

WFP SYRIA EMERGENCY RESPONSE

External Situation Report

29 May 2025

Highlights

- While a **political normalization process is under way** and sanctions are being lifted, the economy remains fragile, sectarian tensions continue, and humanitarian and food security needs continue to be urgent. Food security is a cornerstone for national security. A stable Syria is essential for broader regional stability and security, and a prerequisite for the safe, voluntary and dignified return of Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons.
- WFP has the capacity, footprint, and access to help Syrian communities recover** through a combination of humanitarian and resilience interventions. WFP reaches over 1.5 million people each month with targeted emergency food assistance, school meals, nutrition and livelihood interventions. As part of WFP's efforts to strengthen social safety net systems in Syria, on 29 May WFP launched the subsidized bread programme, which will reach 2 million people in Syria's most food insecure areas.
- WFP requires USD 296 million to implement its targeted emergency and recovery interventions in 2025**; USD 100 million are needed by August to avoid a funding shortfall in September.

IN NUMBERS



Over **1.5 million** people reached on a monthly basis with WFP's regular programmes



7.4 million people remain displaced within Syria, including 617,000 **newly displaced** since 27 November (UNHCR). More than **4.5 million** are registered as refugees in neighbouring countries



Over **1.7 million** people – 1.2 million IDPs and 500,000 refugees – returned to their areas of origin since 27 November 2024. Up to 3.5 million are anticipated to return to Syria by the end of 2025 (UNHCR)



Over half of the population (23.7 million) is food insecure. Of these, nearly **3 million** people are projected to be **severely food insecure**



USD 296 million required to implement all activities for the remaining of 2025. WFP needs USD 100 million by August to avoid funding shortfall in September

WFP RESPONSE

- WFP reaches 1.5 million people monthly** with targeted emergency food assistance, school meals, nutrition, and livelihoods interventions; cash assistance continues uninterrupted, despite liquidity challenges.
- WFP is making progress on strengthening **social safety net systems in Syria**. On May 29, **WFP started the subsidized bread project** in Dar'a Governorate. The project will expand to other governorates in coming weeks, reaching 2 million people in the most food insecure areas across the country. WFP will supply fortified wheat flour – including through the Grain from Ukraine initiative – to over 60 public and private bakeries, including several bakeries previously rehabilitated by WFP. Targeted communities will be able to purchase bread at a fixed price of SYP 2,400 per bundle – offering some buffer to vulnerable families.
- Provided enough funds are made available, WFP is ready to **scale up early recovery efforts, with a focus on food value chains and agricultural livelihoods**. Since 2020, WFP has rehabilitated 25 bakeries and restored access to water for 50,000 hectares of agricultural land. WFP is also in discussion with the interim authorities to rebuild Syria's **wheat flour fortification and salt iodization** systems.
- WFP continues to work closely with UNHCR and UNICEF to be ready for voluntary returns of **Syrian**

refugees, particularly those in need of assistance. WFP recently signed a data sharing agreement with UNHCR for refugees' data to help ensure seamless support.

- **WFP continues to work with the Resident Coordinator, UN agencies** and the caretaker authorities on the Transitional Action Plan (TAP) and refugee support. As part of the TAP, WFP will co-convene Pillar Two, alongside UNHCR, and will lead on Social Protection.
- WFP is prepared to commence the **annual Food Security Assessment (FSA)**, which will - for the first time - incorporate the **Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)**. This assessment will be conducted in coordination and collaboration with FAO and the interim authorities, including the Planning and Statistical Commission (PSC). WFP and FAO are currently awaiting the interim authorities' green light to proceed.

Supply Chain

- **WFP continues to optimize and augment its operational capacities, using all available corridors to ensure a continuous and cost-efficient supply of commodities into Syria.** This includes the expanded use of the Turkish corridor, and the continued use of the Syrian ports, Jordan and Lebanon corridors. As a contingency measure, WFP has also recently secured access via Iraq.
- Recent shifts in the exchange rate and broader economic changes have opened opportunities for **WFP Syria to expand local procurement**. Following a food sourcing analysis, WFP is now positioned to procure key commodities locally, including sunflower oil, olive oil, iodized salt, bulgur wheat, and canned foods. This will support domestic producers and reduce costs compared to regional or international imports. Additional cost savings have already been achieved thanks to the **expansion of the Turkish corridor**; prior to December 2024, WFP Syria was unable to import directly from Türkiye.
- **All three crossing points between Syria and Türkiye are open for humanitarian movement** - until 7 August for Bab al-Hawa, and until 3 September for Bab al-Salam and Al-Raee. With the reopening of the Syria-Türkiye borders for commercial vehicles, WFP will review and adapt its transshipment operations to improve efficiencies.
- Currently, WFP holds sufficient **in-country food rations** to sustain its emergency food assistance operation for two months.

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

- WFP's ability to respond to Syria's overlapping crises has been significantly constrained by **increasing humanitarian needs, coupled with funding shortfalls**. This is particularly concerning amid the full

removal of large-scale subsidies and the anticipated return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

- **Liquidity challenges persist**, as international banks remain unable to fully engage with Syria. So far, thanks to the Central Bank of Syria, WFP was able to secure sufficient SYP to pay suppliers and implement cash-based transfers (CBT); negotiations are ongoing to secure additional SYP. While discussions with UN interagency working groups and the UN Secretariat Treasury Department continue to explore sustainable and secure solutions for USD availability, suppliers and partners are increasingly reluctant to accept USD due to exchange rate fluctuations.
- **Syria is experiencing its worst drought since 1989**, putting up to 75 percent of its wheat crop—approximately 2.7 million metric tons—at risk of failure. This amount of wheat could have fed around 16 million people for one year, further exacerbating the already critical food security situation.
- **Sanctions relief** from the US, EU, as well as other countries has been an extremely welcome development. Yet, it remains to be seen how quickly the Syrian economy will be able to reap the benefits from the lifting of the sanctions to support its recovery and reconstruction.

FUNDING REQUIREMENT

- **In 2025, WFP requires USD 296 million** to deliver targeted emergency food assistance – including subsidized bread, school meals, and nutrition programs, as well as recovery interventions.
- **WFP needs USD 100 million** by August to avoid a funding shortfall in September. Flexible contributions are key to enable WFP to use any assistance modality and corridor to reach those most in need.

CLUSTERS AND COMMON SERVICES

Food Security Sector (FSS)

The Food Security Sector continues its efforts in enhancing coordination among partners across all of Syria.

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) supports the humanitarian community and UN Hubs through the provision of connectivity services and Security Communications across Syria.

Logistics Cluster

The Logistics Cluster is supporting the border crossing transshipment of humanitarian supplies carrying commodities from Türkiye into Syria. Since the start of 2025, 975 trucks carrying UN aid have crossed from Türkiye to Syria – more trucks than during the whole of 2024; WFP accounts for 79 percent of these trucks.

UNHAS

UNHAS is operational between Damascus and Aleppo, with two weekly flights on each route. UNHAS ceased flights between Damascus and Amman on 29 May, following the relocation of its aircraft to Damascus. Flights to Qamishli remain suspended pending the airport's reopening.