

WFP SYRIA EMERGENCY RESPONSE

External Situation Report

19 February 2025

Highlights

- **Syria's transition remains in its early, fragile stage.** The success of the transition depends on a **collective effort to address significant unmet food security and humanitarian needs**. Equally critical is the **revival of the food system, livelihoods, and essential infrastructure**, deeply impacted by 14 years of conflict.
- **On 13 February, a conference on Syria was held in Paris to discuss Syria's humanitarian needs.** Regional and international stakeholders pledged support to ensure the success of Syria's transition within a framework that must be Syrian-led and Syrian-owned.
- **WFP is ready to scale up its support but needs the international community to step up.** WFP urgently needs US\$250 million in flexible funds to avoid a pipeline break in July. Overall, WFP will require US\$550 M to implement all its activities in 2025.

IN NUMBERS



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



Over **1 million** newly displaced people reached with emergency assistance across Syria since September 2024



7.4 million people remain displaced within Syria, including 617,000 **newly displaced** since 27 November (UNHCR)



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



US\$ 250 million of flexible funding urgently needed to avoid pipeline break in July. Invest in recovery interventions. WFP requires US\$ 550 M to implement all its activities in 2025

humanitarian needs, continue to present major challenges to Syria's transition and stabilization. **Food insecurity remains a major concern**, with over half of the population food insecure, including nearly 3 million people projected to be severely food insecure.

- **Diplomatic engagements and international humanitarian support for Syria continue.** On 13 February, Syria's Foreign Minister joined ministers and representatives from regional and western countries, and United Nations agencies - including WFP - in Paris, to redefine the aid architecture for Syria. Participants pledged to collaborate in ensuring the success of Syria's transition through a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned process - in accordance with the principles outlined in UN Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015).
- **The return movements of internally displaced and refugee Syrians continue.** Over 828,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned to their areas of origin following the November and December hostilities, while 617,000 people remain newly displaced. Additionally, since early 2024, over 630,000 refugees have returned from neighbouring countries, including 270,000 since 8 December. UNHCR predicts that up to 1.5 million refugees may return to Syria in 2025; many are concerned about safety, damage to infrastructure, limited services, and lack of livelihood opportunities.

SITUATION UPDATE

- The security and political situation in Syria remains extremely complex. **Insecurity, socio-political tensions, dynamic population movements, a crippled economy, and significant unmet**

WFP RESPONSE

- The success of the Syria's transition depends on a **collective effort to address significant unmet food security and humanitarian needs**. Equally critical is

the **revival of the food system, livelihoods, and essential infrastructure**, which have been deeply impacted by 14 years of conflict.

- As one of the UN's largest humanitarian organizations in Syria, **WFP is uniquely equipped to support Syria in this transition**. To do so, WFP is adapting its programme to simultaneously address acute food insecurity, safeguard access to bread, and support the recovery of food systems and livelihoods. WFP is also ready to support the caretaker government in establishing national safety-net systems to enhance long-term food security and social protection.
- WFP continues to **actively engage with the caretaker authorities** and has held positive and strategic discussions with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, the Ministry of Administration and Services, the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection, the Ministry of Development, as well as the Central Bank. WFP is also working alongside other UN agencies to support MOFA in drafting strategic papers ahead of the Brussels conference taking place in March.
- WFP is participating in the development of the Syria Transitional Action Plan (TAP) led by the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO), advocating for food security and livelihood opportunities for the most vulnerable populations, including IDPs and returnees. The plan, which aims to support the Office of the Special Envoy in facilitating an inclusive, credible, and transparent political transition, will be presented at the Brussels conference in March. WFP is also coordinating with UNHCR, at country and regional levels, on return intentions, trends, and programmatic response.
- **WFP continues to reach** over 1.5 million people every month with targeted food assistance, school meals, nutrition (prevention and treatment), and livelihood support. **Additionally, WFP reached over 1 million newly displaced people** since September 2024. WFP is progressing with the registration process of vulnerable families for its targeted emergency food assistance, including those recently displaced or returned who meet eligibility criteria.
- Support is needed from the international community to **connect Syrian banks to the international banking system**. The persistent issue of cash liquidity continues to impact WFP's ability to implement cash-based transfers (CBT) - except in northwest Syria areas. To mitigate the issue, **WFP is temporarily shifting CBT beneficiaries in some areas to in-kind modality, while implementing an alternative temporary delivery mechanism for CBT assistance in Aleppo, with plans to expand this solution to other governorates**.
- The large-scale subsidy system is facing interruptions across the country, resulting in increases in the price of food. The price of bread already increased by 400

percent in the past three months. Bread subsidies – which used to support between 10 and 12 million people across Syria - are expected to be completely halted in the next two months. **WFP is expanding its network of supported bakeries to ensure access to affordable bread for those most in need. Since 2022, WFP has rehabilitated 25 bakeries and is currently in the process of rehabilitating 3 more.**

- **WFP continues to optimize and augment its operational capacities**, using all available corridors to ensure a continuous and cost-efficient supply flow into Syria. This includes the continued use of the Turkish corridor, the Syrian ports, Jordan and Lebanon. WFP is also exploring a new corridor via Iraq for the movement of humanitarian cargo and personnel.
- **WFP is sourcing new food through available open corridors**. Currently, WFP has an in-country stock of food rations sufficient for 540,000 people for one month only, as well as nutrition supplies and mixed food commodities, enough to produce food rations to cover the needs of approximately 1 million people.

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

- After nearly a month of suspension, humanitarian movements via Bab al-Hawa border crossing have resumed, following a six-month extension of the consent-based agreement (until 7 August). However, humanitarian movements via Bab al-Salam and Al-Raee have been halted as their consent expired.
- Amid a fragile economy and disrupted social services and banking systems, **full relief from sanctions** on Syria is needed to enable fast recovery, reduce humanitarian needs, and promote security and stability in Syria, as well as in the region.

FUNDING REQUIREMENT

- **In 2025, WFP will require US\$550 million to implement all its activities**, including emergency food assistance, school meals, nutrition, support to the bread value chain, and recovery interventions.
- **WFP urgently requires US\$250 million** to avoid a pipeline break in July.
- Flexible contributions are key to enabling WFP to use any assistance modality and corridor to reach those in need.

UN RESPONSE

- The UN **has extended the timeframe of the recent 'Syria Humanitarian Response Priorities'** that expands the 2024 Humanitarian Response Plan into 2025. The plan, now extended until June 2025 and valued at US\$1.2 billion, aims to address the most urgent needs of 6.7 million people in areas such as protection, camp IDP management, early recovery and livelihoods, education, food security, health water and sanitation, until more elaborate needs assessment and planning are completed for the rest of 2025.

CLUSTERS AND COMMON SERVICES

Food Security Sector (FSS)

- The **Food Security Sector continued its efforts in enhancing coordination** among partners across all of Syria.
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) seeking to scale up operations in parts of Syria where they were not previously working **are urged to coordinate their work through the FSS** to enable a single comprehensive overview of assistance and minimize gaps and duplication.

Logistics Cluster

- The **Logistics Cluster** is supporting the border crossing transshipment of humanitarian supplies carrying commodities from Türkiye into 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.

UNHAS

- **UNHAS resumed operations**, with two weekly flights between Amman and Damascus, until insurance reallows to base the aircraft in Damascus - which was the case before the 8 December events. Flights to Aleppo and Qamishli are also expected to resume soon – pending the reopening of these airports.

