

HIGHLIGHTS

- With access easier, food for 112,500 people enters Syria's hard-to-reach Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa governorates in the first two weeks of April.
- An inter-agency convoy brings WFP food assistance to IDP camps in Idleb for the third time since the beginning of March, raising hopes of more regular future deliveries.
- Exceptionally low rainfall in recent months is likely to result in below-average wheat production in Syria, threatening to aggravate food insecurity in the country.
- Safety net assistance programme launched for vulnerable Lebanese.
- WFP's voucher programme in Jordan forecast to contribute 0.7% of GDP this year.
- WFP completes transition from paper to e-vouchers in Greater Cairo.
- As security improves, April distributions in Iraq's Gawilan camp proceed without incident.
- WFP/Turkish Red Crescent expands its e-Food Card Programme to Midyat camp in Mardin province, bringing the total caseload to 143,000 people.



SYRIA

Since the 22 February adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2139 urging all parties to the conflict to allow unfettered humanitarian access, WFP has delivered food for 413,250 people living in previously inaccessible or hard-to-reach areas – 66 percent of them in areas not controlled by the government.

Notwithstanding this breakthrough, interagency convoys are becoming more complex to organize and require extensive negotiations with many parties, a formidable challenge given the multiplicity of armed opposition groups. In some areas beneficiaries are being coerced by influential actors with political or financial objectives not to accept UN humanitarian assistance. This poses further risks to the success of inter-agency convoys across conflict lines. Estimates suggest that some 3.5 million vulnerable people are living in what are essentially inaccessible locations. Access restrictions and continuous population movements also continue to impede the assessment of needs.

Further deliveries to Al Hasakeh are envisaged through the Nusaybeen crossing point between Syria and Turkey. While WFP has obtained the clearance of the Syrian government to proceed, approvals are pending from the Turkish authorities.

Compounding the devastating effects of the conflict, exceptionally low rainfall in recent months is now threatening the staple wheat crop, due to be harvested in May. Drought-like conditions are expected to impact food production and further exacerbate Syria's humanitarian crisis.

EVOLVING NEEDS AND WFP OPERATIONS

	Planned*	Dispatched	Distributed
JANUARY CYCLE			
General Food Rations	4,250,000	3,713,730	3,653,165
Wheat Flour***	1,504,000	1,946,680	1,160,200
Supplementary Feeding Programme	240,000**	94,909	127,498****
FEBRUARY CYCLE			
General Food Rations	4,250,000	4,104,055	Ongoing
Wheat Flour	1,504,000	2,224,925	Ongoing
Supplementary Feeding Programme	240,000**	104,600	50,820
MARCH CYCLE			
General Food Rations	4,250,000	Ongoing	Ongoing
Wheat Flour	1,504,000	Ongoing	Ongoing
Supplementary Feeding Programme	240,000**	Ongoing	Ongoing

*WFP adopts a flexible operational approach in order to maximise the efficiency of its response to the fast evolving conditions on the ground. As such, it takes into account population movements and access challenges, increasing assistance to address displaced populations in need as required. As a result, more than 100% of targets may be met in areas where actual needs exceed the original plan.

**The planning figures for the Supplementary Feeding Programme apply to the entire year, while the current number of beneficiaries are being targeted on a monthly basis. The programme includes distribution of Plumpy'Doz® in the central, western and southern governorates and Nutributter® in the north-eastern governorates.

*** The current monthly ration of wheat flour per family is 12.5 Kg. At present, households receive a 25 Kg bag of wheat flour every two months.

****February distributions of Plumpy'Doz® and Nutributter® exceeded targets, as some quantities of Plumpy'Doz® dispatched in January were distributed only in February. Additionally, the Ministry of Health took advantage of the on-going national polio vaccination campaign to increase coverage of the blanket feeding programme in Rural Damascus.

General Food Assistance

As of 15 April, 53 percent of planned dispatches for the month – targeting a total of 4.25 million people country-wide over the four-week period – had been achieved, reaching 13 out of 14 governorates. This included the delivery of rations for 112,500 people to the governorates of Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa, where access was previously problematic. Nonetheless, insecurity along overland routes continued to prevent dispatches to hard-to-reach



eastern Aleppo City and its rural hinterland. Access to Al-Hasakeh was achieved during the last reporting period cross-border from Turkey – contributing to WFP’s March provision of food for a record 4.1 million people in all 14 governorates – and further deliveries are planned in April.

Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme

In 2014, WFP plans to reach a total of 240,000 children aged 6-23 months with measures to prevent malnutrition in northern, central and southern governorates. By 7 April, over 44,800 children out of the 77,600 targeted by March dispatches had received Plumpy’Doz® in collective shelters and among host communities in Rural Damascus, Homs, Hama, Aleppo Tartous, Idleb, Lattakia and As-Sweida. Furthermore, over 6,000 children out of the 27,000 targeted by the quantities dispatched to Al-Hasakeh in March were provided with Nutributter® to combat micronutrient deficiencies. Access constraints and a shortage of technical partners have hindered a rapid scale-up of the intervention.

North-eastern Syria

Al-Hasakeh

Due to a complete lack of road access from within Syria for the last seven months, WFP relies on access to the governorate through the Nusaybeen crossing point between Syria and Turkey. Plans are underway to deliver an additional 10,000 food rations for 50,000 people in April. While WFP has received clearance from the Syrian government, approval is still wanted from the Turkish authorities.

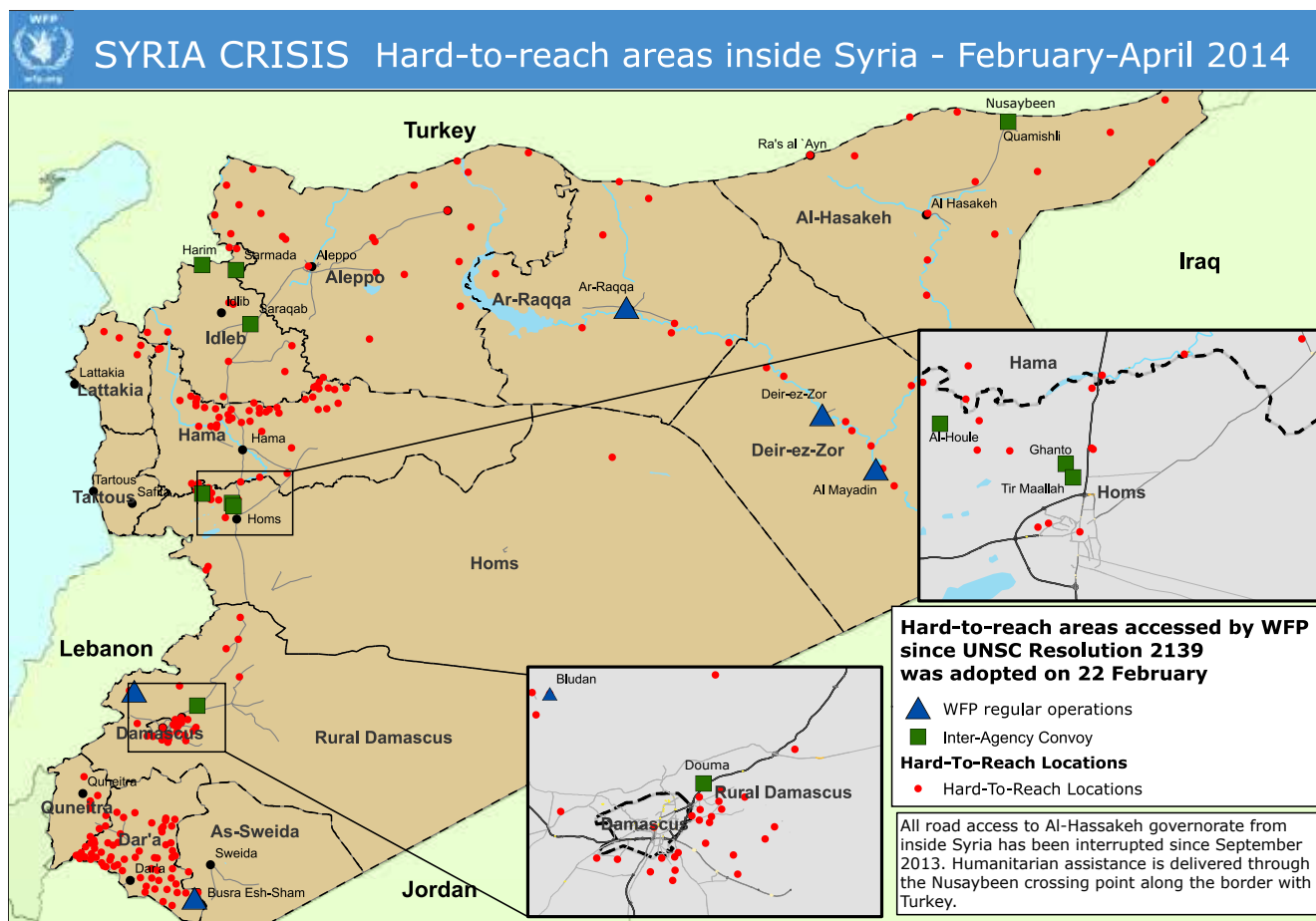
Over the reporting period, an escalation in fighting caused thousands of families to flee the towns of Margada and Qahtanieh to seek safety in Al-Hasakeh City and in Al-Mayadin in Deir-ez-Zor.

Distribution continued of the 10,000 family food rations (for 50,000 people, 22 percent of the targeted vulnerable population) trucked in from Nusaybeen in Turkey as part of an inter-agency convoy during the last reporting period. That food is currently reaching people in rural and urban areas of the governorate, including hotspots such as Tal Brak, Tal Khamis, Al-Hol, Amouda and Derbasieh.

Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa

Moderate improvements in access have allowed deliveries to Deir-ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa governorates to resume since the end of February, albeit not at the scale and pace that would allow WFP to reach the full target of beneficiaries. The food delivered to the two governorates during the reporting period was sufficient to support only 23 percent of intended recipients in Deir-ez-Zor and 15 percent of those in Ar-Raqqa. WFP partners have reported distributions taking place in Deir-ez-Zor, AL-Mayadin in Deir-ez-Zor governorate, as well as in Ar-Raqqa city and some villages in rural parts of the governorate (including Al Shaher, Al Montazah, Al Sahameyah, Al Khan, Masada, Al Abbarah, Abu Kabrah and Um Shaqarah).

Renewed fighting in the northeast is pushing large numbers of already displaced people to seek refuge in safer areas of the region. During the reporting period, heavy clashes in the town of Abu Kamal, on the border with Iraq, forced at least 15,000 people to move to Al-Mayadin, where they were registered by a WFP partner organisation, Islamic Charity Association. The association also reported the arrival of another 1,500 people from the war-torn town of Margada in rural Al-Hasakeh.



Northern Syria

Idleb

Over the past few weeks, some 117,500 newly displaced people were reported to have sought shelter in IDP camps in northern and central Idleb (including in Abu Thouhor, Ma'arat Al Nu'man, Saraqib, Harim, Sinjar, Kafr Numbol and Taftanaz), having fled fighting in other parts of the governorate, rural Aleppo and northern Hama. At the beginning of April, 16,000 new families were registered by SARC, of which 6,000 families are already receiving assistance, while registration of the remaining IDPs is ongoing. With clashes continuing in the rural east of neighbouring Lattakia, more IDPs are expected in northern Idleb in the coming weeks.

Since the beginning of March, three inter-agency convoys carrying food and medical supplies reached IDP camps in northern and central Idleb. It was the first time WFP assistance was delivered to the area since the Syrian conflict began. Following the convoys to Harim and Sarmada areas, the latest of the three missions delivered assistance to the camps in Saraqab on 12 April, including WFP assistance to support 4,000 people for one month. As of 12 April, WFP had delivered food assistance to cover the needs of approximately 55,000 people, amounting to over 90 percent of the total population estimated to be living in IDP camps in Idleb.

Central Syria

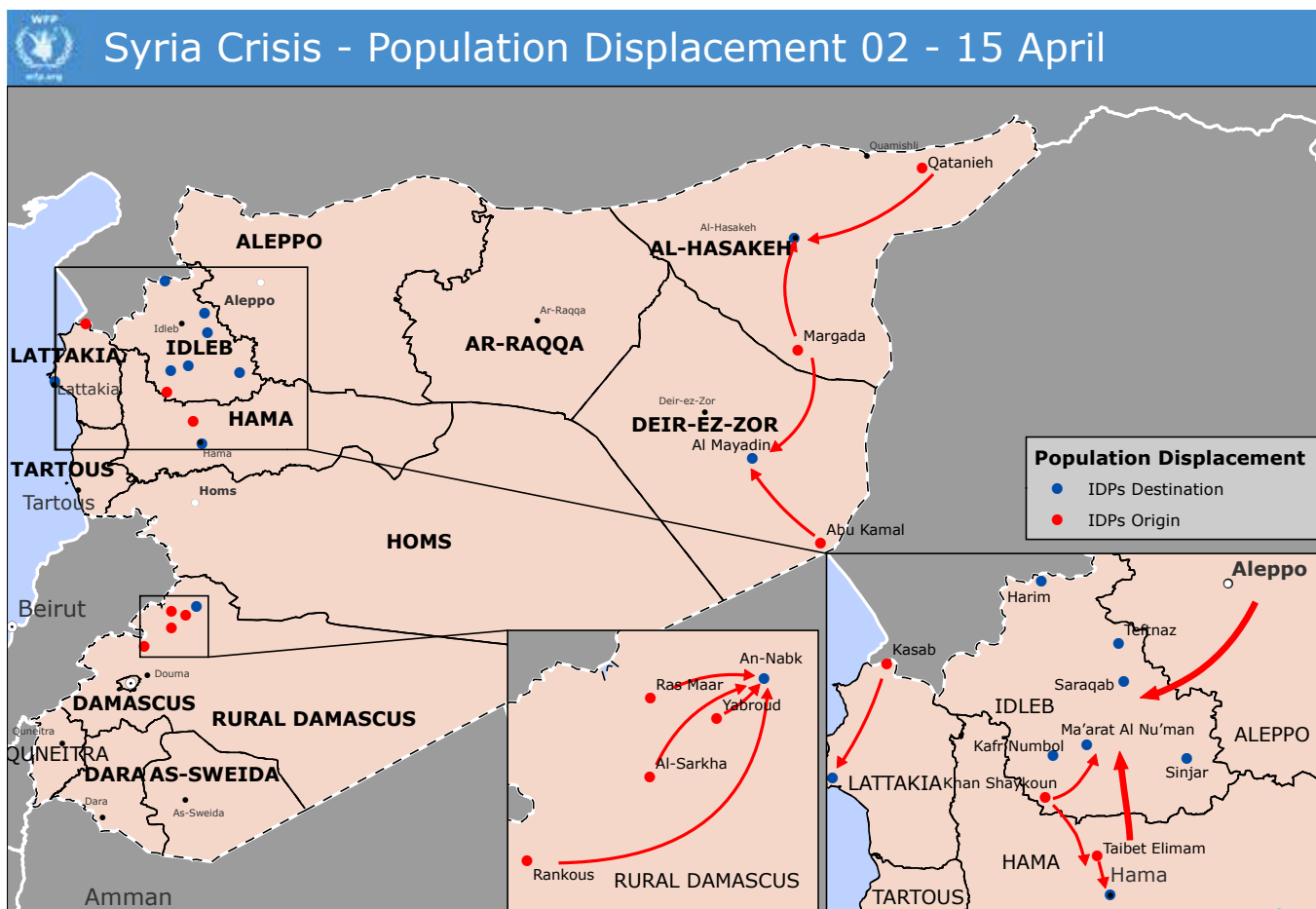
Homs

Heavy fighting in Homs over the past few months has caused large-scale displacement and a rapid deterioration in humanitarian conditions. In March, WFP delivered assistance for over 630,000 people in the governorate, an increase of 15 percent on the initially planned beneficiary number.

On 8 April 4,000 family food rations for 20,000 people and Plumpy'Doz® to prevent malnutrition in 2,300 children reached the towns of Ghanto and Tir Maallah in rural Homs – last reached in October 2013 - through an inter-agency convoy. The rations can support the food needs of 70 percent of the 30,000 people estimated to be living in the two locations. A rapid assessment conducted by inter-agency mission members showed that food prices were about 25 percent higher than pre-crisis levels. It also revealed significant disruptions to the local economy and a shortage of employment opportunities, not least because insecurity is limiting farming, traditionally the main livelihood in the area.

Hama

Heightened needs for the same reasons in the neighbouring governorate of Hama obliged WFP to increase by 25 percent over planned levels the assistance provided in March. Much of the focus was on urban areas of the governorate. Partners reported that some 50,000 people fled to Hama City from fighting in Tibet Elimam in rural Hama and Khan Shaykhun in neighbouring Idlib.



Southern Syria

Rural Damascus

WFP remains unable to reach almost 40 locations - home to more than 300,000 people - in Rural Damascus, particularly in Eastern Ghouta, to the east of the capital. As a result, WFP is increasing food assistance to calmer areas hosting large numbers of IDPs, including some from the neighbouring governorates of Quneitra and Dar'a.

Heavy fighting in the towns of Mliha and Jobar is expected to generate significant displacement. Escalating violence has also pushed hundreds of families from the Qalamoun region towns of Rankous, Ras Maar, Yabroud and Al-Sarkha towards Al-Nabek, now relatively calm after intense fighting in late 2013.

A pause in military operations in the Qudsia area during the reporting period enabled life to return to some sort of normalcy, with people moving relatively freely and a resumption of commercial activity. This was in sharp contrast to the heavy fighting there in the second half of March, which forced large numbers of people to flee towards Damascus City.

MARKET ANALYSIS

Insecurity continued to fuel food price surges in WFP-monitored markets, notably in the conflict-affected governorates of Idleb and Dar'a. Staples like lentils, rice, cooking oil and wheat flour were more costly in, for example, rural Idleb, while the price of diesel in Dar'a was 50 percent up from March levels.

Despite improved internal and cross-border overland access, high food inflation persisted in the north-eastern governorates, pushing the prices of even basic commodities beyond the means of the poorest households.

On the other hand, bread prices stabilized or declined in most markets due to increased production in both private and public bakeries. This is attributable to support from the government that includes distribution of wheat flour, yeast and fuel to some governorates. WFP also prioritizes distribution of wheat flour to vulnerable households in 11 governorates that have experienced bread shortages. In Aleppo, reports indicate irregular support of wheat flour imported from Turkey to some bakeries by relief committees. In Ar-Raqqa City, Tal Abyad (Ar-Raqqa) and Deir-ez-Zor City, bread prices fell by up to 43 percent compared to March averages, as previous blockades over road access were partially lifted during the past month allowing a improved flow of wheat flour supplies. The exception to this trend was Dar'a where bread prices spiked up by 100 percent as an escalation of fighting cut supplies of yeast and wheat flour to the governorate.

The delivery in the latter half of March of WFP food to Douma, Rural Damascus, which had been under siege since October 2012, triggered an immediate steep reduction of as much as 50 percent in the prices of key commodities. However, they are still high compared to those in surrounding markets.

LEBANON

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Refugees registered and awaiting registration:
1,014,070*

Reached in March: 691,435**
640,797 vouchers (96% of operational plan***)
50,638 parcels (78% of operational plan***)

Plan for April:** 770,141
708,091 Vouchers
62,050 Parcels

* UNHCR registration numbers:

<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122>

** Reconciliation ongoing

*** Operational planning figures are based on UNHCR manifest where WFP targets approximately 70% of the caseload.

The number of Syrian refugees who have fled to Lebanon officially topped 1 million on 3 April, highlighting the growing humanitarian catastrophe caused by Syria's civil war and the huge burden placed on its neighbours.

During the first week of April, an influx of refugees was reported in the border town of Tfail, located in the eastern part of the Bekaa Valley. To date, access to the area has been denied to local and international partners, including WFP although negotiations to gain access and provide assistance continue.

EVOLVING NEEDS AND WFP OPERATIONS

WFP's April distributions started, including the introduction of safety net assistance for vulnerable

individuals (see below). During the reporting period, 661,530 beneficiaries were assisted including some 11,500 new arrivals who were supported with food parcels. The remainder had their e-cards automatically uploaded to the value of US\$30 per person per month.

In addition, WFP Lebanon committed to distributing 390 metric tons (mt) of dates donated by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the regional response to the Syria emergency. Preparations are being made to ensure proper warehousing and adequate transport capacity for delivery of the dates.

A recent assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and their Employment Profile, conducted by the International Labour Organization (ILO), found that low wages, high unemployment and lack of labour market regulation pose serious challenges to livelihoods for both residents and for refugees in host communities. In line with the results of the ILO study, WFP, the World Bank and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) are in the process of developing an e-card food assistance project specifically targeting vulnerable Lebanese. WFP will initially manage, while building the capacity of MoSA to eventually take over the project. The World Bank and UNHCR have committed funds for the start-up in July, and donors are being asked to provide additional funds for a medium term caseload of 50,000 food assistance recipients.

Safety Net Assistance

WFP Lebanon has started providing safety nets assistance to vulnerable individuals whose households were previously ineligible for assistance. Those who can benefit include pregnant and lactating women, children under 2 years, people over 60 years, and other dependents. The eligible will receive an individual ration via an e-card for as long as their vulnerability persists. Some 5,000 requests have been received so far and 3,300 of them have been validated. These are being included in the April distribution cycle, and WFP's cooperating partners are continuing to receive requests.



Logistics Corridor

During the reporting period, 7,062 mt of food items, some 180 truckloads, were dispatched from Beirut Port to Damascus, Tartous and Lattakia. The commodities include bulgur wheat, rice, edible oil, lentils, fava beans and pasta.

In March, WFP transported 12,819 mt of food items from Lebanon to Syria. Most trucks used the Beirut-Damascus highway and the others the Beirut-Tartous and Beirut-Lattakia routes.

March Logistics Corridor

BEIRUT TO TARTOUS 16 

BEIRUT TO LATAKIA 17 

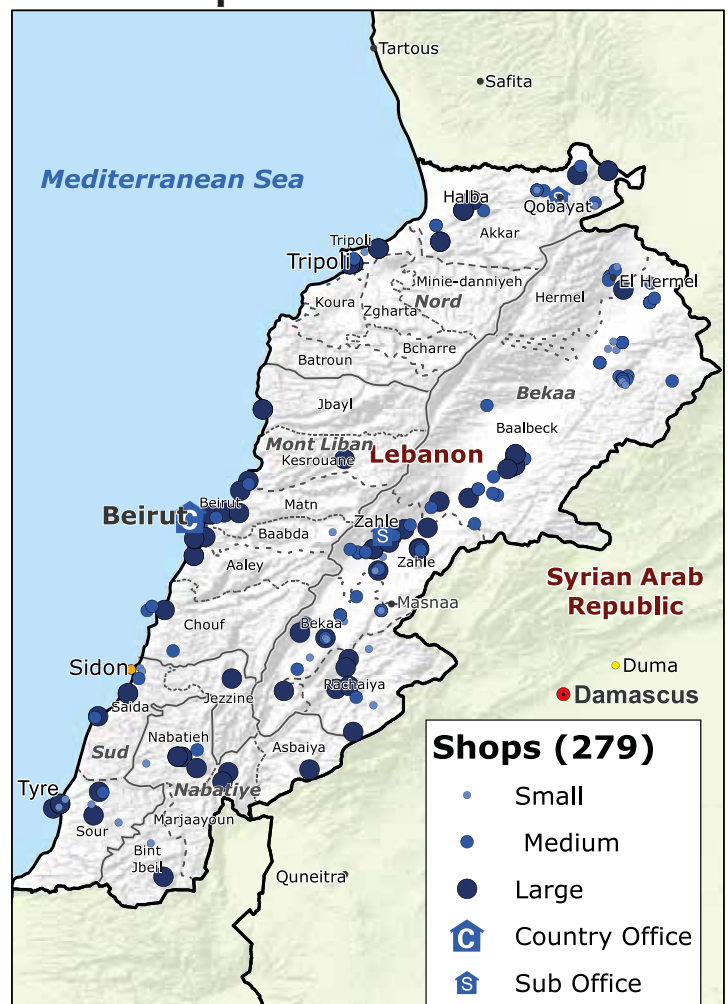
BEIRUT TO DAMASCUS 288 

The MV Forester arrived in Beirut Port on 4 April, and completed the discharge of 3,600 mt of bagged rice on 7 April. All cargo was loaded onto trucks and dispatched by road to Damascus, Tartous and Lattakia.

Shop expansion

The number of partner shops across the country where beneficiaries can redeem their e-cards decreased from 285 in March to 279 during the reporting period. It is anticipated that the number of shops will increase and WFP is currently drafting a new shop partnership strategy to expand the number of shops in use.

Partner Shops in Lebanon



OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Registered refugees: 589,792
Reached in March: 527,701 (93% of plan)
 In Za'atri: 98,974 (85% of plan)
 Refugees in communities: 428,727 (97% of plan)
Plan for April*: 565,284
 In camps: 100,822
 Refugees in communities: 464,462

Ongoing distributions under the April cycle are targeting some 565,000 refugees in Al Za'atri camp and Jordanian communities. The transition from paper to e-vouchers in communities has been completed in six of Jordan's 12 governorates, with distributions ongoing in four others. Meanwhile, a recent assessment of the impact of WFP's voucher programme on the Jordanian economy forecasts that it will account for some 0.7 percent of the country's overall GDP in 2014.

**Planned figures are based on UNHCR manifest which is subject to some inflation due to incomplete departure information and other variables. UNHCR is currently working to address this through the ongoing reregistration process.*

EVOLVING NEEDS AND WFP OPERATIONS

While an average of 440 refugees now cross the border informally from Syria to Jordan every day, the total number in the country is increasing more slowly than expected. This follows UNHCR's ongoing re-registration process, which is enabling the cleaning of registration lists and the removal of duplicate families who have registered in multiple locations. Thus far UNHCR has already deactivated nearly 10,000 individuals from Al Za'atri camp that were registered in community locations and plans to finish the exercise by the end of May. As of 10 April, 589,700 refugees were registered in the country, up from 588,979 at the end of the last reporting period. In the event of a future large influx of refugees, WFP maintains a contingency stock of 80,000 welcome meals, with the capacity to produce an additional 70,000 meals per week, as well as 64 mt of A28/29 meal bars sufficient for 128,000 persons for 24 hours, and 68,000 full dry rations for two weeks.

Camps

Al Za'atri camp

WFP distributions in Al Za'atri camp decreased from 115,639 to 100,822 people during the reporting period mainly due to the ongoing UNHCR re-registration exercise, in addition to informal camp departures and returns to Syria. The first distribution of food vouchers valued at JD10 (US\$14) /person for the month of April was completed on 14 April, reaching 88,848 people in the camp. In addition, WFP continued the distribution of 22.5 mt of bread on a daily basis, as well as of Saudi dates and date bars to every camp resident.

Following the launch of a specialised nutrition programme on 30 March, partner Save the Children is distributing SuperCereal Plus to all children between 6-24 months, targeting a total of some 6,000 children. In March, 4,507 children were reached. In addition, more than 6,000 welcome meals were distributed to new arrivals registering in Rabat Al Sahar as well as special needs cases in Al Za'atri camp.

Following a riot on 5 April which left one male refugee dead and 11 Jordanian security force personnel injured, schools were closed on 6 and 7 April. While date bar distributions were halted during the two days, WFP and Save the Children Jordan resumed distributions of bread and welcome meals on the morning of 6 April. In total, 12,659 children attending school on a daily basis during the reporting period received date bars.

With plans to transition Al Za'atri camp to e-cards upon completion of the UNHCR re-verification exercise, WFP and its partner bank assessed the feasibility of establishing the network required to support it. While connectivity was determined to be inadequate, WFP and the Jordanian Government's Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate are looking into the possibility of using a landline connection, with WFP expecting to begin the e-card pilot in May.

Azraq camp

Preparations continue for the camp's planned opening at the end of the month, with the construction of the Sameh Mall shop expected to be finalised by 25 April.

Communities

The transition from paper to electronic vouchers for Syrian refugees living in Jordanian communities continued over the reporting period. As illustrated by the map, the distribution of e-cards has been completed in the governorates of Ma'an, Tafila, Karak, Ajloun, Jerash and Balqa, as well as Ramtha district in Irbid and Bayader Wadi Al Seer district of Amman. Meanwhile, distributions are ongoing in the Tabrbour district of Amman and in Mafrag and Zarqa governorates. In addition to the voucher distributions that target a total of 341,193 people with paper vouchers and 123,269 with e-cards during the April cycle, WFP dispatched dates for distribution at some partner voucher distribution sites.

Originally targeting 185 individuals with its specialized feeding programme for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition in host communities, WFP partner Medair has extended its coverage to include an additional 43 beneficiaries in Jerash, Ajloun and Balqa governorates. The recent inclusion of six additional members in the mobile outreach teams will help reach more malnourished Syrian refugees.



Inter-agency targeting exercise

Efforts continue to develop a common vulnerability framework to underpin an enhanced humanitarian assistance coordination mechanism as well as the targeting of assistance to refugees residing in Jordanian communities. So far, the Steering Committee – of which WFP is a member together with four other UN agencies, five NGOs and two donors – has produced a list of 15 agreed indicators to be tested and validated through a statistical model being developed with the World Bank. WFP is leading the development of a tool to assess vulnerabilities at UNHCR registration centres and on a rolling basis through home visits in communities. To support the planned piloting of the tool in early May and the roll-out of the framework shortly thereafter, the Steering Committee is developing a communications campaign to inform refugees and other stakeholders of the upcoming changes.

ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

To evaluate the impact of WFP's voucher assistance, a team of economists has assessed the financial impact of the programme in Jordan since the start of operations. As per the findings, assistance through the voucher programme is expected to contribute 0.7 percent of Jordan's GDP in 2014. As of the end of March, the voucher programme has already produced some US\$2.5 million of investment in physical infrastructure by the participating retailers, created over 350 jobs in the food retail sector and generated almost US\$6 million in additional tax receipts for the Jordanian government. In addition, the study found that 87 cents of each dollar spent by voucher recipients in supermarkets are channelled to food commodity purchases from suppliers within Jordan.

For the full report, please see:

<http://www.wfp.org/content/jordan-economic-impact-study-wfp-food-voucher-programme-april-2014>

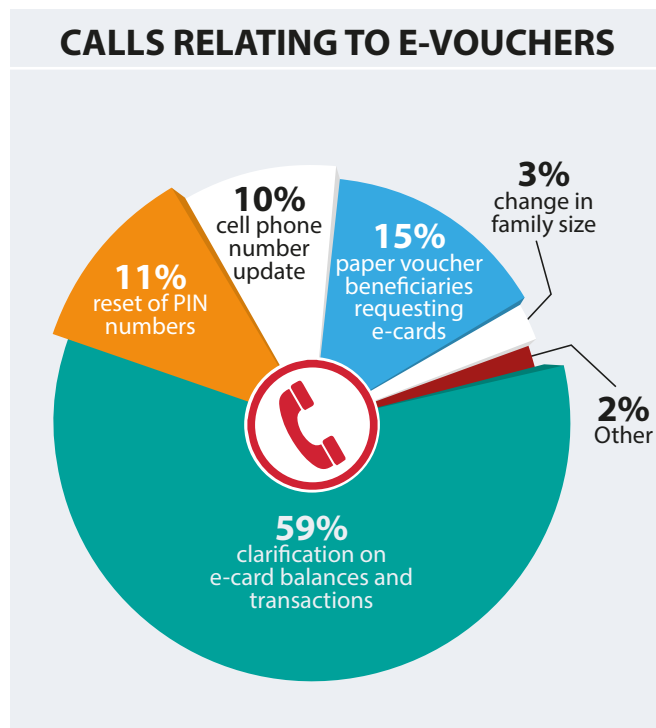
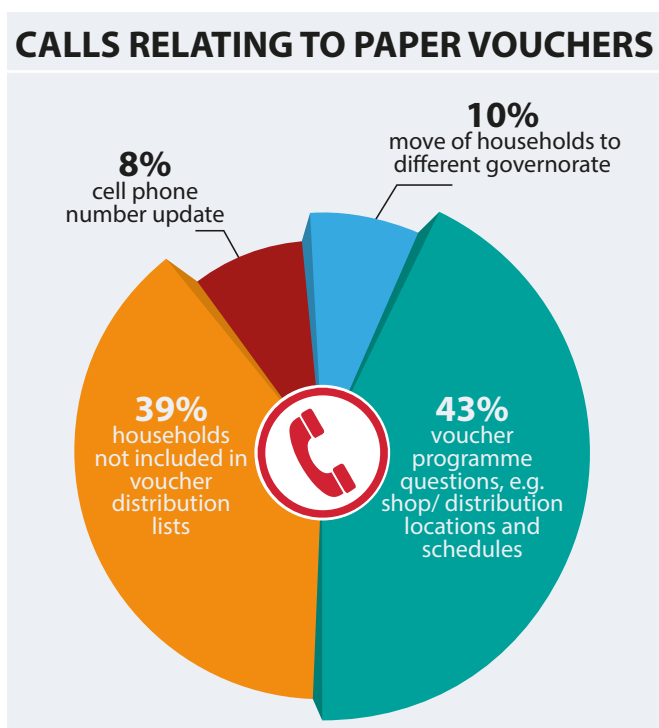
MONITORING

Monitors found two community-based organisations in Al Za'atri camp to be exchanging vouchers for non-food items. WFP is officially warning shops to comply with their contractual agreements or risk exclusion from the programme.

In communities, beneficiaries are reported to be pleased with the receipt of e-cards, which enable refugees to redeem the value of the card in any WFP partner shop throughout the country, while eliminating the need to travel to distribution sites and the payment of transportation fees. To ensure beneficiaries are well aware of how to use the card and its associated pin code, WFP requested partners to increase the frequency and quality of information sessions given to beneficiaries during e-card distributions. Finally, to support the ongoing re-registration process and help accelerate distributions - as these processes take place simultaneously - additional staff from the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) are expected to come on-board with UNHCR by early May.

WFP HOTLINE

The WFP beneficiary hotline received an average of 103 calls per day during the reporting period. Continuing the trend seen over the past months, the proportion of calls relating to e-vouchers increased while those relating to paper vouchers continued to decrease. The main questions posed by beneficiaries regarding paper and electronic vouchers respectively are illustrated in the graphic below.



OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Registered refugees: 713,437

Reached in March: 140,097

People in camps (100% of operational plan)

Plan for April: 145,000 people in camps

EVOLVING NEEDS AND WFP OPERATIONS

While government estimates put the total Syrian population inside Turkey above 800,000, its Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) reported that the number registered and assisted in 22 camps in

10 provinces is 224,265. In April, WFP plans to reach approximately 145,000 of these beneficiaries in 16 camps through the e-Food Card Programme.

Turkey shares a 900-kilometre border with Syria, and armed clashes in border towns are not only becoming increasingly frequent, but also beginning to impact WFP monitoring operations. WFP has not been able to monitor Yayladagi 1 and Yayladagi 2 camps for a month due to security concerns caused by cross-border shelling.

EVOLVING NEEDS AND WFP OPERATIONS

The high likelihood of drought in Syria and record-low harvests of key commodities could potentially push millions more Syrians into hunger and exacerbate the protracted displacement crisis both in-country and in the region. Turkey is similarly facing drought conditions, with this year's wheat harvest having dropped by at least 14 percent due to low rainfall. Other key commodities have also been affected which will likely result in increased food prices nationwide (including in the camps) and reduced purchasing power for beneficiaries of the e-Food Card Programme. The value of the food entitlement is also threatened by fluctuations of the Turkish lira. The Turkish lira has been under strain for the past six months due to the fear of decreased purchase of bonds drying up the capital inflows that have financed the current account deficit. The weaker currency is increasing the price of all imports, most markedly the price of food.

E-Food Card Programme

At the beginning of April, WFP expanded the WFP/Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) e-Food Card Programme to Midyat camp in Mardin province; the addition of approximately 3,250 beneficiaries brings the total caseload to roughly 143,000 Syrians in camps. Midyat is the second camp covered under the cost-sharing agreement with AFAD whereby WFP uploads 60 Turkish liras (roughly US\$30) to the WFP/TRC e-Food Card and AFAD uploads 20 Turkish liras on its own card. The cost-sharing modality will be expanded to other camps as programme pre-requisites are met in the coming months.

WFP programme and monitoring staff played an integral role in the launch of the programme in Midyat camp. Field monitors assisted TRC staff with training and information campaigns to all stakeholders; the distribution of e-food cards; and the assistance to beneficiaries during the first few days of shopping in camp markets.

The ration amount is currently 80 Turkish liras per person per month for the 14 camps enrolled in the programme since 2013 and 60 Turkish liras for newly added camps, where the cost-sharing pilot is implemented, starting from February 2014 (currently two camps with approximately 23,250 beneficiaries). As of May, WFP plans to reduce the contribution to the food entitlement per person to 60 Turkish liras in all camps and will be supplemented with 20 Turkish liras for food purchases on the government's AFAD card, thereby maintaining the same food entitlement amount of 80 Turkish liras.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

High prices continue to be the main concern voiced by beneficiaries in most camps. Field monitors have noted that many beneficiaries find food to be comparatively more expensive than in Syria. To address this concern, TRC and WFP advocacy with shopkeepers in Midyat camp has resulted in significant price decreases since the launch of the e-Food Card Programme on 1 April.

IRAQ

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Registered refugees: 219,579

(as of 30 March)

Reached in March: 106,795

(97% of the operational plan).

Plan for April*: 106,000

Food assistance to all refugees in camp settings continued in April, targeting a total of 106,000 people. WFP is providing food assistance in all ten camps hosting Syrian refugees, including a transit camp in Dohuk governorate on the border with Syria. Nine out of ten camps are assisted with individual monthly food parcels (of 16.29 kg each) and the other, in Domiz, is supported through a voucher programme. Moves to transition to voucher assistance in camps in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq also

continued during the reporting period. A request for proposals for potential retailers in Dara Shakran, Kawr Gosk and Gawilan camps was launched, with the objective of starting voucher programmes in these camps in the coming months.

EVOLVING NEEDS AND WFP OPERATIONS

Thus far, the April distribution of in-kind food assistance has been completed in Gawilan, Akre, Arbat and Al Obady camps. Despite previous insecurity, access to Gawilan camp was permitted and the distribution occurred without incident on 9 April. WFP worked closely with UNHCR to ensure the safety of staff and the efficiency of the distribution. In total, 2,380 beneficiaries were reached in the camps, 76 percent of whom were women and children.

Voucher assistance commenced in Domiz, where WFP plans to reach 76,000 people with vouchers valued at US\$31 per person per month. WFP is currently working to establish retailers inside the camp, reducing transportation costs for the refugees.

Assistance in camps in Erbil will begin next week, given that distributions were delayed in March due to a pipeline break.

Bajet Qandela

On 10 April, WFP staff travelled to Bajet Qandela transit camp in Dohuk, near the border with Syria, as part of an assessment mission prior to the distribution of food assistance. The border has been closed since 8 April on the Syrian side, with families waiting on both sides of the border. WFP has already sent additional food stocks to Dohuk governorate and is prepared to respond to an influx of refugees if necessary.

There are approximately 320 refugees currently residing in Bajet Qandela transit camp while awaiting registration. It was reported that three families left the camp after registration, but returned because they could not find accommodation elsewhere. It is likely that some families will remain in the transit camp until they are relocated to another camp in the KRI. Others may leave to stay with friends or relatives in urban areas or camps. WFP will distribute food parcels to the refugees in Bajet Qandela in the coming week.

SPOTLIGHT ON COOPERATING PARTNERSHIPS: ACTED

Following an influx of refugees in August 2013, WFP signed an agreement with the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) for the distribution of food assistance in five refugee camps in Erbil and Suleimaniyah governorates. Since then, WFP has worked with ACTED to provide monthly food assistance to over 25,000 refugees, employing Syrian refugees from the camps to assist during food distributions and monitoring activities. For the past seven months, ACTED has implemented WFP's in-kind food assistance in Arbat, Basirma, Dara Shakran, Kawr Gosk and Qushtapa camps.

ACTED has been present in Iraq since 2003, implementing emergency support for internally displaced persons and host communities, and working in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to build the capacity of local civil society organisations and local government entities. ACTED has been responding to the Syrian refugee crisis in the Kurdistan Region since early 2013 through camp management, NFI distribution, information management, food distribution, and child protection programming.

Community Engagement

Prior to a distribution, ACTED engages with camp communities through outreach campaigns and community meetings, enhancing community participation in the food distribution process. To disseminate key messages, including distribution dates and times, ACTED utilises existing community communication mechanisms, meeting with camp council leaders, camp committee representatives, and traditionally-appointed sector leaders, who in turn disseminate information to their communities. ACTED also meets with relevant camp management and government bodies to inform them of distribution dates and ensure their full cooperation in the distribution process.

Helping Vulnerable Groups

In the five camps where they are WFP's cooperating partner, ACTED rents tuk-tuks from private drivers on food distribution days to assist vulnerable people (persons with disabilities, elderly persons, pregnant women) with the delivery of food parcels. In order to prevent long queuing times, vulnerable beneficiaries are also able to proceed through the distribution process in a separate queue, and are prioritized by the registration desks. This is also the case in Gawilan and Akre, where WFP directly implements its food assistance programme.

Feedback Desks

After piloting the initiative in February, ACTED ran feedback desks at all five of its March distributions. Information regarding the desk was incorporated into mass information campaigns prior to each distribution, and the desk itself was advertised by a large banner in Arabic, Kurmanji, Sorani and English. In total, 11 observations were received during March, mostly from individuals who wished to receive food on behalf of others.



OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Registered refugees: 136,119*

Reached in March: 88,728
(73% of operational plan)***

Plan for April:** 107,767

* UNHCR data:
<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=8>

**Operational planning figures are based on UNHCR and UNWRA manifest.

others attempting to depart illegally for Europe. Approximately 130 Syrian refugees were arrested in the first week of April attempting to illegally depart Egypt, 20 of whom were released, according to UNHCR.

During the March distribution cycle, WFP reached nearly 89,000 Syrian refugees, including over 3,600 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS). The April distribution cycle started in the week of 13 April targeting up to 100,000 Syrian refugees and 6,000 PRS. The first month of e-vouchers in greater Cairo with the Carrefour supermarket chain went well, with intensive messaging to beneficiaries and additional support provided at supermarkets by WFP. Overall, beneficiaries expressed appreciation for the new modality and the wider choice of products available at the supermarket.

A new voucher distribution site will be required in 6 October (Cairo), as the lease governing the existing site expires at the end of April. With the introduction of the e-voucher through Carrefour in greater Cairo, the scale of Cairo distributions, and associated site requirements, are expected to decrease substantially. In Damietta a new distribution site is required due to overcrowding at the current site. WFP is continuing to distribute paper vouchers in Damietta and Alexandria until the introduction of the joint WFP/UNCHR OneCard system across Egypt.

EVOLVING NEEDS AND WFP OPERATIONS

As of 13 April, there were 136,119 Syrians registered with UNHCR in the country. In the first three months of 2014, 5,520 Syrians registered as refugees and 1,711 people closed their cases. While some refugees were closing their case in order to renew their passports in Egypt, many were reportedly closed in order to leave Egypt for Turkey, Lebanon or Jordan, with some returning to Syria and



MONITORING AND EVALUATION



Following the transition to the e-voucher modality in greater Cairo, preliminary monitoring and evaluation results indicate that beneficiaries are generally satisfied with the new modality and the wider choice of products available at the supermarket. However, some reported that prices of particular items, including chicken, eggs and olive oil, were higher than at the previous partner supermarket. This is being investigated through price data collection at the partner supermarket and at competitor supermarkets. Beneficiaries were also pleased that the e-voucher is uploaded remotely so that they do not have to attend monthly distributions.

The WFP telephone hotline, where beneficiaries can provide feedback, complaints and suggestions, received 35 calls a day in March on average. Nearly all the calls were from Syrian refugees, with only 1 percent from PRS and with similar percentages of male and females callers – most of whom (53 percent) were requesting to be added to the voucher distribution lists. Other reasons for calling included beneficiaries confirming they would still be receiving assistance (25 percent), inquiring about the distribution schedule (14 percent) and asking about UNHCR services (8 percent).

WFP HOTLINE AVERAGE OF 35 CALLS PER DAY



MARKET ANALYSIS

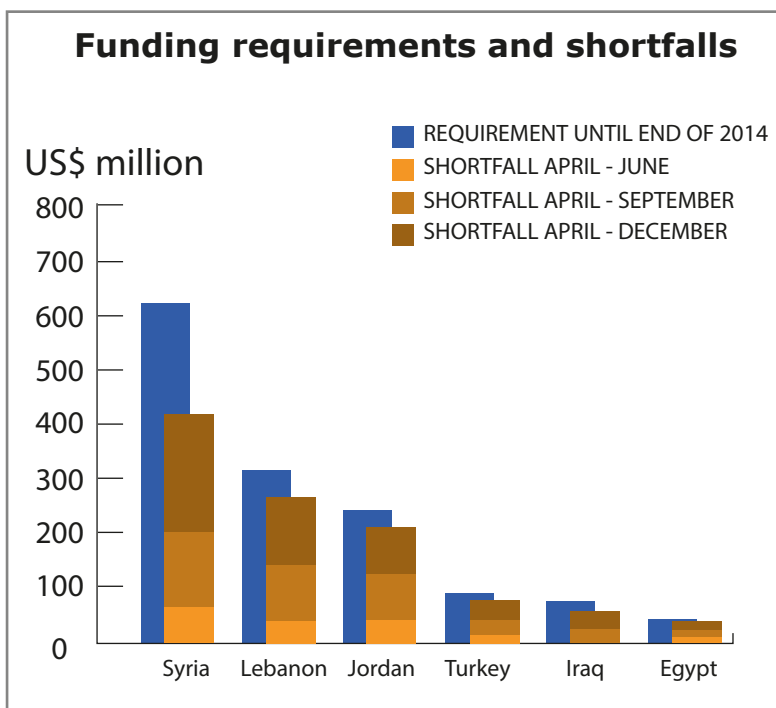
Consumer price indices published by the government’s statistical agency CAPMAS show that the annual inflation rate slowed to 15.8 percent in March from 16.1 percent in February and 19.1 percent in January. However, year on year, the monthly inflation rate increased from 0.3 percent in February to 1.4 percent in March. It is anticipated that it will increase further in April, due to a widespread shortage in diesel, in addition to a seasonal tendency for food prices to rise during the month. It is noteworthy that shortages in diesel occur every year in March and in some years extend till June, having direct implications on the cost of harvesting and transportation of food crops.

The government announced plans to improve the food subsidy system in the coming months. Discounts ranging from 10 to 15 percent are to be in place from 5 to 15 April on food products and essential commodities at consumer branches of the Food Industries Holding Company. The Ministry of Supply is also planning to provide loans to upgrade bakeries to receive bread smartcards as well as increase the production of subsidised bread.

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FUNDING AND SHORTFALLS

WFP requires **US\$131 million** to support 4.25 million people in Syria and 2.68 million people in the neighbouring countries for the next three months (April – June 2014). Of this, US\$64 million is required to support operations in Syria, while US\$67 is required for operations in the region. A total of US\$1.023 billion is required to support operations until the end of the year.



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, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, , Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, the United States and private donors.



Donors are represented in alphabetical order.

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