



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Lebanon Country Brief February 2021



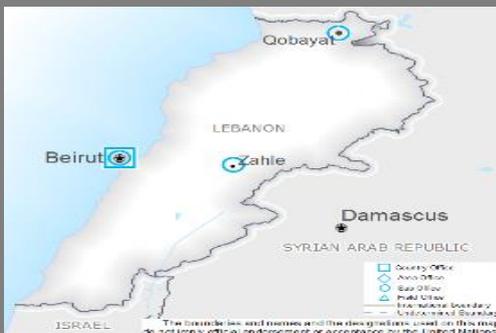
Operational Context

Lebanon, long considered a middle-income country, is rapidly sinking into poverty as it faces a triple shock from the unprecedented economic crisis, the impact of COVID-19 on employment and public health, and the consequences of Beirut port explosion. It is also at the forefront of the Syrian crisis: as of January 2021, there are 865,531 Syrian refugees registered in Lebanon by UNHCR. The massive influx of refugees has placed a significant strain on existing resources and host communities.

Rising poverty is leading to more food insecurity in Lebanon. The World Bank estimates that over half of the Lebanese population are poor, while 22 percent of the Lebanese population (approximately 850,000 people) are extremely poor. Meanwhile, almost the entire Syrian refugee population became extremely poor in 2020. WFP surveys found that 21 percent of Lebanese, 50 percent of Syrian refugees, and 33 percent of refugees of other nationalities are food insecure. Rising unemployment as a result of the economic crisis and COVID-19 measures is one of the key reasons both Lebanese and Syrian refugees are becoming food insecure.

The Lebanon Country Strategic Plan, which came into effect in January 2018, is aligned with the Government-endorsed Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (2017–2020), the United Nations Strategic Framework (2017–2021), and Lebanon National Agriculture Strategy (2020 – 2025). It positions WFP as a major partner of the Government and other United Nations agencies in crisis response and towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

WFP has been present in Lebanon since 2012.



Population: **6.8 million**

2019 Human Development Index: **93 out of 189**

Income Level: **Upper middle**

2019 Gross National Income per capita (PPP): **USD 14,655**

In Numbers



1,181,217 people assisted in February 2021

US\$21 m cash-based transfers made

US\$130.2 m six months net funding requirements (March 2021 – Aug 2021)

Operational Updates

- In February, WFP assisted a total of 1,181,217 beneficiaries through cash-based transfer modalities amounting to USD 21 million and through distribution of family food parcels as part of the COVID-19 and economic crisis response. The people assisted were 338,455 vulnerable Lebanese, 820,354 Syrian refugees and 22,408 refugees of other nationalities.
- A new preferential exchange rate of LBP 6,240 for the dollar (instead of LBP 3,900) was applied as of 4 February for humanitarian operations by WFP and other LOUISE agencies. As a result, though more beneficiaries were assisted in February compared to January, the dollar value of cash transfers is significantly lower. The transfer value for food assistance for February remained LBP 100,000 per person while the non-food transfer value was maintained at LBP 400,000 per household.
- Lockdown measures began to be eased throughout February and WFP and partners received the necessary authorization to carry out both card and in-kind food distributions. In February, in response to the impact of COVID-19 and the economic crisis, WFP supported about 35,000 vulnerable Lebanese families (160,000 individuals) across Lebanon with food parcels. As movement restrictions continue to be lifted, WFP plans to assist up to 50,000 Lebanese families with in-kind assistance in March.
- On 24 February, distributions of take-home rations resumed after being on hold since mid-January due to strict COVID-19 lockdown measures. Families of all students enrolled in the 81 WFP-assisted schools will be provided a 30 kg food parcel through distributions at school premises, which will continue until schools resume in-person learning.
- Under the Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) activities, agriculture infrastructure as well as forestry activities resumed in February. While the resumption of Food Assistance for Training (FFT) in-person activities is set at a later stage in the COVID-19 lockdown plan, WFP and partners are carrying out distance training and capacity strengthening activities in health, hygiene, management training, and more.
- WFP assisted 105,124 vulnerable Lebanese through the NPTP programme in February and will distribute food e-cards to new beneficiaries under the scale-up plan once lockdown restrictions are eased.

WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2021)	
Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
1.88 bn	1.41 bn
2021 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (March 2021 – August 2021)
532 m	130.2 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Food-insecure refugees – including school-age children – and crisis-affected host populations have access to lifesaving, nutritious and affordable food throughout the year

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Unconditional resource transfers to support access to food (CBTs)
- In-kind food assistance
- School meal activities

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable women and men in targeted refugee and Lebanese communities sustainably improve their skills, capacities, and livelihood opportunities by 2020

Focus area: Resilience-building

Activities:

- Individual capacity strengthening activities (CBTs)
- Asset creation and livelihood support activities (CBTs)

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable populations in Lebanon are enabled to meet their basic food needs all year long

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

- Unconditional resource transfers to support access to food (CBT)

Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 5: National institutions and national and international humanitarian actors are supported in their efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their assistance

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

- Institutional capacity strengthening activities

Assessments & Monitoring

- As of 28 February, despite continued lockdown restrictions, 96 percent of beneficiaries who received their entitlements redeemed their assistance through shops and ATMs.
- The November-December 2020 edition of the mVAM report to assess the socioeconomic and food security situation of Lebanese found that 22 percent of households consumed inadequate diets and 41 percent reported facing challenges in accessing food and other basic needs. The full report is available [here](#) and the full 2020 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees can be accessed through this [link](#).
- The latest assessment of market prices indicates that the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) reached a total

cost of LBP 156,367 in February 2021, marking a 12 percent increase in just one month.

- In February, household process monitoring was conducted remotely via phone calls, and as lockdown restrictions gradually lifted, ATM monitoring, crowd control, and management gradually resumed to ensure the necessary precautions and safety measures are taken when beneficiaries redeem their assistance at the ATMs.

A Story Worth Telling



"I want to grow up and support my parents with whatever they need," says Amira (left). Photo: WFP/Edmond Khoury

It is young Amira's dream to study hard and make something of herself. "When I grow up, I want to become a dentist," she says. "I will treat any patient that comes to me, with or without pay."

Amira is the only child in her family of six who is getting an education. She moved with her family to Lebanon in 2016 to flee the Syrian war and they have been enrolled in WFP's Multi-Purpose Cash Programme since 2018. In support of Amira's love for education, her parents use a portion of the cash to pay for her school.

Similar to Amira, many refugees in Lebanon are experiencing the same dire living conditions, which have only become worse in the past year. In 2020 alone, WFP supported 966,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon, of which around 220,000 were supported with WFP multipurpose cash assistance to cover basic food and non-food needs. This assistance allowed beneficiaries to meet their basic survival needs from food, shelter, medication, and education.

Donors

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