



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL ESCALATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Situation Report #9

3 May 2026

IN NUMBERS



650,000 displaced people assisted in **Lebanon** with food and cash to date.



125,274 displaced people received date bars at **Syria** crossings.

33,500 refugees in settlement supported with food and cash assistance in **Iran**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The ripple effects of the Middle East continue to threaten millions of already food-insecure people worldwide with further erosion of their access to nutritious food. As needs surge, WFP is accelerating efforts to scale up assistance, rebuild critically depleted stocks, and restore supply lines disrupted by weeks of sustained disruption.
- In Iran, WFP assistance continues uninterrupted, reaching 33,424 refugees across 20 settlements, with cash assistance arrangement underway to support additional refugees referred by the authorities.
- Lebanon's situation is becoming increasingly alarming, with nearly a quarter of the population now facing acute food insecurity, particularly in the south, where conditions are deteriorating most sharply and vulnerabilities are rapidly intensifying. WFP continues to respond to the urgent needs of people affected by the ongoing conflict through food and cash assistance in shelters and communities along with convoys with the logistics cluster to hard-to-reach areas. Over the next four months, WFP urgently requires immediate and flexible funding of USD 44.1 million per month to sustain critical assistance for conflict-affected people.

Global Food Insecurity Impact

- Two months into the Middle East escalation, multiple overlapping shocks continue to drive a further deterioration in living conditions for already vulnerable households worldwide. Inflation and rising food prices continue to erode purchasing power, while funding shortfalls and reduced humanitarian assistance are constraining households' ability to cope. In parallel, insecurity and displacement are disrupting livelihoods and income-generating activities. Market access and food inflation remain uneven in conflict-affected and neighboring countries areas as supply chains come under increasing strain.
- In Lebanon, the latest [Integrated Food Security Phase Classification analysis \(IPC\) projection of April – August 2026](#) starkly underscores the fragility of the country. Mounting pressures have reversed recent food-security gains, pushing the country back into crisis and placing vulnerable households at heightened risk of acute food insecurity. Nearly a quarter of the population – or one in every four persons - is facing high level of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above), representing a 7 percent increase from the previous projected acute food insecurity levels for [March](#) (874,000 people, 17 percent). The decline is primarily driven by renewed conflict, large scale displacement, deepening economic contraction, rising food prices, agricultural losses, and a projected reduction in humanitarian assistance coverage from mid-2026.
- The largest food insecurity increase is found in the southern governorates, affecting 55 to 65 percent of the population, including about 10 percent of people in IPC phase 4 (Emergency). Deterioration is most pronounced among arrivals from Syria (52 percent) and Palestinian refugees (45 percent), followed by Syrian refugees (36 percent) and Lebanese residents (19 percent).

WFP Response

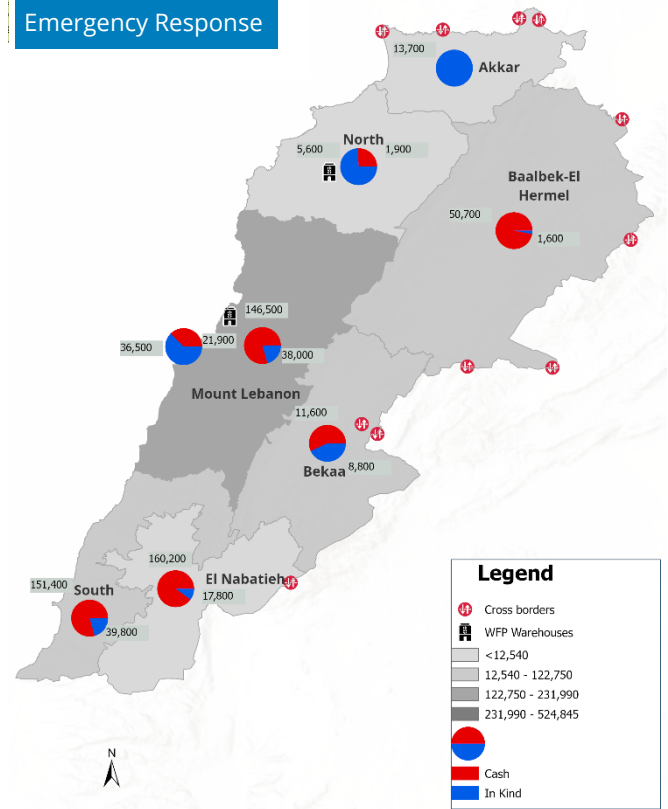
- WFP continues to support affected people across the Middle East, leveraging contingency planning and pre-positioned food stocks; amid escalating needs, critically low funding and pre-existing unmet humanitarian demands.

Iran

- According to the Government of Iran, approximately [3.2 million people](#) (around 800,000 households) have been internally relocated, one of the largest internal movements in the country in recent decades. An estimated 75 percent are in Tehran, currently accommodated in temporary facilities, including schools, guesthouses, and sports halls. In some locations, overcrowding has reportedly strained basic services.
- Essential food commodities remain available; however, affordability is increasingly constrained amid rising prices, high inflation, and exchange-rate volatility. Despite government subsidies targeting vulnerable households, WFP assessments show the cost of the food basket has risen by 131 percent year on year, while household purchasing activity declined by around 19 percent during the escalation. Annual inflation reached 50.6 percent in April 2026, with urban Consumer Price Index increasing by 7 percent month on month. The parallel exchange rate further depreciated to approximately IRR 1,800,000 per USD - about a 16 percent fall in four days - exacerbating market disruptions.
- WFP operations continue without interruption, assisting 33,424 refugees across 20 settlements, including 800 newly arrived refugees who relocated to the settlements following the recent escalation. An additional 7,000 refugees have been referred and integrated into settlements and are receiving in-kind support, of whom 5,000 are undergoing documentation finalization to begin receiving cash-based transfers (CBT).
- Beneficiaries receive food and cash including daily bread through WFP-supported bakeries and wheat flour distributions (9 kg of wheat flour per person per month) supporting home-based baking in smaller locations. CBT value is set at IRR 8 million (USD 5.7) for male-headed households and IRR 9 million (USD 6.5) for female-headed households.
- Due to prevailing insecurity and the shift to remote learning, school feeding continues through take-home rations for around 9,000 school children.
- For the next six months (May – August 2026), WFP requires USD 20.7 million** to sustain its regular operations and emergency response in Iran.

Lebanon

Emergency Response



- Despite the ceasefire, implementation on the ground remains inadequate, with continued demolitions, drone activity, and systematic destruction reported in southern Lebanon. Renewed evacuation warnings were reportedly issued to residents of several villages north of the Litani River, prompting population movement toward Saida and increased traffic along key routes.
- Following the ceasefire, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) residing in shelters has fluctuated, decreasing to 121,400 across 628 shelters. Expanded evacuation warnings are expected to contribute to continued fluctuations in displacement patterns. To date, 19 percent of those previously in collective shelters have left, reflecting ongoing pendular returns. Hundreds of thousands more reside with host families, in informal shelters, or public spaces, where protection needs remain acute. Grave risks from unexploded ordnance persist for those seeking to return to areas heavily affected by the conflict.
- WFP continues to respond to the urgent needs of people affected by the ongoing conflict. To date, **WFP has reached 650,000 conflict affected people with food and cash assistance in shelters and across communities** since 2 March,

including 161,200 people reached with food assistance and 544,800 people supported through cash assistance (*Figures by modality reflect overlapping assistance as some individuals have received support through more than one modality*). Of those:

- WFP provided food assistance to 160,000 displaced people in 477 shelters across Lebanon. This includes the distribution of 3.7 million hot meals, and thousands of cold meals, light Ready-to-Eat (RTEs), packages of bread, food parcels (dry rations) and snacks.
- Outside shelters, WFP provided food assistance to 53,200 conflict-affected people in host communities or hard-to-reach areas.
- Cash assistance, in coordination with the Ministry of Social Affairs, through the Shock Responsive Social Safety Net supported 435,800 conflict affected Lebanese (110,000 households), while 109,000 Syrian refugees (26,700 households) affected by the conflict have been reached through a separate horizontal expansion of the cash assistance programme.
- This week, the Logistics Cluster successfully facilitated, with the support of WFP, six convoys of 16 trucks on behalf of partners to Borj El Moulouk (Marjayoun district), Fardis (Hasbaya district) Hermel, Cheeba, Tebnin and Rmeich delivering vital humanitarian aid, including WFP's food parcels, hygiene and emergency shelter kits to 35,024 conflict-affected people. The convoy to Rmeich was the first delivery to a community south of the "Yellow Line" since access restrictions were established.
- Since the escalation, **18 convoys have been completed, assisting almost 93,080 affected people in hard-to-reach areas**. Due to negative or absent responses on deconfliction requests 20 out of 38 convoys being planned have not been completed, almost 53 percent.
- For **May–August 2026, WFP response requires USD 44.1 million per month** to sustain cash, food, and fuel assistance for conflict-affected populations, bringing total requirements over the four-month period to USD 176 million. While current resources provide coverage through May and most of June, funding visibility beyond June remains extremely limited. Immediate, flexible, and front-loaded contributions are required to **avert funding gap of USD 88.2 million for the period of July–August** and sustain the emergency response.

Syria

- As of 25 April, more than 336,400 people crossed into Syria from Lebanon since the escalation, including over 279,800 Syrians and nearly 56,600 Lebanese. Among the Syrians, 77,276 have expressed an intention to return permanently (UNHCR). Most crossings occurred through Masnaa–Jdeidet Yabous and Al Qaa–Joussieh. Priority humanitarian needs have included food supplies, due to the lack of food availability at the border-crossings, safe drinking water, shelter and non-food items (NFIs) and transportation.
- Overall, **WFP continued its emergency response, distributing date-bars to 125,274 Syrian and Lebanese returnees arriving at Jousieh and Jdeidet Yabous border crossing points**.
- For the next six months (May–October 2026), **WFP Syria requires USD 191 million to sustain its regular operations**.

Afghanistan

- About 190,900 refugees have [returned](#) to Afghanistan from Iran since 28 February.
- The closure of the Afghanistan–Pakistan border since 12 October 2025, compounded by the escalation in Iran, have disrupted the Dubai–Iran supply route, further driving up food prices and deepening already high food and nutrition insecurity. As a result, WFP has a complete stock outage of specialized nutritious food essential for women and children recovering from malnutrition, lasting until end of May.
- As a contingency measure to reduce reliance on the southern corridor, WFP is exploring alternative routes. In the interim, approximately 400 mt of fortified biscuits stored at the UNHRD hub in Dubai have been dispatched and are currently en route to Afghanistan via Türkiye, and is moving additional food through alternative routes via Azerbaijan and a trial corridor through Iran to mitigate supply gaps.
- Despite severe funding shortfalls, WFP is prepared to scale up support for increased returns. In light of the intensified conflict along the Afghanistan–Pakistan border and the broader Middle East escalation, **WFP urgently requires USD 15.2 million to assist 320,000 people** - 140,000 IDPs and 180,000 returnees from Iran - through food and nutrition support.

Contacts

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