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## ***The Emirati Contribution to the Emergency Food Assistance for Vulnerable conflict-affected families in Syria First Progress Report (September-December 2014)***

### **PROJECT**

***The Emirati contribution to the “Emergency Food Assistance for Vulnerable conflict-affected families across Syria”***

### **GRANT GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Country:** Syria

**Project Code:** SYR-14/H/62000/561

**Sponsored Program:** Syria-EMOP 200339

**Contribution Year:** UAE/2014

**Award Start Date:** 17 September 2014

**End Date of Award:** 16 March 2015

**Dollar Amount of Award:** US\$ 20,000,000 (Only US\$ 19,200,000 will be received as 4% will be deducted by the donor to cover monitoring and evaluation costs as well as fund management)

**Payments received so far:** US\$ 13,440,000 (First payment; 70% of total donation of US\$19,200,000)

### **Contact information:**

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### GENERAL INFORMATION

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#### **Project Objectives:**

WFP's emergency response operation aims to save lives by providing food assistance to 4.25 million vulnerable Syrians whose food and nutrition security has been adversely affected by the ongoing conflict. The Emirati grant will assist WFP to provide life-saving assistance to meet the immediate food needs of the most vulnerable crisis-affected groups.

#### **Targeted Beneficiaries:**

The food provided through the Emirati donation contributed to the monthly dry food rations foods that usually provide a minimum of 1,617<sup>1</sup> kcal per person per day and is being distributed in the different Syrian governorates. The selection of conflict-affected families to be assisted (targeted) is carried out jointly by WFP and its implementing partners - selected through a thorough due diligence process, to ensure that they operate in a neutral and unbiased way- on the basis of agreed vulnerability criteria. Targeted beneficiaries include:

- Vulnerable displaced households, particularly those who experienced multiple displacements or are living in informal settlements;
- female-headed households without a regular and stable source of income
- poor host families supporting one or more displaced persons,
- vulnerable families living in areas highly affected by the conflict

The UAE donation complemented resources from other donors allowing WFP to provide food assistance for an average 3.9 million people (91 percent of the plan) over the reporting period, with the maximum number of beneficiaries assisted in September and November when food for over 4 million people (or 95 percent of the plan) was distributed across the country.

#### **Timeframe of the Grant:**

On 17 September 2014, the United Arab Emirates, through the Ministry of International Cooperation and Development pledged a generous contribution of US\$20 million to WFP's Syria Response. Accordingly, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the two parties setting March 2015 as the project's completion date.

The first payment was utilized as soon as it arrived.

### SUMMARY OF RESULTS ACHIEVED TO DATE

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#### **WFP Syria Operation:**

<sup>1</sup> 1,920 kcals per person per day cover 80 per cent of minimum daily requirements of a five member household; without wheat flour, the food basket meets up to 1,617 kcals per person per day- 67 percent minimum daily requirements-

However, within the reporting period, and due to funding shortfalls and consequent pipeline breaks, provided kcals were as such: September: 1,623 (15% reduction), October: 1,147 (40% reduction), November: 1,507 (21% reduction) and December 1,470 (23% reduction.)



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Since the start of the emergency operation (EMOP) 200339 in October 2011, WFP has been providing food assistance to families whose food security has been critically compromised by the conflict. WFP has consistently expanded the scope of its response from an initial target of 50,000 beneficiaries to 4 million in 2013, 4.25 million in 2014. In 2015, WFP plans to further scale up to reach 4.5 million people with humanitarian assistance and livelihood strengthening activities.

Monthly assistance is provided in the form of family food rations sufficient to cover the needs of a five-member household offering a minimum of 1,617 Kcal per person per day. In areas where shortages of bread have been reported, the food basket includes fortified wheat flour (covering 70 per cent of the targeted beneficiaries, living in areas where the effect of the conflict has disrupted availability or compromised milling and baking capacities).

WFP provides additional support to beneficiaries with specific nutrition requirements; through a blanket supplementary feeding programme to prevent malnutrition and micronutrient deficiency in up to 240,000 young children; a voucher-based programme to improve the dietary diversity of up to 15,000 vulnerable pregnant and lactating women in Latakia and Homs governorates. In addition, WFP school feeding programme is currently reaching approximately 111,800 primary school children in districts with a high concentration of IDPs, high food insecurity and low education indicators in Hama, Tartous, Rural Damascus and Aleppo governorates.

The timely and generous contribution from UAE is enabling WFP to respond swiftly and in accordance with priorities already identified. Needs have been identified on the ground and coordinated programmes to respond to these needs had been developed; this contribution is facilitating the immediate implementation of such programmes.

### **Achievements:**

In 2014, food assistance reached an average of 3.7 million people per month, reaching a peak of 4.1 million people in August.

Moreover in 2014, a total of 751,103 (approximately 193,620 mt) were delivered in hard-to-reach areas of rural Homs, Rural Damascus, Aleppo, Idleb, Al-Hasakeh, Dar'a, Quneitra, Hama, Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor, through a combination of cross-line, cross-border, regular deliveries and emergency airlifts.

Contributing to these achievements was the passing of two UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR 2139 and UNSCR 2165) in February and July 2014, which aim at improving humanitarian access to conflict-affected populations within Syria, including through four border crossings on the Turkish, Jordanian and Iraqi borders. In 2014, a total of 110,912 food rations were delivered from Jordan through Al-Ramtha corridor, and southern Turkey, using Bab Al-Hawa and Bab Al-Salam corridors. This assistance was sufficient to support 554,560 people in opposition held areas of Dar'a (13 percent), Quneitra (11 percent), Idleb (42 percent) and Aleppo (34 percent).

**During the reporting period (September-December 2014),** WFP food assistance reached 13 of the 14 governorates, providing monthly assistance for an average of 3.9 million people. The highest number of beneficiaries was reached in September and November, when over 4 million people, or 95 percent of the monthly plan, received WFP assistance. The age and gender breakdown of the assisted beneficiaries is provided in the table below (Table -1-).

Amidst a general deterioration of the food security situation in the country, monitoring findings in the last quarter of 2014 revealed slight improvements in the food security outcome indicators among households receiving WFP assistance compared to the same time in 2013. The overall proportion of surveyed households with a poor food consumption score decreased to 10 percent from the 14 percent recorded at

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the end of 2013. This finding is mirrored by the increase of 3 percent in the proportion of households with acceptable food consumption, while the percentage of families showing borderline food consumption scores remained almost unvaried from last year. The results are however not representative of the situation at country level but provide an indication of a general stabilisation among WFP beneficiaries.

At the same time, a gender disaggregated analysis confirmed a higher vulnerability to food insecurity in female-headed households, which showed higher percentages of poor food consumption scores, and consequently scored lower in the acceptable food consumption category, compared to those where men are the primary bread-winners. Dietary diversity indicators followed a similar pattern.

December cycle saw a drop in the number of people assisted (just over 3.6 million), due to a number of difficulties and constraints which adversely impacted on the operations (see below for additional details).

**Table 1: Beneficiaries Reached During Reporting Period**

Month	Males				Female				Total
	Children Under 5 years	Children 5-18 years	Adults	Sub-Total	Children Under 5 years	Children 5-18 years	Adults	Sub-Total	
Sep-14	274,841	824,523	863,786	1,963,150	288,935	866,806	908,083	2,063,825	4,026,975
Oct-14	262,825	788,476	826,022	1,877,324	276,304	828,911	868,382	1,973,597	3,850,920
Nov-14	274,289	822,867	862,051	1,959,206	288,355	865,065	906,259	2,059,679	4,018,885
Dec-14	247,104	741,313	776,613	1,765,030	259,776	779,329	816,440	1,855,545	3,620,575

### Commodities bought with the first instalment:

The first instalment of US\$13,440,000 was used to procure bulgur, pasta, rice, sugar, vegetable oil and dried pulses – Table 2- that were used in the general distributions to vulnerable Syrians as stated earlier.

**Table 2: Commodities Acquired by the First Instalment of the UAE Donation**

Commodity	Total procured tonnage MT	Distributed in First Month		Distributed in Second Month		Distributed in Third Month		Distributed after - Fourth 2014		Remarks
		MT	Beneficiaries covered	MT	Beneficiaries covered	MT	Beneficiaries covered	MT	Beneficiaries covered	
Bulgur	3,508	3,186	2,124,000	322	214,667	-	-	-	-	
Pasta	3,630	3,449	2,299,333	73	48,667	-	-	108	72,000	108 MT of Pasta have been purchased with remaining balances and will be distributed in Feb. 2015 and would cover 72,000 beneficiaries.
Rice	6,728	-	-	4,978	1,659,167	1,751	583,500	-	-	
Sugar	1,282	873	873,087	409	409,267	-	-	-	-	
Total MT / Total beneficiaries covered excluding overlap *	15,148	7,508	2,299,333	5,782	1,659,167	1,751	583,500	108	72,000	

## PARTNERSHIPS

- WFP is providing food assistance to vulnerable Syrians through an extended network of cooperating partners (CPs), including the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, 26 local NGOs and one international NGO –table 3-. These CPs have been selected through a thorough due diligence process that assessed operational capacities, logistics management, geographical presence, **impartiality and neutrality**.

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**Table 3: Cooperating Partners; Charities and NGOs**

\* These partners are not part of the MoU, but are part of the total partnership base with which WFP is collaborating in Syria

PARTNERS FOR DELIVERIES FROM INSIDE SYRIA			
No	Governorate	CP	Comments
1	Aleppo	Ahl Al-Kheer Charity	
2	Aleppo	Al-Ta'alouf Charity	
3	Aleppo	Al-Ihsan Charity	
4	Aleppo	For Aleppo Association (Men Aji Halab)	
5	All governorates	Syrian Arab Red Crescent	
6	Damascus	Hefz El-Ne'ma Charity	
7	Damascus	Lamset Shefa Charity	
8	Damascus	The Orphans Sponsorship project	
9	Dara'a	Al-Birr and Social Services Association in Dara'a	
10	Deir Ezzor	Islamic Charity in Al-Miadeen	
11	Deir Ezzor	Al-Ahdath protection Association*	
12	Hama	Social Care Society in Hama (Hefz Al-Ne'ma)	
13	Hama	Aga Khan Foundation	
14	Hassaka	Al-Birr and Social Services in Qamishli	
15	Hassaka	Armenian Catholic Church	
16	Homs	Al-Birr and Social Services Association in Homs	
17	Homs	Islamic Orphanage Charity	
18	Idlib	Al-Birr and Social Services Association in Idlib	
19	Lattakia	Al-Ikha'a Syrian Family /Osret Al Ika'a Al Soria	
20	Qunitera	Al-Mabarar Charity for Golan People	
21	Raqqa	Al-Birr and Social Services in Raqqa*	
22	Raqqa	Al-Raqqa Voluntary Youth Association*	
23	Rural Damascus	Al-Birr and Al-Ihsan in Al-Zabadani	
24	Rural Damascus	Al-Kiswa Charity	
25	Rural Damascus	Ahl Al-Sham Initiative /Mobadaret Ahl Al Sham	
26	Rural Damascus	Ina'ash Al-Faqeer Charity	
27	Swaida	Social Case Society in Swaida	
28	Tartous	Al-Botul Charity	

**WFP continues to put in place efforts to expand and improve the quality of WFP's local partnerships.**

- Throughout 2014, efforts were tailored to further identify capacity gaps and strengthen the technical skills of local implementing partners, which remained the backbone of the emergency response.



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Based on recommendations from an annual evaluation of cooperating partners in all Syrian governorates, capacity building initiatives launched in 2013 continued and were expanded in 2014 with trainings conducted the fields of programme monitoring, warehouse management, resource mobilization, quality control of food commodities, fumigation, safe distribution practices, and reporting. Additionally, a country-wide assessment of partner warehouses was conducted by WFP logistics unit to identify gaps, improve storage structures and handling of food commodities across the country. Launched in 2013, the exercise was completed in early 2014 with 79 partner warehouses assessed including in highly insecure locations. Based on these results, action was taken to improve or augment storage infrastructures that did not conform to WFP standards. Wiikhalls and other storage infrastructure was erected for partners in Aleppo, Homs, Dar'a, As-Sweida and Tartous while ICT equipment was provided. During the second half of 2014, WFP has further scaled-up its partnership base to support increased food deliveries through the UNSCR 2165 borders. Currently, WFP has agreements with six NGOs (five international and one local NGO) and efforts are ongoing to further expand partnerships for cross border operations in the coming next months.

### **OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES**

#### **Insecurity and access restrictions:**

- Severe access constraints, particularly in the northern and north-eastern part of the country continues to restrict deliveries to many areas. For most of the reporting period, WFP was unable to assist the 600,000 targeted civilians in Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor (accounting for approximately 14 per cent of distributions) as negotiations with radical armed groups controlling access did not allow for the safe passage of trucks into those territories. Limited food supplies were able to reach Ar-Raqqa in November following successful negotiations through partners on the ground and a temporary ease of the access restrictions. However all access has been interrupted again since then.
- In other areas of the country, worsening security conditions also restricted access to most rural areas of Dar'a, Quneitra, Hama and Aleppo.
- Finally, several locations surrounding Damascus city remain cut off from all humanitarian assistance.

#### **Logistics Bottlenecks:**

- A countrywide fuel shortage, resulting from import complications faced by the government, affected WFP supply chain from the ports to WFP storage facilities and to partner warehouses since September. The ongoing conflict in Syria has resulted in the destruction or inaccessibility of most local oil refineries, compelling the government to import fuel from outside the country. However, limited foreign exchange reserves, coupled with delays in receiving crude oil shipments, have hindered the government's ability to import sufficient fuel to meet local requirement. Fuel shortages coupled with high prices hindered transporters ability to make sufficient trucks available to transport food commodities to WFP storage facilities, particularly from Lattakia and Tartous ports, causing delays in packaging and dispatch operations.

#### **Pipeline and Funding:**

- During the reporting period, WFP emergency response faced a critical funding shortfall. Limited and late confirmation of funds compounded by long lead time required to procure the commodities forced cuts to the food basket distributed over the reporting period. As a result, rations were reduced to 85 percent in September, 60 percent in October, 79 percent in November and 77 percent in December.

### **ISSUES TO HIGHLIGHT**

#### **Access Gains**



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- As access constraints significantly impacted WFP's ability to reach populations most in need, advocacy efforts were intensified to deliver vital assistance in besieged areas of the country and repeated appeals have been put forth to access several towns.
- Between September and December 2014, WFP delivered food assistance to almost 1.3 million people trapped in besieged or hard-to-reach areas of Aleppo, Ar-Raqqa Homs, Idleb, Rural Damascus, Al-Hasakeh, Dar'a and Quneitra through a combination of cross-line, cross-border and regular deliveries.
- This includes food for over 318,810 civilians delivered in opposition held areas of Idleb, Aleppo, Dar'a and Quneitra governorates through cross border missions from Jordan and Turkey. The remaining 918,000 people assisted in hard-to-reach areas of the country were reached through cross-line or regular deliveries from within Syria.

### **Logistics:**

- WFP has further scaled up logistics capacity, opening a new warehouse and a new packaging facility in Tartous. This allowed the closure of the previous and smaller hub in Safita. The newly opened hub is able to package up to 200,000 family food rations per month to serve the requirements of the northern and central governorates in Syria.

### **Strengthened Humanitarian Coordination:**

- Following efforts within the Whole of Syria Food Security Sector, the second half of 2014 saw significant progress towards a coordinated approach to food security assistance by all relevant actors. This included:
  - o Agreement on the estimated number of people in need of food assistance. The establishment of a monthly comprehensive picture of food assistance delivered by all actors (acting from within Syria and across its borders).
  - o **The development of a 3-month joint operation plan** to identify gaps and avoid overlaps in assistance in four governorates, laying the groundwork for sector-wide 2015 strategic planning as part of the overall Strategic Response Plan for Syria.

## **Annex**

### ***Actions taken to give visibility to the grant and the government of UAE***