UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

Guate's Wrap-up
Our impact last month

DATA-BASED HUMANITARIAN ACTION
More information, better assistance

Every day, the world sees **emerging technologies and innovations** that help us understand, collect, analyze, and visualize data at a faster pace.

The humanitarian context is no stranger to this data development. As humanitarians, we aim to understand these innovation changes and accept the challenge to responsibly and ethically adapt these tools to improve the work with do with refugees, asylum-seekers, and others in need of international protection.

UNHCR Guatemala was part of **2022 UNHCR's Data Innovation Impact Fund** awardees, with the A2SIT project led by the operation's **Information Management Unit.**

We sat down with **Pedro Martínez Llabata,** Peter as everyone knows him, to tell us more about the work of the **IM Unit** and this project:

Pedro Martínez, Associate Information Management Officer

1. Can you explain a bit about the Information Management Unit? What do you work on?

The IM unit's work covers a wide range of tasks. We handle the **entire information management cycle for various data systems** *in our operation and are involved in several exciting projects. Some are routine, like our Performance Monitoring System, which helps us track monthly progress and the impact of our projects on people's lives. But we're also pushing boundaries with some innovative projects. For instance, we are* **standardizing the use of R programming** *to clean and analyze data in a faster and more reproducible way. R is a programming language used as statistical software and a tool for cleaning and analyzing data.*

It is a demanding job but always interesting and rewarding. And I consider myself incredibly fortunate to work with an exceptional team of highly skilled and dedicated professionals. **Yonny, Juan Francisco, and Ana's** *expertise and commitment truly make all the difference in our endeavors.*

2. Why is it important to have evidence-based humanitarian assistance?

Having evidence-based humanitarian assistance is incredibly important because it ensures that **resources and efforts are effectively directed to where they are needed most**, *creating the maximum impact. Think of it as using a compass to steer us in the right direction. Let me illustrate this with a recent example from our Unit.*

We are consistently collecting and analyzing data on individuals in Mixed Movements. In our most recent analysis, we found that 36% of the surveyed individuals left their countries of origin due to violence, and half of them faced challenges accessing food and shelter. These insights help us to forge stronger partnerships with the various relevant ministries of Government of Guatemala to enhance protection measures and collaborate with fellow organizations and UN agencies to improve access to essential resources like food and shelter.

By basing our actions and strategic decision on data, we make sure our **initiatives are spot-on, efficient, and attuned to the actual needs of the affected communities.**

Juan Francisco Verdugo, Data Management Assistant

3. What is the A2SIT project about?
What results do you hope to see reflected from this project in UNHCR's work?

The *A2SIT (Administrative level 2 Severity Index Tool)* project was developed to tackle a common challenge in the humanitarian field: how can we best prioritize our limited resources to support the most affected communities? After digging into the issue, we realized that to make smarter choices, we needed a better grasp of the situation in each area. Often, sometimes we lacked information about community conditions, leading us to rely on subjective or capacity-based criteria.

To crack this puzzle, we designed a *web-based tool that crafts a replicable and standardized composite severity index.* Picture it like whipping up a smoothie. Each fruit is good on its own, but when you blend them, you get a more intricate and refreshing result. In A2SIT, the fruits are indicators, and the smoothie is the final severity index. The Web App acts as the blender—a statistical model that performs outlier treatment, normalization, weighting, and aggregation to produce the severity index. When you feed it with the indicators, the model automatically dishes out three severity scenarios, each with an easy-to-grasp choropleth map. This map lets you dissect the *on-ground situation* in the country with remarkable detail.

While it is currently in beta stage, the tool is already 100% functional. We are doing some user-testing and final enhancements, partnering with other keenly interested operations. Once it is ready for deployment, we hope it will aid UNHCR operations, government bodies, NGOs, other UN agencies, and especially humanitarian coordination structures. (we envision a great future in crafting Humanitarian Needs Overviews)

This initiative was awarded funding by the 2022 UNHCR Data Innovation Impact Fund.

NEW GUATEMALA DATA PORTAL

In July, UNHCR Guatemala launched its **Operational Data Portal** website. This webpage allows quick access to data dashboards, figures, and external reports.

Through the portal, users can also find an updated Power BI dashboard with recent numbers on the humanitarian assistance provided by UNHCR and its partners in the five Migrant and Refugee Assistance Centers (CAPMiRs) that UNHCR manages -*PowerBI is a Microsoft software that allows the building of interactive dashboards, making it easier to analyze and understand complex data*- The CAPMiRs reinforce the national response for people in mixed movements by covering entry and exit borders and transit routes.

ACCESS THE PORTAL

Every year, UNHCR holds several **discussion and focus groups throughout the country** with refugees, asylum-seekers, Guatemalans and others in need of international protection. These sessions, called participatory assessments, allow UNHCR to engage directly with the refugee population to understand the protection risks they face. More importantly, refugees, asylum-seekers, and Guatemalans at risk **participate as partners in the design of UNHCR's programmatic responses** to issues that directly affect their lives.

These participatory assessments involve discussions with women, girls, boys, men, and LGBTIQ+ individuals to gather information on the specific protection risks they face and to hear their proposed solutions.

LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum-seekers take part of a participatory assessment in Guatemala City.

Guatemalan women from the community of Livingston, Izabal participate in a group discussion.

GLOBAL TRENDS 2022
Displacement has more than doubled in the last decade

UNHCR's main annual statistical report**,** Global Trends (GTR), aims to provide insights into forced displacement and is a core analytical source for UNHCR and its partners. #GlobalTrends explains how and why worldwide numbers of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless people and others displaced changed over the year, including people who have returned to their countries or areas of origin. By the end of 2022, the number of forcibly displaced worldwide reached **108.4 million.**

READ THE REPORT

Would you like to support any of our initiatives and projects?
Please contact:
Jean Pierre Mora, External Relations Officer
moraj@unhcr.org - (502) 3191 7420

UNHCR's financial requirements for the Guatemala operation in 2023 (as of 15 August 2023)

Funded: 16.1 million USD (43%)	Unfunded: 21.51 million USD (57%)

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is grateful for the support of:

Private donors in Australia I Italy I Japan I Republic of Korea I United Kingdom I United States I Spain

Updated on August 2023

Follow UNHCR on social media to learn more about our work!