

HIGHLIGHTS

- Whole of Syria Food Security Sector actors reach almost six million people in August
- Two cross-border missions deliver assistance for 46,000 people in Syria's Dar'a and Idleb governorates
- Inter-agency cross-line convoys provide assistance for 76,500 people in Homs and rural Aleppo, not reached for six months
- Remote monitoring system established in Lebanon's Aarsal region
- Initial targeting in Jordan reduces WFP caseload by seven percent
- WFP/Food Security Sector in Iraq and Turkey assist refugees from Kobane
- WFP strengthens beneficiary verification in Egypt



Seven year-old Hussein accompanies his father to the Coin Market shop in the Bourj Hammoud neighbourhood of Beirut, where they purchase groceries for their entire family using their WFP e-card.

WFP/Sandy Maroun



WHOLE OF SYRIA FOOD SECURITY SECTOR/CLUSTER

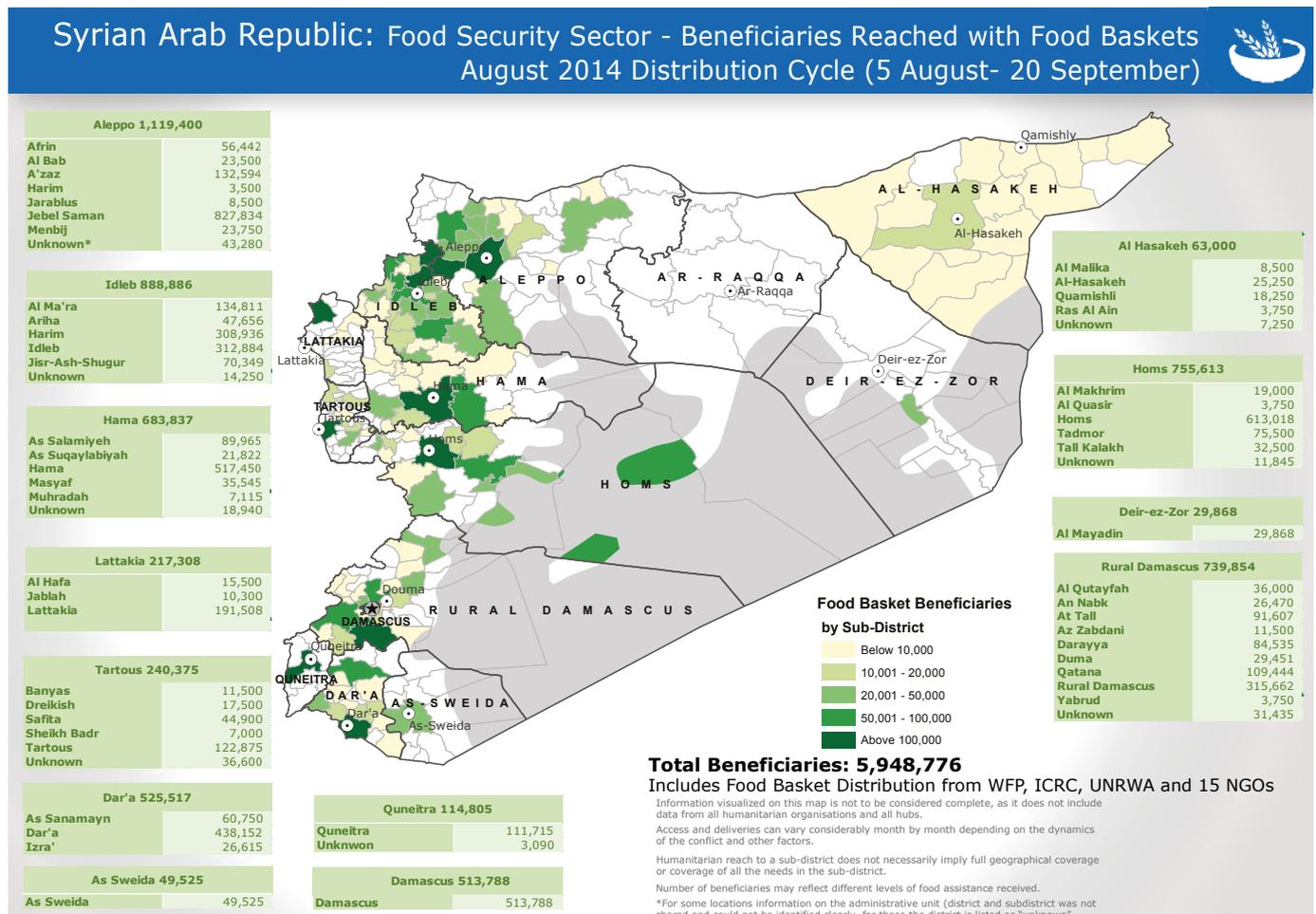
The Food Security Sector/Cluster has over the past year worked to set up the structures, relationships and processes necessary for effective coordination, information sharing and operational planning between food actors based in Syria, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. Coordination capacity in Damascus and Gaziantep has been in place for over a year, while a dedicated overall sector coordinator and information management support in Amman – pulling together the complete Whole of Syria picture, while also responsible for the coordination with Jordan and Iraq-based actors – have been in place since July 2014.

The sector brings together food security actors to establish a comprehensive and holistic picture of food needs and response in Syria – regardless of where those actors operate. Over the past months, the sector has achieved some major milestones. These include a complete 4W (Who does What, Where and When) overview of distributions by some of the main actors operating from Syria, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. As per the overview below, some 18 actors (WFP, ICRC, UNRWA and 15 NGOs) reported their distributions in August – indicating that the sector as a whole reached almost six million people with food baskets during the August distribution cycle.

As part of the Humanitarian Needs Overview process, the sector convened its technical experts to reach agreement on the estimated number of people in need throughout the country. While a comprehensive assessment of the entire country has not been available, food security experts analysed all available assessment data relating to food – leading to an agreed estimate of 9.8 million people in need of some kinds of food or livelihoods support, 6.8 million of whom are located in high priority districts.

The sector has also developed a two-month joint operational plan to determine if, and how, operations overlap and where gaps remain – taking into account all delivery corridors. Regular operational discussions take place between partners working in particular areas to deconflict potential overlaps, determine the partner best suited for sustained delivery and how, should access conditions allow, any gaps may be filled. These efforts will greatly facilitate the development of the 2015 strategic plan for the sector as a whole.

Finally, programmatic discussions and information sharing continue on topics such as the building of partner capacities, the exchange of best practice, the harmonisation of food baskets; and the longer-term goal to standardise future needs assessments undertaken by the sector.



Food rations for 3.9 million people dispatched in October

October dispatches achieved 92 percentage of the monthly plan, with over 785,000 family food rations dispatched for distribution to 3.9 million beneficiaries in 12 of the 14 Syrian governorates. This represents a slight decrease as compared to September, as fuel shortages and the resulting increase in transportation prices caused a reduction in average daily delivery rates by up to 50 percent during the half of the September cycle. Eid Al-Adha festivities in the beginning of October, during which public offices were closed and normal work activities partially suspended, also contributed to delays. A partial overcoming of the fuel availability in the second half of the cycle allowed WFP to speed up dispatches and reduce the gap with September average daily delivery rates.

Food for 225,000 people delivered into Al-Hasakeh governorate

Following the reopening of Nusaybin crossing point on the border with Turkey, WFP started the delivery of a planned 45,000 family food rations through this corridor on 30 September. As of 25 October, all planned supplies had been safely offloaded in Qamishli storage facilities. Dispatches are now underway, with over 12,600 food rations already delivered to partners by 31 October and the remaining to be dispatched over the November cycle. These quantities will be sufficient to provide one-month support to 225,000 people, including vulnerable IDPs and resident families, as well as almost 3,000 Iraqi refugees hosted in Nowruz camp. The delivery through Nusaybin of further supplies, approximately the same amount, are planned to start during the second week of November, pending approval by relevant authorities.

Insecurity continues to prevent access in several parts of the country

Escalating fighting and volatile security conditions continued to prevent access to several parts of the country – particularly slowing down deliveries in Idleb and Hama. Ongoing fighting and the presence of armed groups along the main access routes similarly continued to prevent WFP from reaching a planned 600,000 beneficiaries in Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa, where access has been interrupted since May and July 2014 respectively.

Cross-border missions deliver supplies for 46,000 civilians in Dar'a and Idleb -

Two additional cross-border missions using the Jordan and Turkey border crossings approved under Security Council Resolution 2165 took place during the reporting period, complementing in-country deliveries and extending the reach of assistance into hard-to-reach areas.

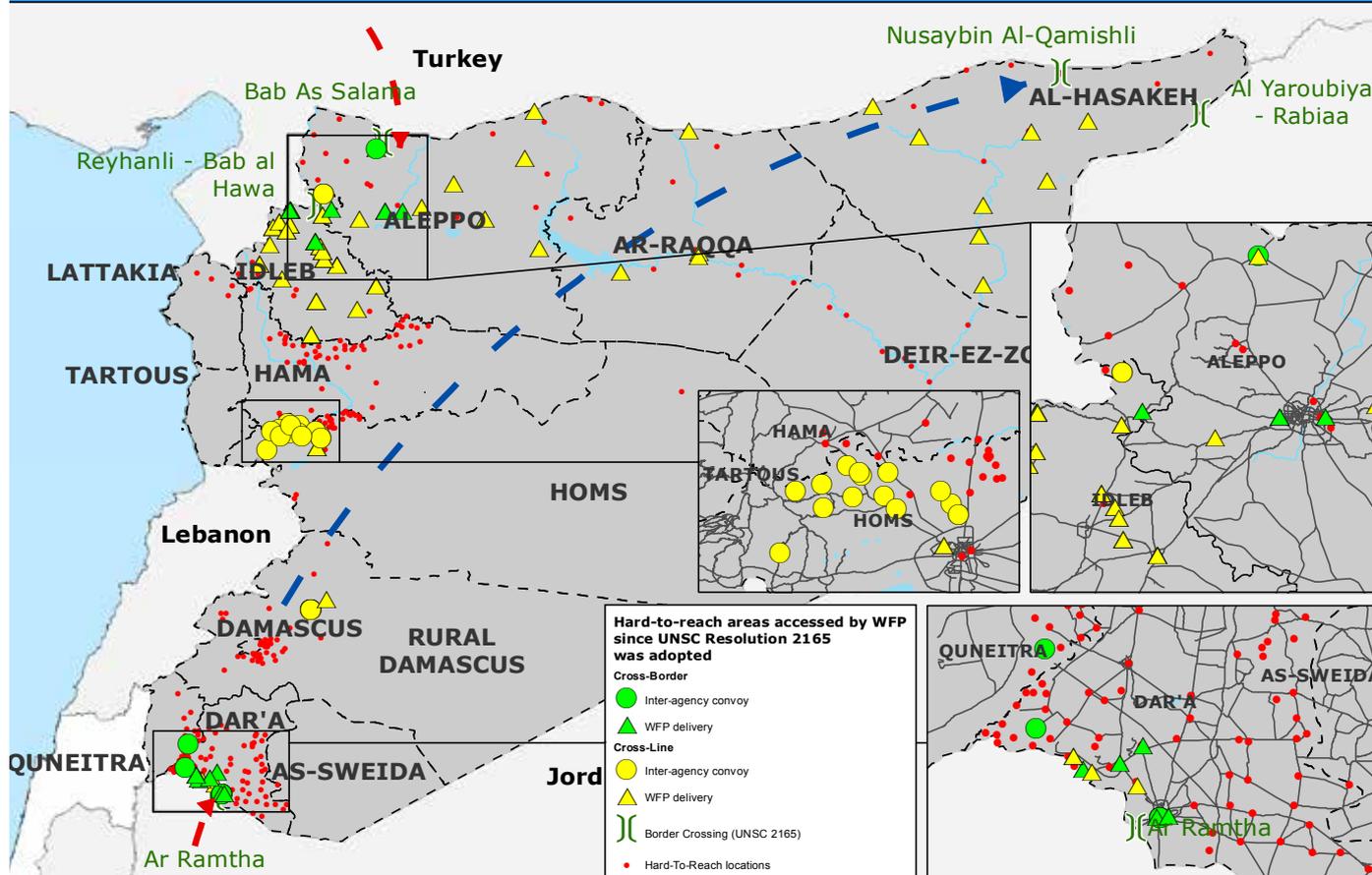
Twelve WFP trucks crossed the Al-Ramtha corridor on the border with Jordan on 21 October, delivering some 4,400 family food rations to Dar'a Al-Balad, Tariq As-Sad, Mohayam, Mzeirib and Zaizoun in opposition-held areas of Dar'a governorate. These quantities, sufficient to cover the needs of 22,000 civilians for one month, were distributed to targeted beneficiaries during the last week of October. In northern Syria, another cross-border delivery through the Bab Al-Hawa corridor from Turkey reached several IDP camps in the Harim district of rural Idleb on 22 and 23 October, providing food sufficient for approximately 24,000 civilians.

Since the passing of Resolution 2165 in mid-July, a total of 215,500 people have been assisted through cross-border deliveries in hard-to-reach areas under opposition control in Dar'a, Quneitra, Idleb and Aleppo.

- while cross-line inter-agency missions deliver assistance for 76,500 civilians in Homs and Aleppo

Following a first delivery on 14 October, the second part of a cross-line inter-agency convoy reached hard-to-reach areas in rural Homs on 21 October. A total of 5,800 WFP rations were delivered, sufficient to support 29,000 civilians in Ter Maleh, Krad Desnieh, Jabourin and Ghanto. The mission reported acute food needs in the accessed areas, which had not received any humanitarian support for up to six months. The situation follows the gradual destruction of its farming and agricultural productive capacities – on which the local economy is based – leaving the civilian population without sufficient income to cover monthly food requirements. Prices of basic food stuffs smuggled into the area were found to be sold at 30-35 percent above their original price.

In rural Aleppo, another joint UN mission allowed WFP to deliver food assistance for some 45,000 people in Afrin and Orem, which had last been reached in August and had not received any assistance during the September cycle.



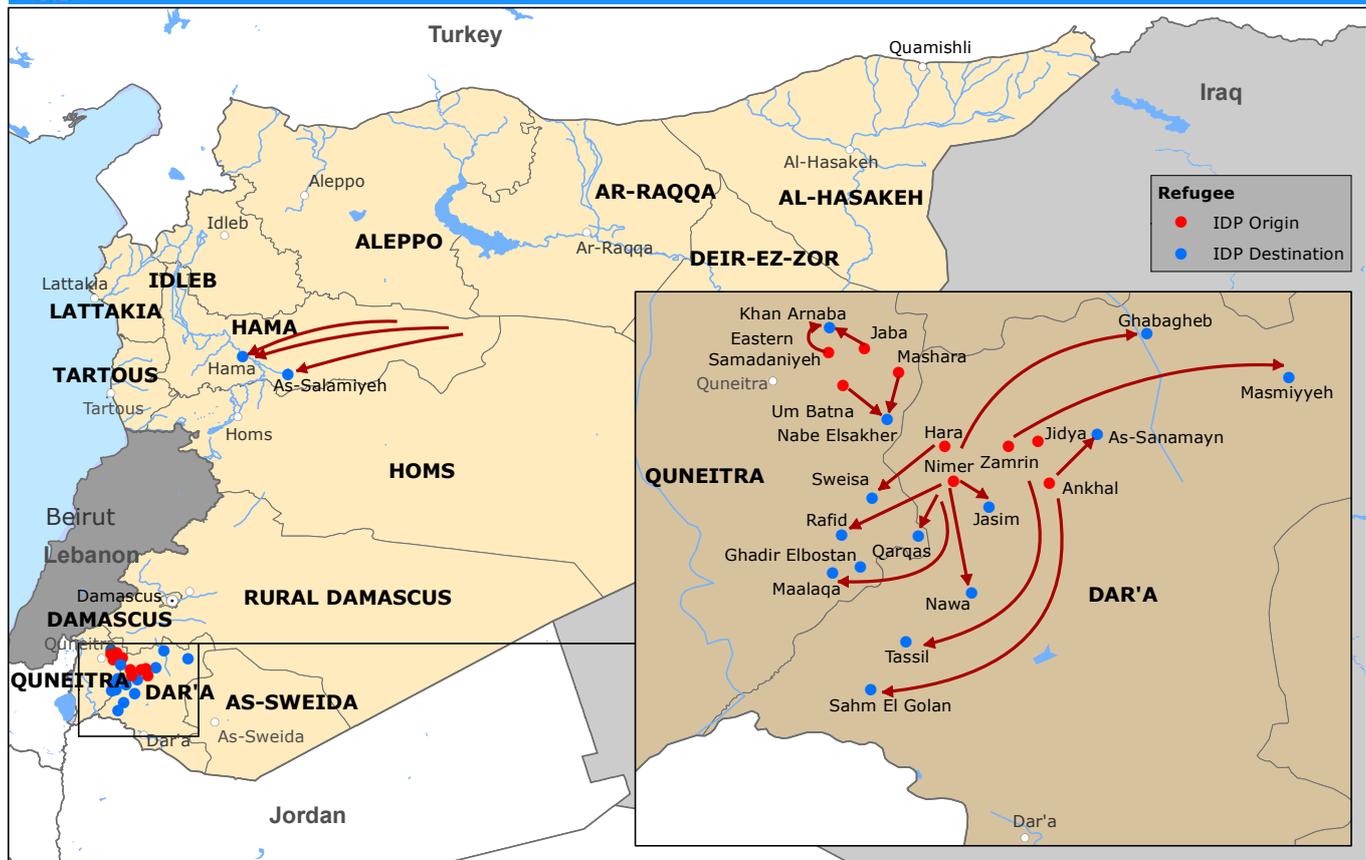
Violence forces new population displacement in central and southern governorates

Mounting insecurity across the country continues to fuel large scale population displacement, as thousands of families flee fighting to seek refuge in relatively safer areas. Over the reporting period, escalating violence in Inkhil and surrounding areas in rural Dar'a forced thousands of civilians to flee towards Sanameen and nearby villages, where SARC registered 50,000 new IDP arrivals over the past two weeks. Additional population influxes were also reported in opposition-controlled rural areas of Dar'a and Quneitra governorates, currently inaccessible to WFP.

Large-scale military operations continue to ravage the north-eastern part of Quneitra, where entire villages are now empty following the departure of the civilian population. Most families have relocated to immediately surrounding rural areas, including Khan Arnabeh, where SARC is registering new arrivals and monitoring the situation.

In central parts of the country, heavy fighting continues unabated in the northern and eastern parts of rural Hama, forcing new families to join the tens of thousands of IDPs who have sought refuge in Hama city and Salamiyyeh over the past three months. To date, over 100,000 newly displaced civilians have been registered by partners in these two locations.

WFP continues to closely monitor the situation to respond to heightened humanitarian needs. Adopting a flexible operational approach, WFP is able to rapidly redirect food rations unable to reach their planned destination to areas recording increasing IDP arrivals. In October, some 47,500 food rations were added to the planned allocation for Hama, Damascus, Rural Damascus, Quneitra, Idleb and Dar'a, to support an additional 237,500 IDPs not previously included in WFP response plan.



Rapid nutrition assessment finds high levels of malnutrition and stunting among children in collective shelters

A rapid nutrition assessment of some 4,500 children under the age of five, residing in IDP collective shelters in 13 of the 14 Syrian governorates, was completed by the nutrition sector in September. No assessment could be conducted in Ar-Raqqa, as access constraints hindered data collection in the area. Preliminary results revealed poor health and nutrition conditions among the children, with global acute malnutrition registered in over seven percent of the sample, including severe acute malnutrition in 2.3 percent of the children surveyed. High levels of

stunting were also reported in 22.3 percent of the sample, of whom almost eight percent were severely stunted. The study highlighted a particularly concerning situation among IDP children in the governorates of Al-Hasakeh, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama, Rural Damascus, Damascus, Aleppo and Tartous, which recorded the highest levels of both global and severe acute malnutrition. These conclusions, albeit based on data limited to collective shelters, will help improve the understanding of the nutrition situation in the country and will inform the future planning for WFP's Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme.

WFP expands school feeding and nutrition support for pregnant and lactating women

In October, vouchers to purchase fresh products not included in the WFP dry ration were distributed to over 2,400 vulnerable pregnant and nursing women in Lattakia and Homs cities, to improve dietary diversity and meet specific nutritional requirements. Following the targeting of just over 700 women in July, the programme is rapidly scaling up with plans to reach over 3,200 women in both governorates by November - a 12 percent increase compared to the previous month's target.

In the meantime, date bars are being distributed in 54 primary schools in Rural Damascus, reaching a total of 44,000 students on a daily basis. The school feeding programme, which targets districts with a high concentration of IDPs, will scale up further in the coming months - extending to primary schools in Tartous and Aleppo in November and December respectively. Training sessions to familiarise school principals and Ministry of Education officials with programme objectives and key implementation aspects were held in Aleppo on 29 and 30 October, and are scheduled to be replicated in Tartous at the beginning of November.



WFP completes October distribution at full monthly value

Following the receipt of additional donor contributions, a supplementary US\$10 was transferred to beneficiary e-cards towards the end of October, bringing the total monthly value of the assistance to the regular US\$30. Beneficiaries were informed before the transfer was made using SMS and posters in local shops. In total, some 917,000 beneficiaries were reached with assistance in October – some three percent less than the planned number – primarily owing to a slower than expected influx of refugees.

Despite restricted access to Arsal, WFP finds innovative ways to continue operations

As insecurity continues to prevent access to Arsal, WFP is finding innovative ways to reach beneficiaries and conduct regular activities. To access newly-registered refugees with e-cards, an alternative distribution point in Zahle (70 km from Arsal) was established in early October, with beneficiaries informed of the location and timing via SMS. By the end of October, some 70 percent of all newly registered refugees had received e-cards, with WFP partners continuing to follow up on no-show cases to ensure they are informed of upcoming distribution opportunities. No security incidents in accessing the area were reported by the beneficiaries.

Despite restricted physical access into the area, WFP's regular shop monitoring activities have also continued as normal, following the establishment of a remote monitoring system. The system includes, among other measures, tailored monitoring forms for phone calls with shopkeepers and beneficiaries. These monitoring tools are crucial as they predominantly aim to cover process-related information regarding prices and shop functionality, and capture feedback from beneficiaries regarding the programme.

WFP and partners finalize common targeting tool

As part of efforts to ensure assistance reaches the most vulnerable, the humanitarian community in Lebanon, through the Targeting Task Force, has developed a joint targeting tool for use as part of each agency's targeting process. The questionnaire, which uses a multi-sectoral approach to assess the vulnerability of refugees, has been shared with sector coordinators and trainings on the tool are underway. The roll-out of the questionnaire is tentatively planned for November.



Targeting and appeals process underway

Following the introduction of vulnerability targeting in October - using criteria generated by the Comprehensive Food Security Monitoring Exercise - a total of 37,025 people, or nearly seven percent of registered Syrian refugees residing outside of camps, were removed from WFP's assistance.

An inter-agency appeals mechanism was established in parallel to the targeting exercise, ensuring that families removed from WFP assistance can appeal their exclusion. An appeals committee – with representation from multiple UN agencies and NGOs – are reviewing the 700 appeals so far submitted, with plans to assess all appeals within a month of their receipt. Given the high number of beneficiary questions related to targeting – as well as questions regarding the potential for reduced assistance due to a lack of funding – WFP monitors are also assisting UNHCR help desks in multiple governorates.

E-card roll-out in Azraq almost complete, ongoing in Al Za'atri camp

WFP continued its roll-out of e-cards in both Al Za'atri and Azraq camps, reaching some 400 families every day. The distribution of e-cards to all households in Azraq is nearly complete, with catch-up days for households who missed distributions taking place this week. The roll-out in Al Za'atri camp, which hosts 13 times as many beneficiaries as Azraq camp, is expected to conclude in late November. WFP field monitors were available at e-card distributions in both camps to show beneficiaries who have never used a debit card-like system how to use the e-card. Thus far, monitoring in Azraq camp indicates that beneficiaries understand how the e-card system works and prefer the modality, as it allows for multiple shop visits and negates the need to attend bi-weekly distributions.

Reached in September:
220,000
 Plan for October:
250,000



WFP continues to support Syrian Kurdish refugees

The number of Syrian Kurdish refugees who have fled to Turkey from conflict in Kobane, Syria has now reached 190,000. Only half of the refugees have been registered with UNHCR, 50,000 of whom are staying in government transit camps and with host families in Suruc, while the rest have moved to different cities further into the country.

Following a government request in early October, WFP is supporting the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) in their provision of two daily hot meals to some 10,750 refugees - almost the full capacity of the mobile kitchens - residing in Suruc transit camps and public spaces. TRC is one of five actors providing hot meals to recently arrived Syrian Kurdish refugees, with local authorities coordinating the food and basic needs response and directing actors regarding quantities and distribution locations. As requested by the TRC, WFP will in the coming month deliver food sufficient for 30,000 for one month, or longer based on the number of people in need. WFP is also attending coordination meetings with partners and local authorities on a regular basis to inform its assistance programme.

No disruption of assistance for relocated camp beneficiaries

To make room for the high number of new Syrian Kurdish and Iraqi refugees entering Turkey, local authorities moved some 5,000 Syrian refugees residing in Nusaybin camp - all of whom are beneficiaries of WFP e-card assistance - to other camps hosting Syrian refugees. Despite the shift, all affected beneficiaries continued to receive WFP assistance without interruption through the automatic uploading of e-cards, also redeemable in WFP-contracted shops in the new camps.

Meanwhile, Nusaybin City was put under high alert after clashes between supporters of the pro-Kurdish Democratic Regions Party (BDP) and Turkish authorities. So far, the delivery of WFP assistance across the Nusaybin-Qamishly crossing - the principal route to send food assistance into Syria's Al-Hasakeh governorate - has remained unaffected.

IRAQ

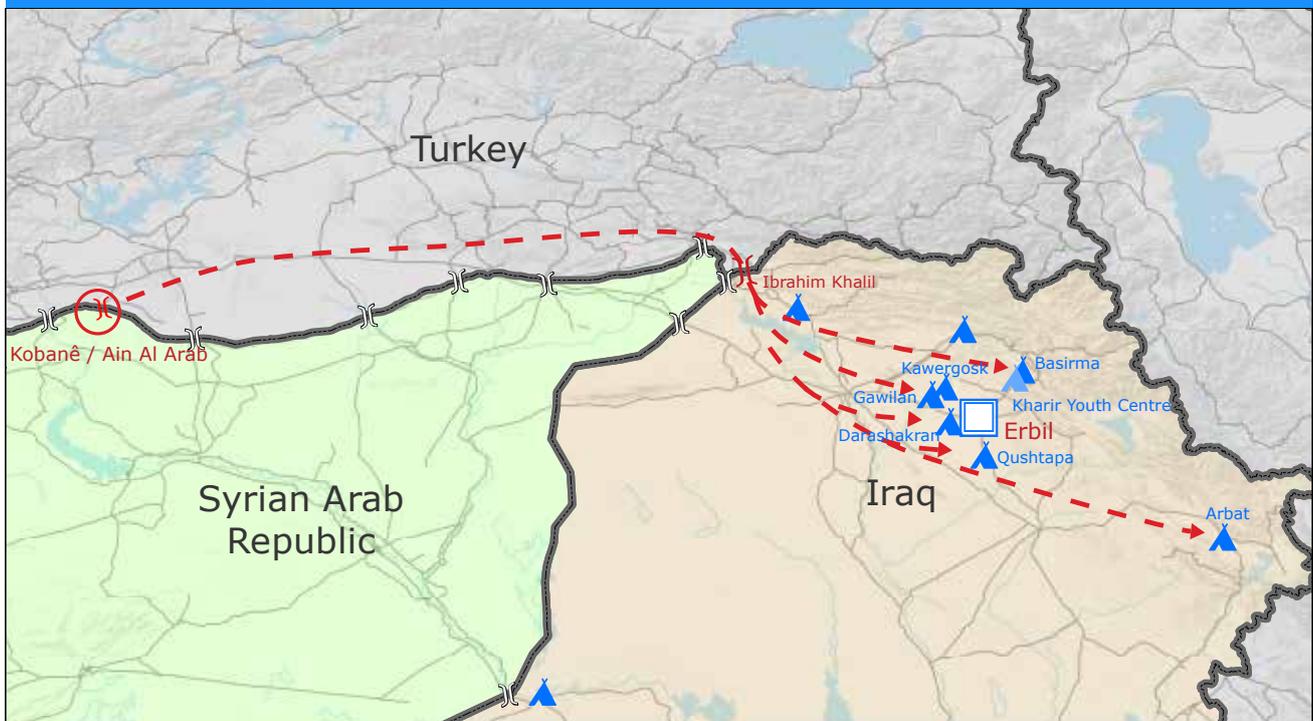
Reached in September:
100,152
 Plan for October:
102,000



Food security sector continues to assist Kobane refugees in Iraq

Over 13,000 refugees from Kobane and surrounding areas have sought refuge in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, with the majority arriving after the opening of the Ibrahim Khalil border crossing with Turkey on 10 October. The Turkey-Iraqi border remains open for refugees, with several thousand additional refugees from Kobane expected to arrive in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in the coming weeks.

Movement of newly arrived refugees from Kobane



In line with a decision by the Kurdistan Regional Government's Ministry of Interior, all new arrivals from Kobane are being transferred to existing Syrian refugee camps - as well as the Kharir Youth Centre in Erbil - where they can choose to remain or decide to move to host communities, often with relatives. Refugees who remain in the camps are then registered by UNHCR, while those who opt to seek refuge in host communities can access the nearest UNHCR urban registration centre located in each KR-I governorate. The large majority of newly arrived refugees are moving to host communities either immediately following their relocation to camps or over the following days.

Food security partners, including WFP, are continuing their assistance to newly arrived refugees from Kobane, ensuring that all those who have moved to camps can meet their food needs. The Barzani Charity Foundation, a local organization, was requested to by the Government to provide hot meals in camps and is doing so until new arrivals are assisted with WFP food parcels. Thus far, WFP has distributed 3,374 individual food parcels to newly arrived refugees in Gawilan, Arbat and Qushtapa camps, and will provide all Kobane refugees remaining in camps with food in-kind assistance as part of the November distribution cycle.

Save the Children has also provided ready to eat rations, comprised of hummus, canned sardines, jam, dried bread, etc, for distribution to newly arrived refugees in Darashakran, Basirma and Kawergosk camps, as well as to Kharir Youth Centre. Each ration is sufficient for a family of five for two weeks and, as they require no cooking facilities, provide ideal support to refugees choosing to remain in camps for a short period before moving to host communities.

WFP food reaches Al Obaidi camp amidst insecurity

Despite ongoing military operations, WFP delivered food to Al Obaidi camp during the reporting period, meeting the food needs of all families in the camp for the month of October. The entire camp population - some 1,300 people - received WFP individual food rations, distributed through WFP's cooperating partner, Islamic Relief Worldwide. If the security situation allows, WFP will dispatch more parcels by the end of November for distribution as part of the November cycle.

EGYPT

Reached in September:
100,877

Plan for October:
100,000



WFP strengthens beneficiary verification processes

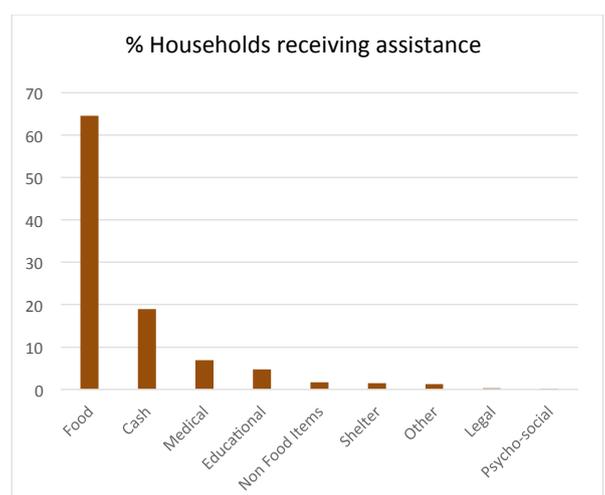
October distributions started as planned on 26 October, with WFP plans to reach just over 100,000 beneficiaries in six locations across the country - Obour, 6th of October, Alexandria, Damietta, Marsa Matrouh and Mansoura.

In response to reports that some people were receiving vouchers for family members who have left the country, WFP is strengthening its beneficiary verification processes to ensure assistance reaches only those who are targeted. During paper voucher distributions, only the principal UNHCR registration card holders or direct relatives (family members who are registered on the same UNHCR registration card) can collect the paper vouchers. All other relatives (second-line family members) who are not on the same registration card, are no longer eligible to collect vouchers for other family members. In addition, WFP will automatically suspend assistance to beneficiaries who miss two distributions in a row and delete them from the beneficiary list, assuming they have left the country or no longer require assistance.

Vulnerability assessment indicates that beneficiaries buy food on credit or borrow money to purchase food

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 registered refugees. Household visits - so far covering over 2,117 households (or 10,100 persons) - have been completed in Obour, 6th October, Cairo, Giza, Ismailia, and Sharkiya, while data collection in Damietta and Alexandria is scheduled to start during the second week of November.

Initial results indicate that an average household consumes two meals per day, and that their main expenditure is on rent, followed by food, education and health. Nearly 90 percent of those interviewed receive at least one type of assistance, with food received by 65 percent of households - the most common assistance received (see table below). Despite the majority of people receiving some kind of assistance, most respondents also reported the use of negative coping strategies, with the most common strategy to reduce essential non-food expenditures, such as education and health, followed by buying food on credit or borrowing money to purchase food, and spending their savings.



FUNDING AND SHORTFALLS

WFP is grateful for the continued support and commitment of its donors to providing vital food assistance to almost 6 million vulnerable Syrians, both inside Syria and in neighbouring countries.

Following a global appeal for support, WFP has received a number of new confirmed contributions and pledges of funding. These pledges have again enabled WFP to utilize its internal loan mechanisms to avert immediate cuts in food assistance across the region. Until these pledges are confirmed, WFP's actual funding situation remains dire with cuts in assistance anticipated during the upcoming winter.

WFP currently needs a total of **US\$325 million** for the operations until the end of the year: **US\$84 million** for Syria and **US\$241 million** for the region.

SHORTFALLS UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR					
Syria	Lebanon	Jordan	Turkey	Iraq	Egypt
84	118	63	33	12	15
US\$ million	US\$ million	US\$ million	US\$ million	US\$ million	US\$ million

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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