



MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL ESCALATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE Situation Report #5 02 April 2026

IN NUMBERS



440,000 displaced people assisted in **Lebanon** with food and cash to date.



70,000 displaced people received date bars at **Syria** crossings.

33,424 refugees in settlement supported with food and cash assistance in **Iran**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Global supply chain disruptions resulting from the escalation are severely affecting humanitarian food deliveries worldwide. Nearly 70,000 mt of WFP food is facing higher costs, longer lead times, and major rerouting of cargo. WFP warns that these disruptions risk pushing an additional 45 million people into acute hunger, at a time when funding is already at critically low levels.
- WFP is mitigating impacts by securing priority cargo, negotiating waivers on emergency surcharges, and rerouting shipments—including activating alternative land corridors—to sustain life-saving assistance to the most food-insecure populations.
- In Lebanon, despite repeated rejection or no response (approximately 80 percent) to deconfliction requests for inter-agency convoys to southern villages, WFP has facilitated four convoys delivering food assistance to 19,000 people in hard-to-reach areas so far, with the latest convoys reaching Tyre and Qlayaa this week. Ensuring safe, reliable humanitarian access, including effective deconfliction mechanisms, is urgent to respond effectively to growing humanitarian needs.

Global Food Insecurity Impact

- Since the onset of the conflict, oil prices have risen by approximately 37 percent increasing fuel costs, and driving higher freight and insurance charges, which in turn have raised transport, fertilizer production, and import costs, with rapid spillover onto staple food prices, particularly in import-dependent economies.
- Fertilizer markets face elevated risk, with an estimated 20–35 percent of global inputs transiting the Strait of Hormuz, which raises the likelihood of higher prices, reduced usage, and subsequent yield losses in upcoming seasons.
- If the conflict continues in the coming months, globally, an [estimated](#) 45 million additional people could fall into acute food insecurity, including 5.2 million people across twelve countries in the Middle East and North Africa region. In the West and Central Africa region alone, knock-on effects risk pushing an additional 10.4 million people into acute food insecurity, a 21 percent increase over current levels, driven by high dependence on imported fuel, cereals, and fertilizers, and likely reducing cultivated land and yields during the 2026 wet season, further straining food supply.

Supply Chain Implications

- Global supply chain disruptions are affecting WFP operations, resulting in 15–20 percent cost increases and shipment delays from rerouting, with continued pressures likely to further raise costs and delay life-saving assistance.
- Nearly [70,000 mt of WFP food](#) - enough to support around 4 million people for one month - is currently affected by the Middle

East conflict, with approximately half on chartered bulk vessels and the remainder containerized cargo en route or stalled in ports, heavily impacted by prolonged transit times, rerouting, and emergency surcharges. Affected commodities include pulses, vegetable oil, canned fish, sorghum, and specialized fortified foods.

- Operations in Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Sudan are directly impacted, with approximately 7,000 mt on ten vessels bound for Berbera, Mombasa, and Port Sudan facing delays of up to 30 days, largely due to rerouting around the Cape of Good Hope and other operational constraints.
- More broadly, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia remain highly exposed to prolonged disruptions; an estimated 500 million smallholder farmers in these regions produce about one-third of global food supplies.
- To mitigate impacts, WFP is adapting transport chains—from procurement to final delivery—using alternative sea routes, ports, and overland corridors to keep food moving. This includes diverting vessels to safer regional hubs, shifting to multi-country land routes, and re-sequencing transport legs to maintain delivery continuity despite longer lead times and higher costs.

WFP Response

- WFP continues to support affected populations across the Middle East as the crisis escalates, building on strong preparedness measures, including contingency planning and pre-positioned food stocks. However, newly emerging needs are creating a dual burden on already stretched pipelines, amid critically low funding and existing humanitarian demands that far exceed available resources – even prior to the escalations.

Iran

- Iran markets remain functional with food availability stabilizing by end of March. According to the Statistical Center of Iran, food inflation reached 112.7 percent in March 2026, significantly eroding household purchasing power, particularly among vulnerable groups. WFP assessment indicated that the cost of Iran's basic food basket has increased by 141 percent year-on-year.
- WFP operations continue without interruption, assisting 33,424 refugees across 20 settlements with food and cash including daily

bread through WFP-supported bakeries and wheat flour distributions supporting home-based baking in smaller locations. School feeding continues through take-home rations for around 9,000 school children.

- Under the three-month [UN flash appeal](#), **WFP requires USD 7.1 million, to assist 45,000 refugees living in Iran settlements** through monthly cash entitlements and wheat flour. In addition, 100,000 refugees living outside settlements will receive monthly cash-based transfers for three months, along with 100,000 people from host communities.

Lebanon

- The conflict is escalating at an alarming pace, with attacks spreading into new areas, forcing mass displacement beyond shelters. There is also a growing number of affected families outside formal assistance channels, including those staying with host communities or in informal settings. Rising food and fuel prices are further increasing pressure on these households, raising concerns around affordability, access to assistance, and emerging nutritional risks.
- In March, **WFP reached 440,000 conflict-affected people with food and cash assistance in shelters and across communities.** Of those:
 - WFP provided food assistance to 102,800 displaced people in 407 shelters across Lebanon, covering more than 75 percent of the people staying in shelters. This includes the distribution of 1.6 million hot meals, and thousands of light Ready-to-Eat (RTEs), packs of bread, food parcels and snacks.
 - Outside shelters, WFP provided food assistance to around 25,200 conflict-affected people in host communities or hard-to-reach areas.
 - WFP is expanding its refugee cash assistance through a horizontal scale-up to address rising needs. A total of 26,700 eligible households, equivalent to 109,000 individuals, received this week March emergency cash assistance with joint plans with UNHCR to extend this assistance for an additional two months.
- Building on the role of TVET schools as reliable, well-equipped platforms for emergency food assistance, WFP has expanded support to displaced families across multiple locations. In Tripoli, cold meals prepared at the TVET school are reaching

around 400 people daily across three nearby shelters. In Dekwaneh, operations are scaling up, with 1,500 hot meals distributed across three shelters and capacity increasing in line with needs. WFP has also launched hot meal provision at the Bir Hassan TVET in Beirut, with plans to progressively reach the 3,000 IDPs residing there.

- Around 1,000 mt of mixed rations - sufficient to support 186,000 people for 15 days - arrived from Turkey at Beirut port, of which 105 mt have been dispatched to WFP warehouses in Zouk Mosbeh, Koura, and Taanayal while the rest is under clearance.
- This week, the Logistics Cluster successfully facilitated, with the support of WFP, two convoys of a total of 20 trucks on behalf of four organizations to Qlayaa border village and Tyr, delivering vital humanitarian aid including food parcels, to 12,800 conflict-affected people.
- Since the escalation began on 2 March, only four of 19 requested convoys have been completed, assisting 19,000 affected people in hard-to-reach areas, due to **negative or absent responses on deconfliction requests**. This has **prevented nearly 80 percent of planned missions from proceeding**, severely constraining humanitarian access and raising **serious concern over the ability to reach populations** in hard-to-access and conflict-affected areas.
- Humanitarian needs are rapidly outpacing initial planning assumptions; while detailed funding requirements are still being consolidated and validated, WFP requires

immediate, flexible, and front-loaded funding at scale to sustain and expand assistance in a highly fluid operational environment.

Syria

- As of 28 March, 207,630 cross-border arrivals were recorded from Lebanon including close to 179,000 Syrians and more than 28,600 Lebanese. Nearly 49,000 Syrians intend to stay. Additional crossings with Lebanon and Iraq opened to ease flows.
- In response, **WFP distributed date bars to over 70,000 Syrian returnees and Lebanese arrivals** at Jdeidet Yabous and Jousieh border points in Rural Damascus and Homs so far.
- For the next six months (April–September 2026), **WFP Syria requires USD 186 million to sustain its regular operations**.

Afghanistan

- About 50,600 refugees have [returned](#) to Afghanistan from Iran since 28 February.
- 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 assistance.

Contacts

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