

EDUCATION



Syrian refugee Hanan Dacka (centre), does classroom work alongside her new Brazilian friends at the Duque de Caxias Municipal School, in the Glicerio neighbourhood of downtown Sao Paulo, Brazil. ©UNHCR/Gabo Morales.

Facts and Figures

Today there are **25.9 million refugees in the world** over half of them under the age of 18. Of the children who are of school age, **3.7 million are not getting an education.**

Only **63% of refugee children attend primary school**, compared to 91% of children globally.

As refugee children get older, this gap grows. Only **24% of refugee children attend secondary school**, compared to 84% of children globally.

At the tertiary level, the difference is even starker. Globally, enrolment in higher education stands at 37%, while only **3% of refugees have the same opportunity.**¹

Compared to the majority of refugees living in protracted situations, **children and youth**

trapped in crisis situations face a great risk of missing out on school altogether.

For refugee girls across situations, it is difficult to find – and keep – a place in the classroom. As they get older, **refugee girls face more marginalisation and the gender gap in secondary schools grows wider.** Completing a higher education degree often remains a dream.²

Education is a basic human right to which all children are entitled, regardless of status, nationality, gender and disability.

¹ UNHCR. 2019. *STEPPING UP. Refugee Education in Crisis.*

² UNHCR. 2018. *Her Turn. It's time to make refugee girls' education a priority.*

Access to quality education is crucial to the self-reliance of refugees. It is also central to the development of the communities that have welcomed them, and to the prosperity of their own countries once conditions are in place that allow them to return home.

The knowledge and skills acquired in pre-school and formal school enable refugee children and youth to become lifelong learners in a fast changing world, and increase their opportunities to lead **productive and independent lives**.

Higher-level education turns students into leaders. It harnesses the creativity, energy and idealism of refugee youth and young adults, casting them in the mould of role models, developing critical skills for decision-making, amplifying their voices and enabling rapid generational change.

Yet, if current trends continue, hundreds of thousands more refugee children and youth will be absorbed into out of school statistics, including disproportionately large numbers of girls, young women and students with disabilities.

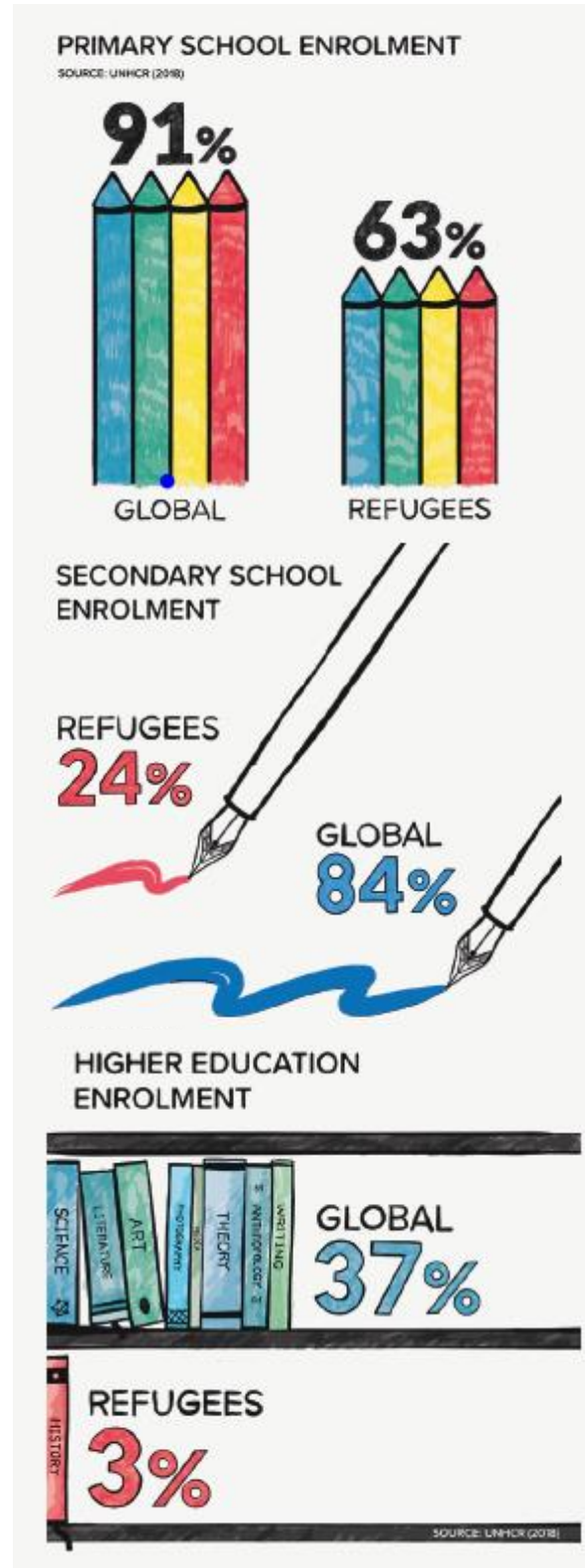
Only in partnership and with **significant, multi-year domestic, humanitarian and development investments now** and for many years to come will it be possible to counter these trends.

The Global Compact on Refugees

The 2018 [Global Compact on Refugees](#) aims to transform the way the world responds to large-scale displacements, by putting into practice the principle of international responsibility-sharing that underpins the protection, assistance and ultimately pursuit of solutions for refugee situations.

It has **four key objectives**: a) ease pressure on host countries; b) enhance refugee self-reliance; c) expand access to third country solutions, and d) support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity.

In adopting the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and the Global Compact on Refugees, UN Member States committed to promoting inclusive and equitable learning opportunities for all, to **share responsibility** with the host countries and **to improve access to**



education for refugee children.

Ensuring the right to education requires States to take measures to include refugee children and youth in national education systems without discrimination. In this way, their learning is accredited and results in **recognised**

qualifications. Which can be their springboard to higher education and other opportunities on their

pathway to self-reliance.

The Global Refugee Forum

The first **Global Refugee Forum** will take place on 17 and 18 December 2019. This will be a unique opportunity to mobilise all actors to reflect on **concrete progress** towards the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees, **including efforts to improve equitable, quality and protective education for refugee children and young people everywhere.**

To achieve this, governments, development and humanitarian partners and the private sector will come together to discuss and report on efforts to provide **more, better coordinated and systematic funding** for refugee and host community education, as well as the technical and material assistance.

They will also have an opportunity to showcase good practices that have made a demonstrable difference in the lives of refugees and their host communities.

Partner contributions and good practices related to successful inclusion of refugee children and youth in host country national education systems from pre-primary through primary, secondary and tertiary will be welcome.

These could include pledges, contributions and good practices in areas such as:

- **Girls' education** across all school cycles
- Inclusion of **students with disabilities** in refugee hosting communities

- **Accelerated learning** opportunities leading to inclusion in formal education
- Innovative approaches to **increase the quality of learning** for all
- **Teacher training**, technical education, and vocational training programmes
- Access to **accredited higher education**, including, for example, Connected Learning and the expansion of scholarship opportunities
- Adapting procedures to **recognise prior learning**
- **Timely and amplified educational responses in emergencies** that lead to inclusion in national systems and strengthened local schools
- **Strengthening of national education systems**, including monitoring and evaluation and planning systems and disaster and emergency preparedness planning
- Partnerships to **leverage domestic capacities** and resources

Contributions would support the achievement of human rights and the **Sustainable Development Goal 4**, which recognises that education is one of the most important ways to build self-reliance and resilience for refugee and host community children and youth.

For more information please read the:

Guidance on [pledges and contributions](#)

Guidance on the [submission of good practices](#)

List of [education co-sponsors](#)

STEPPING UP: Education in Crisis. [UNHCR Annual Report 2019](#).

Contact the Education Section at hqeduc@unhcr.org for more information