



UNHCR  
Innovation  
Service

# Welcoming refugee communities into the world of gaming

# Who we are

World leading organisation  
providing protection to  
those forced to flee  
**since 1950.**

Present in  
**137 countries.**

Assisting  
**123 million**  
forcibly displaced people.  
**47 million**  
of them children.



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency

We help to save  
lives and build better  
futures for millions  
forced from home.

“

My community feels guilt about engaging in leisure activities.

**My community needs a chance to rest and play, to connect and be happy with other people.**

A statement jointly formulated with refugee designers



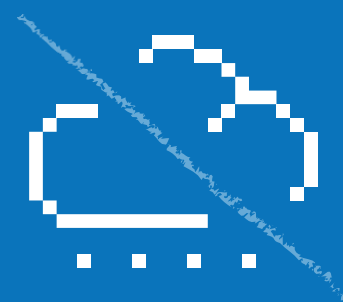
# The Challenge

## Refugees:



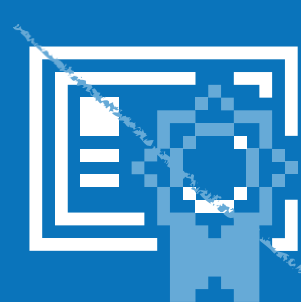
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Are 50% less likely to have access to the internet.



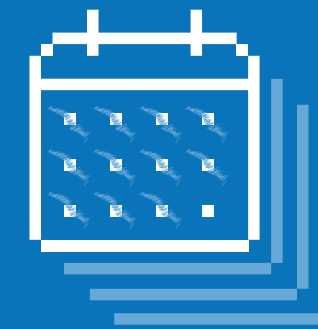
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Are excluded from most digital spaces and communities.



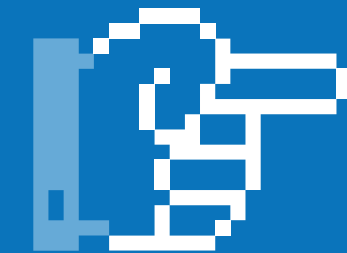
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Have low digital literacy and lack of employment opportunities.



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Experience loss of hope and meaning in protracted situations.



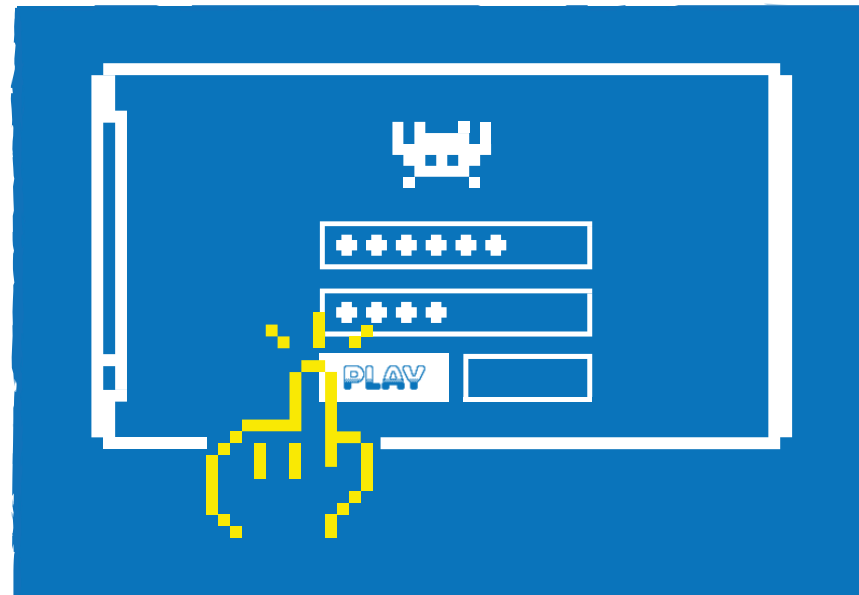
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Face stigma about gaming and digital leisure in general.

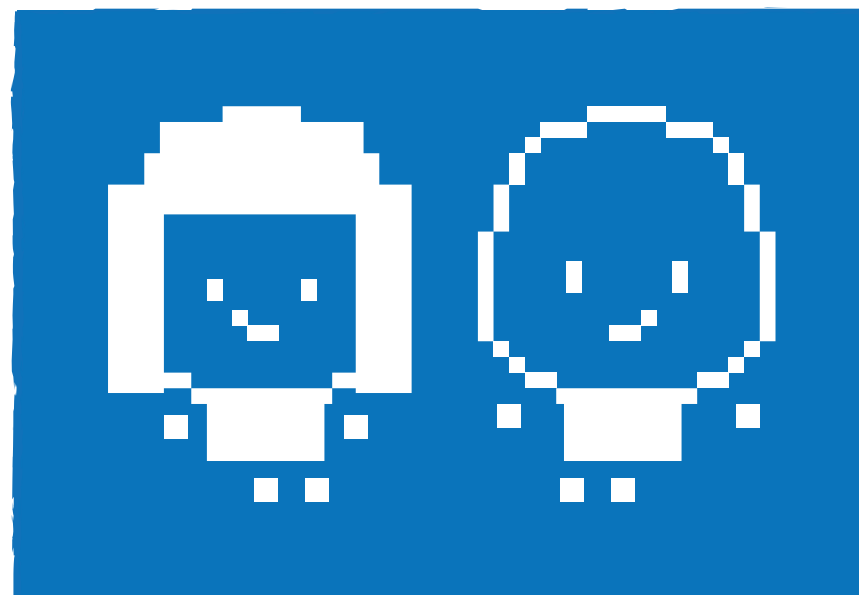


When the **next billion people** in developing countries connect to the internet, they will explore it through **entertainment and gaming.**

# The Opportunity

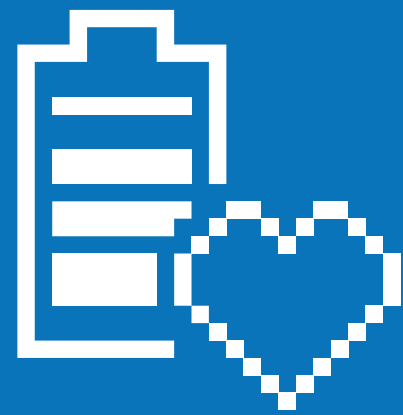


Bring new players and talents into the gaming industry, offering diverse lived experiences, fresh ideas and untold stories.



Gaming at the forefront of positive social change, driven by meaningful and impactful volunteering and mentorship opportunities for people in the industry.

# How can games help?

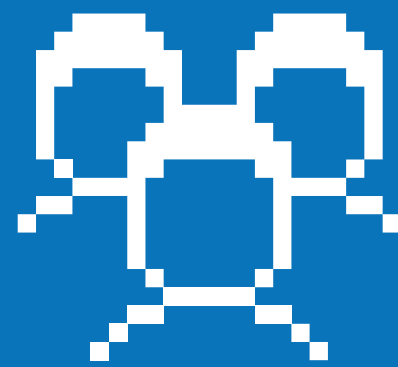


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## Well-being

Find joy and meaning in gaming.

Improved mental health, and peer relationships.

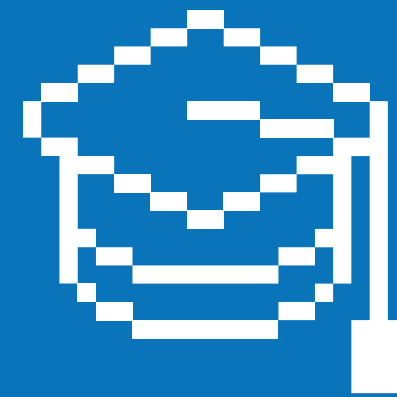


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## Community

Fostering local and international refugee gaming communities.

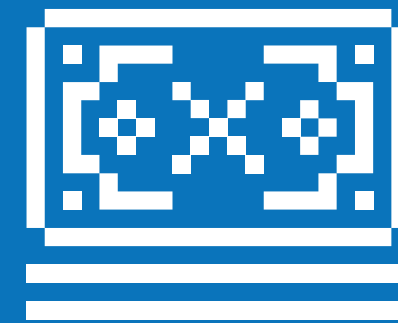
Integrate with host communities.



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## Learning

Improved digital literacy, problem solving, academic achievement and resourcefulness



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## Earning

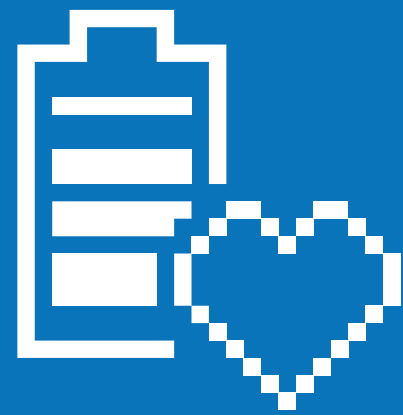
Work opportunities in the digital economy.

Refugee-led entrepreneurship and game development.



**Gaming Hub** pilot with refugees from Ukraine and host communities in North Macedonia

# Feedback from participants

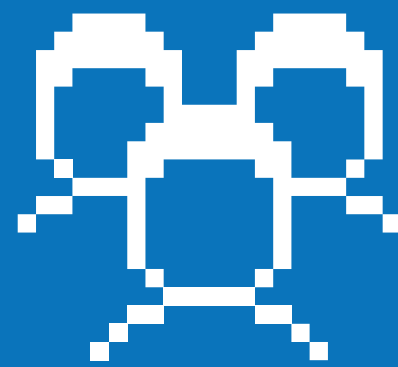


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## Well-being

**100%**

Report a positive impact on mood, relaxation and happiness.

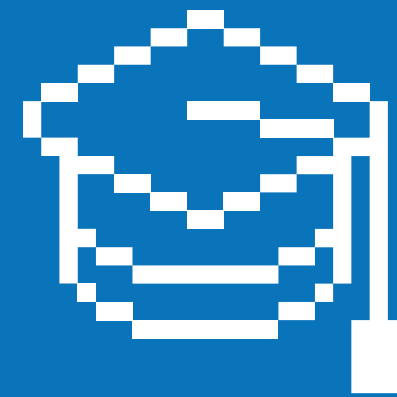


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## Community

**75%**

Report increased social connections and making new friends.

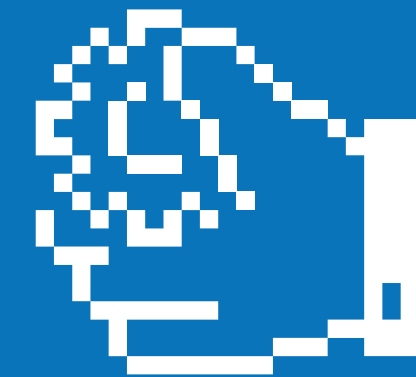


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## Learning

**89%**

Report improved skills such as teamwork and motor skills.



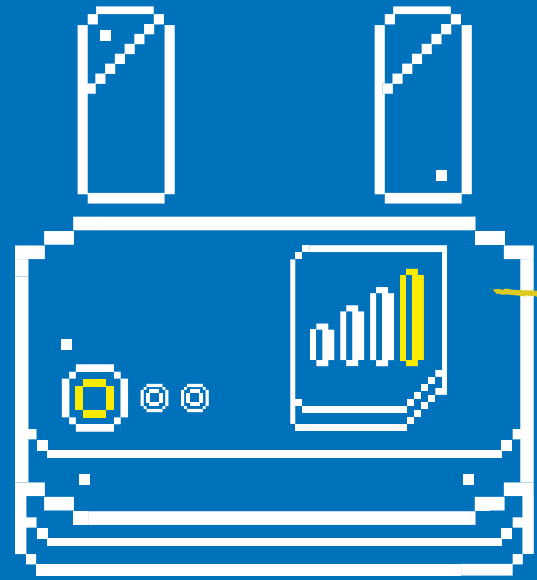
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## Application

**56%**

Find the new skills useful outside of the Centre (e.g. at school, home etc.).

An **ambitious global initiative** integrating gaming across diverse displacement contexts to **welcome millions of new refugee gamers** into the medium.

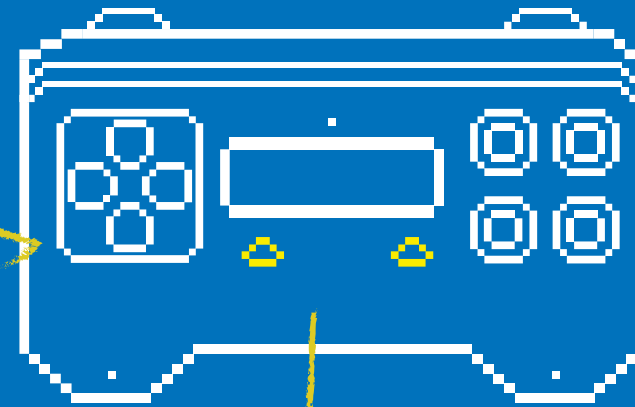


## Infrastructure

Build and upgrade **refugee led Gaming Hubs** in camp and urban settings.

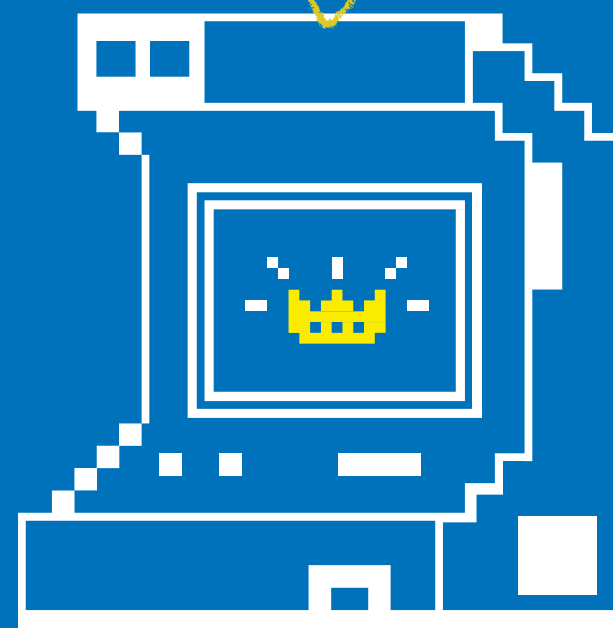
Ensure **safe and reliable access** to digital infrastructure.

Foster a **vibrant global community** of refugee gamers.



## Skills

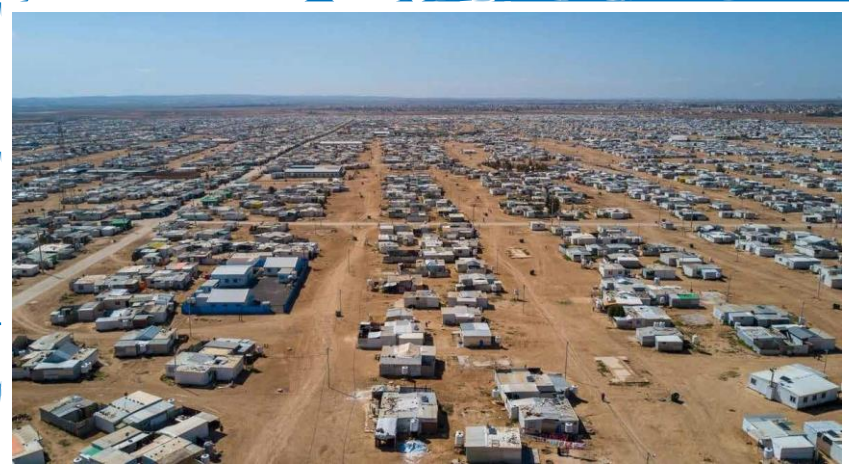
Provide **training and certification** in digital skills, including game development, esports, content creation and soft skills.



## Opportunities

Create new **pathways for refugees** to enter the gaming and esports ecosystems as athletes, developers, content creators and related roles.

# Potential Countries



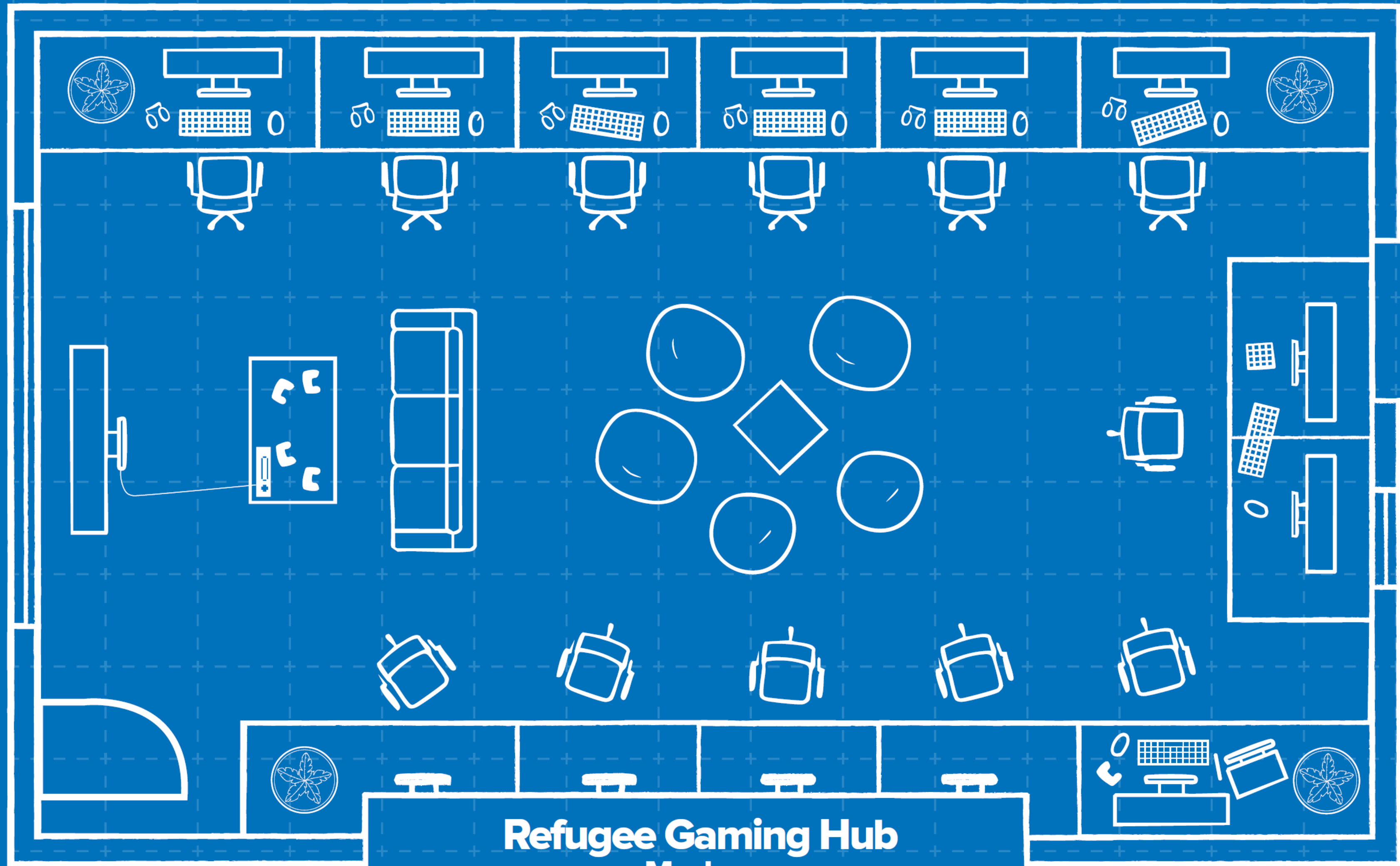
Zaatari, Jordan



Mahama, Rwanda



Boa Vista, Brazil



**Refugee Gaming Hub**  
Mockup

# Pathways



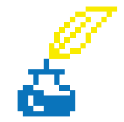
# What We Offer



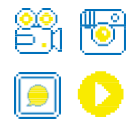
**Co-Design  
The Initiative**



**Seat at  
The Project  
Advisory Board**



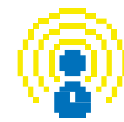
**Branded  
Refugee  
Gaming Hubs**



**Website, Press  
& Common  
Content Creation  
Opportunities**



**Use of UNHCR  
Logo & Brand with  
“In Partnership With”**



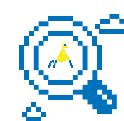
**Access to  
Senior UNHCR  
Staff**



**New Players and  
Talent for Your  
Games**



**Employee  
Volunteering  
and Mentorship**

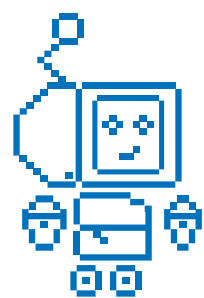


**Field Visits to  
Refugee Camps**



**UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador **Cate Blanchett** meets young **Rohingya refugees** at the UNHCR funded Temporary Learning Centre at the Kutupalong refugee settlement**

**We are looking for partners to turn this vision into reality.**

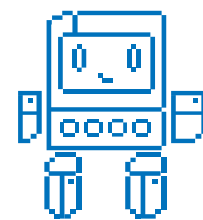


**Petar Dimitrov**

Associate Innovation Officer

[dimitrop@unhcr.org](mailto:dimitrop@unhcr.org)

[LinkedIn](#)



**Max Dalmau**

Video Game and Esports Consultant

[dalmau@unhcr.org](mailto:dalmau@unhcr.org)

[LinkedIn](#)



# Further reading

## Research

- [What can video games offer to forcibly displaced people?](#)
- [The digital leisure divide and the forcibly displaced](#)

## Articles

- [Gaming builds connections and skills among refugees and locals in North Macedonia.](#)
- [Co-creating the future of refugee gaming](#)