

CASH ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES

WFP Lebanon - April 2025



891,000
SYRIAN REFUGEES
Assisted in 2025

51% Female



4% Persons with Disability



USD 2.5Bn

Injected into the local economy since 2012



World Food Programme

Since 2012, the World Food Programme has been providing assistance to Syrian refugees in Lebanon, first with food parcels, then paper vouchers, and, since 2013, with cash-based assistance through electronic bank cards. **Vulnerability levels** amongst the refugee population remain high following years of persistent crises, with 76 percent of Syrian refugees unable to meet their essential needs and 65 percent below survival thresholds.

The impact of the war in Lebanon in 2024 has further exacerbated the dire situation of Syrian refugees. Despite a temporary increase in the transfer value of cash assistance in late 2024 (from USD 115 to 145 for a family of five), helping to mitigate the detrimental impact of the conflict for vulnerable families, it still **covered only a third of basic needs**. Syrian refugees continue to face access restrictions and are frequently exposed to discriminatory rental bans by municipalities, exploitative labour conditions, including underpayment and lack of legal protection, pushing many into precarious work amid rising economic hardship.

With **funding cuts** reducing assistance from 830,000 to 500,000 Syrian refugees in early 2025 and to just 130,000 refugees by April 2025, the **food security situation is projected to worsen**, with 37 percent of Syrian refugees expected to face acute food insecurity by June 2025. Despite severe funding shortfalls, WFP aims to reach 660,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees in Lebanon with cash assistance during the second quarter of 2025. This target reflects a **balance between available resources and the urgent needs of the most vulnerable families**.

To adapt to financial constraints and shifting conditions, WFP and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have **revised assistance cycles to shorter, flexible three-month periods** to ensure the most vulnerable of the vulnerable continue to receive support. These cycles allow for better alignment with funding flows, help mitigate service disruptions and facilitate timely communication with beneficiaries. Two successive targeting exercises will take place in 2025 instead of one. **For April–September 2025**, WFP and UNHCR updated 2024 econometric scores used to select families eligible for assistance and applied categorical and geographic criteria to include families with protection risks or from conflict-affected areas. A new targeting cycle will be implemented **from November 2025**, relying on updated data from the 2025 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon. Throughout the process, **communication** will remain transparent with affected populations through trained outreach volunteers, frontline partners, social media channels and tailored Q&A materials to support understanding and mitigate anxiety around eligibility.

ONE CARD, THREE CASH TYPES

Cash-based assistance, delivered via electronic cards, offer refugee families the flexibility to meet their food and other basic needs according to their priorities, empowering them to make their own spending choices, while enhancing dignity and autonomy. The amount of cash received by assisted families varies according to vulnerability. All assisted families receive food assistance, while more vulnerable families receive a higher transfer value to cover non-food needs.

Food e-cards: Provides up to USD 100 for food purchases at 300+ WFP-contracted shops carefully selected for their quality service, diverse and nutritious food options, and competitive pricing.

Cash for food e-card: cash assistance jointly provided with UNHCR, with WFP covering food-related needs. Valued up to USD 145 for a family of five, it covers food and other essential needs and can be withdrawn from ATMs or money transfer operators (MTOs), or use the card at any shop, including WFP-contracted shops.

Multipurpose cash for essential needs e-card: Up to a maximum of USD 145 for a family of five to support them in meeting their food and other essential needs. Recipients can withdraw cash from ATMs, and money transfer operators (MTOs), or use the card at any shop.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO NEW ARRIVALS FROM SYRIA

Following Syria's political transition in December 2024 and coastal clashes in March 2025, around 117,000 people, 90 percent Syrians and 10 percent Lebanese, fled Syria to Lebanon by end of April 2025. In response, WFP rapidly scaled up emergency assistance, reaching so far 90,500 newly arrived Syrians with 4.2 million hot meals and 24,600 Ready-To-Eat food parcels. Support was delivered across more than 200 informal shelters and host communities in Akkar, North Lebanon, Bekaa, Baalbek El Hermel, and Mount Lebanon governorates.

ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY

WFP and partners rely on a joint assessment and targeting system based on the annual Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees and an econometric formula to identify and rank refugees by vulnerability, factoring in protection needs. This allows WFP and UNHCR to **prioritize limited resources and assistance for families most in need** to ensure that assistance is distributed fairly and equitably.

A robust Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) usually allows families not selected for assistance to appeal. However, due to funding constraints, the GRM is suspended in the April–September 2025 cycle. Instead, all available funds will be used to assist the most vulnerable selected families. Beneficiaries can still voice concerns through Community Feedback Mechanisms and receive counselling but will not be reconsidered for inclusion.

Feedback and queries from assisted families and community members are received primarily through the **WFP call centre**. Individuals who require specialized support through case management (health, protection, etc.) are referred to UNHCR and NGO partners. Other channels for communication include SMS, outreach volunteers, and community representatives.

In 2024, WFP engaged **41 refugee community volunteers** across Lebanon, enhancing communication and outreach within local communities. These volunteers played a key role in identifying challenges at redemption points, referring unresolved cases to the hotline, and providing direct support to beneficiaries.

ADAPTING TO A CHALLENGING CONTEXT

- **Monthly market assessments:** to monitor the availability of food and non-food items, prices at WFP-contracted shops, and potential supply chain disruptions.
- **Staggered loading of cash assistance:** to avoid crowding at ATMs and allow cash replenishment for adequate liquidity.
- **Flexible programming:** in November 2024, following successful negotiations with key donors, WFP transitioned Syrian refugees receiving cash assistance through food e-cards restricted to redemption at contracted shops, to unrestricted cash assistance, empowering beneficiaries to access their entitlements through ATMs, MTOs, or shops, offering them greater flexibility to meet their diverse needs, including paying rent and school supplies.
- **Swift response to evolving humanitarian emergency:** in response to increasing needs triggered by the conflict and the lack of access for most Syrian families to other emergency assistance programmes, WFP expanded its cash programme throughout 2024. Between May and July 2024, WFP expanded its assistance to almost 34,000 Syrian refugees (7,000 households) and provided temporary support to an additional 233,000 Syrian refugees (54,000 households) from November 2024 through January 2025.

ENHANCING HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION

WFP, UNHCR, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) collaborate through the **LOUISE Common Card system** (Lebanon One Unified Inter-Organisation System for E-cards) to provide cash assistance to Syrian refugees. This unified system allows participating agencies to coordinate their humanitarian cash transfers efficiently, leveraging **economies of scale** from various donors and enabling families to access support through **a single e-card** rather than multiple payment instruments.

IMPACT OF ASSISTANCE & FUNDING REDUCTION

[The Decentralized Evaluation Report](#) of the UNHCR and WFP joint cash assistance to vulnerable Syrian refugees in Lebanon issued in July 2023 exhibited the **positive impact of the joint programme on the living conditions of assisted refugee households** during multiple crises since 2019 and the importance of sustaining this support to mitigate potential catastrophic effects of similar crises on refugees.

Food security indicators of assisted Syrian refugee households worsened in 2025 compared to 2024 following the escalation of the conflict in September 2024 and the reduction in assistance. This translates into 594,000 Syrian refugees projected to be acutely food insecure (IPC 3 and above) by March 2025, **a significant 6 percent increase since March 2024**.

WFP monitoring results in 2024 revealed that 33 percent of assisted households were able to afford the cost of their basic needs, **down from 53 percent in 2023**. Only 33 percent of assisted households headed by women exhibited sufficient economic capacity to meet their essential needs in 2024 compared to 51 percent in 2023, indicating reduced access to basic needs in this marginalized group. Excluding the value of assistance from expenditure, **64 percent of assisted Syrian refugee households** would not have been able to afford the cost of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) in August 2024. In August 2024, 86 percent of assisted and non-assisted households reported **accumulated debt**. Medical expenses accounted for 22 percent of assisted households' debt, while **food remained the main reason for borrowing (51 percent)**. Food e-card beneficiaries had the highest median accumulated debt among all cash assistance types.



FOOD ASSISTANCE FOR VULNERABLE LEBANESE AND DISPLACED SYRIANS

WFP LEBANON - APRIL 2025



100,000

VULNERABLE LEBANESE
Assisted in 2025



122,000 MT

of Distributed Food
since 2020



622,000

CONFLICT-AFFECTED LEBANESE
Assisted Oct 2023 - Apr 2025



90,500

**SYRIANS NEWLY
DISPLACED FROM SYRIA**
Assisted Dec 2024 - Apr 2025



**World Food
Programme**

Since the start of the economic crisis in October 2019, **the ability of Lebanese families to afford adequate food, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable, has been drastically reduced.**

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, in-kind food assistance was chosen as the transfer modality for WFP's initial crisis response to mitigate the risk that Lebanese people would not be able to go to shops or ATMs because of lockdown measures. As COVID restrictions eased, WFP continued providing in-kind food assistance to mitigate the risks of market volatility and the reduced purchasing power of assisted families and ensure people had continued access to food.

The price of the food basket in local currency monitored by the WFP has increased by nearly 64 times since 2019. Prices of other essential goods and services have meanwhile increased 31-fold.

Lebanon's economic and political crises, declining humanitarian assistance, and the escalation of the conflict worsened food insecurity significantly in 2024. In 2025, conflict aftershocks, severe agricultural losses, and cuts in humanitarian aid continue to jeopardize Lebanon's fragile food security. While nearly 100,000 people remain displaced, **21 percent of the population**, 1.17 million people, including **591,000 Lebanese**, are projected to face acute food insecurity by June 2025 (IPC, April 2025), with further deterioration expected without sustained support.

WHY IN-KIND ASSISTANCE?

WFP's in-kind food assistance programme plays a critical role in supporting the **most vulnerable Lebanese**, particularly those excluded from national social protection systems and not covered by other humanitarian programmes. It serves as a lifeline for food-insecure families and provides **rapid, life-saving assistance during sudden-onset crises**, as demonstrated repeatedly over the past five years, including the recent conflict in late 2024.

To ensure that assistance reaches those most in need, WFP regularly conducts **evidence-based retargeting exercises** aligned with Lebanon's shifting socioeconomic landscape. These exercises prioritize households with high food insecurity, minimal income and coping capacity, having disabled family members and unemployed heads, among other selection criteria.

In 2024, **limited funding** required WFP to **scale down** its in-kind assistance, reaching 155,000 individuals (39,000 households) in January, and 127,000 (30,000 households) by July following a second retargeting.

To **ensure fairness in targeting decisions**, WFP launched **an appeal system** for households discontinued from assistance resulting in the re-inclusion of 6,400 individuals (1,500 households) by August 2024.

Following the conflict escalation in September 2024, around 47,700 individuals (11,400 households) in 11 affected districts were unable to access food distribution points due to insecurity. In response, WFP swiftly **shifted them to cash assistance** in October 2024 to ensure timely, safe support. As the security situation improved in 2025, WFP began reinstating in-kind food assistance for affected families, returning 39,000 individuals (9,600 households) from cash to in-kind assistance. By April 2025, the total in-kind caseload reached **100,000 individuals** (24,000 households).

In the second quarter of 2025, WFP launched a targeting exercise to assess the vulnerability of **25,000 Lebanese households** who submitted assistance requests through its call centre. The results will inform eligibility for in-kind food assistance between July and December 2025.

A TAILORED FOOD BASKET

Assistance is delivered as a monthly family food ration designed to provide around 60 percent of the total individual energy requirement. The food ration is delivered to families in 20 kg boxes that currently include **10 commodities**: rice, pasta, bulgur, lentils, beans, chickpeas, sunflower oil, tomato paste, sugar, and salt.

In 2023, WFP fully transitioned to local food procurement, enhancing alignment with national food production strategies while boosting cost-efficiency and minimizing supply chain risks. In the first quarter of 2025 alone, this shift injected USD 9.5 million into the Lebanese economy, with 36 percent directed toward the purchase of locally processed food.

Distributions are staggered to avoid crowding. WFP and partner staff are on the ground at each distribution to ensure the safety and dignity of families receiving assistance. In certain locations and for families with specific needs, such as individuals with limited mobility, **door-to-door distributions** may also be organized.

PREPAREDNESS IN ACTION: WFP'S EMERGENCY FOOD RESPONSE

Since the onset of the conflict in October 2023, WFP collaborated with the Government of Lebanon and partners to refine its emergency response to the escalating conflict, reaching almost **837,000 Lebanese and newly displaced Syrians** with one or more rounds of food assistance between October 2023 and the end of April 2025. Ahead of the 23 September escalation, WFP developed response plans, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Lebanese Red Cross, prepositioned food stocks in warehouses across Lebanon and secured standby agreements for food distribution.

By 22 September 2024, WFP had already assisted 42,000 displaced Lebanese in South Lebanon with food support. Following the conflict escalation on 23 September, displacing almost 1 million people, **WFP swiftly scaled up assistance**, leveraging its refined emergency response strategy and donors' flexibility. Using its Conflict Impact Index for geographical targeting, which prioritizes Lebanese cadasters based on conflict severity and pre-crisis poverty levels, WFP delivered **hot and cold meals, food rations, and bread to 268,000 displaced Lebanese** inside and outside shelters. Following the 27 November ceasefire, WFP continued to provide food assistance to **432,000 displaced Lebanese and returnees** while responding to the urgent needs of **90,500 newly displaced Syrians** following the start of the political transition in Syria in December 2024.

REACHING THE RIGHT PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

WFP ensures the most vulnerable Lebanese families receive support by leveraging referrals from cooperating partners, municipalities, Social Development Centres, NGOs, grassroots movements, and religious charities. Additionally, a web-based self-registration form, launched in 2020, expanded outreach to those not referred by partners.

To enhance accessibility, WFP established a **call centre** in July 2021, providing a direct channel for beneficiaries to seek assistance, share concerns, and request support. The call centre, along with cooperating partners' helpdesks, now plays a key role in receiving and processing requests for assistance from vulnerable Lebanese who are not enrolled in assistance programmes.

To ensure those most in need are reached, WFP employs **household targeting** using food security and economic vulnerability indicators through a questionnaire designed based on the results of the Lebanon Vulnerability Assessment Panel (LVAP), conducted jointly with the World Bank.

IMPACT OF ASSISTANCE

In 2024, WFP Lebanon, with support from WFP's Office of Evaluation (OEV) and USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs, and in collaboration with the International Security and Development Center, conducted **an Impact Evaluation to measure the impact of different targeting approaches for in-kind food assistance** on household food insecurity, socioeconomic welfare, households' perceptions of fairness and accountability of the approach.

Preliminary findings from the mid-line evaluation results show that **overlaying different target methodologies**, including poverty-based targeting, food security indicators, and categorical targeting tools, achieves the most accurate and effective targeting approach in terms of reducing vulnerability and food insecurity. In 2025, WFP will conduct the endline survey data collection and analysis to finalize the results of the impact evaluation. Findings will be put to the benefit of the wider food security sector and humanitarian community.

WFP conducts regular post-distribution monitoring and qualitative interviews to ensure that distributions go smoothly and to assess beneficiary feedback, preferences, and food security outcomes.

In 2024, WFP monitoring results highlighted a **slight decrease in assisted households' food security**, with 77 percent having an acceptable food consumption score in 2024, compared to 83 percent in 2023. Notably, 96 percent of households resorted to at least one livelihood coping behaviour to meet their food needs, out of whom 5 percent resorted to severe coping strategies such as selling their house or land, compared to 1 percent in 2023.

This deterioration of food security highlights the profound impact of the ongoing economic crisis, exacerbated by the escalation of the conflict.



GOVERNMENT SUPPORT: BUILDING SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

WFP LEBANON – April 2025



794,000

Lebanese Enrolled in one unified
Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN)



First Call Centre

Established at MOSA



237,000

Lebanese Affected by the Conflict
Assisted through Shock-Responsive
Safety Net (SRSN) in 2024 - 2025



USD 33 million

Transferred to Conflict-affected
Lebanese through SRSN in
2024 – 2025



**World Food
Programme**

In line with the Government of Lebanon's (GoL) National Social Protection Strategy, WFP continues to support efforts to **build national resilience to shocks by strengthening social safety nets**. Over the past decade, WFP Lebanon provided **technical expertise, capacity strengthening, and policy advice to the Government of Lebanon** to enhance its ability to design and develop social protection systems.

Since 2014 and for ten consecutive years, the WFP has supported the food assistance component of Lebanon's first **National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP)** implemented by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (PCM). Support included monthly cash transfers to the poorest Lebanese families and technical assistance to enhance institutional capacity. Since 2022, WFP has also supported the Government-led **Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN)**, funded by the World Bank and later renamed **AMAN**, by providing socioeconomic data on households and cash transfer services to the GoL.

TOWARDS A UNIFIED SOCIAL SAFETY NET SYSTEM

As poverty deepened, **NPTP** scaled up significantly, from 5,000 households in 2014 to 75,000 (412,000 individuals) in 2023. In 2024, funding constraints forced a shift from monthly to bi-monthly transfers, coupled with a decrease in the transfer value, before **halting the programme** by June 2024.

In 2023, WFP undertook a **due diligence review of Lebanon's two largest social safety nets, NPTP and ESSN**, together with MoSA, recommending their unification under one national social safety net. Capitalizing on the results of the due diligence study, WFP and MoSA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in March 2023, dedicated to **strengthening the Government of Lebanon's capacities to design and operate social safety nets**. A technical task force led by MoSA and supported by the World Bank and WFP developed a roadmap to reach safety net integration by the end of 2025. As part of the MoU, **WFP trained 600 MoSA social workers** on digital data collection and quality control in 2023, enabling a strategic transition to a household survey model led by social workers for eligibility and enrollment in the national social assistance programme, promoting national ownership of the programme.

Building on this momentum, WFP and the Government launched a recertification exercise in 2024 to assess household eligibility for ESSN, resulting in the integration of 73,000 former **NPTP households into ESSN** by October 2024, marking a major milestone towards unifying Lebanon's social safety net. By December 2024, ESSN had expanded from 416,000 individuals to **794,000 individuals** (from 96,600 to 166,800 households). This integration enhances efficiency, reduces administrative costs, and reinforces Lebanon's social protection system to better serve the most vulnerable people. In 2025, WFP will continue its close support to the Government by supporting the **design of AMAN's next phase**, including improving targeting, monitoring, and delivery systems. Moreover, capitalizing on the experience of the recent emergency, WFP will also **enhance the shock-responsive component of national social assistance** programmes to reduce vulnerable populations' exposure to shocks and will continue to **strengthen Grievance and Redress Mechanisms** to improve accountability of the Government to the Lebanese population.

SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL SAFETY NETS

The country's fragmented social safety nets and limited capacity to cushion the impact of multiple shocks, dramatically worsened food insecurity in Lebanon following the escalation of the conflict in September 2024. By March 2025, **970,000 Lebanese faced acute hunger**, a stark increase from 683,000 in March 2023.

In response to the escalating conflict throughout 2024, WFP supported MoSA to establish **shock-responsive mechanisms**, leveraging existing social safety nets and WFP's cash networks to deliver emergency cash assistance to **237,000 conflict-affected Lebanese**. This response was strategically informed by the WFP **Conflict Impact Index**, which uses verified vulnerability data, focusing on **households not reached by regular assistance or emergency programmes** and guided by **geographic prioritization** of areas with the highest levels of displacement and conflict impact.

Following reduced displacement after the ceasefire, WFP used its Conflict Impact Index to retarget assistance, reaching 161,700 people in January 2025. Due to funding shortfalls, support further dropped to 60,000 by May 2025.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK: STRENGTHENING IDP DATA FOR COORDINATED RECOVERY EFFORTS

Following the conflict escalation in September 2024, WFP and UNICEF signed a technical agreement with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) in November 2024 to **support nationwide data collection of the most conflict-affected population**. This data will enable MoSA, government bodies, and humanitarian partners to deliver targeted emergency and recovery assistance. As the lead entity for cash-based and integrated services, MoSA will use this data to **enhance coordination and reduce duplication amongst humanitarian responders**.

As part of the registration exercise launched by MoSA in December 2024, WFP **trained over 500 MoSA staff**, including social workers and call centre agents, on data collection, complaint handling, and registration procedures. In January 2025, WFP-trained social workers started to conduct home visits to assess the living conditions and identify the needs of registered Lebanese families, enabling a tailored emergency assistance. To support these efforts, WFP distributed **144 tablets and provided incentives to MoSA field staff**. This initiative targets approximately **182,000 registered families**. To ensure data integrity and minimize errors, WFP and MoSA implement quality control measures, including random verification calls.

As the registration exercise progresses, post-war humanitarian assistance remains fragmented, relying on multiple data sources. Humanitarian actors expressed interest in using MoSA-led registration data as a unified basis for targeting support. To enable MoSA to coordinate these efforts effectively and consolidate national operational tools and procedures, WFP is providing **technical assistance** to MoSA in assessing databases, drafting SOPs for data and user access management, mapping assistance plans, and establishing data-sharing protocols and agreements. WFP is also supporting the development of a reporting dashboard to enhance transparency and decision-making. These efforts aim to create a **structured coordination model equipping MoSA with the tools needed to lead a harmonized, data-driven emergency and recovery response**, laying the ground for **institutionalized shock-responsive safety-net mechanisms**.

IMPACT OF ASSISTANCE ON THE MOST MARGINALIZED GROUPS

A joint study conducted by WFP and UN Women in 2022 on enhancing the safety and accessibility of social assistance for marginalized groups highlighted the **NPTP's positive impact on women's empowerment and family dynamics**, noting increased agency and autonomy among women beneficiaries and reduced household tensions due to shared decision-making supported by income security. It also recommended prioritizing food assistance for persons with disabilities (PwDs), the elderly, individuals with chronic illnesses, and families with pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls. In response, WFP trained 559 MoSA social workers in

2023 on gender and social inclusion (GESI), focusing on integrating gender and protection into ESSN data collection and improving GBV referral mechanisms.

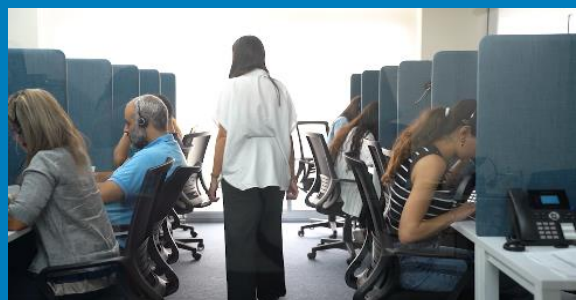
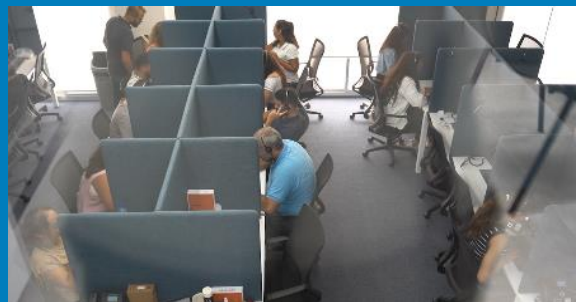
Building on these efforts, WFP and UN Women signed an agreement in June 2023 to expand GESI training and conduct a study to strengthen gender and inclusion in the NPTP. This partnership led to training for an additional **445 MoSA staff and a follow-up study in 2024** addressing the specific needs and challenges of women, girls, and PwDs. Insights from both studies will inform the design of future social safety nets to ensure they are more gender sensitive.

MOSA CALL CENTER: BRIDGING PEOPLE WITH GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Leveraging its experience with call centre operations since 2021, WFP supported MoSA in establishing a call centre as a first step toward building a holistic Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), operational since September 2024. WFP provided support with the system design, procurement of relevant infrastructure, development of operating procedures and recruitment of appropriate staff to ensure responsiveness.

The call centre features custom-built software and an autonomous and sustainable electricity network powered by solar panels. The call centre, **staffed by 30 operators**, handles daily feedback and grievances related to MoSA programmes, including safety nets and emergency assistance.

Since its launch in September 2024, the call centre received almost **118,000 claims** registered from **72,300 callers** (54 percent female) by March 2025. This initiative **enhanced MoSA's accountability towards the population it serves** by providing them with critical information and addressing their concerns. WFP will continue to provide technical assistance for the call centre for another year, which will entail supportive supervision, expansion of channels, and gradual handover to MoSA.



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SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAMME

WFP LEBANON – April 2025



26%

of households have children not attending school (UNICEF, 2023)



130,000

Students to receive healthy snacks or sandwiches locally produced and procured in the 2024-2025 school year



2024-2025
School
Year

1 million

In-school Snacks Distributed Monthly (fresh fruit in season plus UHT milk or baked nuts)

185,000

Sandwiches Distributed Monthly (pitta bread filled with dairy products or hummus)



World Food Programme

To address access to primary education and healthy nutrition for vulnerable Lebanese and refugee children, WFP has partnered with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) since 2016 to develop and implement Lebanon's first school meals programme. This initiative delivers integrated education and nutrition services while ensuring local production and sustainable energy linkages. It aims to improve children's food consumption and dietary diversity and enhance education outcomes by increasing students' ability to concentrate at school.

MORE THAN JUST A SCHOOL SNACK

Since 2016, an almost equal number of boys and girls have been participating in WFP's school meals programme, with **overall retention rates of nearly 100 percent for both the morning and the afternoon shifts**. Participating schools are in vulnerable communities and typically offer a **double-shift system**. The morning shift primarily enrolls Lebanese students while the afternoon shift is designed to accommodate Syrian students. By targeting both vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian children, the programme promotes a healthy school environment for all communities.

The composition of the snack package aims to address dietary diversity and the double burden of malnutrition among targeted students. In addition, parents are relieved from budgeting for their children's lunches, freeing up much-needed financial resources to help meet other needs.

Since the beginning of the programme in 2016 and by the end of the 2023-2024 school year, **30 million snacks** have been distributed, representing more than **6,000 metric tons of food**. During the academic year 2024-2025, around **84,000 students across 256 public schools** are benefiting from daily healthy in-school snacks, with plans to gradually reach 130,000 students in 2025, as the registration is ongoing and schools are opening. From February to April 2025, WFP supplemented its school meals programme with a monthly distribution of two litres of fortified sunflower oil, easing families' financial strain amid the economic crisis.

In June 2023, WFP conducted a comprehensive assessment of the school meals programme, which confirmed its **positive impact on various levels**. The caregivers of students enrolled in the programme reported that their children enjoy the snacks and cold meals, highlighting the programme's success in assisting parents affected by financial crisis while providing nutritious and healthy food. Students expressed a great desire for the programme continuation, with 60 percent reporting improved access to nutritious food, 23 percent enhanced focus while studying, and 2 percent increased school enrolment.

SCHOOL KITCHENS

In 2021, WFP initiated the school kitchens project, engaging volunteer mothers whose children are enrolled in schools that are part of the school meals programme. These dedicated women prepare **locally sourced cold sandwiches** for students, accompanied by fresh fruits or vegetables. Throughout the academic year, caregiver mothers receive skills training and monthly incentives, fostering empowerment and encouraging their active involvement.

In 2023, WFP launched a **new 'satellite school kitchen' modality**, where existing school kitchens expand the production of cold meals to additional students in nearby schools. By April 2025, 21,400 students across 12 different school kitchens and 34 nearby schools received cold meals with plans to reach 24,000 students by end of 2025.

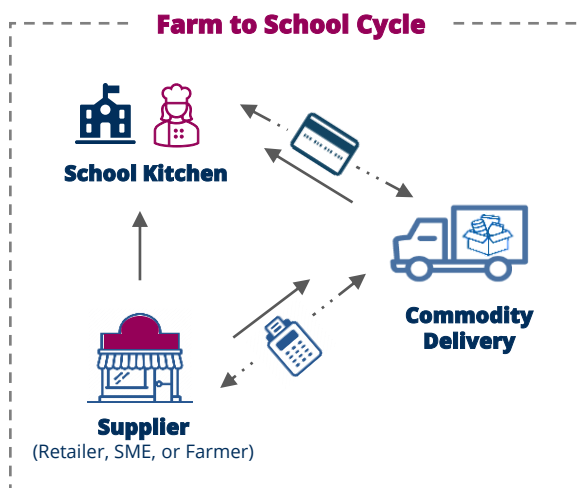
To ensure the effectiveness of the programme, the snack and meal distributions are monitored by WFP's partners in collaboration with school health educators, while a third-party company regularly monitors partners' warehouses, school kitchens and end-products to ensure food safety and quality.



FROM FARMS TO SCHOOLS

Aiming to optimize the procurement process of the school kitchen model, WFP initiated a pilot project in May 2023, testing decentralized and direct procurement of cold meal ingredients by school kitchens through WFP-supported retail shops using cash-based transfer (CBT) Cards. After a successful pilot with approximately **26 percent annual cost savings**, the decentralized approach was expanded in the 2023-2024 school year to all twelve school kitchens serving 39 schools and sourcing ingredients locally from ten WFP-contracted retailers. Notably, **92 percent of student-consumed food is procured locally**, of which 68 percent are locally produced fruits and vegetables.

Moreover, as part of its commitment to promote the **Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) model**, in 2024 WFP launched a pilot project connecting school kitchens with local agri-food businesses supported by the [WFP Food System Challenge](#) or other emerging local agri-businesses. Agrifresh, a WFP-supported SME, was initially selected to supply fresh produce to designated school kitchens, while efforts continue to build the capacity of additional SMEs to meet food safety standards. As a result, three new SMEs, two dairy companies and one hummus producer have been integrated into the supply chain to be linked to school kitchens. This initiative benefits local farmers, stimulates the local economy, and strengthens local food systems.



NUTRITION EDUCATION

WFP and UNICEF are collaborating with MEHE to enhance nutrition education for school-aged children (KG1 to Grade 12) and their parents. This initiative aims to **promote healthy eating habits** by revising, updating, and rolling out a **comprehensive nutrition package and learning modules**. The ultimate goal is to integrate these materials into the formal curriculum, equipping primary and secondary students with essential knowledge on nutrition and healthy choices, ensuring long-term well-being and improved dietary habits.

SUPPORTING THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT TOWARDS A NATIONAL SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME

WFP is supporting the Government of Lebanon and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) to develop a roadmap for **establishing a national school feeding programme** aligned with the 5-year National General Education Plan (2021–2025). In pursuit of this goal, WFP provided essential **technical assistance to MEHE staff**, specifically enhancing their proficiency in monitoring and reporting on school meals programmes. In 2021 and 2022, WFP held workshops with the Government to lay the foundation to conduct the **SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results)** exercise in 2023. This will support the Government in gathering systematic and verifiable information about the quality of policies and systems in place relevant to establishing a national school feeding programme. WFP also supported the engagement of the Government with the **global School Meals Coalition**. In 2023, Lebanon joined the coalition of more than 120 member states and partners by signing the commitment to advance school feeding in Lebanon and develop a National School Meals Policy by 2025.

Recognizing the need for streamlined data management, WFP developed a **digital tracking system of school meals** to gather meal distribution data. To ensure the effective implementation of the system, WFP **trained 432 health educators, supervisors and directors** on its use. The system is successfully used by all trained school staff in 164 schools, significantly improving information accuracy and accessibility and enabling MEHE and WFP to monitor the orders and delivery of snacks with near-real-time data. To further mainstream inclusion of people living with disabilities, WFP signed in May 2024 a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with MEHE and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to **expand the School Meals Programme to 10 private free schools** hosting the Dirasa programme. The Dirasa programme aims to bring **out-of-school children**, including children with disabilities, back into classrooms.

In May 2024, WFP, MEHE, UNICEF, and the French Development Agency (AFD) launched **the first national assessment of school nutrition and food environments** in 386 public schools. The study aims to understand students' dietary behaviors, preferences, and purchasing habits, informing the long-term vision for a national school feeding policy and aligning with Lebanon's commitments to the Global School Coalition. More than 400 school staff were trained on the student questionnaire to support the data collection exercise across public schools. 4,500 families, 6,710 students and 300 school directors were interviewed, with results expected in 2025.

Finally, during the 2024-2025 school year, in collaboration with local mills and bakeries, WFP piloted the **fortification of meal bread** components to further reduce the risks of malnutrition among school-aged children.

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BUILDING RESILIENCE & SUPPORTING LIVELIHOODS

WFP LEBANON – APRIL 2025



6,200 LEBANESE AND
SYRIAN REFUGEES participants
in FFA and FFT activities in 2024



benefiting **23,000**
vulnerable individuals



400 DAIRY PRODUCERS
supported and trained in 2024



46% seeing profit margin increase
of **10%** to **60%**

64% hired new employees

70 barns rehabilitated



219 GREENHOUSES
constructed or rehabilitated in
2024

benefiting **100 local farmers**

boosting their income by **10%**

reducing water consumption by **15%**



41 SUPPORTED SMEs
since 2021 under the Food
System Challenge



Out of **30** assessed SMEs:

27 SMEs supported to substitute imports

102 new jobs created

400 tons of food waste prevented

400 farmers and farm workers engaged



In 2024, Lebanon's food insecurity was exacerbated by the conflict with Israel, which has strained infrastructure and hindered access to basic needs. Over 130 municipalities faced high risks of agricultural land and asset damage, with 336 strikes on cropland, 74 of which affected irrigated areas. Displacement and **restricted access to land and labor** resulted in unharvested and abandoned croplands, heightening food insecurity. Climate change further amplifies these challenges, including **water scarcity, unplanned urbanization, and land degradation**, compounding the already dire development and food security situation. Projections indicate a potential **50 percent reduction in water availability** during the dry season, causing annual economic losses of 1.1 percent to 2 percent of Lebanon's real GDP by 2040.

WFP's Livelihood and Resilience Programme aims to address these challenges through an integrated set of interventions which sustainably improve the resilience of marginalized Lebanese, refugees, and communities to economic and climatic shocks and strengthen local producers and businesses to increase their production quantity and quality, market access, and competitiveness, ultimately reducing their vulnerability to future shocks and their reliance on humanitarian assistance.

EMPOWERING LIVES AND LANDS IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED LEBANON

Through its **Food Assistance for Assets (FFA)** and **Food Assistance for Training (FFT)** activities, WFP supported food-insecure Lebanese and Syrian individuals with cash assistance by engaging them in the construction and rehabilitation of community assets and the development of income-generating skills, including land management activities over 107 hectares, the construction of 0.4 km of road, and vocational training such as beekeeping. To boost local production capacity, incomes and sustainable resource management, WFP supported the construction and rehabilitation of **219 greenhouses**, for **100 farmers** (30 percent women). Each greenhouse produced 4–5 tons of tomatoes and 2 tons of cucumbers per season,

generating USD 2,100 in net profits and boosting farmer incomes by 10 percent. Farmers also received 5,000 training sessions on safe pesticide use, soil fertility, and water management, reducing pesticide residues and promoting safer food production. All supported greenhouses were equipped with drip irrigation systems, reducing water usage by 10–15 percent. **In the dairy sector**, WFP trained **400 producers and processors** (33 percent women) on best practices, offering tools and services to enhance production. As a result, 64 percent increased their workforce, 72 percent reported productivity gains of 10–30 percent, and nearly half reported profit increases of 10–60 percent. To reduce post-harvest losses, WFP also established a **solar-powered apple processing facility** in Anjar, capable of processing 390 metric tons annually, 10 percent of the district's apple yield, creating a reliable market for surplus produce.

In 2025, WFP will implement a post-conflict recovery plan to strengthen local food systems. Support will expand to more farmers, include flood mitigation, address the dairy sector's livestock feed shortage, driven by import dependency and limited technical capacity, and promote sustainable waste management through a new composting facility, boosting rural resilience.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Satellite imagery analysis of WFP's FFA sites in 2024 showed that **63 percent of the 107 created assets were visible and maintained**, with 38 percent improving vegetation and soil conditions compared to pre-intervention averages and control sites, and 60 percent maintaining stable vegetation health. Notably, forestry interventions increased soil moisture and vegetation health in all seasons, boosting crop productivity, climate resilience and carbon sequestration. Overall, these results confirm the long-term sustainability of WFP's interventions.

THE FOOD SYSTEM CHALLENGE: STRENGTHENING LEBANON'S AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

WFP launched the Food System Challenge in 2021 to support Lebanese small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the agri-food sector to tackle challenges related to raw material and energy access, boost local production, and reduce reliance on imports. Since then, WFP has supported **41 SMEs** with grants of up to USD 100,000 each, technical assistance, business development services, and tailored coaching.

An impact assessment of 30 SMEs assisted by WFP in 2023–2024 highlighted **significant outcomes**: 102 new jobs created, 58 staff upskilled, productivity gains across 10 commodities, and almost 400 tons of food waste prevented. The supported SMEs engaged over 396 farmers and farm workers, creating income-generating opportunities across the value chain. WFP also helped 27 SMEs substitute agri-food imports and nine enhance the production of agri-food inputs. One enterprise pioneered a renewable energy solution to make irrigation more affordable for farmers. In 2024, **WFP linked three of these supported SMEs to supply the school meals programme** with dairy, fruits, and vegetables. Additionally, capacity-building initiatives enabled one agri-food SME, not directly supported by WFP, to meet food safety and quality standards, allowing it to supply schools in 2025 and expand its market share. This future.

INNOVATION FOR RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS

As part of the **Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator (AFCIA)** initiative, which promotes advancing climate adaptation solutions, WFP has selected three innovative ventures to receive up to USD 200,000 in cash and technical support to develop their solutions further. These ventures focus on soil biofertilizers, solar-powered ovens for baking, and sustainable livestock management.

EMPOWERING NATIONAL SYSTEMS: BUILDING RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

In April 2024, WFP and Lebanon's Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen national food security systems. This agreement focused on establishing a dedicated **Food Security Analysis Unit** and enhancing data-driven monitoring tools, including crop mapping and IPC analysis. As part of this collaboration, WFP and FAO conducted a **Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM)** with MoA in July 2024. The assessment revealed a sharp decline in staple crop yields due to adverse weather, economic instability, and conflict. It also highlighted the vulnerability of market systems. The CFSAM called for urgent interventions, and its findings will inform the next **National Agriculture Strategy**.

Under the same MoU, WFP conducted a needs assessment of the MoA's **Kfarchima Phytopharmacy Laboratory**, launched a procurement process, and

upgraded its equipment. WFP also carried out **urgent maintenance** on MoA facilities, repairing roof leaks and structural damage to ensure a safe and functional work environment.

Following the November 2024 ceasefire, and during Q1 2025, in collaboration with FAO, UNDP, and the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS) and under MoA leadership, conducted a **damage assessment** to evaluate the impact on agricultural lands and rural livelihoods. Using geospatial analysis, field verification, and mixed-method data collection, the assessment provides a detailed understanding of the post-conflict agricultural landscape. These findings will shape the design and targeting of WFP's **livelihood recovery plan**.

FROM CRISIS TO RECOVERY: REBUILDING FOOD SYSTEMS

The recent conflict has exacerbated Lebanon's economic crisis, pushing vulnerable communities further into poverty and food insecurity by disrupting their livelihoods. Agriculture, livestock, and fisheries were heavily affected, with over 14,700 damaged agricultural assets, including farmland, food processing units, and fish farms; significant livestock losses and many struggling agri-food SMEs, facing collapse. Smallholder farmers and SMEs are unable to recover without support to restore livelihoods and rebuild food systems. In response, WFP has developed a three-pronged strategy for livelihood recovery:

- **Restoring agricultural and livestock production** by supporting small-scale farmers with inputs, productive assets, and technical assistance.
- **Revitalizing food production and value chains** through the restoration of farmlands, irrigation systems, livestock shelters, and market infrastructure.
- **Rebuilding restocked and operational MSMEs** in the agri-food sector, enhancing their capacity to aggregate, process, and distribute food products.

Activities across the three pillars will be sequenced and integrated, reinforcing one another to generate synergies. All interventions align with WFP's 2025 livelihoods strategy, targeting 50,800 people across Lebanon to restore sustainable livelihoods and strengthen communities' ability to withstand future shocks.



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