



EMPACT | Connecting youth to the future of work

Across the world, WFP is helping young refugees and vulnerable host communities to build a brighter future through learning digital skills and finding the path to alternative livelihood opportunities.

UN assessments have highlighted that the two primary drivers of displacement for most refugees are lack of safety and the loss of livelihood opportunities at home, which negatively impact people's ability to afford food. Food is essential and an important source of stability. When families are able to put food on the table, the need to move and leave home often diminishes. Furthermore, 85% of refugees are hosted by developing countries who are grappling with their own socio-economic challenges and struggling employment rates. The chances for these refugees ever becoming financially self-reliant are very low, leading to a continuous and unsustainable dependency on international aid.

LEARN AND EARN

WFP's Empowerment in Action Initiative, EMPACT, provides digital skills through a tailored, focused vocational training programme, and partners with leading tech firms to connect trainees with online work opportunities. Participants in the programme can learn



everything from navigating the Web, typing skills, and annotating images, to dedicated software training in programs like Microsoft Office and Adobe Photoshop.

Technology is changing the future of work—and working remotely is fast becoming the norm across many industries, with basic digital skills now a requirement for most jobs. Through WFP's EMPACT, those we serve are empowered to identify the appropriate marketplaces, supported to create accounts, and enabled to find work without being bound to the possibilities of the local market. This allows them to tap into a growing global demand for lower-skilled, labour-intensive services, such as data entry, data cleaning, image annotation, fact checking and photo tagging or editing.

EMPACT opens up this online realm to areas in the world that were previously unprioritized, effectively

shifting mind-sets and the understanding of what's a possible source of income.

CREATING BETTER OPPORTUNITY THROUGH DIGITAL TRAINING

Beyond the wage facilitation, one of the aspects of EMPACT's model is that it leverages the low-income data labor market as an incentive for talented, disadvantaged participants who would otherwise need a financial buffer to dedicate time to learning a new skill or advancing through a specific qualification and make their way out of informal/exploitative work. Moving beyond the basic training and entry-level work, selected participants in the program have the opportunity to learn more complex skills like coding, front-end developing and to manipulate intermediate or advanced softwares like QuickBooks® or Tableau®. Candidates are supported by coaches who mentor them and guide them through the uncertain and overwhelming world of training and online freelance work.



9,638

Students trained



52%

Female students



55,192

Lives impacted



4

Countries
Lebanon | Iraq | Kenya | Turkey

Since 2016, EMPACT has trained more than 9,638 individuals across twelve campuses in Lebanon and Iraq; 52% of participants being women. In Iraq's first year, almost 20% of students generated an income through online work and 33% of the alumni was employed 4 months after graduating.

The programme, supported by WFP's Innovation Accelerator, has recently launched a new, fully-remote pilot in Turkey in October 2020. A total of 100 people, 50% Turkish nationals and 50% Syrian refugees, participated in a four-month-long training on Microsoft Office, data analysis, data annotation, Java.

Contact: elisa.molena@wfp.org