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# LOTUS FLOWER

BY SHE MATTERS

*EMPOWERING REFUGEE,  
MIGRANT AND ASYLUM  
SEEKING WOMEN TO ENTER  
THE LABOUR MARKET*

#### LOCATION

The Hague, NETHERLANDS

#### TIMELINE

Jan 2018- Present

#### TARGET AUDIENCE

Refugee, migrant and asylum seeking women; corporations

#### TYPE OF ACTION

Skills training, employment matches, emotional support

#### KEYWORDS

Economic empowerment and social inclusion



# ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

**She Matters** is a social enterprise recruitment agency specialising in empowering refugee, migrant and asylum seeking women to enter the labour market. Based on the needs and challenges of women and mothers, She Matters provides a holistic approach to their economic empowerment and social inclusion.

For businesses, She Matters specialised matchmaking service allows employers to meet with qualified candidates (through a traineeship) to fill their vacancies. She Matters provides administrative support on the hiring process and government subsidies. Offered services also include educational workshops on the benefits of diversity in the workplace.

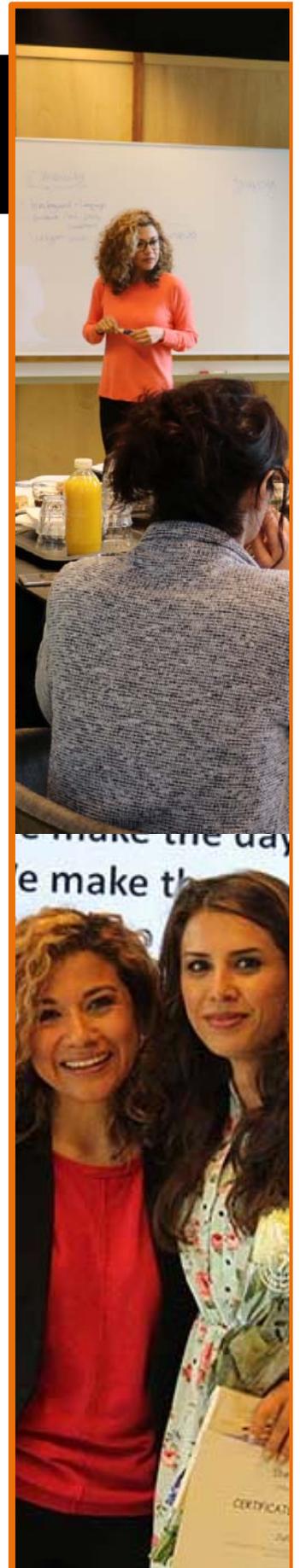
## IN BRIEF

**Name:** She Matters

**Creation:** 2017

**Location:** The Hague

**Aim:** empower refugee and migrant women to build their social and economic capital, boost their self-confidence



# CASE DESCRIPTION

## BACKGROUND

Representing half of the refugee, migrant and asylum-seeking population\*, women are twice as vulnerable to violence and exploitation.

On their journey to safety, they experience physical abuse, harassment, sexual and financial exploitation. Many have had to navigate an unfamiliar and often unnerving new environment after becoming the unexpected head of household.

With their courage and resilience, they bring to host countries new energy, innovation and cultural diversity, filling gaps in employment, lifting economies and keeping them vibrant and productive.

They provide for their families, securing education and health care for their family members, while finding new ways to earn or increase their income.

With the adequate support, their new roles represent an opportunity for transformative change towards gender equality and women's empowerment.



\* according to UNHCR

# DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

## She Matters Lotus Flower Programme

### LOTUS FLOWER TRAINING PROGRAMME

10 candidates attend 12 weeks traineeships, which include weekly workshops to learn new hard and soft skills, information and communication technologies skills, financial management using the Dutch banking system and cultural norms in the workplace.

Additionally, the candidate and her partner attend a workshop on gender equality.

The underlying foundation of the Lotus Flower Training Programme is emotional support. That is why each candidate is matched with a female mentor who can provide both emotional and practical support – whether answering questions about cultural norms in the workplace or issues surrounding childcare.

The programme also acts as a form of group therapy, allowing candidates to receive and provide support to each other for the duration of the programme.



Upon successful completion of the programme, the candidates receive a certificate in celebration of their success and new beginnings to a bright future. The employers can then decide whether to hire the candidate or simply provide a job reference.

The programme is also a valuable way to practice and enhance Dutch language skills, gain new skills, expand networks, and most importantly, regain lost confidence.

### TYPE OF ACTION

- Skills training
- Employment matching
- Emotional support



## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

The pilot started in January 2018, and is nearly completed. The candidates were matched with traineeships, mentors and trained.

Thanks to the programme's holistic approach, women gain higher levels of confidence and well-being.

Going through the programme with other women who share the same employment journey provides cohesion and a sense of solidarity and support among them.

She Matters documents every step of the programme and will publish a final report on the website.

## STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

The beneficiaries are migrant and refugee women.

Among the partners are corporations, such as TOMS and Canon Europe, who provide traineeship opportunities.

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 She Matters



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