



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL ESCALATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Situation Report #7

16 April 2026

IN NUMBERS



453,200 displaced people assisted in **Lebanon** with food and cash to date.



102,960 displaced people received date bars at **Syria** crossings.



33,500 refugees in settlement supported with food and cash assistance in **Iran**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Escalating regional hostilities continue to restrict key humanitarian corridors, constraining logistical pipelines and humanitarian access, and placing vulnerable civilians and displaced people at heightened risk of food insecurity across the Middle East and beyond.
- WFP teams continue to operate around the clock to support displaced people across the region, drawing on robust emergency preparedness measures while maintaining operational agility through the use of alternative supply routes and rerouted corridors to sustain assistance despite access constraints.
- In Iran, WFP assistance continues uninterrupted, reaching 33,424 refugees across 20 settlements, including around 800 refugees newly relocated following the recent escalation.
- In Lebanon, despite deteriorating security conditions, the Logistics Cluster, with the support of WFP, has facilitated 10 convoys so far, assisting 47,400 affected people in hard-to-reach areas. Ensuring safe, reliable humanitarian access, including effective deconfliction, is urgent to respond effectively to growing humanitarian needs.

Global Food Insecurity Impact

- Amid a fragile ceasefire, the Middle East escalation continues to generate regional and global spillover effects, contributing to upward pressure on international food and commodity prices and compounding existing domestic inflationary trends. Disruptions to trade routes - including delays, higher insurance costs, and rerouting along key maritime and overland corridors - are constraining the flow of essential goods and increasing import costs. At the same time, elevated and volatile fuel prices are driving up transportation, storage, and production costs across food supply chains, with impacts increasingly transmitted to local markets.
- As a result, food prices are rising faster than household incomes, eroding purchasing power and placing additional strain on already fragile livelihoods. In import-dependent countries, higher food prices - often compounded by currency depreciation and elevated input costs - are reducing access to sufficient and nutritious food, particularly among low-income households and displaced populations. These dynamics are further exacerbating pre-conflict economic vulnerabilities and increasing food insecurity risks.
- Gaza has experienced the most severe increase in wheat flour prices, rising by approximately 122 percent as of mid-April since the onset of the crisis, reflecting extreme market disruption and access constraints. In Lebanon, the Food Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) increased by 6 percent month-on-month in March (USD 43.5 per person), while the food MEB rose more sharply by 9 percent (USD 62.4 per person). The steeper increase in the food MEB reflects

its greater reliance on fresh food items, which were among the first commodities affected by higher oil prices linked to the regional conflict.

- Fuel price pressures remain pronounced, particularly in Lebanon, where diesel has increased by 78 percent, gasoline by 31 percent, and cooking gas by 25 percent by mid-April compared to pre conflict levels, further intensifying pressure on household food affordability. In Gaza, fuel prices have increased by around 24 percent as of early April, amplifying inflationary pressures on food and other essential commodities.
- In Syria, food prices continue to rise moderately, with the food basket increasing by around 9 percent since the onset of the crisis as of March, while fuel prices have remained relatively stable, rising by approximately 2 percent, helping to partially contain broader inflationary pressures.
- Without timely mitigation measures, continued price volatility, trade disruptions, and fuel-driven inflation are likely to further undermine food access and nutritional outcomes in the months ahead. Amid this deepening uncertainty across the region, an additional [45 million people](#) around the world could be pushed into food insecurity, adding to the 318 million already affected.

WFP Response

- WFP continues to support affected people across the Middle East, leveraging contingency planning and pre-positioned food stocks; amid escalating needs, critically low funding and pre-existing unmet humanitarian demands.

Iran

- According to the Government of Iran, approximately [3.2 million people](#) (around 800,000 households) have been internally relocated, one of the largest internal movements in the country in recent decades. An estimated 75 percent are in Tehran, currently accommodated in temporary facilities, including schools, guesthouses, and sports halls. In some locations, overcrowding has reportedly strained basic services.
- As of early April, according to WFP assessment, the cost of the food basket in Iran is 131 percent higher year-on-year (compared to the April 2025 average) and nearly 12 percent higher than pre-crisis levels.

- Prior to the crisis, food basket inflation was already high and continued along a broadly similar trajectory during the escalation. Food prices surged during the first week of the conflict, most pronounced for fresh foods (especially meat, vegetables, and potatoes) - primarily due to panic buying - before moderating in subsequent weeks and stabilizing by early April.
- The expansion of the Government's subsidies to additional food items, fixed bread prices, and the ban on food and agricultural exports imposed early March helped to protect domestic stocks. High levels of domestic food production have helped cushion external shocks; however, rising prices continue to erode food affordability for vulnerable households.
- WFP operations continue without interruption, assisting 33,424 refugees across 20 settlements. This includes approximately 800 newly arrived refugees who relocated to the settlements following the recent escalation and have been incorporated into WFP food assistance since early April. The expansion of assistance is expected to continue progressively with registration underway in coordination with the settlement authorities, to support up to 7,000 refugees, subject to government approval and referral.
- Beneficiaries receive food and cash including daily bread through WFP-supported bakeries and wheat flour distributions supporting home-based baking in smaller locations.
- Due to prevailing insecurity and the shift to remote learning, school feeding continues through take-home rations for around 9,000 school children.

Lebanon

- Since the escalation, **WFP reached 453,200 conflict-affected people with food and cash assistance in shelters and across communities.** Of those:
 - WFP provided food assistance to 107,700 displaced people in 459 shelters across Lebanon. This includes the distribution of 2.8 million hot meals, and thousands of cold meals, light Ready-to-Eat (RTEs), packs of bread, food parcels (dry rations) and snacks.
 - Outside shelters, WFP provided food assistance to 52,300 conflict-affected

people in host communities or hard-to-reach areas.

- This week, the Logistics Cluster successfully facilitated, with the support of WFP, two convoys of a total of 16 trucks on behalf of four organizations, to Sarba (Nabatieh) and Hasbaya border village, delivering vital humanitarian aid, including WFP's food parcels, to 8,200 conflict-affected people.
- **Since the escalation, ten convoys have been completed, assisting almost 47,400 affected people in hard-to-reach areas.**
- The current emergency is unfolding against an already underfunded operation, and regular assistance already reduced or suspended due to funding shortfalls. Humanitarian needs are rapidly outpacing initial planning assumptions. WFP requires immediate, flexible, and front-loaded funding at scale to sustain and expand assistance in a highly fluid operational environment.

Syria

- As of 15 April, more than 280,610 people crossed into Syria from Lebanon since the escalation, including over 236,751 Syrians and nearly 43,859 Lebanese. Among the Syrians, more than 68,000 have expressed an intention to return permanently (UNHCR). Most crossings occurred through Masnaa-Jdeidet Yabous and Al Qaa-Joussieh.
- Following the announcement from The Syrian General Authority of Civil Aviation on 8 April, all air corridors in Syria have been reopened, with the resumption of air traffic through Syrian airspace including Damascus International Airport. As a result, UNHAS resumed its operations on the Damascus-Aleppo-Damascus route on 13 April.

- Overall, **WFP continued its response, distributing date-bars to 102,960 Syrian returnees and Lebanese arrivals** at both Jousieh and Jdeidet Yabous border crossings.
- For the next six months (April-September 2026), **WFP Syria requires USD 186 million to sustain its regular operations.**

Afghanistan

- About 134,100 refugees have [returned](#) to Afghanistan from Iran since 28 February.
- The closure of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border since 12 October 2025, compounded by the escalation in Iran, have caused the suspension of the Dubai-Iran supply route, disrupting the delivery of nearly 8,800 mt of nutritious food, including Specialized Nutritious Food and vegetable oil, placing greater strain on WFP's nutrition support programmes in Afghanistan. As a contingency measure to reduce reliance on the southern corridor, WFP is exploring alternative routes. In the interim, approximately 400 mt of fortified biscuits stored at the UNHRD hub in Dubai have been dispatched and are currently en route to Afghanistan to help mitigate the supply gap.
- 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 support.

Contacts

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