

## **REFUGEE<sup>1</sup> YOUTH LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY, AND PUBLIC SPEAKING TRAINING A training programme for youth leaders in refugee contexts offered by COHERE Charity and UNHCR**

### **Introduction**

The global Covid-19 pandemic has had adverse effects on young people worldwide, particularly youth in displacement contexts. Despite the immensely challenging circumstances of day-to-day life, including limited access to education and training, health, and work, displaced youth have continued to reinforce their role as connectors and contributors by bridging social, ethnic, and geographical divides.

Young refugees' talent, energy, and potential are vital resources in global efforts to prevent and respond to challenges affecting all refugees and find solutions. Demonstrating resilience and adaptability, refugee youth overcome language barriers, connectivity and network limitations, as well as cultural differences to serve as agents of change, building a network of global citizens.

Yet, refugee youth have historically been overlooked or left out of decision-making processes on issues that affect their lives. This training series aims to reinforce the position of refugee youth as contributors, mobilizers, and essential partners to humanitarian and development responses to crisis and conflict. Forcibly displaced young people are ready and willing to contribute to developing and implementing solutions, including specifically on education, inclusion, and social cohesion.

**Enabling leadership and agency among youth from displacement backgrounds should be our ultimate goal.**

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<sup>1</sup> Refugee youth and displaced youth are used interchangeably and could include youth from host communities, IDPs or communities of return, where applicable.

Youth empowerment is an essential mechanism for social change and a fundamental step toward ensuring that displaced youth can participate in and contribute to creating a society that recognizes and values their contributions to the social fabric of the communities that host them. While many youths have started their own initiatives, there is a need to provide more targeted support to youth leaders and youth groups to develop their individual and organizational capacity to become leaders in community-based projects and actions to address their own and their communities' needs.

Cohere Charity is an international organization that specializes in supporting refugee leaders to lead in the humanitarian response through capacity strengthening, advocacy, coordination and funding. UNHCR, in collaboration with Cohere Charity and the Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium are therefore launching a global 6-month part-time training programme for young (aspiring) leaders across the Middle East, **MENA (Middle East and North America), Asia, Africa and Latin America.**

The overarching objective of this training is to support selected refugee youth from the selected countries to develop substantive knowledge and practical skills to advance their public speaking, leadership, content generation, advocacy, and other relevant capacities, thus equipping them to participate effectively and lead change in their communities and beyond. The training aims at empowering these young people not only to tell their own unique stories but also to speak with confidence on the complex issues they have first-hand experience of, such as peacebuilding, social cohesion, opportunities for their future, and to lead efforts to expand initiatives, including on education, livelihoods, protection and solutions for refugees.

The training will give participants access to youth networks, relevant information, and opportunities to share ideas and experiences, and provides an avenue to collaborate to develop and scale their contributions to society.

## Audience

The programme targets young people from regions which host youth who are 1) displaced, 2) returnees and 3) active members of their community. The target age of participants is 15-30, with some flexibility depending on individual circumstances.

## Prerequisites

Participants are expected to:

- Understand, write and speak English<sup>2</sup>
- Be willing to **commit to the entire six-month programme, including 2-3 hour sessions and 1 hour for self-study per week.**
- Have a demonstrated interest in one or more of the following:
  - ❖ volunteering in the community,
  - ❖ leading or engaging in entrepreneurship projects,
  - ❖ tackling social issues,
  - ❖ building peaceful societies,
  - ❖ expanding access to higher education and livelihoods for displaced youth, and/or
  - ❖ a commitment to community and youth work, youth participation, and/or activism.
- Commit to remaining engaged with the group after the end of the programme, including creation of a regional youth network, and participating in relevant events/dialogues and content development.
- Be open to sharing the skills they have acquired with others in their

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<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, the programme can only be offered in English at this stage. However, participants will be guided on how to disseminate learnings to other youth within their circles of influence, including those not fluent in English. Arrangements for youth with disabilities, including sign language and transcription of sessions, can be made.

community/region/country, in particular youth who may not meet the English language requirement.

## Content and structure

The programme consists of:

- 1 weekly expert session on topics relevant to youth leadership.

The Session topics listed below are tentative based on consultations with refugee students, networks and leaders.

- Introduction to refugee youth leadership
- Leadership and critical thinking in humanitarian context
- Use of media and delivering positive messaging
- Organization capacity building
- Regional networking
- Media engagement and campaigning
- Higher education paths for displaced youth
- From learning to earning( internship, interview and CV)
- Digital engagement and connected education
- From resilience to action( What does local action mean?)
- Employment and entrepreneurship
- Content creation and speech writing
- Peace building , mediation and conflict resolution
- Youth-led global advocacy
- Reporting and documentation
- Climate action and refugee engagement
- Age, gender and diversity

All sessions will be facilitated by 2 representatives from of the Tertiary Refugee Student Network (TRSN), and the Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium (CLCC) who will be responsible for:

- Encouraging youth to attend, participate during sessions, and stay engaged throughout the programme
- Moderating sessions, introducing speakers, moderating Q&A
- Recording sessions and technical facilitation (presentations, videos, etc) where required.

Weekly thematic sessions will be led by external experts identified by Cohere Charity and UNHCR. Upon completion of the Programme, certificates will be issued to the participants.

## Logistics

Participants to ensure they have stable and reliable internet connectivity to ensure effective participation in online sessions .

Weekly thematic sessions will take place every **Wednesday at 1pm CET**(to be confirmed with participants in case of other AGD considerations).

## After the training programme

At the end of the training, refugee youth are expected to stay engaged and support the following training cohort by creating a hub for youth to be connected and lead initiatives and campaigns.

Youth participants in each country are expected to organize a country-level (or, where this is not feasible, county/settlement level) youth-led event at the end of the training, supported by the UNHCR country office and partners, to share their learnings and initiatives with other displaced youth.

Country-level events will be followed by a regional conference in early 2023, where a selected number of representatives from each location will come together in person to connect, share their experience and good practices, and present projects for funding by UNHCR. UNHCR, ILO, UNICEF and/or thematic experts will constitute an expert panel to evaluate projects

presented during the conference. Promising projects will be supported in applying for funding for refugee-led grant agreements by local UNHCR offices/the regional bureau, with funding up to USD 4,000.

Lastly, upon completion of the programme, ILO, UNHCR and UNICEF regional and country offices will create youth leaders' profiles and repositories to facilitate their engagement in upcoming regional and global speaking, advocacy and other opportunities.

## Learning, adaptation & feedback

The learnings of this youth training programme will facilitate other training in 2024 and provide valuable insights into needs and capacities of youth across the region.

To capture learning, and collect feedback, a baseline questionnaire will be administered to participants before the first session, a midline questionnaire after 3 months, and an end-line survey after completion of the programme. Participants will also have the opportunity to channel anonymous feedback through the TRSN /CLCC facilitators.

## Schedule

Call for applications: **15th May 2023**

Application deadline: **25th May 2023**

Successful candidates announced: **19th June 2023**

Programme start date: **28th June 2023**

If interested please apply [here](#). Cohere and UNHCR value diversity.