

Complementary Pathways through Education for Refugees in the West and Central Africa Region:

Mapping Refugee Education Opportunities

Final Report

Contractor: **UNHCR, Regional Bureau
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The nature of the challenge

To extend the provision and improve uptake of complementary pathways through education by refugees from and within West and Central Africa (WCA).

Extending opportunities to complement resettlement of refugees from, and, within the WCA region, will require collective action by a broad spectrum of stakeholders.

UNHCR can contribute significantly by engaging its resources to catalyse processes and mechanisms that enable the stakeholder community to design and coordinate mutually reinforcing actions aimed at positively influencing the provision and uptake of complementary pathways through education.

The findings in literature and country data have revealed a mix of factors dominant in the optimisation of the offer and uptake of education pathways by refugees in WCA. Understanding the detailed dynamic of “push and pull” of refugee enrolment will be particularly important in identifying and mobilising levers of change.

A collective approach to addressing the challenges to availability and accessibility will be needed to meet UNHCR’s 2030 target – of 15 percent of college-eligible refugees enrolled in Higher Education (HE), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), or connected education programmes in host and third countries.

Strengths and weaknesses: key findings

- **WCA region has an inherent advantage in the existing conditions of entry, residence and establishment afforded mutually to citizens of member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and, with less consistency, to the Economic Community of Central Africa States (ECCAS).**
- **Building knowledge and recommendations upon reliable data is critical.** The review of country data highlighted profound gaps which in turn become knowledge gaps.
- **Practical, concrete, and immediate challenges to refugee access to educational opportunities documented in the literature reviewed are manifest in the WCA region and countries.**
- **Contextual analysis permits a meaningful categorisation of countries as presenting favourable, somewhat favourable, or limited indicators** for the development of complementary pathways.

The principles of freedom of movement applied broadly within the WCA region offer refugees, who are citizen of Member States, the possibility to claim their rights of access to durable solutions through educational pathways across ECOWAS and ECCAS host countries.

Push data – country level data on the numbers and profiles of refugees accessing or eligible to access HE or TVET, was limited. Similarly, reliable and consistent pull data – the types of HE and TVET programmes available, their scale and the entry criteria applied to them, was fractured. It was particularly difficult to assess the availability of TVET opportunities which are frequently outside of national education frameworks. Given that refugee access must be viewed alongside provision for

nationals, the challenge of obtaining reliable data on potential refugee “demand” was compounded by the paucity of information on the absorptive ability of national systems to receive refugee scholars in significant numbers. Similarly, it proved challenging to evaluate the adaptive ability of institutions and educational policies to respond positively to the specific barriers to refugee access.

Refugees within and from the region are faced with concrete and practical challenges relating to physical access to provision, insufficient financing for their studies, the need to provide evidence of their entry eligibility, and assuring linguistic and cultural access. The literature highlighted systemic challenges at the level of national educational policy, regulatory regimes, and infrastructure investment plans, which were also manifest in the WCA region. Scholarly evidence for these challenges is recurrent, although direct references to the WCA region are extremely limited.

Available data and knowledge do not lend themselves to a simple ranking of WCA countries for targeting of interventions.

UNHCR: a catalytic enabler

The study concludes that there exists a significant opportunity for UNHCR to support activities to address select challenges. The actions suggested below do not constitute an exhaustive presentation of opportunities for intervention by UNHCR. It is a selection of those which the findings from the literature review and country data support as practical, concrete and deliverable in the immediate future, with catalytic input.

Proposed actions

- **The creation of a disseminated and robust information management system for the collection and analysis of baseline data and extraction of meaningful information at regional and national levels.** Increasing availability of this data is key to both accountability and predictability in the development of pathways in the region. This would include agreeing on common performance indicators.
- **Identification and documentation of good practice in the WCA region – what works? what does not? – and the creation of a shared information platform to collate and disseminate analysis on programme performance and contexts.** This could create enhanced autonomy of researchers in the field and improve decision making by the service providers and external supporters. Clean, clear communication on the best use of available resources is key to success.
- **Develop a supported framework for the convening and facilitation of exchange across the regional network of UNHCR partners and refugees in WCA, to inform actions towards extending complementary pathways through education for potential refugee scholars.**
- **Communicate to refugees the availability of educational pathways and the access routes to these pathways.** This would immediately enhance the autonomy of potential refugee scholars and improve decision making by providers regarding the nature and conditions of supply. Such an approach would also bridge the gap between potential refugee scholars and education providers.

Attention could in a first instance be given to developing these resources in those WCA countries displaying favourable indicators for potential development.

Impact of UNHCR-facilitated action

In committing resources, UNHCR might expect to positively improve key conditions by delivering the following:

Outcomes

- **Use of an agreed set of relevant, restricted, and common performance indicators. In addition, enhanced availability of key data points and established mechanisms for data collection and collation, with assigned authorities, responsibilities, and accountability.** Decisions are based on an accurate understanding of the field of action, all efforts remain aligned, and stakeholders can hold each other accountable and learn from each other's successes and failures.
- **Structured and continuous communication across the community of policy makers, providers, funders, and beneficiaries of HE and TVET complementary pathways.** The development of provision is based on evidence of need and impact, sharing of good practice, and the building of confidence that decision making is based on objective data and will provide the best possible solution to the problem.
- **UNHCR's partners and refugees are integrated via a regional network to further facilitate access to complementary pathways through education, for potential refugee scholars.**
- **Use by potential refugee scholars and providers of HE and TVET opportunities of a shared information platform to collate and make available data on complementary pathways, their content, how they are accessed, and on what conditions.** This would create the opportunity for both enhanced autonomy of potential refugee scholars, and improved decision making by providers, regarding the nature and conditions of supply. This information could be further linked to existing data sets providing information relating to the support available to overcome barriers. For example, access to financial support, whether in the form of scholarships or other.

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GLOSSARY

Acronyms	Definition
CEMAC	Central African Economic and Monetary Community
DAFI	Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESP	Emergency Scholarship Programme
HDI	Human Development Index
HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IOM	International Organization for Migration
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SNHU	Southern New Hampshire University
SRP	Student Refugee Program
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SVR	German Federal Expert Council on Integration and Migration
TE	Tertiary Education
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (United Nations Refugee Agency)
US\$	United States Dollar
UWC	United World Colleges
WCA	West and Central Africa
WUSC	World University Service of Canada

1. Introduction

The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) embodied a series of historic decisions on a comprehensive, far-reaching, and people-centred set of universal and transformative goals and targets. The 2030 Agenda was the manifestation of a shared resolve which included a commitment for all people to have access to life-long learning opportunities that could help them acquire the knowledge and skills needed to exploit opportunities and participate fully in society. [Sustainable Development Goal \(SDG\) 4](#) enshrines the importance of ensuring inclusive and equitable education for all. SDG target 4.3 specifically addresses the provision of equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including university.

The role of education is a gateway to both economic and social mobility critical in supporting all individuals, communities, nations, and the global compact, in their commitment to securing sustainable development. It has been noted that those already at the margins of communities, including refugee populations, will require additional measures of inclusive support to reach the targets set. [Refugee Education 2030: A Strategy for Refugee Inclusion](#) aims to contribute directly to the following goals of the [Global Compact on Refugees](#): to ease the pressures on host countries and enhance refugee self-reliance.

The scope of work reported in this paper responds more specifically to the goal established in [UNHCR's 2019 Three Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways](#), *to advance complementary pathways by improving access and developing opportunities*. The objectives are to:

- **Identify existing and potential complementary educational pathways¹, including vocational training², for admission within the West and Central Africa region for refugees.**
- **Assess where there is scope to further develop/advance existing education based complementary pathways in WCA region.**
- **Explore where possible and appropriate, potential for new education-based opportunities in WCA region.**
- **Identify potential gaps and challenges refugees may face to access these opportunities.**

This is for the purpose of informing future opportunities for immediate, practical, and concrete engagements that UNHCR could support, in order to extend the availability of complementary educational pathways in WCA, and/or their uptake, by refugees in the region.

The available body of research advances the importance of education as a notable driver of refugee integration within host communities. The development of skills and competencies enable refugees to enter the labour market and contribute to efforts for post-conflict reconstruction on return to their countries of origin. However, research does not make much reference to the role of complementary pathways through education in general, and WCA specifically.

In the context of WCA, the youthful demographic of refugee populations lends itself to a focus on education as a contributor to structural integration and meaningful opportunities for economic activity beyond the informal economy and labour markets. Therefore, education can contribute to the creation of durable solutions for refugees.

¹ UNHCR definition of complementary pathways <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/complementary-pathways.html>

² Key considerations on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), UNCHR, 2019 <https://www.unhcr.org/5c628dc04.pdf> and International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, UNESCO, 2009 <https://unevoc.unesco.org/home/TVETipedia+Glossary/filt=all/id=474>

In 2020-2021, UNHCR expressed its aim of responding to the education needs of 3 million vulnerable children, including refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in host areas such as conflict-affected countries in the Lake Chad Basin and the Sahel.³ Furthermore, UNHCR's tertiary education target for 2030 is to enrol 15% of college-eligible refugees in tertiary, technical and vocational education and training or connected education programmes in host and third countries. UNHCR also aims to achieve equitable gender representation across tertiary enrolments.⁴ This is from a UNHCR reported baseline of less than 1% in WCA, and a global figure of 3%.

Definition 1. Complementary pathways

Complementary pathways for admission are safe and regulated avenues for refugees that complement resettlement by providing lawful stay in a third country where their international protection needs are met. They are additional to resettlement and do not substitute the protection afforded to refugees under the international protection regime. Complementary pathways include existing admission avenues that refugees may be eligible to apply to, but which may require operational adjustments to facilitate refugee access.

This report provides a baseline of findings from available academic literature, collated data on country specific conditions relating to the presence of refugees, the availability of HE and technical and voluntary education and training, and access to these by the present community. These findings have informed **recommendations on immediate, practical, and concrete opportunities for UNHCR-led engagements that could enhance the ecosystem that supports complementary pathways through education in WCA.**

2. Landscape of the study: West and Central Africa (WCA)

The review of the landscape of education opportunities for refugees in WCA may be more readily understood in the context of the political-economic realities in regional entities.

2.1 WCA: A socio-economic overview

Inhabited by nearly 0.6 billion people, the region is characterised by an increasing per capita income, sustained human population growth, rising enrolment rate in primary, secondary and tertiary education ([The World Bank, 2021](#)). However, it must be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 and its duration in time has slowed economic activity.

In 2019, WCA, on average, shows a population growth rate to the order of 2.6% associated with a gross primary school enrolment of circa 98%. With 12% of its population being under the age of 15, WCA has one of the youngest populations in the world and is characterised by youth unemployment rates in the range of 9.3% and 15.1%. See Figure 1 below, for a comparison between regions. It is interesting that the estimated low levels of (youth) unemployment actually hide very high underemployment in most WCA countries, as noted by [Romero \(2020\)](#).

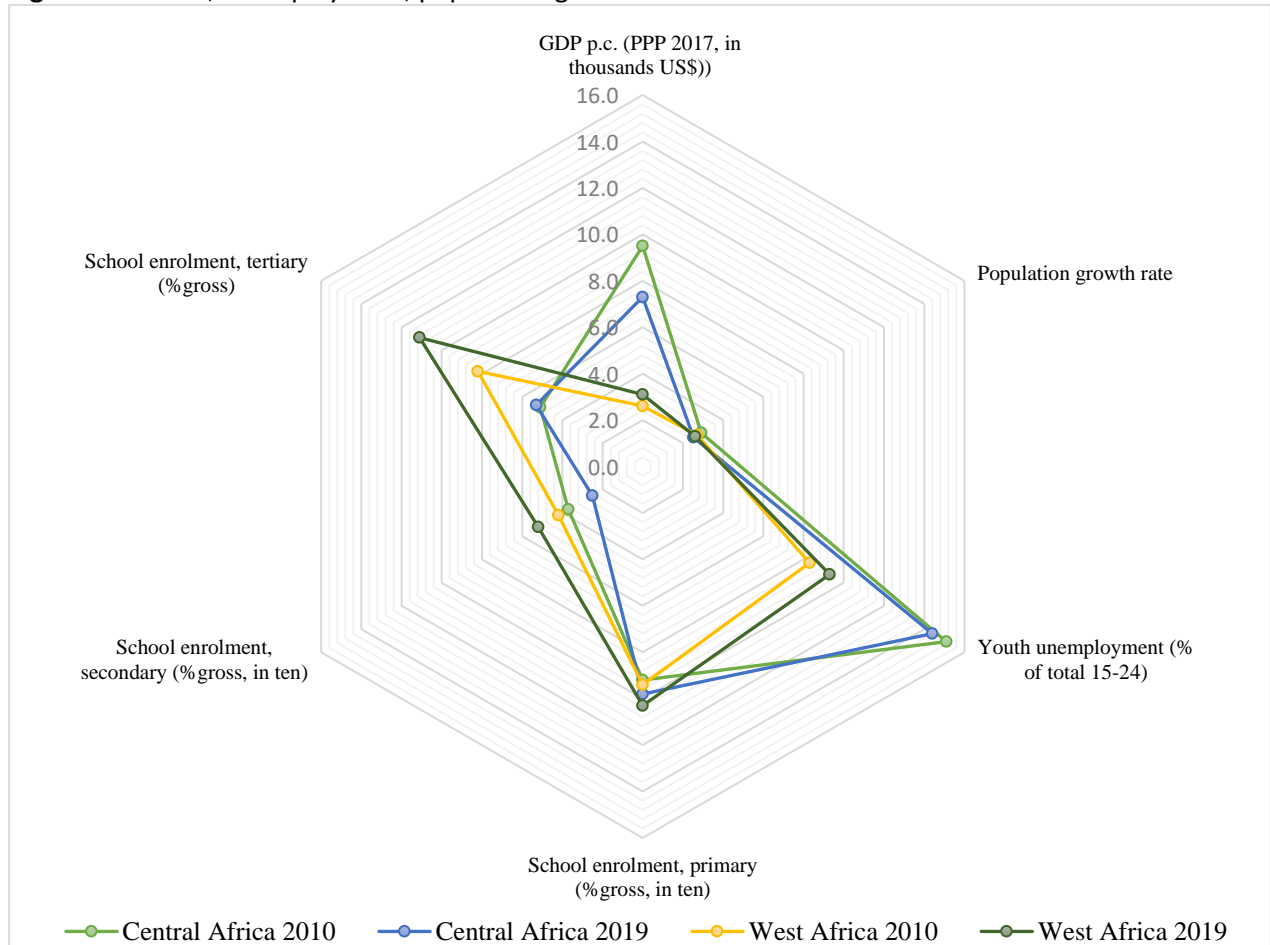
Alongside these broadly positive indicators, WCA faces serious challenges relating to political stability, inequalities, as well as persistent gaps in health, skills, and employment. High underemployment rates are observed in WCA countries, as consequences of a drop in regional job creation over the last decade, combined with rapid population growth. In addition to these challenges, desertification, instability, and recent recurrent terrorist attacks, especially in the Sahel region, have amplified population

³ UNHCR, Global Appeal 2020-21

⁴ UNHCR, Refugee Education 2030: A Strategy for Refugee Inclusion. 2019 Edition

movements and migration across the WCA region. The latter stability challenge is evidenced by the Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism index, where WCA countries mostly display negative scores ([Political Stability in Sub Sahara Africa, 2019](#)).

Figure 1. Income, unemployment, population growth and school enrolment in WCA in 2010 and 2019.



Note: The data plotted in this figure considers only the 21 target countries of WCA.

2.2 Importance of regional communities in WCA: ECOWAS and ECCAS

Migration and population movements tend to follow geographical patterns ([King, 2012](#)) and migrants in WCA mostly originate from African countries. This is also supported by figures discussed by [Geertrui and Scarlett \(2013\)](#) arguing that population movements are predominantly within the region. This being the case, the role of regional communities and their migration and freedom of movement policies are important in understanding refugee protection in WCA. These policies, associated with international conventions relating to the status of refugees, as well as the individual country's refugee protection act(s), inform and regulate condition surrounding refugee access to education and labour markets.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) consists of 15 countries.⁵ According to its legal framework ([ICMPD and IOM, 2015](#)), the citizens of the community have the right of entry, residence, and establishment in Member States.

⁵ Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

Table. 1. WCA countries' profile

Country Name	Member State of	Population, 2019	Refugees, 2019	Refugees pop. Share, in %	School enrolment, tertiary (% gross)	School enrolment, Secondary (% gross)	HDI	HEIs	DAFI students, 2019
Chad	ECCAS	15946876	442659	2,78	3	20	0,4	130	165
Cameroon	ECCAS	25876380	406230	1,57	14	60	0,56	243	174
Niger	ECOWAS	23310715	179995	0,77	4	24	0,39	26	31
Nigeria	ECOWAS	200963599	54157	0,03	10	42	0,54	170	32
Mali	ECOWAS	19658031	26676	0,14	6	41	0,43	75	22
Burkina Faso	ECOWAS	20321378	25862	0,13	7	41	0,45	169	15
Senegal	ECOWAS	16296364	14462	0,09	13	51	0,51	150	51
Togo	ECOWAS	8082366	11953	0,15	15	62	0,51	72	15
Ghana	ECOWAS	30417856	11926	0,04	16	71	0,61	297	97
Liberia	ECOWAS	4937374	8225	0,17	12	38	0,48	53	28
CAR	ECCAS	4745185	7172	0,15	3	17	0,4	14	0
Guinea	ECOWAS	12771246	4968	0,04	12	39	0,48	53	43
Gambia, The	ECOWAS	2347706	4298	0,18	3		0,5	97	13
Côte d'Ivoire	ECOWAS	25716544	2020	0,01	9	51	0,54	51	18
Guinea-Bissau	ECOWAS	1920922	1846	0,10	3		0,48	8	13
Benin	ECOWAS	11801151	1238	0,01	13	59	0,55	35	15
Gabon	ECCAS	2172579	442	0,02	8		0,7	23	0
Sierra Leone	ECOWAS	7813215	441	0,01	2	42	0,45	10	0
Cape Verde	ECOWAS	549935			24	88	0,66	11	0
Equatorial Guinea	ECCAS	1355986			2		0,59	4	0
São Tomé and Príncipe	ECCAS	215056			13	89	0,63	3	0

Note: Data on world population and gross enrolment in education in 2019 is from the World Development Indicators ([World Bank, WDI](#)) and data on refugee population is from the UNHCR Refugees Demographics, 2019 ([UNHCR, demographics of refugees](#)). The count of DAFI students is from the DAFI report, 2019 and the HDI is from the [United Nations Development Programme](#). The number of HEIs is linked to the “country specific assessments” (see Section 4.3 and Annex 3 for reference).

In the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), a similar regional agreement exists between countries, although its effective application remains less consistent ([Ndione and Broekhuis, 2011](#)).⁶

These community frameworks ensuring free population movement, establishment, access to education and the exercise of a professional activity all contribute to long-term solutions for refugees originating in the WCA region. Moreover, compared to extra-community migrants who may face some restrictions, special treatments (refugee protection act) facilitate refugees' access to education and labour market in the ECOWAS and ECCAS communities. Specific country-level analysis provides enhanced understanding of refugee access to higher education and labour market, compared to nationals of the respective countries. The nature of the ECOWAS and ECCAS communities' freedom of movement provision can be of prime importance for the admission of refugees to third countries, for the purpose of education.

As an adjunct, it should be noted that the segmented space of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) which is made up of Congo, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, and Chad, supports and applies the free movement of people protocol and allows young IDPs and refugees in their host countries to access education. A similar observation can be made between countries such as Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda. However, countries such as Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and Angola request visas from other nationals of the ECCAS region.

2.3 The demographics of refugee populations in WCA: A macro-overview

All WCA countries are affected by migration and refugee crises either as the origin or the destination of significantly increasing refugee movements. Although the refugee crises seem more pronounced in Eastern Africa, recent clashes among rival groups in Central African Republic, Boko Haram's violence since 2014 in Nigeria, Cameroon and Niger, and the current instability in the Sahel Region, have significantly increased the number of refugees in WCA.

UNHCR's statistics on refugee populations show that the number of refugees has doubled in the WCA over the past decade. Analysing the geographical distribution of refugees in WCA shows that Chad, Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, and Mali are the countries mostly affected by refugee movements. Demographics of refugees in the considered regions indicate that most refugees are less than 18 years old. See Figure 2, below.

3. Literature review: Complementary pathways through education in WCA

Objective: To establish a clear picture of the state of scholarly knowledge on complementary pathways through tertiary education - including higher education and TVET, for refugees in WCA.

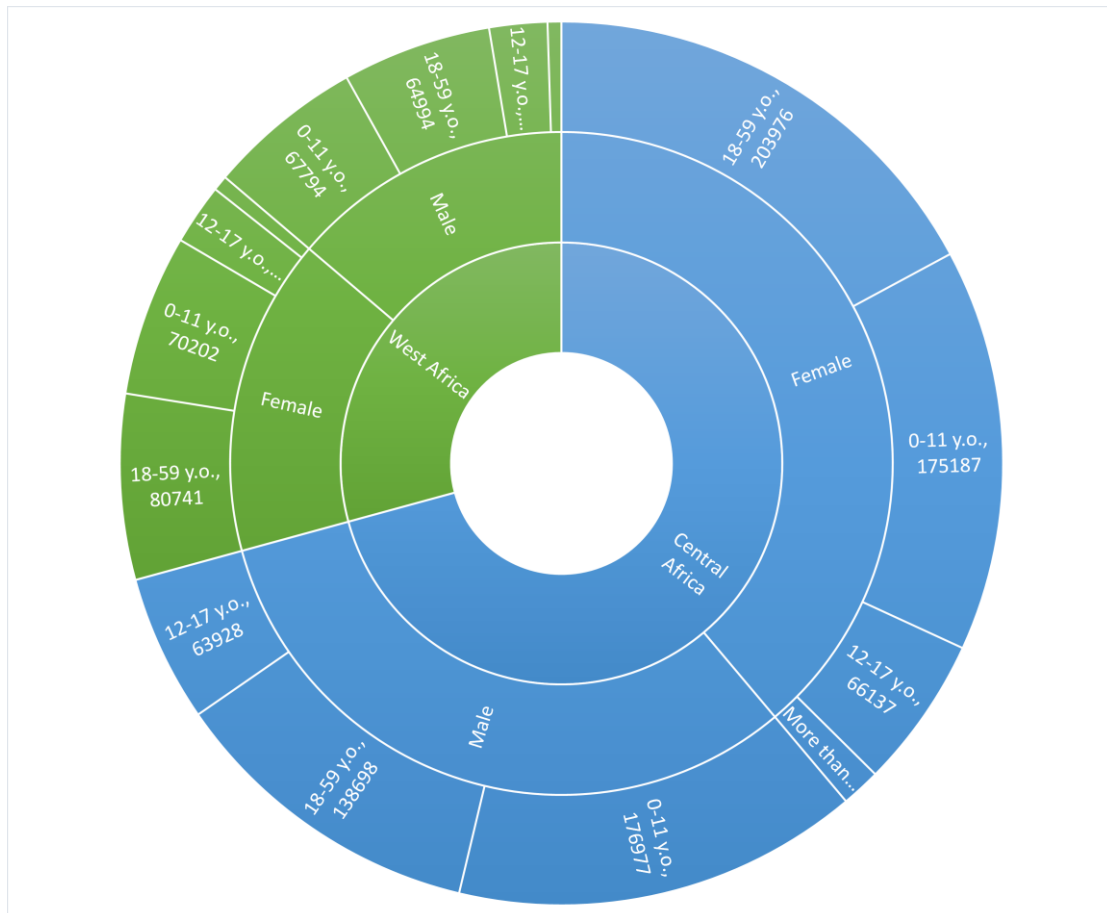
3.1 The importance of tertiary education and TVET for refugees

In a background paper commissioned for the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report: Migration, Displacement and Education, [Ferede \(2018\)](#) highlights the significant role tertiary education plays "in advancing refugees' integration into host societies, in developing skill sets that can be leveraged for entry into labour markets and toward post-conflict reconstruction in countries of origin." Higher education has proved to be a gateway for both economic and social mobility, by providing individuals with increased access to better-paid, higher-skilled roles, access to well-connected social networks and

⁶ For instance, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea require migrants from other countries in the region to apply for visas, whereas Congo Republic, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, and Chad support and apply the ECCAS free movement protocol.

entry into the middle class ([Ma, Pender, and Welch, 2016](#)). Similarly, TVET is seen as a useful tool in promoting efficient access to secure, decent jobs in host countries ([Koehler and Schneider, 2019](#)).

Figure 2: Demographics of refugees in WCA, in 2019 (UNHCR, [Refugee Statistics](#))



[Koehler and Schneider \(2019\)](#) describe refugee education as a “social investment in the long-term”, which can be used to promote peace building and stability. Upon returning home, refugees can apply their skills and what they have learnt from their host societies in their own countries to help rebuild their societies. According to [Coffie \(2014\)](#), out of the Liberian refugee returnees from Ghana and Guinea, those who were able to access tertiary education opportunities while in their host countries deployed their professions and skills towards peace building upon returning to Liberia.

In addition to the benefits refugees’ access to (tertiary) education may bring to both the refugees and their host countries, refugee education is of importance as an unalienable human right. As noted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, SDG 4 to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

3.2 Theoretical perspectives and existing models of complementary pathways through education

The scholarly knowledge on tertiary education and training for refugees does not systematically dissociate between education as an alternative avenue (complementary pathway) and education for resettled refugees. Tertiary education for refugees only came into focus in recent years, in no small part due to UNHCR’s 2012-2016 Education Strategy which included it as a priority. Up until then, it was

largely seen as a humanitarian response strategy. In 2016, less than 1% of the world's refugee youth had access to tertiary education and today, this figure is 3%, although the WCA region still stands at less than 1% (UNHCR, 2019). Given the relatively recent attention brought to education outside of the humanitarian context, it is more common to find studies generally advocating for unlocking refugees' potential through education and training, rather than studies discussing education as complementary / alternative pathways for refugee admission into a third country.

Given that the necessity of refugee education is supported by humanitarian, human rights and sustainable development considerations, existing theoretical frameworks on refugees' tertiary education and training are mostly embedded in holistic perspectives. The latter, broadly, address how learning, psychosocial adjustment, social integration, and socio-economic well-being of refugees are intertwined ([Pastoor, 2017](#) and [Lynnebakke et al., 2019](#)). While highlighting the usefulness of a safe environment, resilience and social interactions, researchers equally agree on the importance of learning for a young refugee's integration process and development. For [Pastoor \(2017\)](#) and [Lynnebakke et al. \(2019\)](#), inside and outside school interactions, particularly with family, play an essential role in refugees' cultural transition and well-being, as facilitating the psychosocial adaptation.

Beyond the holistic considerations, the literature provides more limited discussion on educational pathways for refugees in third countries. These include [Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst \(DAAD\)'s Leadership for Africa programme](#), the [Emergency Scholarship Programme \(ESP\)](#), and the [WUSC's Student Refugee Program \(SRP\)](#). Notwithstanding their limitations in scale, the model provided by these refugee education programmes deserves mention. These programmes propose a unique framework enabling tertiary education opportunities for young refugees, together with chances of resettlement in third countries. By so doing, they complement refugees' resettlement and present examples of good practice for alternative pathways through education.

The WUSC's SRP operates through a range of national and international partners collaborating at different stages of the programme. The [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada \(IRCC\)](#), UNHCR, the [International Organization for Migration \(IOM\)](#), among others, facilitate the selection, preparation for university and travel arrangements. The WUSC's Local Committees and their post-secondary institutions then fund refugee scholars and ensure provision of essential integration support through a peer-to-peer support model.

Similar programmes combining education with resettlement opportunities are not readily identifiable in WCA. There are however scholarship programmes targeting refugees already residing in the country of the opportunity or of asylum. The well-known scholarship programmes like [Albert Einstein Academic Refugee Initiative \(DAFI\)](#) and [Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program](#), available for refugee students in WCA, fall into this category. Nevertheless, combined with the regional migration policies, these programmes provide pertinent examples of alternative pathways towards refugee education in WCA.

3.3 Complementary pathways through education: Findings from outside WCA

Literature focused on cases of complementary pathways outside the WCA region has proven interesting, not least highlighting the significant role that differences in national educational systems and institutions play in facilitating entry by non-traditional students ([Crul and Schneider, 2012](#); [Crul et al., 2012](#)). As an example, in the Swedish educational system, *all* children have equal access to the best education based on their talents and academic capacities, regardless of their family and social backgrounds. Previously, this included working and immigrant children and today, is also inclusive of refugee children. Contrastingly, in the German educational system, a student's educational pathway is often determined by her/his family's social class and as such, children of immigrant families are almost

always automatically placed into the “lowest qualifying vocational track” ([Koehler and Schneider, 2019](#)) due to their own parents’ working-class backgrounds.

In Australia, refugees have access to all levels of education: “all people seeking asylum and all refugees have a right to education. Primary education should be compulsory and free, and secondary education should be available and accessible. Access to higher education should be equal and based on merit” ([Blythe et al., 2018](#)). Students on refugee visas with permanent residency are treated as local students and can therefore enjoy free government education like Australian citizens. However, [Blythe et al., \(2018\)](#) argue that while Australian states and territories provide some legislative grounds on the mandatory education for school-aged children, they fail to address any eligibility for fee-waivers or funding, considering fees often constitute a legitimate obstacle for children accessing education.

While Article 28 (1) (c) of the Convention of the Rights of the Child specifies that State Parties are to “make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means” (OHCHR, 2016), in practice, the accessibility of tertiary education for refugee youth is extremely limited. Even though there are more explicit policies regarding refugee education, across for example Europe and Australia, there are still discrepancies in the policies which fail to address major barriers that particularly challenge refugee access to education in their host communities, such as: strict age limits, financial and residential requirements.

3.4 Complementary pathways through education: From WCA and within WCA

3.4.1 On tertiary education for internally displaced persons in WCA

Given the relative paucity of scholarly literature on refugees’ access to tertiary education and TVET, as well as complementary pathways in the WCA region, discussions were held with researchers and practitioners in the field. These included Dr. Jan Schneider, Head of Research, Expert Council on Integration and Migration (Der Sachverständigenrat für Integration und Migration SVR); Dr. Simon McGrath, Nottingham University, Department of Education (UNESCO Chair in International Education and Development); Dr. Halimatou Hima Moussa⁷, education expert, currently Minister Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Niger to the United Nations; and Dr. Robert Ebenezer Nsoga, an expert on the protection of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in Central Africa. Based on their feedback, the initial review was extended to include reference to IDPs’ experiences, which can manifest similar hallmarks to that of refugees. Studies relating to education for IDPs in WCA have received relatively little attention in existing literature, even though available data for IDP populations is increasing. As noted by UNESCO (2011), much of the IDP experience can be extrapolated to the refugee context.

The research work on South-South internal population movements is insightful in analysing challenges and efforts needed to achieve SDG 4. IDPs in West Africa face challenges in exercising their right to education; challenges which can be mapped to parallel refugee populations. Like refugee students, the entry requirements demanding that IDPs show documentation to prove their age, schooling history and residency, among others, often serve as barriers that hinder their access to national education systems ([Sule et al., 2020](#); [Kyereko, 2020](#)).

In addition to documentation, economic difficulties, lack of access to information and language barriers also play significant roles in IDPs staying out of school. Most importantly, the lack of funding to cover tertiary education and vocational training fees and other education-related costs such as

⁷ Currently focuses on Security Council affairs such as children and armed conflict, humanitarian issues including education, as well as women, peace, and security.

uniforms, transportation and feeding impede tertiary education access for most IDPs in WCA ([Bruni et al., 2017](#); [Sule et al., 2020](#); [Kyereko, 2020](#)).

Beyond documentation, economic and other barriers mentioned previously, literature also references blurred national educational policies towards IDPs and refugees. [Crush and Tawodzera \(2011\)](#) and [Kyereko \(2020\)](#) argue that some African countries fail to facilitate refugees' and IDPs' access to their national education systems due to the ambiguity of their national education policies. [Sule et al. \(2020\)](#) provide robust empirical evidence showing that the provision of IDP-focused bursaries and scholarship programmes facilitate their access to tertiary education, which has significant impacts on the development of displaced persons. Such considerations may also be applicable to refugees.

3.4.2 Refugees' complementary pathways in WCA

UNHCR's [Key Considerations for the Admission of Refugees to Third Countries](#) (UNHCR, 2019) list several complementary pathways. These include, among others, humanitarian admission, family reunification, employment opportunities and third country education opportunities. Concerning refugee education, the existing literature on WCA countries largely mentions challenges faced by young refugees to access education and vocational training. In this, humanitarian and development actors have been developing strategies to provide primary and secondary education in a crisis context. The usefulness and urgency of these efforts of providing basic education for refugees are evidenced by [Nicolai et al., \(2020\)](#), [Mali Education Cluster \(2020\)](#), [Stratégie Éducation 2030 Chad \(UNHCR, 2020\)](#), and in the academic sphere by [Dryden-Peterson \(2018\)](#), [Dryden-Peterson et al. \(2017\)](#) and [Obashoro-John et al. \(2017\)](#).

The review noted very little research explicitly referencing education as alternative pathways to admission in third countries, and even more so in the WCA context. Whilst the scholarly literature addresses unlocking refugees' potential through education, it seems less focused on the latter as alternative pathways for admission in third countries. This is a noticeable gap in existing knowledge on refugee education in a third country within the 21 African countries considered.

Specific strategies facilitating refugee access to HE and TVET are observed in host countries. These opportunities, mostly scholarship programmes, require that the refugee resides in the country where s/he intends to access higher education or vocational training. This is the case of scholarship programmes such as the DAFI and the ESP. In addition, some country level efforts are also observed in facilitating refugee access to higher education. For example, private universities in Chad systematically offer refugees a 50% discount on fees. Although these initiatives provide opportunities to access tertiary education, they cannot be considered as alternative pathways through education, as the latter involves admission to a third country within the WCA region.

4. Mapping of refugee tertiary education and TVET opportunities in WCA

The mapping procedure provides a clear picture of the country provision for access to tertiary education, including vocational training. Data has been collated relating to population profile, education strategy, labour market conditions, existing pathways to higher education and TVET for refugees, and challenges faced by these refugees. The methodological considerations applied are referenced in Annex 1. Primacy was given to data reliability and replicability of data sets across the 21 countries within the WCA region. Where possible, priority has been given to open-source information and when this has not been available, it has been formally noted. It should also be noted that all web references are to documents reviewed and data extracted effective of the 9th June 2021. These web listings will be subject to change over time.

For the purposes of consistency in mapping and tallying, country assessments in Section 4.3 will reference the following definition of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) from World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action adopted by the 1998 World Conference on Higher Education and published by UNESCO: “*all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent state authorities.*” UNESCO, the World Bank, and UNDP, amongst others, use this definition.

4.1 Synopsis of findings

The mapping of education opportunities for refugees aims to provide reliable, comparable data between countries and highlight education pathways largely absent from each national context.

4.1.1 Demographics

Over the past two decades, from a refugee population perspective, our analysis helps to identify countries where refugee population has more than quadrupled (Chad, Niger, Cameroon), countries where a decrease is observed (Central African Republic and Guinea), and countries with unknown counts of refugees (Cape Verde and Equatorial Guinea). The youth refugee population (0 to 17 years old) represents circa 60% of the total refugee population in several countries, including Chad, Niger, and Burkina Faso. The predominance of youthful refugee populations is without question a dominant demographic characteristic across the WCA region.

4.1.2 Access to tertiary education

Regarding access to labour markets and higher education, although there is no clear refugee policy in countries such as Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe, in most WCA countries, refugees accessing education are treated no less favourably than nationals in the same circumstances. However, entering the labour market and finding a job is challenging due to high national unemployment and under-employment rates observed in WCA. Although refugees have access to higher education, we note the cases of Côte d’Ivoire and Senegal, where refugees are treated in the higher education system as foreign students, whereas in Chad and Cameroon, some private HEIs offer reduced tuition fees to refugee students, easing the financial challenges faced by refugees without scholarships.

4.1.3 Scholarship programmes

Among existing scholarship programmes to support refugee higher education, the DAFI programme can be viewed as the most visible one in Africa. In 2019, 46% of DAFI scholars lived and studied in SSA (UNHCR, 2019). Further scholarship programmes, including the [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#), the [Refugee EdTech Program](#), and the [Mastercard Foundation Scholarship Programme](#), are available for refugees living in WCA but seem out of reach for most of these refugee students. It is to note that the scholarships mentioned in the country specific assessments can be both in the country of asylum (e.g., [DAFI scholarship](#)) or in a third country (e.g., [DAAD Leadership for Africa](#)).

Challenges and pathways absent: The literature review, the expert consultations and the refugee interviews helped to identify some intersecting challenges faced by refugees. It is well-known that refugee scholarships are very limited, compared to the number of applicants. Thus, it is almost impossible for refugees with no financial support to access and fund higher education programmes of study. A lack of information and coordination regarding higher education funding opportunities is also noticeable in WCA. Furthermore, refugees mentioned in interviews that they face linguistic and documentation barriers when accessing education in their host countries. Finally, besides the rigid criteria surrounding refugee scholarship programmes, education system incompatibilities and the

long-distance separating refugee camps from HEIs make it difficult for them to access available education opportunities.

Pathways absent from the regional context: Complementary pathways through education for refugees have been identified in other geographies such as Canada and New Zealand. Within WCA, there seems to be no programme comparable to SRP, to relocate refugees for the purpose of higher education. Online learning platforms do not seem very popular, due to connectivity (internet) costs.

4.1.4 Remarks

The commitment of African states to the provision and facilitation of access to primary and secondary education by young refugees, to meet their aims/commitments towards full enrolment, is well documented. However, for tertiary education and TVET, a similar dedication cannot be observed in WCA. This must be interpreted in the context of the inherent systemic strengths and weaknesses of national tertiary and TVET provision, and their ability to further adapt to or accommodate the specific challenges faced by potential refugee scholars. Even when treated no less favourably than nationals when considering tertiary education, refugee students require additional support to access and successfully complete programmes of study in a host or third country.

4.2 Developing complementary pathways: A contextual analysis of the potential in WCA

The extent to which the national contexts lend themselves to developing enhanced complementary pathways through education for refugees is informed by the prevailing baseline of tertiary education and TVET provision, the associated enabling context, and the ability to extend provision. The nature of the conditions effecting refugee take up of tertiary and TEVT opportunities have been reviewed in Section 2 (Landscape of the study), Section 3 (Literature review), and Section 4 (Mapping of refugee Tertiary Education and TVET opportunities in WCA), above.

The combination of analysis and lessons taken from the literature suggest that anchoring and developing complementary pathways in a considered geography appears to demand the following core conditions. These conditions are not exclusive determinants of developmental potential but are defining elements:

Condition A. The presence of Higher Education Institutions, including TVET that, in addition to responding to the inherent demand from nationals, can absorb refugee students in significant numbers.

Condition B. The existence of a local organisations and network, including amongst refugees and diaspora populations, to support new refugees' integration and community absorption.

Condition C. The responsiveness of the Higher Education system to prevailing socio-economic conditions and levels of demand, as evidence by enrolment into that system.

Condition D. The country's capacity to absorb the educated refugees into stable durable socio-economic solutions as evidence by the presence of acceptable living conditions.

A contextual analysis of these indicators enables a meaningful categorisation of countries by the potential for significant development of complementary pathways. This results in three categories:

- Presenting FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.
- Presenting SOMEWHAT FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

- Presenting LIMITED indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

The mapping of base educational infrastructure, **Condition A** above, is most reliably informed by elements currently found within the existing national educational framework. As such, pre-eminence is given in this analysis to the known number of public universities.⁸

The WUSC’s Student Refugee Program (SRP), amongst others, has revealed the importance of local communities and organisations in the support and integration of newly arrived refugees. As a quantitative indicator for the fulfilment of **Condition B** above: presence of local organisations and refugee networks that can help support new refugee students, analysis can be based on the available counts of DAFI scholarships at individual country level. In so doing, our rationale is that the higher the number of DAFI scholars, the more organised the local DAFI club and supporting stakeholders are.

A potential proxy for responsiveness of the higher education system to prevailing socio-economic conditions and levels of demand, **Condition C**, above, refers to the nationally available data on gross enrolment in secondary and tertiary education.

An *a priori* condition for developing higher education and TVET educational pathways includes the capacity to receive and integrate refugee students and offer durable solution to these refugees: **Condition D** as mapped above. The presence of ECOWAS and ECCAS agreements on freedom of movement, including for refugees, responds to issues of physical mobility for refugee populations. A proxy for the presence of acceptable living conditions, including potential for meaningful economic activity, and which is considered reliable, would be the [Human Development Index](#).

Table 2 reports the main indicators used in classifying the 21 target countries according to the possibility of developing complementary pathways. In ranking the countries, we considered that the four (4) identified conditions above are of the same importance (equal weighting).

Table 2: Classification by conditions for development of complementary pathways through education

Countries	Rank	Countries	Rank	Countries	Rank
Cameroon	1	Togo	8	Cape Verde	15
Ghana	2	Guinea	9	São Tomé and Príncipe	16
Chad	3	Mali	10	Gabon	17
Senegal	4	Liberia	11	Guinea-Bissau	18
Nigeria	5	Côte d'Ivoire	12	Sierra Leone	19
Burkina Faso	6	Benin	13	Central African Republic	20
Gambia, The	7	Niger	14	Equatorial Guinea	21

Note: The colour code corresponds to the three (3) categories discussed above. The ranking is based on a unique score computed as weighted average of the four (4) qualifying conditions mentioned above.

Emergent Classification Categories:

Presenting FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

Presenting SOMEWHAT FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

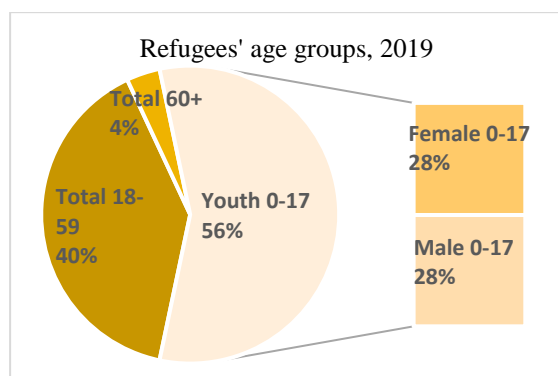
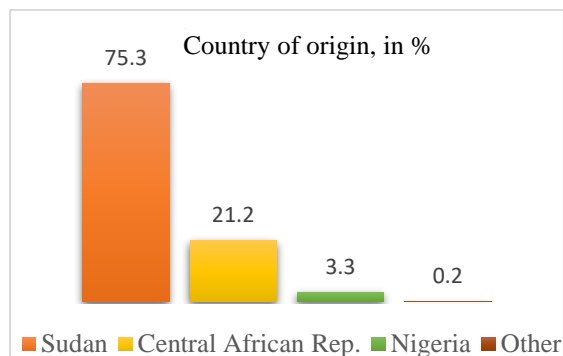
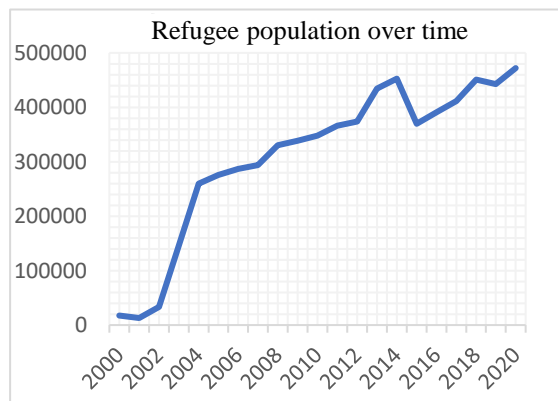
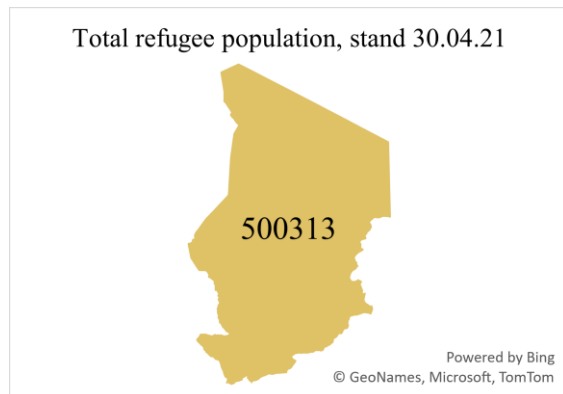
Presenting LIMITED indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

⁸ The count of public universities appears more reliable than any other count of HEIs in WCA countries.

4.3 21 country specific assessments

4.3.1 Chad

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: It is constituted by public and private HEIs and TVET centres. See [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#) for a map of the education system. Establishing precise verifiable figures for the number of HEIs is challenging. Figures from “[Plan Intérimaire de l’Éducation au Tchad 2018-2020](#)” (see p. 73) and from [UNESCO](#) indicate:

TVET centres	43
HEIs	130

Access to HE: Refugees in Chad have access to public education under the same conditions as nationals, as granted by international treaties and Chadian law. The bilingual education system (French and Arabic) facilitates access to education and reduces language barriers.

Scholarships: Private HEIs offer refugee students a 50% discount on tuition fees. Among refugee scholarship programmes, the DAFI scholarship (165 in 2019), Bourse Partielle Mouvements Mixtes (597 in Bachelor programmes) and the French Embassy Scholarship Programme (14 in 2020) can be identified. Other scholarship opportunities include [Refugee EdTech Program](#) and [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#).

Challenges: Refugee camps in Chad are mostly located near the Sudanese border. Refugee populations are physically distanced from HEIs. Language barriers exist for English-speaking refugee students.

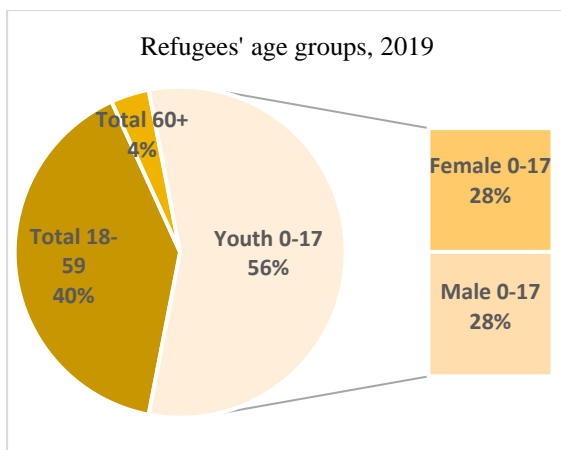
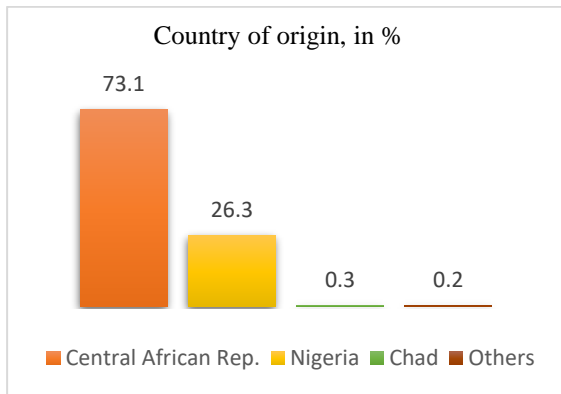
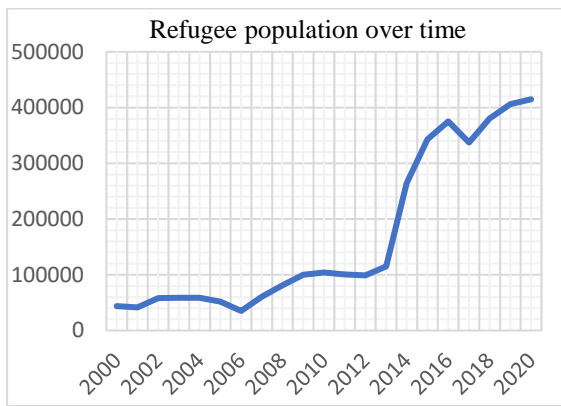
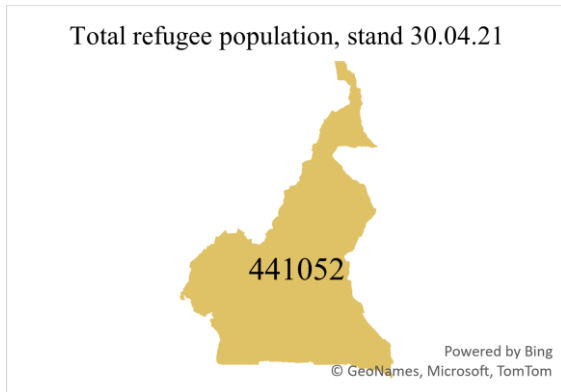
Access to labour market: Refugees in Chad enjoy the same treatment as nationals with regards to the exercise of salaried activities, as a consequence of the reinsertion [Décret 11-839](#).

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Chad classifies as presenting:

FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.2 Cameroon

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A map of the education system and its TVET profile is available at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The education ecosystem is constituted by private and public HEIs (see the Ministry of Higher Education of Cameroon's web listings [public institutions](#) and [private institutions](#)). Regarding TVET, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training lists more than 700 TVET centres (list [here](#)).

TVET centres	734
HEIs	243

Access to HE: Refugee students access HE and receive the same treatment as nationals, as granted by law ([Loi n°2005/006](#)). The French and English bilingual education system in Cameroon facilitates refugee access to HE and reduces language barriers.

Scholarships: DAFI scholarship programme has supported 174 refugee students in 2019 (DAFI report, 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students include [Refugee EdTech Program](#), [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#) (in Cameroon) and [DAAD Leadership for Africa](#) (in a third country). Some private HEIs offer refugee students reduced tuition fees.

Challenges: The spread of conflicts since 2014 negatively affects refugee communities and access to education, especially in the English-speaking areas of Cameroon. Compared to demand, refugee scholarships are very limited.

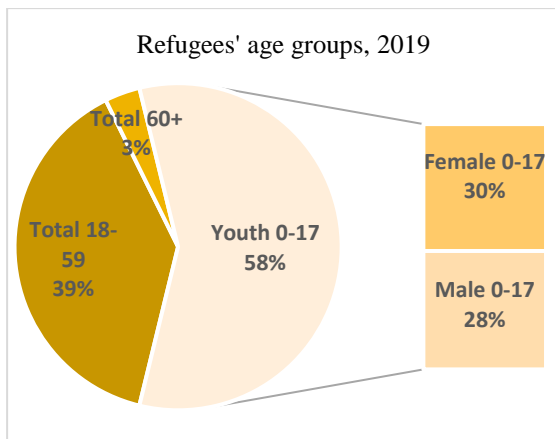
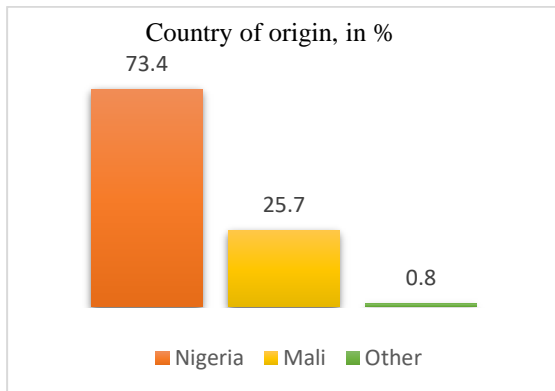
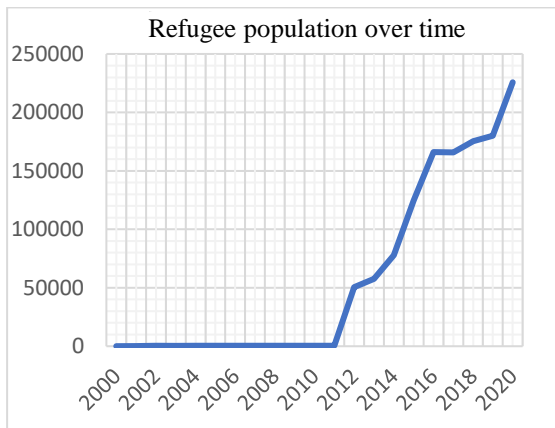
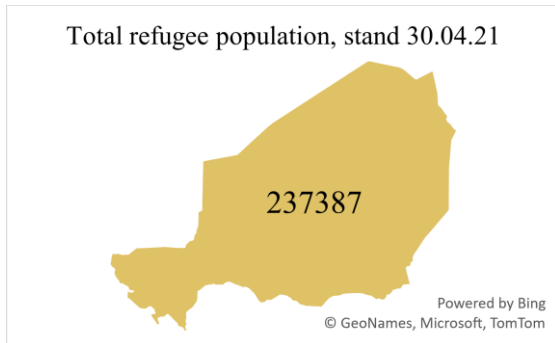
Access to labour market: Refugees access labour market in Cameroon under the same conditions as nationals, as consequence of the reinsertion ([Loi n°2005/006](#)).

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Cameroon classifies as presenting:

FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.3 Niger

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A map of the education system and its TVET profile is available at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The education ecosystem in Niger is constituted by private and public HEIs and TVET centres. See the “Oreille du campus” website listings [here](#) and [here](#) for HEIs in Niger. Regarding TVET centres, figures of the [Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training](#) suggest:



Access to HE: Refugee students in Niger access HE and receive the same treatment as nationals, as granted by [Loi no 97-16](#) (art. 10).

Scholarships: DAFI scholarship programme has supported 31 refugee students in 2019 (DAFI report, 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Niger include [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#) and [Refugee EdTech Program](#).

Challenges: Given the relatively poor access to and HE of Niger’s nationals (135 for 100,000 inhabitants), refugee access to tertiary education seems not to be among development priorities. Lack of information and coordination regarding HE opportunities.

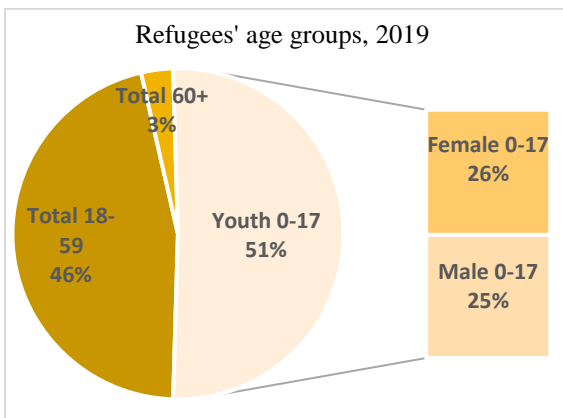
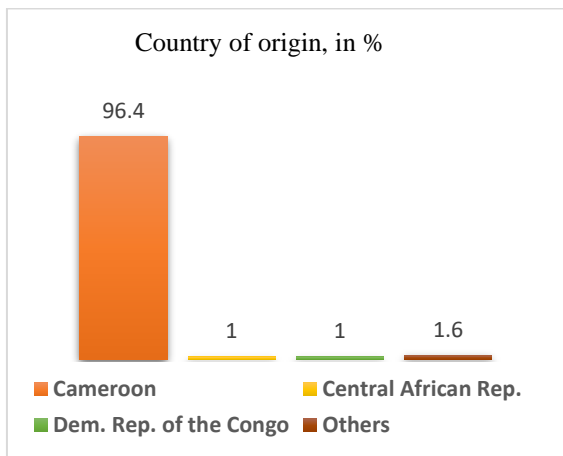
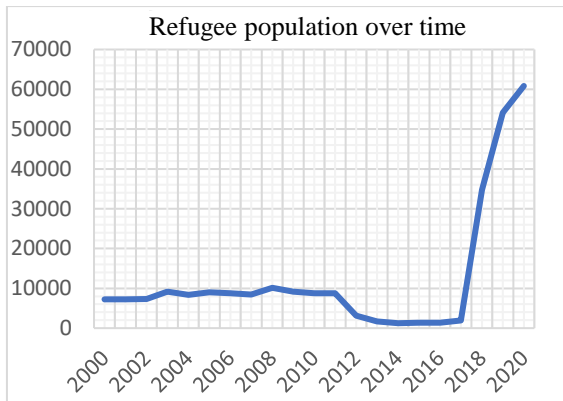
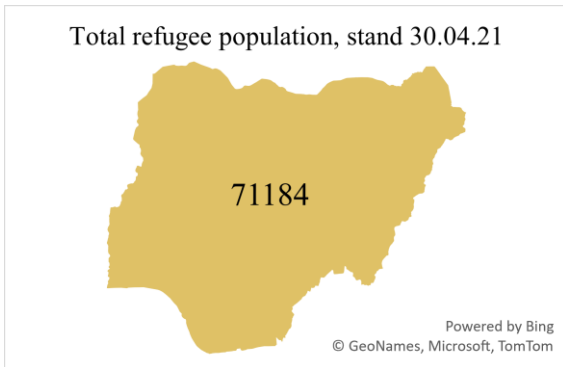
Access to labour market: Refugees, subject to prior authorisation, access labour market in Niger under the same conditions as nationals, as granted by the [Loi no 97-16](#) (art. 9) on the status of refugees in Niger.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Niger classifies as presenting:

Presenting **SOMEWHAT FAVOURABLE** indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.4 Nigeria

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Nigeria and its TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The education ecosystem in Nigeria is constituted by private and public HEIs and TVET centres. See the list of HEIs accredited by the [Nigerian National Education Commission](#). For TVET centres, figure by [Haßler et al. \(2020\)](#) (see p. 242) indicate:

TVET centres	600
HEIs	170

Access to HE: Refugees are treated no less favourably than nationals, with respect to education, the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges and the award of scholarships facilitates refugee entry ([Cap N21 LFN 2004](#)).

Scholarships: DAFI scholarship programme supported 32 refugee students in 2019 (DAFI report, 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Nigeria include [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#) and [Refugee EdTech Program](#).

Challenges: The fragile security situation, especially in North-East Nigeria, raises concerns regarding refugee protection.

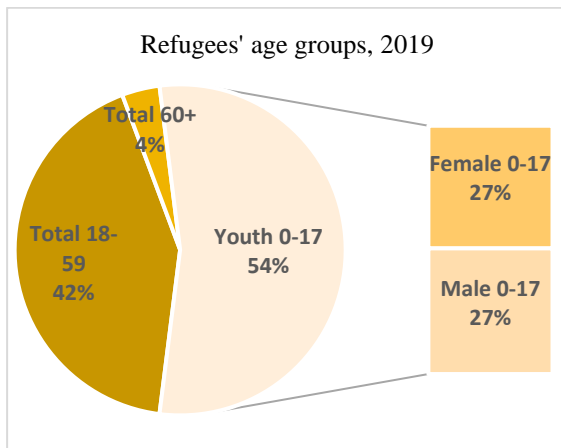
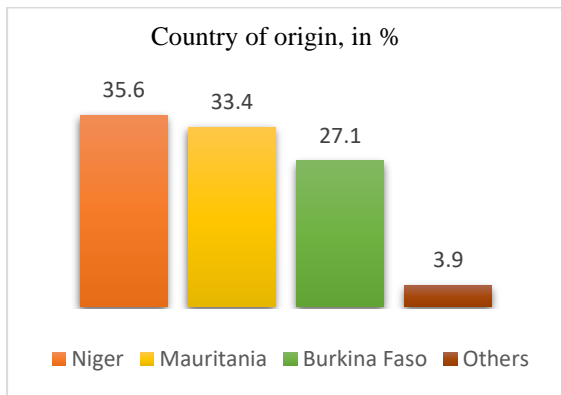
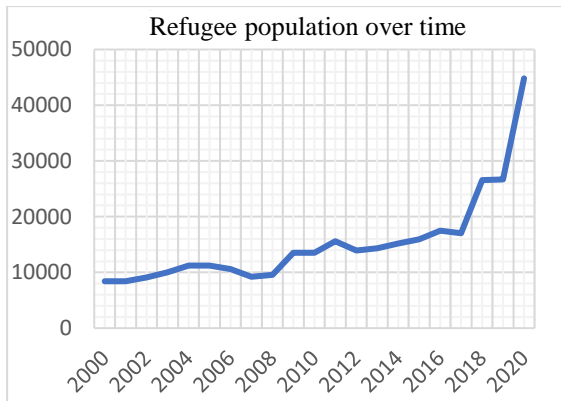
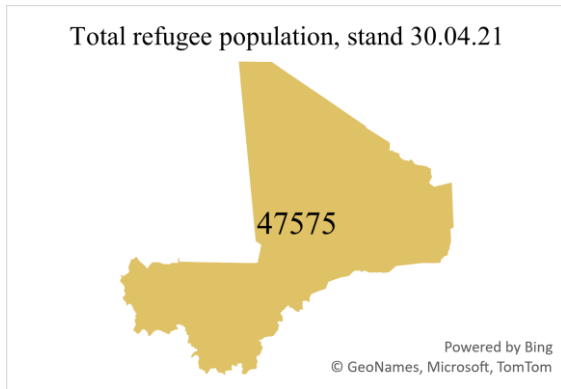
Access to labour market: Refugees access labour market under the same conditions as nationals, as granted by law ([Cap N21 LFN 2004](#)) on the status of refugees in Nigeria.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Nigeria classifies as presenting:

FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.5 Mali

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Mali and its TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The education ecosystem in Mali is constituted by private and public HEIs and TVET centres. See [here](#) and [here](#) for Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique list of public and private HEIs. For TVET, see the listing by the [Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle](#).

TVET centres	64
HEIs	75

Access to HE: Refugees enjoy the same treatments as nationals of Mali, with respect to education, especially regarding access to university and registration fees ([LOI N°98-040](#)).

Scholarships: DAFI scholarship programme has supported 22 refugee students in Mali in 2019 (DAFI report, 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Mali include [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#) and [Refugee EdTech Program](#).

Challenges: Refugees in Mali likely face security issues, given recent political unrest in Mali. Access to scholarship and paying tuition fees are also very challenging for refugee students in Mali.

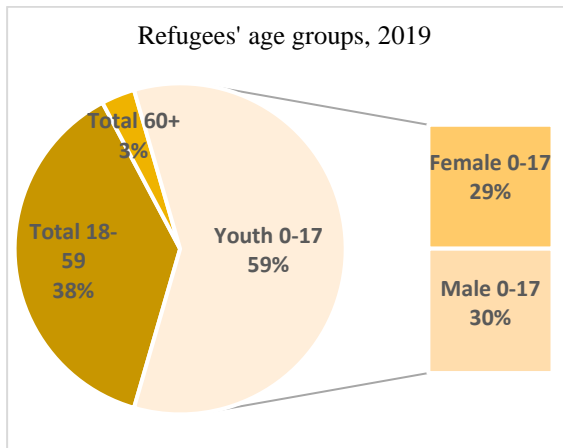
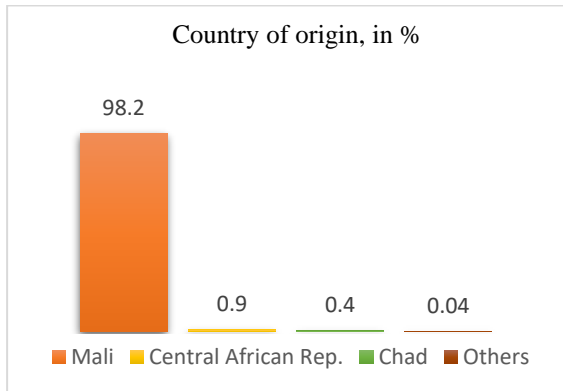
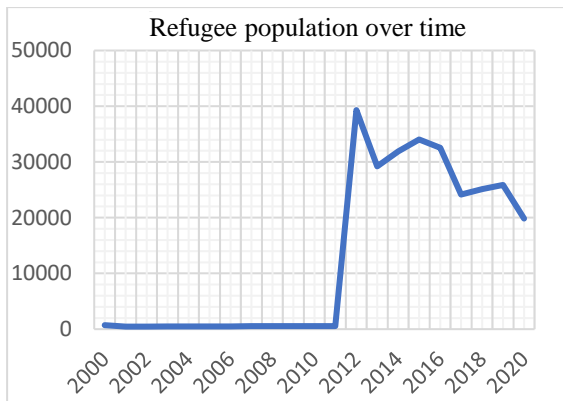
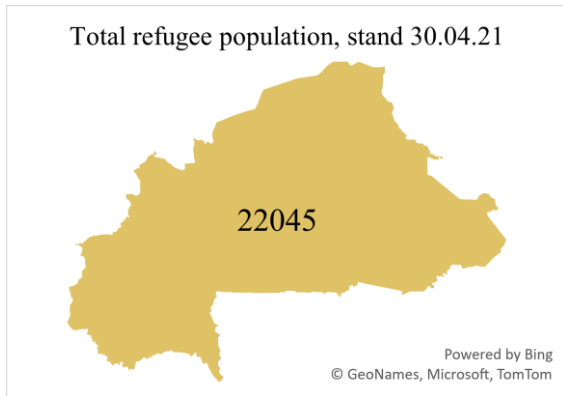
Access to labour market: There is no provision in Malian law that foresees the protection of the labour market (Labour Code, art. L 28). Refugees have the right to work in Mali. ECOWAS Member States' nationals can reside and work in Mali, providing they hold a valid identity card.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Mali classifies as presenting:

SOMEWHAT FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.6 Burkina Faso

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Burkina Faso and its TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The education ecosystem in Burkina Faso is constituted by private and public HEIs and TVET centres. Figures from the “[Tableau de bord de l’Enseignement Supérieur](#)” (see p. 20) indicate 169 public and private HEIs. For TVET centres, see listing by “Oreille du Campus” website [here](#).

TVET centres	189
HEIs	169

Access to HE: Refugees in Burkina Faso receive the same treatment as accorded to nationals, with respect to education. This includes free tuition in basic education and access to higher education (see [Loi No. 042-2008/AN](#)).

Scholarships: DAFI scholarship programme supported 15 refugee students in 2019 (DAFI report, 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Burkina Faso include [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#) and [Refugee EdTech Program](#).

Challenges: Refugees in Burkina Faso likely face security issues, given recent violent events in northern Burkina Faso. There are also financial challenges for students with no scholarship.

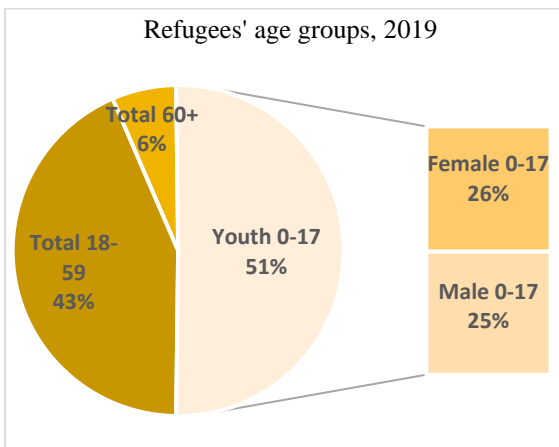
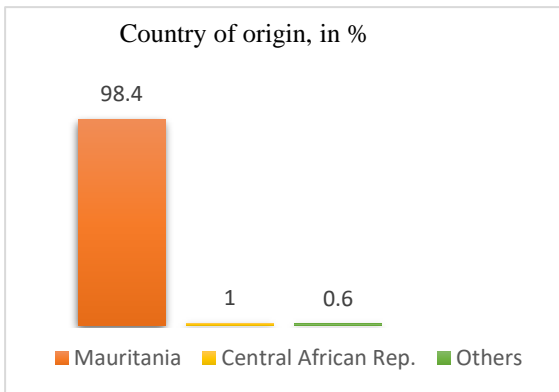
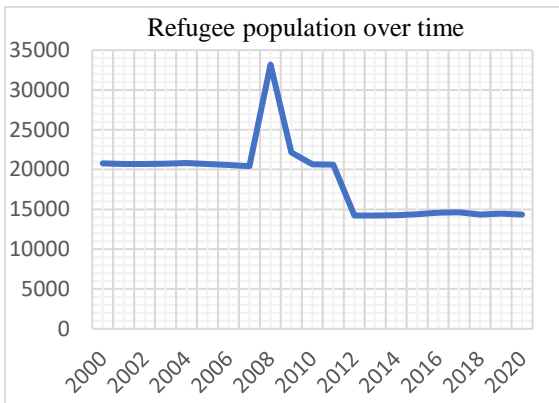
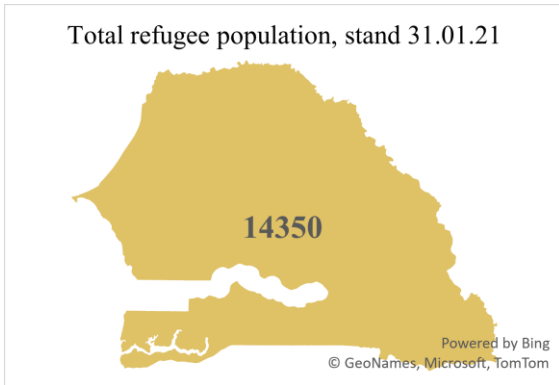
Access to labour market: Migrants (including refugees) have full access to the labour market in the sense that they can freely change employers and sectors of employment (see [here](#)). Labour Code, 2008, Art. 2, provides for equal treatment of nationals, regardless of legal status.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Burkina Faso classifies as presenting:

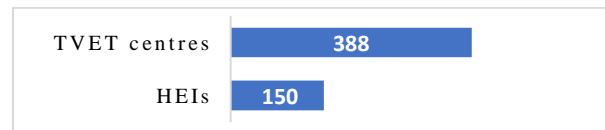
FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.7 Senegal

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the Senegalese educational system and description of the country's TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The education ecosystem in Senegal is constituted by private and public HEIs and TVET centres. See [Instituts de Formation Supérieure et Universités Etablies Au Senegal](#) for a list of HEIs and [UNESCO, La Formation Professionnelle, Analyse de la Mise en Oeuvre des Réformes, Sénégal 2018](#) (see p. 20) for detailed information regarding TVET centres in Senegal (388 centres identified in 2018).



Access to HE: Refugees in Senegal have access comparable to nationals, regarding private Higher Education Institutions. However, they are still considered foreigners when accessing public universities and they therefore pay higher tuition fees (source: UNHCR Senegal).

Scholarships: DAFI scholarship programme supported 51 refugee students in 2019 (DAFI report, 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students include [Refugee EdTech Program](#), [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#) (in Senegal) and [DAAD Leadership for Africa](#) (in a third country).

Challenges: Refugee students with no scholarship face financial challenges, due to high cost of HE.

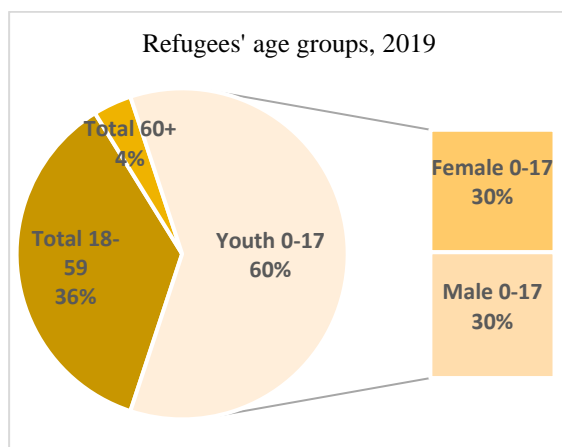
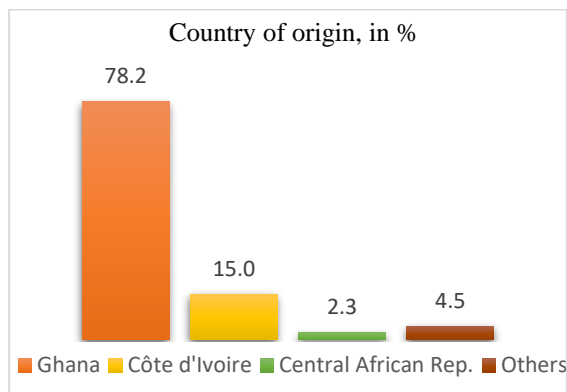
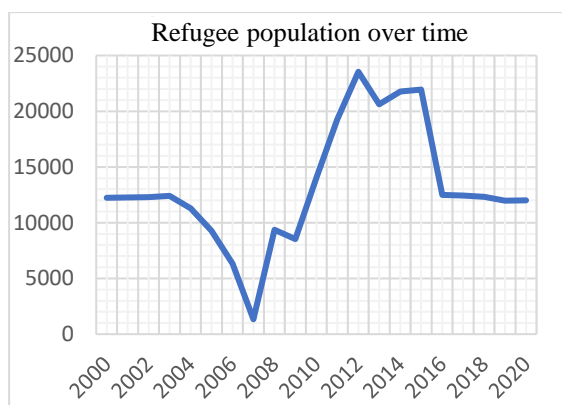
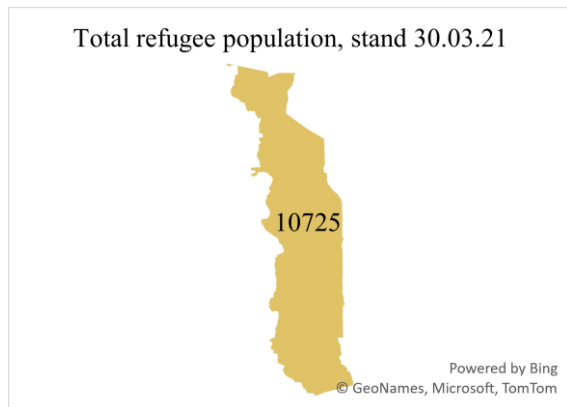
Access to labour market: Refugees have full access to the labour market in Senegal.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Senegal classifies as presenting:

FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.8 Togo

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). It is constituted by public and private HEIs and TVET institutions. In addition to 2 public HEIs (see “Togo Presse” [here](#)), official figures indicate 70 private HEIs in June 2021 ([Portail Officiel de la République Togolaise](#)) For TVET institutions identified in Togo see the listing of [the Ministère délégué chargé de l’enseignement technique et de l’artisanat](#).

TVET centres	37
HEIs	72

Access to HE: Refugees are granted same treatments as the nationals, with regards to access to primary, secondary and HE. Also, university diplomas and titles issued to refugees abroad are recognised as granted by law, [Loi No 2016-021](#).

Scholarships: In 2019, Togo hosted 15 refugee students with a DAFI scholarship (DAFI report 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Togo include [Refugee EdTech Program](#) and [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#).

Challenges: Language barriers for English-speaking refugee students. High connectivity costs, making online learning platforms largely accessible.

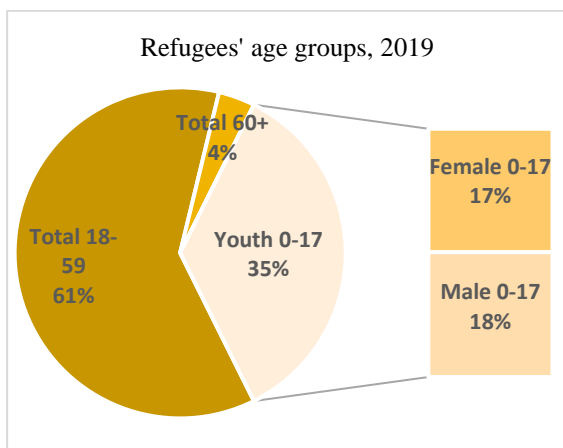
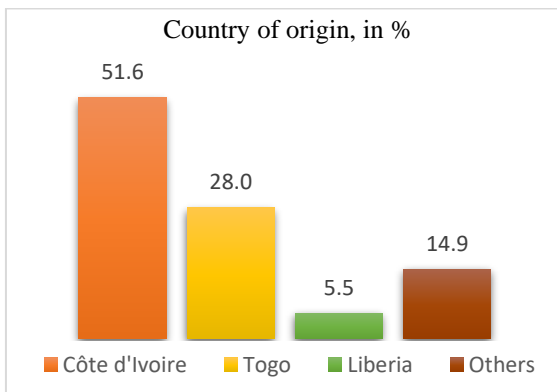
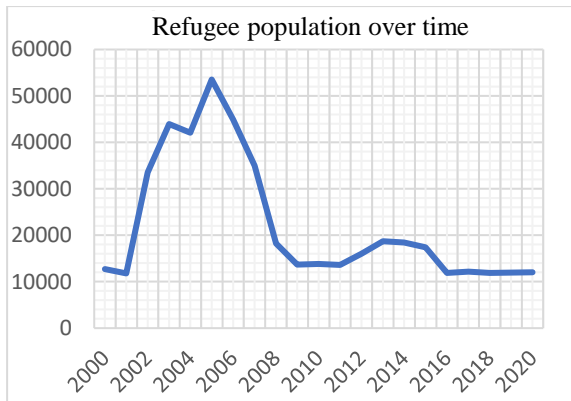
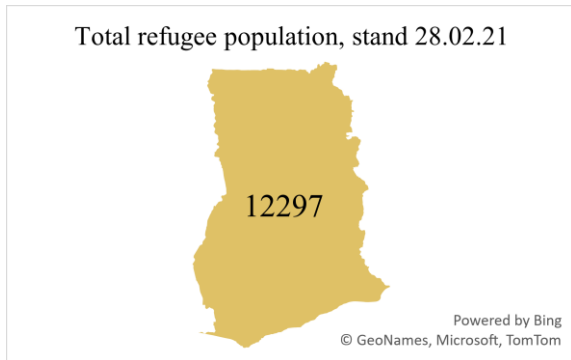
Access to labour market: Refugees/migrants have access to the labour market and can freely change employers and sectors (see [Loi No 2016-021 and Labour Code, 2006, Art 2](#)).

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Togo classifies as presenting:

SOMEWHAT FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.9 Ghana

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Ghana and its TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The HE ecosystem is made of a combination of public and private HEIs and TVET centres. For a list of HEIs by the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission see [here](#), and [Commission for TVET](#) for a listing of centres.

TVET centres	145
HEIs	297

Access to HE: As guaranteed by the [Refugee Law, 1992](#), refugees are treated not less favourably than any alien, with respect to HE access. As regards access to studies, the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges and the award of scholarships facilitate refugee entry.

Scholarships: In 2019, Ghana hosted 97 refugee students with a DAFI scholarship (DAFI report 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Ghana include [Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program](#), [Refugee EdTech Program](#) and [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#).

Challenges: Low refugee enrolment in tertiary/higher education institutions due to high tuition costs. Linguistic barriers for Francophone and Arabic refugees

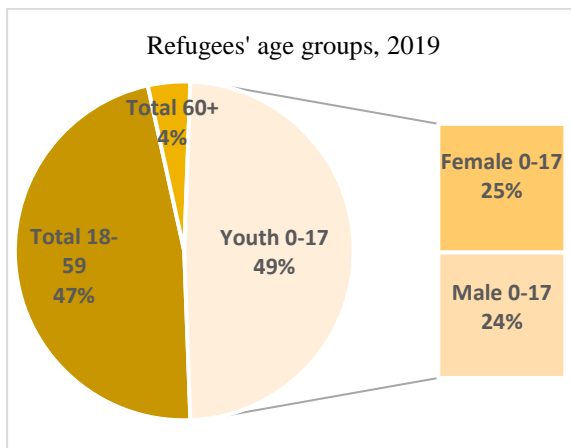
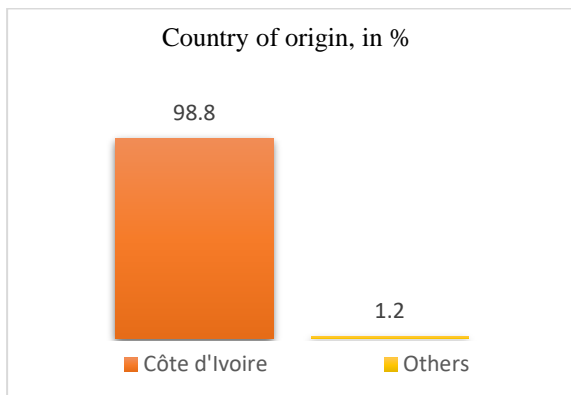
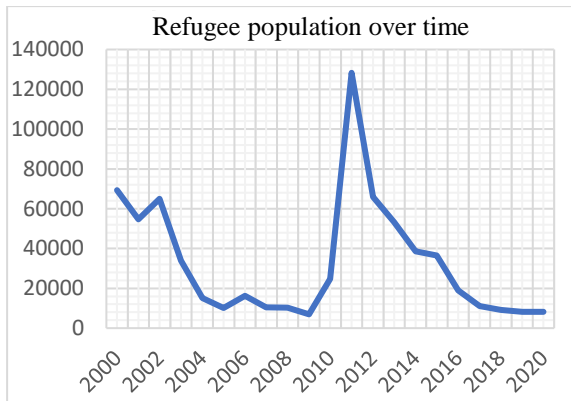
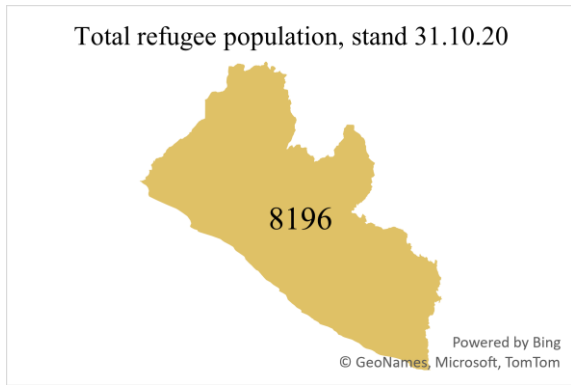
Access to labour market: Refugees in Ghana have the same legal rights as Ghanaian nationals: they can live and own businesses and properties. They are also allowed to work, provided they have work permits issued by the Ghana Refugee Board.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Ghana classifies as presenting:

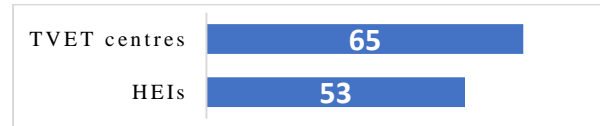
FAVOURABLE conditions for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.10 Liberia

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Liberia and its TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The ecosystem is constituted by public and private HEIs. See [National Commission for Higher Education of Liberia](#) for a full list of HEIs, among others. For TVET we refer to the 2020 RUFORUM “[Assessment of Current Status of Technical and Higher Education Sector in Liberia](#)”(p. 14).



Access to HE: Refugees are treated no less favourably than nationals, with respect to access to higher education. Thus, refugee students pay tuition fees at the same rate as Liberian nationals.

Scholarships: In 2019, DAFI scholarships supported 28 refugee students (DAFI report, 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Liberia include [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#) and [Refugee EdTech Program](#).

Challenges: Providing HE and TVET pathways for refugees living in Liberia does not appear to have the same priority as provision of access to primary and secondary education.

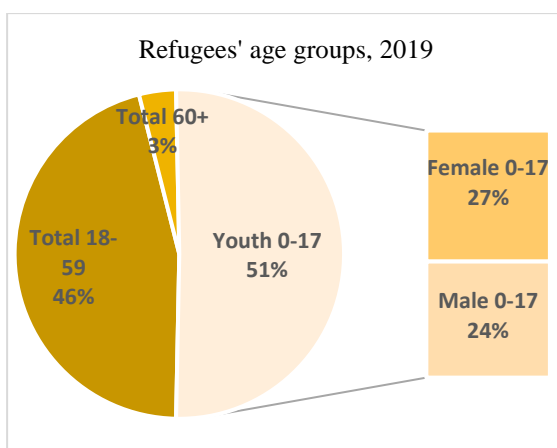
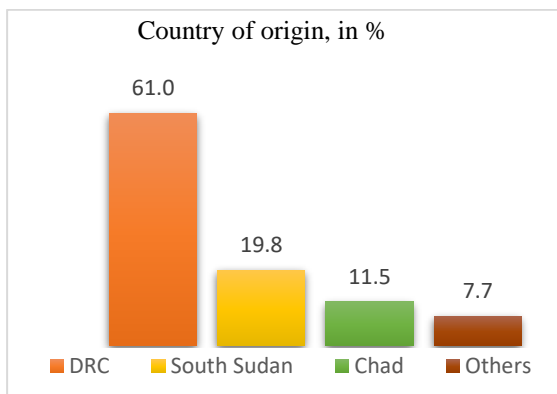
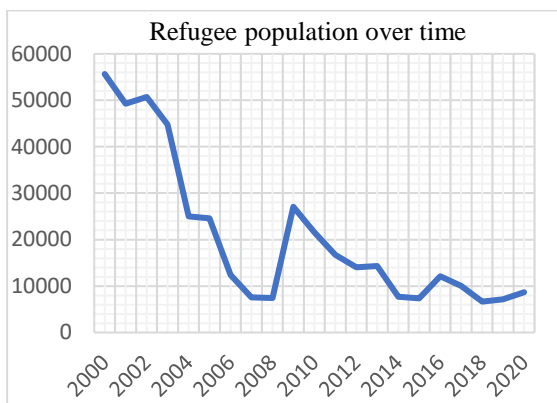
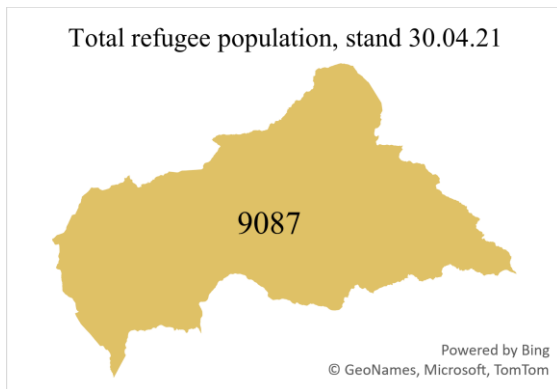
Access to labour market: Refugees access labour market in the same conditions as nationals, as granted by the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol on the local integration of refugees in their host countries.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Liberia classifies as presenting:

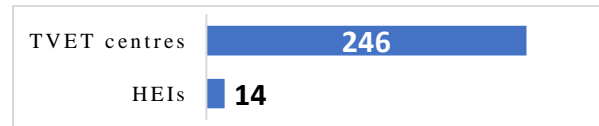
Presenting **SOMEWHAT FAVOURABLE** indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.11 Central African Republic

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Central African Republic (CAR) and its TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The ecosystem is constituted by public and private HEIs. [The International Encyclopaedia of HE Systems and Institutions*](#) (p.p. 918-920) proposes a list of HEIs. For TVET, please see [Répertoire des centres de formation professionnelle de la République](#) (p.p. 16-19).



Access to HE: Refugees have access to higher education in CAR, as granted by Decree N°07.019 and international conventions on the Status of Refugees.

Scholarships: Scholarship opportunities for refugee students in CAR include [Refugee EdTech Program](#) and [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#).

DAFI scholarships are not available for refugee students in CAR.

Challenges: Recurrent armed conflicts raise securities issues for refugees. Access to scholarships is very restrictive and almost impossible. Thus, refugee students in CAR face serious financial challenges.

Access to labour market: Refugees access labour market in the same conditions as nationals, as granted by the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol on the local integration of refugees in their host countries.

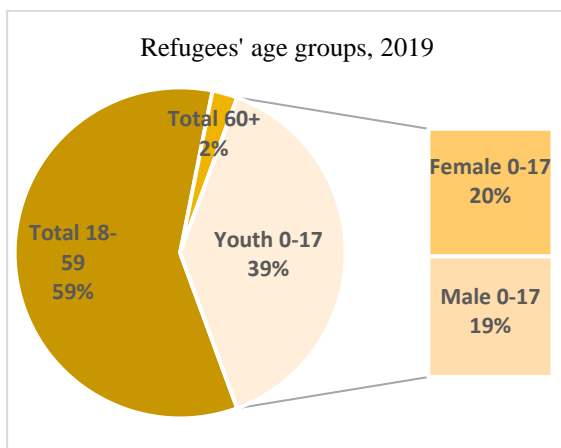
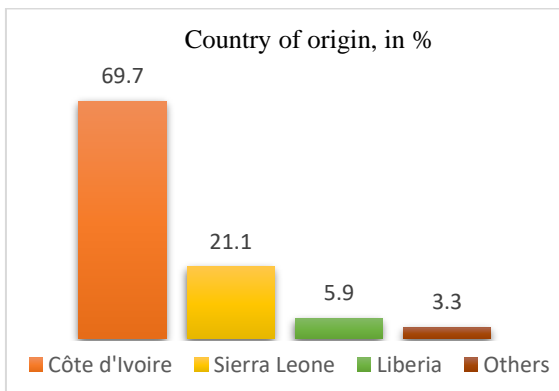
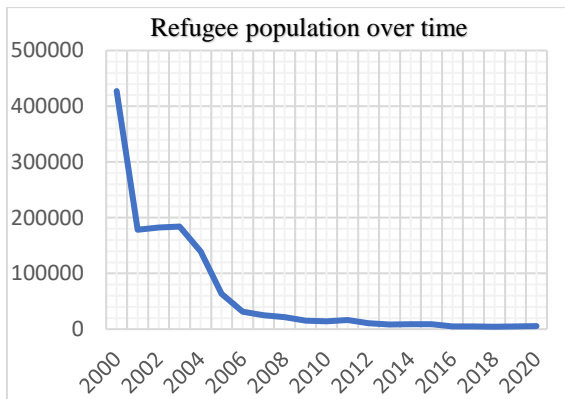
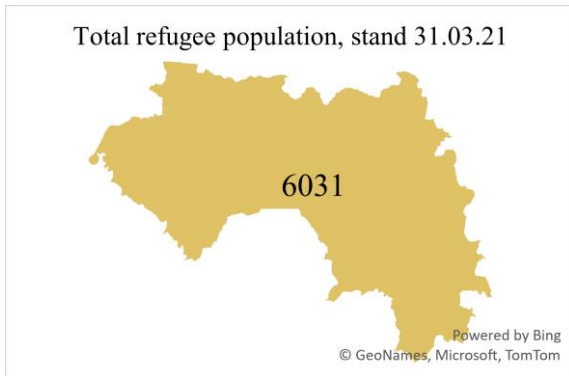
Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Central African Republic classifies as presenting:

LIMITED indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

* Nuno Teixeira et al, "The International Encyclopaedia of Higher Education Systems and Institutions" Springer, 2020. Not an open-source document.

4.3.12 Guinea

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Guinea and its TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The HE ecosystem is made of a combination of public and private HEIs and TVET centres that are geographically distributed across the country. For HEIs we would refer to [Annuaire statistique de l'année universitaire 2019/19](#) (p.p. 17-19). Regarding TVET institutions, see [Tableau de bord statistique de l'enseignement technique et de la formation professionnelle 2018/19](#)

TVET centres	120
HEIs	53

Access to HE: Refugee students in Guinea access HE in the same conditions as nationals, as granted by law on Asylum and Refugee Protection in the Republic of Guinea ([Loi L/2018/050/AN](#) art. 72-73).

Scholarships: DAFI scholarship programme supported 43 refugee students in 2019 (DAFI report 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Guinea include [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#) and [Refugee EdTech Program](#).

Challenges: Lack of information and coordination regarding HE opportunities.

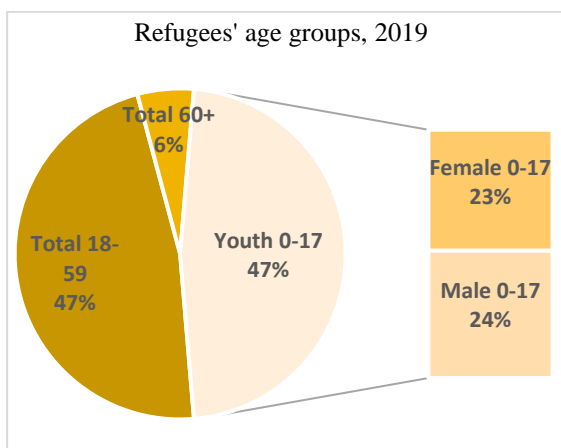
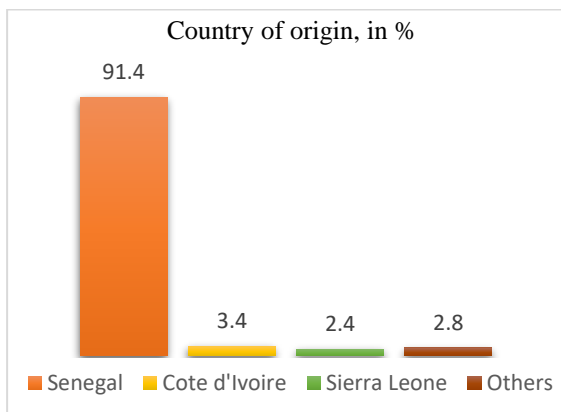
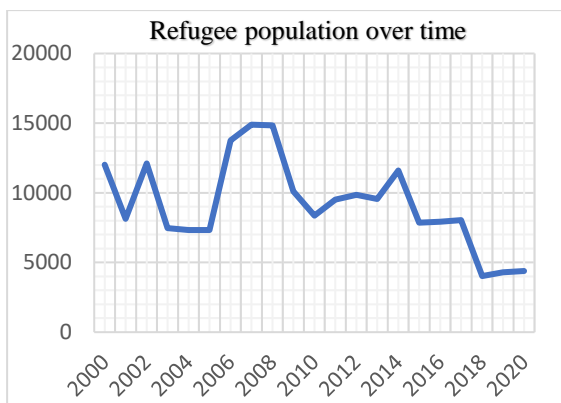
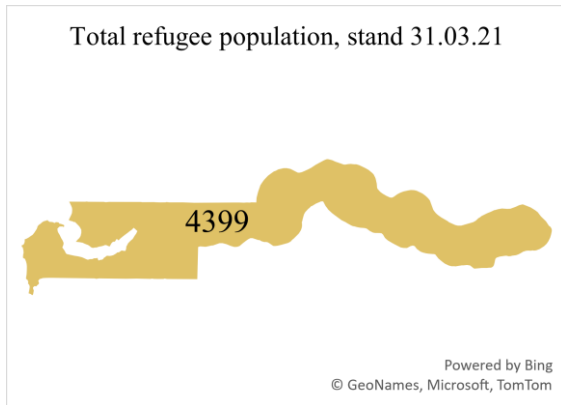
Access to labour market: Restrictive measures imposed on foreigners or on the employment of foreigners for the protection of the national labour market are not applicable to refugees. Thus, a beneficiary of refugee status has the right to exercise a liberal professional activity in the Republic of Guinea ([Loi L/2018/050/AN](#) art. 70-71).

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Guinea classifies as presenting:

SOMEWHAT FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.13 Gambia, The

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the Gambian education system in country's TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). Figures on HEIs in The Gambia see the [Ministries of Basic and Secondary Education and Higher Education Research Science and Technology](#) (see p. 6) 97 For TVET, see the [Gambian TVET Roadmap 2020-2024](#) (p. 7). A list of some TVET institutions in Gambia is available on p. 54 of the TVET [Roadmap](#).



Access to HE: Refugee students in The Gambia access HE in the same conditions as nationals in public education institutions.

Scholarships: DAFI scholarship programme supported 13 refugee students in 2019 (DAFI report 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in The Gambia include [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#) and [Refugee EdTech Program](#).

Challenges: Linguistic barriers for French-speaking refugees. Besides financial challenges, there is a lack of information regarding education opportunities for refugees.

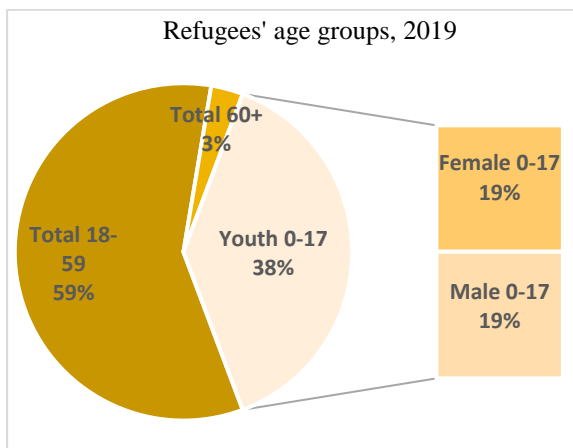
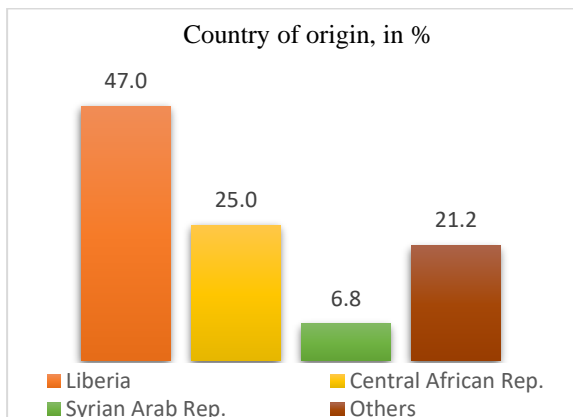
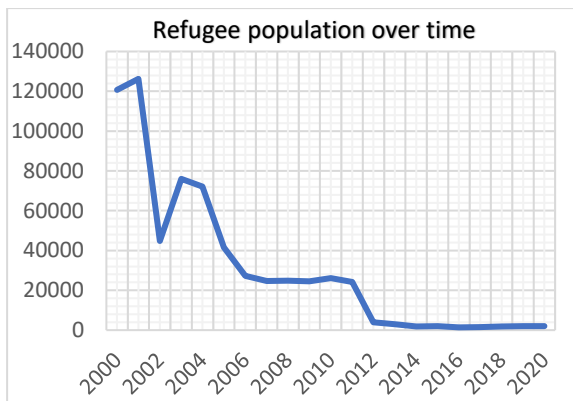
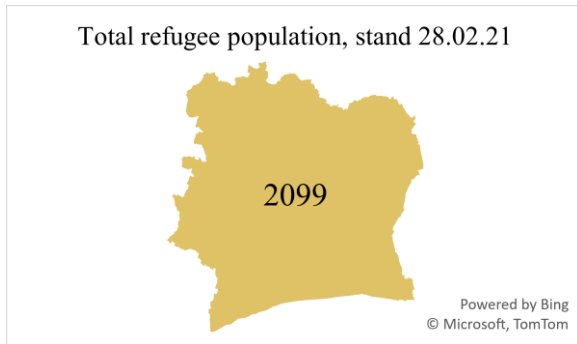
Access to labour market: No restrictive measures imposed on refugees in accessing the Gambian labour market. The Gambian [Refugee Act 2008](#) gives refugees the right to work and to access social amenities as nationals.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, The Gambia classifies as presenting:

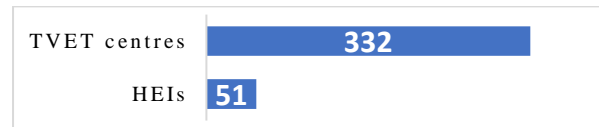
FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.14 Côte d'Ivoire

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Liberia and the country's TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). 7 public HEIs including 1 virtual are listed by the [Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique](#) whilst further 44 private HEIs are listed at: [Liste effective des établissements d'enseignement supérieurs privés de type universitaires](#). More than 300 TVET centres can be identified: [Liste des Etablissements de Formation Professionnelle Privée autorisés](#).



Access to HE: Refugee students have access to HE in Côte d'Ivoire. Like foreign students, refugee students pay higher tuition fees compared to national students (DAFI, report, 2018. No information available in DAFI report, 2019).

Scholarships: In 2019, DAFI scholarship supported 18 refugee students (DAFI report 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students include [Refugee EdTech Program](#), [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#) (in Côte d'Ivoire) and [DAAD Leadership for Africa](#) (in a third country).

Challenges: Linguistic barriers for non-French speaking refugees. Financial challenges for refugees with no access to scholarships.

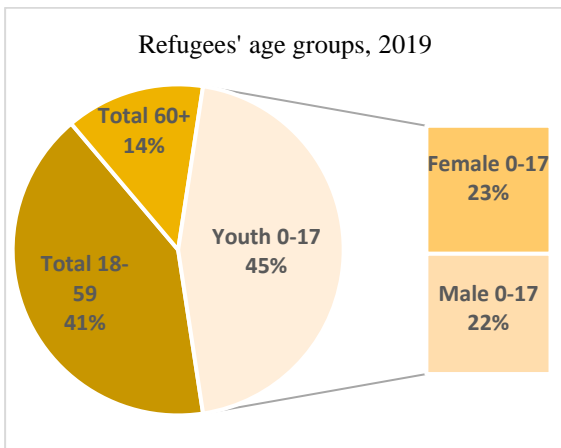
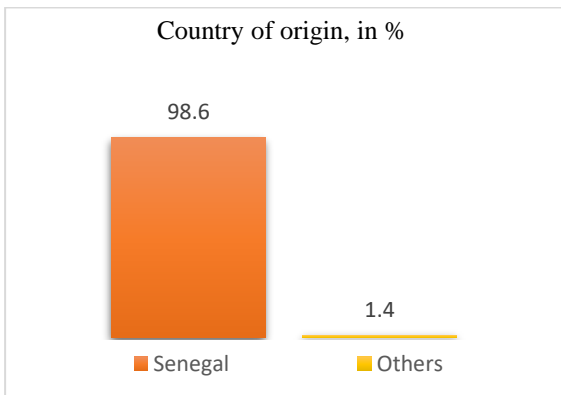
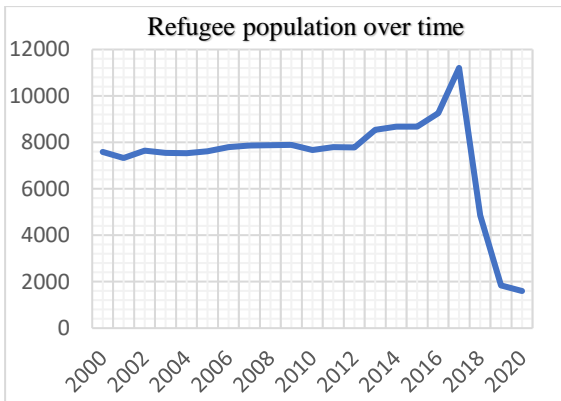
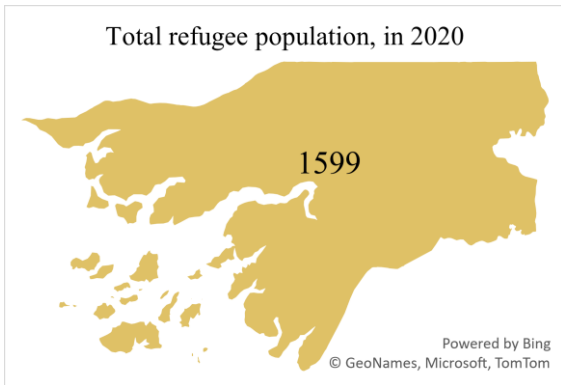
Access to labour market: Refugees access labour market in the same conditions as nationals, as granted by the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol on the local integration of refugees in their host countries.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Côte d'Ivoire classifies as presenting:

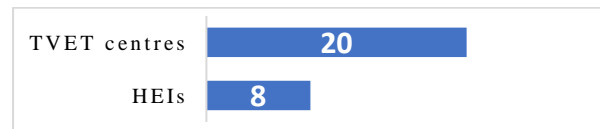
SOMEWHAT FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.15 Guinea-Bissau

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Guinea-Bissau and the country's TVET can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The ecosystem of HE in Guinea-Bissau is constituted by public and private HEIs and TVET centres, mostly informal. Regarding TVET, data about training institutions, specialities and trainees is provided by [Barreto and Carvalho, \(2020\)](#). For HEIs, [Knowledge Institutions in Africa and their development 1960-2020: Guinea-Bissau](#) (p. 5)



Access to HE: Refugee students have access to HE in Guinea-Bissau under the same conditions as nationals in public institutions.

Scholarships: In 2019, DAFI scholarship supported 13 refugee students (DAFI report 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Guinea-Bissau include [Refugee EdTech Program](#) and [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#).

Challenges: Linguistic barriers for non-Portuguese speaking refugees. Financial challenges for refugees with no scholarship.

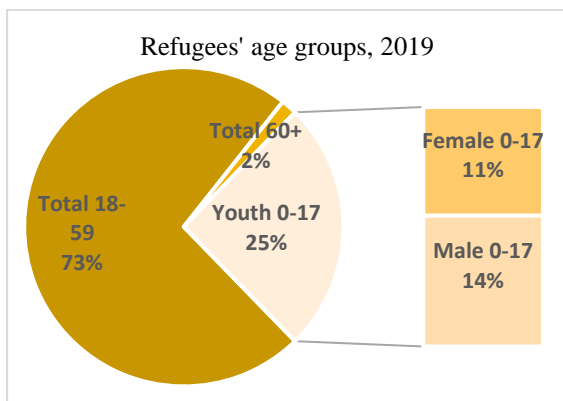
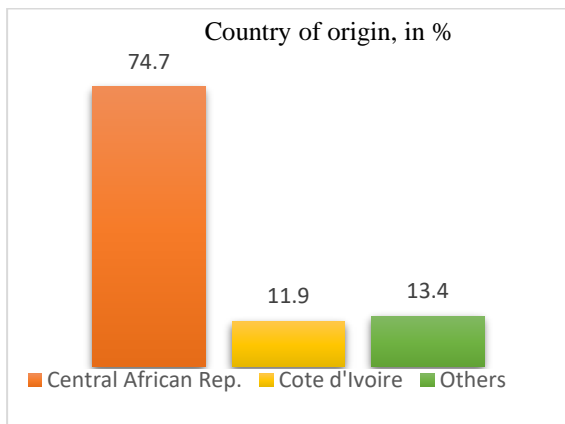
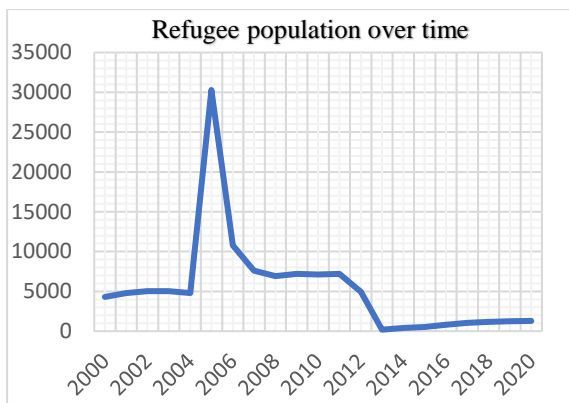
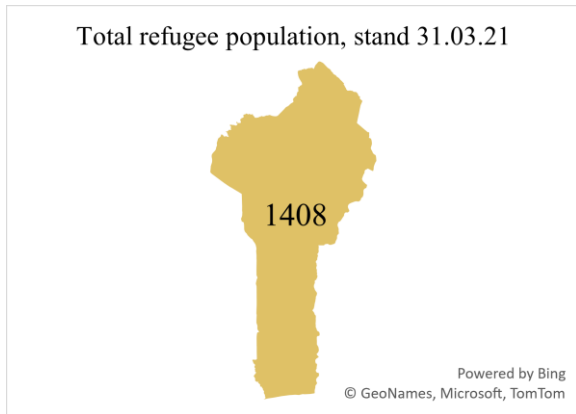
Access to labour market: Refugees access labour market in the same conditions as nationals, as granted by the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol on the local integration of refugees in their host countries.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Guinea-Bissau classifies as presenting:

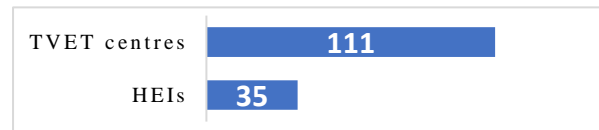
LIMITED indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.16 Benin

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Benin and the country's TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The ecosystem of HE in Benin is constituted by public and private HEIs and TVET centres. For a list of public and private HEIs in Benin, see [Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique, République du Bénin](#) and [Liste des établissements privés d'enseignement supérieur](#). [Nouatin et al. \(2019\)](#) proposes a data on TVET institutions in Benin (see p. 73).



Access to HE: According to the [Ordonnance No. 75-41](#) on refugees' status in Benin, refugees enjoy the same treatment as nationals with regard to access to education, scholarships, labour rights and social benefits.

Scholarships: 15 refugee students with DAFI scholarships were identified in Benin in 2019 (DAFI report 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Benin include [Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program](#), [Refugee EdTech Program](#) and [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#).

Challenges: Financial challenges for refugees with no scholarship, given the high cost of HE in Benin.

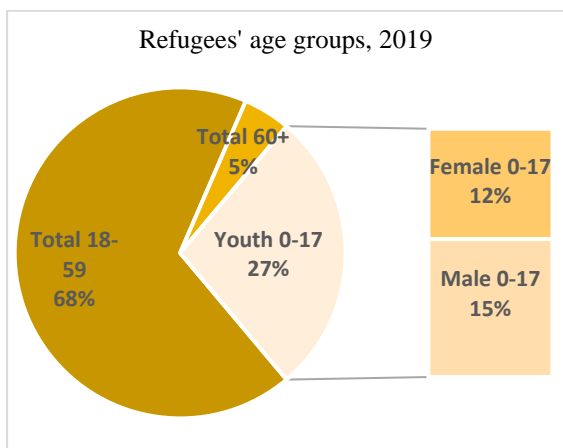
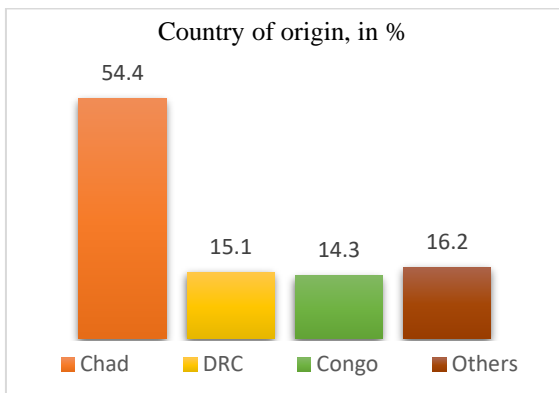
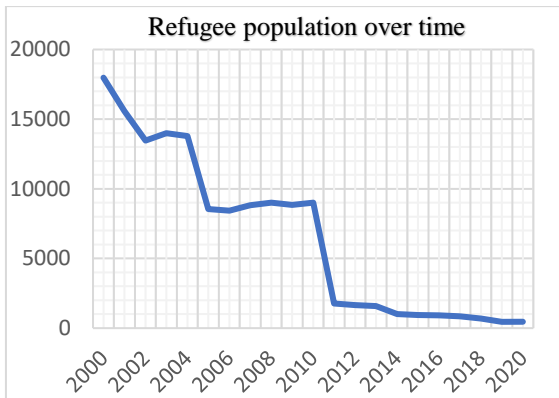
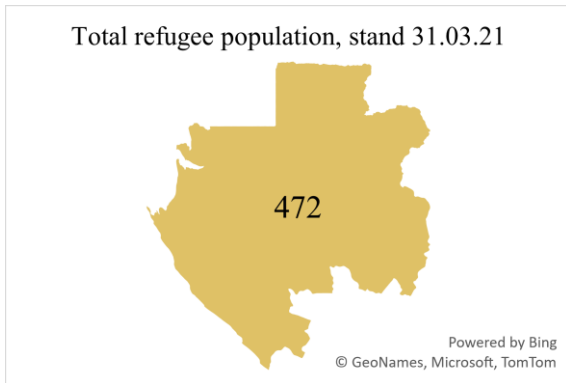
Access to labour market: Refugees in Benin have access to the labour market, under the [Ordonnance No. 75-41](#).

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Benin classifies as presenting:

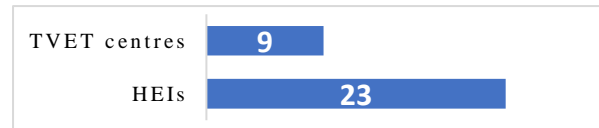
SOMEWHAT FAVOURABLE indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.17 Gabon

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Gabon and the country's TVET profile can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). The ecosystem of HE is constituted by public and private HEIs. A list of private and public HEIs in Gabon can be found here: [Africa Universities web listing](#) and [Agence nationale des bourses du Gabon](#). UNESCO data about TVET centres in 2020 (see [here](#)) indicate:



Access to HE: According to the [Loi No. 5/98 du 1998](#), on refugee status, refugees in Gabon receive the same treatment as nationals with regard to access to education, school and university registration fees, the costs of university as well as social benefits.

Scholarships: Scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Gabon include [Refugee EdTech Program](#) and [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#).

DAFI scholarship not available for refugee students in Gabon.

Challenges: Financial challenges for refugees with no scholarship, given the high cost of HE in Gabon.

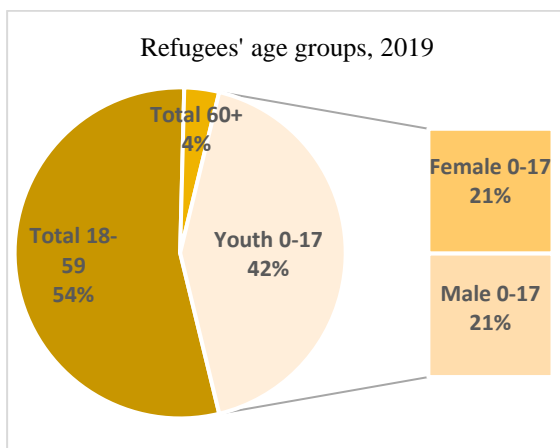
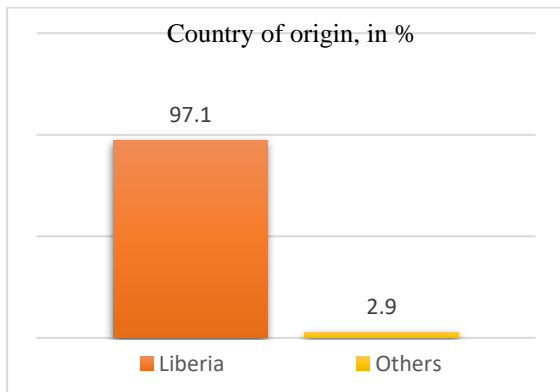
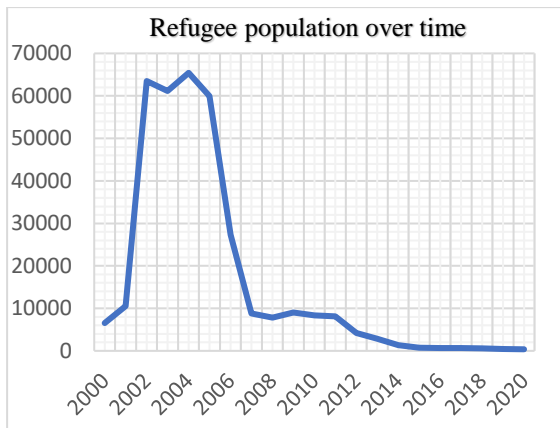
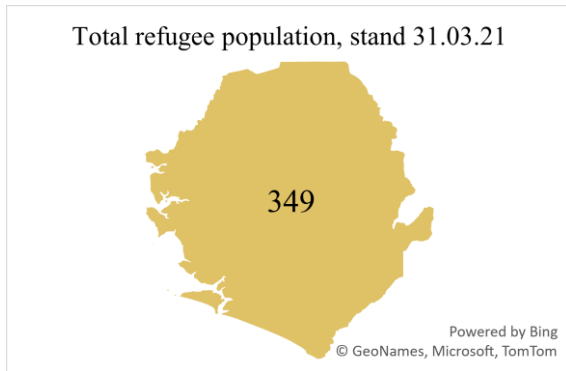
Access to labour market: Refugees in Gabon access labour market in the same condition as nationals and enjoy social benefits linked to the exercise of a salaried or unpaid professional activity, according to the Loi No. 5/98 du 1998.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Gabon classifies as presenting:

LIMITED indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education.

4.3.18 Sierra Leone

Demographics of refugees



HE ecosystem: A UNESCO map of the education system in Sierra Leone and the country's TVET profile by the can be found at [UNESCO: TVET Country Profiles](#). Public and private HE as TVET institutions are the main actors of the ecosystem. [The International Encyclopedia of HE Systems and Institutions](#)* (p. 1468) lists 10 HEIs in Sierra-Leone. For TVET institutions in 2018, see [GIZ Diagnostic Study, 2018](#) (p .96).



Access to HE: Refugees in Sierra Leone have access to HE and are treated as favourable as possible, with respect to education, the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges and the award of scholarships ([Refugees Protection Act 2007](#)).

Scholarships: Scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Sierra Leone include [Refugee EdTech Program](#) and [Emergency Scholarship Programme](#).

DAFI scholarship are not available for refugee students in Sierra Leone.

Challenges: Recurrent outbreaks of *Ebola* may threaten the well-being of refugees in Sierra Leone

Access to labour market: Under international conventions on refugee protection and local integration and the [Refugees Protection Act 2007](#), refugees are eligible to a wage-earning employment and access labour market in Sierra Leone.

Complementary pathways: Using the framework developed to assess the propensity of WCA countries to absorb refugee students, Sierra Leone classifies as presenting:

LIMITED indicators for the potential to develop complementary pathways through education

* Nuno Teixeira et al, "The International Encyclopaedia of Higher Education Systems and Institutions" Springer, 2020. Not an open-source document.

4.4.19 Equatorial Guinea, Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe

Demographics of refugees

Data on the refugee population in these three countries is very limited, rendering it impossible to analyse the evolution of refugee population over the year, the countries of origin, and the age groups. The only data we found is the count of stateless person in **Cape Verde**, which was 115 individuals.

Equatorial Guinea: The National University of Equatorial Guinea seems to be the main public university in Equatorial Guinea. HE is also supported by the Spanish National University of Distant Education, principally in Bata and Malabo. Further public training institutions such as the Institute for Health (Bata), the Institute for Public Administration and the Institute for Agriculture can be identified. The specific conditions surrounding refugee access to HE seems unclear. Nevertheless, labour laws do not prohibit discrimination based on refugee or stateless status ([US Department of State, 2020](#)). Regarding the potential to develop complementary pathways, Equatorial Guinea, besides being the only Spanish-speaking country in WCA (linguistic barriers), displays limited pre-requisites.

Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe: With populations respectively estimated at 0.6 and 0.2 million individuals in 2021, 11 HEIs can be identified in Cape Verde, including the University of Cape Verde. In São Tomé and Príncipe, HE is mainly provided by the Lusíada University, the University of São Tomé and Príncipe and the Higher Polytechnic Institute. Annex 3 provides more details about HEIs in Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe. In both countries, the specific condition surrounding refugee access to higher education are unclear.

5. Findings: The ‘red threads’ through the WCA complementary pathways through education ecosystem

The literature review and the analysis of the country specific information sets have **been used in considering the availability of, and access to, complementary pathways for refugees**. The focus has been on identifying complementary pathways that are available regionally in a significant manner, and that can be attributed to one or more countries with certainty.

However, an immediate and preoccupying finding from the country specific data sets is the **relative lack of consistent and reliable data** within WCA countries and across the region. Data quantifying the potential for uptake of complementary pathways through education by refugees, the availability of educational pathways, particularly in the TVET sector, and providing qualitative insight into the accessibility of available pathways is limited. Establishing reliable baselines for availability of pathways, potential demand for pathways and actual levels of refugee take-up of educational pathways has proven elusive. This is a fundamental point of concern when stakeholders must decide where and how to allocate limited resources to address barriers to improving accessibility and provision.

The analysis of findings shows a mix of interrelated factors that significantly effect both the provision/offer of pathways to refugees, and the accessibility/uptake by refugees. The findings **signpost both potential engagements and actions which may catalyse change, as well as the identification of lead stakeholders who may be able to influence these levers of change**.

Literature reviewed did not distinguish meaningfully between refugee access to education as a pathway of choice for entry to a WCA country and subsequent uptake when refugees arrive in a third country. This is most likely closely associated with the very specific freedom of movement provisions that exist for refugees in the ECOWAS and ECCAS communities. Such free movement is a significant benefit for refugees who may consider accessing educational pathways in third countries within the

WCA region. It largely removes the frequently high barrier of restricted freedom of movement which preoccupies stakeholders in many other regional groupings.

Country data highlighted that some existing national educational policies result in significantly different treatments for refugee and non-refugee applicants accessing tertiary or TVET opportunities within the WCA region. Research into, and information on profiles and numbers of refugees desiring and achieving (or not) access to higher education or TVET, was not found in reliable or replicable form. This gap appears to present an important opportunity for conducting future research.

5.1 Existing or potential education complementary pathways for admission

The research scope defined a number of modalities of programme delivery both for HE and TVET, which we have recorded for each WCA country. The modalities were selected as a result of their presence in early literature review and their established use as references across research publications. These delivery models include:

- Programmes with physical presence amongst refugee communities
- Host community scholarship programmes
- International scholarship programmes
- Online learning platforms
- Information sharing platforms

It is to be noted that information sharing platforms returned the poorest information returns, both from the literature reviewed and country matrices.

Available data and conservative estimates of the number of “university ready” students within the refugee population (based on national uptake rates and refugee community profiles) suggest that the need/demand for financial aid cannot be met by available international scholarship programmes alone. This is despite the fact that such scholarship programmes are often the best documented and standout provision. It would be helpful to be able to assess ratios of demand to offer, for currently available international scholarships. It would be helpful to have data permitting a comparative analysis between refugees receiving national versus international scholarships, or other financial aid.

If international scholarships are not the panacea to addressing financial access issues for refugee populations, then it becomes evident that the levels of national provision become of key importance. We note that country specific considerations have already highlighted national cases where systemic underinvestment, or failure of the HE system, appears to be manifest. **This highlights the need to build a clearer picture of how national educational policies are addressing the provision of HE and TVET. A subsequent analysis would be how these policies are implemented in relation to the needs/desires of refugee populations.** This would include questions of financial accessibility of programmes to refugees, and the role played by scholarship programmes provided by the host communities.

With regards to the **availability of online learning platforms, with an almost total absence of regional or national information sharing platforms, references in both the literature and country data have focused on two concerns: firstly, issue of connectivity – the physical availability of network connections with sufficient bandwidth to allow students to access online learning – and secondly, accreditation.** Accreditation is considered largely in terms of the value given to learning acquired on-line in the context of national and international recognition and the value given to it by the refugees accessing such learning. The extent to which this is a refugee specific problem is to be questioned.

5.2 Scope to further develop existing education-based complementary pathways

Both the literature review and country data collection have validated the range of barriers to accessing HE and TVET listed in Section 5.4, below. The contention is that to further develop/extend existing

pathways, engagement would need to be designed to include actions to break down these barriers. Literature reviewed makes specific reference to practical measures that address specific barriers. This is partially reflected in the findings from national data. However, the enabling process and mechanisms to facilitate such actions are largely absent in the WCA regional context.

Improving access must also be complemented with increased provision of HE and TVET programmes. **TVET's integration into considerations of educational investment, promotion and the value held in the labour market is at an early or very early stage in many countries.**

Concerns regarding the value of the educational pathway for refugee integration into regulated and durable economic activity is material. The evidence indicates that a significant component of available TVET is informal and bound to the informal economy/labour market. This raises the **need to reflect on the integration of existing informal opportunities into the formal educational framework.** The literature flags that the formal sector responds more readily to the requirements of complementary pathways – safe, regulated, and lawful access. The informal sector does not. This should be borne in mind, given the relative importance that may be placed on TVET versus HE provision, when seeking to expand availability of educational programmes.

We would refer to measures to overcome physical barriers to refugees accessing TVET and/or HE, such as **physically locating a programme in proximity to the largest number of HE-or TVET-ready refugees, versus those with lower numbers:** that is, urban versus rural locations, and geographical allocations within countries. Here, the literature also looks specifically at freedom of movement issues as determined by both national legislation, practice, as well as regulation on movements of refugees agreed at the level of ECOWAS and ECCAS. Movement restrictions may also refer to subsets of the refugee population, i.e., women and girls restricted in movement by prevailing family, cultural or other concerns, or those with mobility impairing conditions.

Literature and practice have also noted that a precondition to extending available provision is to also **create viable protocols and standards for the treatment of professional experience/qualifications as equivalencies for entry to tertiary or TVET programmes.** There has also been some modest consideration of whether electronic means, such as use of block chain for the recording of educational attainment records can be used to provide permanent and unique personal records (Jenkins, 2019). There is further evidence from outside of WCA of successful collaborations with trained evaluators of credentials, or government agencies such as the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT).

In relation to identified **financial barriers to access**, and options to extend availability and take up of existing provision, consideration may be given to the relative importance placed upon the provision of international scholarships. However, the itinerant issues of equality of access and cost, relative to extension of host community scholarships, would need to be considered carefully. Certain country models, for example Chad, also allow for differentiated pricing to facilitate refugee entry, notably to HE programmes provide by private sector universities.

It is also suggested in the literature that **incentives to extend available provision of HE and TVET nationally are likely to be strongly associated with provision of a net positive impact on the labour market and employability.** Whilst the national rationale for this can be made, it is evident that direct investment exclusively in refugee access to the labour market may not be as readily accepted as shown in the German example - see Section 3.3 above.

Consideration could also be given to the data and commentary around **national investment in technology and digital connectivity. Whilst access to appropriate devices reliable connectivity is**

important to the provision of online learning, such consideration is not manifest in national digital infrastructure strategies. Similarly, e-learning strategies are not evident from the review of national educational policy frameworks.

In addition to connectivity and digital infrastructure, decision makers need to consider how to harness the power of technology to improve access to education and enhance the skills of refugees, to enable them to find decent employment. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed new ways of teaching and learning, some of which are more accessible and cost-effective. These could be explored for addressing some of the issues identified during this mapping work.

5.3 Possible and appropriate potential for new education-based opportunities

Analysis of available data has not specifically permitted a ranking of WCA countries by potential for new education-based complementary pathway opportunities. The methodology applied recommends prioritisation of engagements based on evaluation of the propensity of the national context to accommodate and benefit from action to enhance provision or access to educational pathways. See Section 4.2 Developing complementary pathways: a contextual analysis of the potential in WCA.

5.4 Potential gaps/challenges refugees may face to access these opportunities

The analytical frameworks evoked by the literature review and analysis of information garnered at country level to date are coherent. Findings have been consistent with expectations, although manifestation of gaps and challenges are highly specific to the country context.

Based on country level information and data, it may be useful to consider gaps and challenges which are evidenced on a near universal basis in countries across the WCA region, and those that are manifest in subsets or individual countries. The following have been explicitly referenced in the literature review, or national information, or both, for accessing tertiary education:

- Presence of higher education/TEVT institutions and available places in adequate numbers.
- Distance of core refugee populations from existing campuses and issues of physical accessibility i.e., movement restrictions.
- Levels and types of academic certification required for admission and their availability to potential refugee applicants.
- Treatment of professional experience/qualifications as equivalencies for entry to TVET programmes: that is, years of experience in workplace, prior vocational training.
- Number of refugee students graduating from secondary school or acquiring access qualifications, particularly girls.
- Restrictions on fields of study open to refugees.
- Educational costs: tuition, fees, others.
- Requirements to provide a financial contribution to family or self as an exclusionary factor for uptake.
- Additional barriers that affect refugee enrolment, particularly as relate to gender, language and/or linguistic, cultural, ethnic, religious considerations.
- Additional barriers faced by those with disabilities and children (e.g., childcare costs while studying).

These are all concrete fields for action in any endeavour, to enhance the WCA ecosystem. The critical challenge remains to create the enabling conditions for the relevant stakeholders within the WCA region to effect change. UNHCR is not apt to resolve these challenges independently. If systemic change is to be achieved, then coordinated and mutually reinforcing collective actions by stakeholders, through multi-dimensional interventions over a period of time, will be required.

6. Enhancing the WCA complementary educational pathways ecosystem: Potential for UNHCR-facilitated catalytic interventions

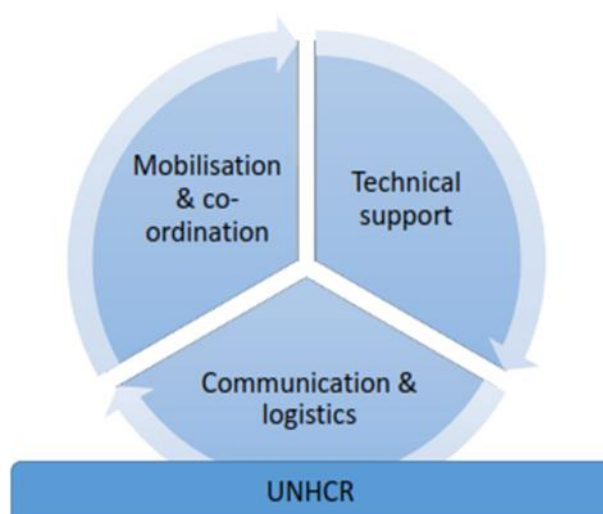
The provision of responses to these specific challenges is not the remit of UNHCR or any single stakeholder. Research shows that successful collective impact initiatives typically have five conditions that together produce true alignment and lead to powerful results: a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support organisations.⁹

6.1 Focused opportunities to enhance accessibility and availability

Appropriate and meaningful focal contribution to addressing these challenges within the WCA region would be for UNHCR to actively engage its resources to catalyse process and mechanism which enable the stakeholder community to:

- **Establish baseline data and extract meaningful information** on actual levels of uptake and potential uptake amongst the WCA refugee populations. This would require creation of a disseminated and robust information management systems for the collection and analysis of data on the key factors influencing the design of accessible and appropriate complementary pathways through education.
- **Identify existing good and impactful practices in WCA**, share this knowledge and encourage each stakeholder to undertake the specific set of activities at which it excels in a way that supports and is coordinated with the actions of others.
- **Co-design new evidence-based interventions across the spectrum of stakeholders from micro to macro level actions.** Impact will derive from the creation of significant incremental action of stakeholders, not the uniformity of their efforts, but from the coordination of their differentiated activities through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.
- **Enable long-term (to 2030) organisational/stakeholder and sector wide learning and development of a collective voice** to move the profile of complementary pathways through education as an adjunct to resettlement for provision of durable solutions for refugees.

Figure 3. UNCHR: a catalytic enabler



⁹ Collective Impact. John Kania and Mark Kramer, Stanford Social Innovation Review Winter 2011

UNHCR can look to act as the catalytic hub for convening, mobilising, and enabling stakeholders to build the processes and mechanisms that can create the collective impact required to significantly increase the contribution of complementary pathways through education. This could help to provide durable solutions for refugees in the WCA region. See Figure 3 UNCHR: a catalytic enabler.

Action of this nature would be consistent with UNHCR's remit as the lead for refugee protection. UNHCR's commitment to, and support for refugees and host governments until solutions for inclusion in education are obtained, are enshrined in [Refugee Education 2030: A Strategy for Refugee Inclusion](#) and the [Three-year Strategy \(2019-2021\) on resettlement and complementary pathways](#).

Given the regional findings in considering how and when to support and enable action to greatest effect, the target, in a first instance, is on developing processes and supporting mechanisms that enable the stakeholder community acting within WCA to address strategic and operational needs to:

6.2 Impact of UNHCR-facilitated action

Enable access to base line data to increase accountability and predictability, and to strengthen the evidence base for collective action in this field.

- Facilitation of an in-depth analysis of the quality of the data and identifies any gaps or data limitations that need to be addressed.
- Improvement of data systems to capture information on refugees, profiles, skills, and knowledge.
- Development of UNHCR and stakeholder mechanisms to gather and analyse comprehensive data on the availability and use of complementary pathways.
- Development of tools to monitor and evaluate complementary pathway programmes.

Identify existing good and impactful practices within WCA

- Investment in systems to facilitate information sharing and channelling mechanisms between UNHCR, States and other stakeholders.
- Identification of high-potential countries, regions, partnerships, and initiatives that can develop the relevant pathway by mapping existing opportunities. Targeting activity to those countries likely to yield greatest impact. See Section 4.2 above.

Improve the communication of what is available by

- Enhancing digital and other communication tools to make information on complementary pathways more widely available for refugees.
- Building tools to match refugee profiles and skills with existing complementary pathway opportunities.
- Co-designing online and other communication channels to help refugees to access information on complementary pathways.

7. Table of Annexes

Annex 1. Methodological consideration: Literature review and country mapping

Annex 2. References

Annex 3. Complete data matrices: 21 Countries of West and Central Africa

Annex 1.

Methodological consideration: Literature review and country mapping

1. Of note on methodology

For the literature review, a critical finding is the paucity of scholarly papers in the agreed eligibility period from 2018 that directly address the issues of complementary pathways through education globally, and specifically in the context of West and Central Africa. This finding was confirmed in discussions with a range of researchers dedicated to the study of the fields of education, refugees, and migration. Indeed, it is more common to find studies advocating for unlocking refugees' potential through education and training or addressing matters of integration, rather than studies discussing education as alternative pathways for admission in a third country.

With regards to the collection of information at country level, this was almost entirely a desk-based exercise to reference, in the first instance, data from nationally, regionally, and internationally validated or verified data sources. Unsurprisingly, data availability has shown significant variability across countries and in relation to interrogation points. Attention has thus been given to both identifying a further tier of trustworthy data sources, often at national level, which are able to provide information for comparative purposes. This work has been supplemented, as far as it was feasible in the time available, with interviews or focus group discussions with refugees, UNHCR staff and other stakeholders.

2. Methodology: Review of literature on complementary education pathways in WCA

Our work began with the interrogation of sources identified in the **Literature Review Frame**, Complementary Pathways through Education for Refugees in the Central and West Africa Region: Education Opportunities Mapping, as validated with the UNHCR team. This restricted review to publications in the period 2018 to date.

Cross referencing from the original literature selection has contributed to a significant building out of the literature brought into the scope of the study. The contribution by the UNHCR team of detailed listings of UNCHR publications was very helpful. There was further interrogation of dedicated data collection, including but not restricted to:

- [Refworld, UNCHR](#)
- [German Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training \(BIBB\) Repository](#)¹
- [International Organization for Migration publications](#)²
- [Evidence Library, Open Development & Education](#)³
- [African Education Research Database, ESSA](#)⁴

¹ Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) systematically records the German-language specialist literature on all aspects of vocational education and training research from the year of publication 1988 onwards.

² IOM produces a large number of publications, including: the World Migration Report, National Migration Profiles, the Migration Research Series; as well as other studies and reports, journals, manuals, information sheets, flyers and thematic catalogues. The Publications Unit is within the Migration Policy Research Division and part of the Department of International Cooperation and Partnerships. The Unit provides overall support concerning publications-related issues for Headquarters departments and Offices worldwide.

³ Open Development & Education offers: Rigorous education research, education programme implementation, education programme strategy and management. Focus on low- and middle-income countries, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean.

⁴ The online African Education Research Database ([AERD](#)) has been developed by the Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre at the University of Cambridge, in partnership with ESSA. The database aims to raise the visibility of African research, consolidate the evidence base for policy and practice, and inform future research priorities and partnerships. The AERD is a curated collection of research undertaken in the past decade by scholars based in sub-Saharan Africa. The database includes social science research with implications for educational policy and

The assessment of literature relevance and findings has been further informed by remote exchanges with practitioners, academics, and authors. This has included input from, amongst others, UNICEF, International Organization for Migration (IOM), the German based Expert Council on Integration and Migration (Der Sachverständigenrat für Integration und Migration SVR), [Dr Simon McGrath](#), Nottingham University, Department of Education (UNESCO Chair in International Education and Development), [Dr Halimatou Hima](#) Moussa Dioula, education expert, currently Minister Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Niger to the United Nations⁵, and [Dr Robert Ebenezer Nsoga](#), an expert on the protection of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in Central Africa.

3. Methodology: Mapping of education opportunities for refugees

The mapping of education opportunities, as validated by UNHCR, aims to give a clear picture of the country-specific provision for access to tertiary education, including vocational training.

Area of concern	Data point
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole population profile including demographics as mapped to eligibility criteria for HE/TVET. Refugee profile including demographics as mapped to eligibility criteria for HE/TVET.
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key national strategic and policy objectives relating to HE and TVET. Key national strategic and policy objectives as applied to refugee populations.
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Related to the relevance of HE and TVET. With reference to conditions regulating access to work for refugees.
Map of existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programmes with physical presence amongst refugee communities. Host community scholarship programmes. International scholarship programmes. Online learning platforms. Information sharing platforms.
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence of HE/TVET institutions/programmes and available places in adequate numbers. Distance of core refugee populations from existing provision and issues of physical accessibility, i.e. availability of transport, and restrictions on movement. Levels and types of certification required for admission, and their availability to refugee applicants. Number of refugee students graduating from secondary studies. Restrictions on fields of study open to refugees. Financial considerations: fees, travel, provisions and/or contribution to personal or family welfare.

Table 1: Overview of the country matrix content table

To achieve this goal, the present exercise systematically collected country-level data relating to population profile, education strategy, labour market conditions, existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees and

practice, understood in the context of the global priorities and targets expressed in Sustainable Development Goal 4 'ensuring inclusive and quality education for all', and the African Union's Agenda 2063 and Continental Education Strategy for Africa. The AERD includes peer-reviewed articles, chapters, PhD theses and working papers identified through structured searches of academic and grey literature databases, expert consultation, and pearl-growing techniques.

⁵ Currently focuses on Security Council affairs such as children and armed conflict, humanitarian issues including education, as well as women, peace, and security.

challenges faced by refugees. The expected results of collecting these data are individual country level matrices providing *between* country comparable data and highlighting *pathways* largely absent from the national context. Table 1 above proposes an overview of the main variables considered when mapping refugees education opportunities at country-level.

The mapping procedure provides a clear picture of the country provision for access to tertiary education, including vocational training. Data has been collated relating to population profile, education strategy, labour market conditions, existing pathways to higher education and TVET for refugees, and challenges faced by these refugees. Primacy was given to data reliability and replicability of data sets across the 21 countries within the WCA region. Where possible, priority has been given to open-source information when this has not been available it has been formally noted. It should also be noted that all web references for the mapping of country data are to documents reviewed and data extracted effective of the 9th June 2021. These web listings will be subject to change over time.

For the purposes of consistency in mapping and tallying, country assessments in Section 4.3 reference the following definition of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) from the World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action adopted by the 1998 World Conference on Higher Education and published by UNESCO: *“all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent state authorities.”* UNESCO, the World Bank, and UNDP, amongst others, use this definition.

Annex 2.

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Annex 3. Complete data matrices: 21 Countries of West and Central Africa

	Chad	Cameroon
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16.4 million inhabitants in 2020, with an annual population growth rate of 3.0% (UNFPA); more than half of population is under 18. Asylum country for circa 494,551 refugees in 2021 (UNHCR), 75%, 21% and 3.3% of whom are respectively from Sudan, Central African Republic, and Nigeria. A total of 36,203 female and 34,257 male refugees, ages 12-17 in 2019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 26.5 million in 2020 with an annual growth rate of 2.6% (UNFPA) Refugee population of 439,161 (UNHCR) with majority from Central African Republic, Nigeria, and Chad.
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugees have access to public education under the same conditions as nationals. Total integration of camp schools in national education system. Primary and secondary school are compulsory (bilingual teaching: Arab and French). Refugee's access higher education in the same conditions as national in public institutions. 50% discount in private institutions (see here). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education in Cameroon is compulsory up to age 14, when 6 years of primary school are complete. Refugees in Cameroon receive the same treatment as nationals with regards to access to education, school and university registration fees and fees for university work centres (see Loi n°2005/006). Some private universities offer reduced tuition fees (DAFI report, 2019).
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 76.3% of employment in agriculture, with almost 40.8% of underemployment. The admission in public services is reserved to Chadian nationals. Conditions regulating refugees' access to employment in the public services are not clearly defined (see here). Chad joined the UN Convention and took the Decret 11-839 relating to the Status of Refugees, which ensure same treatment as nationals with regards to the exercise of salaried activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly informal economy. Informal sector (mainly women), account for more than 90% of workers in Cameroon. Refugees have full access to the labour market in Cameroon (see Loi n°2005/006).
Map of existing pathways to Higher Education (HE) and Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Figures from Plan Intérimaire de l'Éducation au Tchad 2018-2020 (see page 73) indicate more than 130 HEIs. TVET as part of the national education system. A total of 43 public and private TVET centres have been identified in 2015 (see TVET Country Profiles). 165 DAFI students identified in 2019; Bourse Partielle Mouvements Mixtes for 597 refugees in Bachelor programmes; French Embassy scholarship programmes (14 in 2020). 1.5% of refugees in technical education. In 9 TVET centres near camps in 2018, 52% of total of 619 are refugees. Other refugee-dedicated scholarship programmes (see the list here). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official figures indicate 243 HEIs (Ministry of Higher Education of Cameroon's website here and here). Some private universities offer reduced fees to refugee students (DAFI report, 2019). TVET is part of the national education strategy. A listing of TVET centres, their location and status (public, private) by the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training indicate 734 centres. 174 DAFI scholars supported in 2019. Other scholarship opportunities for refugees include Refugee EdTech Program, Emergency Scholarship Programme (in Cameroon) and DAAD Leadership for Africa (in a third country).
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet remains a luxury for online programmes. No country specific refugee students' programmes, enabling the admission/resettlement of refugees from WCA countries in Chad. No systematic policy of refugees' admission into TVET centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugee camps in Chad are mostly located near the Sudanese border, while HEIs are located in regions far away. Thus, large distances between core refugee populations and HE campuses. HE systems incompatibility, mostly for refugees from Sudan (Arabic school system). Additional barriers that affect refugee enrolment, particularly female, include linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and religious. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers affecting refugee enrolment include lack of learning materials, inadequate teaching materials and non-adopted/overcrowded classes (see here). The spread of conflict in Cameroon since 2014 continues to impact communities and negatively affects access to services and jobs.

	Niger	Nigeria
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24.2 million inhabitants in 2020, with an annual population growth rate of 3.8% (UNFPA) • Asylum country for circa 234,289 refugees in 2020 (UNHCR), 73% and 26% respectively from Nigeria and Mali • A total of 13,858 female and 12,937 male refugees, ages 12-17, in 2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 206.1 million inhabitants in 2020 with an annual growth of 2.6% (UNFPA) • Refugee population of 68,518 (UNHCR) with majority from Cameroon (96%), Central African Rep. (1%) and Dem. Rep. Congo (1%).
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a gross secondary school enrolment rate of circa 4%, camp schools are mostly integrated in the national education system. • The West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) protocol allows refugees, 99% of whom are from the WAEMU countries, to access public education under the same conditions as nationals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nigerian states accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education (see National Commission For Refugees Act). • Refugees are not treated less favourably than nationals in the same circumstances, with respect to education, as regards access to studies, the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges, and the award of scholarships (see here and the National Commission For Refugees Act).
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture and artisanal trade dominate the labour market. • Admission of migrants/refugees in public services is subject to the absence of “national competences” (Labour Code, Art. 48). The Labour Code and the law on refugees’ status in Niger ensure refugees receive same treatment as nationals. • Refugees enjoy the same rights as nationals for liberal professions (Loi no 97-16). Agence Nationale Pour l’Emploi (ANPE) ensures that refugee graduates access internship and jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8th largest oil exporting country (in 2018), unemployment rate is over 24% and is characterised by youth unemployment (see here). • Refugees have the right to work in Nigeria (see National Commission For Refugees Act). Entering the labour market is challenging, due to high national unemployment rates.
Map of existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 HEIs identified in Niger by the “Oreille du campus” website here and here. • TVET are part of the education system. 245 TVET centres identified. For listing and geographical location of TVET centres, see the Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training website here. • Refugees access HE under the same conditions as nationals. • DAFI scholarship supported 31 refugee students in 2019. Alternative refugee-dedicated scholarship programmes included Emergency Scholarship Programme and Refugee EdTech Program (see the list here). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Education Commission lists a total of 170 accredited HEIs (see full listing). • As TVET centres, Nigeria hosts a total of 121, 197 and 282 federal, state, and private TVET institutions respectively, which include polytechnics, technical colleges, colleges of agriculture, among others (see Habler et al., 2020, p. 242). • A complete listing and types of Nigerian TVET Institutions is available here. • 32 DAFI students supported in 2019 (DAFI report, 2019) • A full list of scholarship opportunities for refugees can be found here
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to internet, and therefore to online opportunities, remains difficult. No national refugee students’ programme identifiable. • No clear discount on tuition fees, or special treatment for refugees. • No systematic within country relocation strategy for the purpose of HE/TVET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and education system incompatibility for refugees from Nigeria (75% of total). • Relatively poor access to secondary and HE for Niger nationals, 135 for 100,000 inhabitants. Security and protection issues. Recurrence of attacks on schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The security situation in (Northeast) remains fragile and unpredictable.

	Mali	Burkina Faso
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20.3 million inhabitants in 2020 with annual population growth rate of 3% (UNFPA); 42.2 of population lives below the poverty line (2019). • Host country of 47,378 refugees in 2020 (UNHCR), 35.7%, 33.1% and 27.2% respectively from Niger, Mauritania, and Burkina Faso. • In total, 2,123 female and 2,184 male refugees aged 12-17 identified in 2019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20.9 million inhabitants in 2020, with annual growth rate of 2.9% (UNFPA); 70% of population aged under 35 years; 40.1% live below the national poverty line (see here). • Host country of 20,202 refugees in 2020 (UNHCR), 98% and 1% of whom are from Mali and Central African Republic, respectively. • In total, 2,223 female and 2,284 male refugees aged 12-17 identified in 2019.
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education is free of charge and legislated as compulsory between ages 7 and 16. • Refugees have the same treatment as nationals with regards to education, an example being that they pay the same amount for registration fees (LOI N°98-040 Portant statut des réfugiés). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education is compulsory for children aged between 7 and 14. Circa 20.4% of young people aged 16-24 are educated to at least a secondary education level (see here, p. 13). • Refugees in Burkina Faso are accorded the same treatment as nationals with respect to elementary education, including free tuition in basic education and access to higher education (see Loi No. 042-2008/AN).
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73% of active population work in the informal economy and a third of the workers are between 15-39 years of age. Youth unemployment rate is much higher than the total average: 12% in the whole country and 32% in Bamako (see here). • No provision in the legislation that foresees the protection of the national labour market (Labour Code, Art. L 28). ECOWAS Member States' nationals freely stay and work, provided they hold a valid identity card (see here). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of economic activities are in the informal sector, which employs almost 93% of the active population. Youth unemployment rates of 34.5% and 17.2% for youth with tertiary and secondary education, respectively (see here). • Migrants have full access to the labour market in the sense that they can freely change employers and sectors of employment (see here). Labour Code, 2008, Art. 2, provides for equal treatment (obligations and rights) with nationals, regardless of legal status.
Map of existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “Ministère de l’enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique” lists a total of 75 public and private HEIs (see here and here). • The “Ministère de l’Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle” lists a total of 64 TVET centres in Mali. • 22 DAFI students were supported in 2019. Alternative scholarship opportunities include Emergency Scholarship Programme and Refugee EdTech Program (see here). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tableau de bord de l’Enseignement Supérieur mentions 169 HEIs. • A total of 189 TVET centres have been identified in the country (see Oreille du Campus). • In 2019, 15 DAFI scholars supported (DAFI report, 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Burkina Faso include Emergency Scholarship Programme and Refugee EdTech Program (see here).
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No host communities or national refugee-dedicated scholarship programmes. • No mention of special treatment for refugee students. • No information on refugees’ access to public TVET centres.
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security issues. • HEIs mostly located in urban areas, not contiguous with refugee populations. • Overcrowded classes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security and protection issues. Recurrence of attacks along the Malian border on camps and other instabilities leading to camp closures or relocation.

	Senegal	Togo
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 17.2 million in 2020 with an annual growth rate of 2.8% (UNFPA). Refugee population of 1,944 with majority from Mauritania (UNHCR). In 2019, 50% of refugees were between 0-17 years old (UNHCR). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.5 million inhabitants in 2021 with an annual growth rate of 2.5% (UNFPA). 40.3% of population aged between 0-14. Refugee population of 10,725, with 78%, 15% and 2% respectively from Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Central African. Rep (UNHCR). In 2019, 60% of refugees were between 0-17 years old (UNHCR).
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secular education is compulsory and free up to age 16, although this policy is not enforced in areas where Islamic education is preferred. Primary and lower secondary education both compulsory; compulsory education age limit of 16 (source). 2000-2016: access to higher education and TVET improved but gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education still low (7% in 2017) (source). Refugees in Senegal have access to education in the same conditions as nationals, as granted by law. (Loi No. 68-27). It is to be noted that UNCHR Senegal sources report that in practice refugees are nonetheless considered foreigners in public universities, attracting the associated higher tuition fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary education is free and compulsory, but characterized by limited classroom space, teachers, and materials. Secondary schools and HEI are sparse in rural areas, and somewhat more present in the capital city (see here). Refugees are granted same treatments as the nationals with regards to access to primary, secondary and higher education. It recognizes the university diplomas and titles issued to refugees abroad (Loi No 2016-021). Refugee students enjoy same treatment as nationals with regards to public assistance.
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 97 % of businesses are in informal sector. Unemployment rate of 7.1% (2020) (World Bank). High unemployment (even among university graduates) and widespread poverty because of country's high illiteracy rate of more than 50% (World Bank). Refugees have the right to work in Senegal (Loi No. 68-27, art. 7) but unemployment remains high for refugees and nationals alike (DAFI report, 2019). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Around 80% of total employment is operating in the unregulated, informal economy. Reported unemployment rate surprisingly very low (3.4% in 2015) and circa 35% of underemployment (see here). Refugees/migrants have access to the labour market and can freely change employers and sectors of employment (see Loi No 2016-021 and Labour Code, 2006, Art 2).
Map of existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 51 DAFI Scholarship students in 2019. Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students include Refugee EdTech Program, Emergency Scholarship Programme (in Senegal) and DAAD Leadership for Africa (in a third country) (source). 150 HEIs have been identified in Senegal (see Instituts de Formation Supérieure et Universités Etablies Au Senegal). A total of 388 TVET institutions identified in 2018 (see UNESCO, La Formation Professionnelle, Analyse de la Mise en Oeuvre des Réformes, Sénégal 2018, p. 20). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 public HEIs (see here) and about 70 private HEIs can be identified in Togo (see "Portail Officiel de la République Togolaise"). A total of 37 public TVET centres can be identified in Togo, see list by the the Ministère délégué chargé de l'enseignement technique et de l'artisanat. In 2019, Togo hosted 15 DAFI scholars (DAFI report, 2019). A list of international scholarship programmes available for refugee students in Togo can be found here.
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of community scholarships to support non-DAFI students. High connectivity costs, thus online learning platform hardly accessible.
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial circumstances – the extra costs for food, clothes and transportation make accessing [free] school difficult for some families (source). Previous education not always recognised by host country's education system. (source) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language and school system incompatibilities for most refugee students from Ghana. Financial issues for refugees with no scholarship.

	Ghana	Liberia
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 31.1 million in 2020 with an annual growth rate of 2.2% (UNFPA). Refugee population of 12,297 with majority from Côte d'Ivoire (51.6%), Togo (28%) and Liberia (5.5%) (UNHCR). In 2019, 35% of refugees were between 0-17 years old (UNHCR). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 5.2 million with an annual growth rate of 2.5% (UNFPA). Refugee population of 8,196 with majority (circa 99%) from Côte d'Ivoire (UNHCR). In 2019, 49% of refugees were between 0-17 years old (UNHCR).
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugee students have access to free High School education (Junior High School & Senior High School), as do Ghanaian nationals (Refugee Law, 1992). Refugee students have same access to TVET institutions as Ghanaian nationals; mostly enrolled into National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) and Council for TVET (COTVET) accredited institutions (UNHCR Ghana). Some schools built in refugee camps (Ampain, Egyeikrom, Fetentaa) have been integrated into the Ghana Education Service (GES) system, which allows their studies to be formally certified and recognised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most schools in Liberia are operated by Christian Missions and the government. Free basic education for students attending government schools. Free tertiary education announced by president in 2019 (see here). Ministry of Education encouraged every school to provide elective learning opportunities in at least one vocational skill between grades 1 – 12 and organises basic formal TVET courses for students who have finished grade 7 (Liberia education sector plan). Refugees pay the same tuition fees for HE as nationals (2019 DAFI Report).
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth unemployment rate (% of labour force aged 15 - 24): 9.5 % (2020) – International Labour Organisation (ILO) Database. Agribusiness, Apprenticeship, Construction, Entrepreneurship, Sports and Tourism seen as key sectors that can offer an increase in employment opportunities for Ghanaian youth (World Bank). Refugees in Ghana have the same legal rights as Ghanaian nationals: they can live and own businesses and properties. They are also allowed to work, provided they have work permits issued by the Ghana Refugee Board (DAFI report, 2019). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth unemployment rate: 2.3% (ILO Stats). Only 3.5% of youth (aged 15-24) have stable jobs in the formal sector; majority employed in the informal sector as self-employed or unpaid family workers (source). Refugees, mostly from Côte d'Ivoire, have full access to labour market and can freely change employers and sectors of employment in the same condition as nationals, as provided by the WAEMU protocol. Refugees in Liberia have access to the labour market (Refugee Act, 1993).
Map of existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ghana Tertiary Education Commission lists a total of 297 HEIs. Regarding TVET, 145 institutions have been identified: Commission for TVET 97 DAFI Scholarship students in 2019. Alternative scholarship opportunities include Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program, Refugee EdTech Program and Emergency Scholarship Programme (see list here). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Liberian National Commission on Higher Education lists 53 HEIs (see here). For available TVET figures we refer to the 2020 RUFORUM Assessment of current status of technical and higher education sector in Liberia 28 DAFI Scholarship students in 2019. Alternative scholarships include Refugee Emergency Scholarship Programme and Refugee EdTech Program (see list here). AIRD's Liberia program in 2019 provided small-scale business management training to 508 Ivory Coast Refugees in Liberian refugee settlements (see here).
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low refugee enrolment in tertiary/higher education institutions due to high costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No community or national refugee scholarship programme identified. Providing HE and TVET pathways for refugees living in Liberia seems not to be prioritized when compared to primary and secondary education (see here).
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High tuition costs and limited scholarships: Rigid criteria of DAFI scholarship e.g., students no older than 28 years old, Mastercard Foundation Scholars programme only for students applying to KNUST and Ashesi University (UNHCR Ghana) Linguistic barriers for Francophone and Arabic refugees – any student interested in gaining admission into a tertiary institution in Ghana must have good knowledge of English language (UNCHR Ghana). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distance from refugee camps to cities where university and TVET institutions. Education system severely affected by civil wars and 2015 <i>Ebola</i> epidemic – affected both infrastructure and (qualified) teaching staff.

	Central African Republic (CAR)	Guinea
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 4.9 million in 2021 with annual growth rate of 1.4% (UNFPA). Refugee population of 9,087 with majority from DRC (61%), South Sudan (19.8%) and Chad (11.5%) (UNHCR). In 2019, 34% of refugees were between 0 – 17 years old (UNHCR Stats). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 13.5 million in 2021 with annual growth rate of 2.8% (UNFPA). Refugee population of 6,031 with majority from Côte d’Ivoire (4,201), Sierra Leone (1,272) and Liberia (357) (UNHCR). In 2019, 39.4% of refugees were between 0 – 17 years old (UNHCR Stats).
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education system in CAR has been severely impacted by prolonged periods of conflict; many schools closed in districts due to volatile security situation (source). Primary education is compulsory for all children between 6 and 11 (source). CAR’s Education Sector Plan (2020-2029) emphasises that displaced children, orphans and vulnerable children must be offered quality education through integration, reintegration or support in the formal education system. In the case of displaced children and out-of-school children, alternative education such as non-formal basic education, vocational training and interventions such as teaching by radio must be offered to these children (source). Refugees have access higher education in CAR, as granted by Decree N°07.019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Guinea’s Ten-Year Education Programme (2020 – 2029), one of the priority programmes aims to guarantee access to general education for all children regardless of their sex, place of residence, geographical location and socio-economic status (source). Free primary school to be reinforced to improve access for disadvantaged children and those with specific needs (source). Refugees in Guinea have the same equal access to higher education as Guinean nationals at public institutions as granted by law (Loi L/2018/050/AN).
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth unemployment rate (% of labour force aged 15-24): 6.6% (2019) - World Bank. CAR’s major export products such as timber and cotton offer opportunities for creating jobs and generating additional revenue (World Bank). Refugees have access to the labour market, as granted by the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol on the local integration of refugees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth unemployment rate (% of labour force aged 15-24): 5% (2019) - World Bank. Agriculture and natural resources, plus manufacturing and services sectors are some of Guinea’s economic assets. Agriculture is Guinea’s main source of employment and is essential for poverty reduction (World Bank). Refugees in Guinea have access to the labour market, although the high unemployment makes it challenging to find decent work for both refugees and nationals (Loi L/2018/050/AN).
Map of existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholarship opportunities for refugee students include Refugee EdTech Program and Emergency Scholarship Programme (see list here). 1 public and 13 private HEI (The International Encyclopedia of HE Systems and Institutions p. 918-920)¹. 246 TVET institutions (9 public and 237 private) identified in 2019 (See Répertoire des centres de formation professionnelle de la République, from p. 16-19). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAFI scholarship available for students in Guinea. Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Guinea include Emergency Scholarship Programme and Refugee EdTech Program (see list here). In 2019, 43 DAFI scholars identified in Guinea (DAFI report, 2019) For 53 HEIs we would refer to Annuaire statistique de l’année universitaire 2019/19 p. 17-19. 120 TVET institutions, see Tableau de bord statistique de l’enseignement technique et de la formation professionnelle 2018/19
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAFI scholarship not available for students in CAR (UNHCR). 	
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugee children’s lack of civil documentation (source). Public schools lack teachers and educational resources (source). School closures in many districts due to violence and instability (source). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shortage of trained teachers (source). Low primary completion rate (source).

¹ Nuno Teixeira et al, “The International Encyclopaedia of Higher Education Systems and Institutions” Springer, 2020. Not an open-source document.

	The Gambia	Côte d'Ivoire
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 2.5 million in 2021 with an annual growth rate of 2.9%. Circa 43.8% of population between 0-14 years old (UNFPA). Refugee population of 4,399 in 2021 with majority from Senegal (91.4%), Côte d'Ivoire (3.4%) and Sierra Leone (2.4%) (see UNHCR). In 2019, 47% of refugees were between 0-17 years old (UNHCR). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 27.1 million in 2021 with an annual growth rate of 2.5%. Circa 41.4% of population between 0-14 years old (UNFPA). Refugee population of 2,099 in 2021 with majority from Liberia (47%), Central African Rep. (25%) and Syrian Arab Rep. (6.8%) (UNHCR). In 2019, 38% of refugees were between 0-17 years old (UNHCR).
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public schools are free (no tuition fees) up to senior secondary level. The Gambian Technical Training Institute offers more than 60 courses, and The Gambia College provides non-degree training in agriculture, science, nursing and midwifery, education, catering, and management (see here). Refugee students in The Gambia access HE under the same conditions as nationals in public education institutions (Refugee Act, 2008). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public primary and secondary schools are free (no tuition fees) and compulsory up to 16. The system follows the French national model, with technical and vocational training as part of the national education system (see here and here). Refugee students have access to education. Like foreign students, refugee students pay higher tuition fees than national students (as specified in the DAFI report, 2018. No specific information provided in the DAFI report in 2019 hence it is unclear whether the situation persists).
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour market participation is 64.2%. In urban areas, unemployment is 16.5% and is significantly higher for women (21%). Underemployment is about 23.4% (see here). The Gambian Refugee Act 2008 gives refugees the right to work and to access social amenities as nationals (see here and here). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment rate (persons aged 15+) is circa 55.1% in 2019 with a Labour force participation rate (persons aged 15+) 57%. The youth unemployment rate is circa 5.1% (see DeStatis, 2020). In Côte d'Ivoire, refugees have access to the labour market and can change employers and sectors of employment in the same way as nationals.
Map of existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A total of 97 HEIs have been identified in The Gambia by the Ministries of Basic and Secondary Education and Higher Education Research Science and Technology (see p. 6). TVET is part of the Gambian education system. 115 TVET institutions, of which 92 are accredited, identified in 2019. Gambian TVET Roadmap 2020-2024 (p. 7). A list of some TVET institutions in Gambia is available on page 54 of the TVET Roadmap. Refugees in Gambia have access to higher education under the same conditions as nationals at public institutions. 13 DAFI scholars identified in 2019 (DAFI report 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in The Gambia include Emergency Scholarship Programme and Refugee EdTech Program (see list here). 1,595 Refugee students received educational support in 2015 (Factsheet 2015). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 Public HEIs (1 virtual, Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique) and about 44 private HEIs (Liste effective des établissements d'enseignement supérieurs privés de type universitaires) have been identified. More than 300 TVET centres can be identified: Liste des Etablissements de Formation Professionnelle Privée autorisés 18 DAFI scholars identified in 2019 (DAFI report 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students include Refugee EdTech Program, Emergency Scholarship Programme (in Côte d'Ivoire) and DAAD Leadership for Africa (in a third country), and a full list can be found here.
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No community or country-specific refugee scholarship programme identified.
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational training was also available but limited by available funding (UNHCR). High unemployment makes finding decent work a challenge for both nationals and refugees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High costs involved in accessing education (see Fynn, 2010). This is in the case of Liberian refugees but can be extended to other refugees across WCA.

	Guinea-Bissau	Benin
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 2 million in 2021 with an annual growth rate of 2.5%. 41.7% of population aged between 0-14 (UNFPA). Refugee population of 7,803 with majority from Senegal (7,696) (UNHCR). In 2019, 30% of refugees were between 0-17 years old (UNHCR). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 12.5 million in 2021 with annual growth rate of 2.7%. 41.7% of population aged between 0-14 (UNFPA). Refugee population of 1,408 with majority from Central African Republic (1,052) and Côte d'Ivoire (167) (UNHCR). In 2019, 29% of refugees were between 0-17 years old (UNHCR).
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political and institutional instability have had severe impacts on education system; education sector is under-financed, and there is a general lack of data on the sector which has resulted in poor management (source). Refugee students have access to HE in Guinea-Bissau under the same conditions as nationals in public institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education is compulsory for children between the ages of 6 and 11; school fees have been abolished (especially at the primary level) (source). Between 2006 and 2013, the government made significant strides to develop the education system: to ensure free universal primary education, tuition support for girls in junior secondary education and the creation of new technical schools (UNESCO). Refugees in Benin enjoy the same treatment as nationals with regard to access to education (Ordonnance No. 75-41 on refugees status).
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugees have access to labour market, although high unemployment makes it difficult to find decent work for both refugees and nationals (2019 DAFI Report). Youth unemployment rate (% of total labour force aged 15-24): 4.6 % (2019) - World Bank. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugees have access to the labour market, although high unemployment makes it difficult to find decent work for both refugees and nationals (2019 DAFI Report). Youth unemployment rate (% of total labour force aged 15-24): 4.9% (2019) - World Bank.
Map of existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAFI Scholarship available for refugees in Guinea-Bissau (source). 13 DAFI scholars identified in 2019 (DAFI report 2019). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Guinea-Bissau include Refugee EdTech Program and Emergency Scholarship Programme (see list here). A total of 8 HEIs have been identified in Guinea-Bissau Knowledge Institutions in Africa and their development 1960-2020: Guinea-Bissau (p. 5). Data about TVET institutions, specialities and trainees is provided by Barreto and Carvalho, (2020). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAFI Scholarship available for refugees in Benin (source). Other scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Benin include Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program, Refugee EdTech Program and Emergency Scholarship Programme. (see list here). 15 DAFI scholars identified in 2019 (DAFI report 2019). For a list of 35 public and private HEIs in Benin, see Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique, République du Bénin and Liste des établissements privés d'enseignement supérieur. Nouatin et al. (2019) proposes a data on TVET institutions in Benin (see p. 73)
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of functional national public university – high school graduates have difficulty having their accreditations recognised in universities in neighbouring countries (source). Higher education institutions lack suitable infrastructure such as laboratories, internet connection and regularly updated libraries (source). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private universities not always of the recommended standard (source).
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low primary completion rate – only 25% of schools offer all 6 levels of education, which means in the other 75% of schools, students must transfer to other schools to complete their education cycle, which often results in them dropping out altogether (source). Shortage of trained teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low primary completion rate – high level of enrolment, at 126%, but level of completion only 62% for year 6 (source). Disparities in access – children living in urban areas are more likely to access schools than those living in rural areas (source). Overcrowding crisis in universities – students often have to stand in or out of lecture halls or even sit perched on windows in lectures (source).

	Gabon	Sierra Leone
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 2.3 million in 2021 with an annual growth rate of 2.7%. Circa 37.4% of population between 0-14 years old (UNFPA). Refugee population of 472 in 2021 with majority from Chad (54.4%), DR Congo (15.1%) and Congo (14.3%) (UNHCR). In 2019, 27% of refugees were between 0-17 years old (UNHCR). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 8.1 million in 2021 with an annual growth rate of 2.1%. Circa 40% of population between 0-14 years old (UNFPA). Refugee population of 349 in 2021 with majority from Liberia (97.1) (UNHCR). In 2019, 42% of refugees were between 0-17 years old (UNHCR).
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School is compulsory between ages 6 and 16. Primary school (6 years) and junior secondary (3-4 years, general and technical) are largely based on the French school model. According to the Loi No. 5/98 du 1998, Portant statut des réfugiés, refugees in Gabon enjoy the same treatment as nationals with regard to access to education, school and university registration fees, the costs of university as well as social benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary education is free, as are the 3 years of junior secondary. The first 9 years of education are mandatory by law, but unfeasible due to facilities shortage. Senior secondary (also vocational) schools and tertiary education complete the system. Refugees are treated as favourably as possible, with respect to education other than elementary education. This is particularly with respect to access to studies, the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges and the award of scholarships (Refugees Protection Act 2007).
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gabon is characterized by high reliance on the oil sector (50% of GDP and 80% of exports). In 2019, unemployment affects 20% of the working population (see here). Refugees in Gabon access labour market in the same condition as nationals and enjoy social benefits linked to the exercise of a salaried or unpaid professional activity, according to the Loi No. 5/98 du 1998. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unemployment rate was estimated at 4.4% in 2020. This was associated with a high underemployment rate of 36%. Circa 9/10 of workers are in vulnerable employment, which are less likely to be formal (see Labour market profile Sierra Leone – 2020). Under The 1951 Refugee Convention and the Refugees Protection Act 2007, refugees are eligible to a wage-earning employment and access labour market in Sierra Leone.
Map of existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A list of 20 private and 3 public HEIs in Gabon can be found here: Africa Universities web listing and Agence nationale des bourses du Gabon. UNESCO data indicates 9 TVET centres (here). Scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Gabon include Refugee EdTech Program and Emergency Scholarship Programme. See the full list here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The International Encyclopaedia of HE Systems and Institutions² lists 10 HEIs. TVET is part of the education system. A diagnostic of the TVET sector and a list of TVET institutions by the GIZ can be found here: GIZ Diagnostic Study, 2018, p .96.
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No community or country-specific refugee scholarship programme identified. DAFI scholarship not available for refugee students in Gabon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No community or country-specific refugee programme. DAFI scholarship not available for refugee students in Sierra Leone.
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher costs of HE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent and recurrent outbreaks of <i>Ebola</i>.

² Nuno Teixeira et al, “The International Encyclopaedia of Higher Education Systems and Institutions” Springer, 2020. Not an open-source document.

	Cape Verde	Equatorial Guinea
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 0.6 million in 2021 with an annual growth rate of 1.2%. Circa 27.7% of population between 0-14 years old (UNFPA). Refugee population in Cape-Verde is unknown, but UNHCR estimates the number of Stateless Persons in 2020 at 115 (see here). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of 1.4 million in 2021 with an annual growth rate of 3.7%. Circa 36.8% of population between 0-14 years old (UNFPA). Data on refugee population in Equatorial Guinea is hardly available.
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary education (6 years) is compulsory, followed by secondary education (3 and 2 years). TVET is part of the education system and aims at closing strategic skill gaps. In 2012, UNHCR noted that Cape Verde is not fully meeting its international obligations in the field of refugee protection, as it has not signed the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 2009 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary/elementary education (6 years) is compulsory. Lower and upper secondary education take 4 and 2 years, respectively. The law provides for the granting of asylum or refugee status, but the government has not established a system for providing protection to refugees (US Department of State, 2020).
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unemployment has been fluctuating for years but decreased from 12.2% in 2018 to 11.3% in 2019. In 2016, high youth unemployment of 41% was observed (UN, 2020). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over the period 1991-2020, an average unemployment rate of 8.41% was recorded, the highest value of which was observed in 2020, 9.15% (see Perspective Monde, 2021). Labour laws do not prohibit discrimination based on refugee or stateless status (US Department of State, 2020).
Map of existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 public and private HEIs can be identified in Cape Verde. A list of the main universities, colleges, vocational schools, and other HEIs can be found in the Scholaro listing of universities in Cape Verde. Scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Cape Verde include Refugee EdTech Program and Emergency Scholarship Programme. See the full list here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National University of Equatorial Guinea (public) is the only public university in the country. A total of 4 HEIs have been identified (Nyongesa Sande). Scholarship opportunities for refugee students in Equatorial Guinea include Refugee EdTech Program and Emergency Scholarship Programme. See the full list here.
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAFI scholarship not available for refugee students in Cape Verde. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAFI scholarship not available for refugee students in Equatorial Guinea. No systematic policy of refugees' admission into TVET centres. No systematic within country relocation strategy for access to HE.
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugee students in Cape Verde may face language barriers, as most refugees in WCA are from French and English-speaking countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugee students may face language barriers, as most refugees in WCA are from French and English-speaking countries.

	São Tomé and Príncipe
Population profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of 0.2 million in 2021 with an annual growth rate of 1.9%. Circa 41.3% of population between 0-14 years old (UNFPA). • Reliable data on refugee population in Equatorial Guinea is sparse to non-existent.
Prevailing national education strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite the ratification of the 1951 Convention, there is no national legislation governing specific issues relating to asylum-seekers and refugees or stateless persons (UNHCR, 2015).
Prevailing labour market conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No clear legislation governing specific issues relating to asylum-seekers and refugees or stateless persons.
Map of existing pathways to HE and TVET for refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarship opportunities for refugee students in São Tomé and Príncipe include Refugee EdTech Program and Emergency Scholarship Programme. See the full list here. • 3 HEIs have been identified in the country (Nyosake Investment)
Identification of pathways largely absent from the national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No systematic policy of refugee admission into TVET centres. • No systematic within country relocation strategy for access to HE. • DAFI scholarship not available for refugee students in São Tomé and Príncipe.
Challenges to refugee access to existing pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugee students may face language barriers, as most refugees in WCA are from French and English-speaking countries.