

RefugePoint Report to Focusing Philanthropy 2019 Refugee Self-Reliance Campaign

Campaign Background

The global structure in place to help refugees worldwide was created following World War II to provide temporary safe haven for displaced persons waiting for their home countries to become stable enough for them to return home. Today, very few refugees have a realistic prospect of returning home. The results for most refugees are either (i) protracted stays in refugee camps that often span decades and in many cases result in multiple generations of families being born and reared in camps or (ii) unsafe, permanently marginalized, poverty-stricken circumstances with tenuous legal status in large urban centers in developing countries.

RefugePoint aims to address this gap in the refugee protection regime and is a leader in self-reliance programming and measurement for refugees, especially those residing in urban areas. RefugePoint operates a direct-service program, the Urban Refugee Protection Program (URPP), in Nairobi, Kenya, with the aim of supporting vulnerable refugees to progress toward self-reliance. The organization also promotes self-reliance programming across Africa and globally through field-building and systems-change activities, including disseminating elements of our program approach, including measurement and assessment tools. Specifically, RefugePoint co-founded and co-leads the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative—a multi-stakeholder collaboration of humanitarian organizations, government agencies, foundations, research institutes and other partners dedicated to promoting refugee self-reliance—and has led the co-creation and testing of the Self-Reliance Index—the first global, open-source tool for measuring the progress of refugee households toward self-reliance.

In 2019, RefugePoint and Focusing Philanthropy partnered on a campaign to further refugee self-reliance efforts and capitalize on the global attention to and momentum around refugee self-reliance. The \$500,000 matching campaign specifically aimed to:

- Support and expand RefugePoint’s direct self-reliance program in Nairobi to further generate evidence for our unique self-reliance approach,
- Codify RefugePoint’s holistic approach to refugee self-reliance through the development of measurement tools available for use by other NGOs and humanitarian actors and technical support on program approaches, and
- Bring together leading humanitarian agencies and entities interested in advancing self-reliance to promote shared understanding and learning.

Campaign Objectives

The campaign supported the Livelihoods Unit of the URPP in Nairobi, as well as RefugePoint’s broader self-reliance field-building and systems-change efforts, including the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative. With the support of Focusing Philanthropy and donors to the campaign, RefugePoint aimed to reach the following targets:

- Support 190 urban refugees in Nairobi to engage in income-generating activities through the work of the Livelihoods Unit,

- Impact an additional 600-800 dependents of the beneficiaries of livelihoods support mentioned above,
- Support other NGOs to use the Self-Reliance Index and incorporate elements of our self-reliance approach into their own programming,
- Reach approximately 1,470 additional urban refugees through partner organizations using the Self-Reliance Index or receiving technical assistance on program approach, and
- Grow the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative’s Community of Practice to 23 members.

Campaign Impact

RefugePoint and Focusing Philanthropy successfully raised \$506,600, of which \$253,300 (precisely half) RefugePoint worked to secure. We were thrilled to exceed our fundraising goal.

In 2019, the URPP exceeded its goal of 190 by 12%, supporting a total of 212 unique individuals to engage in income-generating activity through support by the Livelihoods Unit. These 212 individuals represented 180 unique households, as multiple individuals in one household may sometimes receive Livelihoods support. This had the amplified impact of reaching an additional 752 dependents across these 180 households for a total of 964 beneficiaries.

The work of the Livelihoods Unit was further supported by the unique \$40,000 gift, made outside of the campaign by Focusing Philanthropy, to provide business startup capital grants and business expansion grants to RP’s self-reliance clients in Nairobi who have received entrepreneurship training. Below is a table displaying how many RefugePoint clients were supported at differing capital grant levels:

Funding	Bucket	Range of grant amount	Target numbers	Actual number supported	Total \$USD
FP	Start-up Capital	\$300 – 400	70	71	\$24,563
FP	Business expansion funding	\$200 – 400	30 – 60	46	\$15,449
RP	Regular RP Livelihoods programming	\$200	120	98	\$25,533

RefugePoint expended the entirety of the \$40,000 grant in FY2019.

Additionally, through the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative, RefugePoint released the Self-Reliance Index (SRI) to a limited audience for additional testing and feedback, and supported three other partner NGOs to test and use the tool across three geographic locations.

RefugePoint continued testing the tool in Kenya, and supported Asylum Access in Mexico, Danish Refugee Council in Jordan, and HIAS in Ecuador. In Mexico, Asylum Access reached 59 refugee households with an initial assessment using the SRI, and 33 refugee households were reassessed. In Ecuador, HIAS reached 30 refugee households with an initial assessment using the SRI. In Jordan, Danish Refugee Council reached 16 refugee households with an initial assessment using the SRI. In Kenya, RefugePoint reached 57 refugee households with an initial assessment using the SRI, and 34 households we reassessed.

In total, 162 unique refugee households, representing an estimated 659 individual refugees (344 adults and 315 children), were reached through interviewing and data collection with the SRI by all partners. The learning from this phase of testing across four different contexts has informed revisions to the tool, which has been designed to help build an evidence base for enhancing refugee self-reliance opportunities and to allow for comparative global analysis. Version 2.0 of the SRI will be widely released in March 2020.

In addition, RefugePoint continued to provide technical support Caritas Czech Republic (CCR) in Lusaka, Zambia, on various aspects of self-reliance programming, including livelihoods programming, data collection and assessment, client outreach and identification, case management, and monitoring and evaluation. Through this partnership, our efforts helped CCR reach an additional 416 refugee households, representing an estimated 1,248 individuals. In total, through partnership and field building, RefugePoint expanded its reach to 1,907 individual refugees across the five geographies mentioned, against the goal of 1,470.

Finally, RefugePoint helped grow the Community of Practice to 25 members in 2019, exceeding its goal. Notably, the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative convened many of its members in October 2019 in Amman, Jordan, to celebrate the Initiative's achievements and to collectively chart its course forward. Representatives from over 25 organizations spanning operational and advocacy NGOs, UN agencies, research organizations, donors, and host governments participated in the meetings. The four-day convening included three distinct but linked events: a Self-Reliance Index 101 workshop, an RSRI Convening, and a session on the Graduation Approach, one model for self-reliance programming.

In sum, the 2019 Refugee Self-Reliance Campaign between RefugePoint and Focusing Philanthropy exceeded both its fundraising and impact goals. Together, we have truly been able to make marked progress toward promoting and expanding access to self-reliance programming, with a focus on robust and meaningful measurement of what it means to move toward self-reliance. The campaign has supported truly foundational work for the humanitarian field at large.

Client Stories

Riziki and Matisse were two of the 212 urban refugees living in Nairobi who RefugePoint supported in 2019 to engage in and grow income-generating activities.



Riziki*, a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo, arrived in Kenya in 2016 with her two sons. As a single mother with no steady source of income, Riziki could barely support her young family. In 2019, Riziki was referred to RefugePoint by a Community Navigator and began receiving livelihoods support.

During business training, RefugePoint staff asked Riziki to identify a high-demand skill or product that she could sell and to think about business opportunities within her community. Riziki immediately had the idea to sell sombe - a dish made of ground cassava leaves and peanut powder. Sombe is a staple food among the Congolese and Burundi communities but is in limited supply in Kenya. Due to the demand for the product, Riziki saw an opportunity to fill a gap in the market.

“When you run, you lose everything, but you carry the knowledge you have in your mind. I know how to cook, and I know how to sell,” she says. “When I attended RefugePoint’s Business Development Skills Training, I thought of combining those two skills. Many people in my class wanted to sell fabric, but I wanted to do something unique, something that I knew would have a demand.”

After developing and submitting a business plan in July 2019, which RefugePoint staff assessed for business potential, Riziki received a grant of \$310. The grant enabled her to buy a grinder, cassava leaves, and peanuts. Riziki managed to create good relationships with cassava leaf suppliers and is now able to get them free of cost from Kenyan farmers around Nairobi. Riziki receives many orders for her sombe from friends and neighbors, including not only Congolese and Burundians but also Kenyans, and has been able to sell large quantities.

Riziki’s profits enable her to pay her rent, cover the cost of daycare for her youngest son, and rent a small space for her business operations. Riziki was also able to purchase a gas stove. Riziki is no longer anxious. She is calmer and at peace, focused on what the future will bring.



Matisse* is a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) living with albinism. Matisse was a third-year student at the University of Economics in Congo. However, in 2015, he was forced to flee his home due to discrimination and threats he received as a result of his albinism. Matisse witnessed the murders of other people living with albinism, who are often killed for organ harvesting. He initially fled to Uganda but moved to Kenya in 2016 to escape Uganda's harsh climate.

Matisse always had an interest in business and was able to identify a unique way to connect with customers through social media. Matisse exclusively markets and sells his products, including shoes and clothes, through WhatsApp and Facebook.

"When I arrived in Kenya, I had no capital. I spoke with a friend and shared with him that I had potential clients, but no products to sell. My friend assisted me with a small amount of capital to start," he says. "I noticed that many of my friends communicated through WhatsApp, and I decided to begin using that as the main source of marketing for my products. I purchased clothes, took photos of them, and shared them within different groups on WhatsApp. Slowly, I began receiving orders."

In August 2019, Matisse received a livelihoods "expansion" grant of \$365 (36,500 KSH), which he has used to increase his stock.

**Names have been changed for protection of RefugePoint clients.*