



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

From Displacement to Dignity: WFP's Approach to Refugee Self-Reliance and Food Security

Fueled by escalating conflicts and climate-related disasters, **the global refugee population has surged over the past decade**, more than tripling to an unprecedented **43 million**. **60% of them lives in countries facing food crises**, often relying on long-term humanitarian aid, and enduring long-term displacement (20 years, on average), with limited access to sustainable livelihoods.

In these grim circumstances, WFP's **Skills for Livelihood Opportunities (SLO)** initiative helps marginalized refugees and host communities **gaining marketable skills to access jobs and business chances**, in turn **improving their food security and reducing dependence on aid**.

Successful examples from **Egypt** and **Colombia** show how technical upskilling and private sector partnerships are **turning skills into real economic chances**.

BOOSTING SELF-RELIANCE THROUGH SKILLS FOR LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES

In 2024, WFP supported **11.6 million refugees in 42 countries**, through food aid and promoting their inclusion in national social systems.

At the [2023 Global Refugee Forum](#), WFP committed to **scaling up** its integrated programs to support long-term solutions and inclusion. This expansion targets greater **self-reliance** for refugees by strengthening both **agricultural and non-agricultural livelihoods**.

In parallel, through SLO, **WFP helps refugees become independent** by investing in their upskilling and livelihood opportunities, especially in areas with limited natural resources access.

The programme improves people's **chances to access new income prospects**, providing **market-driven technical vocational training** complemented by **conditional food transfers**.

Further, in alignment with the 70:20:10 model, **SLO pairs formal training with hands-on experience and post-training support**, like coaching, financial access, and job placements, **to turn learning into income**.

WFP SLO programme is inspired to the **70:20:10 model**:

- **10%** of learning comes from formal training,
- **20%** from social interactions and
- **70%** from experiential on-the-job learning.



In 2024, WFP supported **800,000 people** with food and cash aid and **trained over 340,000 in marketable skills**.

In 2024 SLO supported refugees in 7 of the 32 countries of operation, making up **30%** of participants. Over half were **women**, and **52%** generated new income.



★ EGYPT'S PATH TO INCREASED REFUGEE SELF RELIANCE

Egypt hosts **more than one million refugees**, the largest number in the Middle East and North Africa. However, the ongoing economic crisis has heightened their vulnerabilities, making self-reliance and social integration increasingly difficult.

In response to growing needs, WFP expanded its assistance beyond food and cash aid to invest in **long-term solutions**. Through SLO, it helps refugees and vulnerable Egyptians build self-reliance by developing **marketable skills, accessing sustainable livelihoods, and strengthening social cohesion** within communities.

Since early 2024, WFP has been supporting over **23,000 refugees** and vulnerable Egyptians with **vocational training and cash-based food assistance**, helping them accessing jobs and business opportunities. The impact is evident: **more than half of them had secured new sources of income**. And overall, these interventions have benefited **115,000 people**.

Photo page 1: WFP/Egypt CO
Photo page 1: WFP/Paola Campos
Photo page 1: WFP/Ali Jadallah

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★ BUILDING FUTURES FOR MIGRANTS IN COLOMBIA

Colombia hosts **over 2.8 million Venezuelan migrants**, many of whom remain vulnerable in accessing sufficient and nutritious food. Despite two thirds being employed, the 2024 Food Security Assessment found that 37% - around **1.1 million migrants - still face moderate to severe food insecurity**.

To address these challenges, WFP promotes socio economic integration in urban areas by focusing on food security, sustainable livelihoods, and social cohesion. In partnership with the government and private sector, **it helps migrants access decent jobs, supports small businesses, and encourages financial inclusion**.

From 2021 to 2025, the SLO Programme in Colombia supported **over 7,000 people**: 70% migrants (mainly Venezuelans) and 30% from host communities. It provided **employability training to 2,000 individuals** and helped **5,000 people to develop businesses** with seed capital in sectors like food, beauty, and retail. Overall, the initiative has benefitted **over 28,000 people**.

WFP's efforts have helped **improve migrants' food security by increasing household incomes** and reducing dependence on aid. Notably, by the end of 2024 88% of supported businesses remained active, and 33% of participants secured stable jobs, **showing strong potential for lasting self-reliance**.

LOOKING AHEAD

Aligned with the [SLO Global Proposal 2026-2030](#), WFP plans to:

- **Scale up** SLO programmes to reach more refugees in need.
- **Refine targeting and monitoring** to better track progress toward refugee self-reliance.
- **Strengthen partnerships** with governments, UNHCR, financial institutions, and development actors to support durable solutions.

