

WFP SYRIA EMERGENCY RESPONSE

26 March 2025

External Situation Report

Highlights

- **Syria's transition stands at a pivotal moment, and presents both opportunities and challenges.** The success of Syria's transition hinges on addressing immediate food security and humanitarian needs, alongside efforts to revive food systems, livelihoods, and essential infrastructure, all impacted by 14 years of conflict.
- **The 9th Brussels conference** on Syria resulted in pledges of almost EUR 6 billion (USD 6.5 billion) in aid to rally support for Syria's recovery and transition and address the urgent humanitarian needs both within Syria and in neighbouring countries that host Syrian refugees.
- **WFP has the capacity, footprint, and access** to help Syrian communities recover but requires USD 335 million to implement its targeted emergency and recovery interventions in 2025. WFP urgently needs USD 100 million by June to avoid a disruption in food assistance in August.

IN NUMBERS



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



Up to **5,000 people** reached with emergency food and nutrition assistance every day among those impacted by recent escalation of hostilities in the coastal area



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



1.2 million people returned to their areas of origin – including 926,000 IDPs and 356,000 refugees. Many more are anticipated to return this year since 27 November 2024



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 335 million required to implement all activities in 2025. WFP urgently needs USD 100 million to avoid a lack of funding in August

SITUATION UPDATE

- **The security situation deteriorated significantly since 6 March** when sectarian violence and unrest erupted across the coastal areas impacting minority communities the most. The clashes resulted in thousands of civilian casualties, severe damage to critical civilian infrastructure, and restricted access to affected areas. In addition, thousands of people have been internally displaced; over 20,000 people have also sought refuge in Lebanon. UN inter-agency missions – some led by WFP – extracted over 100 UN staff, dependents and family members, as well as NGO and Embassy staff and families, from the volatile areas. WFP staff are all safe and accounted for.
- **On 17 March, the European Union (EU) hosted the 9th donor conference in Brussels to rally support for Syria's recovery and transition**, with Syria participating for the first time. Overall, pledges were about 25 percent lower than in 2024 as some major donors from 2024 did not pledge this year. These contributions aim to support Syria's transition and recovery efforts and address the urgent humanitarian needs both within Syria and in neighbouring countries hosting Syrian refugees.

WFP RESPONSE

- **WFP is operational across the country, with a reach of 1.5 million people monthly** through targeted emergency food and cash assistance, school meals and nutrition interventions.

- In addition, after days of hostilities and lack of access, on 16 March, **WFP started to provide emergency food assistance to those impacted by the recent escalation of hostilities in coastal area**. As of 20 March, WFP reached 9,000 people in rural Latakia and Tartous. Subject to access and partners' operational capacity on the ground, WFP could reach up to 5,000 people on a daily basis.
- In addition, in partnership with the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection, WFP aims to **support bakeries with wheat flour** – including through the Grain from Ukraine initiative - **ensuring access to affordable bread for 2 million people in hunger hotspots**. Bread distribution will start in April and aims to improve food security and promote social cohesion, while stabilizing local economies.
- **WFP also works to support and stabilize the recovery of the bread value chain and agricultural livelihoods**. Since 2022, WFP has rehabilitated 23 bakeries and restored access to water for 48,279 hectares of agricultural land.
- **WFP implements its activities in collaboration with 30 cooperating partners and in close coordination with the caretaker authorities**. WFP is working with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to **enhance national social protection systems**, through capacity strengthening and assessments.
- **WFP continues to work with the Resident Coordinator, UN agencies** and the caretaker authorities on the Transitional Action Plan (TAP), a roadmap to guide Syria's transition toward lasting peace, and returnee support.

Supply Chain

- **WFP continues to optimize and augment its operational capacities, through 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 has also secured access via Iraq.
- Currently, WFP has an in-country stock of food rations sufficient to support 1.5 million people for only one month.
- In light of the recent change in policy, which allows importation of commodities directly from Türkiye, WFP has significantly expanded the use of the **Türkiye corridor**. A WFP analysis compared shipping and food procurement costs from various origins versus Türkiye, estimated that, at current volumes this can save up to USD 5 million every year.
- Agreements for the three crossing points between Syria and Türkiye were recently extended, until 7 August for Bab al-Hawa, and until 3 September for Bab al-Salam and al-Raee. More than 775 trucks have already crossed in 2025 with UN humanitarian aid from Türkiye into Syria, marking more than an

eightfold increase compared to the same period last year; WFP accounts for close to 80 percent of these trucks.

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 as humanitarian conditions are expected to worsen even further with the anticipated full removal of large-scale subsidies in the next months a higher rate of return among displaced Syrians.
- **Liquidity challenges persist**, as international banks remain unable to fully engage with Syria. WFP faced obstacles in payments to suppliers and in the implementation of cash-based transfers (CBT) at scale across most of the country. WFP seeks potential solutions in light of the recent easing of sanctions.

FUNDING REQUIREMENT

- **In 2025, WFP will require USD 335 million to implement its targeted emergency and recovery interventions**, while WFP upholds due diligence and assurance to ensure funds reach those in greatest need.
- **WFP urgently needs USD 100 million** by June to avoid a disruption of food assistance in August. Flexible contributions are key to enable WFP to use any assistance modality and corridor to reach those 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.

UNHAS

UNHAS resumed flights between Damascus and Aleppo on 20 March following the reopening of Aleppo airport. Flights to Qamishli will resume upon the reopening of the airport. Flights between Damascus and Amman continue twice a week (since 6 February) in alignment with Aleppo flights as the UNHAS aircraft remains based in Amman, pending approval from Syrian caretaker authorities for the aircraft to be relocated to Damascus.