

Situation Update

1-15 OCTOBER 2014

SYRIA LEBANON JORDAN TURKEY IRAQ EGYPT

HIGHLIGHTS

- Donor generosity avoids October assistance cuts, though funding situation for November onwards remains critical
- Opening of Nusaybin corridor enables delivery of food for 97,00 people in Al Hasakeh, the first delivery since May
- Growing insecurity hamper deliveries to Syria's northern governorates
- WFP distributes e-cards to new beneficiaries in Lebanon's Aarsal region, despite continued insecurity
- Vulnerability targeting for refugees in Jordanian communities begins
- WFP supports Syrian Kurds in Turkey and Iraq, following heightened insecurity in northern Syria



WFP/ Hussam Al-Saleh



Recently introduced early recovery activities proceed in Rural Damascus, Homs and Lattakia

Under the recently introduced voucher-based nutrition programme, vouchers are being distributed to pregnant and nursing mothers in Homs and Lattakia cities to improve dietary diversity and meet specific nutritional requirements through the purchase of fresh products not included in the regular WFP ration. The programme has gradually scaled up since its inception in July, with nearly 3,000 women in both locations targeted in October - a 23 percent increase as compared to the September plan.

October date bar distributions are ongoing in the 52 targeted primary schools in Rural Damascus, providing nutritional support to some 44,000 children through the school feeding programme. Launched last August, the programme will be extended to Tartous governorate in November and aim to reach up to 350,000 children by the end of the year.

Dispatches slow down in October -

Food dispatches for a targeted 4.25 million beneficiaries continue as part of the October cycle, albeit at a reduced pace. As of 15 October, close to 290,000 rations for some 1.4 million people had been dispatched throughout the country, fulfilling 34 percent of the plan - a 33 percent decrease as compared to the previous cycle. The slow start was the result of Eid Al-Adha festivities, during which public offices were closed and normal work activities partially suspended. Compounding the impact of the holiday break, official fuel prices increased by up to 25 percent at the beginning of October, following shortages that have been reported since mid-September. These developments adversely impacted food deliveries, particularly those originating from Tartous, where daily delivery rates slowed down by an average of 50 percent in October as compared to the plan.



WFP/ Hussam Al-Saleh

General food distribution in Rukn Eddin, Damascus.

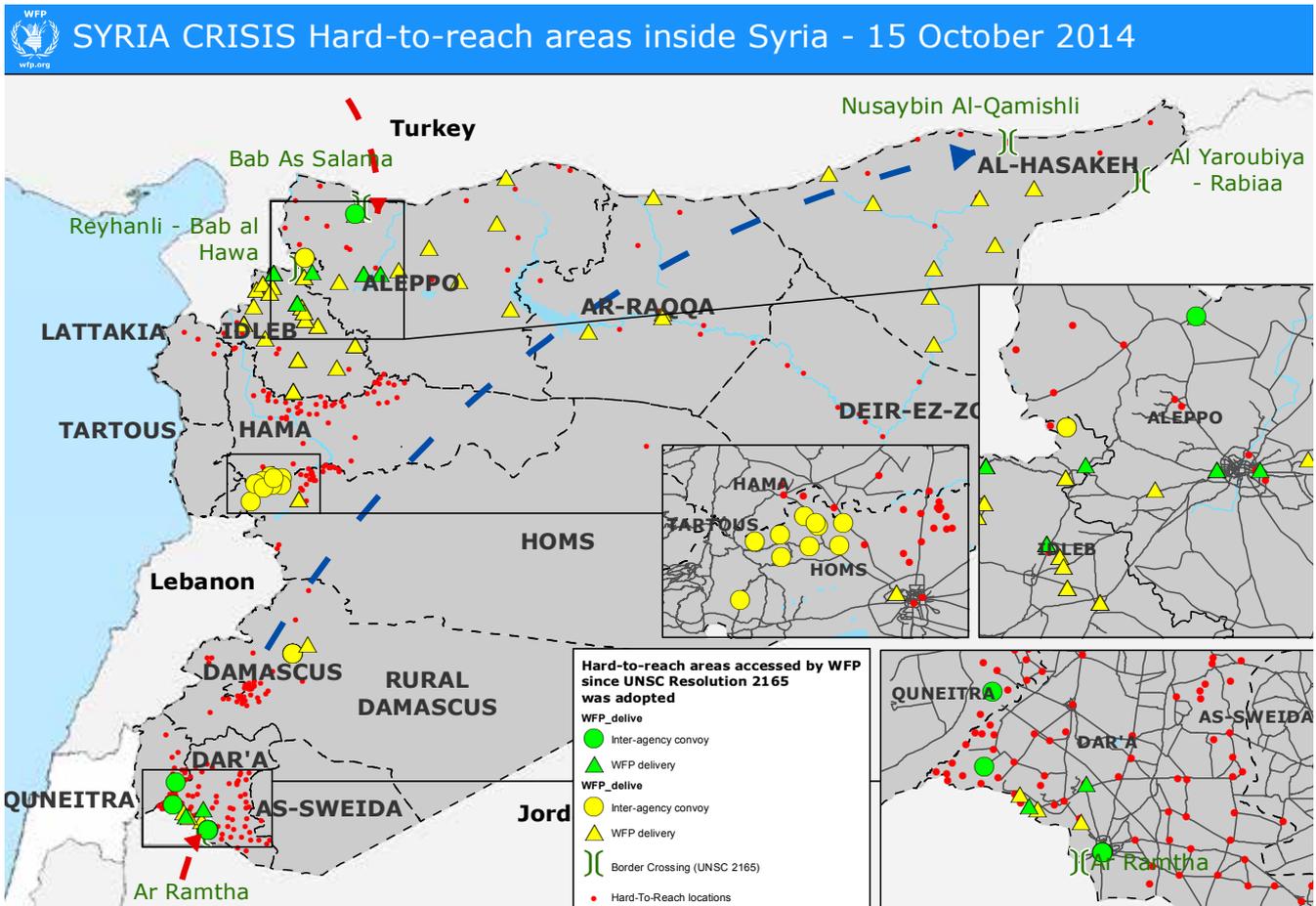
- as assistance to northern governorates, constituting one fourth of the plan for the country, is further hampered -

Compounding logistics-related delays, a deterioration in security conditions over the past few weeks have slowed down food deliveries to affected areas in the northern governorates. As a result, September deliveries across lines of active conflict almost halved in rural Idleb and rural Aleppo as compared to the previous cycle. Combined, the two governorates make up approximately 24 percent of the total volume of assistance planned to be delivered in Syria each month. Further east, widespread insecurity continues to prevent access to Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa governorates, hindering all planned food allocations from reaching the governorates since May and July respectively, affecting the food security of some 600,000 targeted beneficiaries.

- while supplies from Turkey start reaching Al-Hasakeh for the first time since last May

Meanwhile, food commodities are being delivered to Al-Hasakeh governorate from Turkey, following the long-awaited re-opening of the Nusaybin corridor at the end of September. By 15 October, almost 19,500 food rations, sufficient for some 97,000 people, have reached WFP warehouses in Qamishly - 43 percent of the 45,000 rations planned to cross the border this month. These will be dispatched to partners for distribution over the October cycle, providing support to the more than 225,000 people

targeted by WFP in Al-Hasakeh. Humanitarian conditions have deteriorated over past months, as widespread population displacement within the governorate has increased the number of IDP families requiring assistance in main urban centres. More recently, new IDPs fleeing the violence-ravaged town of Kobane in rural Aleppo have sought sanctuary in the governorate, mainly in Derbasieh and Ras Al-Ein, where 515 families, or some 2600 people, were assisted with ready-to-eat meals during the reporting period. In addition, almost 3,800 Iraqi refugees who are still being hosted in Nowruz camp in Al-Malikiyeh district are being assisted with WFP ready-to-eat meals and daily bread supplies.



Cross-line inter-agency mission delivers food to locations in rural Homs for the first time in six months -

Some gains in cross-line deliveries were recorded in rural Homs during the reporting period, as an inter-agency convoy delivered humanitarian assistance to hard-to-reach civilians living in northern areas of the governorate on 14 October. WFP participated with food supplies for 5,000 people in Ter Maalla, 5,000 in Al-Ghanto and 4,500 in Jabourin, where WFP had not been able to deliver any food in the past six months. A second joint convoy is scheduled to take place on 21 October, with WFP planning to deliver a total of 2,900 family food rations for almost 15,000 people in Ter Maalla and Krad Desniah.

- while one year partial siege leads to further deterioration of humanitarian conditions in western Homs City

Elsewhere in the governorate, the western Homs City neighbourhood of Al-Wa'er has seen security conditions deteriorate following a failed truce agreement, severely undermining living conditions of the 350,000 people estimated to be living in the area. Under partial siege for the past 12 months, over half of Al-Waer's residents are IDPs who fled insecurity in rural areas of the governorate before October 2013, and who are now mostly living in precarious conditions in unfinished buildings, schools and makeshift accommodation.

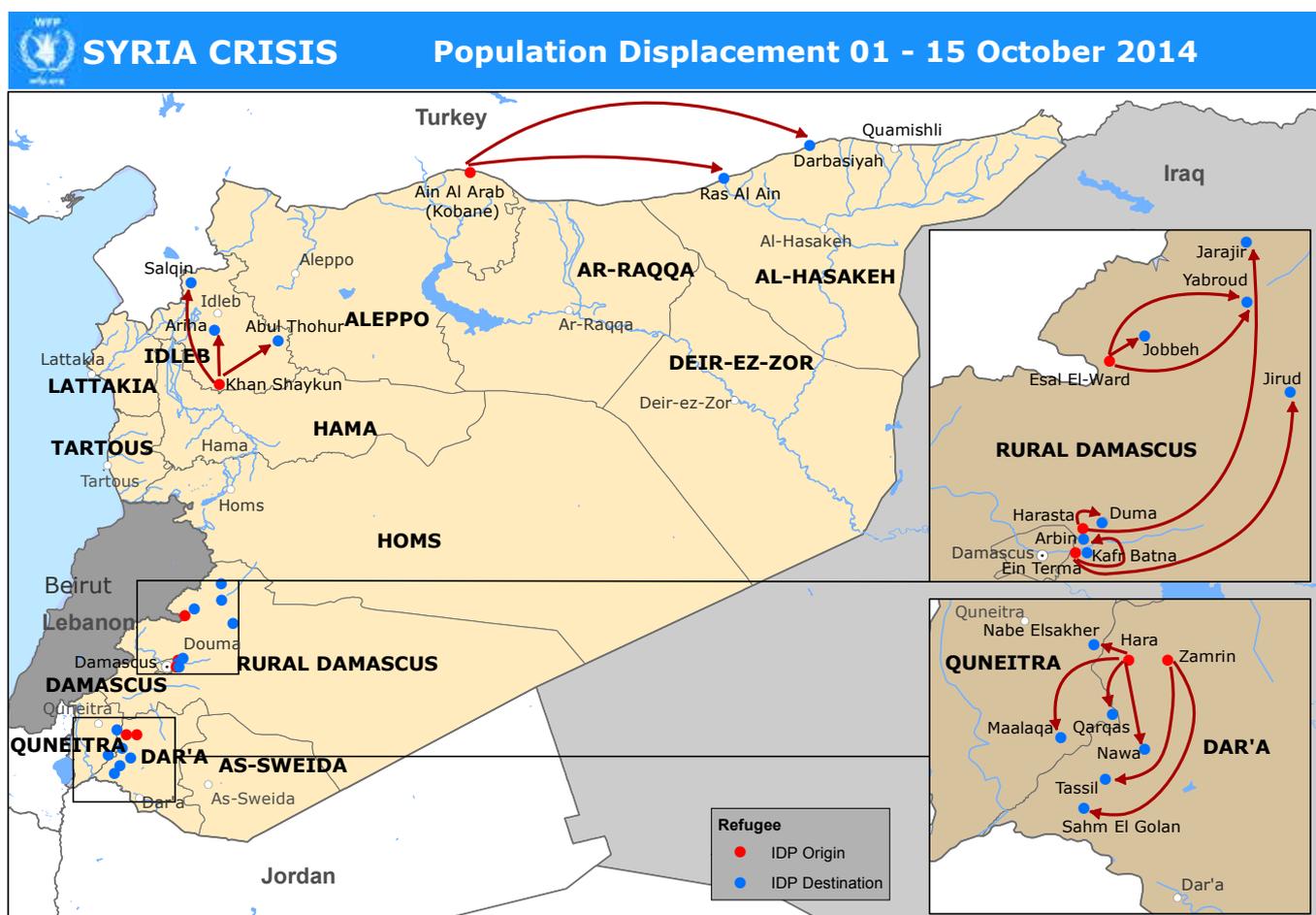
With checkpoints applying strict control over the flow of supplies allowed to move into the restricted area, markets are very dysfunctional with acute shortages of all basic food commodities, including vegetables, meat and dairy products. When available, these items are sold at 35 percent above the standard national prices. Fuel and gas are similarly either not available or sold at prohibitive prices, up to eight times above standard rates. This is severely impacting access to fuel for heating and cooking, particularly significant in light of the approaching winter season. Most health centres have either been destroyed or are no longer operational and partners are reporting a rationing of medicines and vaccines.

Fighting continues to force new displacements across the country

Over the reporting period, violence continued to ravage the periphery of Damascus city and spread to other areas, including Harasta and Ein Terma. Thousands of civilians have reportedly fled, seeking refuge in relatively safer locations in Ghouta, where access has been severely restricted for the past two years. A joint humanitarian convoy to the area, the first time since last May, was cancelled due to security concerns.

Elsewhere in Rural Damascus, clashes escalated in the Qalamoun region, forcing waves of population displacements towards Jobbeh, Jirud and Yabroud. To respond to the sudden influx of around 15,000 newly displaced civilians, WFP, in coordination with its partner SARC, dispatched ready-to-eat-meals for 10,000 people and monthly food rations for 5,000 people.

Large-scale military operations took place in Dar'a with thousands of civilians seeking refuge in safer areas of Dar'a and Quneitra governorates. In addition, an estimated 1,700 people in rural Idleb fled insecurity seeking refuge in Salqin, Ariha and Abul Thohur, where they are being registered and assisted by WFP partners.



FUNDING AND SHORTFALLS

Cuts to regional assistance avoided in October

Donor generosity has helped WFP avoid anticipated cuts to assistance during October. However, the funding situation remains critical, with significant cuts anticipated for November and December, should additional contributions not be forthcoming.

LEBANON

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Number of refugees: 1,142,425
(1,125,122 registered and 17,303 awaiting registration)
Reached in September*: 861,981
(860,512 e-vouchers; 1,469 parcels)
Plan for October:** 961,926
(904,405 through e-vouchers to Syrian Refugees;
36,692 through food parcels; and 20,829 electronic cash transfer to Palestinian Refugees)

* Distribution and data reconciliation is ongoing.

**Operational planning figures.

access, as entitlements – which are automatically transferred to the cards each month – are redeemable in any WFP-contracted shop in Arsal.

WFP provides e-cards to new beneficiaries in Arsal, despite access problem

In light of continued tensions in Arsal, which have made the area inaccessible to WFP since July, WFP has worked with partners to begin e-card distributions to new beneficiaries in a UNHCR registration site in Zahle, some 70 km from Arsal. Around 700 e-cards have already been delivered to new beneficiaries, approximately half of all newly registered refugees. The cards enable WFP to deliver assistance to beneficiaries irrespective of

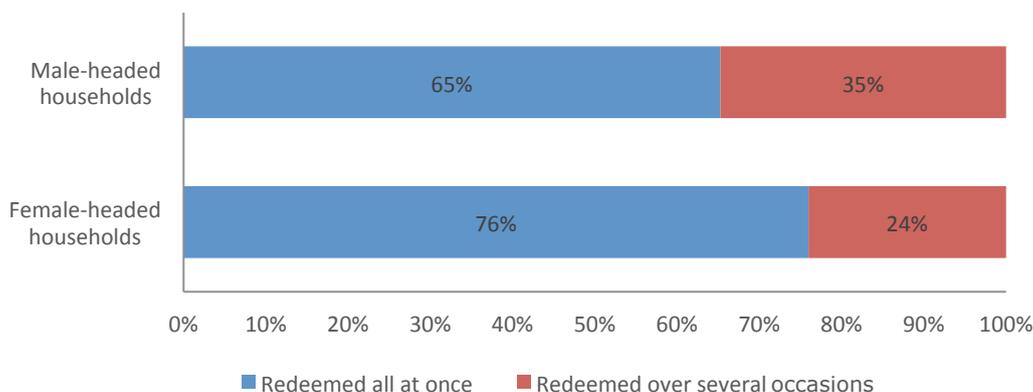
Efforts underway to incorporate nutrition plans at the policy level

WFP, as an active participant of the Nutrition Sub-Working Group (NSWG), is working with the Ministry of Public Health and partners (such as UNICEF) to establish an inclusive work plan for nutrition, including preparedness for emergencies. Efforts are also underway with the central Health Working Group to incorporate nutrition priorities within the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), which aims to address refugee protection and humanitarian needs, whilst building the resilience of vulnerable and impacted communities and strengthening the capacity of the national delivery system.

Findings indicate higher percentage of female-headed households redeem vouchers at once

Monitoring findings have found that a majority of the female-headed households redeem their full monthly voucher entitlements at a single time, as opposed to on multiple occasions (see figure 1 below). Approximately 76 percent of the female-headed and 65 percent of the male-headed households redeemed their vouchers at once in September. This can in part be attributed to the households headed by women facing higher household and income earning responsibilities, thereby making shopping for the whole month in one go a better option. The e-voucher programme is designed to cater to such diversities within beneficiary households – aiming to make the purchase of food as flexible and accessible as possible.

Figure 1: Spending patterns by sex of household head, September 2014



OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Registered refugees: 619,163
Reached in September*: 565,142
Beneficiaries in communities: 482,060
Beneficiaries in camps: 83,082
Plan for October:** 530,000

**Reconciliation of figures ongoing*

***Includes planned vulnerability targeting excluding nearly 7% of the September caseload in October.*

WFP initiates vulnerability targeting

WFP has begun targeting assistance for all non-camp refugees, based on vulnerability criteria defined in the Comprehensive Food Security Monitoring Exercise (CFSME). Excluded families – some 36,000 people (or 6.5 percent of WFP’s current caseload) – were notified via text messages in early October. A second stage of targeting is being devised and will soon be implemented. Overall, WFP estimates that 85 percent of refugees living in non-camp settings will continue to be in need of food assistance.

E-card programme rolled out in camps

Following successful pilots in Al Za’atri and Azraq camps, e-cards are being rolled out to all beneficiary households in the two camps during the month of October – starting in Al Za’atri camp on 13 October and Azraq camp on 19 October. WFP and its partners plan to reach between 500-800 households per day in each camp, with the aim of completing the roll-out this month in Azraq and early next month in Al Za’atri. In total, some 90,000 people are expected to be assisted through e-cards once the roll-out is completed.

Al Za’atri supermarkets help Syrian and Jordanian school children

As part of their corporate social responsibility programmes, WFP’s supermarket partners in Al Za’atri camp will distribute backpacks, school supplies and WFP water bottles to 1,330 Jordanian and Syrian school children attending schools in villages surrounding Al Za’atri camp.



WFP/Dina El-Kassaby

Beneficiaries in Al Za'atri camp cook food purchased with WFP vouchers.

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Registered refugees (UNHCR): 1,029,500
Reached in October*: 217,000
Plan for October: 280,000
 (250,000** Syrian Refugees through vouchers and 30,000*** through food to Syrian Kurdish refugees)

** Reconciliation ongoing*

*** Operational pipeline targets*

**** Evolving situation, not in pipeline targets*

WFP begins food support to the recent influx of Syrian Kurdish refugees

Since 19 September, over 160,000 Syrian Kurds have fled to the Turkish border district of Suruc following attacks in Syria; many new arrivals have joined family members or are being temporarily taken into host community care, whilst others are in temporary shelters provided by the state. At the request of the government, WFP rerouted food pre-positioned in Turkey for operations in Syria, to provide immediate support to these refugees. The first batch of food was delivered to the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) in early October

to support its mobile kitchens. The total planned WFP food assistance is sufficient for TRC to provide hot meals to 30,000 people for one month – TRC’s current capacity. Several other actors are also providing food assistance in and around Suruc, however, food support continues to be one of the priority needs identified on the ground. WFP is assessing the situation and participating in inter-agency discussions to determine needs and facilitate a coordinated response.



Refugees entering the registration area in Suruc.

Activities begin to harmonize targeting criteria for new non-camp refugees

Over one million Syrian refugees currently reside in Turkey. WFP continues to assist all those living in 21 camps; approximately 220,000 refugees. Following the government's recent request for WFP to expand programmes to non-camp refugees and as part of the Food Security Working Group, WFP and key food security actors have begun the development of robust targeting criteria to ensure that assistance reaches the most vulnerable refugees residing outside of camps. It is hoped that WFP's planned support to the most vulnerable non-camp Syrian refugees will help lessen the burden on host communities; the scope and timing of such assistance is dependent upon further funding and operational realities.

IRAQ

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Refugees registered and awaiting

Registration*: 215,387

Reached in September: 99,602

Plan for October: 102,000

* UNHCR registration figures
Reconciliation of figures ongoing

WFP assists newly arrived refugees from Kobane

The Iraqi-Kurdish border at Ibrahim-Khalil officially opened on 10 October for Syrian refugees fleeing fighting in Kobane – a northern Aleppo city along the border with Turkey. Since then, some 900 refugees have crossed daily, many of whom are being relocated to pre-existing Syrian refugee camps across the Kurdistan Region. Thus far, over 2,700 newly arrived refugees in Gawilan camp, Dohuk, have been assisted with individual

food parcels. All other newly arrived refugees who were relocated to camps other than Gawilan – figures for whom are changing daily – will be assisted with WFP food parcels in the coming week. Until the distribution of WFP assistance commences in these camps, newly arrived families are being assisted with ready-to-eat food by other food sector partners.

Despite WFP's efforts to reach families already facing multiple displacements and severe violence, WFP is again facing a dire funding situation, with insufficient funds to meet the needs of its existing caseload in November, let alone those of newly arrived refugees.

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Registered refugees*: 140,026
Reached in September**: 100,877
Plan for October***: 100,000

**UNHCR registration numbers:
<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122>
 ** Reconciliation of figures ongoing
 ***Estimate*

WFP continues assessing vulnerability of beneficiaries

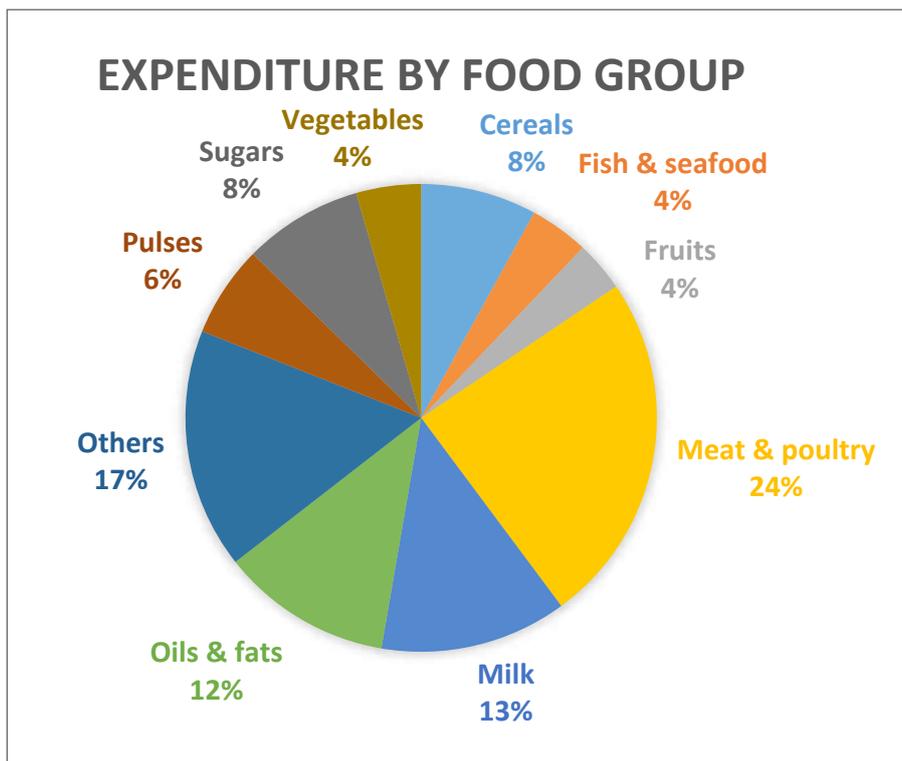
Prior to the planned shift to vulnerability targeting, WFP and UNHCR, in partnership with Save the Children, have continued to collect data on the vulnerability of beneficiaries. So far 1,806 households, or 8,645 individuals, out of the planned 30,000 households have been visited. With the data collection phase expected to be finalised by December 2014, results from the assessment will inform the shift towards vulnerability targeting

and will identify those vulnerable households that will continue to receive food assistance based on their needs and vulnerability.

Following initial feedback received from respondents indicating that some of the questions were intrusive, WFP and UNHCR will increase communication to beneficiaries to inform them about the length of the interview (average of two hours per household) and reasons for potentially sensitive questions. Tentative findings indicate that 37 percent of families are worried that the current assessment may result in losing their entitlement for WFP food vouchers and other assistance.

WFP analyses market assessments to better understand spending patterns

As part of WFP’s efforts to ensure assistance corresponds to beneficiaries’ food consumption levels, WFP has conducted monitoring and market assessments of beneficiary spending patterns, categorising actual purchases by food groups across different locations and months. As indicated by the diagram, most of the funds spent on food go towards meat and poultry, followed by ‘others’ and milk products. While the relatively high prices of meat and poultry may explain why beneficiaries dedicate a high proportion of their entitlement to these products, WFP will need to undertake further investigations of the goods that fall under the food group ‘others’, the second most popular group, to fully understand the spending patterns.



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.

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