

Socio-economic inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in Mexico – Relocation, job placement and local integration support

UNHCR's Relocation, job placement and local integration programme enabled over 13.000 asylum seekers and refugees to be employed in the formal economy in Mexico since 2016. **UNHCR established cooperation** with federal and state authorities and employment offices as well as **with over 200 private companies** that were hiring refugees, including Mabe, Kolon, Kimberly Clark, Palliser, Lennox, General Motors, Femsa, Hyatt, Home Depot, Soriana, Holiday Inn, Nissan, Exxon Mobil, Uber, Procter & Gamble, Lear, Faurecia and others.

About the programme

The relocation program was first launched in Saltillo in 2016. In 2019, UNHCR expanded the program to Monterrey, Guadalajara, Aguascalientes, Querétaro, Puebla, Leon and San Luis Potosi in 2020. **By November 2021, 13,421** refugees and asylum seekers from cities in southern Mexico, where opportunities for socioeconomic integration were scarce, were successfully relocated to municipalities located in the central and northern part of the country characterized by a higher demand for workers and a better absorption capacity in the education and health sectors. A permanent dialogue with chambers of commerce, private sector companies and local authorities guaranteed an efficient match between profiles of relocated refugees and the needs of the labour market.

Upon refugee status recognition and issuance of relevant documentation by authorities, refugees are screened for relocation and provided with bus transportation to one of the cities partnering with the programme. During a week-long induction, participants are lodged in a hotel and provided with a series of workshops aimed at equipping them with necessary knowledge and orientation in order to facilitate the socio-economic integration process in their new city of residence.

All participants receive information on housing



options and a one-off cash grant, covering the first month of rent and installation related costs. Designated focal points within the Ministry of Education ensure that relocated children are enrolled in school. Job interviews are conducted at the hotel and usually result in several job offers per each participant to the program. Monthly home visits and psychosocial support by UNHCR and its partners ensure that participants are accompanied during the first year of the integration process.

Four years into the implementation of the project, the results are promising: within the first month of the integration process, refugee families became independent from assistance. Ninety-two of participants of working age found a job, 100% of school age children and youth were enrolled in schools, and 60% of the participants graduated out of poverty within the first year of the integration process. Relocated refugees are expected to access nationality within the first two years of the integration process and access their own dwelling within the first three years.

Benefits for participating companies are significant

Participating companies report a very low turnover of recruited refugees (0.7%). The programme helps to meet labour needs in industrial regions of Mexico. Participating companies have expressed their satisfaction with the refugees and asylum seekers in their work force as they contribute with a high level of motivation and loyalty to the companies, demonstrating lower rotation rates than the industry averages and increasing the diversity of skills and experience.

How to become a partner in the programme

UNHCR invites private sector companies to join the programme and become a partner of the relocation, job placement and local integration programme in Mexico. For further information about the programme please contact:

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