



Graduation Model participants receive technical training

Graduation Model participants interested in wage-employment receive technical/vocational training to increase their employability profile. By conducting a market assessment in conjunction with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the areas of food and beverages, tourism, and trade were identified with the highest probability of incorporating the refugee population into the labour market. Thus, wage-employment participants focus on vocational training that will assure them the skills needed in those sectors.



Of the 75 project participants who chose the wage-employment path, 48 are acquiring skills in the areas of residential electrical installation, cell phone repair, beauty services, human resources, accounting, basic computer skills, computer maintenance and repair, English, and first aid, to mention a few.

We have also established strategic partnerships with private institutions where the participants currently receive training, such as Jimenez Institute, COSVIC Institute, and INATEC. Also, 7 people have been certified to care for elderly persons in the APAM care centre, which provides scholarships to refugees interested in this work.



Graduation Model has a new partners for self-employment

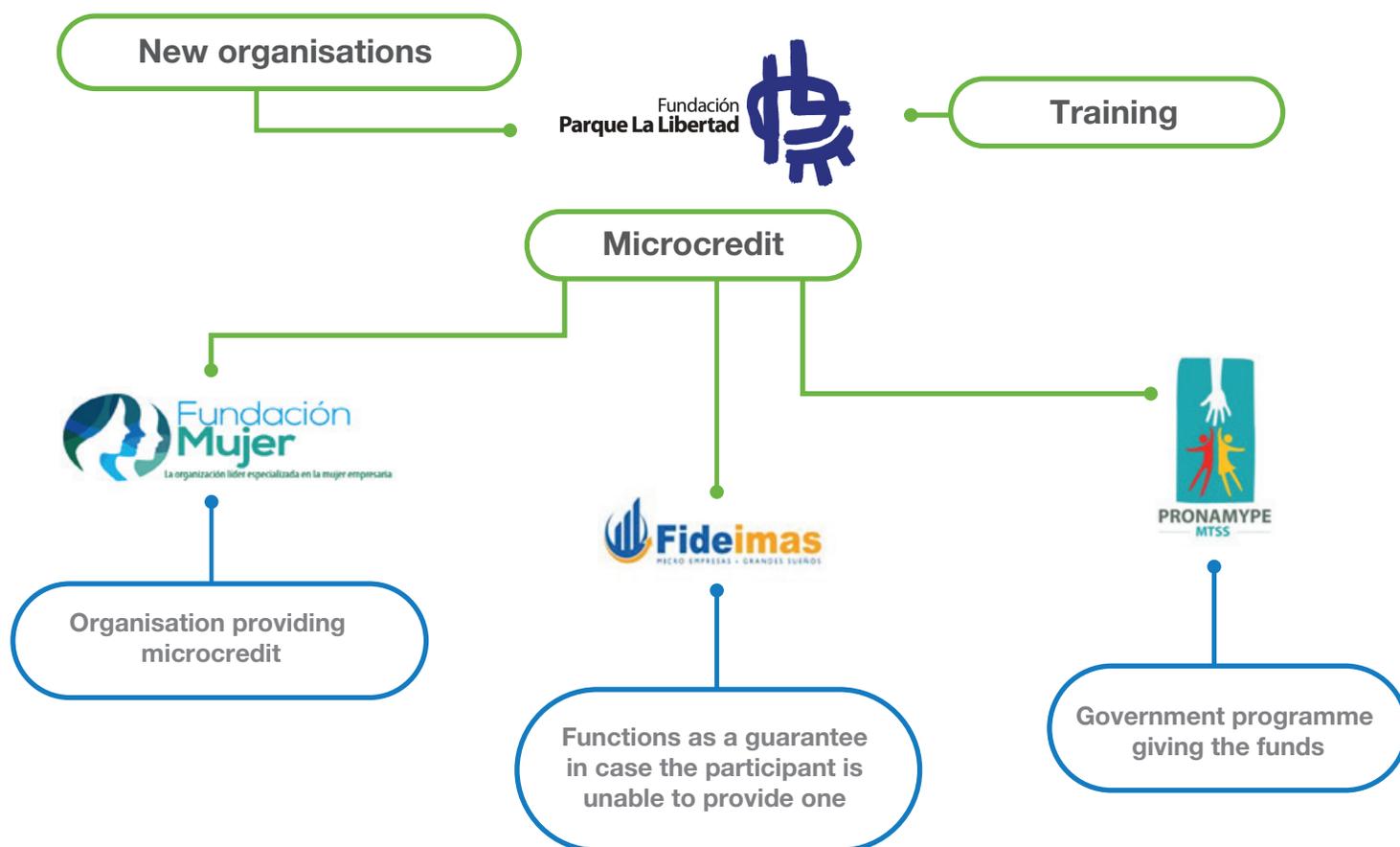


As part of the implementation of GraduationModel in Costa Rica, we have established partnerships with different organisations that work on development and have expertise to facilitate conditions for generating ventures. These organisations are: FundacionParque la Libertad (Liberty Park Foundation), FundacionMujer (Foundation for Women),Programa Nacional de Apoyo a la Microempresa(the National Programme for the support of Microenterprises [PRONAMYPE]),and IMAS Trust (FIDEIMAS). All the aforementioned organisations will play a role in facilitating and supporting conditions for enterprises established by the project participants.

Parque la Libertadwas created in 2007 by the Ministry of Culture and Youth (MCJ) in response to the need to generate positive spaces, access to culture, technology and healthy recreation. In 2011 the micro, small and medium enterprises(MSMEs) axis focusing on promoting entrepreneurship, strengthening and updating businesspractices, and training in digital literacy was created. In 2012, Parque la Libertad signed an agreement with the Ministry of Economics, Industry and Commerce in order to establish the office for MSME creation (CREAPYME) in its facilities, which functions as a centre for the development of MSMEs. Complementary services for informationand business formalisation procedures are provided for entrepreneurs in the central valley of the country.

Parque la Libertad will provide the training for self-employment participants, consisting of a course in business plan and strategy. It will also provide support and monitoring of businesses arising from the course.

FundacionMujeris a non-profit organisation that provides financial and non-financial services (training and monitoring) to entrepreneurs. The Foundation has over 26 years of experience, andthrough its program “Training and Development” it has trainedover 3000 people in business and entrepreneurship issues with a gender perspective. With PRONAMYPE funds, the Foundation facilitates access to microcredit for refugees, and FIDEIMAS serves as collateral of the loan in case the person is unable to present a guarantee.



Graduation Model participants successfully conclude self-employment training



On the 28th of August, 75 participants who enrolled in the courses “Starting a business” and “Business plan” received their certificate for their participation and performance in the courses. The event was held at the premises of the National University in Heredia and was attended by university authorities, the UNHCR Representation in Costa Rica and its partner agencies ACAI and Casa de Derechos.

During the event some of the participants shared their experience in the Graduation Model and the positive impact of the courses to start, manage, and grow their businesses. These courses are taught by the Continuing Education Programme for competitive capacity of micro, small and medium enterprises (FOCCO-MIPYME) of the School of Economics at the National University of Costa Rica.

In addition to this training, participants are able to access a starting capital (to start a business) or microcredit (to expand the business). They also receive support and advice on issues of budget management, marketing and business management in order to sustainably generate their own income and achieve self-reliance.



UNHCR works towards the institutionalisation of its livelihood programmes



UNHCR works to ensure the sustainability and institutionalisation of socio-economic integration programmes currently being implemented (Graduation Model and CSR scheme “Vivir la Integración”). On August 19th the Representative, Carlos Maldonado, Durable Solutions Officer, Elisa Carlaccini, and UNHCR staff in Costa Rica participated in the Presidential Social Council session to present these programmes.

The Presidential Social Council is coordinated by the second Vice President of the Republic, Ana Helena Chacon, and is the body which coordinates all governmental public policies to reduce inequality and poverty, particularly extreme poverty. The Council brings together representatives of institutions and ministries of the Presidency, Labour and Social Security, Education, Health, Culture and Youth, Housing and Human Settlements; the National Women's Institute, the Joint Institute for Social Aid and the Costa Rican Institute of Sports and Recreation.

During the session of August 19th the Council adopted a motion stating the basis for ensuring that refugees have equitable access to government development programmes, poverty alleviation, employability, and promotion of entrepreneurship. It was also declared of interest to the Social Presidential Council agreements related to local integration in the “Declaration and Plan of Action of Brazil”. A memorandum of understanding is currently being drafted between UNCHR, the Migration Board, the Ministry of the Presidency.

These efforts further consolidate the Costa Rican State as a model of local integration of refugees.



Graduation Model participants enjoy a family day



Sharing and integration. In order to facilitate the integration and building social support networks, 2014 and 2015 cohorts of the Graduation Model participated in various activities where they had the opportunity to share and learn from each other's experience while in the project.

The activity was a way to work on soft skills like teamwork, motivation, and communication, among others. Additionally spaces were provided for participants to interact with each other, learn about each other's livelihood activities and the objectives they wish to accomplish in the project.

Recognition was also given to those who have shown commitment and outstanding participation in the project and are soon to become self-reliant.

