



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

CLIMATE AND RESILIENCE SERVICE (PPGR)

World Food Programme
Via Cesare Giulio Viola 68/70, 0
0148 Rome, Italy - T +39 06 65131
wfp.org



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.

