

WFP SYRIA EMERGENCY RESPONSE

External Situation Report

8 May 2025

Highlights

- **Syria stands at a now-or-never moment.** A political normalization process is under way, but the economy is fragile, and sectarian tensions have increased. Syria must stabilize to achieve regional stability, and this is a prerequisite for the safe, voluntary and dignified return of Syrian refugees and those internally displaced.
- **WFP has the capacity, footprint, and access to help Syrian communities recover** through a combination of humanitarian and resilience interventions. WFP reaches over 1.5 million people each month with targeted emergency food assistance, school meals, nutrition and livelihood intervention. WFP also works with interim authorities to strengthen social safety net systems and is ready to scale-up support to returnees and early recovery efforts, if funds are made available.
- **WFP requires USD 335 million to implement its targeted emergency and recovery interventions in 2025;** USD 100 million are needed by July to avoid a funding shortfall in September.

IN NUMBERS



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



Over **40,000 people** reached with emergency food and nutrition assistance among those impacted by the escalation of violence in the coastal area since 6 of March



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



Over **1.5 million** people – 1.1 million IDPs and 470,000 refugees – returned to their areas of origin since 27 November 2024. Up to 3.5 million are anticipated to return to Syria by the end of 2025 (UNHCR)



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 needs USD 100 million to avoid funding shortfall in September

WFP RESPONSE

- **WFP reaches 1.5 million people monthly** with targeted emergency food assistance, school meals, nutrition, and livelihoods interventions; cash assistance continues uninterrupted, despite liquidity challenges.
- Since 6 March, WFP continues to provide **emergency food and nutrition assistance to those impacted by the escalation of violence in coastal areas**. So far, WFP reached over 40,000 people in rural Latakia and Tartous.
- WFP is furthering discussions with interim authorities to strengthen **social safety net systems in Syria**; this includes the **provision of subsidized bread** to those most in need, which has become critical after the removal of large-scale subsidies. WFP aims to provide wheat flour to public bakeries, including through the Grain from Ukraine initiative, ensuring access to affordable bread for 2 million people in hunger hotspots. The project is expected to be launched by the end of May.
- Provided enough funds are made available, WFP is also ready to **scale up early recovery efforts**, with a focus on food value chains and agricultural livelihoods. Since 2020, WFP has rehabilitated 24 bakeries and restored access to water for about 50,000 hectares of agricultural land. WFP is also in discussion with the interim authorities to support the resumption of the **fortification** for the national wheat flour supply.

- **WFP continues to work with the Resident Coordinator, UN agencies** and the caretaker authorities on the Transitional Action Plan (TAP) and refugee support. As part of the TAP, WFP will co-convene Pillar Two, *Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries*, alongside UNHCR.
- WFP continues to work closely with UNHCR and UNICEF to be ready for voluntary returns of **Syrian refugees**, particularly those in need of assistance. WFP recently signed a data sharing agreement with UNHCR for refugees' data to help ensure seamless support.

Supply Chain

- **WFP continues to optimize and augment its operational capacities, using all available corridors to ensure a continuous and cost-efficient supply of commodities into Syria.** This includes the expanded use of the Turkish corridor, and the continued use of the Syrian ports, Jordan and Lebanon corridors. As a contingency measure, WFP has also recently secured access via Iraq.
- Recent shifts in the exchange rate and broader economic changes have opened opportunities for **WFP Syria to expand local procurement.** Following a food sourcing analysis, WFP is now positioned to procure key commodities locally, including sunflower oil, olive oil, iodized salt, bulgur wheat, and canned foods. This will support domestic producers and reduce costs compared to regional or international imports. Additional cost savings have already been achieved thanks to the **expansion of the Turkish corridor;** prior to December 2024, WFP Syria was unable to import directly from Türkiye.
- **All three crossing points between Syria and Türkiye are open for humanitarian movement** - until 7 August for Bab al-Hawa, and until 3 September for Bab al-Salam and Al-Raee. With the reopening of the Syria-Türkiye borders for commercial vehicles, WFP will review and adapt its transshipment operations to improve efficiencies.
- Currently, WFP holds sufficient **in-country food rations** to sustain its emergency food assistance operation for two months.

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 amid the full removal of large-scale subsidies and the anticipated return of refugees and IDPs.
- The rollout of **WFP's subsidized bread project** is temporarily delayed as technical discussions with interim authorities on the targeting strategy continue. While implementation was initially planned for April, it is now anticipated to begin by late May. Should further delays occur, WFP will pre-empt potential quality

degradation by repurposing the 3,000 MT of wheat flour currently in storage for alternative use.

- **Liquidity challenges persist,** as international banks remain unable to fully engage with Syria. Thanks to the Central Bank of Syria, WFP was able to secure sufficient SYP to pay suppliers and implement cash-based transfers (CBT) through April; negotiations are ongoing to secure additional SYP. While discussions with UN interagency working groups and the UN Secretariat Treasury Department continue to explore sustainable and secure solutions for USD availability, suppliers and partners are increasingly reluctant to accept USD due to exchange rate fluctuations.
- **Sanctions relief** remains critical to enable humanitarian and recovery efforts.

FUNDING REQUIREMENT

- **In 2025, WFP will require USD 335 million to implement its activities,** while continuing to invest in due diligence and assurance to ensure funds reach those in greatest needs.
- **WFP needs USD 100 million** by July to avoid a funding shortfall in September. Flexible contributions are key to enable WFP to use any assistance modality and corridor to reach those most 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. Since the start of 2025, 975 trucks carrying UN aid have crossed from Türkiye to Syria - more trucks than during the whole of 2024; WFP accounts for 79 percent of these trucks.

UNHAS

UNHAS is operational between Damascus and Aleppo, and Damascus and Amman, with two weekly flights on each route. Flights to Qamishli will resume upon the reopening of the airport. The UNHAS aircraft remains based in Amman, pending approval from Syrian interim authorities for the aircraft to be relocated to Damascus.