

**UNITED
NATIONS**

Distr.
GENERAL

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND
DISPLACED PERSONS IN
CENTRAL AMERICA
(CIREFCA)**

CIREFCA/CS/90/2
April 1990

ORIGINAL: SPANISH

**FIRST MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL
FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE**

27-28 JUNE 1990,
NEW YORK

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
JOINT PLAN OF ACTION FOR REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS
IN CENTRAL AMERICA**

REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. Development of the Situation	1
II. National Policies for Dealing with Refugees and Externally Displaced Persons	2
III. Strategy	3
IV. Criteria for Establishing an Order of Priority Among Projects	3
V. Institutional Machinery at the National Level	4
VI. Ongoing projects and Financing Received or Pledged	5
PROJECT I	7
PROJECT II	10
PROJECT III	13
PROJECT IV	16
PROJECT V	19
PROJECT VI	24
PROJECT VII	28
PROJECT VIII	32
PROJECT IX	35

I. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SITUATION OF REFUGEES AND UNDOCUMENTED PERSONS

As a result of the conflict in the Central American region in the 1980s, hundreds of thousands of individuals have been forced to flee their countries of origin because of legitimate fears of persecution, violence and war. This regional situation has had a substantial impact on Costa Rica, which has become a country of asylum for a large number of these individuals.

The official document submitted by the Government of Costa Rica to the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA - May 1989) drew attention to the presence in the country of 40,767 refugees as of November 1988. From that date to the end of February 1990, the number of registered refugees increased by 5,537, mainly as a result of flows from Nicaragua.

In addition to the recognized refugees, there is a large number of undocumented or externally displaced persons, mainly in the central and northern parts of the country. Although there are no precise statistics on this population, recent estimates suggest that the total number of undocumented persons is between 150,000 and 175,000.

This influx has made it necessary for Costa Rica to seek resources to meet the demand for services created by the refugees and undocumented persons, mainly in the areas of labour, health, education and housing. In addition, funds are needed to provide care for the refugee population in various camps in the country or scattered throughout the national territory. Since the beginning of the 1980s, Costa Rica has been able to rely on the contribution and collaboration of international agencies and various non-governmental organizations to deal with this set of problems.

The Government of Costa Rica has made efforts not only to provide for the immediate needs of the refugee population but also to find durable solutions to their problems. In that connection, it has been working in conjunction with UNHCR and other international agencies on a thorough overhaul of the existing programmes, giving greater emphasis to activities to promote the gradual economic and social integration of refugees in Costa Rica. However, the awareness in Central America that there was a need to move forward more decisively and in a co-ordinated manner towards the achievement of definitive solutions to the problem of refugees in the region prompted Costa Rica to join forces with the other Governments affected by this problem in a process of analysis, discussion and concertation which gave rise to the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA).

The CIREFCA process has been proceeding parallel to the peace efforts in the region. Aware that only peace will ensure the definitive solution of the refugee problem, Costa Rica has done its utmost to promote a linkage between CIREFCA and the peace plan.

Among the main efforts made by Costa Rica in the search for solutions to the refugee problem, mention should be made of the projects which the Government is carrying out in co-operation with UNHCR and the international community, support for the voluntary repatriation campaign and process, the increase in the options for a solution based on permanent employment for the refugees, strengthening of co-ordination between international agencies, non-governmental organizations, governmental authorities and the private sector to promote the integration of the refugee population into the country's economic and social life.

The tangible impact of these efforts which have been made within the framework and in the spirit of CIREFCA can be seen in three main areas: (a) a real increase in the average number of returnees to Nicaragua (100 per month), a voluntary process which depends on the views and decisions of refugees themselves; (b) the closing of the Limón Camp, one of the five refugee camps established in Costa Rica, as a result of the integration of refugees in host communities; and (c) the continuation and strengthening of job-placement programmes for refugees, which has made it possible to reduce the emergency assistance and end the dependency of thousands of refugees.

The progress made in the peace process in the region has presupposed important changes in the regional situation. Special mention should be made of the successful holding of elections in Nicaragua. This factor will have a direct impact on the repatriation plans of the Nicaraguan refugee population in Costa Rica. The Government of Costa Rica has analysed these processes in order to redefine its policy. Various surveys among the Nicaraguan refugee

population carried out by UNHCR in conjunction with the Government have shown that there is definite interest in voluntary repatriation.

As the Government of Costa Rica sees it, this process of voluntary repatriation of Nicaraguan refugees and undocumented persons will be gradual and must be the subject of careful planning, especially under the auspices of the Tripartite Commission comprising the Governments of Nicaragua and Costa Rica and UNHCR.

II. NATIONAL POLICIES FOR DEALING WITH REFUGEES AND EXTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

The approach of the Government of Costa Rica to this population group can be summed up as follows:

The Government will continue to support the consolidation of a lasting peace in the region, inasmuch as the problem which affects thousands of Central American refugees and displaced persons stems from the conflicts and crisis in the region.

The Government considers that the consolidation of peace requires a new regional and international effort geared to development and integration in Central America. This effort, whose central frame of reference is the Special Plan of Co-operation for Central America (PEC), is the sine qua non for a definitive solution to the problem of displaced persons in Central America.

The Government reaffirms its support for the CIREFCA Concerted Plan of Action, which is as valid and as timely as ever from the perspective of the consolidation of peace in the region.

Faithful to its tradition of full respect for asylum and international agreements, the Government pledges, with the support of the international community, to find a durable solution to the problem, both at the national and the Central American level.

The Government expresses its determination to support as a matter of priority the process of repatriating Central American refugees and undocumented persons living in the country, since it considers voluntary, free and individually chosen repatriation to be the best solution to the problems of the uprooted population. In that connection, there will be a need for co-ordination of more than just the purely immigration and logistical aspects of repatriation. The Tripartite Commission comprising Nicaragua, Costa Rica and UNHCR must tackle the question of co-ordinating policies with the aim of facilitating the process of voluntary repatriation. A knowledge of such factors as the number of individuals expected to return to their country of origin, the time-frame for the process, the characteristics of the repatriation, the social and employment profile of potential returnees and their places of origin, should help both Governments to implement complementary and consistent proposals for ensuring a repatriation process which guarantees reintegration in the country of origin. The proposal submitted by Costa Rica in this document should be viewed as complementing this central effort of voluntary repatriation.

The Government is, accordingly, committed to seeking the immigration, labour and social solutions that will make it possible to solve the problem of refugees who will remain in Costa Rica, whether temporarily or definitively. These solutions must fit in with the country's development plans, enabling the refugee population, with the help of the international community, to become a driving force for development. While it is too soon to be able to evaluate the number of refugees who will choose voluntary repatriation or estimate the time-frame in which the repatriation process will take place, it is clear that not all refugees will opt for repatriation, hence the importance of receiving resources from the international community to carry out the projects which are being presented with a view to dealing with the situation of refugees.

The Government of Costa Rica, with assistance from international organizations and bilateral sources, will continue all its programmes of assistance for the Nicaraguan refugee population, as well as those for refugees of other nationalities living in the country until a definitive solution is achieved for them.

III. STRATEGY

In the light of the foregoing, Costa Rica's strategy can be summed up as follows:

- A. An effort to facilitate, in close co-ordination with UNHCR, voluntary repatriation of Nicaraguan refugees and undocumented persons, using and expanding the framework of the Tripartite Commission comprising the Governments of Costa Rica and Nicaragua and UNHCR. In that connection, Costa Rica calls upon the international community to support financially the efforts of UNHCR in Costa Rica and Nicaragua to ensure the success of this process.
- B. Supplementing its policy of supporting voluntary contribution, the Government of Costa Rica bases its proposal on various projects that pursue a central objective, namely the planned integration of refugees and undocumented persons who remain in the country following the process of voluntary repatriation, in accordance with well-defined immigration and labour policies, taking into account the country's economic and social possibilities and development priorities.

- In that connection, the projects submitted are as follows: three projects are submitted whose objective is to identify the characteristics and scope of the problem (project I: National census of undocumented aliens) with a view to regularizing their immigration situation; (project II: Regularization and immigration control of refugees and undocumented persons living in Costa Rica), which, in turn, will bring about the planned integration of these populations in the Costa Rican labour market; (project III: Strengthening the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Labour to assist refugees and undocumented persons to find employment).

- Two projects, which complement the preceding projects and are mutually reinforcing (Project IV: Training and credit for refugees in Costa Rica and/or returnees in Nicaragua; and Project V: Support for productive and community activities geared to the self-reliance of Nicaraguan refugees who will remain in Costa Rica), the objective of which is to facilitate credit and support for productive income-generating activities and the integration into the economy of those refugees for whom solutions cannot be found within the limited labour market or who can improve their employment situation for its own benefit and that of the country.

- As a third main component, four projects are being presented in the social field. Costa Rica has predicated its economic development on a constant effort to harmonize economic development with social development based on social justice and, especially, on education and health care to which the population has full access. Similarly, it has been a priority for the Government of Costa Rica to implement housing plans for overcoming the serious problems faced by the poorest members of society in obtaining decent housing. It follows from the foregoing that a strategy aimed at incorporating the uprooted population should take due account of the social dimension of the integration processes.

In that connection, the four projects in question - Project VI: Strengthening of the national health services for refugees and undocumented persons; Project VII: Educational infrastructure requirements for the benefit of refugees, undocumented persons and Costa Rican nationals; Project VIII: Housing credit for refugees and Costa Rican nationals participating in mixed production projects; Project IX: Provision of pre-school day-care facilities for the children of refugees, undocumented persons and Costa Rican nationals; the objective of these projects is to strengthen the social structures and improve access by refugees and undocumented persons to housing in order to ensure that they share fully in the benefits of social development in Costa Rica. These projects will enable the State to cope in the medium term with the additional burden imposed by the uprooted population remaining in Costa Rica.

IV. CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING AN ORDER OF PRIORITY AMONG PROJECTS

In May 1989 the Government of Costa Rica submitted to CIREFCA a portfolio of projects entailing a cost of more than \$80 million aimed at integrating a large proportion of the refugees and undocumented persons who were living in the country at that time.

As indicated in chapter III on strategies, while it is certain that this population is still in Costa Rica today and has even increased over the preceding year, the trend in recent events in Nicaragua and the desire expressed by many of the Nicaraguans who immigrated to Costa Rican territory to return to their own country suggests that the integration process, at least not on the scale previously planned for, is no longer necessary. Consequently, the Government of the Republic is submitting to the international community a revised proposal amounting to \$US 12,924,000.

In line with the foregoing, the Government has considered the following elements in establishing an order of priority among the projects presented to the First International Meeting of the CIREFCA Follow-Up Committee:

- a) It is assumed that in the short term (1990-1991) there will be a significant increase in the repatriation of Nicaraguan migrants in Costa Rica.
- b) Part of this population has openly expressed its wish to remain in the country for an indefinite period (more than two years or permanently).
- c) The majority of the uprooted population is dispersed throughout the national territory, does not possess the necessary legal documents, and is employed illegally in marginal conditions and completely excluded from the social security scheme which Costa Rica makes available to its nationals.
- d) As regards individuals who for a variety of valid reasons wish to remain in the country, it is imperative for the Government to be able to provide them with the necessary conditions (stability, work, health, education, etc.) to enable them to become full members of Costa Rican society.
- e) The country does not have the resources to meet the unsatisfied demands and objective needs of this population, whether individually or as a community.

V. INSTITUTIONAL MACHINERY AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

In accordance with the provisions of the CIREFCA Plan of Action, the Government of Costa Rica has decided to set up a "National Co-ordinating Committee" pursuant to Executive Decree signed by the President of the Republic and the Ministry of the Office of the President on 12 September 1989.

This "National Co-ordinating Committee" will be made up of representatives of the following national bodies:

- a) The Directorate for Refugee Protection and Assistance, which will provide the committee's chairman.
- b) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship.
- c) The Directorate of Immigration and Aliens of the Ministry of the Interior and Police.
- d) The National Employment Department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.
- e) The Department of International Co-operation of the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy.

The main functions of the Committee are:

- a) To establish, promote and ensure co-ordination between governmental agencies, co-operating countries, international organizations, funding agencies and national and international non-governmental organizations for the implementation of projects for refugees and undocumented persons (externally displaced persons) in Costa Rica.

- b) To co-ordinate the activities enabling the agencies concerned to formulate detailed projects geared to appropriate assistance for refugees and externally displaced persons in Costa Rica.
- c) To recommend guidelines for assistance from the international community for programmes targeted to refugees and externally displaced persons in Costa Rica.
- d) To present funding proposals to donor countries, international and national organizations and co-operation agencies.
- e) To prepare progress reports on international co-operation for programmes targeted to refugees and externally displaced persons in Costa Rica.

For the preparation of the projects whose summaries are presented here, the Government has benefited from the constant support and assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Recently steps were also taken to set up the support groups envisaged in the CIREFCA Plan of Action, with the participation of national authorities, representatives of donor countries, UNHCR, UNDP and NGOs.

Among the monitoring machinery, mentioned should be made of the existence of a Tripartite Commission, comprising the Governments of Costa Rica and Nicaragua and UNHCR, which is the structure that will be responsible for co-ordinating all activities relating to the process of voluntary repatriation of Nicaraguan refugees. The voluntary repatriation of refugees from other Central American countries will be dealt with by UNHCR, with the co-operation of IOM and in co-ordination with the Government of Costa Rica and the Governments of the countries from which the refugees come.

VI. ONGOING PROJECTS AND FINANCING RECEIVED OR PLEDGED

Besides the regular programmes of UNHCR, the World Food Programme and EEC, Costa Rica has, through the CIREFCA process, received the following assistance, which has made it possible to embark upon various attempts to solve these problems, some of them geared to integration:

- a) Through co-operation received from the European Economic Community (EEC) and UNHCR, the Limón Transit Centre was closed on 30 November 1989, the socio-economic integration of the refugee families having been achieved in various productive projects throughout the country.
- b) The Spanish Government has pledged a contribution of \$US 1,086,000 for a project aimed at the economic and social integration of refugee families and low-income Costa Rican families in the Huetar Norte region of the country. The project is scheduled to begin in 1990 with the refugee population which has expressed an interest in remaining indefinitely in Costa Rica.
- c) The Swedish Government has donated \$US 1 million for a housing programme geared to refugee families. The programme is already under way.
- d) The Government of Finland has expressed interest in providing partial funding for the project entitled "Educational infrastructure for refugees and undocumented persons", for which it has already made an initial contribution of \$US 121,000 for the construction, repair or expansion of schools in the northern part of the country and Limón.
- e) The Government of Italy has pledged a contribution of \$US 7 million for a project originally geared to integrated rural development in a number of communities. The aim is to promote the integration of 300 refugee families in a period of three years (PRODERE). The project will also benefit 300 low-income Costa Rican families.

- f) Mention should also be made of the contribution of \$US 980,000 from the Government of Japan to finance the "Emergency assistance project for health and feeding services for refugees and externally displaced persons in the northern frontier area.
- g) The Agency for International Development (AID) has contributed \$US 1 million for health and supplementary feeding programmes for the refugee population.

Preliminary talks have been held with the Government of Japan and the European Economic Community to seek financial support for efforts to solve the problems of refugees and undocumented persons who remain in Costa Rica.

LIST OF PROJECTS		Financing requested (US\$)
I.	National census of undocumented aliens (externally displaced persons)	1,405,000
II.	Regularization and immigration control of refugees and undocumented persons in Costa Rica.	620,000
III.	Strengthening the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Labour to assist refugees and undocumented persons to find employment.	990,000
IV.	Training and credit for refugees in Costa Rica and/or returnees in Nicaragua.	1,500,000
V.	Support for productive and community activities geared to the self-reliance of Nicaraguan refugees who will stay in Costa Rica.	1,500,000
VI.	Strengthening of the national health services for refugees and undocumented persons.	2,500,000
VII.	Educational infrastructure requirements for the benefit of refugees, undocumented persons and Costa Rican nationals.	1,404,000
VIII.	Housing credit for refugees and Costa Rican nationals participating in mixed production projects.	1,575,000
IX.	Provision of day-care facilities for pre-school-age children and child-minding services for school-age children of refugees, undocumented persons and Costa Rican nationals.	1,500,000
<u>TOTAL</u>		<u>\$12,994,000</u>

7

PROJECT I
(Summary)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. COUNTRY: | Costa Rica |
| 2. PROJECT SITE: | Entire country |
| 3. PROJECT TITLE: | National census of undocumented aliens (externally displaced persons). |
| 4. START-UP DATE: | September 1990 |
| 5. COMPLETION DATE: | December 1991 |
| 6. GOVERNMENT EXECUTING AGENCY: | Ministry of the Interior (General Directorate of Immigration and Aliens) |
| 7. BUDGET: | US\$ 1,833,325 |
| a. International financing: | US\$ 1,405,000 |
| b. Local financing: | US\$ 428,325 |

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

A. Description of target group

The presence of undocumented aliens in our country who are in an irregular situation with regard to the immigration laws has been on the rise since 1980.

The undocumented population is made up of individuals who, for the most part, are Nicaraguans, mainly from rural areas where subsistence agriculture is the rule. They are ethnically quite diverse, they include a high proportion of illiterates and their level of health is quite low.

According to unofficial estimates, this population ranges from between 150,000 and 175,000 and is situated in areas surrounding the Metropolitan Area and the northern frontier area, where it has had an adverse impact on local social and economic conditions.

The living conditions of this population in the country are inadequate, precisely as a result of their irregular status. They face serious health problems resulting from poor environmental conditions and the scarcity of medical services, which has resulted in the reappearance of diseases that had been eradicated or had become extremely rare. Unemployment and underemployment are high among this population, since the individuals concerned do not possess valid work permits and are consequently not able to meet their own basic needs or those of their families.

The fact that these individuals are scattered throughout the territory, together with the inadequacy of the economic and human resources available to the State, has made it impossible for the national immigration authorities to exercise adequate control and they have been unable to regularize the status of the undocumented persons.

With the description of the undocumented persons and the establishment of effective co-ordination among the various national governmental authorities, there has been a reaffirmation of the political will to join forces to deal

with the problem and efforts will be made to promote the voluntary repatriation of these persons in view of the political changes occurring in Nicaragua or their integration in productive activities in Costa Rica to the extent possible as a result of the programmes and projects deriving from the proposals submitted to CIREFCA, which are guided by the National Development Plan.

B. Assistance requirements

Given the lack of information on this population, there is an urgent need to conduct a nation-wide census to ascertain the size, location and socio-demographic characteristics of this group in order to obtain the data needed by agencies concerned with this problem to determine whether there is a need for new policies that are in line with actual conditions in the country and the new circumstances and priorities of undocumented persons who may remain in the country following any voluntary repatriations to Nicaragua, which could take place in the short and medium term as a result of the peace process.

C. Description of projects relating to the target group

1. Censuses:

Two censuses have been carried out under the auspices of the Directorate of Immigration and Aliens, the first in 1976 and the second in 1983.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

A. General objective:

To determine the number of undocumented persons in the country and ascertain their legal, social and economic conditions and geographical distribution with the aim of formulating the necessary policies in the short and medium term with respect to individuals who wish to be repatriated or remain in the country.

The duration of the project will be 16 months from the planning stage through the attainment of its objective. It will be possible to measure the impact of the project in terms of the number of individuals identified and documented.

B. Strategy:

The project will fall basically into two stages. The first is the implementation of a nation-wide census whose co-ordination phase will begin in September 1990 with the view to undertaking the field work in March 1991; six months will then be needed from the time the data is collected until the final results are obtained. The census will ascertain the number of undocumented persons and identify the areas where they are most prevalent, and will assess the legal, social and economic conditions in which they are living.

The collection of census data will be done by teachers in each region over a two-week period, subject to agreements between the Ministry of Education and the officials responsible for conducting the census. The technical aspects of the statistical procedure to be followed will be handled by the General Directorate of Statistics and Censuses, a governmental body with vast experience in this field which has statistical programmes and data-processing equipment.

The second part of the programme will consist in the registration of the undocumented individuals enumerated in the census. Upon registration, individuals will receive a card authorizing them to remain in the country for one year, which will give them an opportunity to meet the requirements for legalizing their situation in the country.

In support of the programme, an information campaign will be conducted through the mass media directed to the target population.

C. Specific objectives and activities

1. To provide the individuals enumerated in the census with an official identity document.
2. In order to achieve these objectives training will have to be provided for personnel who will conduct the census, and there is a need to prepare and plan for the collection of information, its processing and data analysis. For the registration, a basic questionnaire will be drawn up and will be administered to the undocumented persons, and as a complementary measure an information campaign will be carried out. In addition, there is a need for co-ordination between national authorities so that the policies to be followed are accepted as valid by all the institutions involved.
3. To identify current conditions of access to regional basic services.

D. Description of the assistance:

The following resources will be needed for the implementation of the programme: training of staff members responsible for the census and registration process, sub-contracts for financial administration and implementation of the information campaign, transport for the personnel conducting the census, photographic equipment for the registration process, supplies, daily subsistence allowances, fuel, monitoring personnel and equipment.

E. Budget (US\$)

COMPONENT	GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION	INTERNATIONAL FUNDING	TOTAL
1. Personnel	354,706	506,788	861,494
2. Sub-contracts	---	55,000	55,000
3. Training	---	12,000	12,000
4. Furniture and equipment	1,044	170,310	171,354
5. Supplies	8,000	150,000	158,000
6. Vehicles	---	120,000	120,000
7. Miscellaneous	5,000	82,531	87,531
8. Monitoring and evaluation personnel and equipment	59,575	251,307	310,882
9. Contingencies	---	57,064	57,064
TOTAL	428,325	1,405,000	1,833,325

PROJECT II
(Summary)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|---|
| 1. | COUNTRY: | Costa Rica |
| 2. | PROJECT SITE: | Liberia, Puntarenas, San Carlos, Limón, Paso Canoas and Penas Blancas |
| 3. | TITLE: | Regularization and immigration control of refugees and undocumented persons in Costa Rica |
| 4. | START-UP DATE: | June 1990 |
| 5. | COMPLETION DATE: | December 1991 |
| 6. | GOVERNMENT EXECUTING AGENCY: | General Directorate of Immigration and Aliens, Ministry of Interior and Police |
| 7. | BUDGET: | US\$ 822,477 |
| | a. International financing | US\$ 620,000 |
| | b. Local financing | US\$ 202,477 |

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Owing to the conflict which has affected the region, there has not been any real control by the immigration authorities over many of the undocumented aliens who have entered Costa Rica. When these aliens report to the immigration authorities in the Regional Delegations, they are referred to the General Directorate of Immigration and Aliens in San José, owing to the inadequate economic and personnel resources of the Delegations. The Directorate is the only office legally empowered to receive and process the relevant immigration applications, which means that aliens have to make a journey in order to take the required administrative steps. Since in most cases family groups are involved, these journeys entail economic outlays which aliens who do not have stable incomes can ill afford. As a result, a large proportion of this population does not take the necessary administrative action to regularize their immigration status.

Groups of such individuals are still to be found throughout the national territory and there has not been any adequate control of them, which has hampered institutional efforts to deliver assistance to them (health, employment, education).

In order to solve this problem and provide broader and better access for this population to basic services, the project will be carried out for the benefit of groups of undocumented persons in the country.

Surveys that have been carried out reveal that this population is to be found mainly in the frontier areas bordering on Nicaragua as a result of the area's geographic proximity and the opportunities for finding occasional work in the agricultural sector.

In regularizing the status of this population, the Costa Rican Government will rely on socio-demographic data enabling it to adjust its policies and adopt strategies that are in line with actual conditions in the country and make

it possible to incorporate the undocumented persons legally in the production process or, at the very least, to have access to the social infrastructure which Costa Rica makes available for its inhabitants.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. **General objective**

To provide the General Directorate of Immigration and Aliens with suitable infrastructure and skilled human resources in the areas most affected by the influx of refugees so that it can exercise efficient controls with respect to regularization of the stay of aliens and the handling of applications for voluntary repatriation.

B. **Project strategy**

The basis for the implementation of this project is the design, construction and operation in the medium term of facilities for the six regional immigration delegations at sites identified by the General Directorate of Immigration as the main reception points for flows of undocumented aliens. In addition, the project provides for the assigning of the necessary skilled personnel to receive and process applications for immigration regularization and receive applications for voluntary repatriation.

The first phase will entail the design and construction of the facilities for the six regional immigration delegations. This phase will last four months. Competitive bidding will be used to select the private company that will be commissioned to do the work.

The second phase will entail a restructuring of the functions of the regional delegations, vesting them with the administrative authority to receive and decide on applications for immigration regularization. There will be a need to hire skilled technical personnel for this purpose.

The third phase will consist in the implementation of a registration system in the six regional delegations, relating to:

1. Development of general registers, opening and processing of a file for each alien who wishes to regularize his status. The file will contain all necessary socio-demographic information.
2. The establishment of documents for aliens who express an interest in remaining in the country and the issue of a provisional permit.
3. Analysis and submission to the General Directorate of Immigration and Aliens of a recommendation for a final decision concerning each request.
4. Receipt and processing of ordinary appeals from individuals whose applications have been denied.
5. Renewal of provisional permits, issue and renewal of cards, updating of files, including on family members in the file, receipt of withdrawals of procedures or renunciation of status and other formalities.
6. Receipt of applications for voluntary repatriation and referral of such applications to the competent agencies as promptly as possible.

This third phase will need to be supported by an information campaign through the mass media disseminating information about the new functions performed by these offices and other immigration procedures relating to their control function.

C. Specific objectives and activities

1. Construction of facilities for the six immigration posts in the areas which have the largest number of aliens.

- 1.1 Design and construction of the facilities.
- 1.2 Provision of equipment and supplies for the facilities.
2. Technical strengthening of regional authorities (immigration posts) to enable them to exercise adequate control over the alien population in the area and support the voluntary repatriation process.
 - 2.1 Hiring of skilled personnel.
 - 2.2 Training of officials in this area.
3. Reception and processing by the regional posts of applications for immigration regularization and taking of applications for voluntary repatriation.
 - 3.1 Conduct of information campaigns directed to the target population.
 - 3.2 Opening of registration files on the alien population and requests for return.
 - 3.3 Issue of provisional documents to applicants for immigrant status.
 - 3.4 Analysis of files in order with a view to ruling on the status of applicants.
 - 3.5 Recommendation to the General Directorate of Immigration and Aliens for a final decision on each application.
 - 3.6 Immigration regularization (extension and renewal of cards and other documents).

D. Description of the assistance

International assistance will be needed for the improvement and/or expansion of regional immigration infrastructure, and the provision of supplies and equipment to be used in connection with immigration procedures and administrative support.

E. Budget (\$US):

ITEM	NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION	INTERNATIONAL FUNDING	TOTAL
1. Infrastructure	---	400,000	400,000
2. Human resources	135,882	105,412	241,294
3. Sub-contracts	---	65,000	65,000
4. Furniture and equipment	63,595	---	63,595
5. Supplies	3,000	10,000	13,000
6. Contingencies (5%)	---	39,588	39,588
TOTAL	202,477	620,000	822,477

PROJECT III
(Summary)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. COUNTRY: Costa Rica
2. PROJECT SITE: Central, Chorotega, Huetar Norte regions
3. TITLE: Strengthening of the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Labour to assist refugees and undocumented persons to find employment.
4. START-UP DATE: 1 August 1990
5. COMPLETION DATE: 30 July 1993
6. EXECUTING AGENCY: Ministry of Labour and Social Security (National Department of Employment)
7. BUDGET: US\$ 5,585,781
 - a. International financing: US\$ 990,000
 - b. Local financing: US\$ 4,595,781

II. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Costa Rica has traditionally opened its doors to foreigners oppressed by difficult political situations. This has resulted in massive influxes of people into Costa Rica, especially Nicaraguans and salvadorians in the last decade, for the most part rural groups or the urban poor.

Today, now that peace in Central America is an attainable objective given the will which exists in Central America and a much closer objective than several years ago, the conditions which gave rise to the phenomenon of refugees are fading and the great majority of these individuals are looking towards voluntary repatriation. However, for a significant number of the refugees, Costa Rica continues to represent an option, whether for reasons of security, economic opportunities or simply for stability.

This changed situation compels the Government of Costa Rica to take specific action to foster the assimilation of this population from the perspective of an indefinite, rather than at present a temporary, stay. This should be without prejudice to the continued enjoyment by individuals who have expressed a desire to return to their countries in the near future of the open policy of asylum and social guarantees which Costa Rica has offered them up to the present time.

As far as finding employment is concerned, refugees face a series of problems ranging from the lack of training to compete in the labour market to having to meet a series of legal requirements and go through a slow and tedious administrative process which is inconsistent with the hiring and placement requirements of both employers and workers.

In the case of undocumented persons (externally displaced persons), the problem is even more complex, since, owing to their irregular status, they are employed illegally, mainly at odd jobs, and accept salaries and working conditions below the standards set by the Government, and this distorts the labour market.

Unless the causes and trends of this situation are changed through appropriate and timely political and institutional action, it is possible that these circumstances will lead to downward mobility for the refugees and undocumented persons who decide to remain in the country and alter the principles governing the national society as a whole.

It is clear from the foregoing that achieving the legal and planned inclusion of refugees and undocumented persons in the labour market is the best means of integrating this population into Costa Rican society in an orderly way, without causing a loss of jobs for Costa Rican workers.

As regards the undocumented persons, there is an urgent need to ascertain not only the characteristics and the overall magnitude of the problem but also their prospects with regard to repatriation or indefinite stay in the country, so that the Government can decide to take coherent action within the country's overall policy, as embodied in the National Development Plan. This shortcoming in the area of information and the need to regularize the status of the undocumented population in order to take specific action relating to its inclusion in the work force are covered by projects I (National census of undocumented persons) and II (Regularization and immigration control of refugees and undocumented persons in Costa Rica), which were proposed to CIREFCA.

Aware of the necessity of integrating refugees in the production process in the country, the Ministry of Labour has pursued a wide-ranging policy concerning work for this group. However, the magnitude of the country's fiscal deficit limits, if not rules out entirely, the possibility that the Ministry can, with its ordinary resources, undertake in a timely and effective manner any research, analysis or activity connected with a comprehensive effort to find work not only for the remaining refugee population but also for undocumented persons.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. **General objective**

To integrate refugees and undocumented persons in the national workforce, providing sources of employment and work permits in accordance with the laws and regulations in force.

B. **Project strategy**

The project comprises two main components:

- The first entails describing and determining the number of refugees and undocumented persons from a labour perspective through statistical surveys, using as a basic tool the compendium of information in the "multi-purpose household survey" which the Planning Department of the Ministry of Labour is carrying out. As a second part of this component, a business survey is planned as a means of identifying potential sources of employment and projecting manpower demand.

The information gathered as a result of the proposed research will be used for a permanent information system that will make it possible to set up a functional labour exchange in various parts of the country, which will benefit both Costa Ricans and refugees and undocumented persons.

The findings of this research will also be a valuable input for other projects, especially those relating to training, since the research will identify priority areas for vocational training which are not covered and can thus guarantee immediate employment.

- The second component relates specifically to the maintenance and co-ordination of a decentralized administrative structure needed to carry out efficiently the process of integrating refugees and undocumented persons into the workforce.

C. Specific objectives

1. To describe and collect statistical data on the formal and informal labour market, so as to identify activities and geographical areas which can absorb in the medium and long term workers or refugees and undocumented persons;
2. To establish a labour exchange to provide opportunities for refugees and undocumented persons to find work under the protection of the existing legal provisions;
3. To decentralize the process for counselling and handling and monitoring applications for work permits by both refugees and undocumented persons;
4. To find legal employment for a significant number of refugees and undocumented persons in permanent jobs and maintain an open policy of placement in temporary jobs in accordance with the country's real priority and needs and without causing adverse effect for Costa Rican workers.
5. To promote employment in rural areas which have so far best managed to assimilate foreign manpower and avoid population shifts from the countryside to the major urban centres.

D. Description of the assistance

International assistance is sought as an indispensable input for the consolidation of an organizational structure allowing for decentralization of services to those regions where the largest number of refugees and undocumented persons are living, such as the Brunca, Huetar Norte, Huetar Atlántica and Chorotega regions.

Such assistance is also intended to be used to gather information by means of surveys in order to obtain a systematic picture of the Costa Rican labour market in order to identify unmet manpower needs and the geographical areas where they exist, activities, and the characteristics of the available labour supply.

E. Budget (US\$)

The following resources are needed for the implementation of this project:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Government Contribution</u>	<u>International Funding</u>
1	1,338,010	363,629
2	1,576,811	338,421
3	1,680,960	287,950
TOTAL	4,595,781	990,000

PROJECT IV
(Summary)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. COUNTRY: | Costa Rica |
| 2. PROJECT SITE: | Urban and semi-urban areas in Costa Rica |
| 3. PROJECT TITLE: | Training and credit for refugees in Costa Rica and/or returnees in Nicaragua |
| 4. START-UP DATE: | June 1990 |
| 5. COMPLETION DATE: | May 1993 |
| 6. DIRECT BENEFICIARIES: | 1,318 refugees |
| 7. EXECUTING AGENCY: | Asociación Centro Integral de Atención a Refugiados (ACIAR) |
| 8. BUDGET: | US\$ 1.5 million |
| International financing: | US\$ 1.5 million |

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

The majority of people who have entered Costa Rica in the last 10 years in search of asylum and protection have had very little schooling, which has meant that they have had to accept marginal employment, mainly in agriculture and the informal sector of the economy.

Undocumented persons are at an even greater disadvantage than refugees, since their illegal status in the country, together with their low educational levels, have meant that they have been hired as cheap labour, paid less than the legal minimum wage and deprived of the social guarantees which every worker in Costa Rica should enjoy.

The recent changes in Nicaragua have led the Government of Costa Rica and international organizations dealing with refugees to adjust their short- and medium-term policies on the basic assumption that a major voluntary repatriation process involving Nicaraguan refugees and undocumented persons will take place.

In this context, the time is ripe for a project to provide intensive but short training for Nicaraguan refugees who have voluntarily decided to return to their country in the medium term (one year).

The future returnees could benefit from training geared to areas of interest to the Government of Nicaragua, as reflected in the projects which that country submitted to CIREFCA.

Furthermore, given the fact that some refugees and undocumented persons in urban areas have expressed the desire to remain indefinitely in Costa Rica, there is a need to provide credit so that beneficiaries can achieve economic self-reliance by establishing and strengthening small scale enterprises and family-run business.

This project aims to assist 1,318 refugees directly and 5,272 indirectly over a period of three years. The beneficiaries will be selected according to specific criteria from a potential field of 22,000 refugees living in urban and semi-urban areas in Costa Rica who are currently receiving assistance from ACIAR with UNHCR resources.

Of this population, 49% are men and 51% women. In addition, 29% are under the age of 12, hence the economically active population is estimated at 65%. The elderly account for the remainder (6%).

This population group is of urban origin and its educational level is as follows: illiteracy rate: 8.81%, primary school education: 40.58%; secondary school education: 44.21%; post-secondary education: 6.4%.

In addition to its direct impact on the recipient population, this project will have a positive influence in terms of income-generation and job creation for the refugee population.

The project's social and economic impact will be reflected in higher technical qualifications and skills among the labour force. In terms of developing public institutions, the project will strengthen training machinery by making financial resources available for such activities.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. **General objective**

To promote economic self-reliance of the refugee population throughout Costa Rica by means of training and credit to enable them to find jobs in the Costa Rican economy (for those who decide to remain) or to enter the Nicaraguan labour market (for those who opt for voluntary repatriation). The estimated duration of the project is three years, with annual reviews and adjustments in the light of any changes that may take place with respect to the refugee problem in Costa Rica.

B. **Strategy**

A technical team will be formed to carry out the training component of the project, and exchanges and co-ordination with teams in other countries, especially Nicaragua, will be promoted.

The training for participants will be short and geared to facilitating their entry into the labour markets, mainly in Nicaragua but also in Costa Rica.

With regard to credit, the strategy will be to provide training and strengthen small-scale enterprises and family-run businesses in profitable activities enabling the recipients to achieve economic self-reliance.

C. **Specific objectives**

1. To promote durable solutions enabling the target population to achieve social and economic self-reliance by upgrading the skills of these human resources by means of training and credit, with the aim of finding employment for them in the near term either in Costa Rica or in their country of origin.
2. To train the target population wishing to return to their country in the medium term in short courses preparing them for entry into the Nicaraguan labour market.
3. To retrain Nicaraguan refugees living in Costa Rica for activities for which there is a shortage of manpower both in Nicaragua and Costa Rica.
4. To provide financing and technical advice to self-employed individuals possessing the necessary work permits.

D. **Description of the assistance**

Under the training component, it is planned to provide direct payments to training institutions, tools and training materials, and stipends for trainees, including allowances for room, board and transport. The average cost of the training, covering all items, is estimated at \$US 900 per trainee. The average cost of the credit component is estimated at \$US 1,219 per recipient.

Both the training and the credit will be governed by special regulations drawn up by the executing agency for this purpose.

E. Budget (US\$)

YEAR	TRAINING COMPONENT		CREDIT COMPONENT		ADMINISTRATION	
	NUMBER OF TRAINEES	BUDGET (1)	NUMBER OF LOANS	BUDGET (2)	OVERHEAD AGENCY FEES (3)	SUBTOTAL (1+2+3)
1	232	208,629	300	365,853	32,850	607,332
2	206	185,262	250	304,877	29,970	520,109
3	180	162,452	150	182,927	27,180	372,559
TOTAL	618	556,343	700	853,657	90,000	1,500,000

PROJECT V
(Summary)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | COUNTRY: | Costa Rica |
| 2. | PROJECT SITE: | Entire country |
| 3. | PROJECT TITLE: | Support for productive and community activities geared to the self-reliance of Nicaraguan refugees who will remain in Costa Rica. |
| 4. | START-UP DATE: | 1 July 1990 |
| 5. | COMPLETION DATE: | 31 June 1993 |
| 6. | NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES: | 300 refugee and low income Costa Rican families |
| 7. | GOVERNMENT EXECUTING AGENCY: | DIGEPARE |
| 8. | BUDGET: | US\$ 2 million |
| | a. Donor contribution: | US\$ 1.5 million |
| | b. Counterpart contribution (other sources): | US\$ 500,000 |

II. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

A. Description of target group

Preliminary inquiries show that some of the Nicaraguan refugees wish to remain in the country for various reasons, such as because they have lost all their property in Nicaragua or because while they have been in Costa Rica they have already begun the process of integration, or because they have established family ties.

The potential beneficiaries of this project are some 300 families of Nicaraguan refugees and low-income Costa Ricans. Given the average size of rural families (seven members per family), the project is expected to reach some 2,100 individuals.

In the light of the characteristics of the self-reliance which the project aims to promote, the following social and labour profile has been developed for beneficiaries: they should have recognized status, should have lived more than three years in the country, should belong to a family group, should, preferably, have experience and productive capacity in the activity to be undertaken and should be of economically active age.

B. Assistance requirements

Some communities in the country, especially in rural areas, have shown openness and generosity in receiving the refugee population, viewing the arrival of the refugees as mutually beneficial owing to the agricultural potential of the regions and the employment opportunities (temporary and permanent) entailed.

The good will of these communities in accepting the presence of refugees has not been enough to achieve the integration of the latter and make them independent of assistance from the Government and UNHCR, since there has not been enough financial resources available to carry out productive activities and, as a complement, expand basic support services (housing, health, education, training, community infrastructure) which would help to promote economic self-reliance.

Consequently, there is a need for economic assistance to set up a revolving fund to finance specific productive activities geared to the economic self-reliance of the beneficiaries. In addition, funds are needed for specific improvements (infrastructure, equipment, supplies) in basic support services such as health, education, training and community development.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. **General objective**

To promote the self-reliance of at least 300 refugee and low-income Costa Rican families enabling them to become independent of assistance from the Government and UNHCR, to contribute to national production and to obtain training to work in activities that will provide them with a livelihood.

The project provides for a phased approach to the achievement of its objective, culminating in the third year, when the target population should be self-reliant.

B. **Strategy**

The aim is to achieve the general objective by means of an aggressive strategy to promote income-generating activities through job placement, productive and mixed projects enabling beneficiaries to achieve economic self-reliance and social integration.

The project calls for the creation of a high-level co-ordinating structure during the implementation phase and the establishment of an executing and monitoring unit which will be responsible for the administrative and technical management during the execution and operation of the project.

In addition to the income-generating and support activities provided for under the project, another important factor in achieving integration is efforts to foster the necessary awareness among host communities to avoid any social rejection of the refugee population. In that connection, as part of the regular functions of UNHCR, DIGEPARE and other bodies, efforts will be made to promote liaison, communication and co-ordination with community development associations and municipalities concerned.

C. **Specific objectives and activities**

1. Gradually to achieve, over the three years of the project, the economic self-reliance of at least 80 families by including them in production projects, mainly in the field of agriculture.
 - 1.1 Selection of participants on the basis of the social and labour profile adopted.
 - 1.2 Identification and acquisition of land suitable for farming, which will be leased to participating refugees with an option to buy.
 - 1.3 To handle the purchase of land through the Agrarian Development Institute (IDA) for Costa Rican nationals who qualify for the project.
 - 1.4 To provide technical assistance in production, management and marketing for participants in the project.
 - 1.5 To establish a trust fund to manage the agricultural credit made available to nationals and refugees.

2. To include some 90 heads of refugee households in permanent paid employment in agricultural and agro-industrial enterprises in the area.
 - 2.1 To conduct a survey of the labour market in the areas targeted by the project in order to obtain quantitative data concerning the demand for permanent employment of refugees.
 - 2.2 To strengthen job placement activities in executing agencies responsible for this component under the project.
 - 2.3 To provide loans for housing to refugee families participating in this integration scheme.
 - 2.4 To support food-producing activities as a means of supplementing family income or for own use.
3. To establish small-scale enterprises or family-run businesses for the production of goods and services for some 40 families whose members include semi-skilled workers who require only small-scale assistance to achieve self-reliance.
 - 3.1 To conduct the necessary technical feasibility studies for each case.
 - 3.2 To make loans to beneficiaries of the project in a flexible and timely manner, using the trust fund for the establishment of small scale enterprises and family-run businesses.
 - 3.3 To provide technical assistance in the areas of production and marketing and monitoring and evaluation of the small-scale enterprises that are set up.
4. To involve approximately 90 heads of participating households as partners in small-scale enterprises and agricultural production units already in existence in the areas covered by the project which are in a satisfactory financial position.
 - 4.1 To identify and evaluate technically the enterprises and production units participating in this integration arrangement.
 - 4.2 To conclude contracts, under the existing laws, with participating enterprises and organizations.
 - 4.3 To grant loans to enterprises and organizations selected for participation in the project.
5. To strengthen the family as the basic unit of the community, providing housing to all the refugee families participating in the project, and building, expanding or improving, as necessary, the housing units of participating Costa Rican families.
 - 5.1 To reorganize the existing UNHCR-BANHVI housing trust fund so that it can respond more effectively to the circumstances of the refugee population remaining in the country.
 - 5.2 To draw up regulations on financing for housing governing all aspects relating to the submission of applications, requirements, official approval, disbursements and the repayment of loans.
6. To guarantee access to basic community services (health, education, water supply, electricity, transport and communications, etc.) by the entire target population.
 - 6.1 To co-ordinate efforts with community development associations concerned in the areas where participants in the project will settle down.
 - 6.2 To conduct technical studies to identify the kind of investments to be made with contributions from the project and the communities concerned.

D. Description of the assistance

In order to achieve the project objectives, assistance will be provided to beneficiaries simultaneously through two complementary channels:

1. Income-generating activities

Three income-generating components which are conducive to self-reliance have been identified:

- 1.1 Assistance in finding work: the project will promote two arrangements for entering the workforce: efforts to find permanent paid employment representing genuine durable solutions for the beneficiaries and the establishment of small-scale enterprises or family-run businesses, which offer an economically viable alternative.
- 1.2 Productive projects: for the most part, these will be agricultural, geared to the establishment of small family farms, with the active participation of the IDA (the Agrarian Development Institute).
- 1.3 Mixed projects: involvement of participants in the project as partners in existing small-scale enterprises and agricultural production units which need an infusion of capital to consolidate or expand their operations.

2. Support activities

As an essential complementary factor ensuring that the income-generating components can achieve the project's objective, logistical support will need to be provided through the services dealing with housing, health, education, training, community support and administration.

E. Budget (US\$)

ITEM	CONTRIBUTION SOUGHT FROM DONOR	COUNTEPART, OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING
1. Income-generating activities: productive projects, job- finding, mixed projects (reimbursable funds)	1,000,000	---
2. Support activities:		
a) Housing for approximately 150 families benefiting from the project	---	400,000 (1)
b) Health (support for national services)	80,000	25,000 (2)
c) Education (support for national services)	105,000	---
d) Training	50,000	---
e) Community support: electrification, safe water supply, local roads, etc.	130,000	---
f) Administration: executing and monitoring agency	135,000	75,000
TOTAL	1,500,000	500,000

(1) Housing fund from the Government of Sweden (UNHCR/BANHVI Trust Fund).

(2) UNHCR/CCSS.

PROJECT VI
(Summary)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. COUNTRY: Costa Rica
2. PROJECT SITE: Cantons of San José Centro, Desamparados, Goicoechea, Montes de Oca, Tibás, Atenas, Alajuela Centro, Heredia Centro, Alajuelita, Sarapiquí, Upala, Guatuso, Los Chiles, San Carlos, Osa y Buenos Aires, La Cruz y Tilarán, Limón Centro, Siquirres, Talamanca, Pococí, Matina and Guácimo.
3. PROJECT TITLE: Strengthening of national health services in cantons with large populations of refugees and undocumented persons
4. START-UP DATE: July 1990
5. COMPLETION DATE: July 1993
6. GOVERNMENT EXECUTING AGENCIES: Ministry of Health and the Costa Rican Social Security Fund (CCSS)
7. BUDGET: US\$ 3.5 million
 - a. International funding: US\$ 2.5 million
 - b. Local funding: US\$ 1 million

II. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

A. **Description of target group**

Over a ten-year period since the beginning of the conflict in Central America, thousands of persons, for the most part Nicaraguans, have entered Costa Rica in search of asylum. Official data indicate that over this period 46,783 refugees have been registered, while unofficial estimates place the number of undocumented individuals (externally displaced persons) in Costa Rican territory at between 150,00 and 175,000.

The size of this population, its long stay in the country and the lack of human and economic resources have prevented the Government from adequately meeting the demand for health services, inter alia, and this has had a serious adverse effect on health levels achieved in Costa Rica.

Owing to the unsatisfactory environmental conditions in which the uprooted population lives, the immigrants have been affected by various diseases, most of which had been eradicated in Costa Rica or brought under control. This situation faces the country with the necessity of providing the immigrants with a level of preventive and curative medical care that will improve their levels of health by strengthening the primary care programme of the Ministry of Health and the CCSS medical services with a view to providing coverage for the entire target population.

The target population, which comes for the most part from rural areas, is made up of farmers and unskilled labourers, a large proportion of whom are illiterate. This, together with the fact that these people do not possess valid work permits, means that they are able to find only odd jobs, from which they earn very little cash income.

The project is designed to cover those cantons where the largest numbers of refugees and undocumented persons are to be found and which, in addition, are identified in the National Development Plan as priority areas as regards health.

B. Assistance requirements

Owing to the severe budget crisis facing the Ministry of Health and CCSS, the services provided by both institutions have suffered from financial cutbacks, which has hampered their efforts to deal with the problem caused by the increase in the migrant population. Thus, refugees, undocumented persons and even Costa Rican nationals have been affected by the reduction in the quality and quantity of services provided, thereby creating the conditions for an increase in health problems, with resultant harm for both the alien population and Costa Rican nationals.

C. Description of projects relating to the target group

1. UNHCR/Ministry of Health Agreement: Under this agreement, care is currently being provided for 7,000 refugees in camps and adjoining areas, including external consultants services and monitoring of environmental conditions.
2. Assistance for the survival of children affected by acts of war (MS/CARE): This project, which has been concluded, helped to strengthen the primary health-care services for children and adolescents under 17 years of age, pregnant and nursing women, refugees and undocumented persons living in the northern frontier area and in poor neighbourhoods where there are large numbers of uprooted people.
3. Emergency assistance for health and feeding services for refugees and undocumented persons in the northern frontier area: This project, which is in its initial stages, has helped to improve Ministry of Health infrastructure in the northern frontier area, especially in those cantons where there are large numbers of aliens.
4. UNHCR/CCSS Agreement: This agreement currently covers approximately 32,000 refugees distributed throughout the national territory who have been granted access to outpatient services, treatment by medical specialists and emergency services in CCSS clinics and hospitals and are insured against disability resulting from sickness and pregnancy.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. General objective:

To establish public health measures and expand CCSS medical care which will not only improve living and health conditions for the refugees and undocumented persons but also lay the foundations for a significant improvement in living and health conditions of the Costa Rican population living in poor areas which have large populations of refugees and undocumented persons.

This objective can be attained over a three year period. Success will be measured by the number of cantons and beneficiaries covered by the programme.

B. Strategy

The project will entail strengthening the Primary Health Care Programme of the Ministry of Health by increasing the frequency of home visits to the target population as part of a system of preventive medicine.

Another aim is to expand coverage of CCSS medical services to all or most of the refugees and undocumented persons who do not return to their countries of origin and who, with the permission of the Government, are to be integrated into the country's social and economic life. Three schemes are planned to provide access to the CCSS

services: 1) contributions from employees and employers in respect of all wage-earners; 2) payment of voluntary insurance for all self-employed persons; and 3) conclusion of a special agreement between UNHCR and CCSS to ensure coverage of the handicapped and vulnerable individuals who will remain in the country.

C. Specific objectives and activities

1. To ascertain the health situation and socio-economic conditions of the target population in the cantons selected for the project with the aim adapting health programmes to their needs.
 - 1.1 To carry out technical diagnostic surveys on the socio-economic and health conditions of the foreign inhabitants and Costa Ricans in the cantons selected.
2. To train personnel from the Ministry of Health in specific areas such as environmental health, occupational health and nutrition in order to provide integrated care tailored more closely to the needs of the target population.
3. To involve organized groups from the target communities in the various stages of the project using a participatory approach.
 - 3.1 Training of organized community groups through workshops, seminars and talks.
4. To improve the physical infrastructure of the primary health care network of the Ministry of Health and CCSS clinics in communities covered by the project.
 - 4.1 To co-ordinate with the health agencies concerned with respect to the priority, desirability, arrangements, cost and other technical details relating to investments in construction, improvements or expansion of infrastructure.
5. To improve the operational efficiency of the health centres run by the Ministry of Health and CCSS in communities covered by the project.
 - 5.1 Following diagnostic studies co-ordinated with the Ministry of Health and CCSS, selected centres will be reinforced through the provision of medical equipment, furniture and medicines.
6. To guarantee that handicapped and vulnerable refugees and undocumented persons who remain in the country are covered by the project.
 - 6.1 To identify the affected population, examine individuals for a medical diagnosis and provide individual follow-up through the CCSS services.

D. Description of the assistance

Requirements for the implementation of the project include health assistants, supplies and sanitation equipment (Government contribution); training courses for personnel and community leaders, medicines (project contribution); basic medical care supplies and equipment, subsistence allowances and transport for staff, and fuel (Government and project contribution) and resources to make improvements in the physical infrastructure of the health centres and clinics.

E. Budget (US\$)

ITEM	GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION	INTERNATIONAL FUNDING	TOTAL
Personnel	300,000	---	300,000
Training	---	50,000	50,000
Medical supplies and equipment	---	950,000	950,000
Basic supplies and equipment	200,000	---	200,000
Medicines	---	500,000	500,000
Infrastructure support	500,000	1,000,000	1,500,000
TOTAL	1,000,000	2,500,000	3,500,000

PROJECT VII
(Summary)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|---|
| 1. | COUNTRY: | Costa Rica |
| 2. | PROJECT SITE: | Huetar Norte and Atlántica regions |
| 3. | PROJECT TITLE: | Educational infrastructure requirements for the benefit of refugees, undocumented persons and Costa Rican nationals in the Huetar Norte and Atlántica regions |
| 4. | START-UP DATE: | February 1990 |
| 5. | COMPLETION DATE: | December 1993 |
| 6. | EXECUTING AGENCY: | ACIAR/Ministry of Education |
| 7. | BUDGET: | US\$ 1,404,000 |

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

A. **Justification**

One of the main features of the Huetar Norte and Atlántica regions is the large number of Nicaraguan refugees and undocumented persons living there. The existing infrastructure and services, especially in the area of education, and above all at the primary level, have proved to be inadequate.

A statistical survey of school enrolment in recent years has shown that in the communities of these regions a high proportion of pupils are of Nicaraguan origin, with the latter outnumbering Costa Rican children in many cases. This situation and the increase in school enrolment which occurred in 1990, (10% Nicaraguans and 5% Costa Ricans) has affected the local school teachers, who must cope with a growing number of students, with the obvious adverse effect on the quality of education. This situation is compounded by the lack of domestic resources to hire more teachers, open new schools or expand the existing infrastructure.

The situation described above has created critical requirements with respect to education and educational infrastructure in the Huetar Norte and Atlántica regions, since the vast majority of primary schools have only a single teacher and classroom, despite the growing number of pupils in recent years. The educational infrastructure of these regions is very rudimentary and is in a dilapidated condition or, in some communities, faces shortages of everything.

Based on information gathered by the Ministry of Education and corroborated through field visits, the following figures give some indication of the requirements identified in the Huetar Norte and Huetar Atlántica regions:

- 48% of the existing educational facilities do not have any source of safe drinking water.
- 311 education centres are situated in areas where there is no public transport.
- 40% of the existing educational facilities have no electricity.

- 80% of the existing primary schools face serious difficulties owing to their sites, available space, and lack of supplies, equipment and furniture.
- Most of the primary schools do not have school lunchrooms, which prevents them from fulfilling one of their functions, which is to provide meals to the children free of charge.
- 80% of the education centres in the Huetar Norte region are without accommodation for teachers, who are forced to seek housing outside the school district in areas suffering from chronic housing shortages.

While it may be argued that the problem is likely to abate somewhat with the massive repatriations that are in the offing in the short and medium term as a result of the changes which have occurred in Nicaragua, it must be borne in mind that the damage to the school infrastructure is irreversible, that not all refugees and undocumented persons in these regions will return to their homeland, that the process of returning to Nicaragua is a slow one, and that the space requirements for the Costa Rican school population and the migrants who will remain in both regions are still in excess of the available resources. As a result, the changes in Nicaragua notwithstanding, the educational infrastructure project remains fully valid.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. **General objective**

To upgrade the school infrastructure in the Huetar Norte and Atlántica regions in order to provide the school population of Costa Ricans and Nicaraguan refugees and undocumented persons living in these areas with educational services in the best possible conditions, so as to promote the integration of uprooted Nicaraguans who, for one reason or another, decide to remain in the country.

This effort will be carried out over a period of approximately three years, at the end of which the educational infrastructure will have been upgraded in terms of space and quality to meet the requirements of the target population.

B. **Project strategy**

Improvement of the conditions of the school infrastructure will be achieved primarily through co-ordination with the Ministry of Education for the construction of new classrooms or the expansion and repair of existing classrooms; the provision of school lunchrooms in schools which do not yet have one; the construction, expansion or repair of lavatories; the purchase of furniture to fit out new facilities and remedy shortages in existing schools; the purchase of teaching aids and provision of teaching materials that are up to date and tailored to the needs of the school population.

The project will be focused on cantons in the two regions in question where the increase in the Nicaraguan school population has been the main factor in upsetting the balance in the infrastructure/pupil ratio.

The contribution of the community and the input of the Ministry of Education for the carrying out of these works will be a fundamental strategic element. The participation of community members, both Nicaraguans and Costa Ricans, in building activities will help to promote employment; it is also hoped that direct involvement will motivate community members to seek additional resources for the upkeep of the infrastructure that is built or repaired under the project and to allow their children to stay in school longer since the improvements brought about may be regarded as the fruit of their own labours.

C. **Specific objectives and activities**

1. To build or repair the educational and service infrastructure needed in the regions covered by the project.
 - 1.1 Construction of 47 new classrooms to provide proper accommodation for the school population.
 - 1.2 Repairs to 40 classrooms and lavatories.

- 1.3 Construction of 39 school lunchrooms in educational centres which do not have them.
- 1.4 Installation of 49 new lavatories.
2. To foster and improve the quality of education by providing furniture, equipment and teaching materials for educational centres covered by the project.
 - 2.1 Purchase and distribution of 2,500 desks for pupils.
 - 2.2 Provision of supply kits and learning materials for students.
 - 2.3 Provision of five mimeograph machines.
3. Establishment of working conditions that will attract trained personnel to work in these areas.
 - 3.1 Construction of approximately 60 housing units for teachers working in communities covered by the project as a means of attracting and retaining skilled personnel.
4. To create opportunities for temporary employment for Nicaraguan refugees and undocumented persons in the area covered by the project.
 - 4.1 Negotiation and commissioning of building of structures and furniture by groups of Costa Rican workers and Nicaraguan refugees.

D. Description of the assistance

The international assistance should be allocated for the repair or expansion of school infrastructure in the Huetar Norte and Atlántica regions and provision of furniture, equipment and teaching materials suitable for improving educational quality, in line with the priorities set by the Ministry of Education in co-ordination with DIGEPARE and UNHCR.

E. Budget (US\$)

COMPONENT (1)	COST IN \$US
1. Construction of 47 classrooms	470,000
2. Construction of 39 school lunchrooms	390,000
3. Construction of 49 lavatories	50,000
4. Repair of 40 classrooms	120,000
5. Construction of 60 housing units	375,000
6. Purchase of 2,500 school desks	80,000
7. Purchase of equipment and supplies	40,000
SUB-TOTAL	1,525,000
Less initial contribution of the Government of Finland (2)	121,000
TOTAL	1,404,000

(1)The national counterpart contribution has not yet been quantified, but it consists in all existing infrastructure which has for years been used to accommodate uprooted Nicaraguans, in addition to the salaries of teachers and other employees of the educational centres covered by the project.

(2)An initial contribution has been made for the project by the Government of Finland, which is already being used for the construction of four schools in the northern area.

PROJECT VIII
(Summary)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. | COUNTRY: | Costa Rica |
| 2. | PROJECT SITE: | Entire country |
| 3. | PROJECT TITLE: | Housing credit for refugees and Costa Rican nationals participating in mixed production projects |
| 4. | START-UP DATE: | September 1990 |
| 5. | COMPLETION DATE: | August 1993 |
| 6. | BENEFICIARIES: | Direct: Refugees and undocumented persons: 400 families.
Costa Rican nationals: 100 families.
Indirect: 3,500 |
| 7. | EXECUTING AGENCY: | BANHVI |
| 8. | BUDGET: | US\$ 1,575,000 |
| | a) International financing: | US\$ 1,575,000 |

II. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

As a result of the social and political situation in Central America during the 1980s, Costa Rica received a large influx of migrants, mainly of Nicaraguan origin. The refugee population in Costa Rica in February 1990 stood at 46,304, while the number of undocumented persons is estimated at around 175,000 persons.

Undoubtedly the recent political events in Nicaragua will have an immediate and direct impact on Costa Rica by opening up the possibility that a large part of the refugee population will voluntarily consider the option of repatriation. However, preliminary studies indicate that some of these people wish to remain indefinitely in the country.

This population, which is for the most part made up of people from rural or poor urban areas, earns very low income precisely because of its status. This income is inadequate to cover the cost of food, health, education and housing. All this has led to a concentration of Nicaraguan refugees and undocumented persons in the shanty towns surrounding the main cities of the central region or in the rural areas, especially in the Huetar Norte and Huetar Atlántica regions. Dwellings in these areas do not meet minimum standards for decent housing.

Since it is a national priority to eliminate the housing shortage (calculated at 131,500 units in 1989, to which should be added more than 250,000 substandard units) and given the limited resources at its disposal for this purpose, the Government is unable to satisfy the additional housing needs created by the refugees and undocumented persons. While this problem has elicited interest on the part of friendly Governments, including the Government of Sweden, the resources available are not sufficient to meet real needs which exist in this area.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. **General objective**

To support the construction and purchase of housing by refugee and low-income families which decide to remain indefinitely in the country.

B. **Project strategy**

The housing solutions will be financed with project funds. These resources will be administered by the Banco Hipotecario para la Vivienda (BANHVI) as the lead agency of the national housing finance system.

The fund will be used to finance the purchase of building plots and the construction of housing units by the target population, with special emphasis on self-help building arrangements. Loans may also be provided for repairs or improvements to existing housing units which meet the requirements for being considered as socially beneficial.

Beneficiaries will acquire ownership of the property but will be prohibited from selling, transferring or encumbering in any way the property assigned to them until after five years of occupancy.

These resources will be managed under a revolving fund arrangement, which means that resources provided to beneficiary families must be completely recovered in order to finance new applications.

The criteria used for setting rates of interest, repayment periods, and so on, will be the same as those applied to the low-income Costa Rican population.

If a beneficiary eventually changes his mind and opts for voluntary repatriation, the housing unit may be transferred to another refugee family or to a Costa Rican family of similar socio-economic standing. The previous beneficiary will be fully entitled to negotiate, like any other citizen, for the recovery of money paid to amortize the loan and any increase in value owing to capital gains, inflation, and so on.

C. **Specific objectives**

1. To improve the human environment of the beneficiary families.
2. To support the process of integrating the participants in the project into Costa Rican society.
3. To support the integration of refugees and Costa Ricans by providing individual solutions to housing problems in areas where economic activities to serve as the basis of self-reliance will be carried out.
4. To strengthen housing programmes in rural areas by seeking to discourage the flight from rural areas, while at the same time an effort will be made to make maximum use of materials indigenous to each region and local manpower.

D. **Description of the assistance**

International assistance is sought in order to provide loans for the purchase, construction or improvement of low-cost housing for 400 families of refugees and/or undocumented persons, and 100 low-income Costa Rican families participating in mixed projects. The average cost is estimated at \$US 3,000 for each case.

E. Budget (US\$)

HOUSING	COSTS (in US\$)
Costa Rican nationals 100	300,000
Refugees 400	1,200,000
Overhead	75,000
TOTAL	1,575,000

PROJECT IX
(Summary)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|---|
| 1. | COUNTRY: | Costa Rica |
| 2. | PROJECT SITE: | Communities in the provinces of Limón and San José which have large numbers of refugees and undocumented persons |
| 3. | PROJECT TITLE: | Provision of pre-school day-care facilities and child-minding services for school-age children of refugees, undocumented persons and Costa Rican nationals. |
| 4. | START-UP DATE: | July 1990 |
| 5. | COMPLETION DATE: | June 1991 |
| 6. | DIRECT BENEFICIARIES: | 640 children |
| 7. | GOVERNMENT EXECUTING AGENCY: | Ministry of Health |
| 8. | BUDGET: | US\$ 2,250,000 |
| | a) International financing: | US\$ 1.5 million |
| | b) Local financing: | US\$ 750,000 |

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

For the entire period that the uprooted Nicaraguan population has been in Costa Rica, it has always been difficult, if not impossible, for mothers of working age, especially single mothers, to enter the country's workforce in order to improve their income, since they have no one to look after their children.

In this connection, it is of vital importance to have a project which caters for a real need of single mothers who could become economically self-reliant if only there was some suitable place where their children could be cared for while they work.

The implementation of this project could benefit a total of 640 children of mothers who are refugees, undocumented persons or low income Costa Ricans, to be selected from a universe comprising the population which responds to the social and employment profiles to be developed for this purpose.

The population to benefit from the project falls into the 0 - 6 age group for the day-care centres and the 7 - 12 age group for the child-minding services for school-age children.

The provision of these services will enable mothers to engage in full-time employment while they decide whether to return to their country or if they opt to remain in Costa Rica to secure stable employment that will enable them to become self-reliant.

The children benefiting from this project will be covered by the health services of the Costa Rican Social Security Fund (CCSS) under an agreement between UNHCR and CCSS and by the services of the community health centres operated by the Ministry of Health.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. **General objective**

To improve the living conditions of refugee, undocumented and low-income Costa Rican mothers by affording them the opportunity to seek work and earn income to enable them to return to Nicaragua if they opt for voluntary repatriation or to become self-reliant if they wish to remain in Costa Rica.

B. **Strategy**

The project provides for the construction of four new child-care centres and the expansion and/or repair of 13 existing centres in communities where there are large numbers of families of refugees or undocumented persons and in communities within the sphere of influence of the labour market, such as the industrial free zones in Limón and the industrial parks in San José metropolitan area.

The project fits in with the social policy of the Government of Costa Rica, which has enacted laws embodying a strategy for achieving social equality of women and the protection of the rights of the child.

C. **Specific objectives and activities**

1. To promote the inclusion of single mothers, whether refugees, undocumented persons or low-income Costa Ricans, in the Costa Rican labour market by assisting in the provision of pre-school day-care facilities and child-minding services for school-age children.
2. To protect the physical and emotional well-being of children of working mothers by means of a specialized service.
3. To help increase the female labour force in industry and agro-industry, thereby reducing shortages of manpower which exist in these areas of activity.
4. To build four day-care centres in Limón Province and in the San José metropolitan area, with the capacity to accommodate approximately 75 children each.
5. To expand and/or repair the installed capacity of 13 day-care centres, so as to increase by 340 the number of children who can be accommodated.

D. **Description of the assistance**

The international assistance and local financing should be allocated for the construction, expansion and/or repair of the selected centres for the project.

The impact of this project will be felt at three levels: the job advancement of women, child welfare and meeting the manpower needs of the private sector.

E. Budget (US\$)

COMPONENT	GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION	INTERNATIONAL FUNDING	TOTAL
Construction	433,290	866,710	1,300,000
Expansion and repairs	316,710	633,290	950,000
TOTAL	750,000	1,500,000	2,250,000

