

WFP's Response Inside Syria and in Neighbouring Countries: Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq

Situation Report # 16

Reporting Period: 19- 25 August 2012



World Food Programme

Fighting Hunger Worldwide

HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

SYRIA – The situation in Damascus and Rural Damascus has further deteriorated during the reporting period. The situation in Aleppo also remains tense with on-going military operations. As a result, humanitarian needs continue to grow at an alarming rate and intermittent access constraints persist.

Budget revision number 6 with beneficiary caseload reaching 1.5 million beginning September was endorsed by the Project Review Committee on 21 August, 2012.

August food dispatches arrived in all governorates with the exception of Aleppo and distributions are on-going in the majority of targeted areas.

JORDAN – During this reporting period, WFP has provided an average of over 21,200 meals per day in transit camps in Ramtha and Al Za'atari, reaching more than 13,000 beneficiaries daily. In addition to hot meals, WFP is distributing welcome packages to new arrivals who come to Al Za'atari camp mostly in the middle of the night, requiring a 24/7 WFP staff presence.

WFP cooperating partners completed the distribution of vouchers for August reaching over 21,000 beneficiaries.

LEBANON- The August cycle is on-going in the North: A total of 1580 households received vouchers, while 229 households in areas with limited access or other restraints received food packages.

The first round of August voucher distribution has been completed in the Bekaa Valley, reaching about 12,000 beneficiaries. The second round of voucher distribution in Central Bekaa has been postponed due to security threats and will take place next week for about 2,400 refugees

IRAQ - WFP, UNHCR, Islamic Relief Worldwide and DDM are working together to ensure well-coordinated distributions of the 137 mt of food to registered Syrian in Domiz camp and those hosted in communities in Dohuk.

TURKEY- The voucher specialist arrived in Turkey on August 21 and is setting up the programme to start voucher distribution to an initial caseload of 15,000 beneficiaries by mid-September.

Kcal/day/person- In Syria, WFP is providing about 1300kcal per day to each person assisted. In Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq WFP is providing about 2100 Kcal per person and day through either vouchers or food packages and will be providing the same amount of Kcal/day/person in Turkey through vouchers from mid-September.



Voucher beneficiaries in Bekaa Valley, Lebanon ©WFP/ Maria Anguera de Sojo

SITUATION UPDATE

The situation in Damascus and Rural Damascus is deteriorating with entry roads into the city of Damascus as well as border crossings with Jordan and Lebanon intermittently closed during the period under review. Additional checkpoints have been established inside as well as in between the two governorates. Armed activities intensified in Damascus and its suburbs as well as Rural Damascus, Idleb, Hama, and Deir Ezzor resulting in access constraints as well as growing humanitarian needs.

The situation in Aleppo also remains tense with increasing numbers of people seeking shelter in public facilities such as mosques, schools, public parks and university premises. Based on a report from WFP Sub-Office in Aleppo, over 64,000 people are now sheltering in public buildings in Aleppo city and about 200,000 in Rural Aleppo.

The on-going volatility coupled with unstable connectivity continues to pose challenges to WFP

operations in terms of dispatch, monitoring and procurement. Access to and from Damascus and traveling on inter-governorate highways is still unpredictable. Difficulties in securing trucks for food dispatches, especially to the cities of Aleppo and Homs due to the deteriorating situation, as well as diesel scarcity persist. Communication is inconsistent in Deir Ezzor and Aleppo governorates.

UN agencies agreed that Homs is now in dire need of humanitarian assistance. A joint UN mission is to be organized within the next week to assess the current humanitarian situation and needs in Homs as well as the possibility of establishing a fixed presence in the city.

During the reporting period, the situation in Syria was characterized by continued volatility resulting in growing humanitarian needs

WFP RESPONSE

FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME: Pending the latest Budget Revision of the Emergency Operation (EMOP), WFP continues to provide food assistance to 850,000 beneficiaries in 14 Syrian governorates that have been directly or indirectly impacted by the current events.

As humanitarian needs inside Syria grow with the capacity of SARC being overstretched, WFP continues to provide financial support to SARC to cover offloading costs, salaries and incentives for their staff and volunteers in all 14 branches, ICT equipment, trucks and light vehicles, mobile storage units, and warehousing capacity. Training plan for SARC staff and volunteers is also being prepared to take place in September.

July food distributions concluded on 22 August with 821,125 beneficiaries reached - 99.6 percent of the total dispatches for 824,875 beneficiaries.

August food distributions started on 12 August and are on-going in the majority of targeted areas. As of 26 August, 32,350 family food rations for 161,750 beneficiaries were distributed.

During the August cycle, WFP food basket will vary depending on the availability of food, pre-packaged rations and cooking gas.

WFP monitoring activities including household visits and market price collection continued in areas where the situation permitted.

LOGISTICS ACTIVITIES – WFP continues to dispatch food to the final distribution points (FDPs) directly and/or through the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC).

Food dispatches for the August cycle commenced on 10 August. As of 25 August, 64,600 rations for 323,000 beneficiaries arrived in the majority of targeted areas in all governorates except for Aleppo.

COORDINATION: Coordination meetings for the Logistics and Food Sectors continue to take place on a bi-weekly basis. WFP established a logistics

coordination mechanism in Damascus for those undertaking logistics activities in response to the situation in Syria. On 28 August, the Logistics Sector Coordination meeting will be held in Amman to ensure a coherent flow of logistics information to all stakeholders.

WFP continues to provide logistics support to other agencies. During the reporting period WFP provided handling services and transportation for over 51 m³/13 mt of baby and family hygiene kits and food kits on behalf of UNICEF.

RESOURCE UPDATE

The EMOP is currently valued at US\$ 103.2 million. The budget revision will increase the overall EMOP value to approximately US\$136 million.

More than US\$61 million has been resourced thanks to contributions received from UN CERF, USA, Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, European Commission, UK, Finland, Ireland, Germany, Kuwait, France, Russia, and other multilateral donors in addition to carryover from previous operations. The most recent contribution of over US\$1 million has been provided by Switzerland.

The current shortfall stands at US\$42 million and will increase significantly once the budget revision has been approved.

Urgent funding is also needed to start implementing activities under the special operation, aimed at augmenting WFP's capacity in logistics, communication and security amidst the increasingly challenging environment.

Jordan

SITUATION UPDATE



As of 23 August, UNHCR has registered 43,962 Syrian nationals while the Government of Jordan reports that over 150,000 Syrians have entered the country. As the situation in Syria persists, large numbers of Syrians continue to cross the Jordanian borders seeking asylum, mainly through the cities of Mafraq and Ramtha.

Although bailing was suspended, the Government of Jordan has reconsidered for extreme vulnerable cases and family reunions and accepted some bailing on a case-by-case basis.

The rate of new arrivals remains high, with a daily average of 845 Syrians crossing the border though some days are witnessing over 2,200 newcomers. Those crossing illegally are transferred directly to the Zaatari camp.

WFP RESPONSE

In August, WFP is targeting 22,888 registered refugees in the communities and in the Cyber City transit camp with vouchers. WFP is also assisting an increasing number of Syrian nationals (an average of 13,000 this week) in additional transit centers close to the border with hot meals.

During the reporting period, cooperating partners completed the distribution of vouchers for the first month cycle. A total of 21,218 beneficiaries received vouchers. The redemption of these was completed in the designated retailers.

Field Level Agreements (FLA) with Islamic Relief Foundation and Human Relief foundation have been signed while the agreement with Save the Children will be signed early next week.

WFP has provided an average of over 21,200 meals per day (10,129 breakfast and 11,081 lunch) through its implementing partner Tkiyet Um Ali (TUA) in transit camps in Ramtha and Al Za'atari, reaching more than 13,000 beneficiaries daily.

WFP and UNHCR are working together to set up kitchen facilities for refugees at AL Zaatari camp to transition from hot meal distribution to dry rations. This will enable refugees to prepare their own meals and diversify their food consumption. WFP is currently prepositioning dry food commodities for Al Za'atari camp in Manfraqa Food Distribution Point.

In addition to hot meals, WFP is distributing welcome packages to new arrivals who come to Al Za'atari camp mostly in the middle of the night, requiring a 24/7 WFP staff presence. The welcome packages are comprised of

six ready to eat non-perishable items and they are prepositioned at WFP's rub hall in the Al Za'atari camp.

Monitoring Three WFP Field Monitors are dedicated to Za'atari and King Adullah Park, and another two are dedicated for monitoring WFP's voucher programme including shop visits. During the reporting period WFP conducted 14 hot meal distributions, 10 voucher distribution site and 33 shop monitoring visits. Main findings and following actions taken include:

HOT MEAL DISTRIBUTIONS: The timely distribution is challenging due to high numbers of beneficiaries; WFP is increasing distribution staff. Beneficiaries have highlighted a lack of dietary diversity; WFP is requesting partners to diversify hot meals. Refugees have requested to cook their own food, however there are no kitchen facilities in the camp; UNHCR is installing kitchens and WFP is constructing a food distribution center to allow dry ration distribution. Furthermore, the upcoming establishment of Food Management Committees will facilitate further the elevation of critical issues.

VOUCHERS: Following the request from beneficiaries, WFP has expanded the list to include fresh/ frozen meat, fish and chicken as well as other complementary items in order to meet the Syrians needs and habits. Vegetables and fruit are popular items. In addition, during the reporting period, shop monitoring form and distribution checklist has been developed and are being used in the field



Construction of WFPs food distribution point in Al Zaatari Camp © WFP/ Dorte Jensen and Hani Abuarja

SITUATION UPDATE

As of 23 August, UNHCR has registered 39,506 Syrians in the country: 21,589 in the North and 16,419 in the Bekaa Valley, with the remaining 1,498 in Beirut and the Jabal area. An additional 12,548 Syrians have contacted UNHCR to be registered. Part of the registered caseload is awaiting receipt of their cards required to obtain WFP vouchers; WFP is assisting these refugees with family food packages and will phase over to vouchers as soon as UNCHR finalises their registration.

Following a number of abductions last week, the situation remained very tense across Lebanon. From 20

to 24 August violent clashes between Sunni and Alawi rival areas in northern Tripoli city broke out. Several persons were reported killed and all coastal roads linking Akkar District and Beirut were officially closed. Due to a combination of high insecurity and the lack of UNHCR's NFIs (which were stuck in Tripoli), the humanitarian activities in the North were disrupted and the shop assessment in Tripoli as well as the food distributions in Wadi Khaled area (Akkar) were postponed. In Bekaa Valley, all operations and staff movements were suspended for 2 days due to security threats.

WFP RESPONSE

In August, WFP is targeting over 33,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon:

In the North, The August cycle started in Akkar in mid-August: A total of 1580 households received 7800 vouchers; while 229 households with problem cases eg households who came to the wrong distribution points and therefore could not receive their vouchers or where problems are being resolved in the UNHCR database received food packages. Some vouchers were immediately redeemed in the surrounding selected shops; WFP staff made frequent inspections in all shops to make sure that the regulations were respected. However, the completion of the distribution in Wadi Khaled was postponed as UNHCR's NFIs (distributed alongside WFP vouchers) were blocked in Tripoli city. As usual, all WFP staff were actively involved in the distribution process along with the partner DRC. The voucher programme will begin in Tripoli area in September.

In the Bekaa Valley: Two rounds of distribution are planned to take place in August to accommodate delays in UNHCR registration and ensure maximum coverage of beneficiaries for a planned figure of 14,403 people; the first round of August voucher distribution is finalised and has reached about 12,000 beneficiaries.

The second round of voucher distribution in Central Bekaa has been postponed due to security threats and will take place next week for about 2,464 refugees.

WFP and DRC finalized the July voucher reconciliation exercise for north Bekaa; a total of 2,954 vouchers have been redeemed by beneficiaries in the month of July. WVI reconciliation is still pending.

In remote and conflict-affected border areas, WFP will continue to provide food parcels. About 200 food packages (reaching 900 persons) have been distributed through DRC to UNHCR registered households in Masharia al Qaa. The August round for additional remote villages (about 250 registered refugees) is running later than planned due to the above security issues.

"We crossed on foot at night. My kids were screaming and calling God's name all the time. Fatima, my daughter was shaking all the way to Aرسال."
Rima, Syrian refugee from Al Qusayr, a village near Homs

ASSESSMENTS

North: Shop assessments are on-going in the Tripoli area for the voucher programme, but were temporarily suspended due to the clashes in the city. The 25 selected shops in Akkar districts are now receiving the first redeemed vouchers of August cycle and are closely monitored by WFP staff.

Bekaa Valley: WFP has developed a shop database to identify gap areas where extra shops need to be included. The database includes information on the following: area, village, shop, beneficiary numbers, gaps, GPS coordinates, remarks. World Vision (WVI) conducted a shop assessment in Zahle, and collaborated with WFP to select 2 shops for the 35 HH registered in this area.

MONITORING

Currently, WFP staff in the North is conducting monitoring visits on the 25 selected shops receiving the first vouchers in Akkar.

During the previous reporting period WFP in Bekaa Valley had conducted 12 shop monitoring visits and one distribution visit. Main findings include In general the beneficiaries are satisfied with the voucher system however some misuse of voucher has been reported highlighting the need for beneficiaries to cover other urgent needs such as cooking gas, NFIs and hygiene products.

WFP will continue monitoring, building a more comprehensive picture of voucher utilisation and addressing issues raised. WFP has also shared the information with UNHCR who is now working with other organisations to see how the NFI assistance can meet some of the non-food needs raised by beneficiaries. WFP will also request a decision on the use of the UNHCR identity card in shops as this should reduce the risk of voucher selling.

Coordination: WFP received an official request from HRC to assist Lebanese returnees. A meeting was held this week with HRC, IOM, UNHCR and CPs, to work on a strategy to assist this specific caseload. HRC will chair a working group including WFP and their partner DRC to finalise this strategy. This caseload of less than a thousand families could be included in the WFP beneficiaries for the September distribution cycle if the interagency strategy has been agreed.

Iraq

SITUATION UPDATE

According to the UNHCR report of 23 August the current total number of Syrian in Iraq is 15,598 including 11,626 hosted in Kurdistan Region.

The construction of the UNHCR and Iraqi Red Crescent camp at Ksak (Talafar district of Ninewa) with a capacity for 1,000 people is on-going. UNHCR will conduct an assessment of Ksak camp on 27 August. A UNDSS mission is assessing the security situation in the area for humanitarian movement. Iraqi returnees in this area will be accommodated in school buildings.

Al Qaim is about to reach 5,000 Syrian refugees: one section of the camp is almost finalized and according to UNHCR, 1,832 Syrians previously accommodated in boarding schools have entered the camp. As the schools are opening in September, Islamic Relief Worldwide is installing tents in Al Qaim to accommodate other people that are still in hosted schools. The camp will have a capacity for 6,000 refugees. Food assistance is provided by the Government of Iraq and the local community.

WFP RESPONSE

WFP is targeting a caseload of up to 15,000 people Syrian nationals by December with the provision of direct in-kind food assistance; priority is given to those in the Domiz camp, Dohuk governorate.

The Tripartite Agreement between UNHCR, WFP and Islamic Relief Worldwide-Iraq to distribute food to Syrian nationals from mid-August, including the 3,000 people in Domiz camp and to those living with host communities, has been signed by all parties.

WFP, UNHCR, Islamic Relief Worldwide and DDM are working together to ensure well-coordinated distributions of the 137 mt of food to all registered Syrian in this Domiz camp and those hosted in communities in Dohuk.

Assessments: The final report of the Joint UN Interagency Needs Assessment of Syrian Nationals in Iraq has been cleared by WFP. UNHCR as the lead

coordinating agency for the refugee operation under the RRP has transmitted the report to Kurdistan Region Government authorities and is awaiting their approval before dissemination to internal and external stakeholders including donors. Preliminary findings of this assessment indicate that Erbil is conducive to voucher programme implementation to

serve the Syrian nationals in the area, including those in Domiz Camp.

Coordination: Following the request from the Ministry of Displacement and Migration to assist Syrian national in Al Qaim, WFP met with UNHCR to discuss way forwards in the area.

Turkey

SITUATION UPDATE

On 24 August, the Government of Turkey officially announced that the number of Syrians registered is 78,409, including those accommodated in camps, temporarily in the boarding schools or in hospitals undergoing medical treatment. The number of Syrians accommodated in the schools is more than 21,000 persons (27 percent) of the total number. The current official number of 78,409 does not include the 1,500 new arrivals in the 24 hours between 24-25 August. Unofficially, the estimated total number is therefore about 80,000, which marks an increase of more than 80 percent since 23 July.

Local officials informed that by the end of August, four camps (Gaziantep-Karkamış and Nizip, Kahramanmaraş-1 and Osmaniye) will be opened

and those who are in boarding schools will be transferred to the camps.

In order to relieve the pressure of the incoming flow of Syrians the authorities are establishing transit facilities at Kilis "0" border point with Syria. Reportedly basic humanitarian assistance (food-water etc) is delivered to these people to ease their living conditions during the waiting process of admission. Some 6,000 people are reported waiting at the border (4,000 in Öncüpınar) and (2,000 in Reyhanlı). The authorities said they will be admitted as soon as accommodation is arranged.

The Turkish Red Crescent also continues to distribute relief items including food to the vulnerable people in the villages across the border.

WFP RESPONSE

The WFP Office in Ankara is being set up and voucher specialists have been deployed to Turkey to kick start the implementation of the project. On 25 August, WFP Emergency Coordinator and WFP voucher specialist travelled to Gaziantep and Kilis to meet with the local authorities and visit the Öncüpınar camp that currently hosts some 12,000 Syrians.

Next week, the WFP team will visit Hatay province to further engage with the local authorities on the implementation of the voucher scheme in that province (another 4 camps)

Budget revision number 3 of the Regional Refugee Emergency Operation which incorporates the caseload in Turkey in the operation was endorsed

by the Project Review pending some changes and is now being finalized. WFP will start assisting a caseload of 30,000 by the end of the year, though this figure is likely to be reconsidered in BR #4 based on the revised interagency appeal expected to be consolidated in September.

Assessments: The forthcoming final report of the voucher feasibility study recommends a phased transition from direct food assistance to a market based approach with food vouchers in camps where people have or will have cooking facilities and access to shops.

Resource Mobilization

Budget revision number 3 of the Regional Refugee Emergency Operation which incorporates the caseload in Turkey in the operation was endorsed by the Project Review pending some changes and is now being finalized. WFP will start assisting a caseload of 30,000 by the end of the year, though this figure is likely to be reconsidered in BR #4 (as below).

Another budget revision is planned which will incorporate the additional caseloads of refugees in the neighbouring countries of Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey based on the revised interagency appeal expected to be consolidated in September.

A donation from Canada for CAD1.5M has been confirmed to support operations that cover the

immediate food needs of the Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon

DONOR	CONFIRMED US\$
USA	8,000,000
Japan	315,488
ECHO	3,676,471
Switzerland	198,346
CANADA	1,494,024
UN CERF	2,904,292
UN SRAC	1,070,000
UK	4,709,576
Total confirmed	22,368,197
REG EMOP 200433 Cost	33,846,728
SHORTFALL	11,478,531

Thanks to contributions from ECHO and the governments of USA, Japan, Canada, Switzerland, UK the UN CERF and the UN SRAC US\$22.4M has been resourced to date towards the Regional EMOP, leaving a budget shortfall of US\$11.5M.

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