

Situation Update

17-30 SEPTEMBER 2014

SYRIA LEBANON JORDAN TURKEY IRAQ EGYPT

HIGHLIGHTS

- WFP begins delivery of food for 225,000 people in northern Syria's Al-Hasakeh governorate, as the Nusaybin corridor from Turkey to Syria reopens.
- Food assistance for 75,000 people reaches east Aleppo city for the first time in over one year.
- WFP supports recent influx of Syrian Kurdish Refugees into Turkey.
- Funding shortages force WFP to reassess support to refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt.



WFP/ Hussam Al-Saleh



WFP dispatches food for almost 4 million people in September

During the September round of deliveries, WFP dispatched enough food to feed 3.94 million people in 11 of Syria's 14 governorates, achieving 93 percent of the monthly plan. This represents a five percent decrease compared to the August cycle, when WFP dispatched food for a record 4.16 million people across the country. While deliveries proceeded at an even faster pace during the first half of September as compared to August, import blockages towards the middle of the cycle caused severe fuel shortages in the country. The subsequent rise in transportation costs slowed down deliveries as transport service providers faced severe difficulties in operating at planned levels. As a result, in the last two weeks of September, daily delivery rates dropped by an average of 10 percent compared to the first half of the month, as insecurity following the current military campaign has forced WFP to suspend deliveries to some parts of rural Aleppo and rural Idleb.

Cross-border deliveries reach civilians in east Aleppo city

During the last week of September, three cross-border deliveries through Bab Al-Salam and Baba Al-Hawa crossing points along the border with Turkey allowed a ground breaking delivery of 15,000 rations to the eastern side of Aleppo city, for the first time in over one year. These quantities will provide enough support for 75,000 civilians residing in the area, where some 350,000 people are currently estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance.

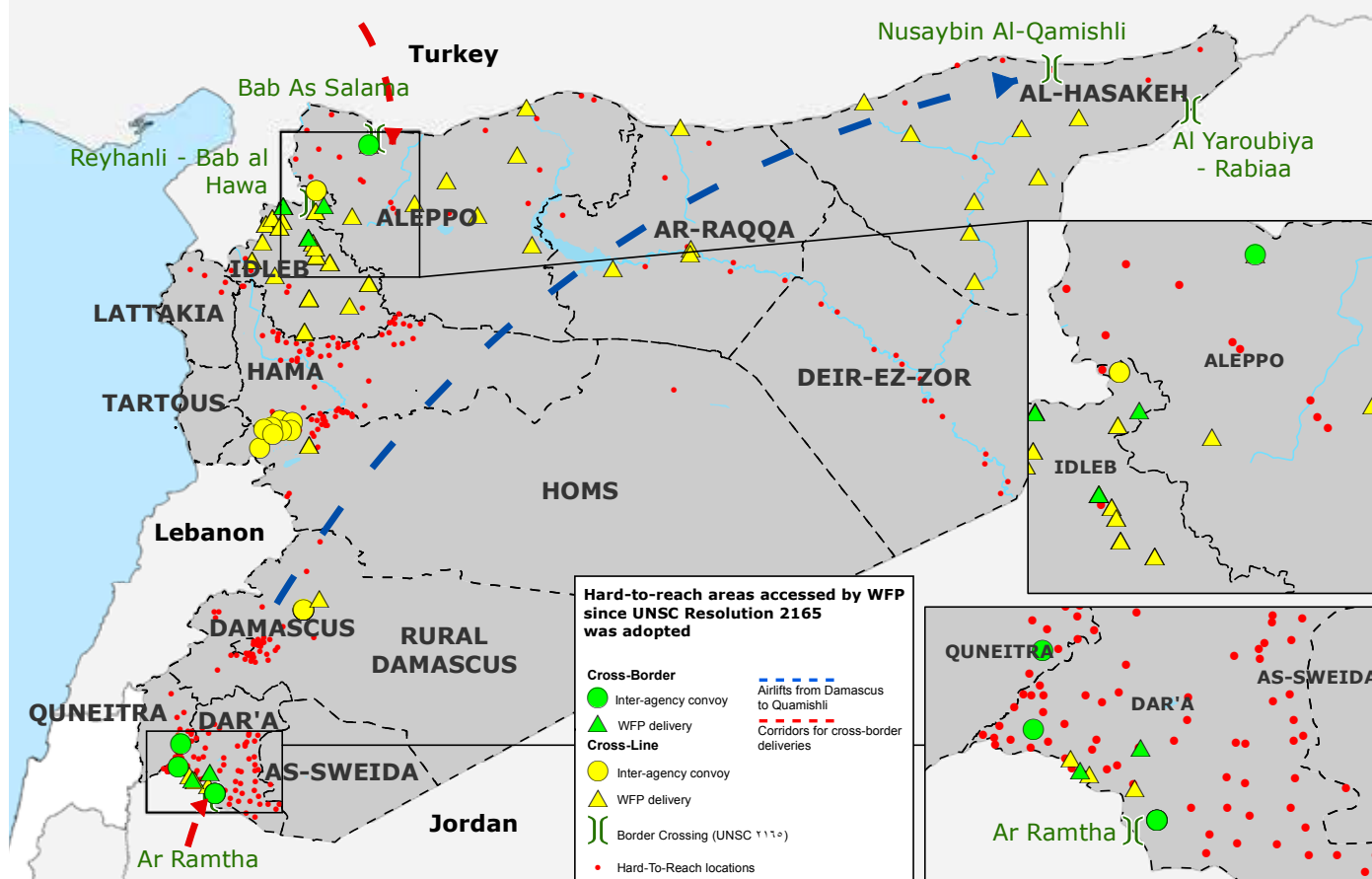
Since the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 2165, aimed at improving humanitarian access to hard-to-reach areas inside Syria, including through the use of four border crossings, WFP cross-border missions have provided assistance for almost 145,000 people in Idleb, Aleppo, Dar'a and Quneitra.

Food for almost 50,000 hard-to-reach civilians arrives in rural Homs

During the reporting period, WFP took part in two inter-agency convoys to opposition-held areas in rural Homs, enabling the delivery of food assistance for 46,000 civilians in Al-Houle, Al-Qabo, Al-Ghor and Falla in the northern part of the governorate. In addition, between 19 and 24 September WFP food for over 2,200 civilians reached Al-Wa'er, west of Homs city, which has been under partial siege since the end of 2013 and had not been reached for the past three cycles. These quantities will be able to cover only some of the needs in the area, where 75,000 people are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance. Food needs are believed to be high, as shortages of basic food items and inflated market prices have been reported as a result of the protracted access restrictions.

Food assistance reaches Al-Hasakeh through the Nusaybin corridor -

On 23 September the Turkish authorities granted approval to implement UN humanitarian deliveries from Nusyabin to Qamishli, currently the only viable and sustainable option to deliver much needed humanitarian supplies to assist conflict-affected civilians in Al-Hasakeh governorate. As a result, the transshipment of the 45,000 family food rations, which had been prepositioned in Turkey in anticipation of the reopening of the border, commenced on 30 September and is expected to be concluded within the first two weeks of October. These quantities will provide support to some 225,000 people in the governorate, allowing WFP to meet its target in the area for the first time in over one year. The supplies reach Al-Hasakeh at a critical time, as ongoing fighting and increased population displacement is causing growing vulnerability among affected families. Over the past two weeks, large-scale displacement continued in the areas of Tal Hmis, Ya'robiyah and Gweran, where escalating violence between government forces and armed opposition groups forced some 30,000 individuals to seek refuge in the safer neighbourhoods of Al-Hasakeh city, Qamishli and surrounding villages.

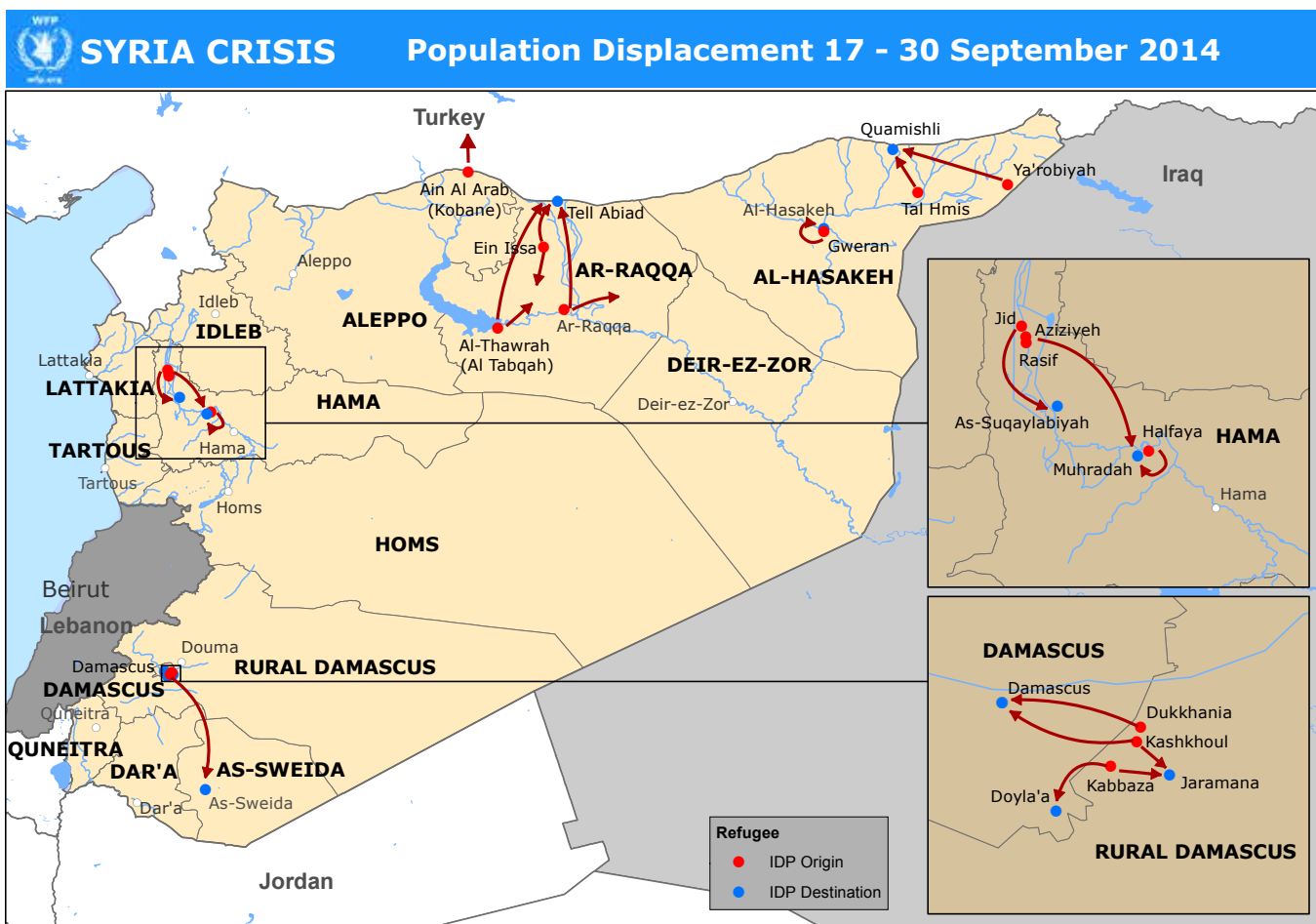


- but the rest of the north-east remains cut off from humanitarian aid

As the opening of the Nusaybin route allows humanitarian supplies to reach Al-Hasakeh, elsewhere in the north-east worsening security conditions continue to compromise access to Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor. Volatile security conditions and the presence of armed groups along the access routes have prevented deliveries to the two governorates since July and May respectively, while assistance has been intermittent and well-below planned levels during the first half of 2014. Starting from 23 September, the on-going military intervention has further restricted access options to these areas. Meanwhile, reports indicate worsening humanitarian conditions in Ar-Raqqa, as fears over airstrikes are forcing thousands of families to flee key towns, including Ar-Raqqa city, Al Tabqah and Ein Issa. Most IDPs relocated to the surrounding rural areas as well as to Tell Abiad, in close proximity to the Turkish border.

Fighting continues to force large population movements across the country

In the central and southern region of the country, large-scale population movement continued to be recorded over the reporting period in areas affected by escalating violence. Families continue to flee the towns of Halfaya, Aziziyyeh, Rasif and Jid in north-western rural Hama after fighting broke-out in early September. IDPs are mainly seeking shelter in the neighbouring towns of As-Suqaylabiyah and Muhradah, where SARC is attending to their most immediate food and shelter needs.



Meanwhile, heavy clashes continue unabated in the periphery of Damascus city since rebel forces seized control of Al-Dukkhania in early September, forcing thousands of civilians to flee the area. Most IDPs have sought refuge in neighbouring locations, including Jaramana and Doyla'a. However, a spreading of the conflict to neighbouring Kashkoul and Kabbaza, is forcing a second wave of relocations from there areas. Reportedly, hundreds of previously displaced families are now fleeing the affected area, seeking refuge in As-Swaida, Damascus city as well as safer locations of Rural Damascus. SARC and partners are closely monitoring developments and assessing humanitarian needs.

WFP scales-up bread provision in Aleppo and Al-Hasakeh

Amidst intensifying fighting, bread scarcities – a daily staple for the local populations - are threatening the food security of war-torn communities in many pockets of the country. Particularly in the north, where commercial routes are continually disrupted by clashes and most bakeries – instrumental in ensuring regular access to food - have been destroyed or damaged, production has plummeted as wheat flour, yeast or fuel are either not available or sold at prohibitive prices. Compounding these problems with the market, government subsidy policies, bringing down inflation in some parts of the country, are not applied in areas under opposition control. This has resulted in unrestrained price rises of over 75 percent in parts of Dar'a, Deir-ez-Zor and Rural Damascus in just over 3 months, compromising poor families' ability to buy food with their limited sources of income.

In response, WFP continues to provide fortified wheat flour to the worst affected communities, targeting approximately 70 percent of the planned beneficiary caseload. In areas where bakeries are functioning, partners have established arrangements with public bakeries, supplying wheat flour to

produce bread for distribution to the families entitled to it. Such a system is already in place in Aleppo, where four cooperating partners are collaborating with seven bakeries in the western districts of the city, producing bread for 200,000 beneficiaries on a daily basis, and arrangements are underway to implement the same scheme in Homs. Bread distributions through a similar system also commenced on 22 September in Norwuz camp in Al-Hasakeh, currently hosting about 3,700 Iraqi refugees, where WFP is providing 500 bread bundles on a daily basis through local partners.

Children in primary schools in Rural Damascus receive date bars under the school feeding programme

WFP launched a school feeding programme in partnership with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education as part of the No Lost Generation strategy, which aims to promote access to education for conflict affected children in Syria. Initially supporting just over 1,300 children in summer clubs in Tartous in August, with the start of the academic year in mid-September the programme scaled-up to reach 44,000 children in 54 primary schools in Rural Damascus. The programme, aimed at increasing enrolment rates and regularising attendance, will gradually scale-up over the coming months, expanding to primary schools in Tartous in November and Aleppo in December. Overall, WFP aims to reach a total of 350,000 primary schools children in some 300 schools in the three governorates by the end of 2014.



WFP/ Hussam Al-Saleh

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Number of refugees*: 1,191,934
(1,166,061 registered and 25,873 awaiting registration)
Reached in September:** 882,989
(859,835 e-vouchers; 23,154 parcels)
Plan for October: 918,792
(904,045 e-vouchers; 14,684 parcels)

* UNHCR as of 29 September 2014

** Distribution and data reconciliation is ongoing.

communication materials are being distributed by shopkeepers and local partners.

WFP works with partners to reach new beneficiaries in Aarsal amidst rising tensions

Reported raids by the Lebanese Armed Forces in search of suspected terrorists in Aarsal over the reporting period caused small-scale movements of refugees to the Bekaa area. Further displacements could potentially follow, putting additional pressure on areas already hosting large numbers of refugees in the Central and Western Bekaa.

Access to refugees in Aarsal has been constrained since August - preventing WFP from distributing e-cards and food parcels to new arrivals. To support refugees moving because of the recent unrest, WFP is working with UNHCR and local partners to develop operational plans to track and reach refugees from Aarsal. All refugees with an e-card, whether remaining in Aarsal or moving to other areas, continue to receive their monthly rations without interruption, as the ration values are redeemable in WFP-contracted shops in Aarsal and throughout the country.

M&E tools under development for assistance to vulnerable Lebanese

One in four people in Lebanon is a Syrian refugee, stretching local resources, putting a strain on the local economy and, ultimately, affecting the food security of Lebanese households. While plans to begin assisting vulnerable Lebanese were postponed following delays in final approvals from the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), preparatory work for the programme is now underway. To allow for effective monitoring and evaluation, WFP is working with MoSA and the World Bank to adapt its M&E tools to the Lebanese context. These tools are also likely to be used to collect baseline data on the target population, as part of the World Bank's impact evaluation of humanitarian assistance.

WFP rolls out new communication campaign on reduced assistance

Current funding shortfalls are forcing WFP to reduce the monthly voucher value in October from US\$30 to US\$20, affecting its entire 918,792 caseload. A new communication strategy has been developed to ensure beneficiaries are informed well ahead of time to help them to better prepare for the cuts. In addition to text messages to notify beneficiaries, information, education and

Poster developed to be hung in shops and stores contracted by WFP in Lebanon, to remind refugees when they shop for food that the amount of assistance has decreased from US\$30 to US\$20 per refugee for the month of October.

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Registered refugees: 619,163
Reached in September: 567,082
Beneficiaries in communities: 482,060
Beneficiaries in camps: 85,022
Plan for October*: 535,000

**This figure includes planned vulnerability targeting excluding nearly 7% of the September caseload in October.*

Reconciliation of figures ongoing

Non-camp refugees to receive reduced vouchers as WFP faces major funding constraints

For the first time since the start of WFP's operations for Syrian refugees in mid-2012, WFP will be forced to decrease its assistance, cutting the value of its vouchers for refugees residing in communities by half. As of October, following the first phase of targeting, all non-camp refugees eligible for assistance will only receive JOD12 (US\$17) as compared to the regular voucher value of JOD24 (US\$34). Monitoring exercises have repeatedly shown that WFP vouchers are the only form of consistent humanitarian assistance to non-camp refugees, making this reduction especially difficult for the most vulnerable families.

Nutrition activities across Jordan, in both camp and non-camp settings, will have to be cancelled, affecting more than 13,000 children under five and pregnant and nursing mothers throughout the country. More than 16,000 children in camp schools will similarly no longer receive date bars through WFP's school feeding programme after October 2014. Refugees in Azraq and Al Za'atri camps will continue to receive JOD20 (US\$28) per person per month, together with daily bread, while refugees in King Abdallah Park and Cyber City transit centers will receive the regular JOD24 (US\$34) per person per month.

Tensions rise between Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities

Tensions between Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities continue to escalate as a result of high rental prices and increased competition for jobs, particularly in the north of the country. In Mafrqa governorate, Jordanian communities have blocked the road to Al Za'atri camp several times, protesting high unemployment amongst those living in the governorate. In an effort to decrease tensions and support communities hosting refugees, WFP requires that only local Jordanians are hired to work in partner shops.

Social tensions between refugees and host communities are expected to worsen as humanitarian assistance – especially for non-camp refugees – is scaled back. A decrease to WFP's voucher value in the coming month may lead many Syrian families, who repeatedly cite WFP vouchers as a main source of income, to seek informal employment at very low wages, further increasing the competition for jobs with impoverished Jordanians.

Refugees discontinue assistance following self-targeting campaign

Following WFP's self-targeting campaign and recent news of a funding crisis, Syrian refugee households have contacted WFP's hotline to discontinue their assistance, noting that they are not in need and prefer that assistance reaches the most vulnerable. An increasing number of such cases are expected as beneficiary perceptions of assistance shift from entitlement to needs-based following extensive WFP information campaigns.

Vulnerability targeting set to start in October

On 2 October, WFP will send out an SMS to all households excluded through the vulnerability targeting process – some 36,522 individuals – informing them that they will no longer receive WFP food assistance. For those households that will continue to receive WFP support, an SMS will be sent on 9 October to explain that they will only receive half of the regular voucher value due to funding constraints, with e-cards for these families to be uploaded on 12 October. A third text message will be sent to those in camps ensuring them they will receive the regular level of assistance in October, including daily bread.

WFP is establishing a Food Security Monitoring System (FSMS) to monitor the food security situation of refugee households excluded from WFP assistance. The data collection tool has been developed and will soon be tested in the field. The tool will help WFP determine the accuracy of vulnerability targeting criteria, which will help improve targeting in the future as well as ensure households' food security situation does not deteriorate prior to exclusion from WFP assistance.

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Registered refugees*: 847,266

Reached in September:** 220,000

Plan for October*:** 250,000

*Syrian refugees registered and awaiting registration, UNHCR.

** Reconciliation ongoing

*** Operational pipeline target

Reconciliation of figures ongoing

WFP extends support to recent influx of Syrian Kurdish Refugees

The Islamic State (IS) began to attack villages surrounding Ayn Al-Arab (or Kobane) city in Syria on 19 September, forcing 140,000 Syrian Kurds to flee to the Turkish border district of Suruc in just three days - the largest displacement in such a short period of time since the start of the conflict.

The Turkish Red Cross (TRC), in coordination with Suruc Municipality authorities, set up kitchens in areas designated by the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority of Turkey (AFAD) to provide daily hot meals to the Syrian Kurdish refugees. In response to a request from AFAD, WFP is borrowing 6,000 food rations, pre-positioned in Turkey and intended for WFP Syria operations, sufficient to support 60,000 of the newly arrived Syrian Kurdish people for two weeks. This is the first time WFP will work with non-camp refugee populations in Turkey.

Currently, no resources are available to continue this assistance past the initial two weeks – a particularly worrying situation considering concerns that the number of people in need could potentially increase to as many as 400,000 (as per AFAD estimates), should IS continue its expansion at the current pace. A WFP team, working with other humanitarian actors on the ground, is currently in Suruc to assess evolving needs.

WFP faces critical shortfalls

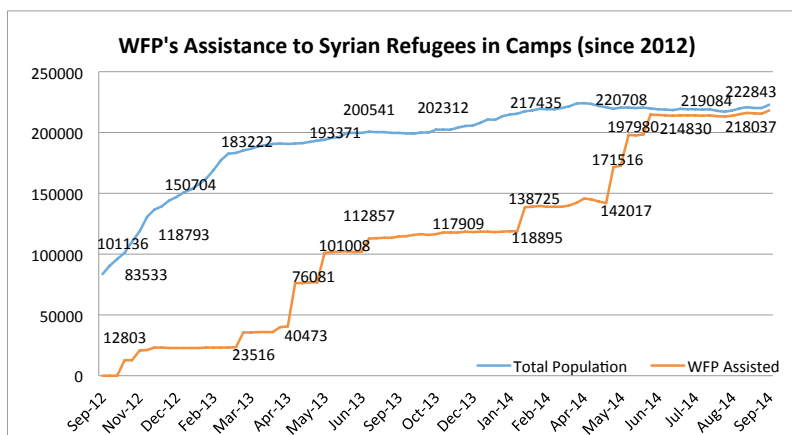
WFP's current assistance to 220,000 Syrian refugees in all 21 camps is facing a funding shortfall for October - with resources sufficient only to cover the first upload of rations (for the first two weeks) and after which no further resources are available. WFP is coordinating closely with AFAD regarding the funding crisis.

Monitoring data shows stable prices and enhanced service delivery in WFP-contracted shops

WFP price monitoring found that prices of key commodities remained stable in September in markets participating in WFP's e-food card Programme. In areas where additional shops were contracted outside of camps, increased competition among shop-owners created a strong incentive to provide high quality service at competitive prices and to adhere to WFP's rules and regulations; moreover, monitoring findings indicate that service delivery even improved in shops that had previously under-performed.

WFP providing assistance to Syrian Refugees since 2012

WFP Turkey, with its partner TRC, has been providing food assistance to Syrian refugees since October 2012 – expanding its operations to meet the needs of the growing number of refugees residing in all 21 refugee camps. WFP Turkey was the first WFP office to provide electronic vouchers (e-food cards) at the start of operations. The entire Syrian refugee camp population, an estimated 220,000 refugees, will be reached through the e-food card programme in the first half of October, while 250,000 Syrians will be targeted in the second half of October – taking into account new arrivals into camps and support to additional emergency response interventions - resources permitting.



OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Refugees registered and awaiting

Registration*: 214,372

Reached in September: 99,820

Plan for October: 106,000

** UNHCR registration figures*

Reconciliation of figures ongoing

month. WFP is currently working with government counterparts, partners, refugee representatives and UNHCR to inform beneficiaries of this change ahead of the October voucher cycle. In September, WFP reached almost 66,000 refugees with food vouchers in Domiz, allowing Syrian families to purchase their preferred food commodities from three WFP-contracted shops.

Without funding, WFP to cut voucher value in Domiz

As a result of major funding constraints, WFP will be forced to scale back its assistance to Syrian refugees in October, decreasing its voucher value in Domiz camp by 20 percent. WFP vouchers in Domiz, which assist 70 percent of all Syrian refugees residing in camps in Iraq, will be decreased from US\$31 to US\$25 per person per



WFP/Iraq

Refugees in all other camps - some 33,000 people- will continue to receive individual food parcels, although stocks will be limited for November if additional funding is not received immediately. Over two months is needed to purchase and receive food stocks, making timely funding of the utmost importance. Funding is also necessary to procure contingency stocks, should a reopening of the border between Syria and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq allow a further influx of refugees. Reports indicate that some 200 people are waiting on the Syrian side of the Peshkabour border crossing with more families expected to arrive as attacks on Kurdish areas of Syria continue.

Food reaches Al Obaidi despite insecurity

Despite major insecurity on the roads between Erbil—where WFP food stocks are stored—and Al Obaidi camp in Anbar governorate, WFP delivered 1,100 individual food parcels to supplement the 277 food parcels already in stock at the camp. Distribution to over 1,300 Syrian refugees residing in the camp began on 24 September and is ongoing. WFP plans to deliver additional stocks to meet October food needs once the security situation allows.

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Registered refugees: 139,887

Reached in September: 100,877

Plan for October: 65,000

Reconciliation of figures ongoing

On 10 September, WFP distributed food vouchers to over 100,000 Syrian refugees in Egypt, including 4,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria. Overall, WFP supported over 65,000 people in Greater Cairo, 26,000 in Alexandria, 13,000 in Damietta, 2,000 in Mansoura and 700 in Matrouh.

Due to a severe shortfall in funding, WFP will be forced to reduce the value of food vouchers from US\$28 to US\$14 in October, while also reducing the caseload to 65,000 refugees. While November will see a further reduction to only 60,000 people, distributions will be cancelled in December, should additional funding not be received. Targeted beneficiaries will be selected according to a set of vulnerability criteria, including serious medical conditions, the elderly, and/or large households with young children. WFP, in partnership with UNHCR, is also improving targeting by removing beneficiaries from distribution lists that have not been re-verified by UNHCR or those who have not been to food voucher distributions in the last two months.

Such drastic cuts in assistance are likely to have serious consequences, especially given that WFP is the only organisation providing food assistance to Syrian refugees in Egypt. Likely negative impacts include rapidly decreasing food security, increasing irregular migration to Europe, seeking risky employment and/or children dropping out of school to contribute to household livelihoods.

First vulnerability assessment launched

As part of the move toward vulnerability targeting planned over the past several months, WFP and UNHCR, in partnership with Save the Children, launched the first assessment to identify vulnerable Syrian refugees in Egypt on 21 September.

With over 30,000 households currently being interviewed in Greater Cairo, the questionnaires will consider food security, coping strategies, access to education and household income. Results are due in December, with predications that a sluggish economy, coupled with restrictions on refugee employment, is resulting in increased vulnerability. The outcomes of the assessment will help WFP target refugees based on their specific assessed vulnerability and needs, all the more important in view of current shortfalls.

Increased post-distribution monitoring

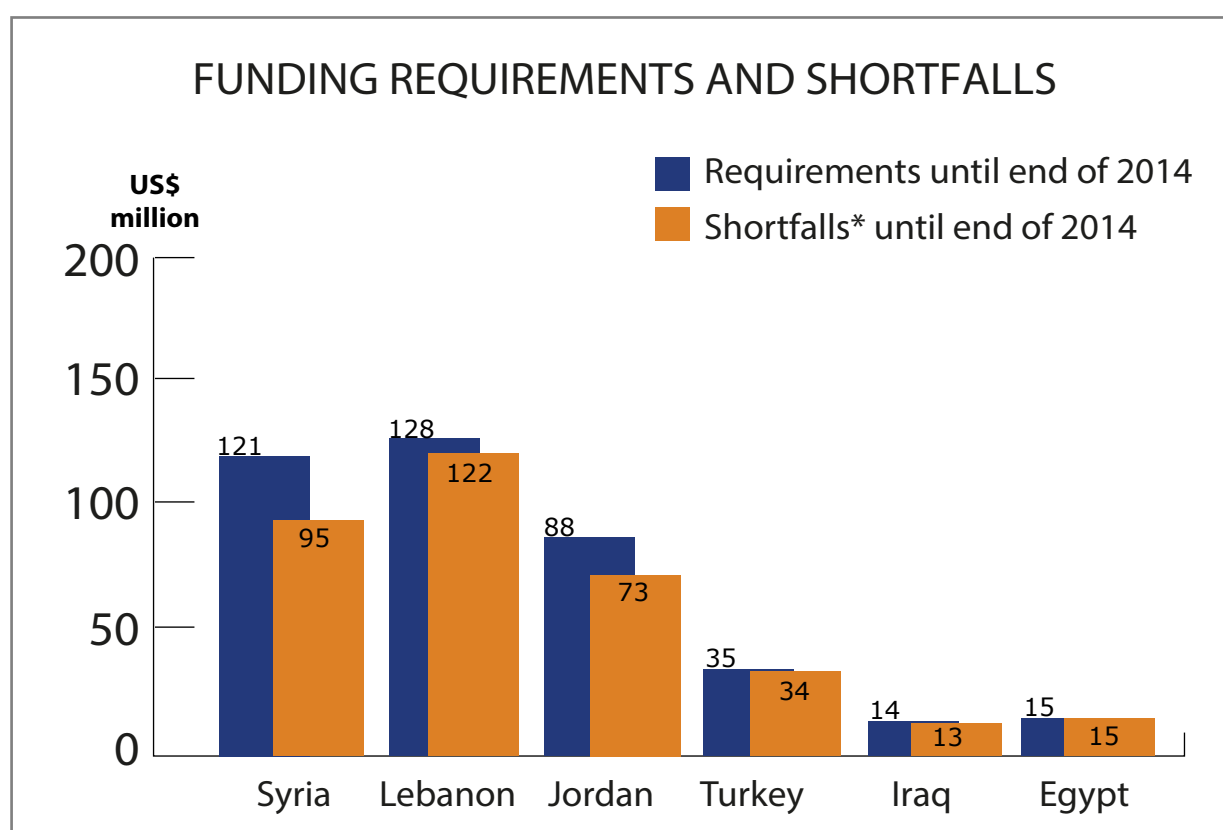
In September, WFP monitored 50 percent of partner supermarkets, an increase from 20 percent in August. WFP allocated extra time to collect data on anti-fraud measures and quality of service. Preliminary results show that most branches took anti-fraud measures very seriously. However, 14 percent of interviewed beneficiaries reported that supermarket employees were impolite. WFP is responding with additional trainings on the quality of service and anti-fraud measures for cashiers.

FUNDING AND SHORTFALLS

Urgent funding shortfalls force WFP to cut operations in Syria and sub-region

WFP has reached a critical point in our humanitarian response inside Syria and the neighbouring countries. While donor generosity has so far allowed WFP to continue scaling up its operations in line with the growing needs, we are now facing an urgent shortfall. Without additional donor contributions, WFP is being forced to significantly limit the number of people supported with essential food assistance and supplementary programmes and, in some cases, reduce the value of the food vouchers they receive.

As of 30 September, US\$352 million are urgently required to support operations for the October to December period - US\$95 million for Syria and US\$257 million for the region.



**Net funding requirements include projected shortfalls plus advances to be repaid.*

Reductions in WFP assistance expected to significantly impact vulnerable Syrians and affected host communities

Reductions are likely to cause widespread food insecurity and further population movement and increased protection concerns.

While neighboring countries have shown considerable generosity, burden on governments and local communities is increasing, with tensions between refugees and host communities likely to be further exacerbated by cuts in the operation. This is worrying given increased insecurity in the region.

With the efforts of the international community to open access to all parts of Syria through the recent Security Council Resolutions, including improved cross-line and cross-border access, it would be detrimental if we were unable to sustain the momentum at this critical time.

WFP is grateful for the critical support provided by multilateral donors in response to the Syria crisis, as well as that of Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, China, the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), Denmark, the European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States and private donors.



Donors are represented in alphabetical order.

For further information contact:
syriacrisis.info@wfp.org

Rebecca Richards,
 Head Operational Information
 Management Unit
 Mobile: +962 (0) 798947954 or
 E-Mail: rebecca.richards@wfp.org

Louise Gentzel
 Deputy Head of Information Management Unit
 Mobile: +962 (0) 799551562
 E-Mail: louise.gentzel@wfp.org