



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Lebanon Situation Report

February 2023

Population | **6.8 million**
2021 Human Development Index | **112 out of 191**
Income Level (World Bank) | **Lower-middle**
2021 GNI CAPITA (US\$) | **3,450**

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Lebanon is entering its fourth year of a severe economic, political, and social crisis while also hosting the largest number of refugees per capita in the world. Record-high global food and fuel prices have added to the country's already dire situation.

These crises have led to high levels of poverty and food insecurity amongst both Lebanese and refugee communities. The first Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) for Lebanon in September 2022 found that 1.29 million Lebanese and 700,000 Syrian refugees – 37 percent of the total population – are facing acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3, *Crisis*, and Phase 4, *Emergency*). As the economic crisis continues to worsen, and food prices increase, food insecurity is expected to affect 1.46 million Lebanese and 800,000 Syrian refugees (42 percent of the total population) by April 2023.

Basic living conditions are in continuous decline. The 2022 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees found that 90 percent of Syrian refugee families were in need of humanitarian assistance to survive, with the most basic needs out of reach due to inflation. Based on WFP's Household Deprivation Score, 60 percent of the Lebanese population was multi-dimensionally deprived in August 2022, up from 53 percent in December 2021.

WFP is at the forefront of the response to Lebanon's economic and refugee crisis, which supported 2 million of the most vulnerable Lebanese and refugees in 2022 to meet their food and other essential needs. WFP is maintaining its assistance to vulnerable communities in 2023, targeting 2.4 million people.

IN NUMBERS

3.5 M
people in need of assistance

1.6 M
people assisted in February 2023

\$20 M
cash-based Transfers made

3,200 MT
of food distributed

SITUATION UPDATE

The price of the food Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) monitored by WFP reached LBP 1.3 million in January, a 9 percent increase from December. The price of the full SMEB (food and other essential needs) for a family of five also increased by 9 percent since December, reaching LBP 13.6 million in January.

Monthly inflation in January was 8.4 percent, with food and energy prices increasing by 11 percent between December and January (*Consumer Price Index data from the Central Administration of Statistics*). Overall prices have increased by 124 percent since the start of 2022, mainly due to currency depreciation.

Amid sharp currency fluctuations the Lebanese government has allowed supermarkets to price items in USD, except for locally-produced goods such as bread and vegetables, which will remain priced in LBP. Customers will be able to pay in USD or LBP, and the exchange rate used will be visibly displayed at store entrances, cash registers, and receipts.

The first shipment of 33,000 tons of wheat, financed under the World Bank's Lebanon Wheat Supply Emergency Project, arrived in Lebanon on 11 February. The shipment – equivalent to about one month-worth of Arabic bread consumption – will help rebuild Lebanon's wheat stock and secure affordable bread for the population. Additional shipments are planned for the coming months as part of the project.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

	% Funded	Available	Required
COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (2023–2025)	8%	\$447million	\$5.3billion
2023 TOTAL REQUIREMENTS	25%	\$447million	\$1.8billion

Net Funding Requirements (Mar – Aug 2023)
US\$ 438 million



WFP RESPONSE



Cash Assistance for Refugees

In February, WFP provided unconditional cash assistance to 915,000 refugees through 3 modalities:

- **Multipurpose Cash** for food and other essential needs redeemable at ATMs or money transfer agents: 204,300 Syrian refugees
- **Cash-for-Food** for food needs redeemable at ATMs, money transfer agents, or shops: 329,100 Syrian refugees and 8,200 refugees of other nationalities.
- **Food e-cards** for food needs redeemable at WFP-contracted shops: 373,400 Syrian refugees

WFP and UNHCR reviewed the assistance packages of 12,000 refugee families receiving WFP's food e-card cash assistance. Starting March, these families will instead receive multipurpose cash assistance (MPC), to support them meet both food and non-food needs.

Economic Crisis Response for Lebanese

WFP supported 280,000 vulnerable Lebanese individuals (74,000 households) with food parcels in February as part of its response to the economic crisis. A total of 135 distributions were conducted by 5 implementing partners in 41 distribution sites across the country.

School Meals

School Meals activities did not place in February as public school teachers remained on strike throughout the month. In response to demands for improved working conditions to continue the school year, the Government approved a proposal to grant teachers additional support by subsidizing 5 litres of fuel per working day. A partial lifting of the strike was decided beginning March, enabling WFP to resume implementation of the School Meals programme.

Support to Social Protection Programmes

In February, WFP assisted 356,300 Lebanese individuals (64,000 families) through the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP), including 70 new families who received assistance for the first time in 2023 part of the ongoing scale-up of the NPTP.

The Government of Lebanon has decided to extend the assistance of the 76,000 families enrolled in the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) programme for an additional six months, in addition to the inclusion of 30,000 additional families in 2023 to receive cash assistance. As of February, 76,000 families (360,000 individuals) received assistance through the ESSN.

Livelihoods

WFP engaged 1,000 Syrian and Lebanese participants (benefitting 5,200 people) in livelihoods activities in February, ranging from trainings on farming and food processing, forest management and reforestation, and construction of irrigation canals and agricultural roads.

WFP participated in the launching of the 'One Million Trees' campaign for 2023 with the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment in February. The campaign will run from February 2023 until March 2024, and aims to encourage Lebanese to plant forest and fruit trees across the country to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Supply Chain & Retail

WFP contracted 63 new shops in February for an initial period of 5 months and added 23 shops to the roster for potential contracting in the future. All contracted retailers were surveyed in February to understand their readiness for potential dollarization of prices following the Government's decision to allow pricing in dollars at shops. Initial results show that most retailers are already planning for the dollarization of prices and are ready to adjust their systems accordingly.

GENDER, PROTECTION & ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS (AAP)

WFP received 69,000 claims in February through its call centre. 39 percent of claimants requested WFP assistance, 39 percent requested information on eligibility, loading and SMS validation, 8 percent requested to amend their personal data, and 12 percent expressed programmatic concerns related to validation and distribution sites. In addition, WFP received 1,300 protection-related cases that were referred to relevant protection services, including gender-based violence case management, legal counselling, and shelter. Almost all (97 percent) claims were resolved in February, while the rest are pending action/feedback from WFP.

A retreat for the WFP Gender Results Network (GRN) took place in February to reflect on achievements and challenges of 2022 and develop the 2023 gender action plan. The GRN is a corporate mechanism that supports WFP in delivering food assistance while considering the different needs of women, men, girls, and boys assisted. The network aims to strengthen the capacities of WFP staff to integrate gender equality into their work.

MONITORING & ASSESSMENTS

An increase in the average two-way cost to reach ATMs was reported by refugee beneficiaries redeeming cash assistance in February, at LBP 110,000, up from 88,000 in January due to hikes in fuel prices. A similar increase was reported by beneficiaries redeeming assistance at money transfer agents.

It took Lebanese beneficiaries significantly less time to redeem assistance at ATMs in February (26 minutes) than in January (42 minutes). For Syrian refugees however, the time of withdrawal further increased to 68 minutes, up from 54 minutes since the previous month. The waiting time at ATMs for refugees almost doubled between end of 2022 and February, which is likely due to increased crowds at redemption points redeeming additional cash assistance provided through UNHCR's winter assistance programme.

Most refugee beneficiaries (93 percent) did not face tensions while redeeming assistance at ATMs in February. Tensions reported by the remaining beneficiaries (7 percent) were flagged by WFP's monitoring team and WFP is taking action accordingly.

KEY CHALLENGES

Rapid currency depreciation continues to impact people's purchasing power, including for refugee families receiving cash assistance. WFP and UNHCR continue to advocate for higher transfer values to help beneficiaries better meet food and other essential needs. Dollarization of assistance is planned for the coming months to ensure beneficiaries receive adequate value of assistance and maintain their purchasing power amid currency depreciation, as well as reduce pressure on the ATM network.

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, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon's Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Norway, Poland, Private Donors, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Switzerland, United Kingdom, USA

FOOD SECURITY & AGRICULTURE SECTOR

In January, WFP and 16 sector partners reached 1.56 million refugees and Lebanese through cash and food assistance. In addition, 1,700 farmers and 18 agricultural cooperatives, associations, and small businesses were supported through capacity building and/or inputs and assets provision. The estimated amount of cash disbursed into the market to enhance agricultural production is USD 165,000.

ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

WFP continues to advocate for funds for the new Country Strategic Plan to meet rising needs, including through strategic engagements with key donors and exploring funding opportunities with the private sector and new donors. In particular, immediate resources are needed to cover the emergency in-kind assistance to Lebanese from July onwards.

In February, WFP led a delegation from the US on a visit to the Tripoli warehouse. This was an opportunity to highlight the emergency in-kind assistance to Lebanese people at a higher risk of vulnerability, while also the continued need for sustained funding to support the operation.

As part of the EU Trust Fund MADAD-funded communications campaign, WFP reached 1.3 million people in the European Union through a paid social media campaign including a teaser video (watch [here](#)) and full Facebook videos (watch [here](#)). The purpose was to raise awareness on how WFP's multi-purpose cash (MPC) assistance empowers and benefits Syrian refugee women, their views and experiences, while cooking traditional Syrian dishes with a Lebanese chef.



Originally established to serve community members in the Bekaa, "Mounet Baladi" is a Lebanese cooperative that aims to provide cultural, social, and educational support through seminars, and has recently started to produce and sell traditional food provisions.

The cooperative caters to people from all educational backgrounds and currently employs 25 local women. "We strive to be proactive by continuously searching for training opportunities to enhance our capabilities." Says Zeinab, head of the cooperative.

WFP, in partnership with the Association for Forests, Development and Conservation (AFDC), has provided employees of Mounet Baladi with training sessions on marketing and labeling to enhance their exposure and marketing channels; equipment and supplies to help initiate a production line of vacuum packaging for long self-life products; solar panels for a sustainable energy source; and orientation sessions on digital marketing.

WFP CASH & IN-KIND ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES AND LEBANESE

FEBRUARY 2023

