



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

## WFP Lebanon Country Brief January 2021



### Operational Context

Lebanon, long considered a middle-income country, is rapidly sinking into poverty as it faces a triple shock from the unprecedented economic crisis, the impact of COVID-19 on employment and public health and the Beirut port explosion. It is also at the forefront of the Syrian crisis: as of January 2021, there are 865,531 Syrian refugees registered in Lebanon by UNHCR. The massive influx of refugees has placed a significant strain on existing resources and host communities.

The port explosion on 4 August exacerbated an already deteriorated situation that has had devastating effects on the economic vulnerabilities of households. The World Bank estimates that 45 percent of the Lebanese population are poor, while 22 percent (approximately 850,000 people) are extremely poor. The latest World Bank report forecasts a 19 percent contraction of the economy in 2020, among the highest in the world. In the first week of January 2021, Lebanon recorded a 70 percent increase in COVID-19 infections, placing the country among those currently experiencing one of the world's sharpest COVID-19 rises, further straining the country's health systems.

The Lebanon Country Strategic Plan, which came into effect in January 2018, is aligned with the Government-endorsed Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (2017–2020), the United Nations Strategic Framework (2017–2021), and Lebanon National Agriculture Strategy (2020 – 2025). It positions WFP as a major partner of the Government and other United Nations agencies in crisis response and towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

WFP has been present in Lebanon since 2012.



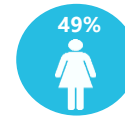
Population: **6.8 million**

2019 Human Development Index: **93 out of 189**

Income Level: **Upper middle**

2019 Gross National Income per capita (PPP): **USD 14,655**

## In Numbers



**1,011,839** people assisted in January 2021

**US\$33 m** cash-based transfers made

**US\$75.8 m** six months net funding requirements (Feb 2021 – Jul 2021)

## Operational Updates

- In January, WFP assisted a total of 1,011,839 beneficiaries through cash-based transfer modalities amounting to USD 33 million and through distribution of family food parcels. The people assisted were 180,221 vulnerable Lebanese, 810,126 Syrian refugees and 21,492 refugees of other nationalities.
- Due to the nationwide lockdown between 7 January to 8 February announced by the Government in response to the COVID-19 crisis and the delays experienced in obtaining permissions to operate, WFP was not able to carry out distributions of family food parcels to the vulnerable Lebanese households most affected by the COVID-19 and economic crises. WFP was only authorized to carry out one distribution of family food parcels in January to assist 70 Syrian households living in an informal tented settlement that had been isolated due to COVID-19. In February, WFP plans to reach up to 48,000 households with in-kind food assistance.
- Distributions of family food parcels for WFP's school feeding programme were also halted in January due to the nationwide lockdown. Following the closure of schools due to COVID-19 restrictions and the deteriorating economic situation in Lebanon, WFP adapted its school feeding programme to ensure children and their families are able to meet their food needs and continue to be connected with schools. WFP plans to resume distributions in February once the lockdown measures are lifted.
- Together with the Ministry of Social Affairs, WFP is scaling up assistance to an additional 35,000 vulnerable Lebanese families through the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP). In January, household enumeration for the purpose of verification of households to be added to the NPTP was also delayed due to the lockdown, reaching 25 percent of the target for the first phase of the scale-up. The first two batches of new eligible households are expected to receive their first round of food assistance in February 2021, provided food e-cards can be distributed on time.
- Livelihoods activities were also impacted by the lockdown, with Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) and Food Assistance for Training (FFT) activities on hold since 7 January. Participants will instead receive an unconditional cash transfer in February, and activities will resume once restrictions are lifted.

## WFP Country Strategy

### Country Strategic Plan (2018-2021)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
<b>1.88 bn</b>	<b>1.34 bn</b>
2021 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (Feb 2021 – Jul 2021)
<b>532 m</b>	<b>75.8 m</b>

#### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 1:** Food-insecure refugees – including school-age children – and crisis-affected host populations have access to life-saving, nutritious and affordable food throughout the year

**Focus area:** Crisis response

**Activities:**

- Unconditional resource transfers to support access to food (CBTs)
- In-kind food assistance
- School meal activities

#### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 2:** Vulnerable women and men in targeted refugee and Lebanese communities sustainably improve their skills, capacities and livelihood opportunities by 2020

**Focus area:** Resilience-building

**Activities:**

- Individual capacity strengthening activities (CBTs)
- Asset creation and livelihood support activities (CBTs)

#### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 3:** Vulnerable populations in Lebanon are enabled to meet their basic food needs all year long

**Focus area:** Root causes

**Activities:**

- Unconditional resource transfers to support access to food (CBT)

#### Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

**Strategic Outcome 5:** National institutions and national and international humanitarian actors are supported in their efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their assistance

**Focus area:** Root causes

**Activities:**

- Institutional capacity strengthening activities

## Assessments & Monitoring

- Despite the lockdown, as of 31 January, 98 percent of beneficiaries who received their entitlements redeemed their assistance through shops and ATMs.
- During January, multiple monitoring activities were put on hold by WFP's cooperating partners due to the COVID-19 total lockdown, while others were shifted to a remote modality.
- The 2020 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR) report will be finalized by mid-February and is set to launch on 19 February 2021.
- The latest assessment of market prices indicates that the revised Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) reached a total

cost of nearly LBP 130,000 in December 2020, marking a 10 percent increase from August 2020. WFP continues to advocate with its partners and donors to increase the food transfer value (currently at LBP 100,000) to match the cost.

## A Story Worth Telling



*It's lunch time at Aisha's. Her four daughters come together every day and share a meal.*

*Photo: WFP/Edmond Khoury*

For Aisha and her family of eight, life has been a struggle. The family first moved to Lebanon mid-2016, seeking refuge from the Syrian war. After almost a year and a half, Aisha was finally informed that she will be receiving WFP assistance.

"When I found out I was selected, I was more than ecstatic. It is a feeling I cannot describe. I will never forget that day. Thank God."

The e-card was a game changer. But then, COVID-19 hit. Through support from the European Union, WFP is providing Lebanon's most vulnerable families with multi-purpose cash assistance that keeps them afloat as the going gets tough. This family was already struggling with money, education, and lack of food. COVID-19 came as an extra blow. However, the cash allowed the family to survive the pandemic.

"We use the cash to pay for different expenses. It helps us with rent, my daughter's education, medication, and of course, food."

### Donors

Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Private Donors, Switzerland, United Kingdom, USA, EU MADAD, ECHO, Ireland, Denmark