

Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion

April 2023

Social and economic inclusion of asylum-seekers and refugees in Costa Rica includes fostering access to formal and decent jobs and other income generating opportunities in the Great Metropolitan Area and the Northern Region.

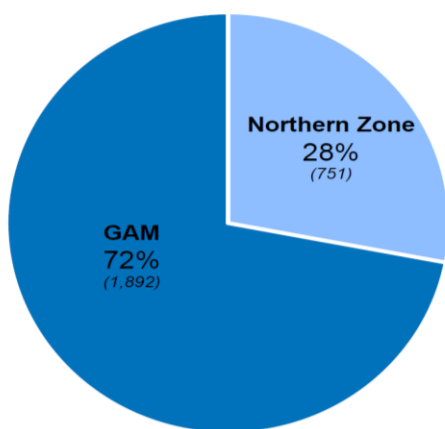
UNHCR in Costa Rica advocates for forcibly displaced and stateless people to access state-led programs and labour

market opportunities through advocacy and capacity-building to improve employability, such as digital literacy, English skills and technical training, job intermediation, business ownership and access to financial services.

Regarding local inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers, actions are

targeted towards improving their employability profile through education, raising awareness among the public and private sectors about their legal right to work, specific vulnerabilities and capacities, their added value and contribution to the job market, as well as improving job intermediation mechanisms and value chain linkages of refugee businesses to local markets.

INDIVIDUALS ASSISTED BY REGION SINCE 2022



HIGHLIGHTS IN 2023 LIVELIHOODS AND PRIVATE SECTOR

4 BUSINESS EVENTS with private sector to promote awareness and engagement with their Social Responsibility programs.

120 EMPLOYEES from private sector allies participated in workshops about awareness on refugee matters.

10 ENTREPRENEURSHIP FAIRS, where 40 people with and for whom UNHCR works presented their business.

MULTISECTOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S SUMMIT where we provided a message, sponsored a performer and distributed over 100 pieces of merchandise to women in regional business chambers, politics, civil society and academia to bring attention to the potential of the people forced to flee and stateless people.

REGIONAL MEETING ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, INNOVATION AND GENDER EQUALITY where we advocated for entrepreneurs to speak on the challenges and benefits when registering their brands and growing their business to create value from their intellectual and industrial property.

BUSINESS ALLIANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT where we participated in the creation of the upcoming Business Coalition for Ethical Hiring and Fair Hiring Practices.

Key figures 2023

544	persons received assistance in the livelihoods programme
74%	women beneficiaries
174	persons participated in basic training to improve their set skills
88	persons completed technical training for wage-employment
15	persons received business training and 11 received seed-capital for their business
46	persons completed a financial health course to improve access to services
62	persons completed a digital literacy course for self-employment, wage-employment and entrepreneurship



People with and for whom UNHCR works attend basic training at Fundación Omar Dengo/ Emily Robles/2023

Livelihoods Strategy

- Private sector partnerships to develop recruitment strategies, staff awareness and capacity-building for refugees.
- Access to formal and decent waged and self-employment opportunities.
- Access to national social protection, education, and employability programs.
- Access to basic, functional, and digital literacy and reduction of the digital divide.
- Waged and self-employment skills capacity-building, considering specific needs and opportunities in the Central and Northern Regions.
- Access to financial products and services such as bank accounts, digital payments and financial health.
- Waged employment job intermediation and business linkages to local value chains and commercialization opportunities.



Living Integration:

This initiative seeks to promote the socioeconomic inclusion and self-reliance of the people with and for whom UNHCR works, through an all society, shared responsibility, network approach. It articulates key sector actors such as the Ministry of Labor (MTSS), the Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje (INA), partners agencies Fundación Mujer and Fundación Omar Dengo, the Business Alliance for Development (AED), and the Costa Rican Chamber of Commerce, among others. Its main objective is to strengthen people of concern’s waged employment and entrepreneurial capacities through guidance, training, promotion events and campaigns and intermediation activities (see Key Figures 2023 above).



Living Integration Seal:

This certification is provided to entities that take specific actions toward socioeconomic inclusion of the people UNHCR serves. Based on Corporate Social Responsibility schemes, it allows organizations to report on concrete actions conducted to protect and include the population of concern. The IV Edition was launched in June 2022; more

than 30 entities from the public and private sectors, academia, civil society, and NGOs were recognized for their positive actions. Many of them and some additional ones have already started workplans for this year’s award and we expect even more nominations than in 2022.



Economic incentives for entrepreneurship and wage-employment:

This initiative aims to benefit people UNHCR serves that complete business management training with business start-up grants, to invest in infrastructure, raw material, equipment, and supplies. This also aims to support self-employed refugees to invest in equipment and tools. These grants also provide basic economic support for participating in technical trainings to improve wage-employment or entrepreneurship capacities.



Ana Ruth and her business, Pupusas Salvadoreñas Flores at entrepreneurship fair /Cristhofer Infante/2023

UNHCR is grateful for the support provided by donors contributing to this operation.



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