



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

Hussein, a farmer for Lebanon's Bekaa Valley checks his harvest following "the hottest Summer he has ever witnessed."
Photo: WFP/Edmond Khoury

WFP Lebanon Situation Report

December 2023

Population | **5.7 million**
2021 Human Development Index | **112 out of 191**
Income Level (World Bank) | **Lower-middle**
2021 GNI per capita (US\$) | **3,450**

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Despite continuing socioeconomic and political instability in Lebanon, some improvements were noted in 2023. Factoring in the available information on food access and displacement of people affected by the conflict in South Lebanon, the [third Integrated Food Insecurity Phase Classification \(IPC\) analysis](#) conducted in October 2023, revealed a projected improvement in the food security situation - from 25 percent food insecure people in October 2023 to 19 percent in March 2024. The fragile economic stability and increased coverage of humanitarian assistance over the year were the key factors to these improvements. However, the IPC analysis highlighted that the situation is anticipated to worsen with 21 percent of the population expected to experience high food insecurity from April to September 2024.

The overall situation remains concerning, exacerbated by persistent multiple crises and the conflict along Lebanon's southern borders.

WFP is at the forefront of the response to Lebanon's economic and refugee crisis, supporting 900,000 Syrian refugees and 700,000 Lebanese nationals to meet their food and other basic needs in 2023. In addition, WFP implements cash transfers for an additional 400,000 Lebanese individuals through the Government's Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN). Together with the World Bank, WFP is a key partner to the Government of Lebanon to strengthen and integrate national social safety net programmes into a unified social safety net programme.

SITUATION UPDATE

The cost of the full Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) monitored by WFP remained almost the same between October and November 2023, standing at LBP 33 million (US\$ 378) for a family of five. Similarly, the cost of the food basket alone remained unchanged at LBP 3.1 million (US\$35) per person per month for the same period.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

	% Funded	Available	Required
COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (2023-2025)	20%	US\$ 632 million	US\$ 3.1 billion
2023 TOTAL REQUIREMENTS	48%	US\$ 632 million	US\$ 1.3 billion

Net Funding Requirements (Jan 2024 - Jun 2024)
US\$ 254.1 million

IN NUMBERS



The number of people assisted and the amount transferred do not include ESSN beneficiaries or transfers.



HIGHLIGHT: WFP RESPONSE IN SOUTH LEBANON

The intensity of the conflict on Lebanon's southern borders continued to rise and has expanded to the Southern suburbs of Beirut. As a result of the conflict at the southern border, 123 people were killed (with at least 21 confirmed civilian deaths), and over 76,000 individuals have been internally displaced by the end of December. 1080 individuals are currently residing in shelters, while the rest are staying with local families, in secondary residences or sub-par dwellings improvised as shelters.

In addition to its regular activities in the South, WFP reached 52,700 people affected by the conflict as of 29 December. WFP distributed one-time in-kind food parcels to 13,000 affected Lebanese people, provided one-off cash assistance to 30,000 affected Syrian refugees, and distributed in-school snacks to 9,700 affected students in 10 additional schools.

Starting January 2024, WFP plans to support an additional 85,000 affected Lebanese with cash assistance leveraging the existing Social Safety Net cash programme and reach 28,200 more with in-kind food assistance.

WFP RESPONSE

Cash Assistance for Refugees

Due to funding shortfalls and as a result of the retargeting exercise, WFP reduced the coverage of assistance to Syrian refugees by 30 percent in December 2023. Additionally, assistance to 9,000 vulnerable Refugees from Other Nationalities (RON) stopped, and they will only receive assistance from UNHCR in 2024. WFP provided cash assistance to 837,000 Syrian refugees through three modalities:

- Multipurpose Cash for food and other essential needs redeemable at ATMs or money transfer agents: 186,000 Syrian refugees
- Cash-for-Food for food needs redeemable at ATMs, money transfer agents, or shops: 295,000 Syrian refugees
- Food e-cards for food needs redeemable at WFP-contracted shops: 356,000 Syrian refugees

Economic Crisis Response for Lebanese

Following the new modality of distributing in-kind food assistance every other month, food distribution did not occur in December 2023. Based on the results of the retargeting exercise to assess the eligibility of households to continue receiving in-kind food assistance in 2024, WFP plans to revise its outreach and will only target those meeting the vulnerability criteria. An initial reduction is planned in the first quarter of 2024, with a potential additional decrease in the second half of the year.

School Meals

WFP's school meals programme reached its scale-up goal in December by supporting 100,900 Lebanese and Syrian students at 185 schools. Of the assisted students, 90,100 received snacks consisting of fresh fruits, and 10,800 received cold sandwiches of fresh dairy products or hummus, prepared by 55 women volunteering at the school kitchens.

Support to Social Protection Programmes*

In December, WFP reached 412,000 Lebanese individuals (74,300 households) through the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP). Moreover, WFP delivered cash entitlements for 63,200 individuals (18,500 households) through the Emergency Social Safety Net programme (ESSN), reaching a total of 416,000 individuals (96,600 households) since the start of the ESSN in March 2022.

Livelihoods

WFP engaged 3,100 Syrian and Lebanese participants in livelihood activities in December, ranging from technical training for farmers and individuals in the food system to rehabilitation of agricultural assets. By December 2023, WFP successfully concluded its support to 24 SMEs through the Food System Challenge, with plans to assist 12 additional SMEs in 2024. Notably, three of these enterprises were selected to provide food ingredients to the school meals programme as part of a pilot initiative starting in January 2024. This initiative aims to enhance local procurement, develop local supply chains, reduce CO2 emissions, and supply chain's climate footprint.

Supply Chain & Retail

Based on the results of the retargeting exercise for Syrian refugees, WFP contracted 23 new retailers and placed an additional 43 on the roster, ensuring all beneficiaries can conveniently access a WFP-contracted retailer within a 3km radius. Additionally, WFP extended contracts with five existing retailers to support the delivery of commodities for cold meals for the South emergency preparedness measures.

GENDER & SOCIAL INCLUSION, PROTECTION & ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS (AAP)

Through WFP operated call center serving as a community and feedback mechanism to Syrian and Lebanese communities, WFP received 52,600 claims in December, down from 68,800 claims in November. 94 percent of the claims were addressed and closed in the same month.

In December, 33 percent of the claimants requested WFP assistance, 18 percent of the calls were mainly related to the programmes, 8 percent requested to update their personal data, 1 percent of the calls were protection-related, and 40 percent requested information on various topics. Protection-related claims were referred to relevant partners for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), child protection, threats, health, legal counseling, and shelter.

As part of WFP's efforts to provide a rapid and tailored response to affected people in South Lebanon, the call centre disseminated information about available assistance and collected crucial data on needs.

Under the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence international campaign (25 November–10 December) that seeks to address and combat domestic violence and marginalized communities, WFP conducted awareness sessions on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Gender Based Violence for male beneficiaries of the emergency response activities and women who work in school kitchens.

In December, WFP assistance reached 77,900 refugees and Lebanese with disabilities.

MONITORING & ASSESSMENTS

In November, the monitoring of redemption points revealed that the waiting time for all individuals was 10 minutes or less. Notably, recipients of ESSN assistance and Syrian refugees experienced the longest waiting times at Money Transfer Operators (MTOs), compared to others. A slight increase in travel costs was reported by Lebanese receiving ESSN cash assistance in November at an average of LBP 215,000, (US\$ 2.4) up from LBP 150,000 (US\$ 1.7) in October.

KEY CHALLENGES

Since the start of the conflict at the southern borders, WFP addressed the new emergency in the South with limited flexible funding, which has been depleted. By early 2024, WFP faces a dual challenge to sustain regular emergency programmes for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese at a proper scale while maintaining its additional response in the South. Without secured funding, WFP will not be able to pursue its response in the South, requiring US\$8.7 million for the first quarter to cover rising needs.

* The NPTP is funded by WFP donors and the ESSN programme is funded through a World Bank loan to the Government of Lebanon, with WFP implementing cash transfers as a service provider.

WFP COUNTRY STRATEGY

COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (2023-2025)

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Economically-vulnerable and food insecure people in Lebanon, including refugees, meet their basic needs during and in the aftermath of crises.

Focus area: *Crisis response*

Activities: Provide unconditional assistance to crisis-affected people in Lebanon, including refugees

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 2: Extremely poor and vulnerable people in Lebanon, including children, are more resilient through inclusion in national social safety nets throughout the year.

Focus area: *Resilience building*

Activities: Provide unconditional cash transfers to extremely poor Lebanese through national safety net programmes.

Provide nutritious school meals to Lebanon and refugee children.

Strategic Result 4: Development of sustainable food systems

Strategic Outcome 3: Individuals, households and communities vulnerable to economic and climatic shocks in Lebanon have more resilient livelihoods by 2025.

Focus area: *Resilience building*

Activities: Provide vulnerable Lebanese and refugee communities with integrated resilience and area-based livelihood support through conflict-sensitive and gender transformative approaches.

Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 4: National institutions in Lebanon have increased capacity to manage social safety nets and other programmes by 2025.

Focus area: *Resilience building*

Activities: Provide technical expertise, capacity strengthening and policy advice to enhance Government capacity.

Strategic Result 8: Enhanced global partnerships

Strategic Outcome 5: Humanitarian stakeholders benefit from enhanced coordination and mandated services to deliver assistance during, in the aftermath, and in anticipation of crises.

Focus area: *Crisis response*

Activities: Provide sector coordination and mandated services to humanitarian partners.

Provide on-demand services, including resources transfers, to Government and other partners.

Donors

Australia, Austria, Canada, Cyprus, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon's Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Malta, Norway, Private Donors, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Switzerland, USA

FOOD SECURITY & AGRICULTURE SECTOR

In November, WFP and 19 sector partners supported 1.4 million people with US\$25 million in cash and food assistance. In addition, 1360 farmers and 32 agricultural cooperatives, associations, and small businesses were supported through capacity building and/or inputs and assets provision. The estimated amount of cash disbursed for small-scale farmers is US\$ 172,700.

WFP established an assistance platform to support the Food Security and Agriculture Sector in the enrolment of displaced people affected by the conflict in the South. This platform designed for a unified response, may extend to other sectors. As of December, WFP, with 21 sector partners, provided 222,800 daily meals and distributed food to displaced people. Moreover, the sector is closely coordinating with the Ministry of Agriculture to collect data on affected farmers in the South and facilitate their enrollment in assistance programs.

ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

In light of funding constraints and upcoming pipeline breaks, WFP met with the Ministry of Social Affairs and donor partners - Canada, the European Union, France, Germany, and Italy - to jointly explore ways to sustain the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP) assistance throughout 2024 and stretch available resources.

On 6 December 2023, WFP and UNHCR held a joint meeting with donor partners to discuss the outcomes of the retargeting exercise of cash assistance to Syrian refugees. WFP continues to update its donors on the funding situation and advocate for additional funding as pipeline breaks are anticipated in early 2024.

Also in December, WFP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, conducted a joint school feeding visit to observe the food preparation in the school kitchen and celebrate the program's expansion, reaching over 100,000 students across Lebanon at the start of the academic year 2023-2024. The video of the visit can be accessed [here](#).



STORY WORTH TELLING

Assaad attending a WFP-supported training session in Akkar, North Lebanon

Assaad from El Houaich Akkar, holds a bachelor's degree in information technology. He excelled academically but faced challenges in securing opportunities within his field of work. Passionate about agriculture, Assaad tends to his garden using a wheelchair, finding enjoyment outdoors. Recently, Assaad participated in the WFP's Livelihood programme, where he learned the process of drying fruits. This experience showcased his love for learning and trying new things. "The WFP project helped me break out of my shell, introducing me to new faces and instructors on a daily basis. It also strengthened my passion for agriculture," he says. "I urge everyone capable of pursuing an education to do so. If you can innovate, then innovate. If you're capable of working, then work. Always live for the better." The video on Assaad story can be accessed [here](#).

WFP CASH & IN-KIND ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES AND LEBANESE

December 2023

