



CITIES OF SOLIDARITY IN THE AMERICAS

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OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

In the Americas, most displaced and stateless people live in urban or peri-urban areas. In this context, local authorities play a leading role in the search for and achievement of local integration. Local authorities can provide access to services in their territory and are in a position to bring about rapid changes in local policy that can have a positive and immediate impact on the lives of the people UNHCR works for in the Americas. However, there are significant challenges in achieving integration at the local level, especially in the case of small municipalities and peripheral cities, due to limited human and financial resources or poor support and coordination from central government.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The “[Cities of Solidarity](#)” initiative is based on the recommendations identified by the States in the region under the [2004 Mexico Plan of Action](#) and the [2014 Brazil Plan of Action](#), with the objective of recognizing and supporting the efforts of local governments to provide protection and integration.

The initiative has developed a [self-assessment tool](#) aimed at providing diagnostics and prioritization on public policy issues related to the inclusion of the people for whom UNHCR works. This framework was developed based on [10 basic criteria](#), a stylized representation of aspects of local integration, forming the backbone of the Cities of Solidarity framework.



73 CITIES
9 PROVINCES
2 MUNICIPALITY ASSOCIATIONS

NATIONAL INITIATIVES

NEW CITIES AWARDED WITH SEAL IN CHILE FOR INCLUDING REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS.

In Chile, as part of the **2nd Municipal Best Practices Meeting**, the National Migration Service recognized 10 municipalities on November 22, for their innovation and commitment to the integration of refugees and migrants. The event, organized in collaboration with IOM and UNHCR, highlighted projects aimed at strengthening local public policies for the care of refugees and migrants.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OF ARGENTINA, CHILE, AND URUGUAY MEET IN CÓRDOBA.

On October 9-10, representatives from local governments in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay gathered in Córdoba, Argentina, for the **meeting of Cities of Solidarity in the Southern Cone**. The event aimed to strengthen collaboration among local governments in these countries to promote dignified reception and integration of refugees and displaced persons, while also enhancing support for the communities that have generously welcomed them.

CARTAGENA +40: THE MONTEVIDEO DECLARATION MARKED THE CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST REGIONAL CITIES OF SOLIDARITY MEETING IN THE AMERICAS.

*UNHCR with the support of the municipality of Montevideo's and the endorsement of the government of Chile, organized the **1st regional meeting of the Cities of Solidarity in the Americas**, on April 25-26 in Montevideo (Uruguay). Sixteen local governments from eleven countries of the region and international organizations shared their experiences and good practices and took the opportunity to emphasize the need to strengthen strategic cooperation and solidarity among cities, national governments, civil society, the private sector, and international organizations to ensure the care, protection, and stabilization of refugees and migrants. At the same time, the cities underscored the importance of developing innovative and sustainable projects that promote inclusion and equally benefit host communities.*

*The meeting was also a forum the cities utilized to presented recommendations for the upcoming regional "Chile Plan of Action", as part of the Cartagena+40 process. Set for adoption in December 2024 by Latin American and Caribbean countries, the ten-year plan aims to enhance protection for refugees and stateless individuals across all stages of migration. Cities participating at the event agreed to sign the **Montevideo Declaration**, reflecting local authorities' commitment to addressing humanitarian and social migration-related challenges in transit and destination cities across the region.*



GUATEMALA: THE CREATION OF THE SOLIDARITY CITIES NETWORK STRENGTHENS THE TIES BETWEEN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

*On September 25-26, the **II National Conference** of Cities of Solidarity was held in Guatemala with the aim of promoting the adoption of inclusive policies and programs at the local level that favor the coexistence and integration of refugees and personas in the context of human mobility together with the host communities. During the meeting, mayors and departmental governors reiterated their commitment to develop and implement initiatives promoting legal, socioeconomic, and cultural integration of refugees by signing the 'Joint Declaration of the Initiative of Cities of Solidarity in Guatemala' also*



highlighting the importance of the creation of the national to strengthen the ties between the national initiative and the regional level.

The event welcomed the participation of Dr. Karin Herrera, Vice President of the Republic of Guatemala, who expressed her support for this innovative and inclusive initiative: "I trust that the commitment demonstrated by all those involved in this Declaration will soon translate into concrete actions that bring about positive changes for refugees, asylum seekers, and people in contexts of human mobility or in need of protection".

FROM THE FIELD

VENEZUELAN ENGINEER DISCOVERS HER PASSION FOR URBAN AGRICULTURE IN ARGENTINA

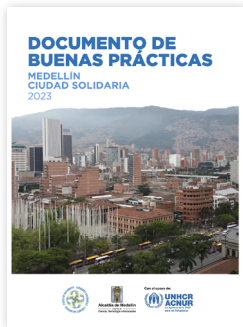
In the framework of Cities of Solidarity, the Municipality of Córdoba and the Business Incubation Foundation (FIDE), with the support of UNHCR, organized events that allowed various companies to meet refugees with relevant professional profiles for their businesses. This is how **Abelis Carrillo**, 29, met Loopfarms, an innovative venture that promotes sustainable food cultivation, and not only found a job but a passion.

After five months as an intern, Abelis now oversees the production of microgreens and edible mushrooms at one of Loopfarms' facilities. Abelis has found hope far from home working at Loopfarms: "I hope to stay here, keep learning and growing," she says. "Argentina is now my home."



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MEDELLÍN JOINS CITIES OF SOLIDARITY AND LAUNCHES BEST PRACTICES REPORT



Historically, the District of Medellín has been an epicenter for welcoming diverse vulnerable populations. The arrival of refugees and migrants presents both challenges and opportunities for the city. In its continued commitment to the integration of refugees, migrants and internally displaced people, the city has made progress in formulating concrete and inclusive policies and programs.

Medellín has recognized the importance of addressing the situation from a rights-based approach, focusing its efforts on ensuring that these populations have access to essential services and opportunities for a dignified life.

The District of Medellín joined the Cities of Solidarity initiative in March 2023 and systematized its best practices in a **document** that is expected to serve as a guide and inspiration for other local authorities in the region.

MONTEVIDEO SUPPORTS VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR REFUGEES

In Montevideo, refugees, asylum seekers and people in need of international protection, mostly women, are taking courses in business management and training in care services. These training programs, aimed at promoting labour integration, are carried out in collaboration with UNHCR, the Montevideo Municipality and the Casa de la Mujer de La Unión organization. The project is part of the Cities of Solidarity initiative, to which the Uruguayan capital has been committed since 2009 (and renewed this commitment in August 2023).

Belkis, originally from Cuba, completed one of these courses in care services between March and July 2023. She currently works caring for the elderly and is happy with her work. "I see myself as a support for those people who need it. Many of them are in nursing homes or hospitals and need love, which is very important. Older people need a lot of love."



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