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SPR Reading Guidance



**Berm Emergency Preparedness
Standard Project Report 2017**

World Food Programme in Jordan, Hashemite Kingdom of (JO)

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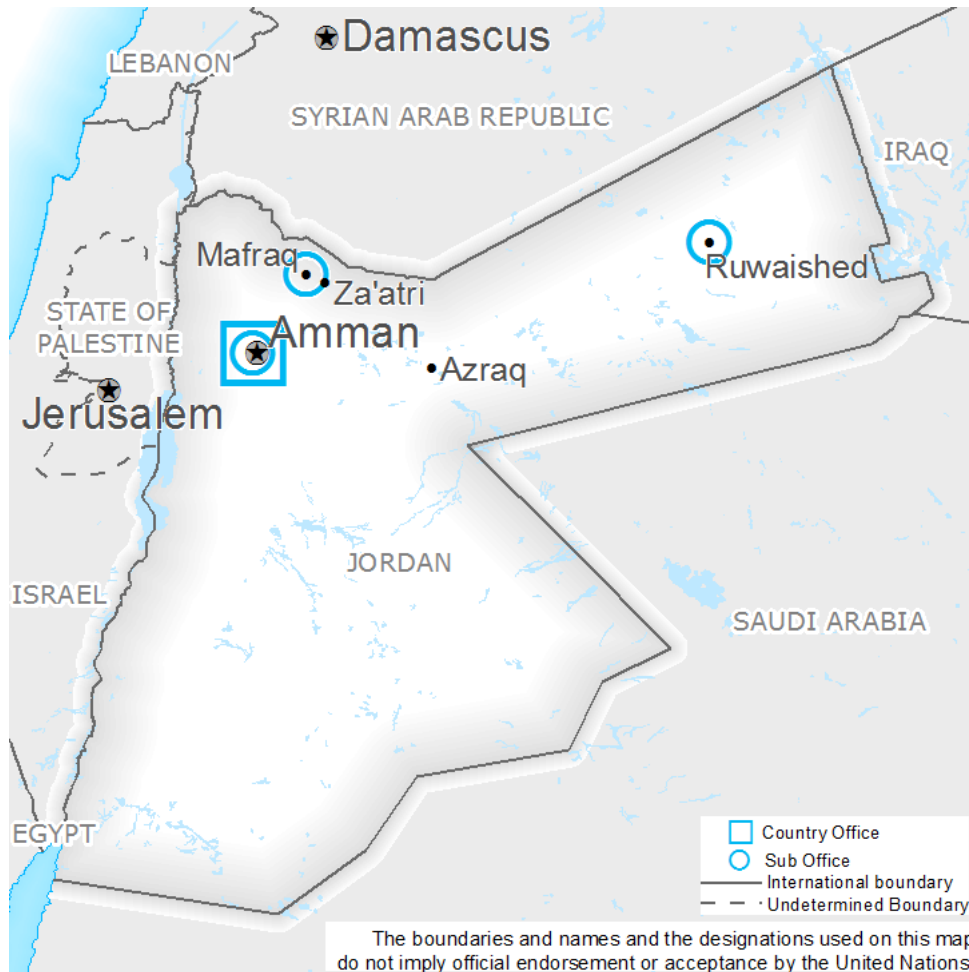
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Country Context and WFP Objectives



Achievements at Country Level

Under its Regional PRRO 200987, WFP provided General Food Assistance (GFA) via e-voucher to 500,000 Syrian refugees vulnerable to food insecurity in camps and communities. WFP also planned to reach 50,000 Syrians stranded at the Berm with in-kind food assistance, when access is permitted. Through its School Meals Programme, WFP reached 360,000 Jordanian school children through the provision of date bars and healthy meals. In addition, WFP supported 30,000 Syrian school children attending formal education in Azraq and Za'atri refugee camps with the provision of healthy meals. WFP also continued to enhance the self-reliance of 47,000 Jordanians and Syrians vulnerable to food insecurity through its asset-creation and livelihood support and individual-capacity strengthening activities.

The Berm, located at the north-eastern border area of Jordan and Syria, is a rocky desert between two man-made barriers of sand, with no vegetation, no water and one of the harshest climates on earth.

In a context of a continuously deteriorating and complex humanitarian situation at the Berm, WFP, through the special preparedness activity, was able to analyse its current emergency context, design the contingency plan for the anticipated scale-up operation and strengthen linkages and coordination mechanisms with the Jordanian Government, United Nations agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations.

To ensure timely and efficient decision-making process, an emergency task force composed of personnel from all relevant units, was established to define operational priorities should an emergency take place.

The increased field presence of WFP team for a period of three months enabled onsite coordination, fostered the engagement with humanitarian actors and consolidated partnerships with the Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF) and other coordination bodies. WFP also assessed Ruwayshed sub-office which was upgraded to provide additional space should there be a need for an immediate scale-up of relief response.

Country Context and Response of the Government

With the Syrian conflict nearing its seventh year, millions have fled Syria seeking refuge in neighbouring countries, in what many now consider to be the worst humanitarian crisis of our time.

Over two million of those registered with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) across the region are women and children. The magnitude of the crisis was reflected by the unprecedented donor response at the 2016 Supporting Syria and the Region Conference in London, and the subsequent conference in Brussels in 2017.

As of November 5 2017, there are 654,877 registered Syrian refugees in Jordan. For years, Jordan has struggled with the additional strain this increase in population has caused to its already stretched national public services such as education, health, water supply, and waste disposal. In mid-2013, Jordan began to enact more severe border policies, and, as a result, traffic across the border slowed dramatically. In addition to the Syrians who have taken refuge inside Jordan, additional Syrians seeking resettlement are stranded at the north-eastern border area of Jordan and Syria, known as the Berm. The number of Syrians stranded at the Berm seeking access to international protection is estimated at 55,000. Syrians at the border wait for many months to access Jordan, in harsh conditions and with limited humanitarian assistance.

In early March 2016, WFP began leading the implementation of food assistance at the Berm in close collaboration with the Jordanian Government and other United Nations agencies. WFP was granted access to the Berm and able to assess needs and deliver food assistance to the stranded population. At the time, the Berm served as a transit centre until Syrians were granted access to Azraq refugee camp in Zarqa governorate.

However, in June 2016, a terrorist attack at the border led to a complete halt of Syrians entering Jordan and completely cut off humanitarian access to the Berm. The Berm was declared a closed military zone and since then some residents have been dependent on sporadically approved cross-border aid distributions from Jordan, managed by WFP. Further efforts and negotiations with the Government of Jordan resulted in an agreement to provide a one-off distribution to affected population at Rukban and Hadalat. In August, for the first time in WFP history, two 70 meter cranes were used to distribute lifesaving assistance to over 78,000 people at the Berm. Another distribution took place between November 2016 – January 2017 through a third-party contractor.

Under the Regional PRRO, WFP planned to provide in-kind food assistance to those stranded at the Berm at the Jordanian-Syrian border. Due to access and security concerns, WFP was only able to carry out one food distribution which took place between May and June 2017 but reached only 35,000 of the camp's estimated population of 55,000. In August, the situation in South-Western Syria started evolving rapidly. Pro-government militias advanced west along the border and led the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) to believe that the population stranded at the Berm would start to be sandwiched until the Syrian Government forces retake control of the whole area. Airstrikes near Hadalat were also reported during the same month.

WFP Objectives and Strategic Coordination

While many scenarios were possible, the response plan anticipated that when the Government of Syria forces approaches Hadalat and Rukban sites, people would move or be moved inside Jordan into a 'new Berm' for an unclear period of time that ranges between a few days to a few months, before onwards movements to either Azraq camp or back to Syria.

For these reasons, a major scale-up of preparedness measures was needed immediately to ensure WFP has the ability to operate swiftly should the situation warrant the launching of a proper emergency response operation. The special preparedness activity had four main objectives:

1. Review the current emergency context, design the contingency plan and strengthen linkages and coordination mechanisms with Government, United Nation agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations;
2. To conduct assessments and identify the most appropriate food assistance intervention in coordination with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other agencies.

3. To organize SSAFE training provided by WFP in Amman to 25 staff representing the first and second waves of deployment, including provision of security and communication equipment to staff members.
4. To pre-position logistics and IT equipment in the sub-office in an event of staff augmentation to fit the operational requirements.

As part of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), WFP and other United Nation agencies continued to participate in the Berm strategic coordination meetings led by the Jordanian Government. Through this, WFP has been engaged in the holistic contingency planning to respond to the evolution of the situation at the Berm.

Country Resources and Results

Resources for Results

In August 2017, WFP secured funding for the IR-PREP from WFP's internal Immediate Response Account (IRA), a multilateral WFP account for disaster preparedness. The secured amount was allocated for implementing identified activities under the emergency preparedness.



Annual Country Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	100,952	95,525	196,477
Children (5-18 years)	192,135	181,280	373,415
Adults (18 years plus)	238,811	276,803	515,614
Total number of beneficiaries in 2017	531,898	553,608	1,085,506



Annual Food Distribution in Country (mt)

Project Type	Cereals	Oil	Pulses	Mix	Other	Total
Regional PRRO	8,328	-	12	1,330	2,056	11,726
Total Food Distributed in 2017	8,328	-	12	1,330	2,056	11,726



Cash Based Transfer and Commodity Voucher Distribution (USD)

Project Type	Cash	Value Voucher	Commodity Voucher
Regional PRRO	4,938,044	145,008,892	-
Total Distributed in 2017	4,938,044	145,008,892	-

Supply Chain

WFP developed an operational plan taking into account potential scenarios. Due to the rapidly changing situation at the Berm, and as per the discussions with the Jordanian Government, it was noted that a crane operation was the only distribution modality likely to be approved by the Jordanian Government. As such, and in order to be prepared to conduct a potential distribution, WFP established crane quotations. To ensure effectiveness of the response, WFP's warehouse in Karama was prepared and retained in order to receive food and non-food items for repackaging in case of a crane operation.

In order to meet the requirement of the emergency preparedness response plan, vendors for equipment and services were engaged and tenders were floated, analysed and submitted for approval. Equally Food Supply Agreements for dry rations and welcome meals were established.

To ensure efficiency of the supply chain and to distribute food and non-food items, various coordination meetings with different stakeholders and partners including the Jordanian Government, United Nations agencies and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) took place during the duration of the emergency preparedness activity.



Annual Food Purchases for the Country (mt)

Commodity	Local	Regional/International	Total
Bread	9,223	-	9,223
Bulgur Wheat	120	-	120
Canned Fish	8	-	8
Canned Pulses	39	-	39
Chickpeas	140	-	140
Crackers	4	-	4
Halawa	5	-	5
High Energy Biscuits	1,792	-	1,792
Iodised Salt	18	-	18
Lentils	120	-	120
Mineral Water	24	-	24
Rice	300	-	300
Sugar	30	-	30
Vegetable Oil	72	168	240
Wheat Flour	240	-	240
Total	12,135	168	12,303
Percentage	98.6%	1.4%	

Project Results

Activities and Operational Partnerships

WFP mobilized one experienced staff to develop WFP's contingency and emergency preparedness plan. As part of this, different scenarios taking into account the evolution of the political situation were drafted to respond to the potential scale-up of the Berm operation. An emergency needs assessment methodology was drafted taking into account protection elements.

Different operational plans for a potential distribution were prepared in coordination with other United Nations agencies including United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and International Organization for Migration (IOM). The plan outlined the details of a potential distribution by crane from the Jordanian side of the border which integrated the distribution of 472 mt of non-food items and 935 mt of food rations. Community leaders were trained to carry out the distribution at the Syrian side of the Berm once the food is delivered.

WFP also established an emergency task force with critical WFP staff from all units to ensure timely and efficient decision-making. The task force also helped define operational priorities, should the emergency take place. Different food rations according to the different scenarios were identified. The final food ration included fava beans, chickpeas paste, canned chicken, canned peas, olive oil, canned tuna, juice and dry thyme.

To accommodate the response team and enhance the operation response, WFP identified needed food items for welcome meals and family food rations, logistical support and IT equipment. To get a better picture of the situation, a survey was conducted at the United Nations health clinic operated by UNICEF and UNHCR involving 539 visitors regarding access to food and food security. Staff for immediate deployment in case of any potential distribution were identified. In order to strengthen the capacity of emergency responders, WFP organized a Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments (SSAFE) training. A total of 25 staff members were trained.

To explore potential funding, WFP prepared cost estimates for each scenario, drafted a funding proposal and contacted donors for pre-agreements for the emergency response.

Results

In accomplishing the first objective of the IR-PREP, WFP, as the lead agency for carrying out humanitarian distributions and the Logistics Cluster at the Berm, participated in the development of an interagency contingency plan (IACP) in order to be fully prepared in case of any distribution of food and non-food items to stranded populations.

The IACP outlined the details of a potential distribution of life-saving food and non-food items by crane from the Jordanian side of the border – the one modality which was most likely to be approved by the Government of Jordan – to an estimated 11,000 households (55,000 beneficiaries). The plan was developed in collaboration with United Nations agencies contributing to such a distribution, including United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) providing hygiene kits, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) contributing with jerry cans and solar lamps, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for dignity kits, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) providing bread stoves. The final operational plan - disseminated to the United Nations Country Team for the Berm and the assessment relevant to the second IR PREP objective to verify the most appropriate assistance - integrated the distribution of 472 mt of non-food items and 935 mt of food rations.

Meeting objectives three and four – to prepare and equip staff for safe distributions and the sub-office to accommodate a major scale-up in staffing – involved 12 staff to be deployed in the first-wave response who were trained on safe distributions, including security, handling of communication equipment, monitoring and communication with affected populations in complex settings. Pending an escalating situation and the required approval from the Jordanian Armed Forces to respond, additional staff members remained on stand-by to receive the SSAFE training and be deployed.

Despite the lack of access to the stranded population, WFP was able to increase its presence at the United Nations health clinic operated by UNICEF and UNHCR on the Jordanian side and carried out two cycles of interviews with 539 visitors during the period. Findings (see Performance Monitoring) were shared with partners during interagency and donor meetings and informed the drafting of the operational plan. The WFP sub-office in Ruwayshid was equipped to be able to accommodate an increased number of deployed staff in case of an emergency response, including logistics and ICT equipment.

The smaller of the two settlements, Hadalat, was overtaken by the Syrian regime forces in September 2017 and an estimated 3,000 individuals fled to Rukban. At the end of this project, however, no further advancements had been made and the relative status quo in Rukban remained.

Performance Monitoring

The three-month IR PREP included four output-focused objectives. Of the utilised funds, roughly half was spent on staff-related costs while the other half was spent on preparing for an anticipated distribution, including ICT equipment and logistics, mainly cost of vehicles and transportation.

In addition to output monitoring, WFP's increased presence at the Berm, strengthened partnerships with the Government and other United Nation agencies, and improved capacity to accommodate staff, offered an opportunity to conduct a household-level survey with visitors to the United Nations health clinic run by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on the Jordanian side of the border.

About 539 surveys were conducted in two phases from early September to mid-October. The first focused on food security-related issues such as access to food, water, aid distributions and work. Based on findings and the emerging context with people fleeing Hadalat, the second cycle focused on the situation of new arrivals. The majority (80 percent) of interviewees were women, which could indicate better accessibility to the health clinic for women than for men, a higher demand for such services by women, or both. WFP also took part in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with community health workers trained by UNICEF who live and work in the settlement.

Findings from the two interview cycles and FGDs suggested that food remains the main issue among the stranded population, despite signs of slightly decreasing market prices. Low accessibility to clean drinking water is likely the source of the high diarrhea rates reported. Both the resident population and newcomers are heavily reliant on coping mechanisms to meet their basic food needs. The number of members per household increased compared to a previous WFP survey held in February 2017 from 5.9 to 6.7, which is likely the result of households headed by women moving together to share resources, as well as households accommodating new arrivals. Households headed by women are less often involved in livelihood activities and many of them expressed security concerns affecting their accessibility to aid distributions.

Despite limitations, including the non-random sampling and the open environment, interviews were conducted and the survey is the most comprehensive set of data collected by WFP at the Berm in more than a year, and it will serve as a pre-assistance baseline in case of a distribution managed by WFP.

Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations

As security and humanitarian access remained the primary concern at the Berm area, WFP drafted a Protection Strategy to ensure that the main protection concerns would be taken into account in any future distribution targeting the population stranded at the Berm. As such, the most common protection challenges identified were: the unequal access to information regarding humanitarian assistance, the challenges accessing the distribution site and the physical safety at distribution sites.

Due to access challenges, WFP had limited options communicating with beneficiaries. However, some measures were taken in order to communicate in case of a potential distributions through leaflets that would be included in food parcels. However, WFP received some feedback through its WhatsApp number that was put in place earlier. The feedback received through this channel mainly recorded complaints regarding the lack of information regarding potential distributions and challenges on access to the distribution sites.

WFP ensured that any decision regarding food distribution would be done taking into account these risks and ensuring mitigation measures are in place to facilitate access for vulnerable people and reducing the risk of misappropriation. Particular attention was given to the "do no harm" principle in all activities, including monitoring. Staff were trained on basic principles of safe distributions and on monitoring in highly sensitive contexts.

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

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A WFP warehouse in Karama being prepared and maintained by staff for the potential distribution of food and non-food items to stranded populations.