



International
Trade
Centre

TRADE IMPACT
FOR GOOD

Connecting vulnerable migrants and displaced persons to markets



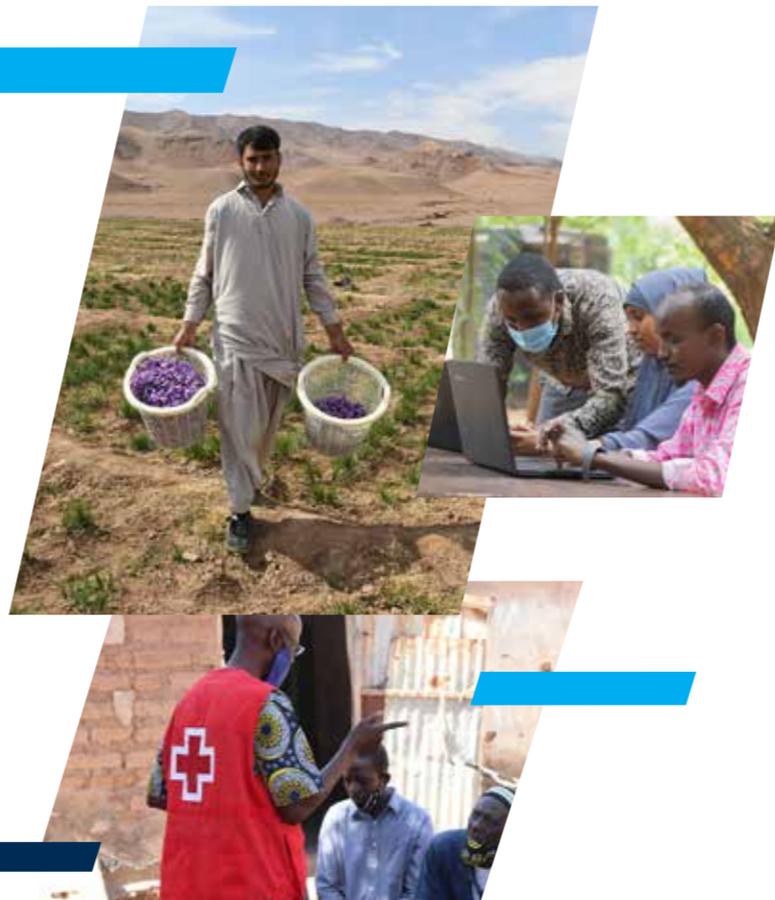
The International Trade Centre empowers vulnerable communities

The International Trade Centre (ITC) has over 50 years of experience in fostering inclusive and sustainable economic development through trade. We build capacity for small businesses to trade locally and internationally.

ITC builds on its vast experience with small businesses to empower vulnerable communities in the contexts of migration and forced displacement – which are complex, requiring a variety of expertise. We therefore work with other UN agencies and local humanitarian actors to address the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

We do this by providing a development perspective in fragile settings that focuses on aligning interventions to the needs of the market. We work with a variety of beneficiaries, focusing on young people and women.

ITC recognizes the knowledge and skills of affected populations as valuable resources which empower them to become economic actors in their new environments. Equipping them with skills and linking them to markets means generating income, creating and improving jobs, and fostering sustainable economic opportunities.



We build bridges with partnerships

We can have a stronger impact by working together. Each actor adds value in contributing to the overarching goal of safeguarding the rights and well-being of affected populations.

The complex nature of many recurrent crises re-enforces the importance of interventions that address both acute humanitarian needs as well as long-term development.

To promote peaceful and robust communities in the long-run, ITC cooperates closely with partners from the humanitarian sector, such as UNHCR and IOM, and international humanitarian agencies, including the Danish Refugee Council and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

Trade and economic development are key in improving the effectiveness and reach of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Through targeted technical assistance, advocacy and thought leadership, we bridge existing gaps.

Moreover, we host events that bring together refugee and migrant entrepreneurs with businesses and investors looking to engage in fragile settings, as well as with donors and implementing partners.

We address the economic root causes of vulnerable migration

The International Trade Centre provides economic opportunities at the source, thus addressing the economic root causes of irregular migration.

Young populations lacking economic prospects in home countries flee from poverty, unemployment, and hardship.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated their vulnerabilities and irregular migration. Returnees face significant challenges when seeking to re-enter the labour markets of their home countries and are equally in need of support.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates 272 million international migrants worldwide, representing around 3.5% of the global population (with 48% being women and 14% children).

While no accurate global estimations of return migration exist, in 2019, IOM supported around 65,000 returnee migrants worldwide (24% of them being women).

The support of the International Trade Centre in the context of migration particularly addresses young populations at risk of irregular migration, as well as returnees. We equip them with the needed skillset and market access opportunities to allow them to earn a decent living in their home countries.



We empower displaced persons and host communities economically

The International Trade Centre (ITC) builds self-reliance for displaced persons and their host communities.

The number of forcibly displaced persons fleeing from conflict, natural disasters, climate change, or political instabilities has increased globally.

Often, these people are trapped in protracted conflicts where unstable conditions prevent them from returning home for several years. This leaves displaced people to spend large parts of their lives living under fragile conditions and uncertainty, especially affecting the youth.

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) estimates that 79.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide are fleeing conflict, persecution, violence, or human rights violations, with 85% hosted in developing countries.

Among the almost 80 million forcibly displaced populations, 22% are living in camp settings, with 4.5 million living in planned and managed camps and 2 million living in self-settled camps.

To ease the burden on the countries hosting these settlements and to build economic resilience and self-reliance, ITC works with rural and urban refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), both inside and outside camp settings, as well as returnees.

Adding value with three interlinked approaches

1. We develop market-based skills

ITC ensures that the capacity built is market-based and that entrepreneurial skills align with the needs of the country's market actors.

Before each project starts, we assess and select value chains with high economic potential. We then build capacities of potential migrants or displaced persons to participate and become competitive in these value chains.

The comprehensive technical training programmes are tailored to each specific context and selected sector. Sector experts upgrade the participants' marketable technical skills so they can deliver competitive products or services.

In parallel, we build entrepreneurship and business development skills. We offer mentorship and business coaching to help entrepreneurs put their skills into practice, provide business development support to find clients, and help create an enabling business environment.

This two-pronged support (technical and business skills) for competitiveness ensures long-term sustainability, creating effective business structures within the targeted sectors.

2. We enable market access

ITC harnesses the productive potential of disadvantaged communities by connecting them to regional and international markets.

We recognize the importance of finding buyers for services and products. This is why we embed go-to-market strategies in our core training components and accompany beneficiaries through mentorship after their skills training.



Private-sector mentors then facilitate additional skills development and accompany their mentees on their way to a first sale.

Moreover, we bring beneficiaries together through self-help groups or collectives and support them in formalizing their businesses, for example through obtaining the required export certifications, which often prevent market access.

Finally, with over 50 years of experience in connecting small businesses from developing countries to market, ITC helps establish strong business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) connections for the beneficiaries. In the context of displaced people and vulnerable migrants, the market connection often begins with the local domestic market.

3. We partner with the private sector

ITC engages private-sector actors systematically in all fragile setting interventions.

We connect with the private sector as potential clients, buyers and investors. They join us in identifying target value chains and remain engaged throughout the skills upgrading and market access components.

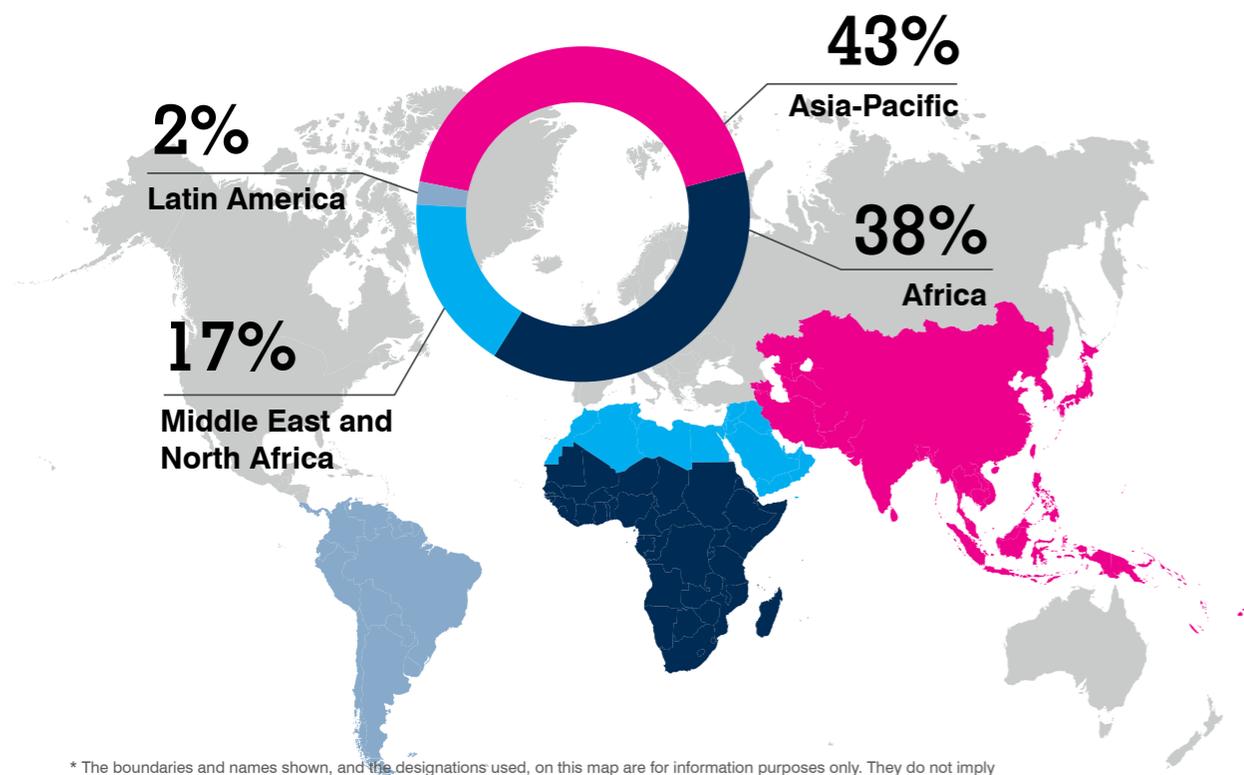
Tapping into the expertise of local and regional companies helps us embed market relevance, as well as establish first connections to buyers and potential mentors.

Leveraging our unique position as a UN agency focused on promoting the development and trade of small businesses, we create linkages to corporate partners to leverage their expertise and connect beneficiaries to markets.

For example, we collaborate with the online work platform Upwork so that our trained freelancer refugees can access the platform, allowing them to access clients internationally.

With Mastercard, we developed an online sales platform for refugees and host community members. Importing and exporting companies facilitate commercial alliances and actors in the fashion industry, such as Zazi Vintage, to connect displaced artisans to buyers in the high-end fashion industry.

Our migration and displacement activities by region



* The boundaries and names shown, and the designations used, on this map are for information purposes only. They do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations of any disputed boundary, and are without prejudice to a mutually acceptable political solution consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

A snapshot of our programmes

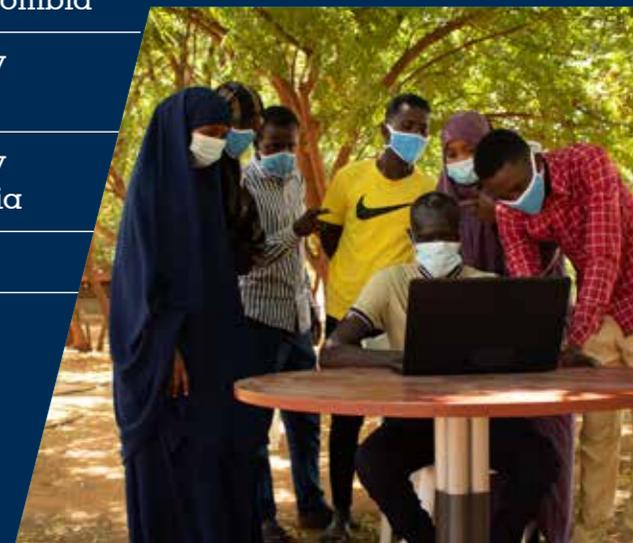
Vulnerable Migrants and Returnees in
The Gambia and Guinea

Internally Displaced Persons in Gaza and Colombia

Vulnerable Migrants, Returnees and Internally
Displaced Persons in Mali and Burkina Faso

Vulnerable Migrants, Returnees and Internally
Displaced Persons in Afghanistan and Somalia

Refugees in Kenya



Vulnerable Migrants and Returnees



The Gambia

In The Gambia, ITC has been working to address root causes of irregular migration by unlocking economic opportunities through the EU-funded Youth Empowerment Project (www.yep.gm) and the broader 'Tekki Fii' Program ('make it at home' www.tekkifii.gm). Together with IOM and by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), ITC supports the reintegration of returnees through institutional strengthening, social services and referrals. National Youth Council offers a free helpline for youth and returnees.

Our results so far

We trained over 6,400 people and connected over 2,600 to jobs.



Guinea

In Guinea, the ITC programme for the socio-economic integration of youth (called INTEGRA) centres around developing technical and professional skills for Guinea's youth and industries, promoting entrepreneurship and enhancing access to finance.

A joint initiative of the Government of Guinea and the European Union, the programme strengthens capacities of youth, enterprises and local institutions in creating better conditions for employment and income generation activities. The programme contributes to the prevention and limitation of irregular migration by supporting the socio-professional integration of young Guineans and the reintegration of returning migrants.

Our results so far

We trained more than 4,000 youth, created 1,750 jobs and facilitated financing of \$400,000 for young entrepreneurs.

Internally Displaced Persons

Gaza

In Gaza, ITC works with unemployed internally displaced persons (IDPs) and youth to take up online jobs in collaboration with a local technical incubator.

In Phase I, over 70% of the 125 participants had secured sales of around \$62,000 and started two freelance agencies. In Phase II, freelancers have earned more than \$80,000 in revenues. The work is funded by the Government of Japan.

Our results so far

We trained more than 230 young job seekers and connected over 85 to jobs, generating income of around \$115,000.



Colombia

In Colombia, the ITC Peace and unity through productive development and commercialization (PUEDE) project looks at improving the productivity, quality, and exports of small-scale farmers in the conflict-affected department of Nariño. The European Union funds this initiative.

In addition to farmers receiving better prices, responsible buyers are helping them with logistics, cash flow and quality management aspects. The pandemic has also triggered more interest in farming as a sustainable means of earning a decent income as well as greater commitment from farmer associations.

Our results so far

We trained 1,720 farmers and connected over 630 of them to new value chains, generating over \$50,000 of income.

Vulnerable Migrants, Returnees, and Internally Displaced Persons



Mali and Burkina Faso

In Mali, the ITC Ethical Fashion Initiative helps vulnerable migrants and internally displaced people to produce sustainable, handmade textiles while linking them to global fashion and lifestyle markets.



In Burkina Faso, the ITC Ethical Fashion Initiative reduces poverty and irregular migration, in particular towards Europe, by targeting both potential migrants and returnees. ITC connects the artisans to the supply chain of 'slow fashion', which focuses on handmade, artisanal products made with love and backed by human stories.

Our results so far

We trained over 1,300 artisans and connected over 2,100 artisans to new market opportunities including e-commerce, generating a total income of \$484,000.

The European Union funds both projects.

Vulnerable Migrants, Returnees, and Internally Displaced Persons



Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, the ITC Ethical Fashion Initiative integrates returnees and internally displaced persons by creating employment opportunities in lifestyle value chains, particularly silk production, garments, homeware, saffron, dry fruits, and nuts.

The European Union-funded initiative connects farmers and artisans working in social enterprises to global buyers.

Our results so far

We created and supported over 6,570 jobs, 2,610 of them are returnees and internally displaced persons as well as 3,962 potential migrants. All these jobs are connected to 12 social enterprises that generated earnings of over \$4.4 million.



Somalia

In Somalia, ITC integrates returnees and host community members in the digital services sector through training in digital skills and establishing connections to online clients. Funded by the Government of Japan, the work also involves developing connections to the Somali diaspora to build a client base for entrepreneurs.

Our results so far

We trained over 125 people and connected them to the country's digital value chain.



Refugees



Kenya

The ITC Refugee Employment and Skills Initiative (RESI) trains displaced youth and host community members in digital skills and supports them in accessing markets through careers in online freelancing. Funded by the Governments of the Netherlands and Japan, RESI operates in Kenya in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council.

RESI activities also focus on building an enabling environment for entrepreneurship. In 2019, RESI launched its first online course on entrepreneurship in a refugee camp. In 2020, ITC piloted its first entrepreneurship ecosystem mapping in a refugee context in Dadaab, Kenya.

Through RESI's pilot projects, we expanded our value chains and engaged new partners, such as Mastercard and TOTAL.

Our results so far

We trained almost 200 refugees and connected over 180 of them to digital value chains. Their income earned reached over \$19,000.



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