



WFP Syria: Cross-border Operations from Jordan

Cross-border deliveries from Jordan

UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution 2165 was unanimously adopted in July 2014, enabling UN agencies to use the border crossings of Bab al-Salam and Bab al-Hawa (Turkey), Al-Yarubiyah (Iraq) and Ar-Ramtha (Jordan) to deliver humanitarian assistance to people in need.

Following the adoption of the resolution, in August 2014, WFP started delivering life-saving emergency food assistance to people in opposition-controlled areas in Dar'a and Quneitra governorates through the Ar-Ramtha border crossing between Jordan and Syria. Subsequent UNSC resolutions extended the authorization for WFP and other UN agencies to conduct cross-border deliveries of humanitarian assistance until 10 January 2018.

Addressing food insecurity

As per the 2017 HNO, there are approximately 300,000 food insecure people in Dar'a and Quneitra governorates. WFP has been implementing its cross-border operation from Jordan to provide general food assistance for people in opposition-held areas in Dar'a and Quneitra governorates since 2014. The inability to reach these areas from inside Syria necessitates a constant humanitarian response, and WFP currently targets 140,000 people on a monthly basis. Assisted people receive a food ration consisting of fortified wheat flour, bulgur, rice, chickpeas, red split lentils, vegetable oil, sugar, iodized salt and white beans, providing each beneficiary with approximately 1,700 kcal per day. Each ration is for a family of five. Currently, WFP is working with two cross-border partners who implement activities in the targeted areas. The

beneficiaries are able to collect their food rations from food distribution points (FDPs) that are strategically located across opposition-held areas in Dar'a and Quneitra governorates.

Prepositioning emergency assistance

Insecurity and subsequent access constraints present a challenge for cross-border operations from Jordan, due to continuous fighting between government forces, ISIL affiliated groups and non-state armed groups. As a result, shipments through Ar-Ramtha border are sometimes delayed, while partners face difficulties in distributing food assistance to the people in need due to the volatile security situation on the ground. Despite these challenges, WFP, through its cooperating partners, has been very successful to respond to the needs of the affected population by prepositioning food assistance in partner warehouses as a contingency stock in anticipation of potential access disruptions. The prepositioning has allowed WFP to continue to provide food assistance once sudden displacements and access restrictions occur.

Immediate response to displacement

In response to sudden population displacements, WFP and its partners distribute ready-to-eat (RTE) rations for newly displaced people who do not have access to cooking facilities during the initial days of their displacement. The RTEs include fava beans, chickpeas paste, canned chicken, canned vegetables, olive oil, canned tuna, juice and dry thyme, providing people with 2,100 kcal per day when complemented with bread. Once the people have access to cooking facilities again, WFP will include them in the general food assistance programme, depending on their needs and vulnerabilities.



Complementary programmes for specific vulnerable groups

To further diversify its programme activities, and to provide a response for specific vulnerable groups, WFP has started implementing complimentary programmes since early 2017 through its cross-border operation from Jordan. Currently, WFP is implementing two small-scale livelihood activities in Dar'a governorate, providing kitchen garden kits and trainings to increase food production at the household level, as well as supporting the rehabilitation of five bakeries for increased bread production and additional employment opportunities for the local population.

Furthermore, WFP is planning to introduce programmes for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition in young children and pregnant and nursing women by providing specialized nutritious foods. WFP is currently also exploring the possibility to implement the school feeding programme in areas targeted through cross-border deliveries from Jordan by providing locally procured fortified date bars to students.

Scale up of the operation

At the beginning of the operation, WFP's cross-border deliveries were limited, reaching an average of 27,500 people every month in 2014. Over time, WFP has been able to gradually scale up its response, reaching almost 160,000 people every month throughout 2016, a six fold increase compared to 2014. WFP has also expanded the geographical coverage of its cross-border operations from Jordan. Starting with three food distribution points (FDPs) in 2014, by the end of 2016, beneficiaries were able to collect their food from

107 FDPs across Dar'a and Quneitra governorates. So far in 2017, WFP has provided assistance at 41 FDPs, and this number will further increase over the course of the year. When looking at unique beneficiaries, WFP has supported some 900,000 people since the operation was launched in early 2014. WFP has used 1,804 trucks to deliver the assistance from Jordan into Syria, transporting more than 41,700 mt of food assistance to date.

Increase in food prices

Continued fighting in the area has an adverse effect on prices and availability of food on the local market and lead to a deterioration of the food security of households and their ability to cope with shocks. Prices for a standard food basket have increased in both governorates in the last 12 months, but were particularly high in Quneitra (increase of 22 percent). Equally, the price for rice in Quneitra has seen a sharp spike of 25 percent since the beginning of the year. At the same time, food production at the household level in both governorates is very limited, making them more vulnerable to sudden shocks of prices in the market or loss of income.

Delivery of WFP food rations from Jordan to Syria through the cross-border operation

WFP food rations destined for areas covered through the cross-border operation from Jordan begin their journey at the supplier warehouse in Amman. There the food rations are pre-packed and uploaded on Jordanian trucks for transportation to the Ar-Ramtha border crossing point. Prior to crossing the border into Syria, all humanitarian cargo, including WFP food rations, is transferred from Jordanian trucks onto Syrian trucks, under the supervision of the UN Monitoring Mechanism (UNMM) who oversees the loading and confirms the humanitarian nature of the consignments. The International Organisation of Migration (IOM) is meanwhile providing transshipment services of cargo to Syrian trucks and transport inside Syria, while the WFP-led Logistics Cluster ensures information sharing and coordination support of the cross-border operations. The Syrian and Jordanian governments are informed ahead of planned operations and receive confirmation on the day of crossing.

On the planned crossing day, the trucks leave Ar-Ramtha border crossing in a convoy towards Syria. Once the convoy has entered Syrian territory, the trucks split and drive to their respective destinations. The trucks carrying WFP food assistance continue to partners' warehouses in Dar'a and Quneitra governorates where cargo is offloaded and prepared for final distribution at FDPs. In the meantime, the trucks return back to Ar-Ramtha border crossing.