

# SYRIA

## EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY UNREST IN SYRIA

April 2016

WFP/ Hussam Al Saleh

### HIGHLIGHTS

- WFP delivered food assistance for 3.9 million people during April.
- WFP food assistance reached 364,500 people in hard-to-reach and besieged locations in Aleppo, Idleb, Homs and Rural Damascus governorates through inter-agency convoys.
- WFP successfully delivered food assistance for 100,000 people through airdrop deliveries to Deir Ezzor city.
- Over 33,000 newly displaced people received WFP assistance in Aleppo and Al-Hasakeh governorates.

### In numbers

**6.5 million** people internally displaced  
**13.5 million** people require humanitarian assistance  
**8.7 million** people require food assistance

### Funding update

WFP requires USD 23.7 million by the end of May in order to ensure operational continuity until the end of September.



**World Food Programme**

## SITUATION UPDATE

### Aleppo Governorate

Heavy clashes between ISIL and armed opposition groups (AOGs) have been escalating since the second week of April, forcing thousands of families to seek refuge in A'zaz and in surrounding IDP settlements. At least 40,000 people have been on the move during the last three weeks of April. However, as clashes spread and intensified more people have been forced to flee. In response, WFP partners provided assistance to 20,000 newly displaced people by distributing almost 4,000 food rations.

UN deliveries through Bab Al-Salam (BAS), the only access route to the A'zaz area, were temporarily suspended in April due to security tension in proximity of the border. WFP had completed all planned deliveries for April cycle prior to the suspension. Access from BAS to eastern Aleppo city has been cut off since the beginning of February. As a result, all shipments to the opposition-held part of the city have been redirected through the Bab Al-Hawa border crossing point. In addition, due to unstable security conditions along the access road, WFP has since February been prepositioning food supplies for over 100,000 people in eastern Aleppo city on a monthly basis in anticipation of potential access disruptions and a consequent besiegement of the area.

### Al-Hasakeh Governorate

On 20 April, heavy clashes erupted between the Kurdish security police and government forces in several parts of Qamishli city, resulting in civilian casualties, material damage and temporary displacement of hundreds of families to safer areas of the city. On 23 April, the situation calmed after the two parties reached an agreement. In response to the temporary displacement, WFP provided 250 ready-to-eat rations for 1,250 newly displaced people. However, the protracted access interruption through border crossing points surrounding the governorate is severely affecting the delivery of humanitarian supplies. At present, WFP continues to prioritize the extremely limited stocks of ready-to-eat rations to respond to the most urgent food needs amongst newly displaced families.

### Deir Ezzor Governorate

On 10 April, in coordination with Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), WFP successfully launched its high altitude airdrop operation into the besieged government held areas of Deir Ezzor City. In April, WFP completed eighteen airdrop rotations delivering live-saving food assistance, almost 312 metric tons of food commodities, for the first time since March 2014. The quantities airdropped include chickpeas, beans, rice, vegetable oil, lentils, bulgur wheat, salt and sugar and were well

received by SARC from the ground. In light of the dire humanitarian situation caused by the continued besiegement, the food commodities were immediately used to provide partial food rations for all 20,000 families (approximately 100,000 people) registered by SARC. More food commodities delivered through ongoing airdrops are used to top up and diversify the food rations until each family has received a full monthly food ration of 41 Kg. The total number of beneficiaries to be supported will increase if additional families are registered.

## WFP RESPONSE

### Overall Achievements

In April, WFP delivered food assistance for 3.9 million people in 13 of the 14 Syrian governorates, achieving 97 percent of its monthly plan. Of this, more than 748,000 people in areas suffering from access constraints in Aleppo, Idleb, and Dar'a, were reached through cross-border deliveries from Turkey and Jordan, representing 19 percent of the total food assistance delivered during the month. In addition, cross-line deliveries to besieged and hard-to-reach areas amounted to three percent of the total deliveries.

In areas experiencing bread shortages or where people do not have access to adequate baking facilities and fuel needed to bake the bread, WFP's partners channel their allocations of wheat flour to contracted private bakeries to bake bread bundles, while WFP fully covers production and transportation costs. In April, despite the temporary suspension of bread production due the escalation of violence reported in the second half of April in Aleppo, an average of 44,000 bread bundles were produced every day, meeting the daily needs of approximately 242,000 people.



## Joint Humanitarian Convoys to Besieged and Hard-to-Reach Areas

In April, WFP reached seventeen hard-to-reach and besieged locations in Homs, Aleppo, Idleb, and Rural Damascus governorates through a series of inter-agency convoys, providing life-saving food assistance for 364,500 people in urgent need of food assistance.



- On 2 April, WFP delivered food assistance for 22,000 people in the hard-to-reach areas of Dar Al-Kabira, Ghanto, and Ter Maleh in northern rural Homs. Each family received a dry monthly food ration and two bags of fortified wheat flour. In addition, WFP delivered nutrition supplies for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition for over 2,100 children under five. Last time WFP assistance reached these locations was in June 2015, when food for some 23,000 was delivered through an inter-agency convoy.
- On 17 April, WFP delivered 10,000 food rations sufficient to meet the needs of 50,000 people in the hard-to-reach areas of Afrin, Yakhur, Rajo and Kafr Jenneh, in northern rural Aleppo. In addition, WFP delivered 7.5 metric tons of nutrition supplies for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition for over 4,000 children. WFP food assistance last reached Afrin in October 2014.
- On 16 and 19 April, WFP delivered food assistance for 50,000 people in seven locations in Kafr Batna sub-district in Rural Damascus as part of two inter-agency convoys. Each family received a monthly food ration and two bags of fortified wheat flour. In addition, WFP delivered 5.5 metric tons of nutrition supplies for the treatment of malnutrition in approximately 670 children in all seven locations. Prior to these deliveries, WFP had previously reached the area between late February and early March, when food assistance for 47,500 people was delivered to the seven locations.
- On 21 and 25 April, WFP took part in two inter-agency convoys to the hard-to-reach area of Al-Rastan, in northern rural Homs delivering 735 metric tons of fortified wheat flour (30 Kg for each family) for 122,500 people living in the area. The wheat flour supplies complemented

food rations delivered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as part of the inter-agency convoys. Moreover, WFP delivered 15.2 metric tons of nutrition supplies for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition for over 8,200 children. WFP had last reached Al-Rastan in April 2015 delivering food assistance for 22,250 people.

- On 27 April, WFP delivered 360 metric tons of wheat flour to support a total of 60,000 vulnerable people living in the hard-to-reach area of Talbiseh in northern rural Homs. Each family received 30 kg of wheat flour, which will be distributed to beneficiaries alongside ICRC food rations. In addition, WFP delivered 9.7 metric tons of nutrition supplies for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition for more than 5,100 children. The last time WFP assistance reached Talbiseh was almost one year ago, in June 2015.
- On 30 April, two simultaneous inter-agency convoys accessed the besieged towns of Madaya and Zabadani in Rural Damascus as well as Kefraya and Foah in Idleb. WFP delivered 180 metric tons of wheat flour to support a total of 60,000 vulnerable people living in the areas. The wheat flour was distributed to beneficiaries alongside food rations delivered by ICRC. In addition, WFP delivered 8.9 metric tons of nutrition supplies for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition for more than 6,800 children.



## CHALLENGES

Deliveries of humanitarian assistance to Al-Hasakeh governorate have been suspended since 27 December 2015 due to interrupted access through border crossing points surrounding the governorate. As a result, WFP stocks of monthly food rations in the governorate have been completely depleted preventing dispatches to partners during the month of April.

Deliveries to Ar-Raqqa governorate remained impossible due to ISIL's control of the area. Food originally allocated to this governorate were redirected to areas witnessing new IDP arrivals, or where needs exceeded the plan. In particular, partners operating in Tartous, Idleb, Damascus and Dar'a governorates received additional food supplies to assist newly displaced families in these governorates.

## **NUTRITION PROGRAMME**

### **Prevention of Acute Malnutrition and Micronutrient Deficiencies**

WFP provided supplementary nutrition products for almost 136,000 children aged 6-59 months through both regular and cross-line deliveries, achieving 57 percent of the plan to reach 240,000 children. Of these, about 21,000 children were assisted through cross-line deliveries to Aleppo, Homs, Idleb, and Rural Damascus, while the remaining 116,000 children were reached through regular deliveries to Aleppo, Hama Homs, Lattakia, Tartous, and Quneitra governorates.

### **Nutrition Support for Pregnant and Lactating Women through CBT**

Over 8,200 pregnant and lactating women, 96 percent of the planned beneficiaries for the April cycle, benefited from nutrition support through the provision of CBTs to purchase locally produced fresh food products from selected retailers in both Lattakia and Homs governorates. This represents a 1.5 percent increase in the number of beneficiaries reached compared to March cycle. The programme complements the general food rations and aims to diversify the diet of these particularly vulnerable and food insecure women.

## **FORTIFIED SCHOOL SNACKS PROGRAMME**

In April WFP continued to support 160,000 school children with daily distribution of fortified date bars in approximately 220 elementary schools in Rural Damascus, Aleppo, and Tartous. Meanwhile, with the school year coming to an end, WFP is arranging to run the programme in July and August in four governorates (Rural Damascus, Homs, Lattakia and Tartous) as part of the summer clubs, which are UNICEF supported summer schools that include extracurricular activities along with remedial classes for students who missed out on school days during the year. The dispatches for the summer clubs will commence at the end of June.



## **LIVELIHOOD AND RESILIENCE**

In April, as part of a joint FAO and WFP project to support to the rehabilitation of greenhouses, WFP distributed 436, out of a total of 2,000, plastic sheets to targeted beneficiaries in Tartous and Baniyas sub-districts (Tartous) in cooperation with an NGO partner.

Under the livelihood support in Al-Hasakeh Governorate, WFP supported 500 farming households out of a total of 1,500 households identified by WFP partner Action against Hunger (ACF) in early March. The assistance provided key inputs to enable them maintain their livelihoods. The remaining 1,000 households will be supported with essential components to facilitate dairy production at the household level.



## **FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE SECTOR**

In April, the Food Security and Agriculture Sector facilitated discussion sessions with the objective to enhance coordination on inter-agency food support in areas reached by joint humanitarian convoys. The sector also conducted its regular monthly coordination meeting on 26 April for partners and stakeholders based in Damascus where challenges and operational issues were discussed. In addition, FAO provided stakeholders with a technical overview on the overall livestock situation in Syria.

The Food Security and Agriculture Sector conducted a mission to Homs and Tartous governorates between 19 and 25 April and held coordination meetings with partners implementing food security and agriculture projects. Key issues which emerged revolved around the need for the sector to support in keeping the number of 'People in Need' up to date and provide capacity building trainings to sector focal points at hub level.

## FUNDING

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From May 2016 onwards, WFP will be able to distribute a full food basket with no reductions in ration content for the first time since the start of the emergency operation in 2011. This great achievement would not be possible but for the generous contributions of donors since the beginning of 2016 and the continuously improving supply chain. At present, WFP operational funding requirements are covered until the end of June; however, WFP is optimistic it will be fully funded until the end of the year as long as the pledges of the London conference are confirmed in time.



## CONTACT

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