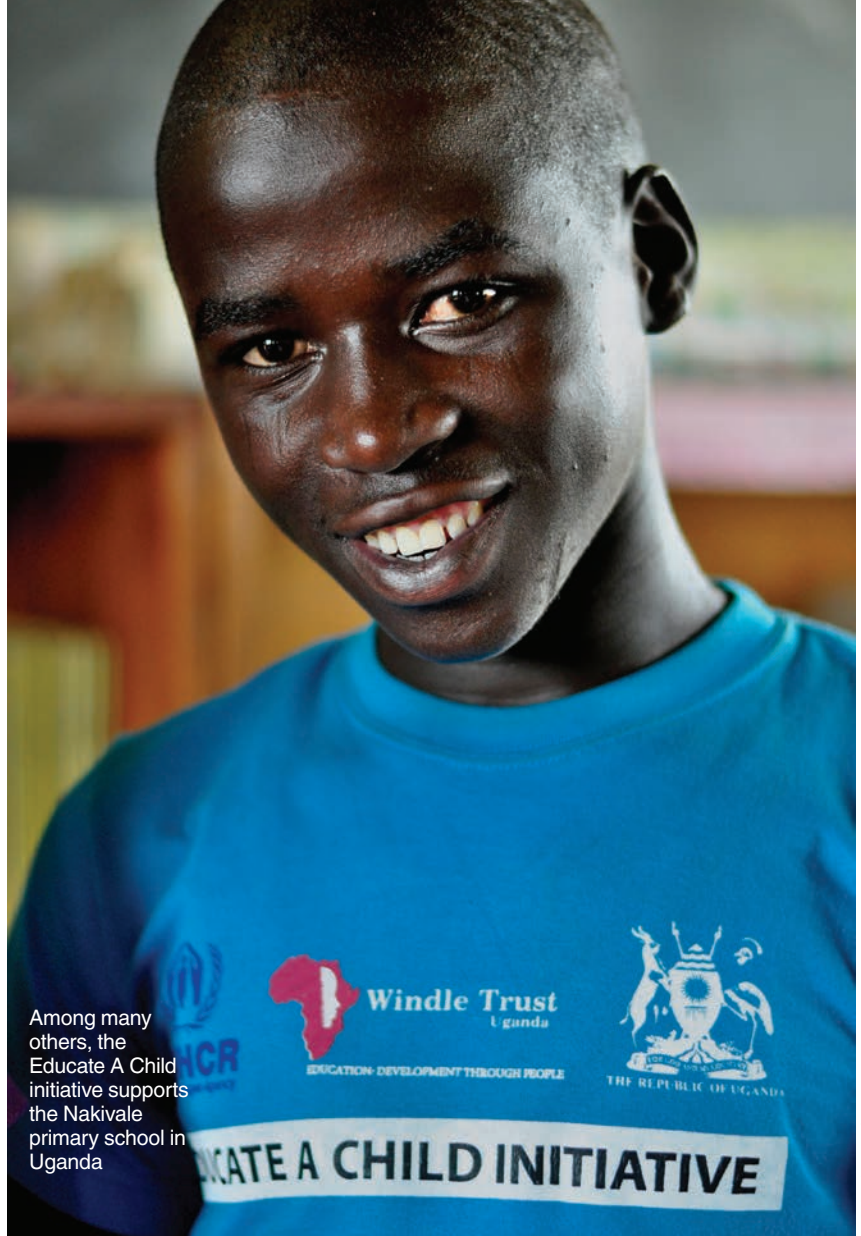
In several countries this very welcome support has been making a remarkable difference, offering quality education and hope to children whose lives have been dramatically interrupted by forced displacement. For example, in **Uganda's** refugee settlements and urban schools, collaboration with a local newspaper has enabled 6,000 children to improve their literacy skills and access to reading material through a new programme called *Newspapers in Education*.

To help cater for the large number of over-aged children crowding refugee primary schools in **Ethiopia** and **Rwanda**, an accelerated learning programme has allowed 5,500 children to complete a full cycle of primary education over a period of three years. This programme will be introduced in the **Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, Sudan and Yemen** in 2014.

In **Syria**, where war threatens education on a daily basis, over 9,000 refugee children were able to access primary school through the provision of cash grants. Where schools are not in safe areas, informal classes have been set up so that children do not miss out on learning. Interventions in 2014 will also include internally displaced children, in collaboration with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education.

Over 14,000 newly arrived refugee children from South Sudan are accessing primary schools in **Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda**.

In **Yemen**, UNHCR and Aden University conducted a special training for imams in Basatin on the importance of education, resulting in education messages being included in their Friday prayers.



Among many others, the Educate A Child initiative supports the Nakivale primary school in Uganda

UNHCR / L. BECK

To respond to Afghan refugee parents' concerns about their daughters going to school in **Pakistan**, an additional three home-based girls' education centres were constructed; security walls were enhanced in 10 schools; and incentives based on attendance encouraged 6,800 girls to stay in school.

**“BEING A REFUGEE IS HARD. THE BEST THING HERE IS THAT WE CAN GO TO SCHOOL AND LEARN SOME THINGS AND WE CAN MAKE OUR FUTURE BETTER.”**

—AFGHAN REFUGEE GIRL (MALAYSIA)



**EDUCATION**

In **Sudan**, data gathered from refugee schools in Khartoum has revealed that limited access, related to financial and socio-economic constraints, is the main barrier to education in an urban setting. Together with the Sudanese Organization for Education Development, UNHCR constructed additional classrooms and offices; covered school fees for 200 refugee children; and provided technical support to refugee community schools, primarily through the securing of school permits and advocacy with the authorities. To facilitate access to quality education, and retention of refugee pupils, the Office built 37 new classrooms and rehabilitated another 40; and covered schooling costs for over 11,700 students, including children from host communities in eastern Sudan. School fees were also covered for 1,600 refugee students in West Darfur. To strengthen the quality of education services for refugees in the country, 58 teachers were recruited and 61 trained.

In **Chad**, UNHCR was not able to meet its targets for secondary education, despite significant efforts to increase enrolment and support programmes for ‘out-of-school girls and boys’. Recreational and educational opportunities for adolescents remained insufficient and the number of female teachers – seen as essential for boosting girls’ enrolment and creating a safe learning environment – had fallen by the end of the year. Operational challenges included limited resources, lack of partner and staff capacity and insecurity in the camps. ●

Syrian refugee children at school in Domiz camp, Iraq

**“IN REFUGEE VILLAGES LIKE OURS, WHERE POVERTY IS THE MAIN OBSTACLE PREVENTING PARENTS FROM SENDING THEIR CHILDREN TO SCHOOL, A LITTLE SUPPORT IN THE FORM OF SCHOOL SUPPLIES, BOOKS AND SOME FACILITIES MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE.”**

—AFGHAN REFUGEE TEACHER

**“I WANT TO EDUCATE THE NEXT GENERATION, BECAUSE EDUCATION BRINGS PEACE.”**

—AFGHAN REFUGEE GIRL



B. LANGER



UNHCR / L. BECK

Refugee children at Nakivale Primary school, Uganda, who have received new school satchels thanks to the Educate A Child initiative

For the first time ever, 160 Sudanese refugee teachers in eastern **Chad** benefitted from qualified in-service teacher training through the Ministry of Education, which will result in certification. This training is an integral part of preparing teachers for the upcoming curriculum transition in 2014.

In **Malaysia**, where refugee children do not have access to local schools, thanks to EAC support, UNHCR has been able to run 120 learning centres in urban areas, 86 of which are managed by refugee communities. Support includes teacher training, rental and transport fees, and incentives for refugee teachers.

**“IF THE SCHOOL WASN’T OPEN I WOULD BE WORKING RIGHT NOW. THAT WOULD MAKE ME SAD BECAUSE CHILDREN AREN’T MEANT TO WORK; WE ARE MEANT TO BE IN SCHOOL AND STUDYING... EDUCATION IS VERY IMPORTANT. ONLY IF I AM EDUCATED CAN I HELP TAKE CARE OF MY MOTHER AND GET A GOOD JOB. WHEN I AM OLDER THIS IS WHAT I WILL DO.”**

—CHIN REFUGEE BOY (MYANMAR)