Introduction
Since October 2011, WFP has provided emergency food assistance to vulnerable Syrians affected by the crisis. The prolonged nature of the crisis in Syria has necessitated a large-scale humanitarian response. With 6.3 million internally displaced people and 13.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, the Syrian operation is now one of the largest WFP emergency operations worldwide.

Every month, WFP targets four million beneficiaries in all 14 Syrian governorates mainly through in-kind food assistance. In addition to general food assistance, WFP implements activities focusing on nutrition, access to primary education and livelihoods support. The different activities are implemented jointly with 54 in-country and cross-border cooperating partners, and in close coordination with relevant government entities and UN agencies.

Supply Chain Set-Up
The vast majority of WFP’s humanitarian food assistance in Syria is provided in-kind, and therefore a large complex logistics set-up has been established. Every month, WFP reaches over four million people in need of food assistance through various delivery modalities from within Syria as well as through cross border from Jordan and Turkey and air deliveries.

Cross-border Operation
WFP delivers food assistance to areas not accessible from inside Syria through Turkey and Jordan under United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2165/2191/2258/2332.

Pre-packed food rations are procured directly from suppliers; they are then transported from the suppliers’ warehouses in Turkey and Jordan to cooperating partners’ warehouses in Aleppo, Idleb, Hama, Dar’a and Quneitra governorates through three border crossing points: Bab Al-Salama and Bab Al-Hawa from Turkey and Ar-Ramtha from Jordan. In addition to general food assistance, nutrition activities are also carried out via the cross-border operation.

In 2016, cross-border deliveries accounted for 20 percent of total quantities of food assistance delivered. This is a substantial increase from 15 percent in 2015.

Transport
WFP logistics is responsible for transporting more than 45,000 mt of food commodities into Syria every month. Food commodities arrive at three ports: Lattakia and Tartous ports in Syria, and Beirut port in Lebanon with shipments coming from Mersin in Turkey. Some commodities, such as nutrition supplies, fortified date bars, milk, and sugar arrive directly in the ports of Tartous and Lattakia.
WFP uses over 4,200 trucks every month to transport food commodities from the three ports into five WFP warehouses, which also serve as packaging facilities, in Tartous, Lattakia, Homs and Rural Damascus governorates (two warehouses in Rural Damascus). In March 2017, WFP leased a new warehouse in Aleppo which will also incorporate a packaging facility. Food rations are prepared and transported to partners’ warehouses and final distribution points.

An additional two warehouses are located in Qamishly in Al-Hasakeh governorate. Previously, pre-packed food rations and other food supplies were received directly from Turkey, but land access has been disrupted since the end of 2015 due to the volatile security situation surrounding the governorate. Therefore, the governorate is currently assisted via humanitarian airlifts and WFP is exploring the option of resuming land access through the Aleppo-Menbij route.

**Procurement**

In 2016, 97.8 percent of the food commodities were procured internationally or regionally and 2.2 percent locally. To support a scale-up in local procurement, WFP conducted a countrywide capacity assessment and expanded the number of shortlisted local suppliers, resulting in an increase in local purchases particularly in the fourth quarter of the year. By the end of 2016, the share of local procurement had doubled compared to 2015. Initially limited to salt and date bars, local procurement was extended to bulgur, rice, pulses, sugar and ready-to-eat food parcels, with plans to gradually scale up to 10 percent of overall purchases in 2017.

**Logistics Contracting**

WFP Syria Country Director has a delegation of authority for contracting all logistics activities related to the Syria operation inside Syria and within its corridors: Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Therefore, the logistics contracting in the Country Office is responsible for contracts in these countries. The contracted services include Syria-customs clearance and port handling, port operations, transportation, warehouse rentals, warehouse management and packaging, warehouse superintendence services, fumigation and pest control services, customs clearance and handling of cargo at the airports and land borders.

**Port Operations**

In order to meet the demands and ensure continuity and efficiency of the operations, WFP uses three ports to import approximately 35,000 mt of food items inside Syria on a monthly basis: Tartous, Lattakia and Beirut. Cross-border operations, airdrops and local purchases account for the remaining 10,000 mt handled every month. The food items are imported through the three ports in two modalities: approximately 50 percent are imported as break bulk cargo and the rest as containerized cargo. The split between the ports is based on the geographical locations of areas that will be assisted and the needs at WFP warehouses; approximately 41 percent is imported through Tartous port, 28 percent through Lattakia port and 31 percent through Beirut port.

**Warehouses and Packaging Facilities**

To ensure an effective response to the large-scale requirements of the Syrian operation, WFP uses eight warehouses strategically located in six Syrian governorates: Lattakia, Tartous, Homs, Al-Hasakeh, Rural Damascus and Aleppo, with an aggregate storage capacity of approximately 165,000 mt. Of these eight warehouses, five currently incorporate packaging facilities managed by contracted service providers. The warehouse in Aleppo will be equipped to have packaging capacity by June 2017. Food commodities are then packed prior to dispatch to partners’ warehouses. The Syrian operation is the only WFP operation where WFP directly outsources the packaging rather than purchasing pre-packed rations. Approximately, 75-80 percent of food rations dispatched every month are packed at the packaging facilities inside Syria. The remaining 20-25 percent are food rations that are pre-packed in Turkey and Jordan for the cross-border operation. The in-country packaging facilities have created job opportunities for more than 1,800 people, including 657 females.
Air Deliveries

When land access to hard-to-reach and besieged areas has been hindered, WFP may choose to carry out air deliveries as a last resort, when operationally and logistically feasible, in order to reach people in urgent need with life-saving food assistance.

Airdrop Operation in Deir Ezzor City

In April 2016, WFP launched an emergency high altitude airdrop operation to reach people in need in the besieged parts of Deir Ezzor city in eastern Syria, which has been inaccessible via land since March 2014 due to the volatile security situation in the governorate. In collaboration with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), WFP is airdropping food assistance as well as various supplies on behalf of other humanitarian actors providing a lifeline for all 93,500 people in need in the besieged parts of Deir Ezzor city. As of late April 2017, over 230 airdrops have been successfully completed with remarkable accuracy, dropping over 4,400 mt of humanitarian supplies from 5,000 metres. The already complex operation was further complicated by an ISIL attack in mid-January 2017, which split the city in two.

Airlifts to Al-Hasakeh Governorate

Due to the protracted inability to deliver humanitarian assistance to Al-Hasakeh governorate via land, WFP, as lead agency of the Logistics Cluster, initiated an airlift operation to Qamishly from Damascus airport in July 2016 in order to deliver critical relief supplies and humanitarian services. The airlifts have also played a crucial role in the response to population displacement in Menbij in Aleppo and Ar-Raqqa, as relief items were airlifted to Qamishly and then dispatched by road to areas in northern Ar-Raqqa and Aleppo governorates. Through the WFP-lead Logistics Cluster, the airlifts are made available to humanitarian agencies including NGOs and UN agencies, to enable the delivery of comprehensive inter-sectoral assistance, including food and nutrition supplies, hygiene kits, generators, tents, education kits, medical supplies on behalf of the whole humanitarian community. By late April, over 430 airlifts have been conducted delivering 15,000 mt of humanitarian cargo to Qamishly, providing support to thousands of families facing dire humanitarian conditions.

Logistics Execution Support System (LESS)

As part of its continuous efforts to increase the efficiency of its operations, in 2015 WFP rolled out a corporate system called Logistics Execution Support System (LESS), implemented in Syria since April 2016. The LESS online system allows real-time tracking of WFP food commodities as they move along the supply chain, and stock visibility extending from the point of receipt up to the final delivery for distribution. Being one of WFP’s largest operations, delivering over 800,000 food rations a month, the Syria operation required the development of a LESS module that would enable WFP to manage both rations packed inside Syria as well as pre-packed rations procured directly from suppliers and moved along the cross border corridors. The new parcel kitting module now ensures full traceability of individual food items in each ration delivered.