Article 26 Backpack 2.0 – Sub-Saharan Africa Deployment, Autonomous Use, Sustainability and Institutional Support" (2021-2023)

Major findings of UC Davis Article 26 Backpack/Kepler Rwanda
MasterCard Foundation learning opportunity collaboration 2021-2022f
UC Davis Human Rights Lab - April 21, 2023

Authors: Jeneva Toolajian, Dheera Dusanapudi, Emma Tolliver, and Keith David Watenpaugh

Introduction:

During 2021-2023, UC Davis Human Rights Studies faculty, staff, and students collaborated with Kepler employees and student fellows to empower higher education access for over 2200 university-age refugee young people in Rwanda through the implementation of Article 26 Backpack *("Backpack"). This is a report of that project and includes key observations and findings.*

Backpack is a digital-human ecosystem that provides an opportunity for members of displaced, at-risk, and under-served communities to safely curate, store, and share critical academic materials, credentials, research, and statements of purpose. It is a unique ecosystem to address wide-spread concerns amongst humanitarian workers, human rights officials, higher education leaders, and refugees about document and credential safety, access, and sharing.

Kepler Backpack Guide Habinshuti Irankunda at the Kiziba Refugee Camp in Rwanda, 2021.

As a recent joint UNESCO - UNHCR study found:

Documents may be lost or stolen during migration and replacing…credentials is often impossible [or] a costly and lengthy process. Most countries do not acknowledge or recognize informally obtained credentials…HEIs [higher education institutes] often require refugee learners to repeat years of their education, which…can lead to exclusion, since students' economic situation most likely does not permit them to repeat their education."
(Martin and Stulgatis, 2022)

Backpack users (Backpackers) indicated similar concerns in a recent survey (2022) about document safety and security. The survey, which was advertised in our July 2022 "Backpacker, Go!" newsletter, had

CONCERNS ABOUT DOCUMENT STORAGE
QUESTIONS 2, 3, 4, 5

Students are deeply concerned about the safety of their documents, and that documents could be stolen or lost

4.79

Most Backpackers confirmed that lost documents are difficult to replace

3.89

Most Backpackers encountered difficulties applying due to lack of access to proper documents

3.11

3.42

seventy-two Backpacker respondents. Respondents were offered statements and then asked to select their level of agreement, on a scale of "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Values below 2.5 indicate mean disagreement; those above 2.5 indicate mean agreement.

These data — and our experience dating from 2013 — also indicates that most refugee Backpack users have encountered difficulties and likely forms of discrimination because of problems with their available documents. (Watenpaugh, et al., 2013; 2014)

Backpack is the only free, Higher Education Institution-based public good available to meet this challenge. Our collective experience has demonstrated a clear pathway forward in taking the problem of document safety, security, and connection off the table for the world's refugees, displaced, and at-risk university-age young people.

Key Observation 1:

Document safety, education about the right to access one's educational materials and knowledge of the human rights to privacy, education, and work can be part of all forms of scholarship support, workforce development, and refugee leadership and empowerment programs.

Backpackers tell us that they believe that, once stored in Backpack, their documents are safe. They are aware that they can access these documents wherever and whenever they need to.

Beyond the numbers enrolled and the achievement of document and credential safety, Backpack continues to demonstrate its capacity to build pathways of connection and solidarity among diverse refugee communities and global higher education; provide leadership, training, and counseling opportunities for refugee youth; and expand knowledge of educational resources, admissions and scholarship opportunities, and human rights.

The collaboration provides a model for a cost-effective way to reach even larger numbers of people who would benefit from the ecosystem, support efforts by university and scholarship agencies to increase applications from refugee youth, and act as a critical adjunct to ongoing efforts to grow higher education and career counseling.

Kepler Backpack Guides at different venues 2021-2022

Moreover, the operation of Backpack and the structured and scheduled interaction between Backpack users and staff in Rwanda and California have provided an unprecedented window into the day-to-day struggles of refugee young people and their efforts to engage and re-engage higher education. This "ground truth" can help shape policies and projects moving forward, particularly in areas of connection, high-stakes language and standardized exams, and credential evaluation.

Connection: Establishing Backpack in the Rwandan Context

Backpack is built on two interlocking parts. The first is the digital element, a cloud-based digital platform using Drupal, a free and open-source web content management system written in the general-purpose scripting language PHP and distributed under the GNU General Public License.

The web-interface for Backpack was developed and is maintained by UC Davis Information and Educational Technologies, which also oversees routine security updates. Backpack's elements were designed to meet the best-practice standards of one of the ecosystem's chief collaborating organizations, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. Originally deployed in Lebanon to support Syrian refugee university students (2018-present), the interface is simple and requires as little bandwidth as possible.

Backpackers report ease with opening and setting up their Backpack accounts when helped by Backpack Guides. Backpackers can use any electronic device that is connected to the World Wide Web and has a web browser. Setting up an account requires users to have an email account.

Survey data indicates how valuable hands-on support by Guides in this process is; Kepler Rwanda indicated that, in many cases, this was the first time that eligible students had created email accounts and that it was an opportunity for quick soft-skills instruction and connection-building. Once an account is created, students often use the camera function on their cell phones or tablets to photograph documents and upload them.


Students at the Kiziba Refugee Camp in Rwanda photograph and upload their documents to their Backpack accounts, 2021.

A feature of Backpack that we believe is key to its overall effectiveness as a means to foster better enrollment and employment outcomes while humanizing refugee youth for admissions officers and employers is the "My Story/My Future" element of Backpack. Our research (Watenpaugh, et al., 2013; 2014; 2017) has indicated that refugee young people often find it more effective to make an oral statement of purpose. It serves the additional advantage of allowing refugee young people to demonstrate facility in multiple languages. The Rwanda experience thus far has shown that preparing for, recording, and uploading a "My

ASSISTANCE WITH SETTING UP BACKPACK

Most Backpackers feel they are connected with other Backpackers

3.73
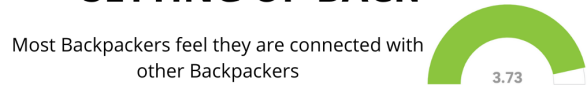
Many Backpackers expressed need for assistance in setting up Backpack accounts and uploading documents

3.13

Most Backpackers **were assisted by Backpack guides**

4.13

The high need for assistance with Backpack and the proven efficacy of the Backpack guide program implies **a strong demand for trained guides.**

QUESTIONS 10, 11, & 12

Backpack
Universal Tool for Academic Mobility

UCDAVIS
HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES

Story/My Future" is too time-and bandwidth-consuming to conduct in most field situations. Future research and projects should explore ways to ensure that students have an opportunity to complete this important element; one possibility is connecting it with other college/opportunity counseling sessions.

The second part of Backpack is the community of Backpack Guides who ensure the integrity of the Backpack, grow awareness of the ecosystem, and work with youth to optimize the enrollment process. In person, remotely, and through social media, Guides educate Backpackers on the digital platform's use, model educational attainment, and identify and share opportunities; they also support efforts to deepen human rights knowledge, in particular the human rights to education, work, and privacy established in the *ICESR* (1966) and UN General Assembly *Resolution 75/176* "The Right to Privacy in the Digital Age" (2020).

In general, Backpack Guides are near peers to the refugee youth using Backpack and are drawn from students pursuing undergraduate degrees in Human Rights Studies at the University of California, Davis, as well as from refugee and displaced young people in host countries. Guides not only work to bring young people into Backpack, but their near-peer status and personal experiences make them ideal role models who can speak with authority and credibility about the value and challenges of higher education. The experience of Backpack Guiding and information from Backpackers themselves indicate how Backpack enrollment events or similar meetings could also serve as venues for college counseling sessions, to raise awareness of scholarship or enrollment opportunities, and/or for soft-skills training.

In prior areas of implementation, including in Lebanon, training Guides has been done in person and with little attention to longer-term institutionalization of the training process. The Kepler team's iteration of Backpack implementation took place during the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting forms of lockdown made international travel difficult, if not impossible.

Backpack Guides at UC Davis meet with Kepler Backpack Fellows to discuss program implementation, 2021.

This challenge presented an opportunity to develop and implement a wholly online orientation and training program for Backpack implementation. For this project, UC Davis and Kepler recruited stipended "Backpack Fellows." The California-based Guides (pictured in the figure at the bottom of page 5) were drawn from the community of young people at UC Davis engaged in Human Rights Studies, who are planning to pursue careers in international humanitarianism, law,

and public policy. Guides in Rwanda were drawn from graduates of Kepler's educational programs and overseen by Sadiki Bamperineza, Kepler's Refugee Student Affairs Manager. UC Davis Guides were overseen by an employee of the university's Global Affairs division and the faculty director of the program, Professor Keith David Watenpaugh.

UC Davis Chief Backpack Guide (2021-2022), Michaela Krulee, explains:

I believe one of the greatest lessons we've come to learn in working with Kepler is the importance of staying flexible. Despite the ongoing pandemic and time zone difference that pose obvious challenges to communication, we've been able to adapt and really make sure to prioritize developing a meaningful relationship with Kepler fellows. Whether it be through Slack or Whatsapp messaging or our frequent meetings via Google Meet, I feel we've been able to cultivate a connection with one another that pays no mind to the bounds of physical distance.

The pandemic-era format created a better and more equal relationship between the teams than had been achieved in the past, and the UC Davis and Rwanda-based Guides were able to work effectively and efficiently. Kepler required gender parity amongst Guides. All UC Davis-based Guides are women.

Beginning in Fall 2021, UC Davis Guides led by Michael Krulee and Jeneva Toolajian began meeting with Kepler Guides, led by Sadiki Bamperineza, Habinshuti Irankunda, and Josephine Uwizeye. To facilitate communication, teams established a shared Whatsapp group and a Slack Channel. Education on Backpack history, theory, ethics, and basic mechanics followed, including reviewing the *Backpack Guide Handbook* (2021 rev.) and having Guides create and share their own Backpacks.

Early products of this collaboration include a series of jointly produced flyers and templates that were shared using various forms of social media and as handouts.

The UC Davis and Kepler sides appear to have built *effective and meaningful collegial relationships around their remote collaboration*. Evidence of "buy-in" takes the form of the continuing enthusiasm of Kepler's Guides in visiting camps, developing Kinyarwanda orientation/teaching materials, and exploring other regional options for Backpack implementation, including Ethiopia and through the Tertiary Education Refugee Network.

Equally, the method employed by the guides has created a template for future implementation and a body of practical experience and knowledge that can be transferred to subsequent guide teams in Rwanda and other areas of need.

Key Observation 2

The model developed here is sustainable – it builds from populations of students who see value in the Backpack project and fits squarely into growing university-based and scholarship agency support for service and global learning opportunities.

Engaging Youth in Backpack, Protecting Futures, and Building Rights Awareness

With some easing on travel restrictions in Rwanda, Kepler Backpack teams traveled to several camps and held multiple events. Backpack enrollment events follow a general pattern first established in the initial implementation in Lebanon (2018) and with resettled refugees and asylum seekers in Northern California (2019).

Image 1

A jointly-produced flyer for Kepler's first Backpack event, designed by Backpack Guides Josephine Uwizeye and Jeneva Toolajian in December of 2021.
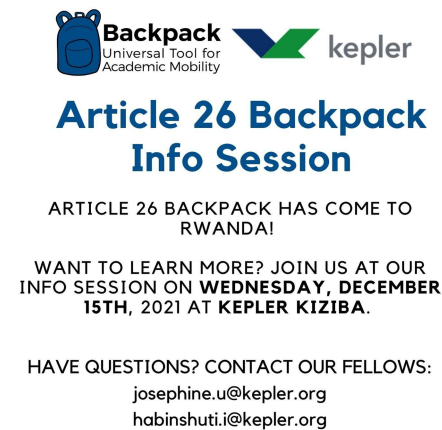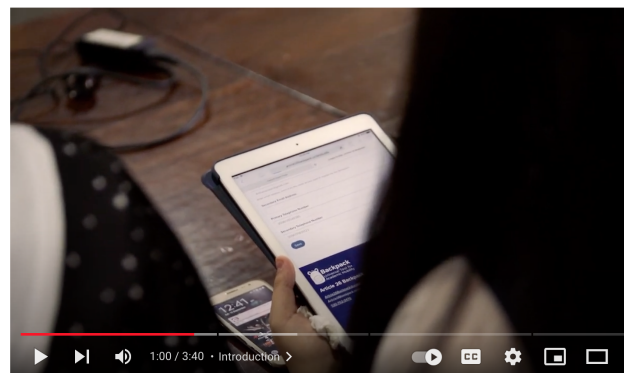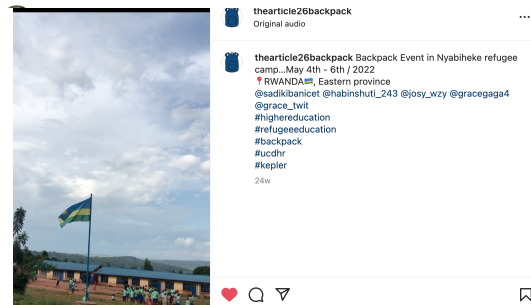
Image 2

Screenshot from Article 26 Backpack's Instructional video in English, released August 2021, of a student creating her Backpack account.

Instructional video available at link:
▶ How and Why to Use the UC Davis Bac…

Image 3

Screenshot courtesy of a video produced by Grace Twitegure. Twitegure created the video after a Backpack Registration Event at the Nyabiheke Refugee Camp in May of 2021. The video was then shared as a reel to Article 26 Backpack's Instagram page (link [here](#)).

Image 4
Screenshots from Article 26 Backpack's Instructional video in Kinyarwanda, released October 2022. Selected images feature Kepler's Communication Intern, Marie Grace Twitegure, as she guides students through the process of creating, filling, and sharing their Backpacks.
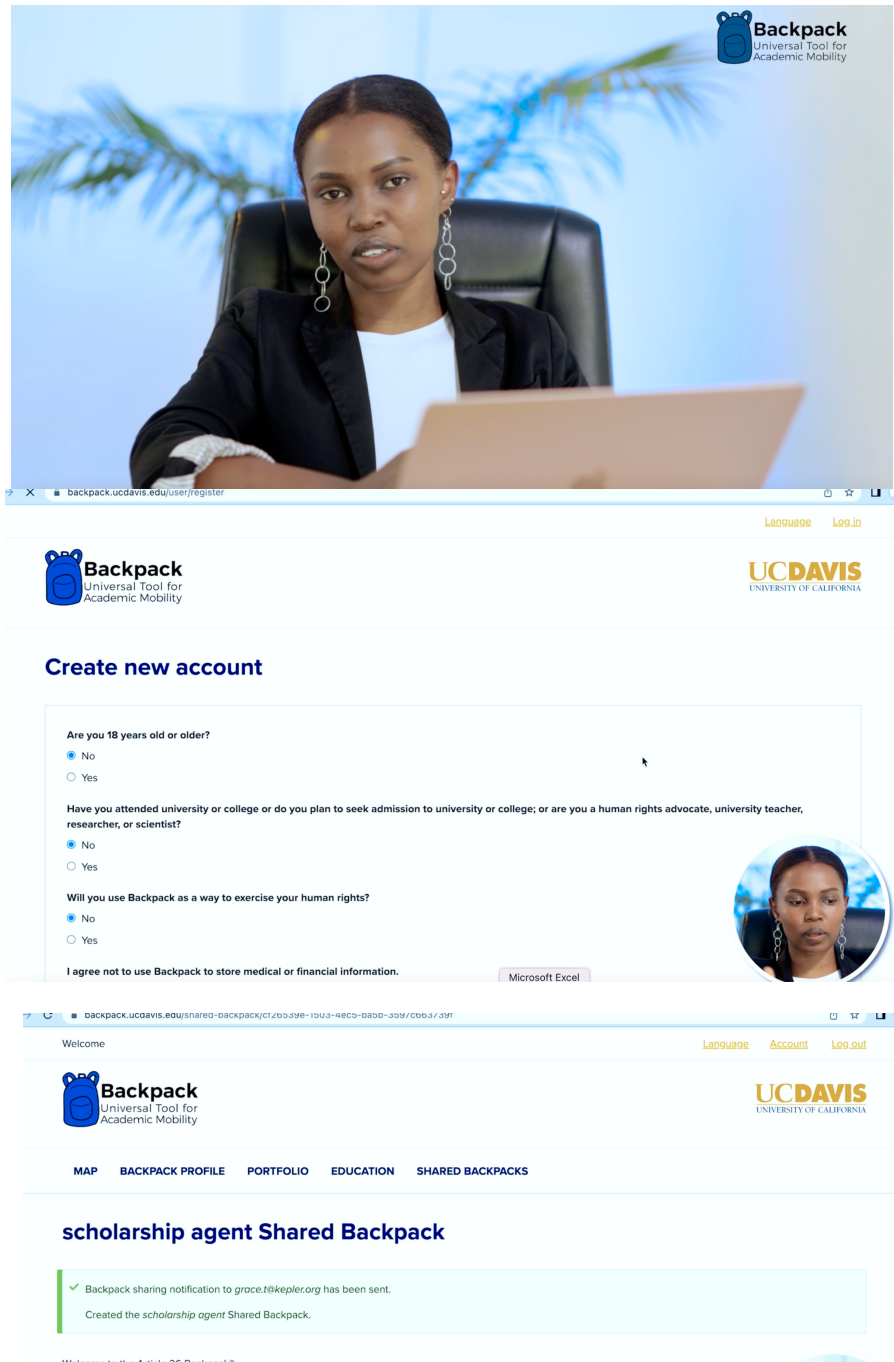
In an interview conducted by UC Davis Guides on July 15, 2022,[1] Josephine Uwizeye, an Article 26 Backpack Project Fellow at Kepler, reported that prospective Backpackers at refugee camps in Rwanda were excited to learn more about Backpack and how they can engage or re-engage with their education. Kepler Fellows prepared for enrollment events by working with their partners at refugee camps and administrators at schools, sharing information via social media and through institutional partners (such as Rwanda's emergency management ministry (MINEMA) and UNHCR), and utilizing volunteer support to advertise enrollment opportunities and to assist with the enrollment process. Enrollment groups were divided by educational level and used technology such as phones, tablets, laptops, routers, and projectors. While enrollment events and the registration process worked effectively, technological issues occasionally arose; there were insufficient tablets and laptops, a lack of power and 4G internet coverage in some locations, and a lack of basic technological skills, digital literacy, and training among youth.

She explained further that, in addition to uploading their school graduation reports, transcripts, IDs, CVs, and certificates to Backpack during enrollment events, Backpackers gained technological literacy that can be a valuable transferable skill for future experiences and opportunities. They are trained to use the digital storytelling and sharing features of Backpack.

TOP ITEMS OF STORAGE
Diplomas, transcripts, and certificates are top 3 most uploaded documents in Backpack, followed by CVs

QUESTION 6

Additionally, Backpackers are supported with resources following their enrollment, including Kepler opportunities, Coursera courses offered by UNHCR, free Duolingo English tests, and knowledge of enrollment opportunities with the African Leadership University (ALU). Indeed,

---

[1] Appendix A.1 for more information.
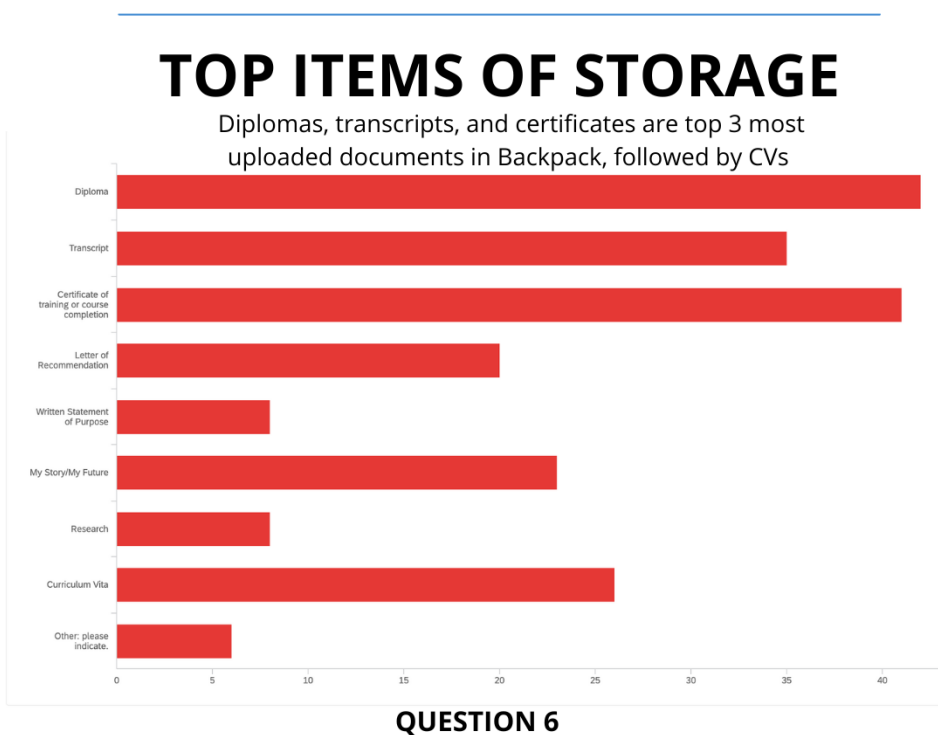
the Kepler team noted that some of the Backpackers enrolled in ALU "testify that having Backpack accounts helped them get admitted…providing them with a chance to re-establish a connection with their aspirations."

Backpackers are also briefed on their human right to education as established by the *UNDHR* and subsequent treaties and international norms.
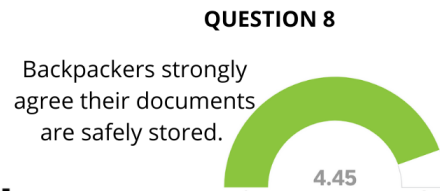
From survey data and direct observation, we know that Backpackers are uploading critical materials into Backpack and that they have been using these materials primarily for admissions purposes, job seeking, and scholarship applications. Smaller numbers have used the ecosystem for official purposes, including asylum applications and residency permits.

Backpack Guides, including Uwizeye, report that these are often very exciting and fun events where young people feel free to interact with the Guides and each other; students report that the events are often helpful in helping them organize not just their documents, but also their short and longer-term plans. It can foster an internal dialog about future and goals. From the perspective of supporting refugee young people's well-being and agency, these events serve as an act of solidarity, addressing directly the universal concern raised by refugees that they have been forgotten.

The form of Backpack, its emphasis on youth leadership and participation, and the continuous dialog with North American-based students and the University of California, Davis help confront this sense of disconnection. Future projects could investigate ways to use Backpack to better build forms of regional and global solidarity.

USE OF ARTICLE 26 BACKPACK
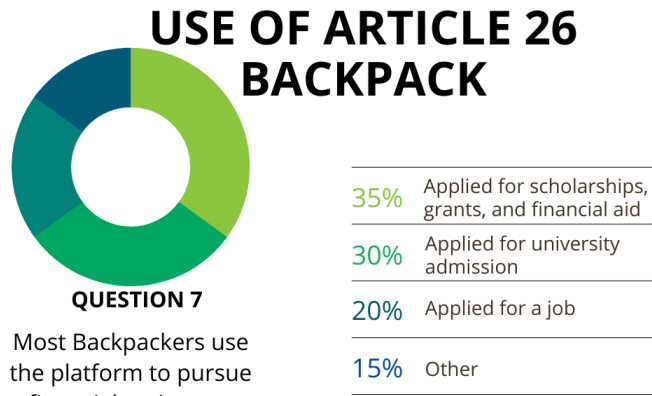
QUESTION 7

Most Backpackers use the platform to pursue financial assistance and higher education.

35%	Applied for scholarships, grants, and financial aid
30%	Applied for university admission
20%	Applied for a job
15%	Other

QUESTION 8

Backpackers strongly agree their documents are safely stored.

4.45

Backpack
Universal Tool for Academic Mobility

UCDAVIS
HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES

How and Why to Use the UC Davis Backpack (English)

Watch on YouTube

Backpacker, Go! - Spring 2022 Article 26 Backpack Newsletter

Welcome to Article 26 Backpack's first newsletter!

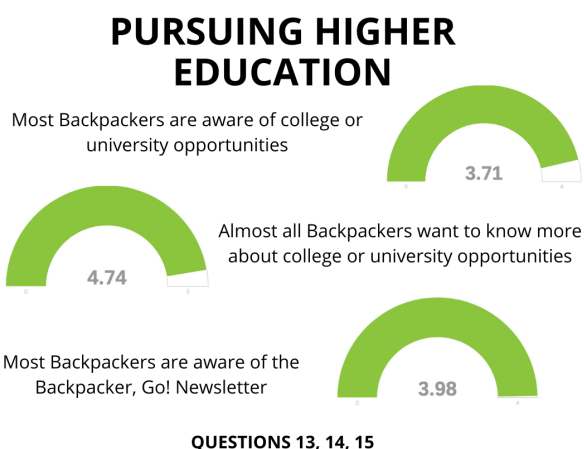by Emma Tolliver, Lead Editor | May 19, 2022

Quick Summary

- Produced by the Article 26 Backpack team at the University of California, Davis, the Article 26 Quarterly Newsletter provides resources, news, and relevant information to Backpackers to support them in protecting their human right to education.

A unique new project of Backpack over this period has been a quarterly newsletter, edited by Article 26 Backpack's Director of Research Emma Tolliver and sent to all Backpackers.

Entitled *Backpacker Go!*, the newsletter is a communications tool that can convey information about scholarship and enrollment opportunities to an international audience of 3700+ refugees and displaced young people. We are unaware of any other newsletter or focused communication tool of this kind; Article 26 Backpack fulfills an area of need as the only North American-based organization engaging in civilian protection and resource sharing with the international Backpacker population.

PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION

Most Backpackers are aware of college or university opportunities — 3.71

Almost all Backpackers want to know more about college or university opportunities — 4.74

Most Backpackers are aware of the Backpacker, Go! Newsletter — 3.98

QUESTIONS 13, 14, 15

Backpack — Universal Tool for Academic Mobility

UCDAVIS HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES

Resources include tools to assist Backpackers in customizing Backpack for their individual needs, free academic credentialing services for Backpackers with instructions to access the service in five different languages, and free English language exams (primarily Duolingo exams, with limited quantities of TOEFL exams). The Article 26 Backpack team has developed a scholarship and fellowship opportunity portion to the newsletter; it debuted in the recent Winter 2023 installment of *Backpacker, Go!* With a few keystrokes, we can communicate and share opportunities, support, and resources with over 3,600 individuals across the world.

As of November 2022, Article 26 Backpack shared 350 Duolingo English tests, 10 TOEFL tests, and 10 ECE® Aid credential evaluation vouchers - though exclusively in Rwanda.

Questions remain as to the effectiveness of the degree to which Backpack is being used as a tool for Human Rights Education (HRE.) We argue that making refugees and other displaced peoples aware of the human rights to education, work, and digital privacy is fundamental to empowering their forward

BACKPACK AND HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

Virtually all Backpackers agree that education is a human right — 4.74

Almost all Backpackers want to learn more about their human rights and how to protect them — 4.58

Almost all Backpackers want to learn how to protect the rights of others — 4.58

QUESTIONS 16, 17, & 18

Backpack — Universal Tool for Academic Mobility

UCDAVIS HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES

motion into university or the workforce. Knowing one's rights helps operationalize and sustain the exercise of those rights; we also see HRE as mandated by international treaty obligations. HRE tends not to be a high priority for international humanitarian organizations, including higher education. That said, the intended users of Backpack, because of their anticipated leadership roles in their own and other countries of resettlement, will be in a position to protect and promote human rights. They told us as much in their survey responses.

Key Observation 4:

Refugees and other displaced people are often unaware of their human rights, including the human right to education. At the same time they are eager to learn about their human rights.

Answering Major Questions and Conclusions:

Finding 1: The joint UC Davis - Kepler learning project in Rwanda, when combined with experience, data and outcomes from other areas/regions of Backpack implementation, including the Middle East, Afghanistan, and Ukraine show that Backpack is a robust ecosystem that is a unique and effective means to address the express needs of refugees and other displaced young people in the fields of academic documentation and credentials safety, curation and sharing. In addition, the operation of Backpack has produced added benefits for peer-to-peer learning, empowerment, leadership and training opportunities for refugee and displaced young people, as well as pathways of solidarity and support between students at a top research university and young people in areas of displacement and refuge.

The experience gained over the last years has also helped answer critical questions that had remained unanswered following the Backpack's first implementation effort among Syrian refugees in Lebanon 2018-2019.

Finding 2: Buy-in: a broad term that roughly translates into the willingness of local communities and refugee-facing higher education institutions and NGOs to adopt and continue to use Backpack in the absence of continued support from UC Davis. Our initial observation is that the Kepler team enthusiastically adopted Backpack, incorporating it into their practice and innovating and adapting it to their specific needs and conditions. Significant examples of this buy-in include the development of the Backpack Ambassadors program—a way to train young people in camp settings primarily to continue to introduce and help people use Backpack; the translation of Backpack training materials into Kinyarwanda, including the creation of an asynchronous education video; and efforts by Rwanda-based Backpack Guides to expand Backpack's reach into Ethiopia alongside Kepler's work in that country. The Kepler team, reflecting on Backpack's utility, noted that "most of the refugee communities didn't even know that education is a human right and they only became aware through Backpack. It was an

eye-opener to most…[about] possible issues if they lose their document[s]." Recognizing this significant impact in both human rights education and document security spaces, UC Davis Human Rights Studies has adopted the Backpack Ambassadors program more generally and will extend the opportunity to Backpackers outside of East Africa.

Finding 3: Scalability. A team of 17, including five in Rwanda and 12 at UC Davis, helped bring over 2200 new Backpackers into the ecosystem through enrollment events, social media outreach, online office hours, and similar activities across a 10 month period of time. We estimate that an additional 1000 will enroll by the end of the academic year (June, 2023). During this period, UC Davis has been able to keep pace with the support of the team in Rwanda — while also managing the project's response to the crises in Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Iran and engaging in fundraising, digital platform maintenance, and security updates.

The model and ongoing assessment capabilities developed in Rwanda showcase how Backpack, *with proper funding in place*, can be scaled through the integrated use of fellowships, training, workshops, and peer-to-peer engagement. The additional enrolled Backpackers posed no issues to the Backpack's digital hardware or software infrastructure. In fact, as the number of Backpackers increase, the cost of hosting begins to lessen quickly.

Finding 4. Sustainability; how can Backpack be sustained? UC Davis Human Rights Studies views Backpack as a public good, Backpackers as members of a community, and the growing global network of Guides and Ambassadors as colleagues. This forestalls building sustainability on charging Backpackers for the use of or access to materials stored in Backpack. Backpack is relatively cost-effective, in part because of its integration into the public engagement and career development opportunities associated with the UC Davis Human Rights Studies Program, which brings talented and multilingual university students into service and leadership roles and the commitment of faculty and staff time from the institution. In the field of operation, sustainability becomes a question of financial support to help refugee-facing educational NGOs integrate Backpack into standard practices. Our experience with the implementation in Rwanda is a guide to broader costs and benchmarks of achievement and probable outcomes.

Recommendations:

Our primary recommendation is to respond to calls from refugee and at-risk university-age populations to provide global support for their (re)engagement with higher education and workforce opportunities by ensuring the safety, security, and accessibility of their most vulnerable and critical educational documents and credentials. At the same time, efforts should be undertaken to build connections with refugee communities along pathways of solidarity and for policy advocacy, knowledge of human rights and awareness of opportunity.

In this, we echo many of the recommendations in Martin and Stugaitis (2022) and further advise that, in addition to supporting refugees access through flexibility in evaluation and the acceptance of credentials (*Recommendation 9*), a priority be placed on providing ways for refugees *not* to be dependent on state agencies or HEI's for the safety, security, and accessibility of their documentation and, rather, facilitate opportunities like Backpack universally. This is an easily addressed way to reduce individual vulnerability to human rights abuse and aid efforts to promote civilian protection.

Put another way, key international efforts to facilitate the movement of refugees into higher education will continue to be plagued by problems of documentation unless and until the human right to possess and ability to safely store and access credentials and documents is readily available to all.

MasterCard Foundation

The MasterCard Foundation is uniquely positioned to ensure this outcome because of its extensive partnerships with higher education institutions throughout Africa. A simple measure it should take is to require any IHE with which it partners to demonstrate that scholarship applicants and enrollees are provided an opportunity to store their academic materials upon application and upon graduation with Backpack, or a tool that provides similar secure, independent, and permanent control of their materials. Were the Foundation to adopt such a requirement, it is possible that other scholarship organizations, including the UNHCR's DAFI program, would follow suit.

A similar requirement was recently stated in the CFP issued by USAID to support Burmese refugee university students: "the Contractor must assist HE students with secure technologies that allow them to securely store academic records, credentials, professional certificates, research, and other important documents. For example, Article 26 Backpack is an organization that has expressed interest in supporting such efforts for HE students in Burma" (U.S. Agency for International Development).

We further recommend that, in addition to continuing the project in Rwanda, additional funding be provided to support multi-year joint outreach projects involving Kepler and UC Davis to expand Backpack's coverage throughout Africa, leveraging the Tertiary Refugee Network. The effort would blend competitive grants to groups and institutions interested in integrating Backpack into their programs with fellowships to provide support to Backpack Guides. Because of Backpack's multilingual capacity, these efforts should not be limited to only Anglophone environments but include French and Arabic - and if needed develop additional language

capacity (ie Amharic). This has already been begun in Ethiopia with a small residual part of the original grant.

General Recommendations

A key "ground-truth" we have observed through our work with refugee young people is the prohibitive costs of required English language examinations, most notably the TOEFL exam. We encourage all HEI to waive that requirement or pay for the examinations of refugee students, unless or until ITS makes the examination available for free or little cost to refugees.

Alternatively, we encourage institutions to support the use of Duolingo, which has made, via Backpack, 200+ free exams available.

IHE should consider ways to integrate Backpack into scholarship or general admissions applications.

HRE should become a standard element of all refugee education and programs; refugee university students should be a special focus for this effort as they constitute the sector most likely to lead further efforts at human rights advocacy and defense and have a demonstrated interest in the subject.

Bibliography

Article 26 Backpack Guide Collective, *Backpack Guide Handbook* (2021 rev.), Article 26
        Backpack: Tool for Universal Academic Mobility, 2021, PDF file.

Fitzpatrick, Deirdre. "Dying to Ask Podcast: Help Ukraine by Sharing a Tweet for Article 26
        Backpack." *KCRA*, KCRA, 16 Mar. 2022,
        www.kcra.com/article/dying-to-ask-podcast-article-26-backpack/39189933#.

Garcia, Karen. "Want to Help Ukraine? These California Organizations Need Your Support." *Los
        Angeles Times*, Los Angeles Times, 23 Feb. 2022,
        www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2022-02-23/how-to-help-ukraine-three-california-o
        rganizations.

Kalkat, Simran. "Article 26 Backpack from UC Davis Allows Students to Safely Store Academic
        Resources." *The Aggie*, 13 Nov. 2021,
        theaggie.org/2021/11/13/article-26-backpack-from-uc-davis-allows-students-to-safely-sto
        re-academic-resources/.

Martin, et al. "Refugees' Access to Higher Education in Their Host Countries: Overcoming the
        'Super-Disadvantage': Policy Paper." *UNESCO*: *IIEP*, 12 May 2022,
        www.iiep.unesco.org/en/publication/refugees-access-higher-education-their-host-countrie
        s-overcoming-super-disadvantage.

Swaak, Taylor. "A UC-Davis Professor's Mission: Saving Academic Credentials in
        Afghanistan." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, The Chronicle of Higher Education,
        14 June 2022,
        www.chronicle.com/article/a-uc-davis-professors-mission-saving-academic-credentials-in
        -afghanistan.

"UC Davis' Article 26 Backpack Digital Human Rights Tool Expands to Rwanda." *Global
        Affairs*, 5 Nov. 2021,
        globalaffairs.ucdavis.edu/news/uc-davis-article-26-backpack-digital-human-rights-tool-e
        xpands-rwanda.

UN General Assembly, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,
        International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Optional Protocol to the
        International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 16 December 1966, A/RES/2200,
        available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f47924.html [accessed 31 October
        2022].

UN General Assembly, *The right to privacy in the digital age : resolution / adopted by the General Assembly*, 2020, A/RES/75/176, UN Digital Library, available at: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3896430?ln=en [accessed 31 October 2022].

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). "USAID/Burma Diversity and Inclusion Scholarship Program Activity (DISP)." DevelopmentAid, November 22, 2022. https://www.developmentaid.org/tenders/view/1075331/request-for-information-rficomm ents-on-draft-scope-of-work-sow-and-virtual-pre-solicitation-conferen.

Watenpaugh, Keith. "Afghanistan Emergency Resource Information." *Human Rights at UC Davis*, 8 Mar. 2022, human-rights.ucdavis.edu/news/afghanistan-emergency-resource-information.

Watenpaugh, Keith David, "A Matter of Rights: A Professor shares his efforts to help refugees access higher education," *UC Davis Magazine*, June 2017.

Watenpaugh, Keith, et al., "'Uncounted and Unacknowledged: Syria's Refugee University Students and Academics in Jordan," UC Davis Human Rights Initiative and the Institute of International Education, 2013.

Watenpaugh, Keith, et al., "'We will stop here and go no further:' Syrian University Students and Scholars in Turkey," UC Davis Human Rights Initiative and the Institute of International Education, 2014.

Appendix A.1: Josephine Uwizeye

(J = Josephine Uwizeye, an Article 26 Backpack Project Fellow at Kepler; I = Interviewer)

I: How ready are Backpackers when they show up?

J: They show up very excited to learn more about the Backpack; some of them come thinking that Backpack is a University or a scholarship agency.

I: What evidence is there of prior preparation for enrollment events?

J: We used to send announcements in refugees camp and WhatsApp groups about upcoming events. We talk to education partners.

I: How did you adapt to get Backpackers ready for enrollment?

J: We talk to education partners from the camp to make sure that they are aware of the event. We communicate to headmasters in high schools. We write emails to UNHCR/MINEMA education teams to allow partners to publish information about Backpack in the camps. We use mobile speakers to make announcements and reach a big audience. We recruit volunteers from camps before we go there so that they can spread the news, help us during enrollment processes, and show us around the camps. Volunteers also help us to hang announcements in public places, where many people meet and visit. We send announcements in different WhatsApp groups from specific refugee camps.

I: How much guidance and help did you have to provide to enroll people?

J: We break up enrollment by grade level. For us, we categorize the youth in the camps, and each category has its own specific day. High school graduating students had their own specific day or more than one, as did high school graduates and university graduates

I: Question about technology: what technologies did you use?

J: Phones, tablets, laptops, routers, and projectors.

I: Issues with technology?

J: Insufficient tablets and laptop, lack of power in some locations, lack of basic technology among youth, and lack of 4G internet coverage in some locations

I: Did you demonstrate the My Story/My Future and Share features?

J: Yes, we did, and we showed them different guiding questions that could help them make a nice story.

I: What's working, not working, or needs improvement regarding enrollment?

J: Everything is working fine with enrollment.

I: What elements of the registration process worked well, were hard, or could be improved?

J: During registration, everything worked well.

I: What kind of documents were students bringing?

J: School reports, transcript, IDs, CVs and different certificates.

I: Did you have a chance to talk about the human right to education? Did students

have questions about that? What were they?

J: Yes, we had the chance to talk about the human right to education. They didn't have any questions about it.

I: During the registration process, did you have an opportunity to share information about other kinds of opportunities? If so, which ones?

J: Yes, we shared Kepler opportunities, Coursera offerings from the UNHCR, Duolingo tests from Article 26 Backpack, and African Leadership University opportunities.

I: Did the students talk to or ask you questions? What about?

J: Yes, they were asking how Backpack is different from other online tools like Google Drive. They asked if they could apply with Backpack while organizations have their applications portal.

I: Do you see [Backpack] as valuable? Will these skills be useful later on?

J: Yes it is valuable, and it will be useful later on because Backpackers learn a lot about technology—how to use emails, how to store their documents and share them easily with Backpack—which might help them in exploring different opportunities using technology.

I: Would you like to work to help other groups to do what you're doing? Are you willing to pass this knowledge on? Why?

J: Absolutely, because I enjoyed helping youth and showing them the way of exploring different opportunities.

I: How have the Backpack events affected refugees in Rwanda?

J: Backpack events helped refugees know more about technology and digital words, and it has helped them to know more about different opportunities and how they can explore different platforms.

I: Should this project be continued?

J: Yes.

I: Is there anything you've learned in the process that you would like to share so that we can improve the project going forward?

J: I have learned that Backpackers need education opportunities; I would suggest creating more partnerships with scholarship agencies and universities to provide more opportunities to Backpackers.

Appendix A.2: Sadiki Bamperineza

(S = Sadiki Bamperineza, an Article 26 Backpack Project Fellow at Kepler; I = Interviewer)

I: Were Backpackers prepared to create their accounts and fill their Backpacks when they arrived at a Backpack enrollment event?

S: Some Backpackers were prepared, while others were not. Those who managed to read our announcements on-site before attending the Backpack events were prepared with the necessary documents. The most challenging issue with preparation was that very few people were able to read the announcement and understand what they had to bring. Some individuals also did not create email accounts before attending the event. Due to these issues, we spent a long time explaining the documents that they can put in their Backpack and helping them create their emails so that they can open a Backpack.

I: How much guidance did you need to provide in order to enroll people in Backpack? Was this dependent on age or grade level?

S: The Backpackers who were able to go to university before did not require much guidance compared to those who only attended high scdhool. Also, the high school graduates had emails while those in the final year of high school didn't have emails.

I: What were the biggest time constraints?

S: In regards to time, it was time-consuming to create emails and enroll students on the BackPack platform at the same time. It was less time-consuming to enroll students who had emails compared to those who didn't have emails. On the other hand, the most time-consuming task in supporting Backpackers is helping them create the MSMF videos.

I: What technologies did you use? Were there any issues with the technology or its availability?

S: In most refugee camps, we were able to find laptops and connect to the internet. However, there are places that had no internet connection or electricity. In places where we had issues with connectivity, we used our routers and tablets to enroll students.

I: Did you demonstrate the My Story, My Future, and Sharing features of Backpack?

S: Yes, we did. However, it was very challenging for Backpackers who were trying to record the My Story, My Future video in English. In response to this, we are creating a Kinyarwanda-translated instructional video for Backpack creation guidance.

I: What kind of documents did students need the most help storing?

S: High school certificates, transcripts, IDs, and certificates.

I: What elements of the registration process worked well or were difficult?

S: The creation of Backpack accounts was difficult due to the lack of emails for many Backpackers, especially for those who only graduated from high school. Also, the MSMF video creation was very difficult due to language barriers for high school graduates. The easiest task was uploading the documents on the platform and navigating through the main features.

I: Are there any improvements you would like to recommend?

S: I would recommend the sharing of the Backpack as a link, not as an email. I would also recommend improving the platform by adding the opportunity section on the menu.

I: Did you educate students about the human right to education? If so, what kinds of questions did the students have about it?

S: Yes, we did. The main questions they were asking were about the ability to get into universities and the kind of guidance they need to get there. They were also asking questions about the university requirements and how they can get information about available opportunities.

I: During the registration process, did you have a chance to counsel Backpackers about further opportunities, such as scholarships or university applications?

S: Yes. This is also part of the training we gave new Backpack ambassadors because we want them to be able to counsel students about university opportunities and application processes.

I: What is the impact of Backpack on Backpackers? More specifically, how have the Backpack events affected refugees in Rwanda?

S: Refugees are now aware of their Article 26 right to education and they are equipped with information about available opportunities. Refugees have learned about the way to store their documents on the Backpack portal and they are aware of how to use the tool to explore university opportunities. Refugees are now engaged in the education opportunities' search; they have hope and a plan. Backpackers are no longer searching for ways to scan documents multiple times when they want to apply for university opportunities.

I: Were you able to effectively share information about and guide Backpackers in using resources provided by Backpack's partners? Do you think there is a need for these resources?

S: Yes.

I: Which resources?

S: Laptops, electricity, internet, classrooms, sound systems, and volunteers.

I: How has being a Backpack Guide provided you with valuable leadership opportunities? How have these opportunities impacted you and others?

S: Being a Backpack guide helped me learn more about the most challenging issues to solve in supporting refugees' access to tertiary education. I learned about how to deal and work with local leaders and partners while advocating for refugees' access to tertiary education. I have started discussions with young refugees about how they can get into tertiary education. I have earned new connections and important people who are willing to support refugees' access to tertiary education.

I: Do you see the Backpack enrollment process and even broader Backpack project as valuable? If so, why?

S: Yes, because there is a high-level need for backpack services in Rwanda. In this phase of

the project, we have reached only a smaller number of people who want a Backpack. Also, there is a high need for information sharing opportunities and safe storage of academic papers.

I: Do you think the Backpack project should continue? Why or why not?

S: Yes, the project should continue because Backpack is very important and needed by high school students on a broader scale. Also, it is very important to continue the project so that current backpackers can find customized support for their future success.

I: Are you willing to pass on your knowledge as a Backpack Guide to other groups who are interested in carrying on this project?

S: Yes.

I: Are there any other thoughts you'd like to share?

S: The partnership with Duolingo and TOEFL adds a greater value to Backpack, and we should seek to ensure that those partnerships are maintained.

Article 26 Backpack's work in Rwanda—as funded by the Mastercard foundation—received media coverage by UC Davis publications. Our work was featured in an article by Global Affairs (Global Affairs at UC Davis 2021) and by The California Aggie (Kalkat 2021). Vice Provost and Dean of Global Affairs Joanna Regulska said of Backpack's work in Rwanda, "UC Davis is working toward an initiative called Global Education for All, which has a goal of providing 100 percent of students with global learning opportunities to change their lives and our world. The Article 26 Backpack internship and the students' work contributing to the global community are fantastic examples of how you can make a difference around the world from any location. The interns are learning how interconnected our world is, and by partnering with Kepler, they are having a tremendous impact" (Global Affairs at UC Davis 2021).

In addition to the media coverage garnered by Article 26 Backpack's work in Rwanda, other Article 26 Backpack efforts have been featured in the media. In March 2022, Article 26 Backpack created an Afghanistan Emergency Resource in English and Dari (Watenpaugh 2022). Afghans were encourage to use Backpack by many major international higher education NGOs, including the International Institute of Education, the Scholar Rescue Fund, NAFSA – Association of International Educators, and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers; it was profiled by major educational and public media outlets, most notably the Chronicle of Higher Education (Swaak 2022). In the three months of Taliban rule, nearly 400 Afghans joined the Backpack ecosystem.

In February 2022, UC Davis Human Rights Studies created Ukrainian and Russian versions of Backpack in an emergency effort. The Ukrainian and Russian Backpacks were produced within one month; it was featured in a Los Angeles Times article describing resources for Californians to support Ukraine (Garcia 2022). News outlet KCRA also did a feature on Backpack, including a podcast and a televised interview with Dr. Keith Watenpaugh and Backpack Guides Jeneva Toolajian and Emma Tolliver (Fitzpatrick 2022).

Appendix C
Survey Methodology

As we continued our joint work through the learning period, UC Davis Human Rights Studies prepared a survey with 20 questions, including an open response opportunity to learn more about how Backpackers use Backpack and Backpacker's attitudes towards document security and human rights. The survey was prepared using Qualtrics in collaboration with Zofia Agnieszka Wlodarczyk, a doctoral candidate in UC Davis's Department of Sociology.

The questions focused on ease of use, accessibility of interface, concerns about document security, how Backpack is being used in application processes, familiarity with Backpack support, and knowledge and interest in human rights. We distributed information about the survey through the summer installment of the *Backpacker, Go!* newsletter sent July 29, 2022 and direct emails to Backpackers sent September 16, 2022 inviting them to take the survey. It is important to stress that we do not have a way to target emails to specific geographical locations, so responses came from Backpackers both in and beyond Rwanda.

We received enough responses to achieve a 90% significance level and a 92% confidence rate of responses.

The Article 26 Backpack Guide Collective is interested in pursuing publication of this study separately.

Appendix D
Survey Materials

1. I have academic documents or professional certifications that are important to me (for example: diplomas, transcripts, letters or recommendations, certificates of course completion).
2. The safety of my academic documents or professional certifications is important.
3. I am concerned that my documents might be lost, destroyed or stolen.
4. If I were to lose my documents, it would be easy to replace them.
5. I have encountered problems applying for higher educational opportunities because I did not have access to important academic documents or materials.
6. I have uploaded the following to Backpack: (Diploma,
7. I have accessed the documents or materials in Backpack while doing the following:
8. Documents stored in Backpack are safe and secure.
9. I have access to the internet and can access my Backpack and contents whenever I wish.
10. I feel connected with other Backpackers.
11. I needed help creating my Backpack and uploading my documents.
12. The Backpack Guides helped me to create my Backpack and upload my documents.
13. I am aware of college or university educational opportunities.
14. I want to know more about college, university, or employment opportunities.
15. I am aware of the Backpack newsletter "Backpacker, Go!" and other resources available to me as a Backpacker such as free English tests and credential evaluation services.
16. Education is a Human Right.
17. I want to learn more about my Human Rights and how to protect them.
18. I want to learn more about how to protect the Human Rights of others.
19. How did you hear about Article 26 Backpack?
20. How can we improve Backpack?

Q1 - I have academic documents or professional certifications that are important t…

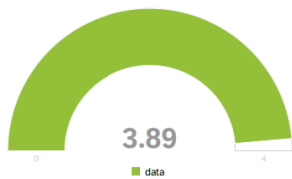| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	4.64	0.71	0.50	66
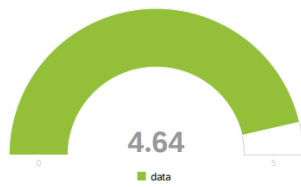
Q2 - The safety of my academic documents or professional certifications is import…

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	4.79	0.60	0.35	63

4.64

data

4.79

data
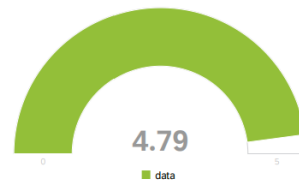
Q3 - I am concerned that my documents might be lost, destroyed or stolen.

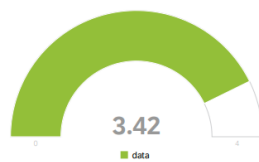| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	3.89	1.36	1.85	66

Q4 - If I were to lose my documents, it would be easy to replace them.

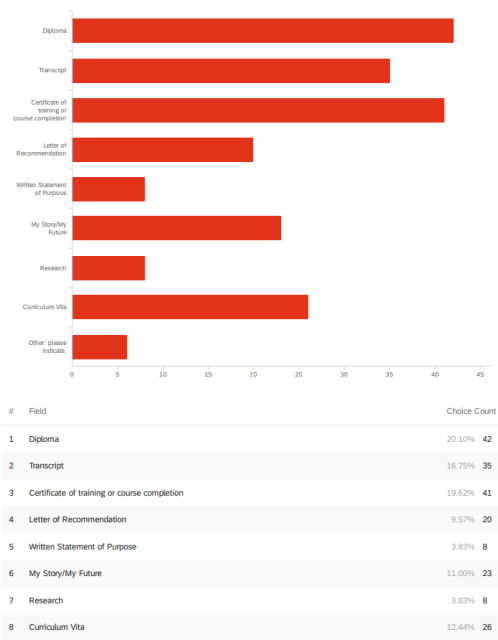| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	3.11	1.59	2.52	66

3.89

data

3.11

data

Q5 - I have encountered problems applying for higher educational opportunities because I di…

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	3.42	1.41	1.99	64

3.42

data

Q6 - I have uploaded the following to Backpack:

#	Field	Choice Count	
1	Diploma	20.10%	42
2	Transcript	16.75%	35
3	Certificate of training or course completion	19.62%	41
4	Letter of Recommendation	9.57%	20
5	Written Statement of Purpose	3.83%	8
6	My Story/My Future	11.00%	23
7	Research	3.83%	8
8	Curriculum Vita	12.44%	26

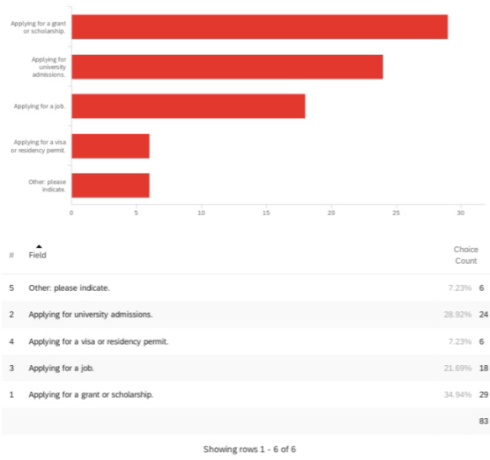| #	Field	Choice Count	
9	Other: please indicate.	2.87%	6
			209

Showing rows 1 - 10 of 10

Q6_9_TEXT - Other: please indicate.

Other: please indicate.
high school reports and ID
Personal identification documents
Identity documents
Now am in Rwanda Country

Q7 - I have accessed the documents or materials in Backpack while doing the following:

#	Field	Choice Count	
5	Other: please indicate.	7.23%	6
2	Applying for university admissions.	28.92%	24
4	Applying for a visa or residency permit.	7.23%	6
3	Applying for a job.	21.69%	18
1	Applying for a grant or scholarship.	34.94%	29
			83

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

Q7_5_TEXT - Other: please indicate.

Other: please indicate.
Keeping my documents safe
Using in Academic related
Nothing

Other: please indicate.
Am in Kigali city /Rwanda Country
No document I have accessed from Backpack

Q8 - Documents stored in Backpack are safe and secure.

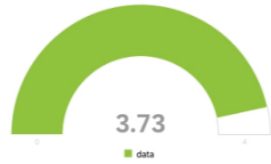| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	4.45	0.89	0.79	44

Q9 - I have access to the internet and can access my Backpack and contents whe...

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	3.93	1.19	1.41	46

Q10 - I feel connected with other Backpackers.

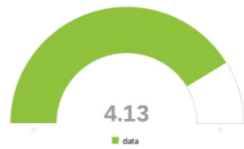| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	3.73	1.35	1.82	48

Q11 - I needed help creating my Backpack and uploading my documents.

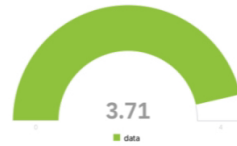| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	3.13	1.67	2.78	45

3.73
■ data

3.13
■ data

Q12 - The Backpack Guides helped me to create my Backpack and upload my do…

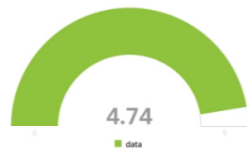| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	4.13	1.13	1.27	45

Q13 - I am aware of college or university educational opportunities.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	3.71	1.38	1.89	45

4.13
■ data

3.71
■ data

Q14 - I want to know more about college, university, or employment opportunities.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	2.00	5.00	4.74	0.66	0.43	42

Q15 - I am aware of the Backpack newsletter "Backpacker, Go!" and other resourc…

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	3.98	1.29	1.67	45

4.74
■ data

3.98
■ data

Q16 - Education is a Human Right.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	4.74	0.78	0.60	39

Q17 - I want to learn more about my Human Rights and how to protect them.

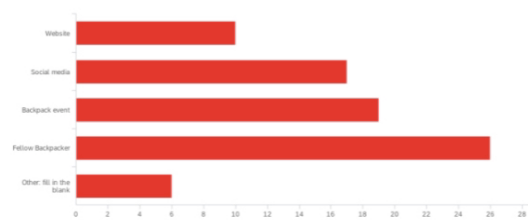| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	1.00	5.00	4.58	0.86	0.74	40

Q18 - I want to learn more about how to protect the Human Rights of others.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Disagree	2.00	5.00	4.58	0.78	0.61	38

4.74
■ data

4.58
■ data

4.58
■ data

Q19 - How did you hear about Article 26 Backpack?

#	Field		Choice Count
1	Website	12.82%	10
2	Social media	21.79%	17
3	Backpack event	24.36%	19
4	Fellow Backpacker	33.33%	26
5	Other: fill in the blank	7.69%	6
			78

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

Q19_5_TEXT - Other: fill in the blank

Other: fill in the blank

It's a tool which can help you to store your documents, it can also help you to apply to different opportunity such as university application,English test, you can apply for job.

I met the bag manager personally in Lebanon

Through scholars at risk

Other: fill in the blank

We have get more information to backpack from the branch fellow in iteme program prepared by Kepler University Rwanda

Email

From scholars at risk email

Q20 - How can we improve Backpack?

How can we improve Backpack?

En mettant plus de securite au systeme

Can improve in creating application

an improvement will be when we share the link and discussing about it the role and importance for social and community camps of refugees and also in putting effort in establishing schoorlaship for youth generation and indigenous people

If possible you may keep follow-up to new backpacker who are not familiar with backpack program

Responding quickly

you have to publishing on all social media.

I am asking you to help the vulnerable people and students on my behalf. I want you to take me out of Afghanistan. To continue my studies.

Make it known in all areas where refugees and forcibly displaced people are found.

Backpack has been helpful in my career and academics as it provided me with useful resources, but I feel that, in spite of this, it's accessed by few people. It's reach out strategies should be stoked/improved.

Keep up what you are doing.

I see it works best

You can create an application of Backpack

I would like to remind you to give us TOEFL exams we recommended because we are ready for the exam and we've been waiting for this for so long. thanks waiting hearing from you soon.

0

How can we improve Backpack?

Simply, you need to make follow up to the Backpack users frequently in order to understand their difficulties. Further, please share with it us different opportunities across the globe as well as providing internship to in Backpack. Lastly, I enjoyed Backpack, it's a smart store for our documents since you access them everywhere you go! Thanks.

Please a worldwide group of backpackers and let them to be connected, this will help backpackers to get aware of all scholarship, fellowship and job offers opportunities and I honestly ask you to introduce more scholarship and work opportunities to me and help me to apply. Once again I thank you for all the activities you are doing for us.

To help users to to know and access colleges and university's information.

I would like you to give all the services regularly. For example I have a Backpack account and I want to free English test but I don't know where I will find that.

You can improve backpack in way of prepare some training to more people and put out activities of backpack .after that you motivate people to follow the activities of backpack

None.

Recognized everywhere.

NA

by preparing enough training to the ambassadors and providing them enough materials to be used while sensibilizing more about backpack,these are like computers and other technological materials

By showing some tutorials about how to use it...for example I have an account and I want to do the language test but I don't know how.

Please provide free TOEFL donations soon.

adding a page of opportunities on backpack platform

Better to have an application like wetsapp, Facebook ...and purplish on play store or app store so that everyone wants to use it can have access to that that application instead of using browsers.Thank you!

I would like to recommend backpack to provide more survey this help us express our ideas on backpack. And I want to ask when are will backpack help me with credit evaluation?

How can we improve Backpack?

to support more and more the new backpacker

Please write a clear instruction about how to use backpack and help in dangered students or scholars at risk to find thier future true your organization. Thank you very much

provide sevices for refugee students

Till now i'm satisfied!

provide more trainings

End of Report