



SITUATION UPDATE

AUGUST 2015

SYRIA CRISIS

REGIONAL RESPONSE



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"It's been 5 weeks since we received the card and it has helped us so much" says Emil, father of four, living in a house he pays 300 lira per month for on the outskirts of Gaziantep. He shares the modest home with his brother's family. Together they came two and a half years ago from Aleppo, Syria with an extended family of 17. His mother, Shehle, passed out twice from exhaustion while escaping the shelling in Syria. She can smile now, and enjoys passing time with her many grandchildren, and helping out with the huge task of cooking large family meals. "I thank everyone whoever helping us to buy food, she says."

Emil recounts the day when his family received the WFP/Kizilay e-food card: "It was like the Eid holiday for us- we ate chicken for the first time in a very long time and had a big celebration! I bought meat, bulgur, sugar, oil and milk for the children. Milk is so important for the children in particular - I am happy to be able to buy it without worrying now."

WFP/Berna Cetin



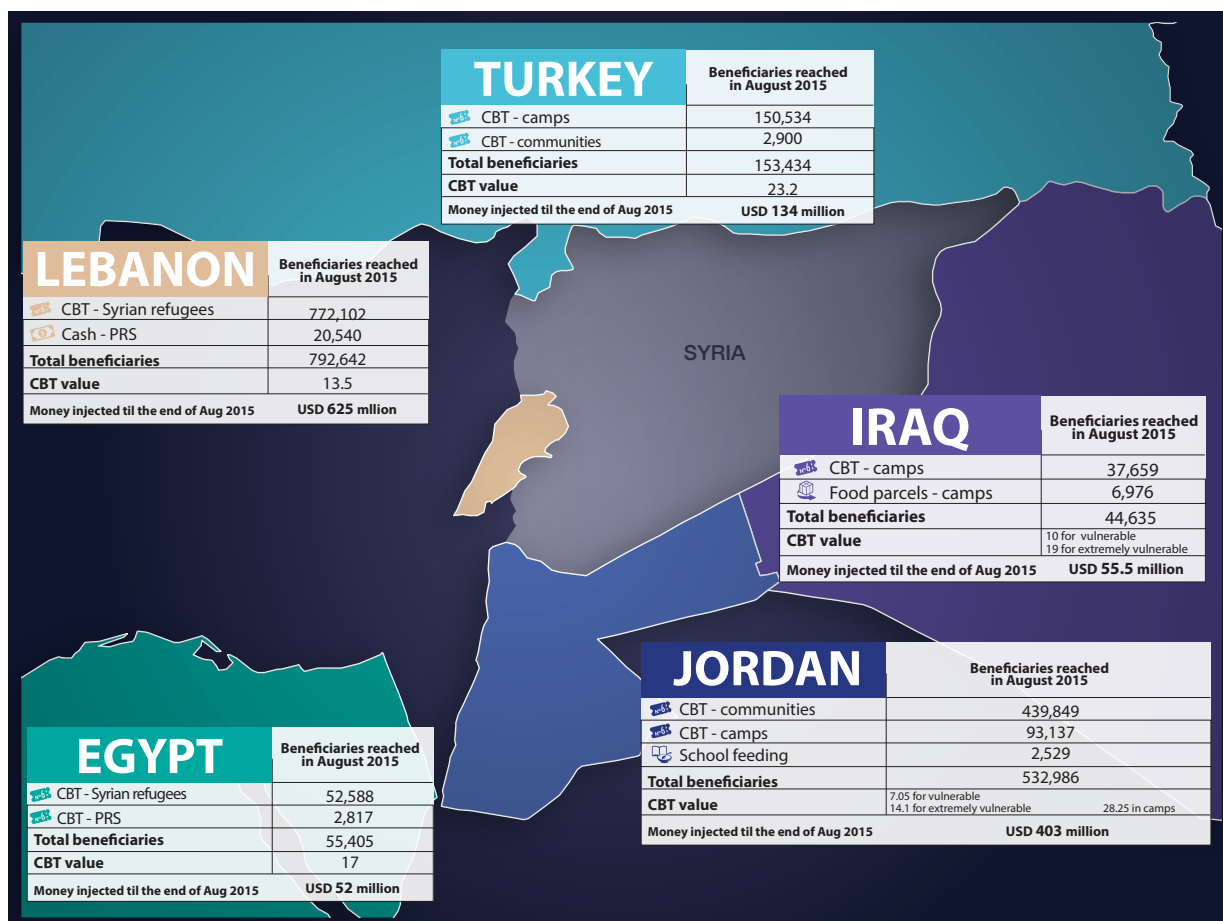
World Food Programme

HIGHLIGHTS

- In **Jordan**, assistance levels were reduced to approximately 440,000 Syrian refugees in communities by 50 percent and will be cut for 229,000 of these due to funding constraints from September.
- In **Iraq** tiered-based approach commenced this month to target those most vulnerable.
- The off-camp food assistance program reached almost 3,000 vulnerable Syrian refugees in **Turkey** this month.
- WFP continues to recalibrate its implementation plan to ensure available resources are channelled to those most in need.

WFP's **Executive Director**, Erthrin Cousin, visited Jordan and Lebanon during the second week of August as part of a larger visit to the region. During this time, she had the opportunity of meeting with different partner organizations and Government officials to discuss the impact of WFP reductions in assistance and advocate for increased funding. Moreover, she had the chance of speaking with several Syrian families to better understand their struggle in meeting their daily needs now that WFP's assistance is being reduced. ED Cousin voiced her appreciation for host countries generosity in hosting Syrian refugees and recognized the national initiatives that aim to encourage social cohesion among local and refugee communities.

Despite facing crippling financial challenges, WFP continues to provide assistance to vulnerable Syrian refugees in the region. In August, WFP reached 1.58 million Syrians – the majority of them through cash-based transfers (CBT).



Reaching urban-based vulnerable Syrians in Turkey with the WFP/TRC electronic CBT

Following a Vulnerability and Food Security verification exercise conducted amongst off-camp Syrian households and the consequent identification of vulnerable families, almost 3,000 urban refugees in Hatay and Gaziantep have received WFP assistance since the launch of the off-camp programme in July. A total of 15 shops have been identified and contracted for the redemption of the WFP/Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) electronic CBT, which in turn injects money into the local Turkish economy. The expansion of the off-camp programme will be pursued in September in the provinces of Sanliurfa and Killis where a high number of Syrians are also hosted. With funds earmarked specifically for this activity, WFP plans to increase its target caseload each month, reaching 30,000 households by December 2015. As a feedback mechanism for off-camp beneficiaries, WFP with its implementing partner, the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC), established a helpdesk in Gaziantep – with plans for an additional helpdesk in Hatay in order to continue to obtain direct feedback from Syrian beneficiaries and respond in person to their queries on assistance. Additionally, Kizilay is also operating an Arabic language hotline.

At present, approximately 87 percent of Syrians in Turkey reside outside of camps with varying access to assistance. The Food Security Working Group, chaired by WFP, is a key coordination fora bringing together NGOs and food security stakeholders to share information on off-camp assistance and prevent duplication of activities. Most importantly, expansion of the WFP/Kizilay electronic CBT programme to reach urban-based Syrians in Turkey relies on the close working relationship cultivated between WFP and local Turkish authorities over the three years since establishment of the programme. At the field level, this has meant joint identification of the most vulnerable beneficiaries eligible for food assistance through collaboration with the Social Solidarity Assistance Foundation (SSAF) of Turkey, the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) and the Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD). With WFP and Kizilay, SSAF staff visited households to collect key data and ensure vulnerability criteria are being met. This strong level of cooperation is a cornerstone of WFP's off-camp programme, and in the long term promotes transfer of knowledge and delivery of harmonized food assistance to vulnerable Syrians in Turkey. Despite successful roll-out of the off-camp programme, WFP in Turkey faces operational challenges related to the implementation and scaling up of the off-camp programme; namely, the lengthy identification process of the most vulnerable families owing to their geographical dispersion and scarcity of available information.

OneCard Platform

WFP's **OneCard** is a financial platform – much like a debit or credit card – devised as an alternative modality of assistance for Syrian refugees in the region. The aim of the modality is to provide the user with an all-encompassing gateway to assistance by offering humanitarian agencies the opportunity to channel their funds on the same card. The beneficiary consequently, can use the OneCard as a debit or credit card at a supermarket where they can use credit from WFP to purchase food and/or at an ATM to redeem other assistance.

Started in July, a pilot of the OneCard is currently being implemented in **Lebanon** in partnership with UNHCR and will be evaluated in September. Meanwhile, World Vision has also been using the e-card platform for cash assistance in Lebanon and will continue to do so until October. Negotiations are also ongoing with UNICEF, the World Bank and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) on the feasibility of using the OneCard platform to deliver one-off cash assistance for winter clothing to children under 15 years of age.

Targeting assistance to the most vulnerable Syrian

In order to ensure resources are being channelled to those most in need, WFP's regional **targeting and verification efforts** have resulted in the reduction of 530,000 people who received assistance. This represents almost a 30 percent reduction in WFP's regional caseload. Progress continues to be made towards targeting the most vulnerable among the refugees in the region.

	Until June 2015	July 2015	August 2015
Lebanon	A reduction of 300,063 beneficiaries (146,381 in 2013 and 153,682 in 2015) beneficiaries from targeting and verification	A reduction of 6,096 beneficiaries	A reduction of 16,814 beneficiaries
Jordan	A reduction of 90,122 beneficiaries through targeting and verification The appeal process for those cut from receiving assistance through targeting is still ongoing		
Turkey	Handover 9 out of 21 camps to the government. However, the government has maintained full assistance to this group (A reduction of some 66,000 beneficiaries)	<i>Off-camp assistance began for some 2,000 beneficiaries</i>	<i>Off-camp assistance expanded to cover 2,900 beneficiaries</i>
Iraq	A reduction of 5,933 beneficiaries from verification	Food Security and Vulnerability assessment completed which informed targeting plans	A reduction of 58,264 beneficiaries based on assessment results
Egypt	A reduction of 25,963 beneficiaries from targeting and verification	A reduction of 14,998 beneficiaries from the overall caseload	A reduction of 12,594 beneficiaries based on targeting results
TOTAL (since January)	422,081	443,175	530,847

Transition to vulnerability-based targeting in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI)

Aligned with WFP's mandate to assist those most vulnerable this month only refugees residing in camps who were deemed vulnerable and extremely vulnerable to food insecurity continued to receive food assistance. This targeted approach was based on the results from the comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability tent-to-tent survey conducted in all nine refugee camps between June and July.

Context in KRI

Data from the assessment indicated that a relatively sizable proportion – nearly 30 percent – of refugees residing in Iraq's camps are food secure, the main reason being that refugees in KRI are provided residency cards which thereby allow them to receive legal work permits. With a work permit Syrian refugees in camps and communities have the ability to work in nearby industries, primarily construction and therefore use their income to supplement their food needs.

Feedback and appeals mechanisms

Given that August's distribution represented an over 50 percent¹ reduction in WFP's caseload, feedback and appeal mechanisms for refugees were set up in collaboration with UNHCR. Helpdesks in each refugee camp along with a hotline at the Erbil office ensured that refugees, particularly those which have been found to be food secure or moderately food insecure, were able to express their concerns regarding the change in their level of food assistance.

Aside from answering inquiries regarding refugee food entitlements, security concerns, distribution dates and CBT use, WFP in partnership with the UNHCR Protection team reviews excluded families for re-inclusion on a case-by-case basis. Moreover, WFP will conduct an ad-hoc assessment in September targeting refugees which were not assessed during the tent-to-tent survey.

The analysis of these families' food security status will determine their level of assistance for the rest of the year.



WFP/Nezih Ibrahim
Arbat Refugee Camp, Sulaymaniyah (KRI)

Prioritization and future plans

WFP's ongoing efforts to continuously assess the vulnerability of the refugee population is the basis against which assistance is channelled to those most in need. However, continued limited resources have resulted in reduced support to vulnerable Syrian families, even within these plans. As the funding attained thus far is insufficient to meet the needs of refugees in the region, WFP is continuously updating its **Syrian Emergency implementation plan** to ensure the extremely vulnerable are taken account of.

- As a result of the targeting exercise, over 16,000 individuals were excluded from assistance this month in **Lebanon**. In order to accelerate targeting, WFP, working with UNHCR, is finalizing an agreement with the American University of Beirut to develop a targeting model that will use data from the VASyR and the household census to fine tune levels of vulnerability and food insecurity among refugees. It is expected that the model will deliver greater evidence-based targeting and be applied before the end of the year. WFP in Lebanon will continue to distribute reduced assistance to Syrian refugees valued at USD 13.5 per person per month until the end of the year. Moreover, in line with the VASyR findings that Syrian refugee households in Lebanon have an on average 5.3 members, households will be limited to a maximum of five CBT from September onwards.² Monthly reductions in beneficiary caseloads will continue as planned based on the results of the ongoing inter-agency household survey.

¹ 50 percent also includes those refugee which no longer resided in camps

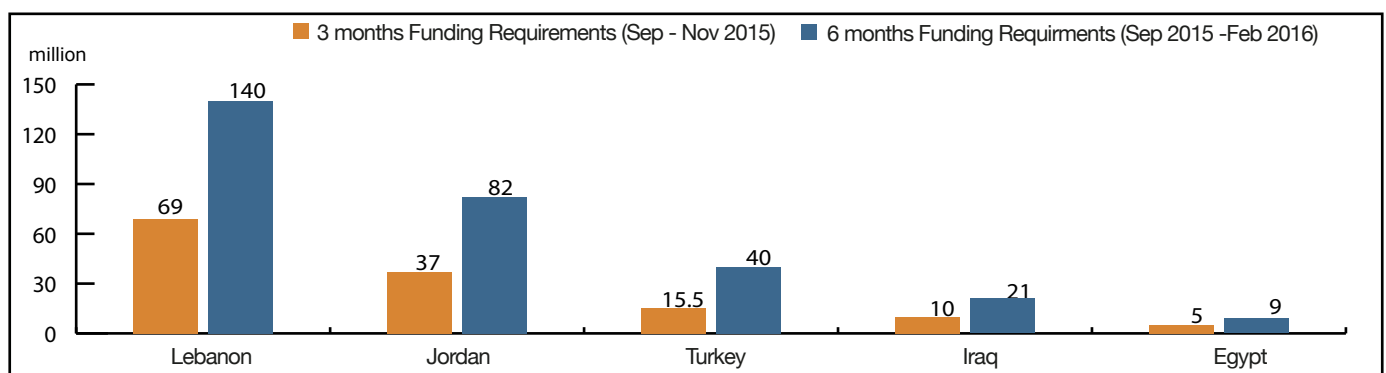
² This will translate into a major reduction in beneficiaries

- In **Jordan**, under the tiered assistance strategy, 227,787 vulnerable Syrians and 212,062 extremely vulnerable Syrians in Jordanian communities received USD 7.05 and USD 14.1, respectively as a CBT this month. While full assistance for refugees in camps was maintained at USD 28.3. Similar to this month’s assistance levels, the CBT in communities will continue at 50 percent of the planned amount for the extremely vulnerable refugees who will receive USD 14.1/person/month. However, from September, 229,000 families categorized as vulnerable will be excluded – this represents almost half of WFP’s current caseload in the country. This month **2,500 refugees left the country choosing to either return to the danger in Syria or go elsewhere** - approximately 80 percent were women and children. Contingency planning for returns to Syria is currently taking place. Refugees may also choose to relocate to a camp inside Jordan, where full assistance will be sustained at least until November. UNHCR reported **over 3,600 refugees relocated to Azraq camp** in the first half of 2015, five times as many as those who relocated in the second half of last year.
- WFP commenced a tiered approach for Syrian refugees in **Iraq** this month. Consequently, the 532 Syrians found to be extremely vulnerable received a CBT of USD 19, whilst the 44,635 vulnerable refugees received USD 10. There are also over 6,500 Syrians in KRI whom are still receiving food parcels, but will be included into the targeting exercise in October. The 53,000 targeted food insecure Syrian refugees will be supported by WFP’s tiered approach until the end of the year.
- The ongoing joint Vulnerability Assessment of the Syrian refugees in **Egypt** has been completed in Alexandria and Damietta and is still on-going in Greater Cairo. As a result of this continuing assessment reductions in the number of beneficiaries assisted are being made on a monthly basis. In August, over 12,000 Syrians have ceased to receive WFP’s assistance; with plans to reduce the overall from 55,000 to an estimated 45,000 by October.
- The number of beneficiaries assistance by WFP in camps in **Turkey**, remains at the reduced level of 30 percent – while the Government maintains the CBT value (USD 23) and supports the difference in caseload. The off-camp programme will be maintained throughout the year, targeting several thousand Syrian households each month.

Funding Requirements

To cover the funding requirements in the region for the next three months (September-November 2015), WFP urgently requires another **USD 136 million**.

To cover the funding requirements in the region for the next six months (September 2015– February 2016), WFP requires **USD 292 million**.



Implementation Plan Based on Available Resources September – December 2015

		September		October		November		December	
LEBANON	Caseload	638,573	25,500	628,573	26,000	618,573	26,500	608,573	27,000
	Voucher value	US\$ 13.5	US\$ 13.5	US\$ 13.5	US\$ 13.5	US\$ 13.5	US\$ 13.5	US\$ 13.5	US\$ 13.5
JORDAN	Caseload	211,000	96,000	201,557	115,000	194,057	130,000	189,057	140,000
	Voucher value	US\$ 14	US\$ 28	US\$ 14	US\$ 28	US\$ 14	US\$ 28	US\$ 14	US\$ 28
TURKEY	Caseload	30,000	150,000	30,000	150,000	30,000	150,000	30,000	150,000
	Voucher value	US\$ 23	US\$ 23	US\$ 23	US\$ 23	US\$ 23	US\$ 23	US\$ 23	US\$ 23
EGYPT	Caseload	47,756	2,500	42,830	2,500	42,830	2,500	42,830	2,500
	Voucher value	US\$ 17	US\$ 17	US\$ 17	US\$ 17	US\$ 17	US\$ 17	US\$ 17	US\$ 17
IRAQ	Caseload	53,000	7,000	53,000	7,000	53,000	7,000	53,000	7,000
	Voucher value	US\$ 10	US\$ 19	US\$ 10	US\$ 19	US\$ 10	US\$ 19	US\$ 10	US\$ 19



**Vulnerable
Syrian refugees**



**Extremely vulnerable
Syrian refugees**



**Vulnerable Syrian
refugees in camps**



**Palestinian refugees
from Syria**

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Donors are represented in alphabetical order.

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