

Crisis response revision of Syrian Arab Republic interim country strategic plan (2019–2020) and corresponding budget increase

	Current	Change	Revised
Duration	January 2019– December 2020	One-year extension	January 2019– December 2021
Beneficiaries	7 455 000	431 500	7 886 500
<i>(USD)</i>			
Total cost	1 809 541 744	1 160 289 201	2 969 830 945
Transfers	1 585 715 784	1 019 286 356	2 605 002 140
Implementation	68 510 406	40 994 652	109 505 059
Adjusted direct support costs	44 874 039	29 192 420	74 066 459
Subtotal	1 699 100 229	1 089 473 429	2 788 573 658
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)	110 441 515	70 815 773	181 257 288

Gender and age marker code*: 4

* <http://gender.manuals.wfp.org/en/gender-toolkit/gender-in-programming/gender-and-age-marker/>.

Rationale

1. The food security situation in the Syrian Arab Republic continues to worsen, as external and internal economic pressures compounded by a dramatically deteriorating financial situation fuelled by rapid currency devaluation have spurred massive food price increases since the second half of 2019. The depreciation of the Syrian pound has accelerated dramatically over the first half of 2020.¹ These trends are compounded by persistent insecurity and continued long-term and large-scale population displacement. The impacts of COVID-19 have further strained the Syrian economy and the livelihoods of the vulnerable Syrian people.
2. A recent study indicates that the dramatic price increases and subsequent growth of the consumer price index have pushed the purchasing power of the average monthly Syrian salary in May 2020 to less than one-fifth of the pre-war (2010) average.² The nationwide average price of the WFP reference food basket in June 2020 was higher than even the highest official monthly government salary, highlighting the dramatic deterioration of the purchasing power of Syrians, as well as the increasing unaffordability of even basic food items on Syrian markets.

¹ The informal exchange rate is around SYP 2,200/USD as of early October 2020, but further fluctuations are expected.

² Mehchy, Zaki (2020) *On the edge of starvation: New alarming Consumer Price Index estimates for Syria*. Conflict Research Programme, London School of Economics and Political Science, 26 May 2020.



3. The number of food-insecure people is estimated to have reached 9.3 million, 45 percent of the total population,³ as of April 2020 - the highest number ever recorded. Of these, more than one million are estimated to be severely food insecure. Under this budget revision WFP aims to target a total of 7.9 million people through different activities (contingent on available resources), with the remaining gap to be addressed by other partners and pipelines.
4. WFP has actively engaged in the inter-agency development of the 2020–2023 United Nations Strategic Framework (UNSF). This budget revision will extend the duration of the current interim country strategic plan (ICSP) until December 2021 and will be followed by a further ICSP which will pave the way for a country strategic plan that will start in 2024 in alignment with the new UNSF.
5. This budget revision aims to: i) extend the current ICSP by one year through December 2021; ii) adjust the beneficiaries targeted under activities 2, 3, and 4; iii) significantly scale up the use of cash-based transfers (CBTs); and iv) adjust the food rations provided under activity 1.

Changes

Strategic orientation

6. This budget revision does not entail changes to the strategic orientation of the ICSP.
7. The first budget revision approved in March 2020 by the Executive Director and the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO): i) increased the beneficiary caseload under strategic outcome 1; ii) adjusted beneficiaries of the nutrition activities; iii) added a new activity (9): United Nations Humanitarian Air Service; and iv) included adjustments to the food ration and budget.
8. The second budget revision approved in June 2020 by the Executive Director and the Director General of FAO: i) increased the beneficiary caseload under strategic outcome 1; and ii) adjusted the beneficiary caseload under activity 4.

Strategic outcomes

9. This budget revision does not entail any strategic change to the ICSP.

Targeting approach and beneficiary analysis

10. Under activity 1, WFP will target 6.4 million⁴ beneficiaries in 2021: 5.9 million beneficiaries monthly and a contingency assistance for an additional 500,000 beneficiaries will be maintained for a period of three months to respond to sudden-onset shocks. Following the results of the planned re-targeting exercise, expected in the first half of 2021, only households identified as severely food insecure will continue to receive a ration equivalent to 1,690 kcal/person/day, while households identified as moderately food insecure will receive rations equivalent to 1,307 kcal/person/day, corresponding to 60 percent of their daily requirement. Residents of the internally displaced persons camps in north-east Syria will continue to receive a full ration of 2,075 kcal/person/day, given the limited opportunities to supplement the ration through other means.
11. Given the stabilization of access of children to regular schooling in some geographical areas, the beneficiary caseload under activity 2 will be adjusted to prioritize the districts with the highest assessed nutritional, food security and educational needs.⁵ 750,000 children will be targeted

³ WFP vulnerability analysis and mapping.

⁴ This budget revision will continue to follow the same targeting for activity 1 as outlined in the first budget revision.

⁵ The locations selected are those identified with a severity scale of 4 and above on both food security and education severity indicators. The upcoming Nutrition Assessment for School aged Children will provide an additional layer to further inform geographical areas to be prioritised.



under school feeding during the 2020/21 academic year; the target will be further adjusted to assist 600,000 children over the 2021/22 academic year. A planned schoolchildren nutrition status assessment, set to be conducted by WFP, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Ministry of Health, will further inform the geographical prioritization.

12. In parallel, CBT assistance will be scaled up from the current 100,000 to 125,000 children over the 2021/22 school year to encourage school attendance through continued assistance and mitigate the use of child labour as a household coping strategy.
13. Under activity 3, WFP will continue to support 200,000 moderately food-insecure households (approximately one million people) in 2021. The activity will focus on capacity strengthening and a closer linkage between individual livelihoods and community assets to effectively expand the reach and sustainability of the interventions.
14. As activity 4 is programmatically linked to activity 1, the number of beneficiaries will be adjusted to target 531,000 people in 2021, of whom 331,000 children aged 6–23 months to be assisted through in-kind assistance and 200,000 pregnant and lactating women and girls to be assisted through CBTs.

Transfer modalities

15. With the necessary government approvals received in May 2020, a significant shift in WFP's transfer modality mix is envisaged, with a scale-up in the use of CBT activities 1 to 4. While most WFP assistance will continue to be provided in-kind, the significant increase in beneficiaries under CBTs is primarily driven by the gradual scale-up under activity 1.⁶

Partnerships

16. WFP continues to explore options for the extension and expansion of the piloted joint provision of CBTs and strengthened synergies across all programme activities with other United Nations agencies, and will continue to foster collaboration with other local and international non-governmental organizations via the inter-agency Cash Working Group.

Supply chain challenges

17. COVID-19 has caused significant disruptions to the WFP supply chain as the price and availability of commodities on international and regional markets were disrupted. This has led to: i) delays in in-country food arrival at ports of entry; and ii) increased operational expense in ensuring staff and service provider staff safety with measures such as the provision of personal protective equipment, rigorous disinfection processes as well as proper social distancing throughout the operation.
18. Additional cost increases are expected due to the extreme exchange rate fluctuations and the reduced availability of fuel and truck spare parts for internal transport. WFP will continue rigorous supply chain optimization efforts such as regional sourcing and economizing on transport modalities as a mitigation measure to minimize the growth in operational expenses.
19. WFP will expand in-country food pre-positioning while working to ensure effective and flexible sourcing through local, regional and global food procurement sources. WFP will also continue to plan for possible adjustments in the food basket based on commodity availability.

Monitoring and evaluation

20. Monitoring and evaluation ensure adherence to WFP standards and practices, and that beneficiary expectations are met. Monitoring is conducted via observation and interviews with beneficiaries as well as cooperating partners at distribution points and project implementation

⁶ A pilot of the use of CBTs in the general food assistance programme (activity 1) was conducted in Damascus and rural Damascus governorates in July 2020.



sites. Process monitoring is complemented by post-distribution monitoring surveys with beneficiaries to collect outcome information, inform programme adjustments and support decision making.

Risk management

21. Continued food price increases, an unstable exchange rate and consequent disruptions in food supply might therefore prescribe a more conservative approach in the scale-up of CBTs. As a contingency, WFP is prepared to replace the CBT component with in-kind assistance when the cost of food commodities on the local market exceeds 20 percent of the currently budgeted value for CBTs. WFP will further invest in its agility to rapidly switch between transfer modalities in response to market trends and has enhanced its market price monitoring mechanisms to closely monitor price trends.
22. Contingency plans are in place for a potential change in access modality for north-western Syria.⁷ These include exploration of assistance through alternative transfer modalities as well as cross-line interventions.
23. With the widening funding gap, WFP will continue to maintain a sustainable prioritization approach in line with the expected funding level and operational capability. WFP will continue to advocate for timely and predictable funding, which remains critical in an operation with a four-month lead time to import food.
24. WFP will maintain a security risk management approach based on community acceptance, embedded in a structure of prevention and mitigation measures.

⁷ The authorization of cross-border deliveries of humanitarian aid to the Syrian Arab Republic was most recently renewed on 11 July 2020 for a period of 12 months through United Nations Security Council [Resolution 2533 \(2020\)](#).



Beneficiary analysis

TABLE 1: DIRECT BENEFICIARIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME, ACTIVITY AND MODALITY								
Strategic outcome	Activity	Modality	Period	Women (18+ years)	Men (18+ years)	Girls (0–18 years)	Boys (0–18 years)	Total
1	1	In-kind	Current	1 390 464	1 335 936	1 875 200	1 798 400	6 400 000
			Increase/decrease	0	0	0	0	0
			Revised	1 390 464	1 335 936	1 875 200	1 798 400	6 400 000
	1	CBTs	Current	130 356	125 244	175 800	168 600	600 000
			Increase/decrease	86 904	83 496	117 200	112 400	400 000
			Revised	217 260	208 740	293 000	281 000	1 000 000
	1	Total	Current	1 390 464	1 335 936	1 875 200	1 798 400	6 400 000
			Increase/decrease	0	0	0	0	0
			Revised	1 390 464	1 335 936	1 875 200	1 798 400	6 400 000
	2	In-kind	Current	0	0	563 500	586 500	1 150 000
			Increase/decrease	0	0	9 800	10 200	20 000
			Revised	0	0	573 300	596 700	1 170 000
	2	CBTs	Current	0	0	73 500	76 500	150 000
			Increase/decrease	0	0	22 050	22 950	45 000
			Revised	0	0	95 550	99 450	195 000
	2	Total	Current	0	0	612 500	637 500	1 250 000
			Increase/decrease	0	0	22 050	22 950	45 000
			Revised	0	0	634 550	660 450	1 295 000
2	3	In-kind	Current	173 808	166 992	234 400	224 800	800 000
			Increase/decrease	59 747	57 404	80 574	77 275	275 000
			Revised	233 555	224 396	314 974	302 075	1 075 000
	3	CBTs	Current	238 986	229 614	322 300	309 100	1 100 000
			Increase/decrease	70 610	67 841	95 224	91 325	325 000
			Revised	309 596	297 455	417 525	400 425	1 425 000
	3		Current	0	0	0	0	0



TABLE 1: DIRECT BENEFICIARIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME, ACTIVITY AND MODALITY

Strategic outcome	Activity	Modality	Period	Women (18+ years)	Men (18+ years)	Girls (0–18 years)	Boys (0–18 years)	Total	
		Capacity strengthening	Increase/decrease	86 904	83 496	117 200	112 400	400 000	
			Revised	86 904	83 496	117 200	112 400	400 000	
	3	Total	Current	412 794	396 606	556 700	533 900	1 900 000	
			Increase/decrease	217 260	208 740	293 000	281 000	1 000 000	
			Revised	630 054	605 346	849 700	814 900	2 900 000	
3	4	In-kind	Current	0	0	207 606	199 464	407 070	
			Increase/decrease	0	0	32 115	30 856	62 971	
			Revised	0	0	239 721	230 320	470 041	
	4	CBTs	Current	220 404	0	11 600	0	232 004	
			Increase/decrease	190 000	0	10 000	0	200 000	
			Revised	410 404	0	21 600	0	432 004	
	4	Total	Current	220 404	0	219 206	199 464	639 074	
			Increase/decrease	190 000	0	42 115	30 856	262 971	
			Revised	410 404	0	261 321	230 320	902 045	
	5	Total	Current	42 750	0	25 650	21 600	90 000	
			Increase/decrease	23 750	0	11 650	9 600	45 000	
			Revised	66 500	0	37 300	31 200	135 000	
	Total (without overlap)			Current	1 498 686	1 256 543	2 385 565	2 314 206	7 455 000
				Increase/decrease	188 695	25 585	113 743	103 477	431 500
				Revised	1 687 381	1 282 128	2 499 308	2 417 683	7 886 500



Transfers

**TABLE 2: FOOD RATIONS (g/person/day) OR CASH-BASED TRANSFER VALUES (USD/person/day)
BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME AND ACTIVITY**

	Strategic outcome 1							Strategic outcome 2	Strategic outcome 3			
	Activity 1					Activity 2		Activity 3	Activity 4	Activity 5		
Beneficiary type	Vulnerable Syrians in camps	Severely food-insecure Syrians		Moderately food-insecure Syrians		Newly displaced vulnerable Syrians	Pre-primary and primary schoolchildren	Out of school children	Vulnerable Syrians	Children aged 6–23 months and pregnant and lactating women and girls	Children aged 6–59 months	Pregnant and lactating women and girls
Modality	Food/CBTs	Food	Food/CBTs	Food	CBTs	Food	Food/CBTs	CBTs	Food/CBTs	Food/CBTs	Food	Food
Cereals	300	233	33	167			70		233			
Pulses	120	100		73					100			
Oil	49	42	36	36					42			
Salt	7	7		7					7			
Sugar	40	33	33	33					33			
Fortified date bars							80					
Yeast	0.5						0.375					
Ready-to-eat rations						458						
Lipid-based nutrient supplement – LNS-MQ										50		
Lipid-based nutrient supplement – LNS-LQ											100	100
Total kcal/day	2 075	1 690	565	1 307		2 075	344		1 690	255	510	510



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Modality	Food/CBTs	Food	Food/CBTs	Food	CBTs	Food	Food/CBTs	CBTs	Food/CBTs	Food/CBTs	Food	Food	
% kcal from protein	10.8	10.8	1.5	10.3		17.1	5.6		10.8	10	10	10	
Cash-based transfers (USD/person/day)			0.38		0.38		0.7	1	0.5	1.2			
Number of feeding days per year	360	360	360	360	360	5	220	300	180	360	90	120	

LNS-MQ: medium-quantity lipid-based nutrient supplement; LNS-LQ: large-quantity lipid-based nutrient supplement



TABLE 3: TOTAL FOOD/CASH-BASED TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS AND VALUE

	Current budget		Increase		Revised budget	
	Total (mt)	Total (USD)	Total (mt)	Total (USD)	Total (mt)	Total (USD)
Cereals	477 974	222 384 068	307 007	141 915 557	784 981	364 299 625
Pulses	269 361	170 251 650	138 099	82 156 837	407 460	252 408 487
Oil and fats	81 899	104 830 880	66 614	85 266 408	148 514	190 097 288
Mixed and blended foods	71 152	139 054 525	27 609	50 254 692	98 761	189 309 217
Other	476 823	275 260 269	267 470	146 312 303	744 294	421 572 572
Total (food)	1 377 209	911 781 392	806 799	505 905 797	2 184 009	1 417 687 189
Cash-based transfers		333 271 440		255 242 000		588 513 440
Total (food and cash-based transfer value)	1 377 209	1 245 052 832	806 799	761 147 797	2 184 009	2 006 200 629

Cost breakdown

TABLE 4: COST BREAKDOWN OF THE REVISION ONLY (USD)

	Strategic Result 1/ SDG Target 2.1	Strategic Result 1/ SDG Target 2.1	Strategic Result 2/ SDG Target 2.2	Strategic Result 8/ SDG Target 17.16	Total
	Strategic outcome 1	Strategic outcome 2	Strategic outcome 3	Strategic outcome 4	
Focus area	Crisis response	Resilience building	Resilience building	Crisis response	
Transfers	782 608 118	106 151 673	117 429 628	13 096 937	1 019 286 356
Implementation	35 270 477	2 321 741	3 402 435	0	40 994 652
Adjusted direct support costs					29 192 420
Subtotal					1 089 473 429
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)					70 815 773
Total					1 160 289 201

TABLE 5: OVERALL ICSP COST BREAKDOWN, AFTER REVISION (USD)

	Strategic Result 1/ SDG Target 2.1	Strategic Result 1/ SDG Target 2.1	Strategic Result 2/ SDG Target 2.2	Strategic Result 8/ SDG Target 17.16	Total
	Strategic outcome 1	Strategic outcome 2	Strategic outcome 3	Strategic outcome 4	
Focus area	Crisis response	Resilience building	Resilience building	Crisis response	
Transfers	2 007 620 090	330 108 830	235 148 935	32 124 285	2 605 002 140
Implementation	88 411 922	11 996 192	9 096 944	0	109 505 059
Adjusted direct support costs	57 171 722	9 355 786	6 662 031	876 920	74 066 459
Subtotal	2 153 203 735	351 460 809	250 907 910	33 001 204	2 788 573 658
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)	139 958 243	22 844 953	16 309 014	2 145 078	181 257 288
Total	2 293 161 977	374 305 761	267 216 924	35 146 283	2 969 830 945