Overview

Now in its third year, Lebanon’s economic crisis continued to deepen in the first half of 2022. Currency depreciation, inflation, and challenges to access basic services has made life increasingly difficult for the 54 percent of Lebanese and 88 percent of Syrian refugees who are vulnerable and in need of assistance. Food security in particular continues to be threatened as food prices increased by 30 percent between January and July 2022 alone. Since the start of the crisis in October 2019, food prices have increased more than 2,000 percent.

So far in 2022, WFP has reached over 1.8 million people living in Lebanon: 1.1 million refugees and 720,000 Lebanese. WFP adapted its response in a complex, changing environment to ensure more people had safe and dignified access to assistance through multiple, fit-for-purpose modalities. This includes adjusting transfer values of cash assistance for inflation, optimizing the in-kind food basket for the nutrition needs and preferences of beneficiaries, and adding more cash redemption points to reduce crowding and travel time and cost.

For the remainder of 2022, WFP will continue scaling up to reach more vulnerable families in Lebanon with lifesaving food and basic assistance. At the same time, WFP is also increasing its support to national institutions and partners to strengthen their capacities to provide safety nets and services. In the first half of 2022, this included support to the Ministry of Agriculture to rebuild the food safety lab at the port of Beirut, and the provision of enumeration and cash transfer services for the Government’s ongoing Emergency Social Safety Net programme.
The School Kitchens initiative not only provides refugee and Lebanese students with nutritious food to go about their school day, but also provides women with the means to help them meet their needs at home.

“My first stipend [received from the School Kitchens Initiative] was used to pay the rent that I couldn’t pay before. I also used the money to buy stationary for my children.” - Abir

For the past 2 years, Abir has been the sole provider for her family of seven. As a mother of five, working beside her children in their school kitchen has provided her with a special kind of joy. One of Abir’s motivations for volunteering in the kitchen is seeing how her kids and their friends run to her as she distributes the sandwiches she’s prepared with the other mothers. “We prepare around 900 sandwiches to 450 students in the school every day. All sandwiches and snacks are prepared with utmost care, cleanliness, and attention.”

Abir is one of ten women who volunteer in the kitchen of Haouch el Oumara Mixed Public School in Zahle, Lebanon, where their children attend school. They participate in both the morning and afternoon shifts, preparing a mix of cheese, hummus, and labneh sandwiches, along with a serving of fruit. The women are provided with a bi-weekly stipend that allows them to support themselves and their families. “My first stipend was used to pay the rent that I couldn’t pay before. I also used the money to buy stationary for my children.” - Abir.

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 Micheline Khoury, the school’s principal

Crisis Response for Refugees & Lebanese

• 1,065,381 refugees received cash-based transfers to meet their food and other basic needs.
• WFP increased the transfer value of its cash assistance to refugees in April to ensure beneficiaries can better meet their needs amid inflation.
• WFP’s economic crisis response reached 380,872 vulnerable Lebanese with in-kind food assistance. Between 2021 and June 2022, WFP achieved its scale-up plan and reached 400,000 Lebanese beneficiaries with lifesaving food assistance.

Livelhoods & Resilience

• 42,060 Syrian refugees and Lebanese received cash transfers through Food Assistance for Training and for Assets activities.
• WFP established living labs to research new technologies and provided composting and barley sprouting units to reduce costs for farmers and maximize climate-smart technologies, including renewable energy.

Supporting the National Poverty Targeting Programme

• WFP delivered cash assistance to 279,974 vulnerable Lebanese through the national poverty targeting programme (NPTP), reaching 65 percent of its target to assist 430,000 individuals by September 2022.
• WFP increased the transfer value of cash assistance through the NPTP in April to ensure beneficiaries can better meet their food and basic needs amid inflation.

Institutional Capacity Strengthening

• WFP supported the creation of new governance structures for the NPTP and conducted assessments to determine the needs of information management systems to improve the delivery of assistance through the NPTP.
• WFP supported the repair and augmentation of the damaged animal and plant quarantine lab, as well as the office of the Ministry of Agriculture at the port of Beirut. The project will help prevent the spread of harmful exotic plants and animal product pests inside Lebanese territories.

Enabling Humanitarian Response

• WFP distributed 10.4 million litres of fuel to 622 WASH and health facilities to ensure continuity of their services.
• WFP provided enumeration services and delivered cash payments on behalf of the Government for the implementation of the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN). A total of 63,000 vulnerable Lebanese families (approximately 295,000 individuals) received assistance through the ESSN between March and June 2022.