



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Lebanon Situation Report

September 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**

Photo: WFP/ Mustapha Ghabris

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Lebanon is now in its fourth year of a deep economic, political, and social crisis. After eleven months of a presidential vacuum, Lebanon is facing another leadership vacuum as the term of the Governor of Banque du Liban (BDL) ended in July 2023. The lack of political agreement to appoint a successor raises uncertainties and further delays the implementation of an economic recovery plan.

The ongoing economic and political instability continues to have a detrimental impact on the food security of both Lebanese and Syrian households. The [second Integrated Food Security Phase Classification \(IPC\) for Lebanon](#), conducted in May 2023, estimates that 25 percent of the analysed population (1,411,000 individuals) are experiencing acute food insecurity. Another 45 percent of the total population is struggling to maintain adequate food consumption, highlighting the urgency to take action to protect livelihoods and mitigate risks of a slide back into acute food insecurity.

Despite high levels of food insecurity, its prevalence has declined from 37 percent to 25 percent between September 2022 and May 2023*. Increased coverage of humanitarian food assistance, enhanced stability of the food supply chain, and more employment opportunities for Lebanese nationals, alongside other factors, may have contributed to this improvement.

WFP is at the forefront of the response to Lebanon's economic and refugee crisis, supporting over 1 million refugees and 700,000 Lebanese nationals to meet their food and other basic needs. In addition, WFP implements cash transfers for an additional 400,000 Lebanese individuals through the Government's Emergency Social Safety Net. 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 single coherent social safety net programme.

*The first IPC conducted in September 2022 estimated that 1.98 million people were experiencing acute food insecurity.

IN NUMBERS



The number of people assisted and the amount transferred does not include ESN beneficiaries or transfers.



SITUATION UPDATE

The cost of the full Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) monitored by WFP increased by 3 percent between July and August 2023, reaching LBP 31.38 million (US\$ 351) for a family of five.

The cost of the food basket alone increased from LBP 2.78 million (US\$ 30) per person per month in July 2023 to LBP 2.92 million (US\$32) in August 2023, a 5 percent monthly increase. The cost of the non-food basket increased by 1.3 percent for the same period.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) slightly increased by 0.9 percent between July and August 2023 compared to a 7 percent monthly increase in July 2023. This slower inflation is mainly due to the price decrease of some non-essential items, such as household equipment and furnishings. In August 2023, the yearly food inflation reached 274 percent.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

	% Funded	Available	Required
COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (2023–2025)	10%	US\$ 522 million	US\$ 5.3 billion
2023 TOTAL REQUIREMENTS	30%	US\$ 522 million	US\$ 1.8 billion

Net Funding Requirements (Oct 2023 – Mar 2024)
US\$ 588.2 million



WFP RESPONSE



Cash Assistance for Refugees

In September, WFP provided cash assistance to 1,024,100 refugees through three modalities:

- **Multipurpose Cash** for food and other essential needs redeemable at ATMs or money transfer agents: 292,600 Syrian refugees
- **Cash-for-Food** for food needs redeemable at ATMs, money transfer agents, or shops: 376,900 Syrian refugees and 7,100 refugees of other nationalities.
- **Food e-cards** for food needs redeemable at WFP-contracted shops: 347,500 Syrian refugees

Economic Crisis Response for Lebanese

Based on the new modality of distributing in-kind food assistance every other month, WFP supported in September 270,600 vulnerable Lebanese individuals (72,300 households) with food parcels covering the September and October 2023 cycles.

WFP introduced in September locally manufactured pasta and burghul into the in-kind food parcels aiming to support the local agrifood economy.

School Meals

As the new school year starting in October 2023 approaches, WFP is actively preparing to support the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) by providing school meals for 100,000 Lebanese and refugee children. In the 2023/2024 academic year, WFP will leverage its school meals program to establish linkages between school kitchens and local traders and producers to provide food ingredients for the preparation of the daily meals.

With the support of WFP to the Government's efforts, Lebanon joined in August 2023 the global School Meals Coalition, a group of more than 120 member states and partners working to ensure that every child can receive a healthy and nutritious meal in school by 2030.

Support to Social Protection Programmes*

In September 2023, WFP cash assisted to 407,400 Lebanese individuals (73,400 households) through the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP), including 1,070 new people (200 households) who received assistance for the first time in 2023 as part of the ongoing scale-up of the NPTP.

By the end of August 2023, WFP concluded the payments for 334,000 Lebanese individuals (73,500 households) assisted under the Emergency Social Safety Net programme (ESSN) and processed in September 2023 the cash entitlements for an additional 73,800 individuals (20,600 households) assisted under this programme.

Livelihoods

In September, WFP engaged 3,300 Syrian and Lebanese participants in livelihood activities ranging from technical trainings for farmers to reforestation activities and construction of irrigation channels. Additionally, as part of the [Food System Challenge](#) supporting businesses operating in the agriculture and agri-food sectors with cash grants, technical assistance for business development, and customized coaching, WFP provided 12 Lebanese Small and Medium Enterprises with grants totalling US\$ 1 million.

Supply Chain & Retail

In September, WFP conducted shop evaluations for 200 retailers considering both their performance and operational needs out of which 165 were granted contract extensions. Also, in September, WFP assessed 17 contracted retailers for potential participation in the WFP School Feeding Programme.

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

WFP received 39,200 claims in September through its call centre compared to 42,000 in August. 94 percent of the claims were addressed and closed in the same month, up from 84 percent in August.

39 percent of claimants requested information on various topics, 31 percent requested WFP assistance, 17 percent expressed concerns mainly related to validation and distribution sites, 12 percent requested to update their personal data, and 1 percent of the calls were protection-related. Protection-related claims were referred to relevant partners for gender-based violence case management, legal counselling, and shelter.

Moreover, WFP endorsed the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) Disability Action Plan for 2023-2025 and committed to various initiatives aiming to improve food security for the most vulnerable populations, as well as to enhance the capacity of public entities to create inclusive social protection systems. In September, WFP assistance reached 50,560 refugee and Lebanese households with members with disabilities.

MONITORING & ASSESSMENTS

On-site monitoring continued to show significant improvement in the average waiting time of assisted families to redeem their assistance at ATMs and Money Transfer Operators (MTOs).

For assisted Syrians, the average waiting time at an ATM and an MTO was 12 minutes in August, down from 22 minutes in July. For Lebanese, the average waiting time to redeem at an ATM dropped from 15 to 8 minutes during the same period, while the waiting time to redeem at an MTO dropped from 11 to 7 minutes.

Increased travel costs were reported by Lebanese receiving NPTP cash assistance in August at an average of LBP 202,000, up from LBP 142,000 in July. The average time to reach redemption points remained the same between July and August, hovering around 25 minutes to reach ATMs and 17 minutes to reach MTOs.

KEY CHALLENGES

Following a rising wave of migration at the Lebanon-Syria borders, public sentiment against Syrian refugees and demands for their return to Syria increased in recent months, fuelled by concerns about the potential impact of this new wave on social cohesion, especially amid the current severe economic crisis.

Moreover, WFP is facing challenges in securing adequate resources to maintain its cash assistance programs for Syrian and Lebanese families at a proper scale. WFP continues to advocate for funds through strategic engagements with key donors and exploring funding opportunities with new donors.

* The NPTP is funded by WFP donors and the ESSN programme is funded through a World Bank loan with WFP implanting 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, 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 **August**, WFP and 14 sector partners reached 1.4 million refugees and Lebanese through cash and food assistance. The estimated amount of cash disbursed is US\$ 25 million, while around 153,000 people were provided with ready-to-eat meals and partial food parcels. In addition, 876 farmers and 15 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 to enhance agricultural production is US\$ 437,000.

ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

In September 2023, the Ambassador of Japan in Lebanon, Masayuki Magoshi, visited an in-kind distribution center in North Lebanon. During his visit, the ambassador engaged with beneficiaries and emphasized the invaluable support provided by the WFP to Lebanon during these challenging times.

As part of the multi-donor Joint Action targeting Syrian Refugees, WFP and UNHCR hosted a regional team from ECHO in Zahle and Beirut for two days. The team visited an informal tented settlement, met with beneficiaries and discussed programme implementation and context needs with both agencies. Additionally, the team visited a call center in Beirut to gain insights into its operations and observe how concerns related to the assistance are addressed.

Also, in September, WFP released a video portraying the supply chain of in-kind activities. The video can be accessed [here](#).



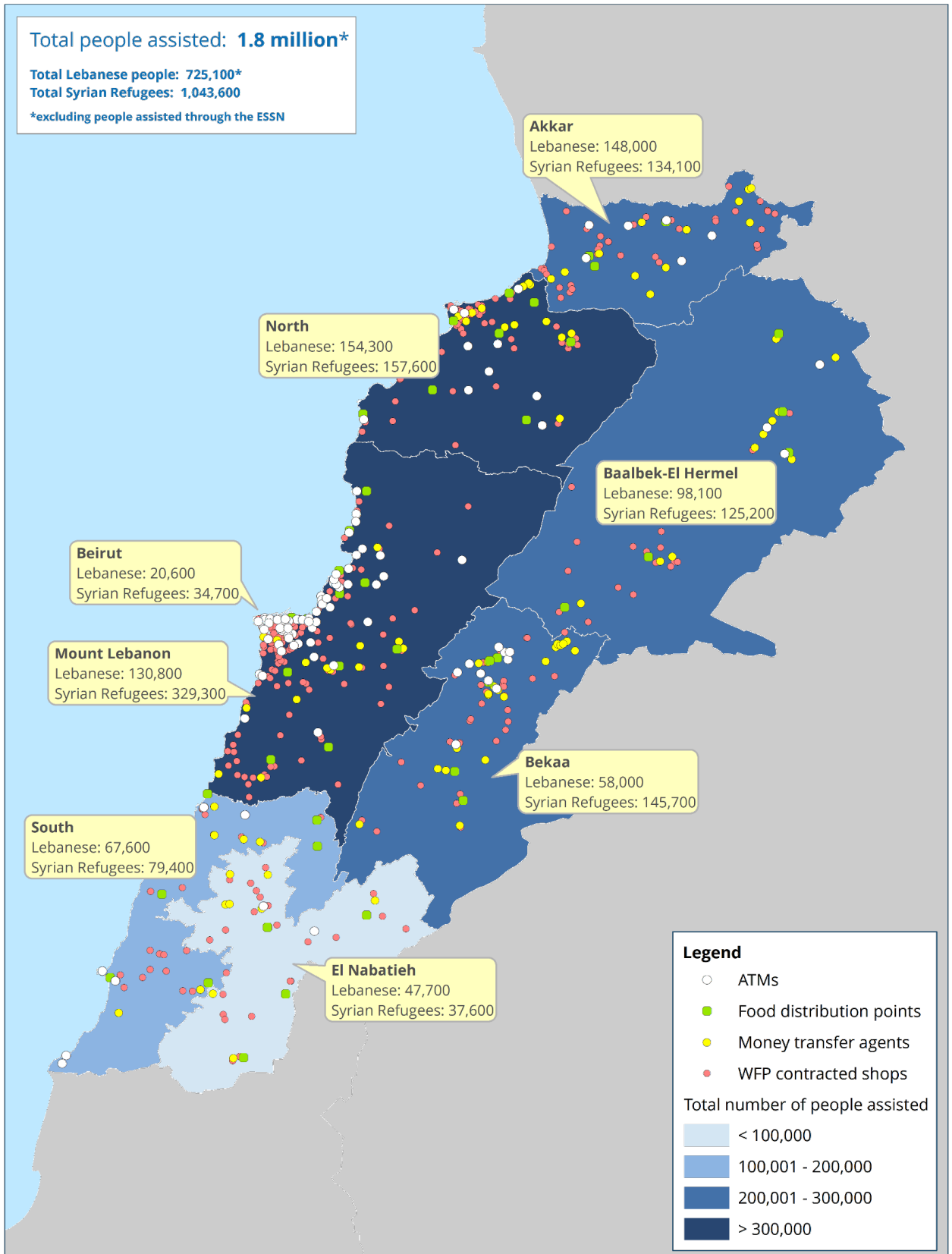
STORY WORTH TELLING

For Mohammad and his family of eight, life can be difficult, yet they still manage to push through. The father of five tries to provide his family with the best life they can afford. As a daily worker, Mohammad earns around LBP 8,000,000 (US\$ 88) per month which is barely enough to cover any expenses. Hence, the US\$125 cash assistance that the family receives from WFP is a notable support that allows them to pay for rent, electricity bills, schools, and medication for the mother.

"The inability to provide your children what they need, or even enrol them in school for two years, adds to the difficulty of our circumstances," said Azhar, the children's mother. Before the assistance, the parents could not afford to send their kids to public schools. "Seeing other children going to school, but not your own child [is difficult]." However, now with the assistance, things have changed. Now the kids hope to achieve fulfilling future careers with their education.

"Abdallah told me that he hopes to become an engineer, Amani wants to become a TV presenter, Ghazal wants to become a lawyer, Rayan a chef, and finally Omar a superhero. I hope that the future holds better for us, that our situation returns to what it once was," explains Azhar.

WFP CASH & IN-KIND ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES AND LEBANESE



*This map reflects August 2023 figures