



ONLINE

SUSTAINABLE ENTERPRISES AND ECONOMIES

MARKET-BASED LIVELIHOOD INTERVENTIONS FOR REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES

9 NOVEMBER – 4 DECEMBER 2026

 60 HOURS, INCLUDING FIELD WORK ASSIGNMENT

Information Note



International
Labour
Organization



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



International Training Centre

CONTEXT

By the end of 2025, 117.8 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced by conflict, violence, persecution and human rights violations, including 41.6 million refugees and others in need of international protection. Global figures have begun to decline for the first time in a decade, largely through returns to Afghanistan, Syria, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo — but those returns are often to precarious conditions, and roughly seven in ten refugees remain in displacement lasting five years or more.

Displacement is no longer primarily an emergency problem. It is an economic one. Humanitarian assistance was designed to save lives in crises, not to sustain communities across decades, and it is now contracting sharply: humanitarian funding is projected to fall by more than 40 per cent, with official development assistance declining alongside it.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has responded by setting a decade-long target, known as 50 by 35: halving the number of refugees in protracted displacement who depend on humanitarian assistance by 2035, through work opportunities, self-reliance and access to national systems.

Delivering that requires a different skillset from the one most livelihoods teams were built around. Historically, the majority of livelihoods programmes for refugees focused on skills development that was not informed by market demand — an approach that produced limited impact and proved economically unsustainable at scale. Meeting today's ambition with today's budgets means understanding how local market systems actually work, why they exclude displaced people and host communities, and how to change them so that opportunities persist after a programme closes.

This course teaches practitioners how to do that.

SNAPSHOT OF THE COURSE

This certification programme teaches practitioners to design livelihood interventions that work through markets, rather than around them. Rather than delivering goods, services and training directly, participants learn to diagnose why local market systems are failing refugees and host communities, and to intervene so those systems start working for them, creating opportunities that continue once a programme ends.

The methodology was originally developed by the ILO together with UNHCR to address the absence of specialised training on market-based livelihoods in displacement settings. It has been adapted and updated in each edition since, drawing on tools and practice from ILO–UNHCR field cooperation and from ILO market systems projects worldwide, so that the content reflects the financing conditions and self-reliance priorities practitioners face now.

The programme is applied throughout. Participants work through mapping exercises, real case studies, practitioner testimonials and design tasks alongside faculty who have built these programmes in the field, supported by learning specialists who facilitate a learner-centred experience.

The programme runs in two phases and ends with a completed piece of professional analysis rather than a record of attendance.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

By the end of the programme, participants will be able to:

- analyse refugee and host community livelihoods through a market systems framework
- identify demand-driven economic opportunities rather than supply-led activities
- select sectors with real potential for displacement-affected populations
- map a market system and diagnose the root causes that keep refugees locked out of viable work
- articulate a clear vision and intervention logic for a market-based livelihoods programme
- design sustainable business models and facilitate partnerships with the private sector
- build results chains and indicators that credibly measure systemic change
- apply international frameworks on refugees' economic inclusion, including the Minimum Economic Recovery Standards, so that economic viability and protection needs reinforce rather than compete with each other

WHO ATTENDS THIS COURSE?

The programme is designed for practitioners responsible for livelihoods, economic inclusion or resilience work who want to move beyond direct delivery, and who have little or no prior exposure to market systems approaches.

It is particularly relevant for those who:

- design or manage livelihood programmes for refugees, IDPs or host communities
- work at the intersection of humanitarian and development programming
- are preparing or revising a programme design and need a stronger economic rationale
- lead private sector engagement, economic inclusion or self-reliance portfolios

Participants come from UN agencies, international and national NGOs, donor and development agencies, and government institutions. Previous editions have included staff from UNHCR, IOM, CARE International, CGAP, Enabel, Caritas, the IFRC, the Danish Refugee Council and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course is designed for practitioners who want to develop the analytical skills needed to build a deep understanding of a market system and design tailored interventions. The programme is organized in two phases:

Phase 1 | Core learning — 9 November to 4 December 2026

Four weeks online through the ITCILO eCampus, combining live sessions of 90 minutes each with self-guided modules and applied exercises. Participants can expect to commit roughly seven to eight hours a week.

Participants work through the full arc of a market systems programme: the market systems framework and its relevance in displacement settings, international frameworks governing refugees' economic inclusion, sector selection, market mapping, root-cause analysis, intervention design, sustainable business models, facilitation and partnerships, and results measurement. Structured exercises are combined with real case studies and testimonials from practitioners running these programmes today.

All live sessions are recorded and made available to participants, so colleagues in any time zone can follow the full programme.

At the end of this phase, participants receive an ITCILO certificate of participation.

Phase 2 | Fieldwork assignment — to 26 February 2027

Participants then conduct a full market systems analysis in a country and sector of their choice — in most cases, their own operating context. The ITCILO provides individualised tutoring throughout and personalised feedback on the final analysis. Three group skills clinics allow participants to test their progress against the cohort, work through obstacles with the training team and brainstorm solutions with fellow participants.

The deadline for completion is 26 February 2027. Participants who complete the assignment receive an ITCILO certificate of achievement.

This second phase is what distinguishes the programme from a short course. Participants finish with a piece of analysis they can use.

PROVISIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME

	Monday 9 November	Tuesday 10 November	Wednesday 11 November	Thursday 12 November	Friday 13 November
Live Session (90 Minutes)	Introduction to the programme		The Market systems framework and its relevance for refugees		International frameworks for regulating refugees' economic inclusion
Self-Guided			The Minimum Economic Recovery Standards		Introduction to the Approach to Inclusive Market Systems

	Monday 16 November	Tuesday 17 November	Wednesday 18 November	Thursday 19 November	Friday 20 November
Live Session (90 Minutes)	Sector selection		Review of Sector Selection Exercise		Mapping the market system
Self-Guided			Sector selection exercise		Market Systems Analysis

	Monday 23 November	Tuesday 24 November	Wednesday 25 November	Thursday 26 November	Friday 27 November
Live Session (90 Minutes)	Root-cause analysis		Introduction to Intervention Design		Designing sustainable business models
Self-Guided			From analysis to action		

	Monday 30 November	Tuesday 1 December	Wednesday 2 December	Thursday 3 December	Friday 4 December
Live Session (90 Minutes)	Facilitation and partnerships		Implementing and monitoring and Results Measurement		What now? Making Market Systems Development work for you
Self-Guided			Intervention design exercise		Articulating results chains

LANGUAGE

The programme is delivered in English.

RESOURCES

Participants receive ILO and UNHCR tools and a library of case studies on market systems development in refugee contexts from operations worldwide.

COSTS

Tuition is €1,445, covering both phases, including tutoring and feedback on the fieldwork assignment.

Group enrolment.

Organizations sending three or more participants qualify for a reduced rate. Sending a team means the approach takes root in a programme rather than in one person's notebook, and recorded sessions mean colleagues can participate around operational demands rather than around a European schedule. Contact us to discuss group enrolment.

Scholarships.

A limited number of partial scholarships are available for practitioners from developing countries, with priority for national NGOs, refugee-led organizations and government institutions. To be considered, indicate your interest in the funding section of the application form. Scholarship applications close 30 September 2026 and decisions are communicated by 7 October 2026.

REGISTRATION

Applications close **19 October 2026**.

Apply at: <https://oarf2.itsilo.org/DST/A9719152/en>

WITHDRAWAL, CANCELLATION POLICY, AND REFUNDS FOR OPEN COURSES

If an enrolled participant wishes or must withdraw from a course, they may choose to apply to a different course or be substituted by another candidate. The participant must notify the Centre, in writing, of their decision at least 14 days prior to the start date of the course. Cancellation of participation in regular courses will result in the following penalties:

- 14 days or more prior to the start date of the course: No penalty, 100% refund of amount paid less applicable bank charges
- 8 to 13 days prior to the start date of the course: Penalty of 50% of course price, refund of residual amount paid (if any) less applicable bank charges
- 7 days or less prior to the start date of the course: Penalty of 100% of course price.

INFO

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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COURSE CODE: A9719152