

The Food Bank of Costa Rica increased its beneficiaries by 45,000 people after a surge in donations

- *Initiatives such as Musmanni's "Ayudar es Pan Comido" (Helping is a Piece of Cake) project have supported the Food Bank's actions to increase the tons of food and essential items donated to vulnerable groups, including children, women and elderly people at social risk.*

July 19, 2023. Through contributions from sponsoring companies, the Food Bank of Costa Rica has increased the amount of aid to beneficiaries. With these resources, the institution has been able to increase its beneficiary population by +45,000 people. Thanks to these resources from the private sector, in the last four months, the Food Bank has been able to collect approximately 370 tons of food products and essential items per month in favor of socially disadvantaged groups.

Contributions to hunger reduction in the country

In the last four months, thanks to its "Ayudar es Pan Comido" program, the Musmanni bakery chain, has managed to contribute resources to the "Zero Hunger" SDG through its synergy with the Food Bank of Costa Rica organization.

€6.4 million colones

The Food Bank operates in 62 of the country's 83 cantons and annually delivers more than 3,000 tons of food and essential items to vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly, indigenous populations, refugees, women at social risk and people in rehabilitation or on the street, among others.

According to Francia Linares Orozco, executive director of the Food Bank, through the work carried out in more than three quarters of the national territory, it contributes to fulfill the second Sustainable Development Goal (SDG): "Zero Hunger". The effort to bring food to the most disadvantaged, according to Linares, is especially important given the increase in the cost of food suffered after the post-pandemic period and combined with high national and global inflationary indices.

Musmanni's valuable contributions

One of the donor companies that has increased its contributions to the Food Bank has been FIFCO, who through the Musmanni bakeries business line has promoted a special project called "Ayudar es Pan Comido", with which, during the months of February, March, April and May they have contributed €6,400,000 thanks to the donation of a percentage of the value of the sale of bread made in the stores of the bakery chain.

For Maria Pía Robles, FIFCO's Corporate Relations Director, the contribution made to the Food Bank organization is an example of the positive impact to society the private sector can achieve when it establishes synergies with social organizations in favor of the welfare of people who are at social risk.

The Food Bank of Costa Rica serves as a catalyst that uses donations from private companies to allocate food and basic necessities to social and community organizations such as Child Care Centers, Homes for the Elderly, Rehabilitation Centers for the homeless or drug addicts, and community kitchens.

According to data from December, 2022, among the Food Bank's beneficiary groups are the child population: 14,531 people (35%), mixed population: 8,763 people (21%), families: 8,069 people (19%), older adults: 2,460 people (6%), and other 8279 people that comprise an heterogeneous group that includes refugees, indigenous populations in need, people in rehabilitation and socially disadvantaged women, among others (20%).

Food is expensive for vulnerable social groups

According to FAO, the region with the highest cost for a healthy diet, according to 2020 data, was Latin America and the Caribbean (3.89 USD per person per day), followed by Asia (3.72 USD), Africa (3.46 USD), North America and Europe (3.19 USD) and Oceania (3.07 USD).

The United Nations indicates that there are almost 800 million people suffering from hunger worldwide and the vast majority come from developing countries. In Latin America and the Caribbean alone, there are 34.3 million hungry people (2015)¹.

On the other hand, in Costa Rica, it is estimated that nearly 900 thousand people do not have access to a healthy diet, an issue that is fundamental to ensure food security and nutrition and that directly impacts indicators of malnutrition, undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity.ⁱⁱ The combination of malnutrition, overweight and undernutrition has a critical impact on the economy and well-being of countries, as it directly affects productivity, development and the quality of life of people in the short, medium and long term.

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¹ https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/es/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/10/2_Spanish_Why_it_Matters.pdf

ⁱⁱ FAO, IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development), UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund), WFP (World Food Programme) & WHO (World Health Organization). 2020. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020. Transforming food systems for affordable healthy diets. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9692en>