Voices of Refugee Youth

A youth-centred longitudinal panel study on the impact of post-primary education for refugees in Pakistan and Rwanda

About this document

This report is the central research output from the Voices of Refugee Youth initiative. It presents the objectives, methodology, findings and recommendations from the research. It provides evidence and practical advice for government policymakers, donors, researchers and other refugee education stakeholders.

Other outputs from the initiative can be found on the Voices of Refugee Youth website. These include: a participatory research toolkit; youth advocacy reports from Rwanda and Pakistan; and a policy brief.

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VOICES OF REFUGEE YOUTH

"Voices of refugee youth: impact of post-primary refugee education" is a research initiative conducted in partnership between Jigsaw, Refugee Education UK and UNHCR. Read more here.

JIGSAW

Jigsaw is a social enterprise that exists to build evidence for education in low-income countries. Read more here.

Refugee Education UK

Refugee Education UK (REUK) is a charity which equips young refugees to build positive futures by thriving in education. Read more here.

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is a global organisation dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. Read more here.

دبي العطاء
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Voices of Refugee Youth Glossary

The Voices of Refugee Youth initiative
A participatory, youth-centred research initiative, which took place from 2018-2022. The initiative included a longitudinal panel study and a training programme for the team of Youth Researchers.

The Voices of Refugee Youth research study
A longitudinal panel study on the impact of post-primary education for refugees in Pakistan and Rwanda. The research study delivers the primary objective of the Voices of Refugee Youth initiative.

The training programme
An accredited graduate-level programme in applied research. The training programme equips the Youth Researchers to participate in the research study and develop skills for future work in the research sector.

The full research team
The combined team of researchers from Jigsaw and REUK and the Youth Researchers.

The Jigsaw and REUK research team
Researchers from Jigsaw and REUK, based in the UK, who delivered the training programme and conducted the research study.

The Youth Researchers
The team of 31 young refugees in Pakistan and Rwanda, who participated in the training programme and all aspects of the research study.

Post-primary education
All education levels and pathways after primary education, encompassing secondary education, higher education and technical and vocational training pathways.

Secondary education
The second formal stage of education, following primary education. It encompasses both lower and upper secondary education. Secondary school participants in the Voices of Refugee Youth research study were all in the final year of secondary education, Grade 12, at the start of data collection.

Higher education[1]
A form of tertiary education—the optional, final stage of formal education—which leads to the award of a degree. It occurs after the completion of secondary education, and includes undergraduate and postgraduate level study.[2] Higher education participants in the Voices of Refugee Youth study were all in the final year of their undergraduate degree at the start of data collection.

[1] It is worth noting that UNHCR would classify this stage of education as tertiary education (UNHCR 2019a).

[2] In this study, higher education is understood to include levels 6-8 of the 2011 International Standard Classification of Education (UNESCO UIS, 2012).

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET)
All forms of education and training which provide skills and knowledge related to a range of occupational fields and aim to enable employment. This can be delivered in formal, non-formal and informal learning settings, both at the post-secondary non-tertiary and tertiary levels.[3]

[3] In this study, TVET is understood to include levels 4-5 of the 2011 International Standard Classification of Education (UNESCO UIS, 2012).

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Executive Summary

Refugees have the right to quality post-primary education. However, a wide range of barriers can impede both refugees' access to and experience of post-primary education, as well as impact transitions from education to employment. There is increasing global recognition of the need for better evidence to improve decision-making across the sector and help overcome the challenges faced in refugee education.

This report presents the findings and recommendations from the Voices of Refugee Youth research study: a youth-centred longitudinal panel study across two countries – Pakistan and Rwanda. The primary objective of the research study is to contribute to building the evidence base for post-primary education for refugee youth, through adopting a youth-centred methodological approach.

The research study is part of the broader Voices of Refugee Youth initiative, which ran from 2018-2022. The initiative was a partnership between Jigsaw, Refugee Education UK (REUK) and UNHCR, and funded by Dubai Cares as part of the e-cubed funding envelope. In addition to addressing current gaps in the evidence base for post-primary education for refugees, the initiative aimed to address the marginalisation of refugee youth from research. A team of 31 refugee Youth Researchers were recruited in 2018 to take part in each stage of the research study, and were equipped through the provision of a university-accredited training programme in applied research. The initiative thus aimed to inform good practice around refugee participation in research and facilitate pathways to employment for the Youth Researcher team.

A mixed-methods design was adopted for the research study. The methodology centred around a longitudinal panel study in Pakistan and Rwanda, which tracked two cohorts of refugee students—from the final year of upper secondary school and of undergraduate-level university degrees—as they completed their current stage of education and, in some cases, transitioned into employment or further studies. In total, 1,126 refugee youth were tracked across the three data points of the survey, which focused on capturing participants' experiences and perspectives of post-primary education and the realisation of their plans for the future. Key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) provided supplementary qualitative data, which was gathered to add nuance and additional detail to the findings of the quantitative survey. The study design and timeline was adapted to account for the Covid-19 pandemic, and to facilitate the continuous participation of Youth Researchers throughout the research process. Descriptive, inferential and thematic analysis was undertaken, and the findings—summarised below—are structured thematically around the seven research questions.

Post-primary education has a significant positive impact on participating refugee students

Refugees' perceptions of the impact of post-primary education on their skills development and social capital were highly

positive. At all data points, secondary school students most commonly reported the development of their general knowledge and skills to have been the most significant change as a result of their education, while the development of communication skills was commonly selected as a key way post-primary education had prepared them for the future. Another prominent theme was the confidence gains that resulted from post-primary education, especially for female Afghan secondary students in Pakistan, when comparing survey responses to those of their male peers. Participants in both countries also noted the impact of post-primary education on their ability to contribute to their communities, such as enhancing their capability to support other students, act as role models or contribute financially.

Significant systemic factors constrain the ability of refugees to access and thrive in post-primary education

Financial challenges were reported to be the most significant barrier to completing secondary and higher education across all data points in both Pakistan and Rwanda, with interviewees reporting both the negative impact of household poverty on their ability to continue studying and the prohibitive cost of school and university fees. At secondary level, this was compounded by challenges accessing educational resources, such as books and computers in Rwanda or school infrastructure in Pakistan. Students and teachers also identified poor teaching quality and a lack of counselling and emotional support services as specific impediments to young refugees thriving in secondary education, exacerbated by high teacher turnover, low teacher salaries and a lack of teacher training. While participants provided a mixed response regarding the impact of undertaking paid and unpaid work during their studies, they noted that refugee status can impede equality of access to education support. Finally, a significantly higher proportion of female Afghan participants had experienced an interruption to their secondary education compared to their male peers, and language of instruction was a topic of concern in both countries.

Participating students' access to and experience of post-primary education was negatively impacted by Covid-19

Low levels of device access, internet connectivity and institutional support amongst secondary school students negatively impacted learning and wellbeing for refugee students during Covid-19. Secondary students were more likely to state that the pandemic had negatively affected their ability to sustain learning than higher education students, especially in Pakistan, possibly due to higher levels of device ownership amongst university students. The majority of participants in both contexts responded that they received no institutional support during school closures, and interviews with teachers suggested that device access and connectivity issues may have contributed towards this. Higher education students whose universities were already providing blended learning prior to the pandemic were amongst those least likely to report having experienced disruption. However, the majority of students across the research study said that their mental wellbeing had worsened during Covid-19. Teachers expressed concern about students' ability to re-engage in education following schools reopening, with the highest drop-out levels observed amongst secondary-level refugee students in Pakistan.

Socio-economic and structural factors hinder refugees' transitions to future education opportunities

There is clear evidence from the research that refugees face significant struggles in attaining their future education goals. At the beginning of the study, the majority of secondary students said that continuing to higher education was their primary aspiration for the future and that they felt confident that they would achieve this goal; but by the end of the study, the large majority of participants had not yet made the transition to enrol in university. The majority of every participant group also said that they would rather be doing something other than their current occupation at the final data point. The primary reported barrier to higher education was financial, and, as a result, students indicated that scholarships are a major factor facilitating access. Documentation and administrative requirements in Pakistan were a significant additional barrier to applying for and enrolling in university, while participants in Rwanda reported that their transition to higher education was hindered by restricted subject choices.

Participating students struggle to navigate pathways to employment from post-primary education

Participants expressed the general conviction that higher education is essential for securing a desirable job, which may be supported by the fact higher education refugee students in Rwanda had over double the employment rate of any other participant group by the end of the study. A lack of employment opportunities was recognised as a challenge across most data points, as well as discriminatory factors such as legal barriers to employment or employer prejudice against refugees. Participants recommended that an increase in practical skills development at both secondary and higher education could better prepare refugee students for the workplace.

Participation in higher education is likely to enhance the agency of refugee youth

At the end of the study, participants who were at university were much more likely to express that they were doing what they wanted to be doing when compared with other groups. In contrast, secondary refugee students in Rwanda were more likely to report that their current circumstances were outside of their control. In Pakistan, decisions were more likely to be taken jointly with parents and other family members, although female Afghan refugees were significantly more likely than their male peers to report that decision-making was out of their control. In both countries, financial challenges were cited as the most significant factor in determining whether participants' current situations were within their control. Finally, despite the majority of all participant groups stating that they had not achieved the goals that they had set for themselves, a high proportion (excluding secondary students in Rwanda) nonetheless expressed both satisfaction about their present situation and optimism about the likelihood they would attain their goals in the future. This suggests high levels of resilience in the face of as-yet unachieved aspirations and plans.

Refugee youth perspectives of post-primary education are affected by the availability of post-education opportunities

Participants expressed both positive and negative perspectives on the value of post-primary education, all of which were associated with the potential for their studies to provide post-education opportunities.

Positive perspectives of education were associated with its capability to provide the knowledge and skills required for entering the job market. In contrast, participants reported that their motivation to invest and continue in education can be negatively affected by a dearth of post-education opportunities, and that the belief that their current circumstances are unlikely to change even after graduating can cause demotivation. The type of motivating factors for post-primary education also varied across different refugee groups. The benefits for increasing personal development and self-reliance were prominent for secondary students in Rwanda and female secondary students in Pakistan. In contrast, higher education students in Rwanda and male secondary students in Pakistan were more likely to be motivated by the anticipated positive impact that their education would have on their community.

Recommendations for global and national education stakeholders

The findings of the study highlight the need to maximise the beneficial impacts of post-primary education for refugees, prepare education systems to support refugees through disruptions to their education, tackle barriers which hinder access to and experience of post-primary education, and create more robust pathways for refugees from post-primary education to employment.

The final chapter of the report provides detailed, practical recommendations for education stakeholders, at both the global and national levels. Readers are encouraged to engage with the recommendations in their full form, in the final chapter of the report, in order to appreciate the nuanced nature of what they advocate for. A summary of each recommendation is provided below.

Global education stakeholders

1. Education policymakers should continue efforts to centralise transferable skills, including communication, confidence and critical thinking, in secondary and higher education curricula design, and ensure that refugee learners have full and equal access to these components.

2. A targeted research strategy is needed to address the evidence gap regarding the comparative and complementary benefits of higher education and technical and vocational education and training for refugees.

3. The international refugee education donor community, led by UNHCR, should work with host-governments to establish and boost inclusion in technology access schemes that are specifically tailored to the needs of refugee communities.

4. Specialist training and associated finance is required so that education institutions are better equipped to provide holistic care, including trauma therapy, to ensure the wellbeing of refugee students.

5 Teachers from a refugee background should be paid a salary aligned with that of teachers who are host country nationals, based on their qualifications and experience.

6 UNHCR and government ministries should continue to work in partnership to provide on-going teacher professional development opportunities for both refugee and national teachers.

7 The education donor community should work to introduce targeted funding to supplement government provision that addresses the funding gaps for refugee students in relation to fees, grants and loans and ensure parity with national students.

8 Education institutions should prioritise the development of practical skills within national curricula to improve refugee readiness for the workplace, and add targeted content within teacher continuous professional development programmes to ensure this is applied in the classroom.

9 UNHCR should continue to invest in the development of strategic partnerships with providers of workplace readiness training schemes across the private and public sectors.

10 Governments should explore opportunities for technical and vocational training for refugees to be better aligned with local emerging markets and context-specific employability trends.

Pakistan education stakeholders

11 The education community should continue to advocate for prioritising refugee girls' education and specifically invest in Afghan community-level advocacy efforts to highlight the individual and societal benefits.

12 The education community should ensure there is a coordinated effort to address the causal factors that lead to refugee drop-out from education after periods of disruption, and provide accessible ways to re-enrol in secondary school.

13 UNHCR and other education stakeholders should consider establishing an awareness campaign to improve refugee girls' knowledge of and access to mechanisms that can support them through disruptions to their education.

14 The government of Pakistan should make a coordinated effort to increase refugee access to free, quality secondary education.

15 The Higher Education Commission should work with the relevant higher education institutions to improve access policies and establish a more administratively streamlined and financially equitable route for refugee students to participate in higher education.

16 Scholarship providers, Pakistani universities and the Higher Education Commission should work to expand the scholarship pool for refugees in both public and private universities.

17 Efforts should be made by the relevant government departments to update policies which currently demand unobtainable documentation from refugees when entering employment.

Rwanda education stakeholders

18 Secondary schools should facilitate peer-learning and mentoring opportunities, as an effective way to develop role models within the refugee student community that can increase motivation for education.

19 Education institutions and donors should increase free access to a greater range of high quality learning resources for refugees, to reduce the pressure on them to earn money to pay for resources, which will in turn help to reduce absenteeism.

20 Providers of scholarships for refugee students should ensure that the scholarship package is transparent about the level of financial support and accompanied by financial advice mechanisms.

21 Providers of scholarships for refugee students should ensure that a wide range of subject options are provided and accessible for application.

22 MINEMA and UNHCR should collaborate to establish improved and ongoing English language support provision for refugees.

23 A targeted advocacy campaign should be implemented that is focused on private sector awareness of refugee employment rights.

24 A policy change should be implemented to allow refugees to register on the MIFOTRA platform with their refugee ID.

Abbreviations and acronyms

ACC	Afghan Citizen Card
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
CBC	Competency Based Curriculum
DAFI	Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative
DP	Data collection point
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
HE	Higher education
ID	Identification
JCU	John Carroll University
KBC	Knowledge Based Curriculum
KII	Key Informant Interview
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
MIFOTRA	Ministry of Public Service and Labour
MINEMA	Ministry in Charge of Emergency Management
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PK	Pakistan
PoR	Proof of Registration
REUK	Refugee Education UK
RQ	Research Question
RW	Rwanda
SS	Secondary school
ToR	Terms of reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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Figure 3 A comparison of the % of survey participants at DP3 (in Pakistan and Rwanda) who had graduated from secondary school/undergraduate degrees, with the % of the same sample who had transitioned to undergraduate/postgraduate degrees.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This report represents the culmination of the Voices of Refugee Youth research study: a youth-centred longitudinal panel study across two countries – Pakistan and Rwanda.

It provides an overview of the research, including the objectives, the methodology, the key findings and recommendations. The evidence and practical advice in the report is aimed primarily at government policymakers, donors, researchers and other stakeholders in the field of refugee education. The research study is the central component of the broader Voices of Refugee Youth initiative, which took place from 2018 to 2022.

1.1 Purpose of the research study

The critical importance of post-primary education in emergencies is increasingly acknowledged within the global community. The Voices of Refugee Youth research study contributes to this evidence base, with a particular focus on the transitions of refugees from post-primary education to employment or future education opportunities.

The foundation of the research study was developed through multiple conversations between Jigsaw, REUK and UNHCR. Each partner had an acute awareness of the issues at the forefront of refugee education. The Voices of Refugee Youth research study was developed in response to these issues and designed on the basis of an initial scoping exercise carried out in Pakistan and Rwanda.

Research objectives

The primary objective of the research study is to:

contribute to building the evidence base for post-primary education for refugee youth, through a youth-centred methodological approach that addresses each of the research questions.

The additional objectives of the study are to:

- inform good practice around refugee youth participation in high level research;
- contribute to improving monitoring, evaluation and learning within refugee youth education programming;
- grow the body of research in the refugee youth education sector.

Research questions

At the proposal stage of this study, eight research questions were put forward to guide the study; these were then updated and refined over the inception phase as the research team consulted with refugee youth in Pakistan and Rwanda. Over the course of the four years of implementation, the research questions were further refined as the global context shifted in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated education challenges. This resulted in a final set of seven research questions:

1. What is the impact of post-primary education on participating refugee students?
2. What are the significant systemic factors, positive and negative, that influence the ability of refugees to access and thrive in post-primary education?

3. What was the impact of Covid-19 on participating students' access to and experience of post-primary education?
4. What are the main opportunities and threats that students encounter as they transition from secondary to higher education and how can these be successfully navigated?
5. How can post-primary education for refugees build effective pathways to employment and what are the factors that facilitate and prevent this?
6. How do refugee youth make decisions regarding their own education in the face of competing priorities, uncertainties, and limited opportunities?
7. What is a refugee youth-centred understanding of the importance of post-primary education?

Why this research matters

The research study is the central component of the broader Voices of Refugee Youth initiative. This report, alongside the other initiative activities, addresses four important and interconnected issues.

First, the study focuses on building the evidence base for post-primary education for refugee youth, helping to address current gaps.

Second, refugee youth are often marginalised from the process of research and evidence-building. The Voices of Refugee Youth initiative engages with this by positioning young refugees at the centre of the process, equipping them with the skills to undertake rigorous research and share their own insights.

Third, refugee youth lack access to higher education and professional development. In order to address this, the initiative provided an internationally accredited, graduate-level certificate for the young refugees working on the research study, through a blended-learning programme in applied research.

Finally, as articulated in the research questions, the Voices of Refugee Youth initiative also engages with the fact that refugee youth lack reliable pathways to employment. The research study contributes directly to the evidence base around the issue, while the broader initiative equips the Youth Researchers engaged on the research study with both the accredited training and practical experience to support their own individual pathways to employment.

1.2 Research partners

Voices of Refugee Youth was designed and delivered in partnership between Jigsaw, REUK and UNHCR. The UNHCR Pakistan country office and the UNHCR Rwanda country office provided vital logistical support throughout and in helping recruit young refugees to work as researchers on the study. John Carroll University (JCU) provided accreditation for the applied research programme, and Centreity provided guidance on the development of the platform and course content. In addition, there has been close collaboration with the Ministry in Charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) and school leaders in Rwanda and the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees, the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, and school leaders in Pakistan.

1.3 Structure of the report

Following the **introduction** (chapter 1) an outline of the **research contexts** is provided (chapter 2), introducing the factors which affect refugee secondary and higher education globally and specifically within the context of the study's two focus countries: Pakistan and Rwanda. The **research methodology** (chapter 3) is then presented, covering the study's youth-centred, participatory approach and mixed-methods design, including sampling, data collection and analysis. The **country overviews** (chapter 4) provide a summary of the participant demographics in each context, as well as an introduction to the key findings from Pakistan and Rwanda respectively. The **discussion of findings** (chapter 5) is structured thematically in relation to the seven research questions. Finally, the **recommendations** (chapter 6) build on the findings and present practical advice for government policymakers, donors, researchers and other refugee education stakeholders.

Chapter 2: Research contexts

This chapter provides an overview of the context within which the study took place.

It includes a specific focus on the state of secondary education, higher education and technical and vocational education for refugees globally, as well as providing further details on these issues in Pakistan and Rwanda.

2.1 The global context of refugee post-primary education

By the end of 2021, there were 89.3 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, and estimates suggest this rose to more than 100 million by the end of 2022 (UNHCR UK, n.d). A high proportion of this population are of school age: UNHCR estimates that children make up 41% of the refugee population, whereas children constitute 30% of the global population (UNHCR, 2022d). Access to education is a fundamental right enshrined in the international legal framework, and evidence shows that children, youth and their families consistently prioritise this right (Gladwell & Tanner, 2014). Despite this prioritisation, many refugee children and young people do not have access to education: data from 40 countries reveal that only 68% of refugee children are enrolled in primary school, dropping sharply to 37% at the secondary level and 6% at tertiary level (UNHCR, 2022e).

Refugee secondary education

The positive economic impact of secondary education has been well-documented, and increasing attention has been paid to its wider societal benefits. More schooling is positively correlated with higher wages and has an inverse relationship with unemployment rates (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2004; Ozier, 2015). However, a multitude of context-specific barriers to secondary school enrolment exist for refugees. This includes the limited availability of schools or school places where refugee students live, unaffordable school fees and associated education costs, difficulties demonstrating proof of primary learning and the challenges or dangers of travelling to school, amongst others (UNHCR, 2017).

In addition to these context-specific barriers, inadequate funding and policy provision has contributed to a lack of refugee access to secondary education. Only states that are signatories to the 1951 Convention have an obligation to provide education to refugees (UNHCR, 2010). However, this obligation is not enforceable and, in reality, refugee education is often overlooked in national policy and practice, particularly when states face challenges providing a comprehensive education to their citizens. In light of such policy-level challenges, international and local organisations have often stepped in to supplement education provision. Nonetheless, within humanitarian funding, secondary education receives considerably less funding than primary education. For instance, according to the most recent available data from 2015, UNHCR's budget for secondary education was a third of that

allocated for supporting primary education (UNHCR, 2015).

Refugee higher education

Across LMICs, higher education has been found to improve earnings and capabilities of graduates, as well as contributing to strengthened institutions, economic growth (Oketch et al., 2014), and democratic processes and good governance (Fontana, 2017). In contexts of conflict and displacement, higher education is also reported to be an important tool to rebuild countries affected by conflicts (Power et al., 2015), and promote peace-building (Dryden-Peterson & Giles, 2010; Aubrey et al., 2016). Nonetheless, investment in higher education for refugees has historically been particularly limited in low-income countries. This can be attributed to several factors: firstly, that universal primary education was seen as the priority for ensuring equity; secondly, the assumption that return on investment is higher for primary and secondary education; and thirdly, concerns that investment in higher education may lead to human capital flight (or 'brain drain') from developing countries (Fontana, 2017; Brannelly et al., 2011). Other factors, such as a historic focus on refugee contexts as temporary rather than protracted, may also have contributed to a lack of systematic funding for higher education for refugees.

However, the landscape has shifted in recent years. While the 6% enrolment rate in higher education for refugees falls behind gross enrolment rates across all income levels globally (79% in high income countries, 58% in upper middle income countries, 38% in middle income countries, 27% in lower middle income countries and 9% in low income countries—UNHCR, 2022e), it is a sixfold increase from the enrolment rate for refugees in 2019. There is an increasing commitment from humanitarian, development and educational sectors to providing access to higher education for refugees, and UNHCR, through the '15by30' campaign, has set a target of achieving 15% enrolment of refugees in higher education programmes by 2030 (UNHCR, 2019a). The increasing availability of scholarships for students from refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds is evidence of this commitment, although these are still limited in their scope and reach (Gladwell et al., 2016a).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) aims to increase access to jobs and enhance economic growth through driving job-specific skills development in alignment with the demands of the labour market. The economic rationale for investment in TVET is centred on the need to tackle rising youth unemployment globally (UNESCO, 2016). According to the Global Education Monitoring Report 2019, 22% of upper secondary students worldwide are currently engaged in technical and vocational tracks (UNESCO, 2018).

However, there is an enduring disparity between the potential of TVET to drive progress and transform societies, and its actual performance (Campbell, 2016; Rawkins, 2018). This is the 'TVET paradox' (Campbell, 2016). Although effective TVET systems are seen as valuable because they can adapt to the demands of a rapidly changing labour market better than traditional education, TVET systems continue to face multiple practical and political challenges, including underfunding, lack of interest from employers, and the stigmatisation of the TVET sector as a comparatively "low-prestige" career pathway (Haßler et al., 2020).

Although TVET systems are often established

in host countries, in practice policies and bureaucratic procedures have often made it difficult for refugees to access TVET, and TVET offerings have often not accounted for refugees' prior learning or aspirations for the future (British Council, 2018). There has been, however, an increased commitment in recent years to expanding and enhancing refugees' access to TVET: improving refugees' access to TVET is a key priority in UNHCR's education strategy, 'Refugee Education 2030' (UNHCR, 2019b), and 26 pledges were made by 10 different countries at the Global Refugee Forum in 2019 to improve TVET provision for refugees (UNHCR, n.d.). Such collaboration is focused on supporting refugees' preparedness for work, whether in the host country, resettlement country or on return to the country of origin (UNHCR, 2021a).

Pathways to employment

The negative impacts of persistent unemployment for young people are well-documented, and these adverse effects extend into adult life, increasing risks of joblessness, poor quality work and lower incomes (ILO, 2015). Refugees are up to six times more likely to be unemployed than non-refugees (British Council, 2018). Policy and legal restrictions on work are a key obstacle to refugee employment (McLoughlin, 2017); 70 of the 145 countries who have signed the 1951 Refugee Convention do not grant refugees the right to work, and even where it is granted, it is often conditional (UNESCO, 2018). Additionally, laws enshrining refugees' right to work are often poorly implemented (Ginn et al., 2022). Global UNHCR data reports that 49% of refugees live in a country where they are restricted from registering and operating a business, 62% have restricted rights to access land for agriculture, and 56% do not have the right to open a bank account (UNHCR 2021). This, along with discrimination in the labour market and lack of recognition of other qualifications from refugees' home countries, means that refugees often end up in low-skilled and/or precarious or non-formal employment (McLoughlin, 2017).

The need for more effective pathways between education and employment for refugees is increasingly acknowledged (Brugha & Hollow, 2017; UNHCR, 2020b). There are a range of initiatives taking place with the intention to increase the employability of refugees and promote successful transitions into employment. For example, some higher education programmes seek to mitigate the soft-skills gap for refugee youth through integrating workplace readiness into their curricula, and offering mentoring programmes that connect students with role models in business or the local community to boost their confidence and employability (Brugha & Hollow, 2017). At present, however, evidence for the effectiveness of employability initiatives within TVET and higher education for refugees is primarily anecdotal (McLoughlin, 2017; Jacobsen & Fratzke, 2016).

2.2 The context of refugee education in Pakistan

The forced displacement context

Pakistan hosts the fourth largest number of refugees in the world, with recent figures showing that there are around 3 million Afghans, 49% of whom are under the age of 18 (UNHCR, 2022a). The regime change in Afghanistan in the summer of 2021 instigated renewed forced displacement, with an

estimated 117,550 new Afghan refugees arriving in Pakistan between January 2021 and February 2022 (UNHCR, 2022b). Over half of registered Afghan refugees reside in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (UNHCR Pakistan, 2022). Estimates suggest that refugee villages house 32% of registered Afghan refugees, whilst 68% live in urban and peri-urban areas (UNHCR/Government of Pakistan, 2022).

Despite hosting significant numbers of refugees, Pakistan is not a signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, nor the 1967 Protocol, and has neither enacted national legislation for the protection of refugees nor established refugee status determination procedures. In the absence of such procedures, in 2006 the government and UNHCR undertook a joint initiative to issue Proof of Registration (PoR) cards—which provide legal protection to refugees by enabling freedom of movement and a means to prove a regular status—to Afghan refugees. The validity of these cards has since been extended multiple times. In 2017, the Pakistani government initiated a programme to provide documentation for unregistered Afghans through the provision of Afghan Citizenship Cards (ACCs), which protects holders from forced return (EUAA, 2022). There are currently 1.28 million refugees with PoR cards (UNHCR/Government of Pakistan, 2022), 840,000 ACC holders as well as an estimated 775,000 undocumented Afghans (UNHCR, 2022a).

Secondary education

Pakistan's 18th Constitutional Amendment guarantees free and compulsory education for all children aged five to 16 years. Secondary education in Pakistan consists of four years, from grade nine through 12. However, school is only compulsory between the ages of five and 16 (or grade 10), after which students receive the Secondary School Certificate. Students who decide to continue will then choose a specialised stream to join, and in grade 12 they receive the Higher Secondary School Certificate. There are three main types of school in Pakistan: public, private, and religious (also known as madrassas).

Education for refugees is situated within what has been described as Pakistan's "extensive education crisis" (Naviwala, 2016), characterised by high numbers of children out of school. Pakistan has the world's second highest total of out of school children, at 22.8 million (UNICEF Pakistan, n.d.). Secondary school enrolment in 2019 was 45% (UNESCO UIS, 2022b), and the national literacy rate of people aged 15 and above was 58% (UNESCO UIS, 2022a).

Gaps in data constrain efforts to estimate the enrolment rates of Afghan refugees in the national education system (UNHCR, 2020c). Education in Refugee Villages serve around 11% of registered Afghan refugee children, while a lack of uniform regulatory framework hinders the admission of both documented and undocumented refugee youth to public schools (ibid.).

Higher education and TVET

Pakistan's strategy for development, Vision 2025 (Government of Pakistan, 2014), states the need for a well-established higher education system to provide a skilled workforce to facilitate economic growth and allow Pakistan to become an upper middle-income country by 2025 (World Bank, 2017). Pakistan currently has over 200 universities and 3,000-degree colleges across the country (International Trade Administration, 2022). The national tertiary education enrolment rate in Pakistan stood at 12% in 2019 (UNESCO UIS, 2022d).

While there are no policy restrictions on

refugee students attending national tertiary education programmes, in practice they are difficult for refugees to access. Data on enrolment rates are limited but the barriers are well-documented. Historically, these have included the cost of courses, for which Afghan refugees may be charged international fees (although recent policy changes have moved towards ensuring tuition fees are equal to those for Pakistani students), and difficulties in proving the credibility of prior qualifications from Afghanistan (UNHCR, 2016a). Responding to this, the DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) programme, in partnership with the NGO Inspire Pakistan, provides scholarships to 17-30 year old refugees. In 2021, DAFI supported 642 refugee students in Pakistan, but the demand exceeded supply, with 926 applications in 2021 (UNHCR, 2022c). Alongside scholarship programmes supporting refugees in Pakistan (such as the Hanns Seidel Scholarship Program; Hanns Seidel Stiftung, 2020), other tertiary scholarship programmes for Pakistani universities are available for Afghans residing in Afghanistan. This includes Phase III of the Allama Muhammad Iqbal Scholarship programme—an initiative of the Government of Pakistan to strengthen the bilateral relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan—which offers 4,500 scholarships to Afghan youth, for undergraduate, graduate and PhD level study (HEC Pakistan, 2023).

Refugees' opportunities to access formal TVET in Pakistan are also limited, with youth unemployment affecting both Pakistani and refugee youth. Those who are able to access TVET programmes (including those run by NGOs) face limited training options, barriers to trade board exams and certification, and are likely to end up working with low pay, low security and no right to appropriate working conditions (British Council, 2018).

Transitions into employment

Refugees in Pakistan have no legal right to work and often face poor working conditions, discrimination and the risk of exploitation in the informal economy (British Council, 2018). Recent research indicates that the most prevalent form of work amongst Afghans continues to be self-employment or daily labouring (Mielke et al. 2021). In UNHCR's youth consultation with Afghan refugees, the barrier posed by their immigration status was stated as the most significant concern for young refugees in terms of the transition from education to employment (UNHCR, 2016).

Routes into entrepreneurship are also limited: though Afghan refugees have been able to open bank accounts since 2019, formal financial institutions do not provide them with credit or financing, meaning they would have to rely on NGOs or informal networks to raise capital for starting a business (UNHCR, 2018). Where Afghans have managed to set up businesses, these businesses are either unregistered or under the proxy ownership of Pakistani friends or relatives (Ginn et al., 2022).

2.3 The context of refugee education in Rwanda

The forced displacement context

Rwanda hosts around 127,000 refugees, mainly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (around 60%) and Burundi (around 40%) (UNHCR Rwanda, 2022b). Thirty nine percent of the refugee population in Rwanda is school-aged children (UNHCR Rwanda, 2022a). The Congolese population has been in Rwanda since the 1990s, with a smaller influx arriving in 2012-2013. Burundian

refugees have been in-country for a shorter period of time, with an arrival of 86,000 refugees since the outbreak of unrest in 2015. Ninety-one percent of the refugees live in camps, with the remainder living in urban settings (UNHCR Rwanda, 2022b).

Rwanda has been a signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol since 1980, and grants prima facie refugee status to the Burundian and Congolese populations. In 2016, a collaborative strategy for the economic inclusion of refugees in Rwanda was launched with an aim of making all refugees self-reliant and able to contribute to the Rwandan economy (MIDIMAR/UNHCR, 2016). One of the pillars of this strategy is increasing refugee access to education and vocational training. In February 2018, the Government of Rwanda announced its commitment to roll out the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (UNHCR, 2019b), which places refugee self-reliance as one of its core objectives. This framework prioritises the integration of refugees into the national education system, including a six-month orientation programme and related back-to-school initiatives—such as training in English, civic courses and teaching methodologies—to prepare refugee students and teachers for the Rwandan curriculum (UNHCR, 2019b; Global Compact on Refugees, n.d.).

Secondary education

Secondary school in Rwanda is separated into two stages, lower and upper, in both public and private schools. After the first three years (grades seven to nine), pupils take exams for O-Level qualifications. Thereafter, they can continue either into the TVET system or into upper secondary school for grades 10-12. In upper secondary, students choose a track to follow, either teacher training, technical secondary school, or general education. Secondary school is free, though school is only compulsory to the end of lower secondary level.

The Government of Rwanda has a progressive practice of refugee integration into the national education system. A previous partnership between UNHCR Rwanda and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency focused on building the capacity of schools close to camps in order to accommodate refugees (UNHCR, 2019c), while current partnerships with the government, local and international NGOs and other UN agencies focus on the inclusion of refugees into the national education system. The gross secondary enrolment rate stands at 46% for Rwanda as a whole (UNESCO UIS, 2022c), while it is estimated that about 43% of refugee youth are enrolled at secondary school (UNHCR Rwanda, n.d.-a).

Higher education and TVET

The higher education system in Rwanda has rapidly expanded since 2003, with 31 higher learning institutions categorised as universities (2 public and 29 private) and 9 polytechnics (MINEDUC, 2023a). The Rwandan government has channelled significant financial resources into higher education, initially to counter the loss of human capital sustained in the genocide, and, in recent years, as a key part of the development of a knowledge economy (Oketch et al., 2014). Nationally, Rwanda has a gross enrolment rate of 6% in tertiary education (UNESCO UIS, 2022e), while an estimated 4% of refugee youths are enrolled in higher education (UNHCR Rwanda, n.d.-a). There is also a seven-level categorisation of TVET, ranging from a six-month training programme—accessible to learners at a minimum of 16 years old—to a Diploma or Advanced Diploma in the 1st cycle of higher education (Rwanda Ministry of Education,

2015).

The cost of a university education is often prohibitive and scholarship opportunities are key to enabling refugee access to higher education in Rwanda. The DAFI programme supported 184 refugee students in 2021 to study at a Rwandan university (UNHCR, 2022c). Unlike in Pakistan, there is a greater range of accessible scholarship options for tertiary education beyond DAFI from a variety of providers including: Maison Shalom, Impact Hope African Leadership University (ALU) and GIZ (UNHCR Rwanda, n.d.-b). Notably, there is also the blended learning programme run by Kepler and accredited by Southern New Hampshire University, which runs international degree programmes in Rwanda. Access has been expanded beyond Kepler's main base in Kigali, with a 'satellite' campus operating in the Kiziba refugee camp since 2015. In 2021, 152 students were enrolled at the Kiziba campus, of which 94% are refugees (Kepler, 2021). In the same year, there were 502 Bachelor's degree students at Kepler's Kigali campus, of which 15% are refugees (Ibid.).

In Rwanda, despite the fact that refugees have the right to work in the formal labour market, there has historically been very little certified TVET available to them, and data on TVET is limited. A 2014 report on Vocational Training Centres in refugee camps highlighted that many are often not functional (WFP/UNHCR 2014). Project cycles for such initiatives tend to be short and limited in scope, and a lack of vocational and skills training has been identified by refugees as one of the key obstacles preventing refugees from improving their livelihoods in Rwanda (WFP/UNHCR 2017). However, in recent years, TVET initiatives have increased due to the Government of Rwanda's renewed focus on training a technical workforce for national development, with 366 TVET schools and 85,587 trainees as of February 2020 (MINEDUC, 2023b).

Transitions into employment

Refugees in Rwanda have the right to work in the formal labour market (excluding the public sector), and are granted the same de jure employment rights as Rwandan citizens, including labour protections, private-sector salary protections, and the right to self-employment (Ginn et al., 2022). However, this right is situated in a context of high levels of national unemployment, particularly for youth; 21.5% of young people aged between 16 and 30 are unemployed, as compared to 13.1% of adults aged 31 years and above (NISR, 2022). For refugees, the situation is even more challenging: available data indicates that Congolese refugees are significantly more likely to be unemployed than Rwandan citizens (Bilgili & Loschmann, 2018), and that Congolese refugee women are significantly less likely to be economically active than both Rwandan women and their Congolese male peers (Bilgili et al., 2017).

A range of barriers to employment are documented. Employers and refugees remain unclear about the regulations surrounding refugees' right to work, with anecdotal evidence from in-country providers of education suggesting that refugees are often unaware that they have this right, and that employers often request unnecessary additional documentation (Brugha & Hollow, 2017; Ginn et al., 2022). Furthermore, although work permits are obtainable in theory, they can be prohibitively expensive in practice, and businesses owned by refugees may be subject to additional scrutiny from authorities (Ginn et al., 2022).

Across both Rwanda and Pakistan, a diversity of policies, politics and socio-cultural factors impact refugees' ability to access and thrive in education and employment. It is within

these broader contexts that the present study is situated.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The Voices of Refugee Youth research study took place over four years, from 2018-2022. It adopted a participatory, youth-centred approach and involved a longitudinal panel study with supplementary qualitative data collection.

This chapter outlines the design of the study in detail, including the youth-centred approach, data collection and analysis strategies.

3.1 Overview of the research design

The Voices of Refugee Youth research involved a panel study: a form of longitudinal research in which data is collected on the same units of analysis (normally individuals) at specified intervals over a multi-year period. The key feature of this approach is the repeated measure of the same sample at different points in time. The longitudinal nature of the approach enables analysis of changes over time, but it also offers the opportunity to draw causal explanations of relationships between different variables (Harpham et al., 2003). A longitudinal panel study was therefore considered to be well aligned to the objectives and research questions of the Voices of Refugee Youth research study. The repeated capture of data over a multi-year period offered the opportunity to follow a cohort of refugee youth through their experience of and transitions from post-primary education.

The study was originally planned to consist of four data points spaced at six month intervals from 2019-2021, as summarised in *Table 1*. Due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, this timeline was adapted to three data points over a 2 year and 11 month period (2019-2022). The first data point took place approximately 6 months prior to graduation in both countries. However, due to the closure of educational institutions during 2020, DP2 was postponed by over six months in Pakistan and over a year in Rwanda to accommodate the disruption caused to education provision during this period, including postponements to exams and graduation. DP3 was then conducted after a further six months in each context, as planned.

Data point	Original timeline for the longitudinal panel study	Adapted timeline: Pakistan	Adapted timeline: Rwanda
DP1	Pre-graduation (final year of secondary/higher education—ideally approximately 6 months before completion)	Aug-Dec 2019	Jan-Feb 2020
DP2	Immediately post-graduation (within 3 months)	Nov-Dec 2020	Sept-Nov 2021
DP3	6-9 months after graduation	June-Aug 2021	May-June 2022

Table 1: Original and adapted timeline for the longitudinal panel study.

While the reduction to three data points could be considered a limitation of the adapted approach, the extended period between each data point ensured that participants' transitions from their initial stage of education were captured, thus providing a data-set that still enabled credible analysis of the research questions.

Furthermore, the Youth Researchers reported a high-level of participant fatigue at DP3, especially in light of the pressures caused by the pandemic, and so removing the fourth data point was considered appropriate in the context of these changed circumstances.

3.2 A youth-centred approach to refugee education research

Youth-centred approaches to research are built on the enshrined right of the child to "give their opinions freely on issues that affect them" and for adults to "listen and take children seriously" (UNICEF, n.d., Article 12). This right is echoed in an increasing number of declarations—such as the Transforming Education Summit's 2022 Youth Declaration (UN, 2022)—which advocate for the meaningful engagement of young people as fully-fledged partners in education policy and decision-making.

In the early 1990s, Hart's seminal 'ladder of participation' (Hart, 1992), provided a framework for gauging the various levels of involvement youth can have in research, and advocated for the meaningful participation of young people. Since then, a diversity of participatory approaches to research have emerged. What unites these approaches is the core aim of involving research stakeholders in decision-making processes, whether through setting the research agenda, acting as consultants, or conducting research alongside researchers (Bradbury-Jones & Taylor, 2015; Haile et al., 2020). Participatory approaches to research also extend to the inclusion of refugee youth, such as the 2016 Global Refugee Youth Consultations, which involved 1,267 young refugees from 22 countries (UNHCR/Women's Refugee Commission, 2016).

As part of these participatory approaches, young people have increasingly been engaged as researchers, rather than simply as

participants in research. This has reportedly led to a positive impact both on the young researchers themselves, and on the quality of the research produced. It has been widely noted that engaging youth as researchers can lead both to the use of more age-appropriate tools, and to more robust, honest responses—as respondents may prefer to discuss sensitive issues with their peers than with adult researchers (Kirby, 2004; McLarty & Moran, 2009; UNICEF, 2011; Lehmann, 2015). The positive impact on youth of conducting research centres on the acquisition of skills and knowledge (London et al., 2003), personal development through increased self-esteem and confidence (Kirby & Bryson, 2002; Mesthenos, 2006), greater resilience (Lehmann, 2015) and positive identity formation (London et al., 2003).

While the prevalence of participatory, youth-centred approaches has increased in recent years, and new initiatives promoting refugee leadership in research (such as the Dadaab Response Initiative (BHER, 2023) and the Refugee-Led Research Hub (RSC, 2023)) have emerged, there has been a lack of application of these established methods in the context of refugee education research. The Voices of Refugee Youth initiative was therefore designed to bring refugee youth to the centre of researching their own education. A cohort of 31 Youth Researchers in Pakistan and Rwanda were recruited to join the full research team at the inception phase in 2018. They were involved at every stage of the research study and were supported via a holistic training programme which provided them with an accredited, graduate-level certificate in applied research. The following sections outline the main details related to their involvement in the research study. Further reflections and practical recommendations related to adopting a youth-centred, participatory approach to research such as this can be accessed in the Voices of Refugee Youth: Participatory Toolkit (2023).

> "The experience of working on this project was a good foundation that can help me to work on further projects. I had seen how the research can be used to influence the decision making body to make a positive change in the life of the participants and provide an appropriate support to them based on their needs. I was also interested in pursuing a career in research because it helps the voiceless to express their ideas where they can not be heard."
> > Youth Researcher in Rwanda

Youth Researcher recruitment

Since the design of the Voices of Refugee Youth research study depended on employing a youth-centred approach, it was important to have a well planned recruitment process that was transparent, clearly set expectations, ensured equity and rigour.

The first stage of the recruitment process took place during the scoping visit in 2018, when members of the Jigsaw and REUK research team consulted with young refugees in Pakistan and Rwanda. This enabled the research team to gain an understanding of the appetite for involvement in the study, how to shape the role of Youth Researcher to make it realistic, and what support would be needed and appropriate remuneration packages.

The information gathered in discussion with refugee youth, plus ongoing dialogue with UNHCR in both countries, enabled the Jigsaw and REUK research team to develop the

terms of reference (ToR) for the role. An example of the ToR can be found in *Annex 1*. This was shared with a group of young refugees for review and feedback before being finalised. Alongside the ToR, an application process was developed and both documents were shared via UNHCR country offices to refugee students of in-country scholarship programmes such as DAFI, Kepler, ADRA and Maison Shalom. Approximately 75 students applied for the role of Youth Researcher in each country.

For the purposes of shortlisting a scoring matrix was developed that assigned marks for:

- fluency in English;
- Information Communication Technology (ICT) literacy;
- communication skills;
- commitment and motivation to do the role;
- organisational skills; and
- relevance to future life.

The following factors were also taken into consideration, eliminating those who did not meet the criteria:

- age (29 or less);
- geographical location (Peshawar in Pakistan and across four camps (Gihembe, Kigeme, Kiziba and Mahama), Kigali and Huye in Rwanda); and
- adherence to the application instructions (CV, cover letter, responses to questions, etc).

A group of 36 young refugees were selected for participation in the first week of training (18 in Pakistan and 18 in Rwanda). During the first week of training the facilitators observed each of the participants and an interview was held at the end of the week in order to determine the final cohort of Youth Researchers who would join the full research team. Fifteen Youth Researchers were selected in Pakistan and 16 Youth Researchers were selected in Rwanda. These numbers were slightly higher than initially planned, however the rationale for this was to mitigate possible attrition amongst the Youth Researchers during the progression of the study.

Delivering an accredited training programme

Training is a core component in any youth-centred research process, since it is a primary means of ensuring that participants are equipped with the tools and confidence to contribute. To this end, the Jigsaw and REUK research team, in collaboration with John Carroll University (JCU) and Centreity, developed a graduate-level training programme in applied research, entitled Social Innovation, Research and Analysis. The aim of the course was to equip the Youth Researchers with the knowledge and skills to operate as effective applied researchers, and at the same time provide them with an internationally accredited, graduate-level certificate to enhance their future professional opportunities and pathways to employment.

The curriculum of the course followed the four broad stages of a research cycle. Unit 1 covered the conceptualisation of research, including an introduction to different research methods, a comprehensive focus on ethics and safeguarding and a practical overview of conducting surveys. Unit 2 expanded on qualitative research methods, focusing on skills for conducting and transcribing focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs). Unit 3 explored the process of qualitative and quantitative data analysis, including data cleaning, deductive and inductive coding and using spreadsheets to generate descriptive statistics. Unit 4 focused on creating change

through research and introduced different methods of presenting findings, with a specific focus on report writing and advocacy through research.

Figure 1: Timeline of the accredited training. programme and data collection points in Pakistan and Rwanda.

The training was delivered through a blended approach of face-to-face and remote sessions. *Figure 1* outlines the timeline to which each unit was delivered in Pakistan and Rwanda. Originally, the course was designed to be conducted in person, and this was the mode of delivery for Unit 1. However, the Covid-19 pandemic necessitated a transition to online delivery, including the provision of asynchronous online content (delivered via the Rise 360 platform) and online sessions (via Zoom). Following the easing of travel restrictions, a blended approach was adopted—retaining the provision of asynchronous online content but reintroducing in-person training weeks.

Each unit of the course was delivered over a 1-2 week period, with the following month dedicated to the completion of graded assignments. The assignments were designed to provide an opportunity to practise the core research skills from each unit, using relevant data from the Voices of Refugee Youth research study. The final assignment was also designed to be a research output: the Youth Researchers produced advocacy reports, based on the research findings, which contributed to the *Voices of Refugee Youth: Pakistan Education Advocacy Report* (Zahidi et al., 2023) and the *Voices of Refugee Youth: Rwanda Education Advocacy Report* (Nsingizimana et al., 2023). Additionally, the Youth Researchers completed a research journal for every unit, both as part of their assignments and to facilitate reflection on the research process.

The timeline of the training programme was designed to integrate with the ongoing research study. As shown in *Figure 1*, Unit 1—which equipped Youth Researchers with the skills to conduct surveys—immediately preceded the first data point (DP1). Units 2 and 3 were scheduled to take place at the midpoints between DP1, DP2 and DP3, although the timings had to be adjusted to take into account the changes which had to be made both to the training modality and the methodology (adapting from in-person data collection to predominantly phone-based data collection during Covid-19 restrictions). Finally, Unit 4 took place after the final data point (DP3), at which stage the Youth Researchers could engage with the analysed survey data as part of their advocacy assignment.

Further details about the training programme are available on the Voices of Refugee Youth website, alongside blogs from the Youth Researchers which detail their reflections on the training and their involvement in the initiative as a whole.

41% + **28%** Youth Researchers reported that 'personal confidence' and 'critical thinking' respectively were the skills they had developed the most during their time as a Youth Researcher.

84% Youth Researchers ranked the content of Units 1-4 as 'very relevant' to their work on Voices of Refugee Youth.

10% VS **55%** Youth Researchers who were full-time, part-time or self-employed when they were recruited in January 2019 compared to on completion of the training programme in October 2022.

3.3 Data collection

The longitudinal panel study followed a mixed-methods design, with all data collection led by the cohort of 31 Youth Researchers. While the study was centred around a quantitative survey, qualitative data collection methods were utilised to provide nuance and detail to the findings. The following chapter outlines the sampling strategy and the design of the data collection tools which were utilised in each country.

Sampling strategy

The sample population for the study included two cohorts of students: upper secondary students (Class 12) in their final year of secondary school and higher education students in the final year of their Bachelor's degree. The same sample was tracked as they transitioned out of education and, in some cases, into employment or further studies.

Table 2 outlines the final sample size of the longitudinal study, broken down by each data collection method. In total, 1,126 participants were involved in the survey: at DP1, there were 512 refugees surveyed in Pakistan and 614 in Rwanda. By DP3, this number had reduced to 745 participants (313 in Pakistan and 432 in Rwanda)—an attrition rate of 34% (39% in Pakistan, 30% in Rwanda). Attrition was to be expected of a multi-year panel study, especially due to the unforeseen circumstances of Covid-19. In Pakistan, Youth Researchers reported that a number of their participants moved to other regions of Pakistan, or to other countries such as Turkey, over the course of the study. Some also temporarily relocated to Afghanistan, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, but a number of these participants were still able to participate remotely as they could be interviewed over the phone.

Data Point	Country	Method	Final sample size	Timeline
DP1	Pakistan	Survey	426 secondary school (SS) 86 higher education (HE)	August-December 2019
		KII/FGD	N/A	N/A
	Rwanda	Survey	479 SS 135 HE	January-February 2020
		KII/FGD	N/A	N/A
DP2[4]	Pakistan	Survey	375 SS (307 originally) HE (68 originally)	November-December 2020[5]
		KII	12 SS 0 HE	February-March 2020[6]
		FGD	3 HE	
	Rwanda	Survey	385 SS (323 originally) 116 HE (110 originally)	September-November 2021
		KII	37 SS 8 HE	October-November 2021
		FGD	10 HE	
DP3	Pakistan	Survey	255 SS 58 HE	June-August 2021
		KII	16 SS 8 HE 6 SS teachers 3 HE teachers	June 2022
		FGD	N/A	N/A
	Rwanda	Survey	329 SS 103 HE	May-June 2022
		KII	18 SS 9 HE 6 SS teachers 3 HE teachers	June-July 2022
		FGD	N/A	N/A

[4] For DP2 survey responses, two sets of sample sizes are included here. This reflects the fact that a small group of participants, who had been untraceable at DP2, were retraced at DP3 and asked the DP2 questions, in addition to the DP3

survey. The first (higher) number is therefore the combined DP2 sample, including both the original sample from DP2 and the additional participants who were retraced at DP3. The second (lower) number refers to the original data collected just at DP2. The remainder of the report will refer exclusively to the combined DP2 sample.

[5] The DP2 survey in Pakistan was shifted to remote data collection due to the restrictions imposed by Covid-19.

[6] As a result of school closures in early 2020, qualitative data collection was not completed in Pakistan, hence the comparatively smaller number of key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs).

Table 2: Final sample sizes for each data point.

While the study aimed to achieve an equal gender split across the sample, and an even split of nationalities, when more than one existed (ie. Burundian and Congolese refugees in Rwanda), this was not always possible due to the nature of the sample population in each country. An overview of the sampling strategy in each country is provided below.

Pakistan sampling strategy

Peshawar, in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, was selected as the location for the Pakistan Voices of Refugee Youth data collection. KP, located in the north-west of Pakistan, near the Afghan border, is the province with the highest number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and therefore the highest number of secondary and higher education Afghan students. In order to keep the research logistics realistic, the study focused on Peshawar District where the majority of the schools and universities reside within KP. It is acknowledged that Balochistan faces severe challenges in relation to post-primary education, however, given the challenges of access for both Youth Researchers and the wider Jigsaw and REUK research team it was decided that the research study would focus on Peshawar, KP.

The Jigsaw and REUK research team and UNHCR Pakistan worked together to identify a clear sample of secondary and higher education students for the Youth Researchers to survey. Due to the fact that numbers of Afghan refugees studying at secondary and higher education levels are low, the focus of the sampling was to identify as many individuals as possible within a two-hour journey of Peshawar city. The constraints around travel were a result of security and cultural norms that prevent young female Youth Researchers from travelling beyond the city limits.

The final secondary school sample included 426 refugee participants from 35 schools (both Pakistani public schools and Afghan private schools) in Peshawar district. Pakistani public schools were identified through conversations with the Director of the provincial Education Management Information System (EMIS) in Peshawar, while UNHCR sourced the data on Afghan private schools across Peshawar. The Youth Researchers then visited these schools and identified as many Class 12 students as they could find. The higher education sample included 86 refugee students studying at 14 universities across the KP region, who were sourced through the DAFI network and the personal networks of the Youth Researchers. Overall, the Pakistan sample had an attrition rate of 38%. Further disaggregation of the final Pakistan sample can be found in *Annex 2*.

Rwanda sampling strategy

Compared to the sampling of secondary and higher education participants in Pakistan, the Youth Researchers in Rwanda found it easier to find refugees in Class 12 and the final year of their Bachelor's degree. The sampling process was facilitated by fewer challenges related to insecurity or inaccessibility. The logistical implications of data collection were also different, with the majority of refugees living and studying at secondary school in

designated camps. For logistical reasons, camps were only included if they were within half a day's travel of Kigali. The four selected camps were: Mahama Camp in the Eastern Province, near the border with Tanzania; Gihembe Camp in the Northern Province; Kigeme Camp in Southern Rwanda; and Kiziba Camp in Western Rwanda. While there is an even split of Burundian and Congolese refugees across the country, only Mahama camp, which has one secondary school with class 12 students, accommodates Burundian refugees. The rest of the secondary sample came from eight schools across the three Congolese camps—Gihembe, Kigeme and Kiziba; however, the closure of Gihembe camp in 2021 resulted in the relocation of some participants directly before DP2.

The final secondary school sample in Rwanda included 479 refugee students from nine schools. These schools were contacted by UNHCR initially to make introductions, then the Youth Researchers were given a list of all students in class 12, and conducted a systematic sample (selecting a male student, then female, then male, etc.) by working through the class register until the target sample size was reached at each school. The final sample of 135 higher education students came from twelve universities from Kigali, Hue and Kiziba camp. The names of students were provided by three scholarship providers—DAFI, Maison Shalom and Kepler—and ADRA. Unfortunately, there were not enough refugee students studying in their final year of bachelor's degree to ensure an equal split of gender and nationality whilst maintaining a sufficient sized cohort for the study. As such there was a higher percentage of both male and Congolese within the higher education sample. Further disaggregation of the final Rwanda sample can be found in *Annex 3*.

Tool design

Quantitative data collection tools

The primary data collection method of the study was a large-scale panel survey conducted with refugee secondary and higher education students in each country. The survey was designed to capture participants' experiences of and transitions out of post-primary education. Approximately half the questions were consistent across all three data points: these questions focused primarily on participants' perspectives of the most significant changes and challenges they had experienced as a result of education, their plans for the future and the realisation of these plans. Background information—including current education status, country of origin, location of residence, gender, a unique ID and phone number—was collected consistently at every data point to enable the data to be disaggregated effectively.

The remaining survey questions at each data point were designed to be specific to that stage of the participants' education. The survey at DP1 collected data on participants' personal and family background, as well as questions about the participants' experience of engaging in income-generating activities during education. It also included a selection of short, open questions, to generate some initial qualitative data. The survey at DP2 was adapted to account for the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic: questions were asked about the participants' experience of learning during school and university closures and their wellbeing during this period. Finally, the survey at DP3—which took place when the vast majority of participants had graduated from secondary school or

university—investigated participants' experience of returning to education after schools and universities reopened, their perspective of their current occupation after

graduation, including any challenges they faced, and their plans for the future.

As part of the study's youth-centred approach, the full research team was involved in the design of the survey, including the 31 Youth Researchers. Their feedback shaped the options provided within multi-choice questions and helped to reframe the survey based on any common issues which arose during a previous data point. The Youth Researchers were each provided with a digital tablet, on which they could access the survey via the KoboCollect app from KoboToolbox. A copy of the survey questions from the final data point is available in *Annex 4*.

Qualitative data collection tools

To supplement the findings of the quantitative survey, the study also included KIIs and FGDs, which were conducted by members of the full research team. There were two rounds of qualitative data collection, each of which involved different KII and FGD templates. The first round of qualitative data collection (including KIIs with secondary and higher education students, and FGDs with higher education students) employed the 'Most Significant Change' approach (Davies, 1998). This approach was adopted to enable the qualitative data to link directly to and build upon the findings of the quantitative survey, by providing "supplementing data that provides a more holistic and richer picture of the learning" (Choy & Lidstone, 2011, p.1).

Since this first round of qualitative data collection was disrupted by the onset of Covid-19, a second round of in-depth qualitative data collection was designed, involving KIIs with secondary and higher education students and teachers. The KII templates were designed after the first round of data analysis of the quantitative data had been completed. The questions were therefore designed to fill gaps in the data or generate additional details and nuance for the key thematic findings.

Finally, additional KIIs were conducted with UNHCR staff and key stakeholders within the education system in both countries. These KII templates were designed to ascertain the stakeholders' perspective of the education system and provision of support for refugees in each context. Just as with the second round of KIIs with students, the questions were also informed by the preliminary quantitative data findings, enabling the KIIs to provide nuanced insights.

3.4 Data analysis

The majority of data analysis was conducted by the Jigsaw and REUK research team, due to the logistical challenges and additional requisite training needed to involve 31 Youth Researchers in the analysis of a complex dataset. However, Youth Researchers were consulted during the interpretation stages of analysis, as they were able to offer contextual perspectives and knowledge that helped to explain the findings.

Quantitative data analysis

Survey data collected at each data point was first cleaned and anonymised, before being imported to statistical software for further analysis. Survey responses were also re-coded when necessary to allow for the creation of new variables and the (re)grouping of existing ones. Both Excel and R were used in quantitative analysis, with Excel being used for simple disaggregation

and descriptive analysis and R for more advanced inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis was conducted on most of the questions in the surveys to explore the general trends and frequencies of each response; and where appropriate, the data was disaggregated by gender, education level, and country. Inferential statistics such as chi-square tests were used on variables where potential significant differences exist between different disaggregating factors (e.g. gender). In these cases, a value of p (significance) is given when such differences are indeed statistically different (e.g. $p < 0.05$).

Qualitative data analysis

Before the analysis of qualitative data began, all transcripts were transcribed and translated into English. This process was conducted by the Youth Researchers who had conducted the surveys, with a quality assurance process carried out by the Jigsaw and REUK research team. Following this, all qualitative datasets—including the few open questions in the first survey, the first round of KIIs and FGDs at DP2, and the second round of KIIs at DP3—went through a cleaning process to exclude unusable and/or

irrelevant information. Transcripts were also anonymised at this stage.

MaxQDA was the main software used for qualitative analysis. Thematic analysis was conducted on the DP3 KII and FGD transcripts, using a combined deductive and inductive qualitative coding approach: an initial coding framework was developed around the research questions, with further codes added inductively as themes arose during the analysis process. In total, the analysis involved 32 deductive and 17 inductive codes. Document variables were created based on the sampling criteria. The qualitative coding framework is included in *Annex 5*. Once the coding process was completed, analysis of the coded segments was conducted to identify areas of convergence and divergence within the data.

Since the DP2 qualitative dataset was incomplete due to the restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, this dataset was not systematically coded in the same way as the DP3 dataset. Instead, along with the data from the open survey questions at DP1, key information and quotes were pulled thematically from the transcripts. In this way, these two datasets acted as supplementary sources of data, while the DP3 qualitative data provided systematically analysed, thematic findings.

3.5 Presentation of findings

The findings of the study are outlined in the following chapters. The 'discussion of findings' (chapter 5) provides a thematic overview of findings from across the dataset, and is structured in relation to the research questions. Findings related specifically to the Pakistani and Rwandan contexts are interspersed where appropriate. An overview of the top findings in each country, as well as a summary of the sample demographics, can be found in the 'country overviews' (chapter 4).

The quantitative findings are generally presented as percentages, with additional inferential statistics (in the form of p-values) added where relevant. It should be noted that, when a percentage is stated in relation to a specific data point, it refers to the percentage of participants at that specific data point, not the survey as a whole. The

total sample size for the relevant data point is provided alongside each percentage. These figures vary in size depending on the specific data item in question, as participants were given the option to skip survey questions which they felt unable or did not want to answer.

The qualitative findings presented reflect both the major themes which emerged from the DP3 data, as well as a selection of specific insights and quotations from participants which offer nuance and detail. A selection of case studies are interspersed throughout the 'discussion of findings' (chapter 5) offering insights into the personal experiences of certain participants. All data is anonymised, with pseudonyms used to protect the identities of the case study individuals.

3.6 Research ethics

Jigsaw and REUK seek to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of all those involved in research, and are guided by the principles in the Belmont Report (HHS, 1979), including:

- Potential research subjects must be treated as autonomous agents, who have the capacity to consider alternatives, make choices, and act without undue influence or interference from others.
- The two basic principles of beneficence: (1) do no harm, and (2) protect from harm by maximising possible benefits and minimising possible harm.
- Fairness in the distribution of the burdens and benefits of research.

The full ethical framework guiding the research is included in *Annex 6*. In addition to the ethical framework, the research team developed a child protection and safeguarding reporting procedure, a risk assessment framework and a code of conduct. Each of these elements were included in the first training unit provided to the Youth Researchers and helped to shape the methodological approach and data collection tools. The study's risk assessment is available in *Annex 7*.

In summary, the following actions were taken to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of all those involved in the research:

- The Youth Researchers received detailed training on research ethics, child protection and safeguarding in research, including how to recognise signs of abuse and understand reporting procedures. Before data collection the Youth Researchers were required to sign the Code of Conduct to ensure appropriate behaviour throughout the data collection period.
- Data collection was conducted in a child-friendly manner with secondary students. The same principles were followed for higher education students as well. This included adequate time dedicated to rapport building. Before administering the survey, FGDs and KIIs, the Youth Researchers explained the objectives of the study and how participants' information would be used. Participants were asked if they would like to participate and it was made clear that participants could choose to end the survey, FGD or KII without giving a reason.
- While names were collected to track students, the Youth Researchers made clear to participants that their name would not be reported and their individual answers would not be disclosed to anyone inside or outside the school, unless the participant was identified as being at risk of harm. Audio

recordings were not used during this study.
- Existing UNHCR procedures were adhered to regarding child protection, confidentiality, sensitive issues and referrals. The referral process for safeguarding concerns followed the UNHCR country office procedure. For example, were any life-threatening situations disclosed to Youth Researchers in Pakistan, then they were to follow the procedure outlined by UNHCR Pakistan by immediately contacting the focal point for Society for Human Rights and Prisoners' Aid (SHARP—Pakistan) and relaying the details, and then emailing both UNHCR and Jigsaw safeguarding focal points. No safeguarding concerns were raised at any point during the study.

3.7 Challenges and limitations of the study

While the study methodology was appropriate and successfully met the study objectives and the necessary ethical considerations, it is important to note the constraints and limitations of the approach. Many of these were understood at the outset of the study, while some arose during its implementation.

First, the Covid-19 pandemic necessitated significant revision to aspects of the methodological approach, particularly in relation to data collection and Youth Researcher training. The following challenges and limitations were observed:

- Despite the support and coordination offered by UNHCR country offices and school teachers, remote data collection made tracking participants more challenging and time-consuming than when done face-to-face during school and university visits. The interruption due to Covid-19 also meant that the gap between DP1 and DP2 was significantly longer than initially planned with many students completing school/university over that period and moving. This added to the challenge of tracking participants at DP2 and DP3.
- Remote data collection relies on the participants having access to technology to allow them to participate. As such there were challenges undertaking some participant surveys and KIIs over the phone if those being interviewed are using phones that do not belong to them. Youth Researchers reported difficulty in scheduling calls with some participants due to the availability of the caregivers or the contact person whose phones were being used.
- Remote data collection does not lend itself to certain qualitative data collection approaches and as such the research team was unable to complete the intended number of FGDs at DP2 in Pakistan—only three FGDs had been conducted before Covid-19 restrictions were announced. Instead, the study relied on semi-structured KIIs and survey responses. This had the potential to limit the depth of insight through the qualitative interactions; however broad coverage through KIIs in Rwanda and at DP3 in Pakistan, and thorough probing within KIIs mitigated much of the potential loss.
- Remote data collection was also disrupted by poor connectivity. Youth

Researchers reported that calls often dropped due to poor network and surveys and KIIs had to be completed over multiple calls.

- Youth Researchers also had increased difficulty in establishing a personal connection and rapport with each participant over the phone. Because of the difficulty in building rapport with participants, particularly interviewees, and the limitations of data collection over the phone, there is the potential that the depth and richness of the data collected remotely over the period of Covid was compromised.

Second, the changing context of Covid-19 restrictions affected the Jigsaw and REUK research team's ability to travel. This meant that an alternative approach was needed for the Youth Researcher training programme and the quality assurance of data collection. This presented an opportunity to develop the training programme into a more flexible resource. The Jigsaw and REUK research team, with the support of Centreity, pivoted the content of the training programme into an online flexible model, with content on the JCU online platform and training delivered remotely through a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous sessions. Unit 2 in Rwanda and Unit 3 in both Pakistan and Rwanda were delivered this way. With travel restrictions over by June 2022, Unit 4 was further adapted to enable a blended approach where the Youth Researchers accessed the content online in advance and then a week of in-person training sessions to facilitate more detailed and dialogical engagement with the content.

Third, specific ethical challenges arise when working with youth as researchers—including the potential for exploitation and appropriate determination of fair remuneration, particularly in low-income contexts (Smith, 2002; Bradbury-Jones & Taylor, 2015). Participatory research is sometimes lauded as a panacea for hierarchical power relations in research, but this should not be assumed (Smith, 2002; Clark, 2004; Bradbury-Jones & Taylor, 2015), particularly in the Global South, where hierarchical relations are often deeply embedded into cultures (Maclure, 2017) and the power realities of the nation state. These power dynamics are further heightened in the refugee context (Hugman, R., Pittaway, E., & Bartolomei, L., 2011). The Jigsaw and REUK research team sought to mitigate these valid concerns by regular communication with the Youth Researchers. An initial consultation took place to establish the most appropriate structure of the Youth Research role, a fair remuneration package and realistic parameters for the data collection. Clear expectations were communicated and end of project survey feedback from Youth Researchers suggests that these concerns were successfully mitigated.

Fourth, cultural and contextual factors, in combination with a limited budget, restricted the scope of the methodological design. The ease of movement in Pakistan, particularly for female Youth Researchers, and the geographical spread of refugees in both Pakistan and Rwanda presented challenges for data collection. Acknowledging the budget available, decisions were made by the Jigsaw and REUK research team to focus the study in certain geographical locations to aid data collection and monitoring. These

decisions, though appropriate, impacted the number of participants available for the study and also are a factor in the representativeness of the findings given the specific geographical spread of the participant cohort.

Fifth, at stages throughout the study, Youth Researchers were restricted from accessing participants. In Pakistan this was due to

school leaders of Afghan private schools not granting the Youth Researchers access to the students within their schools, and the Afghan Consulate in Pakistan advising schools to not grant the Youth Researchers access. This increased the complexity of data collection for the Youth Researchers, creating delays and limiting access to some of the participant cohort. When this happened, the UNHCR Pakistan office worked closely with the Jigsaw and REUK research team to remove these barriers and explain the purpose of the project to the ministry. This was successful; however, some head teachers continued to object to the Youth Researchers engaging with the students which ultimately had an impact on cohort attrition. In Rwanda, it took time to get data collection permissions from MINEMA. It was important to get the approval and buy-in from the government department however this took longer than anticipated, particularly following the disruption of Covid.Permission was required for each data point and regularly took more than six months to obtain, thereby delaying data collection and adding time to the study. Again, the Jigsaw and REUK research team worked closely with the UNHCR country office to request permission in advance in order to minimise delay; however, this was not always successful.

Sixth, the data captured in this study is centred on the student experience, with limited teacher interaction. It is acknowledged that understanding the teacher perspective on all aspects of the study is important. Unfortunately, the time and budget constraints of the study prevented a thorough examination of both perspectives; however, it is recommended that further study incorporate teacher insight.

Seventh, the nature of a longitudinal panel study, conducted by peer researchers, raises the potential for certain biases. The repeated surveying of an established cohort can create response bias, where participants are familiar with the questions posed and remember their previous responses (Kantner & Lindsay, 2012). This was mitigated, to some extent, by the fact that the surveys at DP2 and DP3 were adapted following DP1 and the significant periods of time in between each data point also reduced the familiarity with the questions. Another potential bias was that Youth Researchers, who themselves are peers with the refugee student participants, could be tempted to drift into providing leading questions, or second-guessing answers based on their own experiences, in so doing, creating a bias on the research findings. This was mitigated through identifying the potential issue at the outset of the study and training the Youth Researchers on this phenomenon and ensuring they were vigilant in their role as researchers. Multiple practice rounds, observations and quality assurance on initial transcripts also helped to mitigate this potential bias.

Eighth, the chosen approach raises a further potential for bias. Given the nature of longitudinal panel studies, cohort attrition is expected; however, those that remain are often those who, for one reason or another, can be more easily tracked, have not moved, are often still in education and place value on participating in a study on education. This situation presents potential bias on some of the findings, recognising that attrition leads to a loss of certain perspectives more than others, and should be acknowledged in the reading and interpreting of the findings below.

Finally, some caution should be taken in interpreting the results of some of the statistical analyses due to the small sample sizes. Smaller effects, especially in disaggregated data, may have remained

undetected because there were insufficient sample sizes. As such, there is the chance that no statistical relationships were reported between variables, when indeed a small, though less detectable relationship, might have existed. Conversely, there is the risk that with small and less representative samples, the statistically significant results that are found might be due to chance, or have a higher degree of associated error than might be the case with larger, more representative sample sizes. However, the nature of the research topic, the challenges around education for refugees, particularly female students, remote data collection, the Covid-19 context, and budget constraints meant that there was a limit on the number of surveys and interviews that could be conducted; the decision was therefore made to engage with as many participants that could be found at DP1 in order to focus on the small group of informants that would potentially give the most contextual insight.

Chapter 4: Country overviews

4.1 Pakistan: country overview

This chapter provides an overview of findings from the Pakistan data. The demographic information presented at the beginning offers detail on the identities and contextual circumstances of the Afghan refugee participants—further disaggregation of this data is available in *Annex 2*. This is followed by a summary of the most notable findings from the Pakistani context. While these provide valuable high-level insights, a greater level of detail can be found in the cross-cutting analysis presented in the following chapter.

Participant demographics

Data collection:
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

512 Total sample:
Afghan refugee youth

Education level
83% Secondary school students **426**
17% Higher education students **86**

Gender
412 **80%** Male
100 **20%** Female

Time as refugee
89% Refugees since birth **461**

Residence
Majority Living in city of Peshawar
Minority Living in Islamabad, or refugee camps near Peshawar, Kohat and Hangu

Mother tongue
82% Speak Pashto as their first language **420**
15% Speak Dari as their first language **78**

Secondary school type
395 **93%** Attended private refugee schools (Afghan curriculum, in Pashto)
30 **7%** Attended government schools (Pakistani curriculum, in Urdu and English)

Common university degrees
26% Studied business administration **22**
15% Studied computer science **13**

Higher education participants at
22 **14** Public universities
8 Private universities

A noteworthy trend emerging from the Pakistan findings is the contrast between male and female educational experiences. Finding female students to participate in the study constituted a major challenge: only four out of 86 participants at higher education level (5%) were female, and only 96 of 426 (23%) at secondary level. As discussed below, this is likely due to persistently negative community attitudes towards the education of women and girls, especially at tertiary level. In addition, the Youth Researchers who collected data in Pakistan frequently reported difficulties associated with interviewing female participants. Many did not wish to participate at all, and those who did were often uncomfortable speaking to a stranger alone. While Youth Researchers made every possible effort to make female participants comfortable, ultimately it was not possible to include an equal number of males and females.

Key findings from the Pakistan data

1. Financial issues prevent Afghan refugees from accessing and thriving in education.

"Lack of financial resources"

DP1 + DP2 + DP3
Top reported barrier to completing secondary and higher education.

DP2 + DP3
Top reported barrier to realising future plans by secondary and higher education students

Secondary school interviewees explained that they often faced family pressure to drop out of education so that they could earn money instead, and that financial pressures were the most significant factor that made their situation feel out of their control. Meanwhile, higher education students emphasised the significance of the financial burden of university fees and explained that they were completely dependent on scholarship schemes for their education access.

2. Many Afghan refugees struggle to access education due to discriminatory requirements.

Secondary school

The majority of Afghan refugee participants attend private Afghan schools which have tuition fees

vs

There are few available places at Pakistani government schools which are free until Grade 10.

Higher education

Limited places available to refugees

+

Limited access to scholarships, subsidies & digital devices which are available to Pakistani nationals.

Interviewees noted that this was often due to persistent family and community beliefs that it is somehow shameful to educate girls, or that it is inappropriate to educate girls in co-educational settings, leading female students to feel disempowered and dependent.

3. Female students experience more pronounced barriers to education and onward transitions than male students.

of 95 girls **84%** VS of 330 boys **67%**

DP1 • SS
Female secondary students experienced an interruption to their education, compared to their male peers.

of 43 girls **19%** VS of 212 boys **49%**

DP3 • SS
Female refugees were doing what they had planned after graduating from secondary school, compared to their male peers.

of 41 girls **46%** VS of 211 boys **22%**

DP3 • SS
Female refugees reported that their current situation was out of their control, compared to their male peers.

Interviewees noted that this was often due to persistent family and community beliefs that it is somehow shameful to educate girls, or that it is inappropriate to educate girls in co-educational settings, leading female students to feel disempowered and dependent.

4. Divergent views regarding the shift to Pakistani curriculum in Afghan refugee schools.

Teaching in English and Urdu →

For
Better access to international scholarships

Against
Recognised by employers and easier admission to universities

Pakistani secondary certificate →

For
Challenging for Afghan students

Against
Less useful for those seeking to return to Afghanistan in the future

The Pakistani curriculum was perceived to be generally better quality but less content-heavy than the Afghan curriculum. However, there were concerns that the shift would prevent Afghans from learning about the history and culture of their own country.

5. Poor quality teaching is commonly experienced by refugees at secondary school.

"Better teaching quality"

DP1 + DP2 + DP3
One of the top three selected ways to equip secondary students better for the future.

1 of 6
Secondary school teachers interviewed had received any teacher training.

Students noted at interview that quality was often affected by high teacher turnover, and a lack of teacher motivation caused by low salaries. Several teachers noted that many of their colleagues had entered teaching not because they were passionate about it, but because it was one of the few employment opportunities open to them.

4.2 Rwanda: country overview

This chapter provides an overview of findings from the Rwanda data. The demographic information presented at the beginning offers detail on the identities and contextual circumstances of the Burundian and Congolese refugee participants—further disaggregation of this data is available in *Annex 3*. This is followed by a summary of the most notable findings from the Rwandan context. While these provide valuable high-level insights, a greater level of detail can be found in the cross-cutting analysis presented in the following chapter.

Participant demographics

Data collection:
Mahama, Gihembe, Kigeme and Kiziba Camps

614 Total sample:
Burundian & Congolese refugee youth

Education level
78% Secondary school students **479**
22% Higher education students **135**

Gender
351 57% Male
263 43% Female

Country of origin
56% Refugees from Burundi **345**
44% Refugees from DRC **268**

Residence at start of research
575 94% Living in Mahama, Gihembe, Kiziba or Kigeme refugee camps
39 6% Living in Kigali, Huye or Bugesera districts, or Mugombwa or Nyabiheke camps

Time as refugee
20% Refugees since birth (all Congolese) **124**

Mother tongue
343 56% Speak Kirundi as their first language
254 41% Speak Kinyarwanda as their first language

Secondary school participants at
Different secondary school (in or close to refugee camps) **9**

Common university degrees
26 19% Studied management
22 16% Studied communication
21 16% Studied health and management

Higher education participants at
Different universities (public, private and nonprofit) **12**

It is important to highlight that all except one study participant in Rwanda were either from the DRC or Burundi (the one exception was from Somalia). As discussed below, findings suggest that there is a significant difference between the majority experience of refugees from DRC compared to the majority experience of refugees from Burundi, and also a corresponding difference in relation to their aspirations and future prospects. This is likely due to differing amounts of time spent in the host country and the different senses of permanence associated with these periods; 46% of the Congolese participants (of 268) had been refugees since birth, whereas this was not the case for any Burundian refugees, all of whom arrived in Rwanda in or since 2015.

Key findings from the Rwanda data

1. Financial challenges and a lack of resources prevent students from accessing and thriving in education.

"Financial challenges" — **DP1 + DP2 + DP3** One of the top three selected ways to equip secondary students better for the future.

"Lack of resources" — **DP1 + DP2 + DP3** Second (after financial challenges) most reported barrier to completing secondary and higher education

Interviewees made strong associations between lack of access to education and a lack of basic, non-education-specific resources such as food and electricity, indicating that basic needs must be met in tandem with efforts to improve education access. Secondary students also frequently reported that financial challenges led to students working instead of attending school to support their families or, paradoxically, working in order to pay for school supplies, without which they would be sent home.

2. Burundian and Congolese refugees engaged in remote learning in different ways during Covid-19 school closures.

of 125 Burundian **38%** vs of 64 Congolese students **61%** — Burundian secondary students who reported that a smartphone was the most important device to help continue their learning during school closures, compared to their Congolese peers.

of 125 Burundian **26%** vs of 64 Congolese students **0%** — Burundian secondary students who reported that a radio was the most important device to help continue their learning during school closures, compared to their Congolese peers.

of 148 Burundian **16%** vs of 66 Congolese students **47%** — Burundian secondary students who reported using online resources to continue learning during school closures, compared to their Congolese peers.

These differences can be attributed to Burundians having experienced forced displacement much more recently, while Congolese refugees are often more established in their camps and are therefore better supported by more secure family and community support networks.

3. Burundian and Congolese refugees have different educational experiences and aspirations for the future.

of 300 Burundian **55%** VS of 178 Congolese students **29%**

DP1 • SS
Burundian secondary students who reported that their education had been interrupted, compared to their Congolese peers.

of 178 Burundian **78%** VS of 109 Congolese students **31%**

DP3 • SS
Burundian secondary students who would rather be continuing in higher education than their current occupation, compared to their Congolese peers.

of 178 Burundian **3%** VS of 109 Congolese students **20%**

DP3 • SS
Burundian secondary students who would rather find a job than their current occupation, compared to their Congolese peers.

The aspirations for higher education amongst Burundian refugees may have been inspired by recent experiences of their siblings receiving scholarships from organisations such as Maison Shalom, who offer scholarships for Burundian refugees specifically. It is also possible that some Burundian refugees bring the assumption formed in their home country that higher education is essential to getting a good job later on, while more Congolese refugees may see a more immediate need to prioritise earning money as soon as possible.

4. Refugee students view education as a means of getting a job, but face significant barriers to securing employment opportunities.

"To increase knowledge" + "to enable me to get a job"

DP1 • SS + HE
Top two motivating factors for completing secondary and higher education, closely associated across the data.

74% (of 68)

DP3 • HE
Higher education students who would prefer to find a job or start their own business than remain in their current occupation (at DP3, by which point 98% of all 103 respondents had graduated).

Refugees are legally unable to work in the public sector, and face discrimination from employers in the private sector. Students reported that employers are uninformed about refugee working rights, and are known to harbour beliefs that nationals work harder than refugees. Refugees also struggle to access the start-up capital needed for their own business, as a result of being ineligible for bank loans or needing to spend savings on immediate needs.

5. Many refugees have higher education aspirations, but few are able to realise them.

68% + 74% (of 479 + 320)
DP1 + DP2
Refugees who wanted to transition to higher education after finishing secondary school

3% (of 318)
DP3 • SS
Secondary school participants who reported to have successfully transitioned to higher education (by DP3—89% of whom had graduated at this stage).

52% (of 320)
DP3 • SS
Participants who stated financial issues were the top obstacle faced when trying to realise their post-secondary school plans.

Interviewees specified that a lack of scholarship availability, on which most refugee students' higher education aspirations depend, is responsible for the low transition rate. The low rate may also be partially explained by the fact that students are limited in their choice of what to study. Interviewees explained that this is due to students being assigned to specific subject 'sections' at secondary school without being consulted, and also because scholarship providers limit the study options that the scholarship covers. Interviewees explained that these limitations led to them becoming demotivated and disinterested in pursuing their higher education goals.

Chapter 5: Discussion of findings

The following chapter outlines the main findings of the Voices of Refugee Youth research study.

The chapter is structured into seven sections, aligned with the research questions. The data is discussed thematically, highlighting the most prominent findings across both contexts, as well findings related specifically to the Pakistani and Rwandan contexts.

5.1 The impact of post-primary education on participating refugee students

Refugees report that secondary and higher education can have a strong positive impact on the development of personal skills and on their ability to contribute to their communities. This section presents the ways in which post-primary education can build transferable skills, increase confidence and ethical judgement, enhance refugee students' ability to support their family and benefit the wider refugee community.

Education builds transferable skills

Participants at both secondary and higher education levels reported significant gains in transferable skills thanks to their education. 'General knowledge and skills' was the most commonly reported change that survey participants at secondary schools in both Pakistan and Rwanda had experienced as a result of their education. This was the case at all data points, and was also the case for higher education students in Rwanda at DP1 and in Pakistan at DP2.

Students in both countries also noted that communication was an area in which they had made significant progress, though this theme was stronger in Pakistan. When asked to select the most significant way in which their current education level had prepared them for the future, communication skills

were the most commonly selected option by secondary students in Pakistan across DP2 and DP3, and were always one of the top two choices amongst higher education students in Pakistan—as presented in *Figure 2*. A couple of interviewees clarified that verbal communication was a particular area of growth, such as feeling able "to talk boldly with people" and improved presentation skills. Though survey participants in Rwanda were more likely to select the development of certain skills as the most significant way secondary and higher education had prepared them for their future career (including business, technical and life skills), there was repeated reference to communication skill gains among all student groups in Rwanda as well.

Education increases confidence and ethical judgement

An increase in confidence emerged as one of the most significant attitudinal impacts of education. At DP1, 94% of 509 respondents in Pakistan agreed that their education (whether secondary or higher) had had a positive impact on their confidence to build new social relations, while this figure was 98% (of 614) in Rwanda. Confidence gains were also reported in the DP2 and DP3 quantitative data though to a lesser extent. It was, however, also a particularly prominent theme emerging from the qualitative data, with students at all levels and in both contexts noting this impact of education. Some specified that they were now more

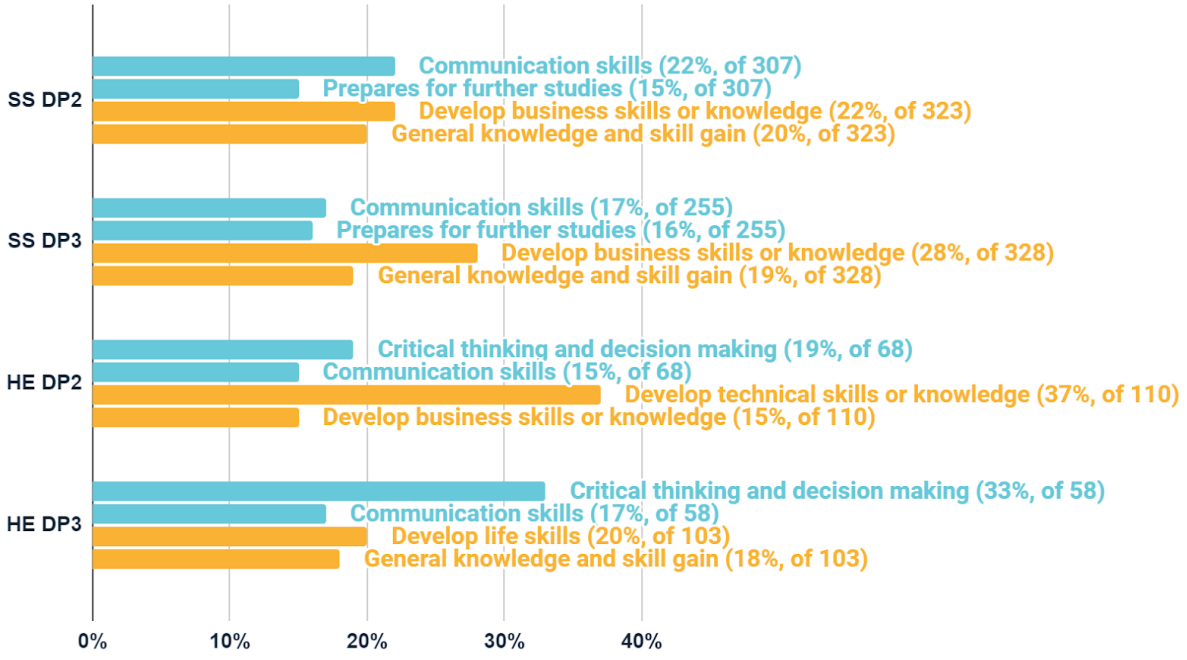


Figure 2: Top two most common answers in Pakistan (blue) and Rwanda (yellow), to the question "What is the most significant way in which secondary school/university prepares you for your future career?", by data point and education level.

Notably, in Pakistan confidence gains as a result of education were more frequently reported by female secondary school students compared to their male peers at DP1. Increased self-confidence was the second most commonly chosen option for female refugees when asked to select the most significant change in their life as a result of participating at secondary school (20% of the 96 female refugees chose this option compared to 6% of the 327 male respondents), and was the top option for female participants at DP3 (19% of 43 female respondents compared to 11% of their 211 male peers).

Another Pakistan-specific finding was the significant impact of education on students' ethical judgement. At DP1, 97% of 423 secondary students in Pakistan reported that their education had positively impacted their ethics and values. When interviewed, students in Pakistan made frequent references to increasingly being able to tell "right from wrong" thanks to their secondary education. Others also suggested that their education had led them to make decisions to avoid criminal activity. Though less commonly mentioned in the qualitative data in Rwanda, some students noted that their education had encouraged them to have "good behaviour" and in some cases had prevented them from taking drugs.

Education increases students' ability to support family and benefit communities

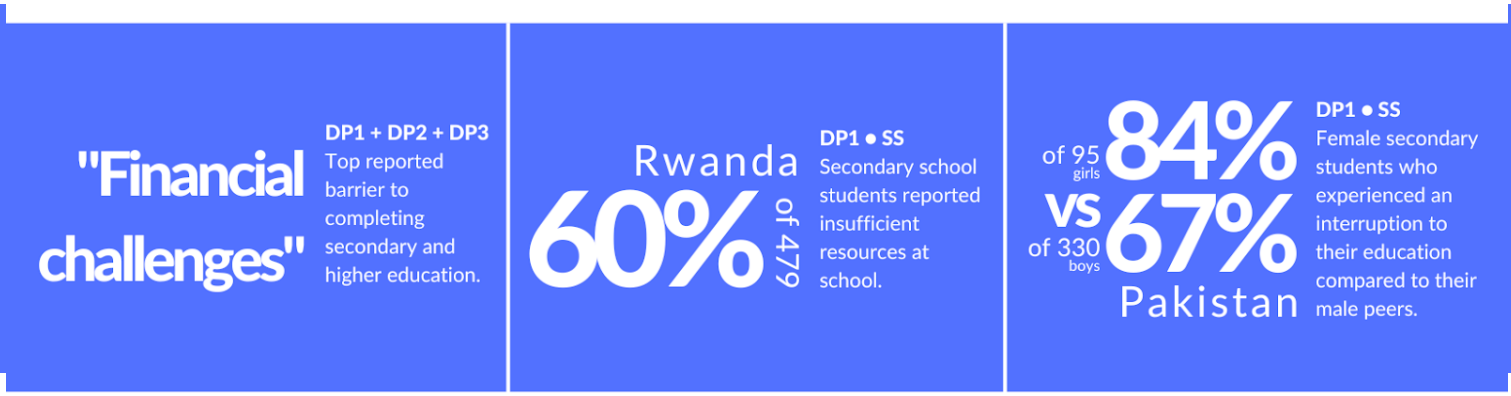
Participants in both countries noted that their education had made a meaningful impact on their ability to contribute to their immediate families, and also to the wider community. At DP1, 94% of 509 students in Pakistan and 97% (of 614) in Rwanda (secondary and higher) agreed that their education had increased their ability to contribute to their community. The qualitative data helped to highlight some of the reasons behind this belief. Secondary students in both contexts referred to being able to help younger siblings and other community members with school work, while higher education students focused on their increased ability to support their families financially due to the increased earning power that their education had afforded them. Several participants noted that they were able to act as positive role models for others in the community or to use their knowledge to advise others. This last point may be explained, at least in the Pakistan context, by a small number of male interviewees who suggested that their education had boosted their status within the community; they reported that higher education students in particular were treated "with great honour and dignity". There was also some indication within the qualitative data from Rwanda that education could help to increase social cohesion. One Congolese higher education student summarised a number of the aforementioned community impacts:

> "When refugees go to university and become successful at their workplaces, they come back and support their community and families, which leads to the well-being of other refugees in the long-term process. The host community will also have not only less burden, but also more assets as they will have qualified labour among the refugee communities of the country."
> > Congolese higher education student

Finally, qualitative data suggests that education was perceived to have a particular impact on the cultural norms associated with young women within the community. Two female secondary students in Pakistan explained that not only had their education enabled them to inspire other young women to pursue their education, but seeing their success had encouraged families to allow their daughters to proceed to secondary education, when previously this was forbidden.

5.2 The significant systemic factors that influence the ability of refugees to access and thrive in post-primary education

Multiple socio-economic, structural and cultural factors impede refugees' access and experience of secondary and higher education. This section presents the ways in which a lack of finance, lack of resources within secondary schools and poor teaching quality negatively affect refugees' experience of post-primary education. It then explores the impacts of engaging in paid work while studying, gender, discriminatory policies and curricula on refugee access to and experience of education.



Lack of finance is the biggest barrier to refugee education

Refugee youth in both secondary and higher education consistently cited financial challenges as the greatest threat to their education. It was the most commonly selected challenge to completion of education for both secondary and higher education students in Pakistan, across all three data points. In Rwanda, it was one of the top two choices at both levels across all data points. In all instances where it was the second most popular option, the top option was always 'lack of resources'. As is explored below, the qualitative data shows that the two issues are intrinsically linked.

Interviewees reported that financial barriers exist for two overarching reasons. The first is the general lack of prospects and prevalence of poverty within refugee communities. Interviewees in both countries explained that refugee families have limited access to jobs, and that the jobs they do have access to are usually low-paying. Some also noted that

family sickness and substance abuse negatively affected refugees' financial situations. These issues result in families struggling to meet their basic needs, which in turn puts pressure on students to forego education in favour of finding work to support their households. Students in Rwanda also reported that they were unable to study properly when they were worried about their families' finances, or were often too tired to study when trying to work at the same time. As one secondary school teacher in Rwanda observed, "someone who knows he will get food after school can't have the same challenges as someone who isn't sure about it."

A story recounted by a female Burundian interviewee illustrates the devastating effect that financial challenges can have on refugees' education:

> "In my last year of secondary school I had an eye problem where I could not see things on the blackboard. I started to pursue medical treatment, but I could not get the money to pay for the treatment on my own. I reached a point where I could not see anything anymore and I was obliged to stop school before sitting for national examinations."
> > Female Burundian secondary school student

Several students in both contexts, and both at secondary and higher levels, also reported being unable to afford school supplies, demonstrating the link between financial challenges and lack of resources. In Rwanda, a common story was of students becoming trapped in the situation of having to be absent from school in order to earn the money to pay for school supplies, without which they would be sent home from school. Meanwhile, higher education students in Rwanda reported that financial issues prevented them from being able to afford a computer or laptop, which many stated was vital for studying.

This links to the second main reason for financial barriers: the prohibitive cost of school and university fees. Higher education students frequently reported that scholarships were the key enabling factor without which they would not have been able to continue studying. However, in Rwanda, even scholarships were not always regarded as satisfactory solutions to financial challenges. Many students noted that the funds provided by their scholarships were insufficient to support them, while others explained that they had ended up having to spend much of the scholarship money on supporting their families instead of enabling their study.

Lack of resources within secondary schools prevents refugees from thriving in education

Secondary students' education experience is often negatively impacted by a lack of school infrastructure and resources in both Pakistan and Rwanda, though this theme came through more strongly in the quantitative data in Rwanda. At DP1, 60% of 479 secondary school participants in Rwanda reported that there were insufficient resources at their school, compared to 32% (of 423) in Pakistan. However, while secondary student interviewees in Rwanda

mainly focused their comments on the lack of books and computers available, students in Pakistan reported these same issues plus a wider variety of problems with basic facilities such as a lack of clean water, electricity, ventilation, and chairs. One subtheme common to both contexts emerging from the qualitative data was the fact that the lack of equipment, such as computers and science apparatus, prevented students from doing extra research outside of class time and developing their practical skills.

The impact of gender on resource access was discussed by one female secondary teacher in Pakistan, who reported that the lack of books at school has a greater impact on female refugees than their male peers:

> "Mostly, we have a shortage of books here and cannot provide [them] free of cost. Therefore, students are left with no choice, except to buy them. Families do not support girls' education already, and when it requires investing money, then it gives them a good excuse not to let their girls go to school."
> > Female secondary school teacher in Pakistan

Poor teaching quality negatively impacts refugees' education experiences

Teaching quality at secondary school level emerged as a major educational hindrance, with teaching quality generally rated much more favourably at higher education level. 'Better teaching quality' or 'better quality education' was one of the top three most commonly selected options across all data points—except at DP2 in Rwanda—when participants were asked 'What one change would make the biggest positive difference to your ability to do your best at secondary school?' and 'What is the most significant way in which secondary school could be changed in order to better prepare you for your future career?'. Across both contexts, 92% of 902 secondary students reported that their teachers helped them to learn at DP1 (though this does not reveal the extent of learning, which may still have been minimal). Secondary school interviewees in Pakistan elaborated on the theme of poor teaching quality, with some reporting that they knew of teachers who were willing to accept bribes in exchange for good grades. Meanwhile, students in Rwanda reported that some teachers were difficult to understand and often gave unclear instructions, with the perception that they also had a lack of care for their students.

Several reasons were suggested for the reported poor teaching quality. In both Pakistan and Rwanda, students noted that quality was often affected by high teacher turnover, and lack of teacher motivation caused by low salaries. Data from Rwanda suggests that this may be particularly true of teachers from a refugee background, who reported that they are paid much less than their national counterparts, leading to them feeling undervalued and unmotivated. Meanwhile, both students and teachers in Pakistan reported that teachers do not receive adequate training to teach at secondary level, and only one of the secondary-level teacher interviewees (an Afghan teacher) had received any training. The most recent comprehensive

secondary-level data from UNESCO highlights the extent of this challenge in both contexts: 55% of teachers in lower secondary and 85% of teachers in upper secondary education held the minimum required qualifications to teach at these levels in Pakistan in 2017, while these figures stood at 61% lower secondary and 54% upper secondary in Rwanda; this compares to a global average of 83% and 88% (lower/upper secondary) and an average of 80% and 84% (lower/upper secondary) in lower middle income countries in the same year (UNESCO UIS, 2023). Furthermore, several teachers in Pakistan noted that many of their colleagues enter teaching not because they are passionate about it, but because it is one of the few employment opportunities open to them. In one specific instance of this, a male Afghan teacher in Pakistan related that he "did not have any special interest in teaching" but that, despite completing a bachelor's degree and studying for an MSc, he "had nothing else to do".

Teaching quality at higher education level was generally rated much more highly than at secondary level, with the majority of higher education interviewees in both Pakistan and Rwanda indicating that they were satisfied with the teaching that they were receiving. However, some students in Pakistan suggested that certain teachers were not professional enough, or did not teach well enough. Similarly, a small number of students in Rwanda reported concerns around teacher competence. A relatively common complaint from students in Rwanda was the fact that lecturers relied too much on theory, with insufficient attention paid to developing the practical skills necessary for entry into employment.

Finally, it was notable that teachers in both contexts suggested that a lack of counselling and emotional support services may affect refugees' experience and ability to thrive at university. This was a repeated theme in Rwandan interviews, where several teachers recommended that increased training for teachers would support students who "have faced difficulties that have left mental scars", as well as to help students "to build confidence and see their future change instead of looking at the obstacles they have right now". This was echoed by university lecturers in each context. One stated in Rwanda that the lack of psychological support at university for refugees risked them not completing their education. In Pakistan, another suggested that culture sensitivity was required to "help teachers to relate [to] refugees and to avoid political discussions in the class which can harass refugee students or emotionally traumatise them".

Gilbert's story

Gilbert[7] is a Burundian refugee working as a teacher in a school in Mahama Camp, Rwanda. He teaches languages—French, English and Swahili—and Music. In his youth, Gilbert had aspirations to become a lawyer or a midwife, but his life circumstances prevented him from pursuing these ambitions: having attended just one week of university in Burundi, he and his family fled the country, and he was then unable to secure a university scholarship in Rwanda. This prevented Gilbert from continuing his higher education and attaining the qualifications necessary for his desired career.

Gilbert therefore turned to teaching in a refugee camp school. In the course of his two-year career, he has taken part in two teacher training opportunities provided by NGOs: Positive Discipline for Everyday Teaching (PDET) and Microsoft Certified Educator (MCE) Program, which have helped him to develop his skills and knowledge in technology and child psychology and development. However, Gilbert feels inadequately supported in his role as a teacher because of the salary he receives, which is significantly lower than his national counterparts. Gilbert receives 27,000 Rwandan Francs per month (approximately 26 USD), whereas he knows of other teachers performing an equivalent role, who are Rwandan nationals, that receive a minimum salary of 120,000 Francs per month (114 USD).

Gilbert believes that one of the biggest barriers to refugee education is the mindset that refugees are not able to achieve anything in life, which is compounded by the financial barriers to higher education, a lack of available jobs for refugees and the instability and uncertainty of being displaced. He has seen refugee students discouraged from attending school by being reminded of these realities by their teachers, and therefore advocates that teachers need more training to encourage refugee students—in partnership with their parents—to achieve their potential.

[7] Name changed.

Engaging in work while studying has mixed impacts on refugees' education experiences

A large minority of all students surveyed at DP1 reported undertaking either paid (20%, of 1126) or unpaid (43%, of 1124) work while studying. In both contexts, common paid activities include self-employment, employment in small businesses, manual labour, and tutoring. Commonly reported unpaid activities in both contexts include domestic work and supporting other students, though several students in Rwanda also mentioned spending time advising other community members and helping to organise cultural events.

As shown in *Table 3* and *Table 4* below, there were mixed feelings among survey respondents regarding how these activities impact their ability to do well in their studies. Higher education students in both contexts, as well as secondary students in Rwanda,

generally viewed both paid and unpaid work as having a positive influence on their studies. The most commonly reported reasons given for this included the potential it created for gaining practical experience, developing life skills, and providing financial support. The only group who did not follow this trend were secondary school students in Pakistan, 53% of whom reported a negative impact of paid work on their ability to do well at school. The main reason given for this response was the fact that work disturbed their studies.

	PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students engaged in paid work at DP1	**29%** (of 426)	**5%** (of 479)	**31%** (of 86)	**16%** (of 135)
% of those engaged in paid work reporting that paid work positively impacts ability to do well at their studies	**36%** (of 123)	**62%** (of 26)	**70%** (of 27)	**73%** (of 22)
% of those engaged in paid work reporting that paid work negatively impacts ability to do well at their studies	**53%** (of 123)	**12%** (of 26)	**23%** (of 27)	**18%** (of 22)
% of those engaged in paid work reporting that paid work has no impact on ability to do well at their studies	**10%** (of 123)	**27%** (of 26)	**7%** (of 27)	**9%** (of 22)

Table 3: Levels of engagement in paid work during education and its impact on studying.[8]

[8] All other respondents not accounted for in this table answered 'don't know' to each survey question.

	PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students engaged in unpaid work at DP1	**28%** (of 424)	**53%** (of 479)	**45%** (of 86)	**46%** (of 135)
% of those engaged in unpaid work reporting that unpaid work positively impacts ability to do well at their studies	**64%** (of 117)	**51%** (of 255)	**77%** (of 39)	**90%** (of 62)
% of those engaged in unpaid work reporting that unpaid work negatively impacts ability to do well at their studies	**20%** (of 117)	**18%** (of 255)	**11%** (of 39)	**0%** (of 62)
% of those engaged in unpaid work reporting that paid work has no impact on ability to do well at their studies	**15%** (of 117)	**30%** (of 255)	**13%** (of 39)	**10%** (of 62)

Table 4: Levels of engagement in unpaid work during education and its impact on studying.[9]

[9] All other respondents not accounted for in this table answered 'don't know' to each survey question.

Education access and experiences differ according to gender

Education is experienced differently by female and male refugees in both Rwanda and Pakistan, though this finding is more prominent in the latter. At DP1 in Pakistan, a significantly higher proportion of secondary female students had experienced an interruption to their education compared to male students: 84% (of 95) compared to 67% (of 330), which a chi-squared test revealed to be statistically significant (chi-squared p-value of 0.002). The interruption refers to a period of time where the student was not attending classes, as opposed to dropping out of school permanently. Teacher interviewees suggest that this may be because girls' education is deprioritised in some refugee families, with attitudes of being too "scared" or "embarrassed" to send girls to school still prevalent. Female refugees were also reportedly "made to feel inferior" by their families or "not empowered and independent".

Reduced female access to education was also reported in Rwanda. Teachers noted that female refugees generally had less family support to get an education than their male peers, with some encouraged into early marriages or relationships with "sugar daddies" who can provide for them materially. Teachers also remarked on the disruption of pregnancies to girls' education, although several noted that this issue had been reduced through the provision of sexual health education.

Discriminatory policies prevent refugees from accessing quality education

Both secondary and higher education refugee students are prevented from taking full advantage of educational opportunities due to their refugee status. At higher education level, interviewees in both Pakistan and Rwanda reported that refugees are not eligible for government support in the form of laptops, financial subsidies, and loans. Relatedly, secondary school students in Pakistan noted the cost burden of education on refugees compared to their national counterparts. 93% (of 425) of the secondary school sample studied at private Afghan refugee schools, the majority of which require tuition fees; Pakistani government secondary schools, on the other hand, are free until Grade 10 (for both Pakistani and Afghan students). However, only 7% of participants had studied at one of these schools, and interviewees emphasised that there are very few places available for refugees at Pakistani government schools, which are considered to have better resources and teachers, and fewer students per class. As such, the financial burden of attending Afghan refugee private schools is compounded by a lack of access to free secondary education at government schools which are seen to provide a higher quality of education. In Rwanda, both teachers and students also noted refugees' need for more support than nationals in many cases. However, students reported the perception that Rwandans have better family support

(both financial and emotional) than refugees, and that refugees often have to take care of themselves, which impacts their time and motivation to study.

Finally, interviewees explained how broader societal attitudes had an indirect impact on refugee students' ability to engage in education. These included being harassed by the police and being made to feel like outsiders. As one Pakistani teacher summarised:

> "People unfortunately perceive refugees as people from some other planet and not equal to the other citizens of the country, which becomes a huge issue. We need to have social interaction to give them the feeling of belonging."
> > Higher education teacher in Pakistan

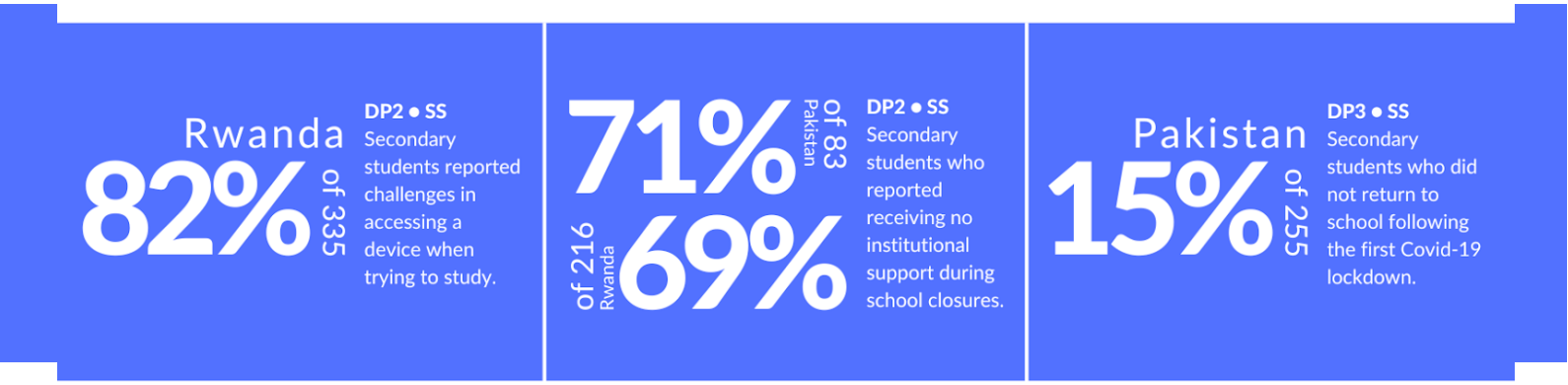
Curriculum choices may impact refugee education experiences

Decisions relating to the content and delivery of curricula in both contexts were perceived to have consequences for refugee education. In Pakistan, a number of divergent views were expressed by secondary students and teachers regarding the decision by UNHCR to introduce the Pakistani curriculum to Afghan refugee village schools (UNHCR, 2020a). Roughly half of teacher interviewees (all Afghan refugees themselves) and a little over half of students were in favour of the shift, with reasons for this including the belief that it would give refugee students better access to international scholarships (due to being taught in English) and job opportunities (as it would be more easily recognised by Pakistani employees). It was also perceived to be generally more rigorous but less dense than the Afghan curriculum, and would make admission to Pakistani universities much easier as they would not have to apply for equivalence certificates. However, a similar number were against the change in policy that has been made and explained that the shift to learning in English and Urdu is too challenging for Afghan students. One teacher reported that they had observed language challenges with refugees attending Pakistani schools, resulting in refugees failing exams and losing interest in learning. Others worried that the shift would prevent Afghans from learning about their own country's history and culture, or that a Pakistani certificate would be less useful to those seeking to return to Afghanistan.

Concerns around the language of instruction were also expressed in Rwanda. Since Lingala, Kiswahili, Chiluba, Kikongo and French are designated as languages of instruction in the DRC (USAID, 2021) and Kirundi and French are the languages of instruction in Burundi (UNICEF, 2017), refugees have often had little to no exposure of learning in English, which became the main language of instruction in Rwanda in 2008/2009 (Williams, 2020). Students reported this as a barrier to education for refugees, and teachers noted that this leads to a need for additional language support and, potentially, teaching in Kinyarwanda instead.

5.3 The impact of Covid-19 on participating students' access to and experience of post-primary education

The Covid-19 pandemic had a negative impact on learning and wellbeing for refugee students, especially due to low levels of device access, internet connectivity and institutional support amongst secondary school students. This section elaborates on the impact of the pandemic on access to learning, including refugees' access to education via technology, the support provided to refugees when schools reopened, the impact on refugee student wellbeing and repercussions for refugees' future plans.



Secondary students had more limited access to learning than higher education students

Secondary students were more likely to experience a negative impact on their education than higher education students during Covid-19, especially in Pakistan. *Table 5* below shows the percentage of students in each context that reported engaging in learning, as well as the amount that each group felt that they had learnt during this period.

Secondary students in Pakistan appear to have been the worst affected by the pandemic educationally, with only 4% (of 314, only 84 of whom engaged in any form of learning) reporting that they learnt a lot during school closures. Qualitative data from Pakistan supports this, with secondary references to becoming demotivated and feeling unable to continue learning without teacher support. Conversely, higher education students in Pakistan fared somewhat better, with 20% (of 75, 64% of whom engaged in any learning) reporting that they learnt a lot.

	PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students engaged in learning (either self study or formal study) during closures	**27%** (of 314)	**57%** (of 385)	**64%** (of 75)	**74%** (of 116)
Of those who engaged in learning, % who reported learning 'a small amount'	**79%** (of 84)	**85%** (of 216)	**62%** (of 44)	**49%** (of 73)
Of those who engaged in learning, % who reported learning 'a lot'	**15%** (of 84)	**15%** (of 216)	**32%** (of 44)	**51%** (of 73)
Of those who engaged in learning, % who reported learning 'nothing'	**4%** (of 84)	**0%** (of 216)	**7%** (of 44)	**0%** (of 73)

Table 5: Levels of learning during Covid-19 school closures.[9]

[9] All other respondents not accounted for in this table answered 'don't know' to each survey question.

Engagement was generally better in Rwanda, with 57% of secondary school students managing to engage in learning, though only 9% (of 385, 57% of whom engaged in any form of learning) learnt a lot. Higher education students in Rwanda were the most able to sustain their learning of all the groups, with 38% (of 116, 74% engaged in any learning) managing to learn a lot during this period.

Secondary students in particular struggled to access education during Covid-19 due to a lack of access to technology

A lack of access to technology emerged as one of the main reasons behind many students' struggles to engage in learning during the pandemic. The quantitative data associated with this finding are captured in *Table 6* below, and may help to explain some of the disparities in engagement above.

As *Table 6* shows, higher education students were significantly more likely to own their preferred study device, which helps to explain the disparity in learning engagement noted above. However, internet connectivity still emerged as a major issue for higher education students in both Rwanda and Pakistan (63% and 42% respectively), a finding reflected in references to internet issues as a barrier to continued learning in the qualitative data.

There were significantly lower levels of device ownership among secondary students in both contexts, especially in Rwanda. The fact that device access was reported as a challenge much less frequently in Pakistan may be explained by the high numbers of secondary students in Pakistan who reported being able to borrow devices (including basic mobile phones, feature phones, smartphones, laptops and desktop computers) from family members (52% of 59), though this number was only 10% lower for secondary students in Rwanda (42% of 162). It was also interesting to note the different levels of engagement with technology during school closures between Burundian and Congolese secondary students in Rwanda: 47% of 66 Congolese

	PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students reporting that they own the device they consider most important for studying at DP2	**46%** (of 59)	**27%** (of 162)	**91%** (of 44)	**92%** (of 74)
% of students who report device access as a challenge when trying to study using technology at DP2	**44%** (of 322)	**82%** (of 335)	**14%** (of 72)	**10%** (of 105)
% of students who reported internet connectivity as a challenge when trying to study using technology at DP2	**30%** (of 322)	**59%** (of 335)	**42%** (of 72)	**63%** (of 105)
% of students who reported electricity as a challenge when trying to study using technology at DP2	**13%** (of 322)	**54%** (of 335)	**18%** (of 72)	**27%** (of 105)

Table 6: Device ownership and access to remote learning during Covid-19 school closures.

students reported using online resources to continue learning, compared to 16% of their 148 Burundian peers. Moreover, Congolese secondary-level refugee students were significantly more likely to report that using a smartphone was the most important device to help continue their learning during school closures: 61% of 64 Congolese students, compared to 38% of 125 Burundian students. On the other hand, 26% of 125 Burundian students reported that a radio was the most important device to help continue learning, while this was not the case for any Congolese secondary level students.

Finally, it seems that students in Rwanda generally encountered more issues associated with internet connectivity and electricity compared to their counterparts in Pakistan. In Rwanda, 59% of 335 secondary school students and 63% of 105 higher education students reported connectivity issues when trying to study using technology, compared to only 30% of 322 secondary-level and 42% of 72 higher education students in Pakistan. In terms of electricity, 54% of 335 secondary school students and 27% of 105 higher education students reported study challenges in Rwanda, compared to only 13% of 322 secondary-level and 18% of 72 higher education students in Pakistan. Though this initially indicates that electricity and connectivity are worse in Rwanda than in Pakistan, this does not correlate with the reports from many interviewees in Pakistan reporting constant electricity and connectivity issues. An alternative reason behind these findings may be that students in Rwanda felt more dependent on technology for continuing their education, while the lower numbers in Pakistan could indicate that many students there were simply not attempting to study using technology.

Institutional support during Covid-19 and at the point of reopening was insufficient and of varying quality

Secondary school students in both Pakistan and Rwanda reported significant shortcomings in the support from their schools during closures: 71% of 83 secondary students in Pakistan and 69% (of 216) in Rwanda reported that they had received no institutional support during this time. This is reflected in many interview responses: secondary students in Pakistan remarked on the lack of online classes offered by their school, while those in Rwanda focused their comments on being unable to take books, devices and other study materials home from school during closures. Students in both contexts also remarked on the lack of support they received from their teachers, though many acknowledged that this was likely due to teachers being subject to the same restrictions as students and also lack of internet access on both sides. Teacher interviewees in both contexts reported attempting to contact students through various means, including WhatApp and simple messaging, perhaps indicating that device access and connectivity issues were a major barrier.

A wide range of views were expressed regarding how schools managed the post-lockdown reopening process. Several students in Pakistan noted that communication from their school around reopening and exams had not been adequate, with schools suddenly announcing that students should return to school and sit exams just days later. Similarly, a number of secondary students in Rwanda reported that not enough time was allocated to covering missed content properly, causing teachers to rush through course content and not give sufficient explanations. In contrast, several Burundian students reported that teachers constantly encouraged students to read a lot and collaborate with peers as much as possible. One female student reported that this had created a positive reading culture and taught them how to learn a lot quickly. In addition, several teachers reported that they ran as many catch-up sessions as they could once schools reopened.

Conversely, higher education students appear to have enjoyed a much greater level of support from their universities: 23% of 44 higher education students in Pakistan, and only 8% in Rwanda (of 73) reported not receiving any institutional support. Accounts from interviewees add colour to these findings: one Congolese student explained that she had experienced no learning loss because her university (Kepler) was already operating a blended learning approach prior to the pandemic. This student was therefore already accustomed to learning remotely. Another Kepler student reported receiving good remote support from course facilitators and academic advisors during this time. Others in Pakistan reported that their universities' provision improved as the pandemic progressed, once students and the institutions had become more accustomed to online learning. However, problems still persisted at this level. Though all higher education interviewees across both contexts reported that they had received online instruction, several in Pakistan noted a lack of concern or understanding for students who were struggling to access the required resources to study remotely. In Rwanda, the most common complaint related to receiving limited support with accessing laptops and internet bundles.

Negative impacts on wellbeing may have affected students' education during Covid-19

Table 7 below shows that the majority of students in all groups felt that their wellbeing had worsened during the pandemic, and that this feeling increased between DP2 and DP3 for students in Pakistan, but remained stable for students in Rwanda. Qualitative data suggests that students' wellbeing suffered for a variety of reasons, the most common of these being increased stress, anxiety and depression due to pandemic-related loss of earnings, fear of the virus, uncertainty about the future, and being cut off from peer support. A noteworthy exception to this came from female interviewees in Pakistan, all three of whom reported that the pandemic had not impacted their wellbeing at all. One commented that she had managed to keep busy with work, teaching her siblings and doing chores, while another observed that her quality of life had not changed before, during and after the pandemic.

Interviewees' accounts also help to determine the potential impact of these wellbeing changes on students' education during the pandemic. Teachers in both Pakistan and Rwanda reported that many students' mental health struggles affected their ability to engage with school again following closures. In Pakistan, teachers observed a negative impact on morale, interest and motivation, though some appeared happy to be back. In Rwanda, several secondary students reported an increase in unplanned pregnancies and substance abuse during school closures, often the result of poor mental health or desperation, which reportedly decreased the likelihood of the students in question succeeding in their education. One teacher noted that many students had returned to school with a "bad mindset to give up on education". This is reflected in a comment from a secondary student in Rwanda:

> "After Covid-19 I studied very badly. First of all I was not in the mood for studies due to the longtime lockdown. My mind was also not open to studies because I was always thinking of the blank year lost due to Covid."
> > Secondary school teacher in Rwanda

In contrast, peer learning and support was found to be an important factor in increasing wellbeing and educational optimism for secondary students during school closures in Rwanda: 80% of 211 secondary students in Rwanda reported seeking support from their friends compared to only 23% (of 124) in Pakistan. Several interviewee comments in Rwanda reflected this focus, noting the value of peer support and group study sessions during the Covid recovery period.

	PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students reporting that their wellbeing was worse than prior to Covid-19 - DP2	**51%** (of 307)	**82%** (of 323)	**52%** (of 67)	**58%** (of 110)
% students reporting that their wellbeing was worse than prior to Covid-19 - DP3	**62%** (of 255)	**82%** (of 329)	**71%** (of 58)	**58%** (of 103)

Table 7: Refugee student wellbeing after Covid-19.

Bari's Story

Bari[10] is an Afghan refugee who fled Afghanistan with the hope of accessing higher education in Pakistan. Despite facing challenges in his educational journey, at 25 years old Bari graduated from university with a degree in Journalism. However, since graduating, Bari has found it challenging to find a job in Pakistan. For the past two years, he has struggled to find work opportunities in his host country. These challenges were compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic, which made it even harder for Afghan refugees to find job opportunities, and gave rise to a whole host of challenges.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions, Bari had to look for alternative ways to find work. Although he was unable to find secure employment, during Covid-19 Bari started working remotely as a freelance reporter for YouTube channels and Facebook news pages. This helped him to overcome some of the financial challenges he was facing. However, as well as financial insecurity, the lack of stable employment also had a significant negative impact on Bari's mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic. He experienced anxiety and depression related to the fact that, despite studying hard to build his future, he still could not find a stable job. Bari remains worried about his future and the future of other young refugees in Pakistan who face similar hardships due to long-term unemployment.

[10] Name changed.

Covid-19 cut short some students' educational journeys and negatively impacted their future plans

Refugee students surveyed in Pakistan struggled to continue their education more than those in Rwanda: 15% of 255 secondary students in Pakistan did not return to school following the first Covid-19 lockdown (from March 2020 to September 2020), compared to only 3% (of 328) in Rwanda (after the school closures from March 2020 to November 2020). In parallel, one teacher in Pakistan estimated when interviewed that 30% of students had not returned. This may be explained by numerous reports of the increased financial pressures on families due to Covid-19, causing students to drop out to help provide for their families. There was a more positive picture at higher education level, with 3% of 58 students reporting that they had dropped out in Pakistan, and no reported drop-outs in Rwanda. Despite the apparent encouraging nature of these figures for higher education, it is important to note that the figures only include those participants who were traceable at DP3 (66% of the original sample of 1126). The 34% of participants who were untraceable at DP3 may well have dropped out of education. As a result, the figures from DP3 may disproportionately reflect the circumstances of refugees who remained in education.

While the majority of students were able to continue their studies following Covid-19, many reported that the pandemic had impacted their perception to the obstacles

which they face in pursuing their future plans, as *Table 8* below shows.

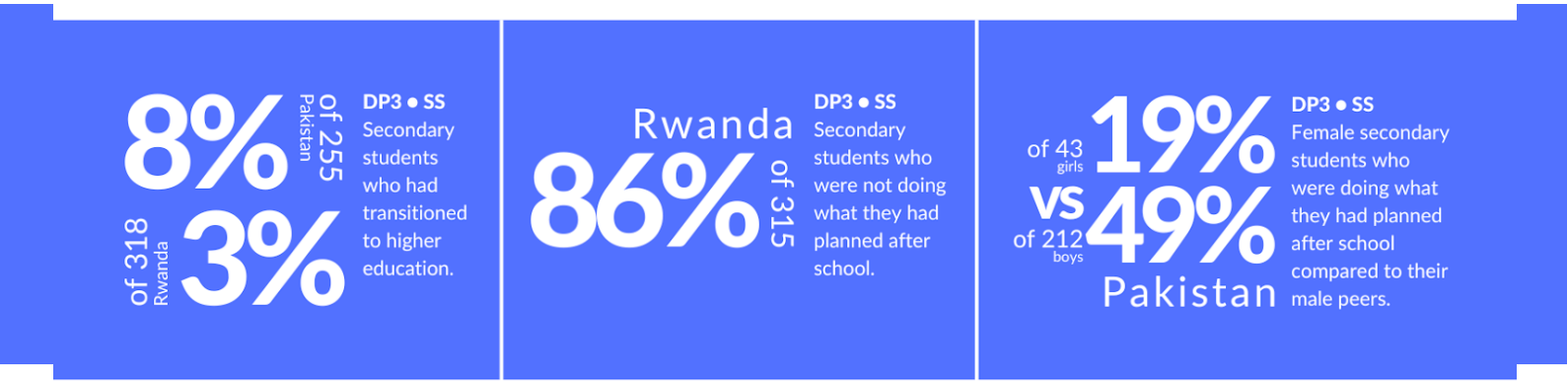
Various reasons were given for these associations, most of which were common to all groups of interviewees. Several secondary students in both Pakistan and Rwanda had received lower grades than expected, which had prevented them from applying for higher education places and scholarships. More generally, interviewees commonly reported that their financial problems had become exacerbated during Covid-19, causing some to spend savings intended for future study on supporting their families. A number of others also reported losing their interest in their studies and becoming too demotivated to pursue their plans.

	PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students who stated that their perception of the obstacles they face in pursuing their future plans was influenced by Covid-19	**88%** (of 252)	**63%** (of 320)	**84%** (of 56)	**67%** (of 102)

Table 8: The impact of Covid-19 on refugee students' pursuit of future plans.

5.4 Navigating transitions to future education opportunities

Socio-economic and structural factors act as barriers to refugees' transition to higher education. This section presents the way in which refugees struggle to attain their future education goals due to factors including financial challenges, documentation and administrative barriers and restricted subject choice. The role of UNHCR as a support for refugees in navigating transitions to higher education is also discussed.



Refugees struggle to attain their future education goals

At the first and second survey data point, both secondary and higher education participants were asked to select their primary aspiration for the future. The majority of secondary school participants selected continuing in higher education as their first choice, as outlined in *Table 9*. Continuing in higher education (to postgraduate level) was also the top choice amongst higher education students in Pakistan, although it was only the second or third choice amongst their counterparts in Rwanda. Furthermore, the majority of all student groups indicated a high level of confidence in their ability to attain their future goals (including continuing in higher education): the majority believed it likely or very likely that they would achieve their aspirations after finishing their current stage of education at both DP1 and DP2.

By the final survey data point (DP3), the majority of participants had graduated from their current education stage: 99% (of 255) and 89% (of 329) of secondary school students in Pakistan and Rwanda respectively had graduated from secondary school, alongside 95% (of 58) and 98% (of 103) of higher education students who graduated from university (although there was a 34% rate of attrition from DP1 to DP3, so these findings are likely to be skewed in favour of those participants who were able to stay in education and whose stability of circumstances therefore made it easier to maintain contact). Despite this high graduation rate, few participants at DP3 had achieved their goal of transitioning to higher education degree programmes. As presented in *Figure 3*, only 8% of the 255 secondary school participants and 14% of the 58 higher education participants in Pakistan were studying at university (undergraduate and postgraduate respectively) by DP3. These figures were even lower in Rwanda, with only 2% of the 328 secondary school participants and 0% of all 103 higher education participants studying in further higher education. This finding indicates the impact of barriers to accessing higher education indicated in the previous few chapters: despite the majority of participants aspiring to transition to higher education (whether to undergraduate or postgraduate level), very few were able to achieve this.

		PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students wanting to continue to higher education (undergraduate or postgraduate level for SS/HE respectively) in the future	DP1	**83%** (of 425)	**68%** (of 479)	**56%** (of 86)	**33%** (of 135)
	DP2	**78%** (of 256)	**74%** (of 320)	**49%** (of 67)	**15%** (of 108)
% students who believe the achievement of their future goals (including continuing in higher education and other goals) to be very likely, likely or slightly likely	DP1	**80%** (of 422)	**78%** (of 479)	**94%** (of 86)	**88%** (of 135)
	DP2	**82%** (of 307)	**82%** (of 323)	**82%** (of 68)	**88%** (of 110)

Table 9: Refugee aspirations for continuing to higher education.

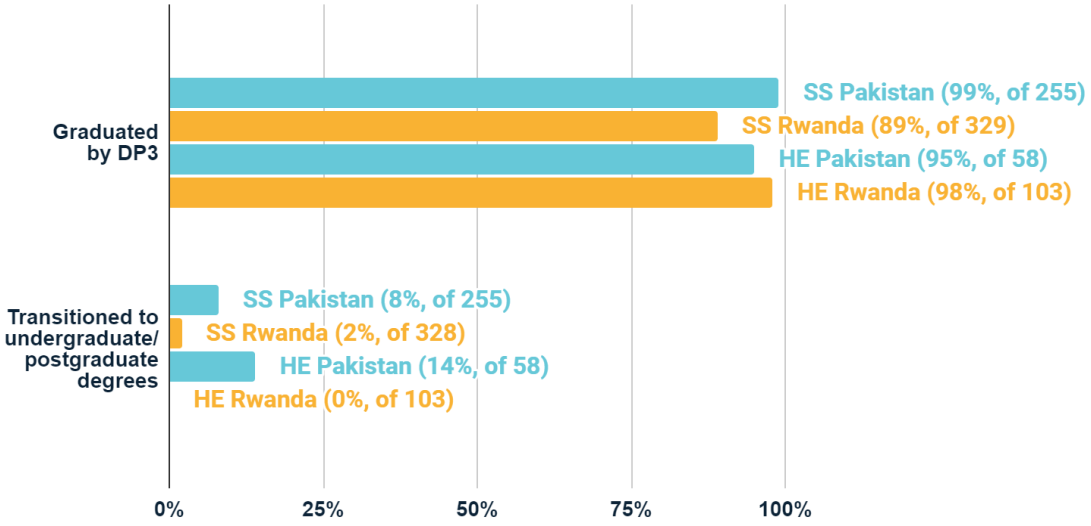


Figure 3: A comparison of the % of survey participants at DP3 (in Pakistan and Rwanda) who had graduated from secondary school/undergraduate degrees, with the % of the same sample who had transitioned to undergraduate/postgraduate degrees.

This mismatch between aspirations at DP1/DP2 and attainment at DP3 was reflected in the participants' perspective of their current situation in the final survey. As outlined in *Table 10*, the majority of each participant group indicated both that they would rather be doing something else. When asked to specify, the majority of all participants in Pakistan and the secondary school participants in Rwanda stated that they would rather be studying at a higher education institution.

Significantly, this inability to achieve future goals was significantly more prevalent amongst female secondary-level participants in Pakistan than their male peers. Only 19% of 43 female participants were doing what they had planned, compared to 49% of 212 male participants, a statistically significant difference (chi-squared p-value < 0.001). This was echoed in interviews with female participants: two spoke of limitations on their education due to their social caste, which "doesn't allow girls to do higher education". Both higher education and secondary school teachers in Pakistan—nationals and Afghan refugees—also referenced the barriers faced by female refugees. Specifically, one teacher noted that Afghan families refused to allow their daughters to learn in a co-education system, adopted by most Pakistani private schools and universities.

	PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students who would rather be doing something else than their current occupation at DP3	**74%** (of 255)	**89%** (of 322)	**60%** (of 57)	**66%** (of 103)
% students who specified that they would rather be continuing to pursue higher education at DP3	**66%** (of 188	**60%** (of 288)	**59%** (of 34)	**15%** (of 68)

Table 10: Refugees' assessment of their current occupation at DP3.

Financial challenges are a major barrier to education transitions

The primary barrier to transitioning to higher education cited by interviewees was the lack of funds or scholarship opportunities. In Pakistan, students reported being pressured to work to support their families instead of continuing in education, while in Rwanda several other interviewees stated that their aspirations had changed due to a lack of available funding. The necessity to earn money was also referenced. One Burundian student stated that:

> "My ambitions were to finish secondary school with good marks and continue higher education. But see where you find me: in the market selling potatoes. My ambition today is to get something to eat only. I don't have any further hope for my future."
> > Burundian secondary school student in Rwanda

This was reflected in the quantitative data with participants asked to identify the biggest challenge they would face after finishing secondary or higher education. As outlined in *Table 11*, in all but one data point in Pakistan, facing financial issues was the most commonly reported significant challenge, both for secondary and higher education students. It was also always in the top three cited challenges in Rwanda, although by a lower proportion of participants than in Pakistan. This high concern with financial security after finishing education underpins the qualitative findings that a lack of funding is a major barrier to transitioning to higher education: meeting the high cost of university tuition fees was reported to be too high a burden for refugee families to manage.

As outlined in a previous chapter, scholarships were discussed as the necessary enabling factor for transitioning to university, without which refugees would generally not be able to continue studying. Inversely, a lack of overall scholarship opportunities was cited as an inhibiting factor to accessing higher education. One teacher interviewee,

		PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students reporting that financial issues were the biggest challenge they would face in their life when they finish secondary school/university	DP1	**59%** (of 420)	**15%** (of 479)	**31%** (of 86)	**19%** (of 135)
	DP2	**61%** (of 306)	**40%** (of 323)	**50%** (of 68)	**18%** (of 110)
	DP3	**62%** (of 255)	**48%** (of 317)	**42%** (of 57)	**21%** (of 103)

Table 11: Frequency that financial issues were cited as the biggest challenge after education.

originally from Burundi, exemplified this via personal testimony:

> "I am an example of this, I badly want to continue my education but I can't. When we fled, I had just done one week at university [in Burundi] and here [in Rwanda] I could not secure a scholarship."
> > Burundian secondary school teacher in Rwanda

Since the financial insecurity of refugees results in such a reliance on scholarships to access higher education, the lack of available scholarship opportunities therefore severely limits the proportion of refugees able to continue their education.

Wagma's story

Wagma[11] is an Afghan refugee living in Pakistan. She dreamt of becoming a doctor from a young age, inspired by the medical drama series she grew up watching on TV. Wagma completed pre-medical studies in college, in the hope of accomplishing her goals. However, she encountered barriers related to her refugee status that prevented her from achieving her dreams. Wagma applied for medical school at a public university, however there were only one or two seats (merit-based seats, where the fees are more affordable) available for Afghans and she was unable to secure a seat. She was unable to apply for private medical school because the high fees were unaffordable for Wagma's family. In response to these hurdles, Wagma lost hope of becoming a doctor.

Then, her father saw an article about the DAFI higher education scholarship program for refugees in a newspaper. Wagma saw a ray of hope, as she thought that she might be able to apply for her dream field. But when she went to the interview session, she was told that the DAFI program covers every study program except medicine and engineering. Wagma felt that her hopes had been dashed once again. However, Wagma realised that she was still able to fulfil part of her goals by pursuing higher education with help from the DAFI scholarship. She decided to apply for a Bachelors in Natural Sciences, and after graduating went on to complete a Masters in Chemistry. Despite not achieving her initial dreams, Wagma adapted to her circumstances, and she now serves as a role model for women and girls in her family and community and inspires them to pursue higher education.

[11] Name changed.

Documentation and administrative barriers negatively impact transitions to higher education in Pakistan

A strong emergent theme in Pakistan was the negative impact of documentation and administrative requirements on students' ability to access higher education. Multiple interviewees stressed that they lacked the documentation required by Pakistani universities to be accepted onto courses, including: a valid passport and visa (which would require returning to Afghanistan); and a Proof of Registration (PoR) card (an Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) is not accepted). The insistence to provide this documentation during the admission process was a key barrier for many refugees, for whom obtaining such documentation is either challenging or not possible. Relatedly, changing the documentation requirements for refugees accessing Pakistani universities was a key recommendation provided by participants, who suggested that there should be more leniency considering that most refugees are unable to obtain passports from the Afghan government or return to study there.

A related barrier was the administrative processes related to completing secondary school in Pakistan. Participants, both students and teachers, reported that the equivalency process (converting an secondary level Afghan certification into the Pakistani standardised system) can take up to one and a half years. This is a required process for all students who have been studying the Afghan curriculum in refugee schools and therefore need an equivalent certification for accessing Pakistani universities. However, the fact that it can take over a year to complete contributes to demotivating or preventing Afghan students from applying for higher education.

Limited opportunity for subject choice hinders transitions in Rwanda

One theme which emerged across all participants groups in the interview data in Rwanda was limited opportunities for refugee students independently to determine their university subject. Three factors appeared to be the root of this issue. Firstly, at secondary school, refugees are often assigned to a subject 'section', such as 'Mathematics, Economy and Geography', 'Literature, Kinayrwanda, French', or 'Maths, Chemistry and Biology'. However, since this assignment can happen without students being consulted, it can inhibit students from studying their favourite subjects and have an inverse effect on their future aspirations: several students reported that not being able to choose their study combination at secondary school had prevented them from applying to their preferred university courses and resulted in them becoming demotivated to continue.

Secondly, some scholarship providers specify the university courses for which a scholarship is valid. One female higher education student reported this issue, stating that she had wanted to study nursing, but this was not an available option via her scholarship provider and so she ended up studying electromechanics instead. Finally, the time taken for some providers to make scholarship offers can also mean that some courses are filled and there is less choice remaining for scholarship-holders. Both of these issues were referred to in the reflections of a Rwandan higher education lecturer's comment that refugees "are given subjects they didn't ask for in the first place".

While these three factors may not be active, deliberate restrictions on refugees' subject choice, they nonetheless were reported to act as a barrier to higher education transitions, with students demotivated or unable to continue their studies in the way they had hoped.

UNHCR is viewed as a crucial source of support to refugees in navigating transitions to higher education

At all data points, survey participants were asked to identify their anticipated source of support after finishing secondary school or university. In both countries, UNHCR was the most commonly chosen source of anticipated support amongst secondary school students—especially in Rwanda, although the proportion of participants selecting this option decreased over time from 52% (DP1) to 38% (DP3). Comparatively, a lower proportion of higher education students selected UNHCR as their potential source of support, as outlined in *Table 12*.

Participants in each country differed on other potential sources of support. In Pakistan, family was the next most cited source of future support behind UNHCR; in Rwanda, the next most chosen option amongst secondary school students was seeking support from NGOs, while higher education students varied between seeking support from their educational institutions, family and not being sure where to look.

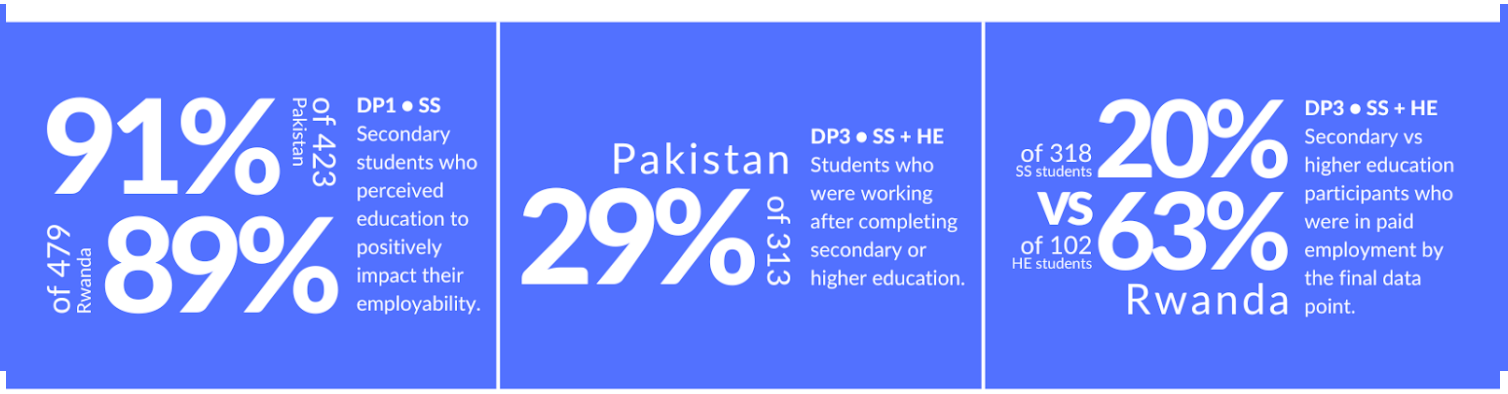
Significantly, female secondary school participants were more likely to report feeling a lack of support options compared to their male peers in Pakistan. 28% of the 32 female participants at DP3 stated that they felt as though they could not get help from anywhere, compared to 7% of the 204 male secondary school participants, which a chi-squared test revealed to be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).

		PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students selecting UNHCR as anticipated source of future support in overcoming the challenges they face after secondary/higher education	DP1	**33%** (of 424)	**52%** (of 479	**22%** (of 86)	**17%** (of 135)
	DP2	**35%** (of 305)	**44%** (of 323)	**29%** (of 68)	**8%** (of 110)
	DP3	**37%** (of 252)	**38%** (of 328)	**34%** (of 56)	**3%** (of 103)

Table 12: Frequency that UNHCR was cited as an anticipated source of future support.

5.5 Navigating pathways to employment from post-primary education

Although refugees perceive education as having a strong positive impact on their employability, structural barriers can prevent them from finding work after school or university. The challenges to securing employment after post-primary education, including structural and discriminatory barriers, are outlined in this section, as well as refugees' perception that higher education is essential for secure employment and that more practical training opportunities are needed to support pathways into paid work.



Transitions to employment are challenging for both secondary and higher education students

After transitioning to undergraduate or postgraduate education, employment was generally the second highest goal at DP1 and DP2. This was especially true amongst higher education participants, amongst whom the proportion of participants wanting to get a job after finishing their undergraduate degree increased from 29% (of 86) to 45% (of 67) in Pakistan and from 36% (of 135) to 54% (of 108) in Rwanda (DP1 to DP2). In Rwanda, there was also a strong focus on entrepreneurship and starting a business, with 24% (of 135) and 23% (108) of higher education participants selecting this as their top choice goal at DP1/DP2.

The panel survey suggested, however, that transitioning from post-primary education to employment is not easy for refugees, even amongst those with a university degree. Despite the fact that the vast majority of participants who were contactable at DP3 had graduated (99% SS and 95% HE in Pakistan, 89% SS and 98% HE in Rwanda), in

	PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students in paid employment at DP3	**29%** (of 205)	**20%** (of 318)	**29%** (of 51)	**63%** (of 102)

Table 13: Percentage of refugee students in paid employment at DP3.

most participant groups fewer than 30% were in paid employment at this time—see *Table 13*. The only exception was amongst higher education students in Rwanda, where 63% were working by DP3. This may be a direct indication that higher education positively affects employment outcomes, as discussed in the following section.

As outlined in *Table 10* on page 65, the majority of participants stated that they would rather be doing something different to their current occupation at DP3, and finding a job was the second most commonly preferred occupation at DP3 (after continuing in higher education). Higher education students in Rwanda, however, were again the exception to this, amongst whom finding or creating work was the priority: 43% wanted to find a job and 31% wanted to start their own business (of 68).

The data also revealed significant variation of education outcomes amongst refugees in Rwanda, suggesting that pathways from education to employment are likely to be different according to country of origin and, by extension, time in the host country. Burundian respondents were significantly more likely to say that they were not doing what they had planned after secondary school at DP3 than Congolese respondents (91% of 202 vs 77% of 113, with a chi-squared p-value of 0.002). However, 47% of 115 Congolese participants reported that they were doing nothing at DP3, as opposed to 19% of 202 Burundian participants (chi-squared p-value < 0.001). This finding may be slightly tempered by the fact that 24% of 202 Burundian respondents were applying for a job, compared to 5% of 115 Congolese (chi-squared p-value of 0.004)—although this still suggests that a higher proportion of Congolese respondents are out of employment.

Higher education is perceived to be essential for secure employment

Across the data, participants expressed the general belief that education improves their employment prospects. 91% of 423 secondary-level participants in Pakistan and 88% (of 479) in Rwanda stated at DP1 that secondary school had very positively, positively or slightly positively impacted their ability to access employment in the future. This was reflected in the statements of many interviewees, who optimistically reflected on the impact of their education on their future employment prospects.

There was, however, a general conviction that a higher education degree is essential for getting a desirable job—indeed, an interviewee in Rwanda stated that "secondary school is no longer considered on the job market". In Pakistan, several male participants stated that only higher education can help refugees access government or office jobs (although current policy means that refugees do not have access to government jobs in Pakistan, so these statements were somewhat surprising). Others noted that higher education increased employability by opening students up to international work opportunities. This was

echoed in the Rwandan data. Employability was the most commonly cited change at DP3 which had occurred as a result of studying at university. Rwanda-located interviewees also expressed the opinion that a degree was essential for access to most well–paying jobs. One female Congolese student offered her own experience as an example, saying:

> "I pursued a major that I liked so much, and I have had an opportunity to get a job thanks to the degree that I got from Kepler. In this way, I can say that education helped me so much to prepare myself and to be competitive in the job market in this country. I can say that I am one of the luckiest refugees in this country who will be able to get a degree and realise their dreams."
> > Female Congolese higher education student in Rwanda

Higher education participants in Rwanda also suggested that a postgraduate degree was more desirable than undergraduate. Several stated that a postgraduate degree is the way to set a candidate apart from others and therefore be more competitive on the job market.

There was a notable difference between the responses of female and male interviewees in each country. In Pakistan, it was striking that no female interviewees commented on the impact of education in terms of employability, compared to their male peers; instead, female Afghan refugees spoke of the broader impact of their education on other girls in their community (whether through their ability to teach them, act as role models or change community attitudes towards girls' education). In Rwanda, several female secondary school students were also less positive when speaking of the opportunities afforded by higher education, noting that it would not automatically result in employment; three pointed out that many graduates are still unemployed, and another commented that those with jobs are often not well-paid.

Finally, it was also notable that the motivation to attend school to get a job varied amongst refugee groups in Rwanda. Congolese participants were significantly more likely to select that they were motivated to attend post-primary education 'to enable me to get a job': 20% (of 178) compared to 11% of 297 Burundian respondents stated that this was their primary motivation at secondary school, as well as 16% (of 90) compared to 2% (of 45) of those at university. This may reflect the long-term nature of the Congolese refugee community in Rwanda, compared with the recent arrivals from Burundi.

Clara's story

Clara[12] is a Congolese refugee living in Rwanda. In 1996, when Clara was a young child, her family fled the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. When they first arrived at Kiziba refugee camp, there were no schools and therefore no opportunities for education. Primary and secondary schools were later built, and Clara was able to complete her secondary education. But it remained extremely difficult for young refugees like Clara to access higher education and employment. Clara suffered from very low self-esteem, and had no hope for the future.

In 2015, the Kepler University Program in partnership with Southern New Hampshire University opened a campus in Kiziba camp. Clara was able to join the Kepler Program in 2017, studying healthcare, and this brought her a glimmer of hope. She did all that she could to acquire the skills she needed to be able to compete in the job market. However, she remained worried about the situation of refugee graduates at Kepler, who were often unable to access the same employment opportunities as nationals. Upon graduating, Clara experienced similar barriers to finding a stable job. Fortunately, Clara was able to obtain a secure job after many trials. For Clara, the future looks bright; as well as finding stable employment, she has also been able to move outside of the refugee camp and now lives in Kigali, she is a member of a youth-led organisation in the camp she used to live in, and she is able to take care of her family. Clara feels that having a degree in higher education has changed her life forever, and provided her with a second chance to achieve her dreams.

[12] Name changed.

Structural and discriminatory barriers contribute to unemployment

A lack of overall job opportunities was recognised as a challenge to participants' future plans across most data points: difficulty finding employment or poor job prospects were regularly one of the top two challenges cited by participants when asked what would be the biggest challenge faced after finishing secondary school or university. One teacher in Pakistan noted that this compelled their students to disregard a need for higher education and seek self-employment instead:

> "I asked some of my Afghan students, why they are not completing higher education? Most of them told me, they don't have many job opportunities here in Pakistan, so it's better to run our own business."
> > Secondary school teacher in Pakistan

Starting businesses was also a repeated aspiration in Rwanda, although a lack of

start-up capital and the fact that banks do not give loans to refugees were cited as major challenges to achieving this.

Discrimination against refugees by employers was reported in both countries. Formal restrictions against Afghans accessing employment and not having ID (such as a valid passport or visa) were said to be key issues in Pakistan, alongside Pakistani employers' reluctance to hire refugees due to the lengthy legal process and intelligence checks required and their uncertainty about Afghan refugees' permanence in the country. In Rwanda, refugee students referenced the fact that refugees are legally unable to access employment in the public sector, and are relatedly unable to register on the ministry of labour (MIFOTRA)'s platform with their refugee ID. Students also discussed the discrimination faced by refugees in the private sector, with some students attributing this to an ignorance or confusion on the part of the employer as to the rights of refugees to work in the private sector, and one student suggesting that it was due to the perception that nationals work harder than refugees. Two students referred to specific instances when they had personally faced rejection from employers due to their refugee status. For example, a male Congolese student described the following recent experience:

> "I applied somewhere to a private organisation (it is a hiring platform). I went through all the primary processes, and I was successful (written exam, interviews, etc.). It was after these processes that we had to provide different documents that were required. It was when we were presenting the documents that they realised that I was not a national. I presented my refugee passport and refugee ID to the hiring manager. He was confused and asked me many questions about it. He could see that they were given by the Rwandan government, but he was not aware of them. In the end, the organisation did not hire me. That was when I realised that companies in Rwanda are not informed about our refugee documents and our right to employment in Rwanda."
>
> > Male Congolese higher education student in Rwanda

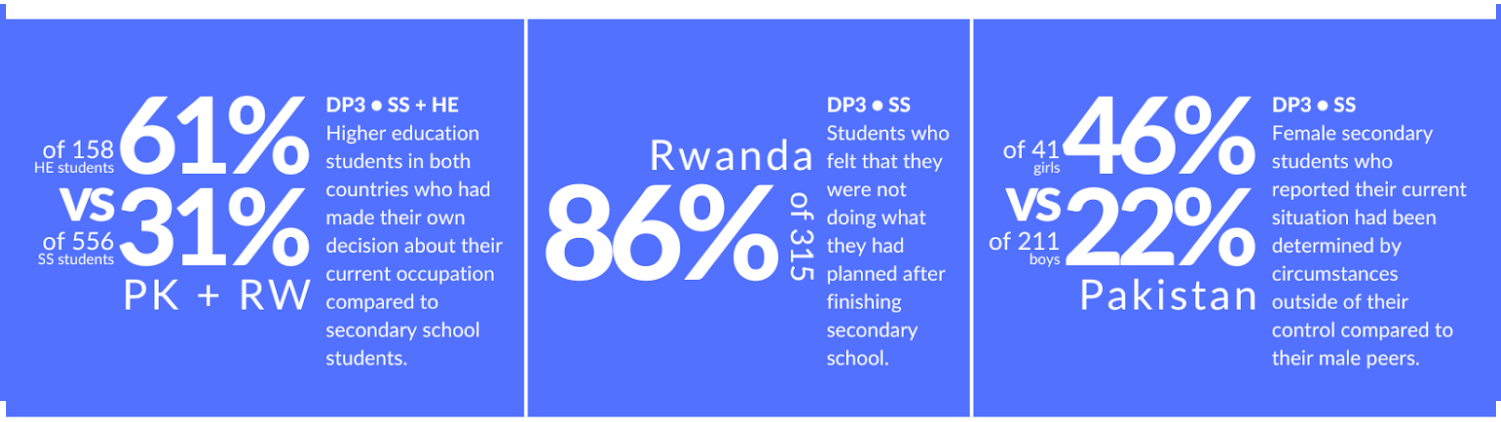
The perceived impact of discrimination in Rwanda was a theme in the quantitative data as well. Higher education participants increasingly cited 'refugee status' to be the most significant barrier to their future plans across the panel survey, compared to a range of other options—25% (of 135) cited it at DP1, 29% (of 110) at DP2 and 39% (of 103) at DP3—and it was the most commonly selected barrier at DP3. This was echoed by teacher interviewees in Rwanda, with one stating that: "The law accepting refugees to work as freely as nationals is not put in practice on the job market."

Refugees recommend practical training opportunities

The development of practical skills was regularly cited as one of the top two ways in which secondary and higher education could better prepare students for their future careers amongst all groups except secondary school students in Rwanda. This was echoed in interviews. Higher education students in Pakistan advocated that universities increase the amount of practical work in courses to help put theory into practice, with students also recommending improvements to infrastructure (i.e. science labs, computer labs) to facilitate this. University students in Rwanda made similar statements, with a common criticism being that courses were too theoretical and students did not have adequate space to put theory into practice. Students therefore advocated for more or longer internship opportunities, specifically indicating that the common one or two months' duration of internships was not long enough to consolidate practical skills. This was said by some to leave students lacking the experience of applying knowledge in a practical context required by prospective employers.

5.6 Refugee youth decision-making regarding post-primary education

This section explores the way in which attending higher education may contribute to refugees' sense of agency over their own decision-making, and presents the fact that resilience amongst refugee youth is high in the face of unachieved plans.



Personal agency in decision-making is greater at higher education

At the final data point for the panel survey, participants were asked who had decided what they were doing after finishing secondary school or university. Across both countries, a significantly higher proportion of higher education students reported that their current occupation had been their own decision, compared to secondary school students: 55% (of 55) and 65% (of 103) of higher education students in Pakistan and

Rwanda respectively stated that they had made their own decision, compared to 34% (of 252) and 29% (of 304) of secondary school students in each respective country. This finding may be associated with the comparative age of the two participant groups, however it could also suggest that personal agency is greater when refugees are able to access higher education considering other findings that higher education is considered essential for accessing post-education employment opportunities.

There were differences in participants' answers to this question at secondary level. In Rwanda, a far higher proportion of secondary school refugees stated that their current circumstances had been determined by circumstances outside of their control than their peers in Pakistan (59% of 304 vs 26% of 252). In contrast, in Pakistan, secondary school participants were more likely to have decided jointly with their parents and other family members (28% of 252 compared to 22% of 55 in Rwanda). However, there was clear indication that female refugees in Pakistan have less agency than their male peers: 46% of 41 female secondary school participants reported that their current situation was out of their control, compared to 22% of their 211 male counterparts, which is a statistically significant difference of chi-squared p-value of 0.002. This resonates with earlier statistically significant findings that female students are less likely to be doing what they had planned after secondary school and not know where to look for support.

Across both countries, financial issues were cited as the most significant factor which determined that a secondary school refugee student felt as though their situation was out of their control. This was reported by 71% of 65 participants in Pakistan and 66% of those 180 in Rwanda who selected this option. Interestingly, Burundian students were significantly more likely to cite this as a cause of their lack of agency in decision making: 70% (of 124) chose financial resources as a cause compared to 55% of their 56 Congolese peers (chi-squared p-value of 0.077). Burundian participants were also significantly more likely to cite camp conditions as a situation out of their control which had influenced their current situation: 69% (of 124) did so, compared to 30% of 56 Congolese respondents (chi-squared p-value < 0.001).

Resilience remains high despite unachieved goals

At the end of the panel survey, the majority of all participant groups stated that they had not achieved the goals that they had set for themselves after finishing their current stage of education. This was especially true in Rwanda: 98% of 328 secondary students and 89% of 103 higher education students in Rwanda felt that they had not achieved the goals which they had set themselves after leaving school. The same was true in Pakistan, although to a lesser degree: 62% of 255 secondary students and 67% of 57 higher education participants reported that they had not achieved their self-set goals).

It was somewhat surprising, therefore, that the majority of students expressed satisfaction with their current situation. 63% (of 252) and 76% (of 55) of secondary and higher education participants in Pakistan stated that they were very or fairly happy with their current situation, as did 64% of 103 higher education respondents in Rwanda. This contrasted with secondary school students in Rwanda, 68% (of 315) of whom stated that they were very or fairly unhappy with their current situation.

A similar level of optimism was expressed when participants were asked about the likelihood of achieving their post-education goals in the future. As outlined in *Table 14*, the majority of all participant groups stated that they thought it very likely, likely or slightly likely that they would be able to do their preferred current occupation in the future and that they would achieve their post-education life goals. These statistics do suggest, however, that students who complete higher education feel more confident in their ability to achieve their goals in the future: in general, a higher percentage of university participants felt it likely that they would be able to do what their preferred occupation and achieve their life goals than those who were transitioning from secondary school.

The fact that the majority of students expressed both satisfaction about the present and optimism about the future suggests high levels of resilience in the face of unachieved plans. This was echoed in several interviews, where participants remarked on the way that education held the power to build their resilience. One secondary school student in Pakistan stated that "I have learnt at school that no matter what happens, I should not lose hope when things are really difficult. At school, teachers encourage me to be bold and face any type of problem in life." A higher education interviewee in Rwanda similarly stated that,

	PKSS	RWSS	PKHE	RWHE
% students who stated it was 'very likely', 'likely' or 'slightly likely' that they would be able to do their chosen alternative occupation in the future	**69%** (of 188)	**75%** (of 287)	**91%** (of 34)	**82%** (of 68)
% students who stated it was 'very likely', 'likely' or 'slightly likely' that they would achieve their goals in life now that they had finished secondary school/university	**73%** (of 255)	**77%** (of 328)	**89%** (of 57)	**88%** (of 102)

Table 14: Refugee confidence in achieving future goals.

through university, "I heard about success stories, and I found out that with focus on the goal, it would be possible to improve our lives. It is that hope and belief that helped me to keep on going, and I am glad to have known this." These statements highlight that, although the majority of participants had not yet achieved their post-education goals, many nonetheless associated their education with a feeling of increased optimism and determination in the future.

Evan's story

Evan[13] is a Congolese refugee who grew up with a dream to become an accountant and own his own business. To achieve this, he wanted to study accounting so that he would be able to successfully manage his business. He worked hard in junior high school and hoped to attend a senior high school that offered classes in accounting. Unfortunately Evan could not find a scholarship to support his education, and his family could not afford to send him to the school he wanted. The only option available to him was to take classes in economics at the school nearest to where he lived, where education was free. Initially, Evan felt very discouraged and disappointed that he could not pursue the path he wanted. He saw school as a waste of time, and this negatively impacted his grades. However, Evan knew he could do better. So, after reflecting deeply on his situation and going through a period of acceptance, Evan resolved to try his best at school.

After he started concentrating at school, Evan's academic performance improved, and he decided to shift his aspirations to becoming an economist. After he completed secondary school, Evan founded a small business, which gave him hope that his dream was still within reach. He now has a renewed sense of hope for the future, and is looking forward to continuing his higher education in Economics and seeing his business grow to the magnitude of his dreams.

[13] Name changed.

5.7 Refugee youth perspectives of the importance of post-primary education

This section outlines the way that refugees are motivated to pursue education by the prospect of future employment opportunities and the ability to contribute to their communities, but the absence of these factors can also negatively affect refugee perspectives of the value of education.

"To increase knowledge" & "to enable me to get a job" **DP1 • SS** Two most reported motivations for pursuing education in **both countries**.

of 96 girls **23%** **VS** of 326 boys **5%** Pakistan **DP1 • SS** Female secondary students who were motivated to attend school to be self-reliant and independent compared to their male peers.

"To contribute towards making a positive change in my community" **DP1 • SS + HE** One of the top selected motivations for pursuing education in **Pakistan**.

Refugee perspectives of education are influenced by post-education opportunities

Across the dataset, it was striking that both positive and negative attitudes towards education were associated with the possibility for it to provide future opportunities for refugees. Positive perspectives of education, for instance, were linked to the way it can provide the necessary knowledge or skills for entering the job market. When asked at the outset of the panel study to identify the most significant factor which motivates them to attend school or university, the most commonly chosen answer amongst secondary school students in both countries was to 'increase knowledge' (23% of the 422 participant responses in Pakistan and 37% of 476 in Rwanda, and also 30% of the 135 higher education responses in Rwanda). The second or third most chosen option in both contexts was 'to enable me to get a job', echoing a close relationship between these two motivations of knowledge gain and employability which emerged from the qualitative data. One secondary school student in Rwanda, for instance, stated that "today, everything requires [us] to have knowledge and skills to perform a given activity" and that attending school was necessary "to be amongst those who can compete in the current time." Another student furthered this idea of competition, stating the negative impacts of not finishing secondary education: "in our continent Africa, when you do not complete secondary studies, the community does not consider you as an intellectual due to your little knowledge; you also become excluded from the labour market." These statements help exemplify the way that the motivation for

finishing secondary education—gaining knowledge—was closely interlinked with the perceived requirements for entering the job market, especially in Rwanda.

Conversely, negative perspectives of and engagement in education were linked with a lack of post-education opportunities. This was a key theme which emerged from interviews with teachers in Rwanda, who attributed a lack of motivation, discipline and focus amongst refugee students to issues including a lack of role models and expectations regarding future opportunities. One teacher, for example, explained:

> "Most of them do not have any role models who can inspire them to pursue education. When we ask some refugee students what they think about education, they do not show any motivation for it. This is because they see that even the ones who graduated before them ended up in the refugee camp without pursuing higher education or getting jobs. This laziness also comes from the lack of motivation and encouragement from their parents; some of them do not even have parents, and it is hard for teachers to motivate such students who already have their pessimistic views about education."
> > Secondary school teacher in Rwanda

Teachers further elaborated that this lack of motivation and discipline negatively affects refugees' ability to engage with the new competency-based curriculum (CBC). They reported that, due to refugee students' passivity and lack of focus at school, they are unwilling to be "the centre of his or her learning process" and would prefer their teachers to use the former knowledge-based curriculum (KBC), which was teacher-centred.

These findings indicate that competing and diverse perspectives on education co-exist among the population of refugee students. Some refugees are motivated to complete post-primary education in the belief that the knowledge and skills they gain will provide future opportunities, especially in the job market. At the same time, a pessimistic perspective of the future, including the unlikelihood of changing their circumstances, leads other refugee students to be demotivated and not want to engage in education.

Education is viewed as an important tool to affect personal and community development

While knowledge gain and employability were commonly selected answers in both contexts, in Pakistan there was a strong focus amongst participants on how education enabled them to have a positive impact on their community. The top motivation amongst higher education respondents was to 'contribute towards making a positive change in my community' (23% of all 86 respondents), while this was the second most frequently chosen motivation (19% of all 422 respondents) amongst secondary students (with 22% of male respondents selecting this option, compared to 8% of female respondents). In Rwanda, although positively contributing towards one's community was the second highest answer amongst higher education students (24% of the 135 respondents), the motivation 'to change my thinking and better myself' was third behind knowledge gain and employability for

secondary school students (11% of the 476 respondents), closely followed by 'to have independence/self-reliance' (10%). This suggests a different priority at the secondary level in Rwanda, one which emphasises the importance of education to support individual agency and development.

This division between personal and community development was further reflected within the Pakistan findings. Female participants were over four times more likely to report that they were most motivated to attend secondary school in order to be self-reliant and independent than their male peers (23% of 96 vs 5% of 326). Much of the gender-differentiated data in this report has highlighted the challenges for female refugees in Pakistan to achieve their goals and find support for their education. However, these findings suggest that the motivation amongst female refugees to attend post-primary education to achieve independence is nonetheless high. In contrast, male respondents were almost three times as likely to report being motivated to continue in secondary school in order to make a positive change in their community (22% vs 8%).

Finally, the wider refugee community was also discussed as a key factor which influences perceptions of education. Two secondary school teachers (both Rwandan nationals) stated that more work was needed to motivate and raise awareness amongst refugee parents and communities about the importance of education. One stated that "students themselves and their parents should change their perspective on education" and that "motivation should be from students and their parents." Another echoed this sentiment, stating that "the first thing to do is the general awareness-raising of refugees, especially parents and children, on the necessity of going to school for them, and the importance of staying focused." Just as refugee students associate education with the potential (or lack thereof) to change their circumstances, strong associations also emerge between refugees' education and their wider community: both the opportunity to contribute to it and the level of encouragement offered by it. Both of these community aspects appear to impact refugee motivation to attend post-primary education.

Chapter 6: Recommendations

This chapter provides the recommendations that come from the findings of the Voices of Refugee Youth study.

While there are clear benefits of post-primary education for refugees' personal and community development, structural factors need to be addressed to provide greater ease of access and new pathways to future education and employment. These recommendations offer tangible actions which can be taken by education stakeholders, either at a global or national level. It is recognised that refugees often access education alongside host-community students, and that many of the challenges faced are shared, but these recommendations are primarily focused on refugee education.

The recommendations are grouped thematically according to four priorities:

1. How to maximise the beneficial impacts of post-primary education.
2. How to prepare education systems to support refugees through disruptions to their education.
3. How to tackle barriers which hinder access to and experience of post-primary education.
4. How to create pathways from post-primary education to employment.

Within each thematic group, the recommendations are subdivided into three further categories: global recommendations, recommendations primarily relevant to Pakistan, and recommendations primarily relevant to Rwanda.

6.1 How to maximise the beneficial impacts of post-primary education

Refugees reported clear positive impacts of post-primary education, including the development of transferable skills, confidence and the ability to contribute to their communities. These personal and interpersonal benefits of education for refugees were also foundational to other benefits of accessing education, such as facilitating pathways to employment (which is the focus of a separate recommendation section below).

The findings also indicate that students who access higher education gain a greater level of autonomy in their decision-making and feel more confident about their ability to achieve their goals. The specific recommended actions that should be taken in light of this are listed below.

Global

1 **Education policymakers should continue efforts to centralise transferable skills, including communication, confidence and critical thinking, in secondary and higher education curricula design, and ensure that refugee learners have full and equal access to these components.** These skills are highly valued by refugees and perceived by them to be a key positive outcome of post-primary education.

2 **A targeted research strategy is needed to address the evidence gap regarding the comparative and complementary benefits of higher education and technical and vocational education and training for refugees.** While many refugees aspire to access higher education, and more can be done to facilitate this option, alternative pathways for further education—such as technical and vocational training—could be utilised to offer a greater number of post-secondary opportunities. Further research should focus on how innovative TVET options can offer the same level of autonomy and confidence as higher education, while opening up additional opportunities for employment.

Pakistan

3 **The education community should continue to advocate for prioritising refugee girls' education and specifically invest in Afghan community-level advocacy efforts to highlight the individual and societal benefits.** Female refugees are not only motivated to attend education to increase their self-reliance and independence, but also benefit more than their male peers in gaining confidence from attending school. Investment in refugee girls' education has the power to improve economic and health outcomes, transform communities, and, especially in light of the December 2022 Taliban ban on post-primary education for girls and young women, Pakistan can play an important role in providing education for young Afghan women.

Rwanda

4 **Secondary schools should facilitate peer-learning and mentoring opportunities, as an effective way to develop role models within the refugee student community that can increase motivation for education.** Refugee students are more likely to become demotivated when they do not see examples of the positive impacts of education, and this negatively affects their ability to engage with the learner-centred CBC curriculum. Utilising the opportunities afforded by mentorship and peer-learning is likely to positively impact refugees' learning and education outcomes.

6.2 How to prepare mainstream education systems to support refugees during periods of disruptions to their education

The onset of Covid-19 highlighted the lack of preparedness across education systems for supporting remote learning for refugees during periods of disruption. Many refugees faced significant challenges in sustaining their learning during school closures, did not receive sufficient support on returning to school and experienced negative impacts on their mental wellbeing. While many of the challenges faced by refugee students during Covid-19 were shared by host community students, refugees often face more frequent disruptions to their education, due to the high levels of mobility and insecurity among refugee communities. The following recommendations focus on increasing the preparedness of education systems to support young refugees and mitigating the impact of such disruptions.

Global

5 **The international refugee education donor community, led by UNHCR, should work with host-governments to establish and boost inclusion in technology access schemes that are specifically tailored to the needs of refugee communities.** Technology access was a major inhibiting factor to remote learning during the pandemic, and education suffers if refugee students have to rely on sharing devices belonging to their household. Access schemes need to couple internet provision—whether through network hubs or affordable data plans—with shared hardware provision, to facilitate remote learning opportunities, both in formal and informal education settings.

6 **Specialist training and associated finance is required so that education institutions are better equipped to provide holistic care, including trauma therapy, to ensure the wellbeing of refugee students.** Periods of school closures and disruption to education is known to be particularly detrimental to refugee learners' mental health, exacerbating previous displacement-related trauma or distress. When refugee learners are able to return to school or university, the education institution becomes a key actor in supporting positive mental health and psychosocial wellbeing. Provision needs to be made for schools and universities to offer more training for teachers in supporting refugee students' wellbeing, as well as create clear structures for mental health support for the youth themselves.

Pakistan

7 **The education community should ensure there is a coordinated effort to address the causal factors that lead to refugee drop-out from education after periods of disruption, and provide accessible ways to re-enrol in secondary school.** The disruption caused by the pandemic resulted in a particularly high drop-out rate amongst secondary-level refugee students. Strategies to mitigate the impact of future disruptions to refugee education should focus on creating accessible routes back into school, including awareness raising amongst community members, cash-based assistance, the provision of remedial courses for returning students, and specific interventions to support girls to return to school.

8 **UNHCR and other education stakeholders should consider establishing an awareness campaign to improve refugee girls' knowledge of and access to mechanisms that can support them through disruptions to their education.** Afghan girls experience a greater level of disruption to their secondary education and report a greater lack of support than their male peers. Any strategies for mitigating such disruptions should be well communicated, to ensure that female refugees are aware of the options available to them.

Rwanda

9 **Education institutions and donors should increase free access to a greater range of high quality learning resources for refugees, to reduce the pressure on them to earn money to pay for resources, which will in turn help to reduce absenteeism.** There is pressure on refugees to engage in paid work during term time in order to afford the learning resources, including books, they need to enable study. Providing greater access to these resources in schools will reduce this pressure and contribute to reduced student absenteeism.

6.3 How to tackle the barriers which hinder access to and experience of post-primary education

In addition to financial challenges, a lack of learning resources, poor teaching quality and curricula which do not take refugees' needs into account contribute to barriers to refugees' access to and experience of secondary school. Discriminatory policies and unrealistic documentation requirements further compound financial barriers when refugees try to attain their goals of studying at university, and mean that the likelihood of achieving UNHCR's '15by30' target is slim. This section outlines the specific recommended actions that should be taken to improve access to secondary and higher education, as well as refugees' experience of post-primary education.

Global

10 **Teachers from a refugee background should be paid a salary aligned with that of teachers who are host country nationals, based on their qualifications and experience.** Refugee teachers are demoralised by receiving pay below that of their host country counterparts, which can negatively affect the quality of teaching for refugee students. Discrepancies in remuneration should be addressed so that teachers from refugee backgrounds are appropriately rewarded for their level of study and teaching qualifications, to match that of national teachers.

11 **UNHCR and government ministries should continue to work in partnership to provide on-going teacher professional development opportunities for both refugee and national teachers.** Refugees' experience of post-primary education is negatively affected by poor teaching quality and high teacher turnover. Host country governments may require budgetary support to train and hire more teachers, and increased investment in school-based continuous professional development for all teachers is required. This should include specific training for national teachers on the integration of refugees into their classrooms, both as a core module in initial teacher training programmes, and also offered as continuing professional development to already practising teachers.

12 **The education donor community should work to introduce targeted funding to supplement government provision that addresses the funding gaps for refugee students in relation to fees, grants and loans and ensure parity with national students.** Finances are refugees' biggest concern in relation to completing secondary education and transitioning to higher education, and they often face costs higher than their host country peers. Equal support with fees, grants and loan access would facilitate greater parity between refugees and host-community students.

Pakistan

13 **The government of Pakistan should make a coordinated effort to increase refugee access to free, quality secondary education.** The financial burden of attending private Afghan refugees school is compounded by the limited number of places available for refugees at free Pakistani government schools. Ensuring that there is equitable policy in refugee secondary education is a necessary prerequisite for improving transition to higher education and engaging in work.

14 **The Higher Education Commission should work with the relevant higher education institutions to improve access policies and establish a more administratively streamlined and financially equitable route for refugee students to participate in higher education.** Unattainable documentation requirements, including providing a passport or PoR card, can hinder access, while delays to the qualifications equivalency process can both discourage and prevent refugees from enrolling at university.

15 **Scholarship providers, Pakistani universities and the Higher Education Commission should work to expand the scholarship pool for refugees in both public and private universities.** Scholarships are a key enabling factor to increasing refugee access to university. However, there are few available spaces for refugees in public universities and the demand for refugee scholarships outweighs supply. In particular, more emphasis should be placed on providing scholarships for marginalised groups, including female refugees.

Rwanda

16 **Providers of scholarships for refugee students should ensure that the scholarship package is transparent about the level of financial support and accompanied by financial advice mechanisms.** Scholarships are a key enabling factor for refugees entering university but many are unable to provide comprehensive support. This can lead to confusion and unattainable expectations from scholarship recipients. Providers should therefore ensure that scholarship programmes are transparent about the scope of the financial provision and offer clear financial guidance for prospective refugee students.

17 **Providers of scholarships for refugee students should ensure that a wide range of subject options are provided and accessible for application.** Delays to the scholarship application process and university enrolment for refugees, in addition to the predetermined list of subjects offered by certain scholarship programmes, can act as barriers in refugees pursuing their preferred degrees. Bursaries should be non subject-specific as much as possible, so that refugees have the same degree of choice as host country students. Private scholarship providers—which may have specific subject-related requirements—should ensure that the range of subjects included is clearly advertised from the start of the application process.

18 **MINEMA and UNHCR should collaborate to establish improved and ongoing English language support provision for refugees.** Many refugees have had little exposure to English before entering the education system in Rwanda, which acts as a barrier to learning outcomes at secondary school and access to higher education. While the six-month orientation programme (within Rwanda's Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework) includes the provision of introductory English training before refugees integrate into the national education system, ongoing language support programmes which continue once refugees are in formal education are still required to help facilitate greater integration of refugees in the Rwandan education system.

6.4 How to create pathways from post-primary education to meaningful employment for refugees

Refugees perceive education to be important in facilitating pathways to employment, Higher education in particular is viewed as essential for accessing security in the job market. However, structural barriers to employment, including discriminatory, legal and documentation barriers, hinder the achievement of these goals. Furthermore, refugees can give up on their education when they believe that no future opportunities will be available after graduation. The following recommendations focus on practical steps to establish more pathways from post-primary education to employment.

Global

19 **Education institutions should prioritise the development of practical skills within national curricula to improve refugee readiness for the workplace, and add targeted content within teacher continuous professional development programmes to ensure this is applied in the classroom.** Refugees advocate for education programmes and teaching which increase the ratio of practical training with theoretical learning content. This could include the integration of work placements into upper secondary and tertiary level education programmes. While restrictions on the right to work in the formal job market and high unemployment rates in many host countries continue to pose key barriers to post-education employment, a greater range of practical learning opportunities could facilitate more pathways for refugees into work.

20 **UNHCR should continue to invest in the development of strategic partnerships with providers of workplace readiness training schemes across the private and public sectors.** Industry placements, apprenticeships and paid internships offer refugees alike the opportunity to build practical skills desired by employers. Increased investment in training schemes in partnership with the private and public sectors will also help refugees build the social capital required to access employment through creating sector-specific mentoring and networking opportunities for refugee students.

21 **Governments should explore opportunities for technical and vocational training for refugees to be better aligned with local emerging markets and context-specific employability trends.** Higher education has a strong positive impact on refugees' employability and optimism in their future. However, access to higher education is challenging and refugees also advocate for a greater number of opportunities to gain practical skills. Creating accessible technical and vocational education training opportunities, which are aligned with emerging market trends and viewed by refugees as valuable alternatives to higher education, could facilitate more reliable pathways into meaningful entrepreneurial activity and employment.students.

Pakistan

22 **Efforts should be made by the relevant government departments to update policies which currently demand unobtainable documentation from refugees when entering employment.** For Afghan refugee youth, obtaining a valid passport or visa is not possible, especially in light of the recent regime change in Afghanistan. However, this documentation is often required by employers, creating a barrier to refugee youth working and contributing economically to their host community. The government should aim to update requirements, allowing refugees to access employment with alternative ID and reducing discrimination amongst employers.

Rwanda

23 **A targeted advocacy campaign should be implemented that is focused on private sector awareness of refugee employment rights.** While policy changes have supported refugees' right to work in the private sector in Rwanda, there is a lack of awareness of these rights and ongoing discrimination against refugees by employers. Targeted advocacy work, amplifying refugee youth voices, should help businesses see the opportunities for them by reducing this barrier.

24 **A policy change should be implemented to allow refugees to register on the MIFOTRA platform with their refugee ID.** Currently, this barrier prevents refugees from accessing employment in the public sector and may also be a contributing factor to ongoing discrimination faced in the private sector.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

This research ToR was developed between Jigsaw (formally Jigsaw Consult) and UNHCR in 2017. It underwent multiple iterations before forming the final proposal.

1. Summary

Title of research	Voices of refugee youth: the impact of post-primary education in emergencies
Details of organisations	This is a joint application between Jigsaw Consult and UNHCR. Jigsaw Consult is an independent research organisation based in the United Kingdom, with a focus on research on education in emergencies. The company is incorporated in England and Wales under company number 06844615 and office is located at Jigsaw Consult, Salvation Army building, Manor Park Road, London, NW10 4JJ. UNHCR is the UN agency mandated to safeguard the rights and well-being of around 65 million refugees worldwide. Established in 1951, in the wake of World War II, UNHCR has over 60 years of experience in protecting those displaced by conflict and responding to their basic needs for survival. UNHCR is governed by the UN General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
Key personnel	Dr David Hollow and Catherine Gladwell (Jigsaw Consult Principal Investigators) Ita Sheehy (Senior Education Officer UNHCR) and Anna Korneeva (UNHCR YEP)
Requested total funds	USD 498,160
Research period	March 2018 – March 2021

2. Background

The critical importance of post-primary education in emergencies is increasingly acknowledged within the global community. Significant progress has been made in recent years for refugee children to access primary education, but a huge gap remains in secondary education with only 22% of refugee adolescents enrolled compared to 84% of their peers

globally and only 1% of refugees accessing tertiary education, compared to 34% of youth globally. Refugee youth around the world have asked UNHCR and partners through the Global Refugee Youth Consultations to ensure they are given the opportunities to shape their own futures and develop leadership and other capacities meaningful to them in displacement and beyond.

The UNHCR Youth Education Programme focuses on secondary education with pathways to tertiary education, as well as other educational options. In line with the 2030 Education Agenda, it builds strong partnerships and improve humanitarian-development coordination, and advocates for sustainable solutions for post-primary education for refugee adolescents and youth. This is a multi-year programme (2017-2020) which focuses on four countries: Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda and Pakistan. The design of the UNHCR Youth Education Programme has been based on extensive consultations with refugee adolescents and youth through participatory workshops and focus group discussion.

3. Rationale

The importance of post-primary education for young people emerges repeatedly throughout the core recommendations of the Global Refugee Youth Consultations. Despite this, the majority of research in education in emergencies remains focused on primary level education, and is conducted primarily by adults in non-conflict affected countries. The research study will address this in two interconnected ways:

- It will focus on the impact of post-primary education for refugee youth – a highly neglected area of research
- It will do this by adopting a fundamentally youth-centred approach – training youth as participatory researchers

The research will fill a critical gap in education in emergencies research globally, and will equip and empower young people from refugee communities as active stakeholders in the research process. The Global Refugee Youth Consultations set an important precedent for elevating the voices of young refugees within the global community. The research study will build on this foundation, increasing youth-facing accountability and building young refugees' research skills whilst creating a vital knowledge base for the education in emergencies sector.

The need for the research study has been confirmed through a scoping study conducted in late 2017. The study (currently under completion) was commissioned by UNHCR and undertaken by Jigsaw Consult (total budget USD 30,000). During the scoping study, Jigsaw Consult consulted extensively with refugee young people, education programme staff and UNHCR staff from Uganda (face to face), Rwanda (face to face) and Pakistan (through Skype). The scoping study also involved a co-design workshop with UNHCR education staff in Copenhagen. The scoping study will be available in January 2018 and will provide a comprehensive foundation for the research design adopted.

4. Objectives and research questions

The primary objective of the research is to assess the evidence base for the importance of post-primary education for refugee youth, through a youth-centred methodological approach. Within this are the following four research questions:

1. What is the impact of post-primary education on participating students (including learning outcomes and hard-to-measure changes in worldview, agency, aspirations and employability)?
2. What is a refugee youth-centred understanding of the importance of post-primary education?
3. How can UNHCR, implementing partners and the wider sector better understand the protection dividends of post primary education?
4. What is the impact on a young refugee as a result of being trained and operating as a youth researcher (including learning outcomes and hard-to-measures changes in worldview, agency, aspirations and employability)?

In addition to the four research questions, the study has five secondary objectives relating to the application of the research:

1. Inform how UNHCR, implementing partners and the wider sector engage youth researchers within research in education in emergencies
2. Provide a detailed research foundation to inform the effective scaling of the UNHCR Youth Education Programme to additional countries
3. Train a cohort of 36 youth researchers through the three year study and build an effective collaboration between global south and north researchers and universities
4. Create conditions for the expansion of networks, resources, approaches and understanding for all participants that can increase the incidence and relevance of sound research in crisis and refugee contexts.
5. Link to and complement other relevant research and learning in the sector, such as the Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG) learning agenda, and the Education and Equity Research Initiative.

5. Research design

Approach

The research objectives and questions outlined above will be addressed through a three year youth-centred study undertaken in Pakistan and Rwanda. The research undertaken in each country will follow the same rhythm and overall approach but will be adapted for the contexts. All the data collected during the research will be processed through rapid learning cycles and used to inform the on-going implementation of the UNHCR Youth Education Programme.

The research will be led by a team of specialist education in emergencies researchers from Jigsaw Consult (Principal Investigators Dr David Hollow and Catherine Gladwell) who will work in close partnership with UNHCR throughout the study. The Jigsaw Consult team will manage the entire research process, oversee the detailed methodological design; coordinate in-country partners; train youth researchers and lead on all analysis and research outputs.

UNHCR staff, at international, regional, country and field levels will be closely involved in the research throughout. Senior staff within the Education Unit will play a leadership role, connecting with Jigsaw Consult on all aspects of the study, findings and dissemination. There is already a close working relationship between the organisations and this will be further enhanced through a structured approach to research management including bi-weekly Skype meetings throughout the research study period.

Youth centred approach with trained youth researchers

In each country a group of 18 young refugees will be trained as youth researchers and they will carry out research across the study. The youth researchers will be selected in a transparent and fair manner and will be thoroughly trained by Jigsaw Consult and through the Universities that are part of the Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium (CLCC). A rigorous quality control process will ensure the validity of the data collection throughout with appropriate inter-rater reliability testing conducted on a regular cycle. The youth researchers will be DAFI scholars, participants on CLCC programmes, or suitable young refugees participating in the UNHCR Youth Education Programme. The youth researchers will be mentored by the Jigsaw Consult team and other southern University colleagues throughout the study.

At the end of the three year study the youth researchers will have completed a qualification in 'social science research methodologies' that will be based on a blended learning course (combination of face-to-face and online) and accredited by a university linked to the Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium (CLCC). The qualification will be grounded in theory and the practice of the young researchers contributing to the data collection and analysis of the study. This will ensure that the youth researchers engaged in the research have a valuable qualification which will enhance their future employability once the study is completed. The curriculum design for this qualification will be funded separately from the research and is not included in the budget costing.

Globally unique data-set from three year youth survey

A mixed methods approach will be adopted, with substantial qualitative and quantitative elements. The research will track a large cohort of young refugees participating in the UNHCR Youth Education Programme. In each country a group of 720 young people will be surveyed every six months (by the youth researchers), giving a total of six study-points throughout the three year study. It is anticipated that there will be a 30% attrition rate throughout the study, providing a final sample size of approximately 500 students in each country. This will provide a combined sample across Pakistan and Rwanda of 1,000 students. The survey will be administered on Kobo (see below) and will be comprised of approximately 30 questions that in combination address the objectives and questions guiding the research. As the survey will be administered six times over three years, with 500 students in each of Pakistan and Rwanda, this will provide a final data set of over 180,000 data points (6000 x 30 question responses). This will be a unique data set for the sector – focused on understanding the outcome level change that takes place for a young refugee as a result of participating in post-primary education.

Alongside the large-scale study, focus groups and in-depth interviews will be conducted with young people and relevant additional stakeholders. These will be conducted by the youth

researchers and by the Jigsaw Consult team, working in collaboration. The research will also have full access to the established output data that is routinely recorded by implementing partners on the Youth Education Programme through log-frames. This will be triangulated with the outcome data provided through the large scale youth-implemented survey and the associated in-depth interviews and focus groups.

Physical hubs and implementing partners

In Pakistan and Rwanda there will be a physical research hub for the research to be focused around – this will be a pre- existing site linked to the in-country implementing partner. The youth researchers will gather in these hubs every six months for one week of training (provided by Jigsaw Consult) in applied research methods. In addition, appropriate implementing partners from the UNHCR Youth Education Programme will be selected to act as long-term collaborators throughout the three-year study. Relationships with the implementing partners are already well established and ready to be operationalised for the research.

Youth advisory boards

In each country a group of six young people will be selected to form an advisory board for the research study. The youth research advisory board will meet once per month throughout the research process. Their role will be to ensure that the on-going findings of the research are well aligned with a youth perspective and engage with their priority concerns. They will also be responsible for working with Jigsaw Consult to ensure that the findings of the research are fed back to the affected communities in an on-going, constructive and transparent manner.

Digital research embedded at each stage

Digital tools will be embedded in each aspect of the research study. The training will be based on a blended learning approach (in partnership with the CLCC), the data collection will be conducted on tablets using the Kobo software, and the data analysis will be conducted with the use of various tools (including 'R' and STATA for the quantitative analysis and Dedoose for the qualitative analysis). An online research platform will be developed to enable rapid and reliable uploading of research data from the youth researchers when they are conducting surveys on Kobo. It will also provide a comprehensive and accessible dashboard where all stakeholders engaged in the research can view the real-time data that is being collected. This will assist in facilitating the rapid learning cycles that will ensure the research findings feed quickly into the on-going implementation of the UNHCR Youth Education Programme.

Best practice and ethical standards

All best practice academic standards will be adhered to throughout the study in relation to informed consent, confidentiality, protection, and research ethics. All youth researchers and refugee interviewees will be fully informed of the purpose of the study and how their information will be used and will be given the opportunity to stop their participation in the study at any point of their choosing. All data will be fully anonymised so that it cannot be traced back to a specific young person in any of the research outputs. A detailed research ethics framework and risk mitigation strategy will be formed prior to the commencement of the

research. All the research team members are highly experienced at undertaking research in fragile environments and have all appropriate training and qualifications in place.

6. Qualifications

The established partnership between UNHCR and Jigsaw Consult provides the necessary skills, experience and qualifications to complete the research in an academically rigorous and impactful manner that will produce a significant global public good. The Principal Investigators of the research study both hold positions at UK Universities (David Hollow at University of London and Catherine Gladwell at University of Winchester) and each have more than 10 years of relevant experience. They are both widely published across the sector. Jigsaw Consult has relationships with universities in Pakistan and Rwanda and internationally and these will be utilised throughout the research process. Jigsaw is widely respected for organisational expertise in education in emergencies, participatory research with young people, and the use of digital tools in research. Relevant recent research from Jigsaw Consult includes:

- Global research study and landscape review on 'higher education for refugees in low-resource environments' conducted in 2015 and 2016. This included field visits to 15 refugee higher education programmes and in-depth interviews with 303 refugee students and 138 programme staff and sector experts. The research was conducted in close partnership with members of the Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium and was funded by an anonymous foundation.
- Impact assessment of gender responsive pedagogy teacher training in Mozambique, Plan Canada, 2016-present. Two-year research study commissioned by Dubai Cares, including the design of a quasi-experimental mixed- methods research methodology, 'gender responsiveness' index and quantitative and qualitative tools, management of in-country enumerator training and data collection, and data analysis and reporting.
- Baseline evaluation of Dubai Cares-funded ICT programme in primary schools in Kenya and Uganda, Aga Khan Foundation, 2016. Quasi-experimental research study tracking student learning outcomes and wider impact on teachers and students, including methodology design, survey and learning assessment design using EGRA/EGMA testing, in-country enumerator training and data collection management, quantitative and qualitative data analysis and visualisation, and reporting.
- 'Hear it from the Children' a research study for NRC and Save the Children focused on the importance of education in emergencies – including interactions with over 200 refugee children and young people in DRC and Ethiopia.

[Specific research outputs can be submitted on request.]

7. Work plan

The table below provides an indicative work plan for year 1. The same pattern of research will be followed through year 2 and 3, with interim reports submitted every six months. The final deliverables will be submitted in March 2021.

Activity – year 1 (following years follow similar patterns of activity)

Inception phase, including research methodology tool design and site identification	Mar 2018
Prep Year 1 training modules, recruit youth researchers, develop online platform	Apr 2018
Rwanda training and field-visit 1	May 2018
Pakistan training and field-visit 1	May-Jun 2018
Research period 1 in each country	May-Jun 2018
Data cleaning and analysis	Jul-Sept 2018
Interim summary report	Sept 2018
Rwanda training and field-visit 2	Nov 2018
Pakistan training and field-visit 2	Nov-Dec 2018
Research period 2 in each country	Nov-Dec 2018
Data collating, cleaning and analysis	Jan-Feb 2019
Submission of Year 1 draft and final research reports	Mar 2019

8. Outcome and deliverables

The production of high quality, evidence based academic articles, conference presentations, advocacy reports, youth- focused reports and digital and social media outputs will in combination ensure that the research findings have maximum global exposure, impact and contribution to the global public good. Each of the findings will be disseminated by UNHCR and Jigsaw Consult through all relevant global networks. The research will have a major impact on practice and will build on the work of the Global Youth Consultations.

In addition, the research will have a direct impact on forming the strategy for how the UNHCR Youth Education Programme is scaled to additional countries after 2020. All the outputs from the research will be open access in order to be accessible to as many people as possible. In addition, the 'raw' data from the research process will be made available to other research studies so that the unique data set that will be formed can be utilised as widely as possible.

- A rigorous, accessible research study that documents the full methodology, analysis and key findings - published for the benefit of the global community (c.50 pages)
- Two academic articles (c.6000 words each) published on specific focus topics within the research study (each published in high impact, international, peer reviewed, open-access journals)
- Three presentations of the research at high level education conferences (such as UKFIET and CIS).

- Two advocacy reports that focus on learning from the research regarding the future of education for refugee youth in order to influence global policy (c.12 pages each)
- A policy toolkit on the process of youth participation in education in emergencies research – this would be a unique resource for the benefit of the sector (c. 25 pages with graphics)
- A report authored by the youth researchers to capture their experience and learning from being youth researchers
- A report with the target audience of young refugees participating in post primary education programmes
- A range of digital outputs (to be hosted on the UNHCR site for maximum 'traffic') to include: video diaries of the youth researchers, blog articles from youth researchers, dedicated Facebook page and Twitter account and other social media channels to engage with youth audiences.

Alongside this, an additional significant outcome is the cohort of 36 refugee youth researchers (18 in Pakistan and 18 in Rwanda) who will be trained and empowered through participating as researchers in the three year study. These refugee youth will have gained advanced social science research skills through the process which will serve as a strong foundation for their futures.

Annex 2: Disaggregation of the Pakistan data

Demographic disaggregation of the Pakistan survey dataset

DP1	Secondary school			Higher Education	
	426			86	
	Gender				
	Female	Male		Female	Male
	96	330		4	82
	23%	77%		5%	95%
	Nationality				
	Afghan			Afghan	
	426			86	
	Enrolment status[1]				
	Refugee status	Foreign status	Other	Refugee status	Foreign status
	395	30	1	62	24
	93%	7%	0%	72%	28%
	Time spent as a refugee				
	Since birth	Other		Since birth	Other
	387	32		74	12
	91%	8%		86%	14%

[1] The disaggregation on enrolment status is presented here only for DP1 as the cohort had graduated from secondary school and higher education before DP2 and new enrolment data was not collected past DP1.

DP2	Secondary school			Higher Education	
	328			75	
	Gender				
	Female	Male		Female	Male
	62	266		4	71
	19%	81%		5%	95%
	Time spent as a refugee				
	Since birth	Other		Since birth	Other
	296	25		63	11
	92%	8%		85%	15%

DP3	Secondary school		Higher Education	
	255		58	
	Gender			
	Female	Male	Female	Male
	43	212	3	55
	17%	83%	5%	95%
	Time spent as a refugee			
	Since birth	Other	Since birth	Other
	231	18	48	9
	93%	7%	84%	16%

Demographic disaggregation of the Pakistan KII dataset

DP1	Secondary School		Higher Education	
	NA		NA	
DP2	Secondary School		Higher Education	
	12		0	
	Gender			
	Female	Male		
	6	6		
	50%	50%		
DP3	Secondary School		Higher Education	
	16		8	
	Gender			
	Female	Male	Female	Male
	4	12	2	6
	25%	75%	25%	75%

Demographic disaggregation of the Pakistan FGD dataset

DP2	Higher Education		
	3		
	Group size		
	Two participants	Four participants	Five participants

	1	1	1
	Group size		
	All Female	All Male	
	0	3	
	0%	100%	

Annex 3: Disaggregation of the Rwanda data

Demographic disaggregation of the Rwanda survey dataset

DP1	Secondary school			Higher Education	
	479			135	
	Gender				
	Female	Male		Female	Male
	221	258		42	93
	46%	54%		31%	69%
	Enrolment status				
	Refugee status			Refugee status	
	479			135	
	Nationality				
	DRC	Burundi	Somalia	DRC	Burundi
	178	300	1	90	45
	37%	63%	0%	67%	33%
	Time spent as a refugee				
	Since birth	Other		Since birth	Other
	99	380		25	110
	21%	79%		19%	81%
DP2	Secondary school			Higher Education	
	385			116	
	Gender				
	Female	Male		Female	Male
	178	207		36	80
	49%	54%		31%	69%
	Enrolment status				
	Refugee status			Refugee status	
	385			116	
	Nationality				
	DRC	Burundi		DRC	Burundi
	147	238		81	35

	38%	62%	70%	30%
	Time spent as a refugee			
	Since birth	Other	Since birth	Other
	72	251	27	89
	22%	78%	23%	77%
DP3	Secondary school		Higher Education	
	329		103	
	Gender			
	Female	Male	Female	Male
	154	175	32	71
	47%	53%	31%	69%
	Enrolment status			
	Refugee status		Refugee status	
	329		103	
	Nationality			
	DRC	Burundi	DRC	Burundi
	123	205	73	30
	37%	62%	71%	29%
	Time spent as a refugee			
	Since birth	Other	Since birth	Other
	63	266	17	85
	19%	81%	17%	83%

Demographic disaggregation of the Rwanda KII dataset

DP1	Secondary School		Higher Education	
	NA		NA	
DP2	Secondary School		Higher Education	
	37		8	
	Gender		Gender	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
	18	19	4	4
	49%	51%	50%	50%
	Secondary School		Higher Education	

DP3	18		9	
	Gender			
	Female	Male	Female	Male
	10	8	3	6
	56%	44%	33%	67%

Demographic disaggregation of the Rwanda FGD dataset

DP2	Higher Education		
	10[1]		
	Group size		
	Two participants	Three participants	Four participants
	2	6	1
	Group size		
	All Female	All Male	
	4	5	
	40%	50%	

[1] The participant information and gender disaggregation were not collected at one of the FGDs.

Annex 4: Exemplar longitudinal survey questions

The following questions are from the secondary school and higher education surveys at the final data point (DP3), conducted by the Youth Researcher team in Rwanda. Equivalent, contextually-specific surveys were deployed in Pakistan.

DP3 secondary school survey (Rwanda)

Introduction and consent
Youth Researcher - select your name
Jigsaw participant code - you MUST fill this in before submitting the survey.
The participant could not be traced.
Was this participant surveyed at DP2?
Please can you confirm your name?
Consent - Hello, my name is [NAME] I would like to ask for your permission to conduct a survey with you on behalf of a research project which aims to show the impact of secondary and university education on young refugees. We would like to ask you some questions about you, how you feel about education and your future plans. You will have spoken with me or one of my fellow researchers six months or a year ago, and now we are here to talk with you again. I will ask you some of the same questions as before. You do not need to give the same answers as you gave before - I am interested to know what your perspective is today. This will be the final survey of the study, but we may ask to speak with you one final time with some different questions. I would like to talk to you for about 20-30 minutes today. If you choose to take part, things you say will not be shared with your family, employer or school/university, and will not affect your grades or relationship with UNHCR in any way. It is your choice to take part or not. If you choose to take part, you can refuse to answer any questions you are uncomfortable with, and you can choose to stop the process at any time. We will record your answers to use them in our research but we will not mention you by name or share your personal details with anybody outside of our team. However, if I believe that you or another person might be at risk, it is my duty to report this to somebody. We would also like to use some of this information about the role of technology in education during Covid-19 for associated research with the EdTech Hub (visit www.edtechhub.org for more information). Please let us know if you would not like your information to be used in this associated research. Do you have any questions about what I've said? Do you agree to take part in our research to help show that it's important for refugee young people to be able to participate in secondary and higher education? Is there anyone else who also needs to give permission for you to participate?
Youth Researcher answer: was anyone else apart from the participant asked for consent?
Who was asked for consent?
Reason for not providing consent.
Participant details

1. What is your ID number?
2. How old are you?
3. How many years have you been a refugee in Rwanda?
4. What year of education are you currently enrolled in?
Other: year of education
5a. What school are you currently enrolled in?
Other: name of school
5b. What university are you currently enrolled in?
Other: name of university
5c. What type of TVET or further education are you currently enrolled or participating in?
5d. What TVET or further education college are you currently enrolled in?
6. Are you married?
6b.How long have you been married?
7a. What district of Rwanda do you live in?
Other: what country outside of Rwanda do you live in?
Other: what district of Rwanda do you live in?
7b. What district of Rwanda do you currently stay in?
Other: what country outside of Rwanda do you currently stay in?
Other: what district do you currently stay in?
COVID-19 DP2
8. Where did you spend most of your time during the period that schools and universities were closed?
Other: in what country outside of Rwanda did you spend most of your time during school closures?
Other: where did you spend most of your time during school closures?
9. What did you do during school/university closures due to COVID-19?
Other: did during closures
10. What resources did you use for learning?

Other: resources for learning
11. How did your school/university support your learning while it was closed?
12a. What technological devices did you have access to in order to help you continue learning when you could not access in-person school due to Covid-19 closures?
Other: access to tech devices
12b. What was the most important technological device to help you continue learning when you could not access in-person school due to Covid-19 closures?
Other: most important tech device
12c. Who owns this device?
13. What challenges did you face in trying to use technology to help with your learning when you could not access in-person school due to Covid-19 closures?
Other: challenges
14. Where did you go for help with learning?
Other: help with learning
15. How much did you feel you learned during school/university closures?
16a. Please summarise the paid work you engaged in
16b. Were you doing this work before the school/university closures, or was this new?
16c. What was the main motivation for you to start this work?
Other: motivation
16d. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
16e. How many hours per week did you spend on the paid work?
16f. What impact did the paid work have on your ability to do your best in your studies?
16g. Did you continue with this work when schools and universities reopened?
17a. Please summarise the unpaid work you engaged in
17b. Was this unpaid work you were doing before the school/university closures or was this new?
17c. What was the main motivation for you to start this unpaid work?
Other: motivation
17d. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?

17e. How many hours per week did you spend on the unpaid work?
17f. What impact did the unpaid work have on your ability to do your best in your studies?
17g. Did you continue with this unpaid work when universities reopened?
COVID-19 DP3
18. Did you return to school after the first university/school closures from March to November 2020?
18b. What is the main reason that caused you to drop out of school during this time?
Other: main reason that caused you to drop out of school during this time?
19. Is your school/university currently open?
19a. Are you currently attending classes now that your school/university has re-opened?
19b. Do you plan on returning to school/university once it reopens?
19c. What is the main reason why you will not be returning to school?
Other: main reason why you will not be returning to school?
20. Compared to before COVID-19, how would you rank your overall well-being?
Impact of education
21. What is the most significant change that has happened in your life as a result of participating in secondary school?
Other: change as a result of participating in secondary school
22a. What is the most significant challenge you currently face or faced in completing secondary school?
Other: most significant challenge you currently face or faced in completing secondary school?
22b. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
23a. What one change would make / would have made the biggest positive difference to your ability to do your best at secondary school?
Other: What one change would make the biggest positive difference to your ability to do your best at secondary school?
23b. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
Transitions
24. Did you graduate from secondary school?

24b. Why did you not graduate from secondary school?
Other: Why did you not graduate from secondary school?
25a. What are you doing now that you have finished secondary school?
Other: What are you doing now that you have finished secondary school?
25b. Who decided that you should do this after finishing school?
25c. What were the factors that led to this happening?
Other: what were the factors that led to this happening?
25d. What is the most important factor?
Other: what is the most important factor
26. How satisfied or content are you with what you are doing currently?
27. Is this what you planned to do after finishing school?
28. To what extent have your post-graduation plans been negatively affected by Covid-19?
29a. Is there anything that you would rather be doing now?
29b. What would you rather be doing?
Other: What would you rather be doing?
29c. How likely is it that you will be able to do this in the future?
29d. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
30a. What are the specific obstacles that you have faced in doing what you planned to do after school?
Other: What are the specific obstacles that you have faced in doing what you planned to do after school?
30b. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
31a. What is the biggest challenge you face in your life now that you have finished secondary school?
Other: What is the biggest challenge you face in your life now that you have finished secondary school?
31b. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
32. Where do you find help to overcome the challenges you face?
Other: Where do you find help to overcome the challenges you face?

33. Do you feel that you have achieved the goals you set for yourself after leaving school?
34a. How likely do you think it is that you will achieve your goals in life now that you have finished secondary school?
34b. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
35. What is the most significant way in which secondary school prepared you for your future career?
Other: What is the most significant way in which secondary school prepared you for your future career?
36. What is the most significant way in which secondary school could be changed in order to better prepare you for your future career?
Other: What is the most significant way in which secondary school could be changed in order to better prepare you for your future career?
Ending
That was my last question for you. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experiences of secondary school?
Are you willing to be contacted by our research team the next time we would like to talk with you?
How can we contact you?
Please can you provide all the phone numbers you can be contacted on?
What is your email address?
Which social media platform and what is your name/handle on the platform?
What is your address?
Other: contact
Do you have any questions for me?
Youth Researcher to answer: was this completed on the phone or face-to-face?
Youth Researcher to answer: was anyone else present during the survey?
Who was present during the survey?
Youth Researcher observations

DP3 higher education survey (Rwanda)

Introduction and consent

Youth Researcher - select your name
Jigsaw participant code - you MUST fill this in before submitting the survey.
The participant could not be traced.
Was this participant surveyed at DP2?
Please can you confirm your name?
Consent - Hello, my name is [NAME] I would like to ask for your permission to conduct a survey with you on behalf of a research project which aims to show the impact of secondary and university education on young refugees. We would like to ask you some questions about you, how you feel about education and your future plans. You will have spoken with me or one of my fellow researchers six months or a year ago, and now we are here to talk with you again. I will ask you some of the same questions as before. You do not need to give the same answers as you gave before - I am interested to know what your perspective is today. This will be the final survey of the study, but we may ask to speak with you one final time with some different questions. I would like to talk to you for about 20-30 minutes today. If you choose to take part, things you say will not be shared with your family, employer or school/university, and will not affect your grades or relationship with UNHCR in any way. It is your choice to take part or not. If you choose to take part, you can refuse to answer any questions you are uncomfortable with, and you can choose to stop the process at any time. We will record your answers to use them in our research but we will not mention you by name or share your personal details with anybody outside of our team. However, if I believe that you or another person might be at risk, it is my duty to report this to somebody. We would also like to use some of this information about the role of technology in education during Covid-19 for associated research with the EdTech Hub (visit www.edtechhub.org for more information). Please let us know if you would not like your information to be used in this associated research. Do you have any questions about what I've said? Do you agree to take part in our research to help show that it's important for refugee young people to be able to participate in secondary and higher education? Is there anyone else who also needs to give permission for you to participate?
Youth Researcher answer: was anyone else apart from the participant asked for consent?
Who was asked for consent?
Reason for not providing consent.
Participant details
1. What is your ID number?
2. How old are you?
3. How many years have you been a refugee in Rwanda?
4. What year of education are you currently enrolled in?
Other: year of education

5a. What university are you currently enrolled in for your undergraduate degree?
Other: name of undergraduate university
5b. What university are you currently enrolled in for your postgraduate degree?
Other: name of postgraduate university
5c. What type of TVET or further education are you currently enrolled or participating in?
5d. What TVET or further education college are you currently enrolled in?
6. Are you married?
6b.How long have you been married?
7a. What district of Rwanda do you live in?
Other: what country outside of Rwanda do you live in?
Other: what district of Rwanda do you live in?
7b. What district of Rwanda do you currently stay in?
Other: what country outside of Rwanda do you currently stay in?
Other: what district do you currently stay in?
COVID-19 DP2
8. Where did you spend most of your time during the period that schools and universities were closed?
Other: in what country outside of Rwanda did you spend most of your time during school closures?
Other: where did you spend most of your time during school closures?
9. What did you do during school/university closures due to COVID-19?
Other: did during closures
10. What resources did you use for learning?
Other: resources for learning
11. How did your university/college support your learning while it was closed?
12a. What technological devices did you have access to in order to help you continue learning when you could not access in-person school/university due to Covid-19 closures?
Other: access to tech devices
12b. What was the most important technological device to help you continue learning when

you could not access in-person school/university due to Covid-19 closures?
Other: most important tech device
12c. Who owns this device?
13. What challenges did you face in trying to use technology to help with your learning when you could not access in-person school due to Covid-19 closures?
Other: challenges
14. Where did you go for help with learning?
Other: help with learning
15. How much did you feel you learned during school/university closures?
16a. Please summarise the paid work you engaged in
16b. Were you doing this work before the university closures, or was this new?
16c. What was the main motivation for you to start this work?
Other: motivation
16d. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
16e. How many hours per week did you spend on the paid work?
16f. What impact did the paid work have on your ability to do your best in your studies?
16g. Did you continue with this work when schools and universities reopened?
17a. Please summarise the unpaid work you engaged in
17b. Was this unpaid work you were doing before the university closures or was this new?
17c. What was the main motivation for you to start this unpaid work?
Other: motivation
17d. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
17e. How many hours per week did you spend on the unpaid work?
17f. What impact did the unpaid work have on your ability to do your best in your studies?
17g. Did you continue with this unpaid work when universities reopened?
COVID-19 DP3
18. Did you return to university/further education after the first university closures from March to November 2020?

18b. What is the main reason that caused you to drop out of university/further education during this time?
Other: main reason that caused you to drop out of university/college during this time?
19. Is your university/college currently open?
19a. Are you currently attending classes now that your university/college has re-opened?
19b. Do you plan on returning to university/college once it reopens?
19c. What is the main reason why you will not be returning to university/college?
Other: main reason why you will not be returning to university/college?
20. Compared to before COVID-19, how would you rank your overall well-being?
Impact of education
21. What is the most significant change that has happened in your life as a result of participating in university/college?
Other: change as a result of participating in university/further education
22a. What is the most significant challenge you currently face or faced in completing university/further education?
Other: most significant challenge you currently face or faced in completing university/further education?
22b. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
23a. What one change would make / would have made the biggest positive difference to your ability to do your best at university/college?
Other: What one change would make the biggest positive difference to your ability to do your best at university/college?
23b. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
Transitions
24. Did you graduate from university/further education?
24b. Why did you not graduate from university/further education?
Other: Why did you not graduate from university/further education?
25a. What are you doing now that you have finished your undergraduate degree/course?
Other: What are you doing now that you have finished university/further education?

25b. Who decided that you should do this after finishing your undergraduate degree/course?
25c. What were the factors that led to this happening?
Other: what were the factors that led to this happening?
25d. What is the most important factor?
Other: what is the most important factor
26. How satisfied or content are you with what you are doing currently?
27. Is this what you planned to do after finishing your undergraduate degree/course?
28. To what extent have your post-graduation plans been negatively affected by Covid-19?
29a. Is there anything that you would rather be doing now?
29b. What would you rather be doing?
Other: What would you rather be doing?
29c. How likely is it that you will be able to do this in the future?
29d. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
30a. What are the specific obstacles that you have faced in doing what you planned to do after school?
Other: What are the specific obstacles that you have faced in doing what you planned to do after school?
30b. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
31a. What is the biggest challenge you face in your life now that you have finished your undergraduate degree/course?
Other: What is the biggest challenge you face in your life now that you have finished your undergraduate degree/course?
31b. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?
32. Where do you find help to overcome the challenges you face?
Other: Where do you find help to overcome the challenges you face?
33. Do you feel that you have achieved the goals you set for yourself after finishing your undergraduate degree/course?
34a. How likely do you think it is that you will achieve your goals in life now that you have finished your undergraduate degree/course?
34b. To what extent is your answer to that question influenced by COVID-19?

35. What is the most significant way in which university/further education prepared you for your future career?
Other: What is the most significant way in which university/further education prepared you for your future career?
36. What is the most significant way in which university/further education could be changed in order to better prepare you for your future career?
Other: What is the most significant way in which university/further education could be changed in order to better prepare you for your future career?
Ending
That was my last question for you. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experiences of secondary school?
Are you willing to be contacted by our research team the next time we would like to talk with you?
How can we contact you?
Please can you provide all the phone numbers you can be contacted on?
What is your email address?
Which social media platform and what is your name/handle on the platform?
What is your address?
Other: contact
Do you have any questions for me?
Youth Researcher to answer: was this completed on the phone or face-to-face?
Youth Researcher to answer: was anyone else present during the survey?
Who was present during the survey?
Youth Researcher observations

Annex 5: Qualitative coding framework

List of Deductive Codes

Theme (parent code)	Code name (child code)	Definition
Factors influencing education	Financial Challenges	All references to financial challenges that have impacted a person's ability to access, complete or excel in education.
	Lack of Resources	All references to lack of resources that have impacted a person's ability to access, complete or excel in education.
	Other Barriers	References to any other barriers that have prevented a person from accessing, completing or excelling in education (non-Covid related)
	Quality of teaching	All opinions related to the quality of teaching received (not related to Covid-19 closures).
	Structural factors	All references to political/structural factors that may have an impact on education, including the Afghan regime change (PK), the switch to a Pakistani curriculum in Afghan schools (PK), and the closure of Gihembe Camp (RW).
	Teacher support received	All references to the level of training and support received by teachers involved in educating refugee students (non-Covid related).
Impact of Education (experienced)	Impact on learning outcomes	Any references to impacts of education on knowledge and learning outcomes, which participants have already experienced.
	Impact on technical skills	Any references to impacts of education on vocational and technical skills, which participants have already experienced.
	Impact on family/community	Any references to the impact of education on a person's ability to help their family and community, which participants have already experienced.
	Impact on integration	All references to the perceived impact of education on a person's ability to become an active member of the host community society, which participants have already experienced.
Covid-19	Impact on learning	All references to impacts on learning resulting from the school closures due to Covid-19

	Impact on teaching	All references to impacts on teaching and teachers' experiences (including teachers' wellbeing) during the school closures due to Covid-19
	Impact on wellbeing	All references to impacts on students' wellbeing resulting from Covid-19 (both generally and due to school closures).
	Impact on student retention	All references to drop-out/non-completion of education relating to school closures and Covid-19.
	Support received and required (students)	Any reference to support received by students to continue learning during the school closures, and to catch-up after returning to school as well as suggestions for additional support that would have been helpful during that time but was not received.
	Support received and required (teachers)	Any reference to support received by teachers to continue teaching during the school closures, as well as suggestions for additional support that would have been helpful during that time but was not received.
Transitions SS to HE	HE Aspirations	Any reference to aspirations and ambitions to enter higher education.
	HE Attainment	Any reference to successful transition from SS to HE.
	Factors influencing transitions	Any details of factors that have prevented or enabled successful transition from SS to HE.
Transitions to employment	Employment Aspirations	Any reference to aspirations and ambitions to enter employment
	Employment Attainment	Any reference to successful transition from post-primary education into employment and opinions of the job attained.
	Factors influencing employment	Any details of factors that have prevented or enabled successful transition into the employment a person aspired to attain, or to any employment.
Importance of education	Perceived importance of education	All reference to the perceived broader value and importance of education e.g. for wider society
	Factors influencing decision-making	All reference to factors that have influenced a person's decisions regarding their education or employment
Recommendations	Education institution-level	All suggestions for improvements to be made at the secondary/tertiary institution-level, including teaching

	Improvements	and school management practices, school facilities, teacher training etc.
	UNHCR Improvements	All suggestions for additional support that UNHCR should provide in order to promote access and completion of education, and successful transitions to HE, post-graduate study, and employment.
	Government Improvements	All suggestions for additional support or changes in policy that the government should enact in order to promote access and completion of education, and successful transitions to HE, post-graduate study, and employment.
	Covid Recovery Improvements	Any suggestions for improvements specifically relating to Covid recovery policies and practices at school-level, from UNHCR and government.
Other	Additional	Any additional comments made by the participant about their experience of education, which do not fit into the categories above.
	Questions	Any questions asked by the participant.
	Observations	Any observations made by the youth researcher(s) about the KII
	Quotes	Any key quotes from the KII

List of Inductive Codes

Theme (parent code)	Code name (child code)	Definition
Factors influencing education	Refugee Status	All references to challenges specific to refugees' legal status in their host country (as opposed to nationals) that have impacted a person's ability to access, complete or excel in education.
	Administrative issues	All references to challenges related to bureaucracy or administrative process that have impacted a person's ability to access, complete or excel in education.
	Other positive factors	All references to other positive factors influencing students' education experiences or their decisions about their education or employment transitions not covered in the other codes.
Impact of education (experienced)	Impact on transferable skills	Any references to impacts of education on personal development, including soft/transferable skills, such as, critical-thinking, communication skills etc, which

		participants have already experienced.
	Attitudinal impacts	Any references to impacts of education on students' attitudes, including confidence, anxiety, enjoyment or interest, which participants have already experienced.
	Impact on employability	All references to the impact of education on students' employability, which participants have already experienced.
Impact of Education (anticipated)	Impact on learning outcomes	Any references to impacts of education on knowledge and learning outcomes, which participants anticipate they will experience.
	Impact on employability	All references to the anticipated impact of education on students' employability.
	Impact on technical skills	Any references to impacts of education on vocational and technical skills, which participants anticipate they will experience.
	Impact on family/community	Any references to the impact of education on a person's ability to help their family and community, which participants anticipate they will experience.
	Impact on integration	All references to the perceived impact of education on a person's ability to become an active member of the host community society, which participants anticipate they will experience.
	Impact on transferable skills	Any references to impacts of education on personal development, including soft/transferable skills, such as, critical-thinking, communication skills etc, which participants anticipate they will experience.
	Attitudinal impacts	Any references to impacts of education on students' attitudes, including confidence, anxiety, enjoyment or interest, which participants anticipate they will experience.
Covid-19	Impact on future plans	All references to impacts on students' future plans or ambitions resulting from the school closures due to Covid-19
Transitions SS to HE	Changes in HE aspirations	Any references to students changing their minds about whether to transition to HE after secondary school, or changing their minds about where or what they would like to study at HE level.
Transitions to employment	Changes in employment aspirations	Any references to students changing their minds about whether to enter employment after either secondary or higher education, or changing their minds about what

		type of employment they are aiming to find
Recommendations	Wider society improvements	All suggestions for improvements that different actors (such as businesses, community organisations, parents) within wider society could make in order to promote access and completion of education, and successful transitions to HE, post-graduate study, and employment.

Annex 6: Research ethics framework

The table below details the ethical framework, including the general protocols followed and considerations specific to the project (developed during the research inception phase in 2019). This framework was considered a living document and was amended and updated throughout the life-cycle of the research, as needed. It was the responsibility of the entire research team to uphold and maintain the ethical standards set out in this framework, including the Youth Researchers and their supervisors. It was the responsibility of the Project Manager to follow up on reported incidents of ethical breaches, and to amend and update the assessment.

Commitments	Protocol	Application to this study
Informed consent	Ongoing and voluntary consent is sought from all research participants. Consent for research with children and adults at risk will be assessed on a case-by-case basis; Jigsaw believes that children and adults at risk should be consulted for consent where appropriate. Participants are able to withdraw their consent at any stage of the research.	Oral consent will be sought from the children and young adults in the study. To ensure consent is informed, the enumerators will provide details of: the purpose of the project; management of the participants' data, including limitations to confidentiality; and the participants' right to withdraw consent at any time. In Pakistan, the caregivers of female youth researchers and research participants will be asked for consent for the female under their care to participate in the research.
Sufficient staff training	Jigsaw staff are trained in research ethics and current best practice in research. Jigsaw trains contracted enumerators in ethics before data collection begins.	The youth researchers will have a module on research ethics during their first week of training. Particular attention will be given to consideration of potential ethical issues of peer research. This process will be participatory; the youth researchers will be asked for scenarios they expect to encounter and to discuss the ethical approach to each scenario.
Appropriate data collection tools	Jigsaw uses innovative and project-appropriate data collection methods. Data collection is often participatory. The tools are developed to be inclusive and accessible to all participants. Data collection tools are appropriate to the local context.	This project is participatory in its design, which includes the data collection tools. Jigsaw will provide training to the youth research in basic design of data collection methods, and the research team will be included in the tool design process. Instruments will be child and youth-friendly and inclusive of persons with disabilities. The surveys will be designed using gender-neutral language. Focus group techniques will be adapted to ensure a child-friendly and disability-inclusive

		approach, through the creative use of drawings, simple visuals, games and objects.
Minimum standards in partnerships with external evaluators and enumerators	Jigsaw regularly works with externally contracted enumerators. The recruitment process ensures that only candidates with the appropriate and relevant expertise are selected. If enumerators are contracted directly, the recruitment process follows Jigsaw's rigorous procedures. Where external evaluators are not recruited directly by Jigsaw, the recruitment process of the supplier is reviewed to ensure it meets the requirements of the project.	Youth researchers will be recruited in a fair and transparent process. Applicants from marginalised communities will be encouraged, this includes female researchers and researchers with disabilities. Jigsaw has a detailed job description for the role of youth researcher and this is clear regarding the minimum standards required for the role. Applicants will be interviewed and the top candidates will be invited to a training week. The training week serves a dual purpose as the final step in the recruitment process. After the training week, 12 youth researchers in Rwanda and 12 youth researchers in Pakistan will be selected to participate in the study.
Data protection	Jigsaw has a comprehensive Data Protection Policy. Data is stored on a secure server, and access is restricted to staff who require it.	To facilitate multi-year cohort tracking, names, phone numbers and other personal details will be collected. These will be accessible by the Jigsaw research team, but not available outside of this. The reports will be anonymised. Jigsaw will sign a data protection agreement with UNHCR to enable sharing of youth information between the two organisations and ensure security by limiting the sharing beyond that. All youth researchers will sign a contract and code of conduct, to include expectations on confidentiality and privacy. The enumerator training will include a module on data handling and protection. Research participants will be fully informed of the purpose of the study and how their information will be used. They will have the opportunity to stop their participation in the study at any point. Research participants, youth researchers and other stakeholders will be provided with a clear referral pathway to bring attention to a potential misuse of data.

Confidentiality and anonymity	All information provided in data collection is treated confidentially and anonymously, except when safeguarding procedures are triggered. Participants are made aware of this exception.	While names will be collected to track students, youth researchers will make clear to participants that their name will not be reported and their individual results will not be disclosed to anyone inside or outside the school. No individual's names will be used in the final report: where focus group participants are quoted they will be referred to only by their category. Composite case studies may be created to uphold confidentiality and protect the identity of young people where necessary.
Research participant safeguarding	The physical, social and emotional well-being of participants is of central importance to research design. Researchers are expected to follow the children and adults at risk safeguarding policy and the code of conduct.	Research participants are at risk of re-traumatisation if the data collection provokes a trigger. Jigsaw will work with the youth researchers to minimise risks of trauma triggers in the research design process, whilst recognising that triggers vary between individuals. Training for youth researchers will include a module on protection issues, including indicators and proxy indicators, the responsibilities of the researcher, and next steps in case of a reported or suspected protection need. Jigsaw will work with UNHCR to identify relevant local support services that are available to the research participants, and this information will be provided to the participants during data collection.

Researcher safeguarding	The physical, social and emotional well-being of researchers is considered in the design of research. Research supervisors provide pastoral support to researchers, and additional welfare provision is available as needed.	Jigsaw recognises that there are potential risks to the youth researchers that arise from their participation in the study. These risks are mostly psychological, as the researchers could experience trauma triggered by listening to stories similar to their own. The data collection tools will be designed in a participatory manner with the youth researchers to minimise the risk of traumatisation, and will not include sensitive topics unless they are critical to the research. Jigsaw provides overall pastoral support for the youth researcher team. Jigsaw will work with UNHCR to identify relevant local support services that will be made available to the youth researchers if needed. The youth researcher training will include a module on self-care in the field. This will allow the team to reflect on potential hazards in their context and appropriate self-care techniques. During data collection, a Jigsaw staff member will facilitate regular debriefs with the researcher team. The debriefs will provide an opportunity to discuss issues in data collection as well as physical, social and emotional challenges. The researchers are also at risk of unintended social consequences arising from their participation and the incentive wage that they will receive. To mitigate this, the appropriate incentive wage will be decided in conjunction with UNHCR. Jigsaw staff are expected to undertake background reading on the local context, and have security briefings upon arrival in-country from UNHCR. A debrief with a senior member of the Jigsaw team upon return will identify if there is a need for follow-up medical or psychological support.
Research location selection	Research is conducted in a location accessible to all participants, including participants with	Jigsaw will identify potential interview locations in conjunction with local UNHCR offices. This will include at least one accessible location.

	disabilities and people living in hard-to-reach areas. Location selection also considers potential local cultural factors which may impact accessibility, and best practice conducting research with children and adults at risk.	The youth researcher training will include a section on best practice in interviews. This will cover setting up a safe and comfortable interview space. In Rwanda all camp locations are relatively accessible and so the final decision will be based on UNHCR's recommendation for the most appropriate sites for participating secondary schools. Almost all HE students are in Kigali. In Pakistan a key criterion for the selection of research location was the ease of movement for both researchers and participants. Focus group discussions conducted by Jigsaw with the youth refugee population confirmed that Peshawar city and the environs are safe to travel in and to, both for females as well as males. The potential research participants who live in rural areas can be accessed by youth researchers, as many are from rural areas, but it is not recommended for Jigsaw staff to travel far outside the city limits.
Clear incident reporting	Jigsaw works with clients to decide on incident reporting pathways for a project. Jigsaw has reporting procedures for safeguarding issues related to children and adults at risk. In case of a breach of ethics, there is a named person on each evaluation team for reporting purposes. Enumerator training includes information on incident reporting procedures. This includes reporting procedures for a breach of: the ethics framework, the code of conduct, and the children and adults at risk safeguarding policy.	In case of a suspected breach of the ethics as outlined in this framework, members of the research team should immediately report the incident to Matt Thomas (m.thomas@jigsawconsult.com). The report of the breach should include the following information, where available: the specific ethical commitment; the time, date and location of the incident; the person who may have breached the commitment; details of the incident. Reports will be treated confidentially and will be followed up in a timely manner by the named staff member.

Active dissemination of results	Research participants are informed about the dissemination plan for the research. Jigsaw encourages the dissemination of research findings to participants, for example, through a summary sheet designed specifically for the research participants. A summary sheet includes the key findings, the next steps after the study, and answers to the most common questions.	The research findings will be made available through a section of the UNHCR education website to ensure maximum accessibility. All publications will be open access and specific reports will be designed to be accessible to refugee communities.
Independence	Jigsaw upholds high standards with respect to research independence. Jigsaw staff are expected to disclose any actual or perceived conflict of interest with their private interests and the research, including but not limited to, the research objectives and stakeholders. Jigsaw expects research partners to follow the same practice.	There is no perceived or actual conflict of interest that arises from Jigsaw's involvement in this research.

Annex 7: Risk assessment

The risk assessment outlined below was developed during the inception phase of the project in 2019, and outlines the potential risks that could impact the research. Each risk is accompanied by an assessment of the probability of the risk occurring, the impact on the research should the risk occur, and a suitable mitigation and correction strategy.

Risk category	Probability	Potential impact	Planned mitigation/corrective actions
High attrition rate - Research participants The research will involve tracking a cohort of participants beyond education. As such, participants may be uncontactable, especially at later data collection points, or they may refuse to be included in multiple rounds of research.	High	Medium	The sample size accounts for an attrition rate of up to 30%. Efforts will be taken to reduce the attrition and this will be done by tracking all participants thoroughly and working with established implementing partners and youth networks to maintain contact throughout. A range of contact details will be collected from participants, including: a phone number, an alternative phone number, and an email address.
High attrition rate - Youth researchers There is a risk that the refugee youth researchers are unable to participate over the course of the project.	High	Medium	The youth researchers will be incentivised to sustain their participation through a combination of factors: the opportunity to gain an accredited qualification on completion of the study, the opportunity to benefit their community through the study, and the incentive wage that they receive for the days worked on the study. The shortlist of youth researchers in each country will consist of 18 individuals. All 18 candidates will attend the initial training as the final stage of the recruitment process. In case a youth researcher drops out during the process, one of the 6 applicants who was not initially chosen will be contacted to participate, assuming they meet the minimum standards required.
Inconsistencies in data collection	High	High	The youth researchers will participate in thorough training

The youth researchers are not expected to have any prior familiarity with the data collection tools. The research will be undertaken in two different contexts. These factors could lead to errors in data and uneven data collection.			before data collection. This training will cover technical instructions on how to use the hardware and software involved, as well as time for pilot data collection and feedback. The data will be reviewed daily by a Jigsaw staff member at the beginning of the data collection period, and then spot checks will be conducted. The youth researchers will discuss the challenges they face during data collection and will be encouraged to support and teach each other. This same review procedure will be followed at each data collection point.
Misuse of data Personal information of research participants will be collected to facilitate longitudinal cohort tracking.	Low	High	The youth researchers will have limited access to the participant details as required for the data collection. The published reports will not include personal details of research participants. The research team, including the youth researchers and Jigsaw staff, will be expected to follow Jigsaw's data protection policy.
Change in staff members - Internal Jigsaw recognises that staff turnover is a risk in multi-year projects.	Medium	Low	Jigsaw stores all project information in a shared database to which all research team members have access. As part of a staff member's exit strategy, there are detailed requirements for handover documents and meetings to ensure all the relevant information is retained.
Change in staff members - External Liaison staff members from UNHCR field offices could leave during the course of the research.	High	Low	Jigsaw will request a handover meeting between the leaving staff member and the new liaison to facilitate a smooth transition.
Harm to research participants - Psychological Research participants are at	Low	High	The research participants are refugees, as such they are recognised as a group at risk. Jigsaw has a children and adults at risk safeguarding policy which will be

risk of re-traumatisation if the data collection provokes a trigger.			followed by its staff and the youth researchers alike. All research team members are required to sign a code of conduct. Jigsaw will work with the youth researchers to minimise risks of trauma triggers in the research design process, whilst recognising that triggers vary between individuals. Jigsaw will work with UNHCR to identify relevant local support services that are available to the research participants, and this information will be provided to the participants during data collection.
Harm to research participants - Physical The research is not expected to pose an undue physical risk to research participants.	Low	High	At the time of a health or safety incident, a first aid contact, or the emergency services, will be contacted, as appropriate. Obvious and easy action that could prevent another incident will be taken if applicable. The incident will be reported to Matt Thomas (m.thomas@jigsawconsult.com) with the following information: date, time, location, name of person reporting, name of person(s) involved in the incident, circumstances of the incident, and any actions taken. The location will be removed if there is a high probability of the incident occurring again, or if the consequences of an incident are severe.
Harm to researchers - Psychological The youth researchers could experience trauma triggered by listening to stories similar to their own.	Low	High	The data collection tools will be designed in a participatory manner with the youth researchers to minimise the risk of trauma, and will not include sensitive topics as these are not required for the research. See the ethics framework for more information.
Harm to researchers - Physical The research is not expected to pose an	Low	High	A key criterion for the selection of research locations was the ease of movement, for both researchers and participants. In Rwanda ease of movement is

undue physical risk to researchers, however, the contexts in Rwanda and Pakistan may change over the course of the research.			relatively straightforward because of the small distances and limited security concerns. As a result, the study locations are simply agreed with UNHCR staff in country. In Pakistan at all times, Jigsaw staff will be restricted to travel only in Islamabad, and Peshawar city and its environs. This is subject to change based on travel advice from UNHCR Pakistan and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Youth researchers are able to travel more widely, and will not be asked to travel to areas that become more insecure over the course of the research. Local UNHCR security procedures will be followed in case the security situation changes whilst Jigsaw staff are in-country. In case of a health or safety incident, this will be reported to Matt Thomas (m.thomas@jigsawconsult.com).