Reaching the SUMMIT

ELEVEN STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION
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About
The Trust for the Americas

The Trust for the Americas is a non-profit organization affiliated with the Organization of American States (OAS). Established in 1997 to promote public and private partnerships, The Trust has implemented projects in 24 countries and worked with over 1,000 organizations in the region. Our initiatives seek to promote educational and economic opportunities as well as government accountability and transparency.

Our unique alliance with the OAS allows us to have access to decision makers within the region. This foundational partnership is the basis through which we create strong networks across member states and the private sector. Through the evolution of our region, The Trust continues to endure by facing challenges through strategic partnerships that promote cooperation for sustainable results.
The CIMA Project (Comprehensive Training for Women in Action in Spanish) is implemented in Mexico by The Trust for the Americas, with the support of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation from the United States. Since 2022, CIMA aims to increase the overall well-being and financial autonomy of young women aged between 16 and 29 through training in technical, life, digital, and empowerment skills, as well as mentorship focused on developing skills for the labor market. Additionally, participants benefit from support services, which may include psychosocial monitoring, assistance in administrative processes, and stipends. In this way, the CIMA Project supports the personal and professional development of participants and their integration into the job market within the hospitality and services industries in the Metropolitan Area of Mexico City.

CIMA has been successfully implemented by The Trust for the Americas in collaboration with its local partners over the course of two years. During this period, we have achieved significant milestones. As of January 2024, CIMA has graduated 434 participants, and 206 have secured quality economic opportunities.
Promoting Inclusion
thetrustfortheamericas.org
About the Book
“Reaching the Summit: Eleven Stories of Transformation”

This book is a testament to the success of the CIMA Project, a tribute to the triumph of all participants and those who collaborated in its implementation. Within these pages, you will discover the valuable contributions of individuals and organizations involved in the project, from The Trust for the Americas to our esteemed local partners. However, the focus of this compilation lies in the inspiring stories of transformation starring the CIMA participants. We extend a warm invitation to immerse yourselves in these narratives, which reflect the commitment, perseverance, and transformative power of the human spirit. We hope this book becomes a source of inspiration and motivation for all those seeking to reach their summits.
At The Trust for the Americas, we work tirelessly towards inclusion and equal opportunities, thereby contributing to the economic empowerment of communities across the Americas. With great enthusiasm, we present this book, which compiles eleven moving stories of the participants in our CIMA Project in Mexico City. Our team has dedicated their time and talent to ensure more women can access better economic opportunities. This commitment and dedication have yielded significant results, evidenced by the graduated women who now stand out as agents of change in their families and communities.

Our partnership with the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation has been fundamental in enabling hundreds of women in the region to emerge as actual examples of success, demonstrating through action that it is possible to transform lives. This book is a tribute to all who have supported the CIMA Project throughout its implementation.

We invite you to immerse yourselves in these narratives, which are sources of inspiration and demonstrations of human resilience.
In 2021, The Trust took on the challenge of designing the CIMA Project thanks to support from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. With excitement, we designed a project that seeks to empower young women in Mexico City through a comprehensive intervention that includes a training process of more than 100 hours in technical, digital, life and empowerment skills; personalized guidance and support services; and stipends that recognize the time and needs of participants. With enthusiasm, we shaped the multiple partnerships that brought knowledge and expertise to CIMA to offer a series of specialized products and services that responded to the challenges and objectives of the project with conviction, we joined forces with local implementing partners, CELAMEX, JCC and SERAJ, to materialize our vision together. After two years of implementation of the CIMA Project, it is with great joy and satisfaction that we see the results of the efforts of the multiple partners that have contributed to making this project a reality. And it is with total admiration that we see the achievements, small and large, of the participants who chose to invest their time in CIMA. The stories included herein confirm the potential that young Mexican women have to work towards their goals; they confirm their resilience, adaptability and learning capacity to work for their dreams. Supporting them in the fulfillment of their goals and dreams is our purpose.
The comprehensive training, support services, stipends, and follow-up are offered continuously to participants throughout the CIMA Project intervention.
Jóvenes Constructores de la Comunidad AC

The CIMA Project (Comprehensive Training for Women in Action) is a transformative initiative implemented by Jóvenes Constructores de la Comunidad (Youth Community Builders) to empower young women in the Valley of Mexico. Supported by The Trust for the Americas, this project is framed within JCC’s fundamental purpose: to help young people recognize their capacities and understand themselves as rights holders who take responsibility for their destiny and their community and positively transform it. Since its launch in 2022, the CIMA Project has been dedicated to strengthening the overall well-being and financial autonomy of young women aged between 16 and 29 in various areas of the Valley of México, including Álvaro Obregón, Azcapotzalco, Gustavo A. Madero, Iztapalapa, Miguel Hidalgo, Naucalpan, and Tlalnepantla.

CIMA provides participants with technical, life, digital, and empowerment skills through online and in-person training. Additionally, in collaboration with local partners, the project facilitates beneficiaries’ access to job opportunities in the hospitality sector in Mexico City. Beyond technical training, CIMA’s focus on life and digital skills prepares participants to face modern challenges with confidence and determination. Our commitment to empowerment is reflected in the personalized mentoring and supportive environment we offer, aiming to increase participants’ employability and cultivate their leadership and ability to impact their communities positively.

The CIMA Project is a vibrant testimony to the transformative power of education and empowerment. We will continue to advance our mission of providing growth and development opportunities to young women in the Valley of México, paving the way for a brighter and more equitable future for all.

José Ramón Garrido
National Director of JCC
We are a non-profit organization with over 65 years of experience, providing comprehensive support to young people. Among our beneficiaries, we assist individuals, sectors, and regions with limited resources, indigenous communities, and vulnerable groups based on age, gender, etc. Thanks to the CIMA Project and The Trust for the Americas, we have strengthened our service model to train and develop young people comprehensively, aiming to improve their quality of life by seizing opportunities and enhancing their talents and socio-emotional resources.

For CELAMEX, implementing this project was a collaborative effort that allowed us to train and connect over 130 young women in vulnerable situations with limited resources, incomplete academic backgrounds, single mothers, and women with no work experience, among others. By raising awareness about utilizing these spaces, creating new and better emotional and economic opportunities, and providing training in technical and life skills, digital literacy, and empowerment, we, along with over 18 corporate partnerships, have integrated them into the hospitality industry in Mexico City.

Currently, the gender gap is one of the most persistent labor issues in our country; women earn less, face discrimination more frequently, have jobs with high vulnerability, and encounter more obstacles to reaching leadership or managerial positions. Therefore, including women in the labor market is a cornerstone for their empowerment and autonomy. We are certain that it is the foundation of economic, mental, and emotional independence. We appreciate and admire the work of The Trust for the Americas; we look forward with great optimism to continue collaborating hand in hand in such a noble project to continue touching hearts, transforming lives, and improving our economic and human conditions.

Atenas Pérez
General Director of CELAMEX
Eleven stories of transformation
From Dreams to Achievements: Tania’s Goals

Tania (29), from Ecatepec, in the State of Mexico, faced challenges from an early age, forcing her to set aside any professional goals and, instead, focus on informal jobs. However, finding the CIMA Project, through local implementing partner, SERAJ, marked a significant turning point in her life. “I called and felt confident, a place where I could overcome my fears,” shares Tania. Participating in CIMA changed her perspective, enhancing her empowerment and social skills, as well as her digital skills through the use of Microsoft Word and Excel. “Through CIMA, I gained technical knowledge and employability skills,” shares Tania, highlighting her knowledge in customer service, sales, and digital marketing.

Tania resumed her goals by deciding to enroll in high school, while focusing on her emotional well-being. Thanks to the guidance of SERAJ staff, Tania found a safe space. “I found women who, like me, wanted to achieve their goals; women who would not allow motherhood to be an obstacle. This motivated me to move forward,” she expressed. Positive parenting workshops improved her relationship with her children and motivated her to be a better mother. Moreover, the economic support Tania received through the CIMA Project was vital. This support allowed her to cover basic needs and motivated her to stay enrolled in the program. Through hands-on training and personalized support at the SERAJ Center, Tania secured a job at a department store as a saleswoman, applying the skills acquired during her journey through the CIMA Project. “I have a formal job with benefits, training, and, above all, it is a job that helps me support my children,” shares Tania.

Tania aspires to complete high school, improve her digital skills, and, in the long run, lead a company. She thanks the CIMA Project and SERAJ for helping her transform barriers and fears into goals.
I called and felt confident, a place where I could overcome my fears.
Forging a Bright Future: Julieta’s Empowerment through CIMA

Julieta (23) found in the CIMA Project a gateway to a more promising future. Born in Naucalpan, in the State of Mexico, Julieta faced the challenge of balancing home life with her professional aspirations. “I wanted something more; I wanted to be able to finish my studies, enter the workforce, and have an income,” shares Julieta. She learned about CIMA through a poster from local implementing partner, JCC, at the local market, awakening her interest in a project that meant a significant opportunity. “This project completely spoke to my needs,” shared Julieta, emphasizing the flexibility that allowed her to balance her time between CIMA’s training and her children. Further, Julieta felt comfortable working with JCC staff and learning from her peers, both of which supported her journey through CIMA.

For Julieta, being part of the CIMA Project meant more than gaining technical knowledge and digital skills. Indeed, her journey involved profound changes in her emotional stability and relationships. “It helped me improve my relationships through a more assertive communication, enhance my leadership skills, and recognize myself as an empathetic and resilient person,” shares Julieta. With her renewed self-esteem, Julieta immersed herself in the digital world and secured a job at a multinational company, applying her new skills in customer service. “I learned and developed many skills, and, in addition to that, a certificate that recognizes me and adds to my CV” Julieta shares.

“Getting a formal job was a big step and a personal achievement. This way, I am not economically dependent on anyone,” shares Julieta, highlighting that her choice to join the CIMA Project was a significant decision in her life. Julieta’s next steps include continuing her training in technical skills and enrolling in university studies. Julieta’s perspective on life has changed; she now faces challenges with optimism and confidence in her abilities. Julieta shares “I never thought I would achieve so much with just one thing: committing to myself. Thank you, CIMA.”
CIMA completely adapted to my needs.
Building Communities: 
Fabiola’s Journey through CIMA

Fabiola (29) grew in an impoverished community in Mexico City. The lack of opportunities around her pushed her to seek growth and learning opportunities elsewhere. Her motivation led her to the CIMA Project through local implementing partner, JCC. She was looking for the opportunity to develop new skills to improve her employment prospects and be part of a supportive community.

Fabiola shares how the CIMA pathway, particularly the life skills courses, had a significant impact on her by helping her better manage her emotions, more effectively deal with stress and conflict, and thus, improving her relationships. Further, the technical skills courses taught Fabiola how to be more assertive and service oriented in a job setting. Her journey through the CIMA Project motivated Fabiola to get involved in community affairs, through which she directly contributed to the improvement of her neighborhood.

Upon completing the CIMA pathway, Fabiola decided to earn an income by offering cleaning services and care for seniors. Fabiola notes that her roles, both as a caregiver and a cleaning person, have given her the opportunity to demonstrate her ability to maintain a safe and orderly environment, as well as to provide essential support to those in need. She has learned the importance of empathy and personalized care, strengthening her ability to establish deep and meaningful connections through her work.

Fabiola plans to continue acquiring knowledge and skills that will enable her to take on roles with greater responsibility and contribute significantly to the well-being of those around her. She is determined to continue building a solid future for herself, focusing on quality service and care. Fabiola’s long-term goal is to contribute to the empowerment of women in her community. Fabiola shares: “I want to be a source of inspiration for other young women and encourage them to pursue their dreams and goals regardless of the obstacles they may face. I wish to continue participating in gender equality initiatives and work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable environment.”
I want to be a source of inspiration for other young women and motivate them to pursue their dreams."
Every time I read participants’ names, I see empowered women ready to continue along paths of secure and vital growth. I can only say THANK YOU.

Maite Capra,
Regional Coordinator and Facilitator of the CIMA Project
From Struggle to Success:
María’s Journey of Empowerment and Service

María (23) is a single mother from Mexico City. She was unemployed when she learned about the CIMA Project through local implementing partner, CELAMEX, while seeking training opportunities in her community. Through the CIMA Project, María was able to access training on, among other, technical skills to be job-ready, as well as to improve her overall well-being. The life skills module proved effective, allowing María to better manage her emotions and strengthen her emotional well-being. Her relationships with fellow CIMA participants were built on mutual respect and empathy, creating a trusting space where experiences were shared, and a community was built.

The personal impact on María was significant, who emerged as a more confident woman, reinforcing her leadership skills. María applauds the CELAMEX team for their efforts, understanding and empathy. CELAMEX’s goal was evident: dedicated support to enhance the personal and professional growth of CIMA participants.

An unexpected opportunity arrived to María when she was invited to join the CELAMEX team as an Assistant supporting the Institutional Development Coordination office. In this new role, María supports project management operations and closely follows participants in various CELAMEX initiatives. Her work motivates her to learn more about the non-profit world and inspires her to support more people.

Looking ahead, María is committed to maintain the economic stability she has secured to provide a good quality of life for her son. Inspired by her daily work, she considers the possibility of pursuing a degree in Pedagogy. María envisions a path of continuous learning and development and expressed her gratitude to CELAMEX and the CIMA Project for instilling in her the confidence that skills can flourish in all of us. Her story is a testimony to the power of personal transformation through the combination of a participant’s agency and the opportunities brought through strategic partnerships such as the ones behind the CIMA Project.
“Definitely, the CIMA Project was useful in many ways: personal, family, and work-related aspects of my life.”
Entrepreneurship and Employment: Inés’ Journey through the CIMA Project

Inés (29), a resident of Gustavo A. Madero in Mexico City, worked at her family’s small business selling tamales and was looking for opportunities. She found the CIMA Project through local implementing partner, CELAMEX. From day one, Inés appreciated the welcoming environment and the support of the CELAMEX team.

At the beginning of the CIMA training, Inés thought the project sounded “too good to be true”, but as time went by, she overcame her doubts and confirmed the CELAMEX team was deeply committed to supporting CIMA participants. Inés’ interest grew throughout the training, especially in life skills courses, which emphasised the importance of emotional well-being and self-esteem strengthening. She found the training on digital skills especially helpful, as it provided her with useful tools and best practices which she successfully applied to the family business.

Inés’ personal impact was profound: she now has greater confidence, assertiveness and a noticeable improvement in how she handles her emotions. Inés applauds CELAMEX’s work for its efficient coordination, flexible format and tools to make the most of the CIMA training. Inés secured a job opportunity, obtaining a position as a secretary at a governmental agency, where she provides day to day administrative support. Inés has now gained economic independence and looks forward to growing in her current position. She is thankful to the CIMA Project for helping her secure formal employment and equipping her with knowledge and tools to face life’s challenges.
The CIMA Project sounded too good to be true.
Empowerment in Action: Xiomara’s Story with the CIMA Project

Xiomara (27), from Ecatepec, in the State of Mexico, is a single mother. Before finding the CIMA Project, she was fully dedicated to her home and her family. Xiomara came to CIMA through a social media post from local implementing partner, CELAMEX. CIMA called her attention since, unlike courses that she took, the CIMA Project offered her comprehensive training that addressed her mental and emotional well-being. Further, the virtual training allowed her to more easily balance her training with her home and caregiving duties.

In addition to life skills courses, Xiomara found the digital skills courses particularly helpful. She highlights the crucial support she received from CELAMEX through counseling and assistance with her job search. Xiomara found a job at a fast-food restaurant. This new job provided Xiomara with economic stability, enabling her to care for her son and continue her education. Further, Xiomara shares her journey through the CIMA Project positively impacted her relationships. Xiomara’s future aspirations include pursuing university studies to further advance and provide for her son. She is thankful for the support of the CIMA Project and the impact it has had on many aspects of her life.
I developed leadership skills, and my perspective of myself is much better than it was before.
When one door closes, it's a sign to become architects of our own destiny. Awaken your restless spirit, cultivate talents, and redefine the ways of doing what others do. This way, you will be the master key that opens doors to opportunities for yourself and for others.

Leonardo Cárdenas,
Facilitator of the CIMA Project
Transformation in Action: Ana Karen’s Journey with CIMA and SERAJ

Ana Karen (22), from Mexico City, was as a single mother dedicated to her home, when she decided to change her life’s course and joined the CIMA Project through local implementing partner, SERAJ. Ana Karen’s entry into the CIMA Project marked a milestone: “It has been everything for me,” she confesses. Through the CIMA training, she strengthened crucial aspects of her life by boosting her self-esteem, improving her assertive communication, growing her self-confidence, as well as expanding her technical and digital skills.

At the beginning of her journey, Ana Karen faced some challenges as she experienced insecurity and anxiety, but the CIMA Project became her key ally. With time, she overcame her fears and improved her ability to express herself in public. Indeed, at Ana Karen’s cohort graduation ceremony, she faced her fear and spoke in front of the audience.

During her journey through CIMA, Ana Karen decided to return to high school, a significant achievement for her as she always wanted to continue her education.

Through workshops on positive parenting, Ana Karen strengthened her role as a mother, learning to “be a mother without guilt”, which positively impacted her family dynamic. In addition, stipend supports eased some of her financial stress, supporting her completion of the training pathway.

With SERAJ’s support, Ana Karen gained crucial professional experience at a hotel and a human resources agency. Based on her outstanding performance, Ana Karen secured a job as an Administrative Assistant in the latter. Ana Karen thanks SERAJ and CIMA for changing her life. “They offered me a new reality in which I overcame my fears and secured a formal job,” Ana Karen plans to complete high school and pursue university studies. “Today, I feel happy. I know what I want to do with my life, and this motivates me to achieve my goals,” she shares.
Today, I feel happy. I know what I want to do with my life, and this motivates me to achieve my goals.
Unlocking Potential: Ely’s Transformation through the CIMA Project

Ely (25), from Mexico City, found in the CIMA Project the key to unlocking her potential and opening doors to transformative economic opportunities. She discovered CIMA thanks to a poster from local implementing partner, JCC, marking a turning point in her life. “My expectations were clear: quality education and tools to advance,” shares Ely. “I had never participated in training like this before, so I was eager to learn more.”

Through her training on biases, resilience, and emotional intelligence, Ely underwent a significant transformation. Ely shares how she went from being a rather introvertive person, to becoming a more outgoing person who interacts openly, allowing her to forge more positive and stronger relationships. Ely attributes much of the personal growth she experienced to the CIMA training on life and empowerment skills, as well as the close support she received from JCC staff.

Ely successfully secured a job at a specialty coffee shop. Besides gaining financial stability, she found joy in providing exceptional experiences to her customers. Ely aspires to learn a new language, pursue university studies in tourism, and achieve full economic independence. Ely’s story highlights the fundamental role of the CIMA Project and JCC in her journey towards personal and professional growth, demonstrating that change is possible with commitment and support.
My expectations were clear: quality education and tools to thrive.
Erica: Breaking Barriers with CIMA

Erica (26) demonstrates that courage can transform destinies. A resident of “La Pastora” neighborhood in Mexico City, Erica faced challenges in a community with high crime. Motivated by her daughters, Erica decided to overcome her circumstances and defy expectations. “I want to convey strength to them for when it is their turn to be in my place,” Erica shares.

CIMA’s life skills workshops through local implementing partner, JCC, were key for Erica to discover her strengths and boost her self-esteem. “Today, I can say that I love myself and that I am capable of facing my fears,” she asserts confidently. Her passion for cooking led her to immerse herself in the restaurant industry. After a successful internship through which Erica improved her culinary techniques and gained confidence in herself, she secured a job at a restaurant. “It is a great challenge, but I do it with dedication and passion,” Erica highlights.

Through her journey with CIMA, Erica has created deep connections with friends and advisors, learning to work as a team. “I feel freer than ever to lead my life in my own way,” Erica expresses. Her message to other women is clear: “Women! I invite you to live this experience. Without a doubt, it will change the course of your lives.”

Erica is a living example of overcoming through determination, proving that, with courage, dreams can come true.
Today, I can say that I love myself and that I am capable of facing my fears.
We grow with the idea of changing the world and dazzling others with our talents. But it would be enough to evolve as individuals, share our knowledge, and be authentic to conquer the summit.

Carlos Noreña, Facilitator of the CIMA Project
Diana (20) was born in Guanajuato and moved to Mexico City looking for better job opportunities. She learned about the CIMA Project through a banner displayed in her neighborhood from local implementing partner, JCC. “Before joining CIMA, I was not working nor studying. I knew I wanted to work, but I did not know how to find a job. This project helped me stay committed to my goal,” Diana shares. At the beginning of the project, Diana felt skeptical, but as she progressed, she realized her fellow participants faced similar challenges, which helped her connect with her peers and experience a sense of community.

“Things can get complicated when you are looking for a job, especially when you lack experience. This is why this program has motivated me to grow.” For Diana, being part of the CIMA Project has been a transformative experience. She underwent changes in her professional and personal life, gaining greater self-awareness and realizing her potential. CIMA propelled Diana’s personal growth and provided her with perspectives on women’s empowerment. She learned the value of achieving financial independence through employment. Diana secured an internship as a Post-Service Analyst at a local company, where she handles a variety of administrative tasks. She feels well-prepared thanks to the CIMA training in digital skills and is motivated to exercise her leadership. Diana thanks the CIMA Project and JCC for their support: “I want to express my deep gratitude to the entire CIMA team for being a transformative tool in my life.”
I want to express my deep gratitude to the entire CIMA team for being a transformative tool in my life.
Maria’s Story in CIMA

Maria (25), from Mexico City, learned about the CIMA Project through local implementing partner, CELAMEX. The CIMA Project was of interest to Maria as she felt she was “living without a clear direction, without clear expectations for studying nor working.” Upon starting the CIMA training, Maria was particularly interested in gaining knowledge and skills around emotional intelligence. She thanks this training for helping her overcome her fear of public speaking. Additionally, she strengthened her digital skills through Microsoft Office tools. Maria highlights how supportive the CELAMEX team was and how helpful the stipend she received was. Further, Maria notes that her journey through CIMA gave her confidence to face interviews and guidance to secure a job as a secretary in a school.

Maria looks forward to continue learning to positively impact her work and professional relationships. For Maria, the CIMA Project had a significant impact in her life, leading her to secure a formal job and have greater clarity on her path towards personal and professional development.
The training on 'Women's Empowerment' strengthened my skills and knowledge, providing me with confidence in my work.
Acknowledgements
Women’s well-being and financial autonomy are pillars that demand our constant attention. Despite progress, gaps persist, hindering the full development of young women who are constantly exposed to underrepresentation in various job fields. For The Trust for the Americas’ team, it is an honor and a privilege to have embarked on this mission.

The CIMA Project has allowed us to adopt a people-centered approach. Its flexibility has been crucial, allowing us to adapt it according to the needs of the women we serve. Each of the eleven stories shared in this book is an inspiring testimony that renews our commitment. We deeply appreciate the 434 women who trusted The Trust for the Americas to accompany them on their journey towards improving their well-being.

This achievement would not have been possible without the exemplary collaboration of our local partners: JCC, CELAMEX, and SERAJ. Their committed teams and the wonderful people they comprise have forged invaluable connections with the participants, paving the way for the impact that CIMA aims to achieve. Likewise, the interventions and support received from our strategic partners, Cubo Social, IOTIC, GENERA, and Manpower, have allowed us to provide the necessary tools for young women’s development.

Finally, we express our gratitude to the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation for their continuous trust and support during the implementation of the CIMA Project. Their vision to support young people in pursuing quality jobs has broadened our horizons and redefined our way of creating impact. Their leadership has been a fundamental basis of this project. We extend our sincerest gratitude to our collaborators, partners, and, above all, to the women and their families who are the heart of CIMA. It is you who, with your courage and determination, bring to life the success stories that inspire us to move forward.
Recognition to
The Trust for the Americas Team

- Linda Eddleman – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Alexander Figueroa – Chief Operating Officer (COO)

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- Karen Priscila Castro – POETA Project Officer
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Be part of the change!

Your collaboration is vital for achieving our goals and moving towards a more inclusive future. You play a crucial role in this journey by engaging with our book and sharing our vision. We warmly invite you to continue being part of our mission by actively participating, volunteering, or spreading our message. Together, we can achieve significant and lasting change.

Join us on this exciting adventure!
A success story book about the CIMA Project
(Comprehensive Training for Women in Action)
in Spanish, CIMA means Summit