

# CASH ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES

WFP Lebanon - September 2025



**1 million**  
SYRIAN REFUGEES  
Assisted in 2025

52% 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 supported Syrian refugees in Lebanon, adapting its assistance modalities in response to evolving needs and challenges. What began with food parcels later shifted to paper vouchers and, since 2013, has taken the form of cash-based assistance through electronic bank cards. Over a decade of compounding crises has left Syrian refugees increasingly vulnerable. Today, **three out of four refugees are unable to meet their essential needs**, while nearly two-thirds live below survival thresholds.

The conflict in Lebanon in 2024 further deepened the hardship of already distressed families. Although WFP temporarily raised the transfer value of its cash assistance in late 2024, from USD 115 to USD 145 for a family of five, the adjustment only **covered half of basic household needs**.

In parallel, significant shifts in population movements have reshaped the humanitarian landscape. Following Syria's political transition in December 2024, some **273,000 Syrians returned home from Lebanon**. In July 2025, the Government of Lebanon, with UN support, launched a voluntary return plan. By late August, nearly 115,000 Syrians had registered to return under this process facilitated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Government of Lebanon, primarily from the North, Akkar, the Bekaa, and Baalbek-Hermel, with Homs and Idlib emerging as key destinations. At the same time, **a new displacement wave from Syria has strained resources**. According to UNHCR, more than **100,000 Syrians have fled to Lebanon**, since December 2024. However, as reported by local authorities and based on field observations, **this figure is underestimated due to registration challenges and limited monitoring**.

In 2025, severe funding shortfalls and delays in donor contributions have forced the WFP to scale down its operations. Since January 2025, monthly **cash assistance has been reduced by 22 percent**, from 830,000 individuals to 663,000, equivalent to just three-quarters of the established Needs-Based Plan. With persistent funding shortfalls reducing aid, the food security situation is projected to worsen, with **33 percent of Syrian refugees expected to face acute food insecurity by October 2025**.

In parallel, UNHCR launched a **Presence Verification Exercise** in the second quarter of 2025 to confirm refugee permanence, update geographical distribution, and ensure reliable beneficiary data. This process has directly influenced WFP programme planning: 42,000 households (equivalent to 200,000 beneficiaries) were suspended since June 2025 pending verification, with around 20,000 reinstated upon verification as of mid-September.

## ADAPTING TO A CHALLENGING CONTEXT

**To maximize impact under financial constraints** in 2025, WFP and UNHCR shifted to shorter, six-month assistance cycles to improve alignment with funding flows, reduce disruption, and ensure that support remains focused on the most vulnerable. In 2025, **two successive targeting exercises were conducted** rather than the usual single cycle. **For the April-September** period, updated econometric scores from 2024 have been applied alongside categorical and geographic prioritization criteria, ensuring inclusion of families with protection risks or from conflict-affected areas, targeting 660,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

**From November 2025 until April 2026**, targeting draws on new data from the 2025 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VaSYR), which indicates that 838,000 Syrian refugees are eligible for support. Due to resource constraints, only 422,000 people (90,300 households), **50 percent of the eligible population, can be prioritized by WFP and/or UNHCR**. WFP will cover 358,000 individuals (75,000 households). Without predictable, flexible funding, **coverage may fall below 50 percent**, leaving hundreds of thousands without essential support, threatening both humanitarian outcomes and Lebanon's fragile stability.

Throughout these exercises, **transparent communication remains a priority**, with outreach volunteers, frontline partners, social media, and tailored Q&A materials helping refugees understand eligibility and mitigate uncertainty.

## ASSISTANCE TO NEW ARRIVALS FROM SYRIA

New arrivals from Syria continue to face critical protection challenges in a context marked by limited resources, constrained humanitarian space, and a lack of clear national policy. Since December 2024, WFP has rapidly scaled up emergency food assistance, reaching 62,000 newly arrived Syrians with hot meals, Ready-To-Eat (RTE) food kits and food parcels across more than 200 informal shelters and host communities in Akkar, North Lebanon, Bekaa, Baalbek-El Hermel, and Mount Lebanon governorates. With limited resources, WFP provides hot meals and RTE kits to 25,000 Syrians in shelters and food parcels to 37,000 in host communities.

## ONE CARD, THREE CASH TYPES

Cash-based assistance, delivered via electronic cards, offers 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 family size.

**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 100 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.

## 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 of Syrian refugees in Lebanon continues to be undermined by conflict aftershocks, inflation, economic stagnation, and widening funding gaps. This translates into **458,000 Syrian refugees projected to be acutely food insecure** (IPC 3 and above) by October 2025.

WFP monitoring results in January 2025 revealed a significant deterioration in refugee households' economic conditions. **Only 19 percent** of assisted households could afford the cost of their basic needs, **a steep decline from 35 percent in August 2024**. Without factoring in WFP's cash support, **81 percent of assisted Syrian refugee households** would have been unable to afford the cost of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) in January 2025.

Coping strategies also worsened: 32 percent of assisted households resorted to crisis coping strategies, more than double the 15 percent reported in August 2024. When faced with a shortage of food, assisted households were mainly **borrowing cash** (63 percent), **reducing payments on essential utilities** (24 percent), and **sending a child to work** (19 percent). Debt remained widespread, with 82 percent of assisted and non-assisted households reporting **accumulated debt**.

## 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.

## 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, the GRM has been suspended since April 2025, due to funding constraints. 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, expanding to 56 by 2025** across Lebanon. This network has enhanced communication and outreach within local communities. Volunteers played a key role in identifying challenges at redemption points, referring unresolved cases to the hotline, and providing direct support to beneficiaries.



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# FOOD ASSISTANCE FOR VULNERABLE LEBANESE AND DISPLACED SYRIANS

WFP Lebanon - September 2025

 **165,000**  
VULNERABLE LEBANESE  
Assisted in 2025

 **133,000 MT**  
of Distributed Food  
since 2020

 **306,000**  
CONFLICT-AFFECTED LEBANESE  
Assisted in 2025

 **62,000**  
SYRIANS NEWLY DISPLACED  
FROM SYRIA  
Assisted Dec 2024 – Aug 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. During the peak and the tail of the economic crisis, 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 36-fold.

In addition, in-kind food parcels and Ready-to-Eat rations played a critical role as a **rapid response mechanism in areas affected by displacement and hardship during the recent conflict**, which peaked between 23 September and the end of November 2024. While nearly 83,000 people remain displaced, food security in Lebanon continues to be undermined by conflict aftershocks, inflation, economic stagnation, and widening funding gaps. As a result, food insecurity is projected to rise, with **705,000 Lebanese (18 percent of the population) expected to face acute food insecurity** by October 2025 compared to 591,000 (15 percent of the population) in June 2025.

## 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.

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

During the first half of 2025, WFP provided in-kind assistance for **116,000 vulnerable Lebanese** (28,000 households).

In the second quarter of 2025, WFP launched a targeting exercise to assess the vulnerability of **25,000 Lebanese households** who requested in-kind food assistance via Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM) channels. Combined with earlier 2024 assessments, 97,100 households were evaluated.

Due to funding constraints, WFP prioritized 21,100 of the most vulnerable for in-kind food assistance **from July to December 2025**. All households were notified of their eligibility via SMS. Through the appeal process, around 2,600 additional households have been deemed eligible for support.

The programme included these households starting from the August 2025 distribution cycle to reach a total caseload of **23,500 Lebanese households**.

## 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 **850,000 Lebanese and newly displaced Syrians** with one or more rounds of food assistance between October 2023 and September 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, which displaced 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 **displaced Lebanese and returnees, reaching 432,000**, while responding to the urgent needs of **62,000 newly displaced Syrians** following the start of the political transition in Syria in December 2024.

Responding to the impact of the conflict, WFP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, supported the **rehabilitation and operations of selected kitchens in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) schools** to prepare meals for people still displaced from that conflict, living in shelters. After setting up two community kitchens in Beirut and Zahle by May 2025, WFP activated a third one in Tripoli in July, which is providing daily meals to new arrivals from Syria to North Lebanon.



## REACHING THE RIGHT PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

WFP ensures the most vulnerable Lebanese families receive support by leveraging referrals from cooperating partners. 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.

The retargeting exercise conducted mid 2025 highlighted the key role of CFM, particularly the WFP call centre, in reaching those most in need, **with 28 percent of the prioritized families being new cases referred through CFM channels.**

## IMPACT OF ASSISTANCE

In 2024/2025, 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 effects of different targeting approaches for in-kind food assistance** on household food insecurity, socioeconomic welfare, and perceptions of fairness and accountability.

Findings showed that **no single targeting method consistently produced better outcomes** on its own, but that **overlaying different methods improved the accuracy** of reaching the most vulnerable households and reduced exclusion errors. Households flagged by several targeting approaches were more dependent on assistance, and discontinuation led to larger drops in food security and well-being among them. Overall, the endline results confirmed that **discontinuing food assistance has serious negative consequences on vulnerable households**, including reduced food expenditure and consumption, greater reliance on negative coping strategies such as borrowing or buying food on credit, and declines in overall life satisfaction, mental well-being and trust in institutions. Importantly, providing households with a **longer warning period before discontinuation did not mitigate these adverse effects**, underlining the need for alternative transition strategies.

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# GOVERNMENT SUPPORT: BUILDING SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

WFP Lebanon – September 2025



**776,000**

Lebanese Enrolled in one unified Social Safety Net - AMAN Programme



**First Call Centre**

Established at MOSA



**198,000**

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



**USD 18 million**

Transferred to Conflict-affected Lebanese through SRSN in 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, implementing cash transfers to vulnerable households on a monthly basis, as well as monitoring 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 the Government **halted the programme** in 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 and based on a recertification exercise, 73,000 eligible former **NPTP households were integrated into AMAN** by October 2024, marking a major milestone towards unifying Lebanon's social safety net. AMAN simultaneously expanded from 416,000 to **794,000 individuals** (from 96,600 to 166,800 households). In September 2025, WFP delivered a final payment to AMAN beneficiaries before **MoSA took over with its payment module**.

As part of the restructuring of the AMAN programme, the PCM, the MoSA, WFP, and the World Bank advanced preparations for the **AMAN recertification exercise**. A pilot conducted in August 2025 tested tools and processes through 684 household visits. Identified issues are being resolved, while the related technical assistance contract is being finalized before launching nationwide data collection.

## 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 October 2025, **705,000 Lebanese are expected to face acute hunger**, compared to 591,000 in April 2025.

In response to the escalating conflict throughout 2024, WFP supported MoSA in establishing **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 **94,000 individuals by August 2025**, reaching only 40 percent of those in need.



## LAYING THE GROUNDWORK: SUPPORTING COORDINATED RECOVERY ASSISTANCE

Following the September 2024 conflict escalation, WFP has played a central role in **embedding recovery assistance into national systems** by supporting the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) to **lead centralized targeting, registration, and coordination** across the Food Security and Agriculture Sector and Basic Assistance Sector partners. In November 2024, WFP and UNICEF signed a technical agreement with MoSA to support nationwide data collection of conflict-affected populations, enabling targeted emergency and recovery cash assistance and **reducing duplication among humanitarian responders**.

As part of the registration exercise of conflict-affected people 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. From January 2025, trained social workers conducted home visits to assess living conditions and identify registered household needs, targeting approximately 100,000 families. To ensure data integrity, WFP and MoSA implemented quality control measures, including random verification calls.

As the 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 provided **technical assistance** in database assessment, SOP development for data and user access management and assistance mapping. Most importantly, **WFP coordination support** to MoSA enabled **17 partners**, including WFP, to have a streamlined approach for six months of emergency cash assistance, targeting **30,000 conflict-affected Lebanese households** not covered by social safety nets, from June to November 2025, including 17,000 assisted by WFP.

In September 2025, WFP and MoSA signed the Digitization Collaboration Framework agreement to support the Ministry's digital transformation across infrastructure, technical assistance, and capacity development, including IT systems, a National Data Warehouse, secure data protocols, process optimization, and staff training. 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.

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.

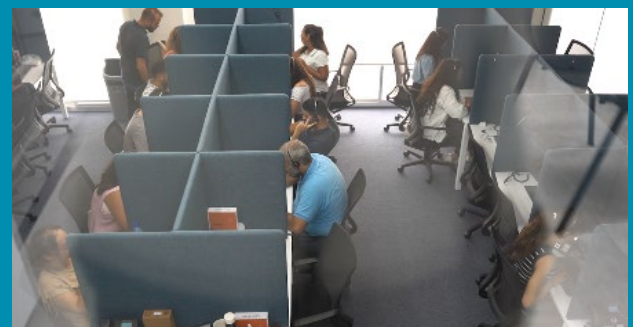
Building on these efforts, WFP and UN Women signed an agreement in June 2023 to expand GESI training and conduct a study to strengthen gender and inclusion in the NPTP. This partnership led to training for an additional **445 MoSA staff and a follow-up study in 2024** addressing the specific needs and 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 till August 2025, the call centre received over **220,000 claims** registered from **108,000 callers**. 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 – September 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 2025-2026 school year



2024-2025 School Year

**1 million**

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

**360,000**

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. The programme promotes a healthy school environment for all communities by targeting vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian children.

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 2024-2025 school year, **37 million snacks** have been distributed, representing more than **7,300 metric tons of food**.

During the academic year 2024-2025, around **107,000 students across 314 public schools** benefited from daily healthy in-school snacks, with plans to gradually reach 130,000 students in 2026, as the registration is ongoing, and schools are opening. From February to June 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 parallel, to further reduce the risks of malnutrition among school-aged children, WFP piloted the **fortification of meal bread components** during the 2024-2025 school year in six WFP-supported school kitchens, serving 47 schools and reaching 7,200 students.

## 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 August 2025, **21,700 students** across 12 different school kitchens and 39 nearby schools received cold meals, with plans to reach 50,000 students by the end of the 2025-2026 academic year. WFP, in close collaboration with MEHE, will **expand school kitchens for the 2025-2026 academic year, selecting 10 new sites** from 135 model primary schools.

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

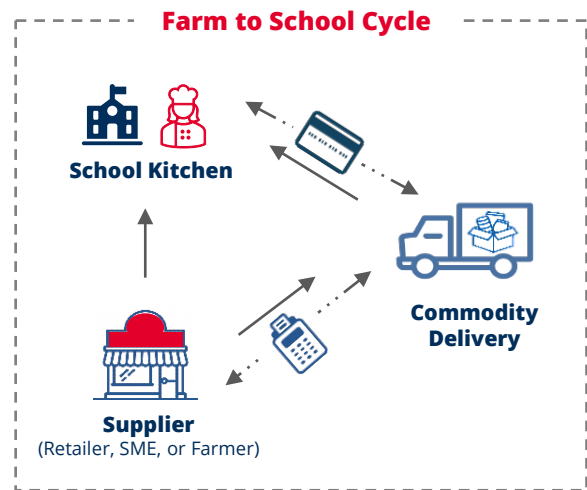
Aiming to optimize the procurement process of the school kitchen model, WFP initiated a pilot project in May 2023, testing decentralized and direct procurement of cold meal ingredients by school kitchens through WFP-supported retail shops using cash-based transfer (CBT) cards. After a successful pilot with approximately **26 percent annual cost savings**, the decentralized approach was expanded in the following school years to include all twelve school kitchens serving 39 nearby 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 \(FSG\)](#) or with other emerging local agri-businesses. By May 2025, **four local SMEs**, two dairy companies, one hummus and one fresh produce company, including three supported under the WFP Food System Challenge, **were integrated into the supply chain and linked to school kitchens**. Additionally, two women-led dairy SMEs in North Lebanon, were selected to supply schools with dairy products starting in September 2025. Improvement plans and capacity-building support for these two SMEs began in May, focusing on infrastructure, equipment upgrades and technical assistance to enhance products' quality. This initiative benefits local farmers, stimulates the local economy, and strengthens local food systems.

## NUTRITION EDUCATION

In May 2024, Lebanon conducted its **first national assessment of school nutrition** and food environments across 386 public schools, led by WFP, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), the United Nations Children's Fund UNICEF, and the French Development Agency (AFD). The study offers a baseline on student health and school food environments, supporting the development of a national school feeding policy. Covering over 6,700 students, 4,400 families, and 523 school staff, the findings revealed **a double burden of malnutrition** among Lebanese and non-Lebanese students, with 12–14 percent underweight and 15–20 percent overweight. Additionally, 12 percent of younger students **skipped breakfast because of a lack of food or money to buy food**. Despite strong parental support, only 21 percent of schools engaged parents in nutrition education. **Physical education was lacking** in 64 percent of schools. These results call for urgent targeted policy interventions.

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 working closely with the MEHE to **advance the development of a National School Feeding Policy**, underscoring its commitment to supporting the Ministry in establishing a comprehensive national framework for the programme. Aligned with national priorities and MEHE's strategic objectives, the policy will mark a critical milestone in **institutionalizing school feeding**, setting out the Ministry's long-term vision and commitment. It will also define a roadmap for building institutional capacity, an essential step toward implementing the framework and establishing a sustainable, nationally owned programme.

WFP also supported the Government's engagement 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 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.

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# BUILDING RESILIENCE & SUPPORTING LIVELIHOODS

WFP Lebanon – September 2025



**1,800** LEBANESE AND SYRIAN REFUGEES participants in FFA activities in 2025

benefiting **10,000** vulnerable individuals



**100** GREENHOUSES constructed or rehabilitated in 2025

benefiting **100** local farmers boosting their income reducing water consumption



**41** SMEs SUPPORTED since 2021 under the Food System Challenge

Out of **30** assessed SMEs:  
**168** new jobs created  
**400** tons of food waste prevented  
**400** farmers and farm workers engaged



**11** local SMEs connected to **10** RETAILERS

- Improved access to markets and domestic food production
- Better understanding of market trends
- Sustainable business growth



The conflict with Israel in 2024 significantly strained Lebanon's infrastructure and disrupted access to basic needs. More than 130 municipalities were exposed to high risks of agricultural losses, with 336 strikes recorded on cropland, including 74 on irrigated areas. The **repercussions of war, combined with inflation, economic stagnation, and widening funding gaps, continue to push families deeper into crisis.** By October 2025, an alarming **1.24 million people** in Lebanon, nearly one in four, are projected to face **acute food insecurity.**

The situation is further aggravated by climate change, with increasing water scarcity, unplanned urbanization, and land degradation intensifying development and food security challenges. Lebanon is enduring one of its **most severe water shortages in decades:** rainfall in 2025 fell to just 51 percent of the national average. Pollution has rendered much of the remaining water unsafe, shutting down hydroelectric plants and worsening electricity shortages. Today, **more than 1.85 million people,** about one-third of the population, **live in areas highly vulnerable to drought,** while 44 percent depend on unsafe and costly water trucking. Meanwhile, **drought, extreme weather events, fuel hoarding, and skyrocketing input costs have further disrupted agricultural production,** threatening farmers' livelihoods.

In the face of these challenges, WFP is working to provide more than immediate relief. Through its Livelihood and Resilience Programme, WFP is investing in long-term solutions to strengthen the resilience of Lebanese and refugees. In 2025, as part of its commitment to community-driven programming, WFP carried out **Community-Based Participatory Planning (CBPP) consultations,** ensuring that farmers, cooperatives, women's groups, persons with disabilities, NGOs, and local authorities all have a voice in shaping recovery. These consultations **identified urgent needs:** repairing damaged infrastructure, addressing water shortages, lowering production costs, and reconnecting markets.

Looking forward to 2025–2026, WFP is **scaling up its investments in areas hardest hit by conflict and water scarcity.** With adequate support, WFP can foster sustainable food systems, enhance market linkages, and build the capacities of value chain actors to reduce vulnerabilities and reliance on humanitarian assistance. Continued donor engagement will be vital to prevent further deterioration and to give communities a chance to recover.

## EMPOWERING LIVES AND LANDS IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED LEBANON

In 2025, WFP continued to empower vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugees through its Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) initiative. Participants **received cash assistance while engaging in activities that strengthened community resilience and improved livelihoods,** with a focus on water management and land reclamation.

In addition, other initiatives provided local communities with **greenhouse support and training** on agriculture improvement, composting and waste management, climate change, soil and water test sessions, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), product value addition, business and marketing.

As part of the EU-funded project "Contributing to Food Security for Refugees and Host Communities Living in Lebanon," WFP, in collaboration with FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture, provided **cash assistance for conflict-affected farmers.** Leveraging official registries, 2,125 farmers were initially identified based on key criteria, including active agricultural engagement and reported conflict-related damage. By August 2025, **1,885 farmers** had already received a one-off cash transfer of USD 300, with the project targeting a total of 5,000 farmers.

WFP also established a **composting facility at Akkar's Agricultural Market,** an innovation by local youth, capable of processing 10 tons of organic waste daily. Officially handed over to NGO EMKAN in June, the facility transforms vegetable and fruit waste into compost, which is sold to local farmers at more accessible prices than imported fertilizer. Revenues cover operating costs, creating a self-sustaining cycle that supports both environmental sustainability and community resilience.

## 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 in partnership with Berytech, has supported **41 SMEs** with grants of up to USD 100,000 each, technical assistance, business development services, and tailored coaching. In 2025, **11 SMEs** benefited from this support.

Berytech conducted an **impact assessment** of 30 SMEs assisted by WFP in 2023–2024 highlighting **significant outcomes**: 168 new jobs created, 441 jobs safeguarded, 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.

To promote integration within the local food system, WFP linked **two local SMEs**, supported under the WFP Food System Challenge, **to the school meals programme** for the provision of dairy and fresh produce. Based on the success of the pilot, the initiative has been scaled up, identifying two additional **women-led dairy SMEs**, both previously supported under the Food System Challenge, to supply schools with dairy products starting in September 2025. Improvement plans and capacity-building support for these two SMEs began in May, focusing on infrastructure, equipment upgrades and technical assistance. This initiative not only strengthens local food systems but also benefits local farmers and stimulates the local economy.

In parallel, WFP launched a pilot to **link Food System Challenge SMEs with WFP's retailer network**, improving their market access. The pilot aims to strengthen access to local markets and domestic food production; deepen understanding of market trends and consumer preferences; and establish strategic partnerships for sustainable business growth. By September 2025, **11 SMEs and 10 retailers** were engaged in the pilot, with orders already placed worth around USD 18,600.



## EMPOWERING NATIONAL SYSTEMS: BUILDING RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

In April 2024, WFP and Lebanon's Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen national food security systems. The agreement focused on establishing a Food Security Analysis Unit and **enhancing monitoring tools**, including crop mapping and IPC analysis.

In July 2024, WFP, FAO, and MoA conducted a **Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM)**, which revealed sharp declines in staple crop yields due to adverse weather, economic instability, and conflict, alongside fragile market systems. Its findings will guide urgent interventions and the upcoming National Agriculture Strategy.

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by WFP and Lebanon's **Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)** in 2024 to **strengthen national food security systems**, in 2025, WFP upgraded the MoA's **Kfarchima Phytopharmacy Laboratory** and carried out **urgent maintenance** on MoA facilities to ensure a safe and functional work environment.

In early 2025, WFP, in collaboration with FAO, UNDP, and the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS) and under MoA leadership, conducted a **damage assessment** using geospatial analysis and field data to evaluate the impact of the 2024 conflict on agriculture and rural livelihoods, shaping WFP's livelihood recovery plan. Moreover, in July 2025, WFP completed the construction of a **vegetable nursery** in North Lebanon at the MoA's regional centre, to support small-scale farmers with seedlings.

### INCLUSIVE LIVELIHOODS: LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

WFP also advances **disability inclusion in its livelihood programme** through a twin-track approach that combines mainstream participation and targeted support. Persons with disabilities are actively included in all projects, with an additional USD 2 per day provided to help **cover transportation costs**. Identification is strengthened through the **Washington Group Questions** and training for cooperating partners.

In early 2025, WFP partnered with Berytech to help 11 SMEs adopt **accessibility and inclusive practices**. Building on this, WFP launched a pilot project in North Lebanon to **support three micro businesses led by persons with disabilities**, primarily women, until November 2025. This initiative aligns with WFP's Disability Inclusion Action Plan and Livelihood Strategy, ensuring no one is left behind.

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