

REGIONAL: RRP6 MONTHLY UPDATE - DECEMBER

FOOD SECURITY

A total of 1.99 million people were being reached with cash, in-kind or voucher food assistance by the end of 2014

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS:

In Lebanon, a generous donor contribution ensured that a catastrophic sudden cut-off of food assistance was avoided. As a result, the sector reached almost 881,000 individuals with vouchers during December, with the total number of recipients of all forms of food assistance almost reaching 918,000. In light of the pipeline break that was almost experienced in December, the sector began working on a contingency plan that could be activated in the event of possible future recurrence of a similar scenario.

In Iraq, a lack of funding means students are no longer receiving high-energy biscuits in the camp primary schools. Nonetheless, the programme of in-kind food distribution in six camps is reaching almost 30,000 beneficiaries, while a further 74,000 are reached with food vouchers in Domiz, Akre and Darashakran camps. The construction of voucher redemption shops inside Domiz and Kawergosk camps is almost completed, and will be ready in time for the January distribution cycle.

In Egypt, concerted efforts at all levels meant that additional funds were received to cover the feared shortfalls in December, and almost 97,000 beneficiaries were reached with an undiminished level of food assistance. Discussions are underway with a supermarket chain regarding the possibility of shifting to e-vouchers which, if implemented, would allow the shift to a full e-voucher system in early 2015.

In Jordan, over 521,000 people are receiving food vouchers or other forms of assistance in camps and urban and rural areas. The transition to e-vouchers for refugees living in and outside of camps has now been completed, with paper vouchers now officially phased out.

In Turkey, the WFP/TRC Electronic Food Card Programme reached approximately 220,000 beneficiaries in camps. The ration is supplemented by AFAD's own e-card programme. The Food Security sector in Turkey is currently working on streamlining and harmonizing vulnerability criteria for an off-camp programme to launch in the first quarter of 2015. WFP has provided commodity support to TRC's mobile kitchen in Suruc, providing two meals per day for approximately 15,100 people, while IOM has supported a soup kitchen run by the municipality in Gaziantep which reaches around 4,000 people with one meal per day.



Jordan, Shaza Moghraby, WFP

SYRIAN REFUGEES IN THE REGION:

3,775,798

Refugee Population, end-December 2014

3,590,000

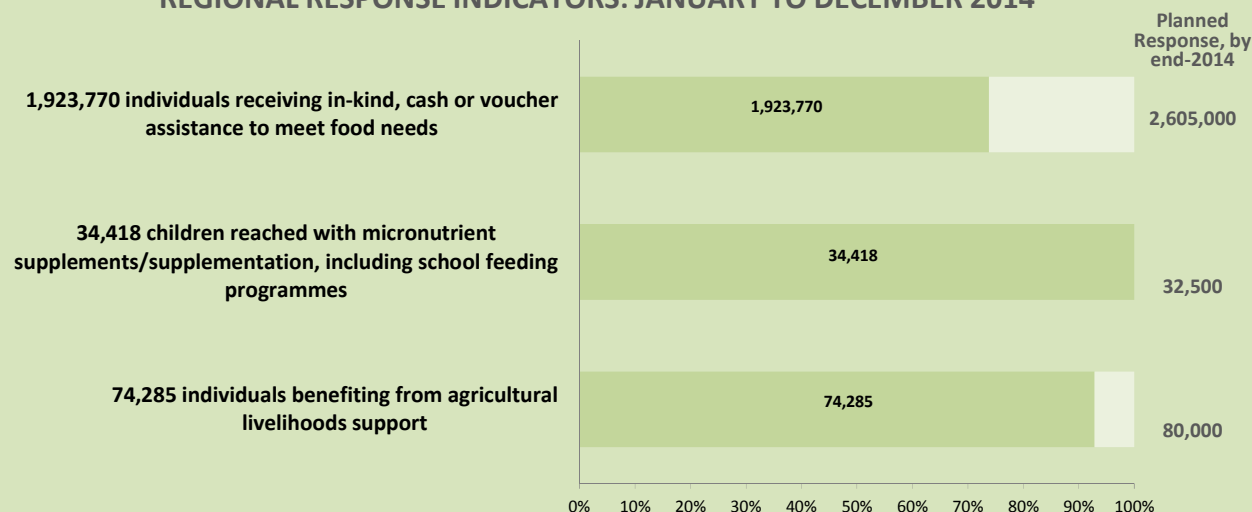
Refugee Population Planning figure, end-2014

NEEDS ANALYSIS:

The supply of agriculture and food products and production capacity is under strain due to the Syria crisis. Up to 25 per cent of domestic food supply in the region is sourced from rural, mostly poor populations, often in areas hosting large numbers of refugees. There are increased reports of trans-boundary animal and plant diseases and pests in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon. RRP partners across the region are concerned about early indications of water shortages which may impact domestic food production, livestock availability and, consequently, livelihoods. Water shortages could further increase retail prices for food products and reduce informal labour opportunities. The gap between wages earned and household expenditure is forcing families to take out loans and engage in other negative coping strategies.

The estimated number of people who will be in need of food assistance by the end of 2014 is some 2.6 million. Pre-assistance baseline monitoring reports indicate that Syrian refugees arrive in neighbouring countries with very low levels of food consumption. In the second quarter of 2014, 20 per cent of newly arriving Syrian refugees in Lebanon had poor food consumption scores, and 31 per cent had borderline food consumption scores. In Jordan, the WFP/REACH Comprehensive Food Security Monitoring Exercise (CFSME), released in July, found that 74 per cent of Syrian refugees relied on WFP food vouchers as their primary source of income, while an estimated 85 per cent of refugees in Jordan would not have economic access to sufficient food without WFP vouchers, with the vulnerability increasing with the length of time spent in Jordan. This evidence supports the necessity of not only maintaining food assistance in the region but also for food assistance to continue to be a strategic priority and for an examination into alternative, more sustainable, means for meeting basic food needs.

REGIONAL RESPONSE INDICATORS: JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2014



Planned response based on full funding of RRP6 for an expected population of 3.59 million Syrian refugees in the region by end-2014. By the end of 2014 there were 3.77 million refugees in the region, and the overall RRP6 appeal was 61% funded.