

Charles

I finished Grade 5 in Burundi but then when i came to Uganda and enrolled in school I couldn't manage because I couldn't understand the language. I am trying to learn but it is really hard for me because we speak French at home and no one speaks English.

I am really frustrated, I know that I can do well in school, back home I was number 3 in my class, my teacher at home said I was clever and hardworking but here the teachers ignore me and say I am lazy and don't want to learn. I do want to learn but I just don't understand anything that is being taught. Now I feel like giving up. My mother says I should find work instead.

Mohamud and Fatima

I was close to completing grade 5 when my school back in Syria was bombed. Luckily, the bombing happened on a weekend, but three of my teachers were killed.

For 3 months we were waiting for another school to take us, but it never happened. Schools had become dangerous places. That's when my cousin and I decided to flee. It took us 3 weeks to reach the border to Jordan.

It is 3 months since we came to Jordan. We live with a family friend, in a house he has rented. I am trying to get back into school but it is difficult, the schools are so crowded and not very welcoming to refugees. I also left my transcripts behind. My cousin, Fatima managed to join school. She is happy to be back, but says it is difficult to cope with the pace. It is difficult to concentrate, we are always worrying about our loved ones at home.

Reheema

My name is Reheema. I am 11 years old. I fled Somalia when I was 8 years old, together with my mother, two younger brothers and our grandfather. I started grade 1 in Somalia when I was 6, but when fighting came to our village I dropped out. 7 months after, we fled to Kenya.

I have not had any education since I came to the refugee camp. I tried to join the primary school the first year, but I could not understand the language and the school was too far away. My mother and grandfather are weak, so I need to attend the food distribution every second Tuesday. So I dropped out in the end.

I really want to go to school. When the "Go back to School" campaign was arranged recently, I nearly enrolled in school again. But I just couldn't; I would be ashamed to start G1 with the six year olds. As if I know nothing. Now I feel like my chances of school have passed.

Rose

I live in Sierra Leone. When I was young my parents wanted me to attend school, but because cultural norms prioritize boys' education over girls' and because my family experienced extreme hardship, it was my brothers who went to school, not me. I wasn't able to enroll at the normal age 6, but I did manage to enroll in primary school at age 8, attended until I was 11 and completed grade 3. I had to drop out because I became pregnant during the Ebola crisis. Since dropping out I have been caring for my daughter, working selling snacks in the markets, looking after three of my younger brothers, and taking care of the household.

Now I'm 15 and I'm keen to attend school as long as I am able to continue to carry out my chores in the home, engage in petty trading before school, and continue to support my child.

Angelo

I started grade 1 in South Sudan and remember really liking school. I was doing well and finished grade 2 but then the war broke out and my school was closed.

I am now 24 years old and have been out of school for 15 years. I work transporting charcoal on my bicycle and make enough money to survive and support my wife and four children. I would like to go back to school, I just want to be able to read and write so I am able to better do business and also help my children in school.

I remember we started learning to read but it was so long ago I've forgotten and I'm embarrassed to tell my children that I don't know how to read and write.