


As of April 2024


Social and economic inclusion of asylum-seekers and refugees in Costa Rica includes **fostering their access to formal and decent jobs** and other income generation opportunities in the **Metro Area (GAM)** and the **Northern Region**.


UNHCR in Costa Rica advocates for forcibly displaced and stateless people to access state-led programs and labour market opportunities by **boosting capacity-building to improve employability and business ownership**, and through advocacy with the public and private sectors.

Key outcomes in 2023

As per indicators monitored by UNHCR in its Multi-Year Strategy 2022-24

 **Refugee unemployment** decreased from 9% in 2022 to 7.2% in 2023.

 **Financial Inclusion** of refugees, which includes access to bank accounts and mobile payments, was **slightly higher** than expected (66% versus 65% forecasted target).

 **Refugee income** was 11% lower in 2023 than in 2022, which is 22 pp below the 33% target, which can be related to the **deterioration of their working conditions**.

LIVING INTEGRATION (VLI) 2023

KEY FIGURES: V EDITION OF THE VLI AWARD

- 47** organizations from private, public and civil society sectors presented a nomination, **30% more** than in 2022
- 42** recognitions were granted in **2 ceremonies**, including **11 honorable mentions**, more than double than those granted last year
- 349** people were directly employed as a result of **4** referral agreements with partner agencies, **4** job fairs and **5** corporate inclusion policies identified
- +900** people were trained in technical and digital skills for employment or entrepreneurship through various multisector alliances
- 282** private seed capital identified (both in-cash and in-kind)
- 15** research projects, including a formal and informal labor study on refugees and asylum seekers shared with **16 public sector institutions** for decision-making

“LIVING INTEGRATION” BECAME “LIVING INCLUSION”: WHAT’S NEW?

- The “**Living Integration**” refugee economic inclusion framework was rebranded as “**Living Inclusion**”.
- This economic inclusion framework has been **implemented by UNHCR in Costa Rica since 2014**.
- Since then, it has contributed to the application of an **all-society, shared responsibility approach**, where the private sector and civil society organizations play a key role in the economic inclusion of those forced to flee.
- The main purpose of the **rebranding strategy**, including the change of its name, is to emphasize that **forced displacement is a reality for which all countries and societies must reflect and act upon proactively**. Therefore, addressing this situation is **not only a responsibility that refugees must undertake** to “adapt” or “integrate”, but a shared duty with host countries to include them as part of the population who resides in their territories.
- The framework seeks to establish the international protection response as a **key task within national and local private sector, civil society and government**, while also researching and presenting the gains and benefits of the economic inclusion of people forced to flee in the host society.



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LIVING INCLUSION 2023: UNHCR's contribution

7,766 people reached through:

 TRAINING

1,589	777	656	237
complementary courses	digital literacy	financial health	business management

 ADVISORY AND SUPPORT

2,567	855	157	131
workplan development	completed enhancement	business formalization	value-chain and market access

 IN-CASH GRANTS

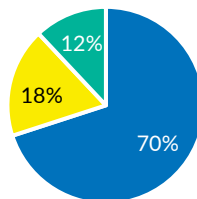
119 for self-employment 34 for wage work training

PROFILE OF PEOPLE ASSISTED

SEX

70% women
30% men

NATIONALITY



■ Nicaraguans

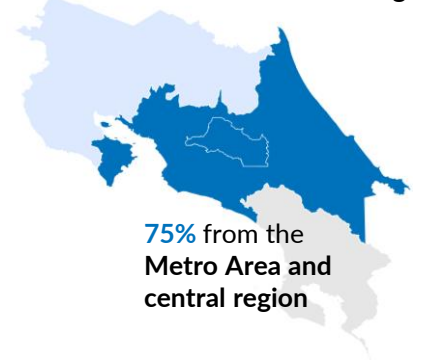
■ Venezuelans

■ Others

48 people from host communities, mostly Costa Rican

RESIDENCE

25% from the Northern region



75% from the Metro Area and central region

PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2024, the work in progress around the VI Edition of the **Living Inclusion/Vivir la inclusión Award** is focused on adding new allies to continue growing our community. Our ongoing **rebranding campaign** will not only increase awareness and visibility of the VLI framework but also help us **create high-value alliances to target refugee and asylum seeker-led initiatives**, as well as financial inclusion and capacity-building for agricultural initiatives in the Northern area.

In 2024, we aim to **consolidate the VLI multi-sector ecosystem** by launching our rebranding campaign. This campaign includes a new image, website, communications strategy and a new design for the VLI award process. We hope this will help VLI grow, aiming at include more organizations than ever before and provide an easier path to those getting started.



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Livelihoods collaborated with the donation of construction materials and agricultural tools to the CSO *Movimiento Campesino* and to the Miskitos community, delivered at a protocol ceremony at the Northern region held by UNHCR. This donation aimed at enhancing their self-reliance and sustainability and advocate for support by other actors. Focus groups held by Livelihoods in February 2024 provided input on needs and capacities to direct decisions for these donations and support.

OUR WORK AT THE FIELD:

Livelihoods for the *Movimiento Campesino* (Northern area)

In February 2024, four communities from the *Movimiento Campesino* community-based organization, located in Los Chiles and Upala cantons, participated in four focal groups with **33 refugees and asylum-seekers**. These assessment sought to know and address their **needs, capacities, allies, and interests (including those related with training)** in terms of **livelihoods**.

These conversations allowed for UNHCR to **better understand their journey as an organized group in Costa Rica**, allowing recognizing their efforts, achievements, and dreams. In 2024, these four communities are being prioritized and, in order to achieve their meaningful participation and ensure success of interventions, **all the training initiatives** on topics such as digital literacy, financial health, specialized agricultural courses, and business training **are taking place inside their communities**.

UNHCR's implementing partner *Fundación Omar Dengo (FOD)* is leading the training process, which includes alliances with public institutions and the private sector.

UNHCR appreciates the contributions of donor countries that contribute to Costa Rica and global programs with unearmarked funds:

As of 31 March 2024



UNHCR Costa Rica also appreciates the contributions of our private donors globally:
 Australia / Japan / Italy / Republic of Korea / Spain / United Kingdom / United States

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