



7 June 2013

SYRIA CONFLICT: HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN THE REGION DEEPENS

World Food Programme scales up food aid to Syrian refugees in Lebanon and neighbouring countries to cope with massive influx of refugees

As the international community revises its estimates of the scale of the humanitarian needs with the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan launched Friday 7 June in Geneva, new figures show that the number of refugees in **Lebanon** has now reached half a million – in a country with a population of just over 4 million.

With the continuous fighting and the increase in needs, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) appealed today for more than one billion US dollars to feed up to 7 million Syrians from now and until the end of the year.

These include 4 million people inside Syria and 2.7 million people in neighbouring countries in urgent need of assistance, making this WFP's most challenging, complex and largest emergency worldwide.

In Lebanon, WFP anticipates there'll be more than twice as many Syrian refugees needing food aid by the end of the year. They've now announced they'll scale up aid to reach more than four times the 370,000 people they're helping now.

Most of the refugees are hosted in over 1200 villages and towns across the country. They get food vouchers they can spend in local shops. But in some areas, like the Bekaa Valley, up to 20 percent of them are living in makeshift tent communities. There they receive food parcels while they wait to be registered.

Meanwhile more than 1,000km away in **Armenia**, around 8,000 Syrians of Armenian ethnic origin are struggling to get by and feed their families -- 5,000 of them are considered by the Government to be vulnerable and in need of food aid. Many left Aleppo and Damascus to escape the fighting and have now exhausted their savings. In June, WFP plans to provide them with staple foods for 6 months.

This Video visits the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon to see how local communities are coping, the scale of food aid and the human impact of the crisis. It includes interviews with beneficiaries and key WFP staff on the scale of the needs. It also visits Yerevan Armenia, to show the upheaval now facing Syrian refugees there.

Shotlist :

Shot : 5th June 2013 Bekaa Valley, Lebanon.

- 00 00 Title slates
- 00 13 Bekaa Valley in Lebanon
- 00 21 Street in Qob Elias, Bekaa and Road sign
- 00 25 Close up to a road sign showing the way to Syria
- 00 30 Pan from municipality sign to Syrian refugees waiting at the municipality of Qob Elias in the Bekaa valley
- 0037 Sign of the Qob Elias municipality
- 00 41 Syrian refugees entering the municipality
- 00 48 Close up of a Syrian refugee waiting to register with the municipality
- 0057 Mayor Fayyad Haydar, head of Qob Elias municipality, talking to WFP staff
- 0109 SOT (Arabic) of Fayyad Haydar, Mayor Qob Elias municipality
The municipality is working at full capacity but the needs are putting immense pressure on us due to the increasing numbers of refugees. The municipality alone is not able to cope; it is almost impossible.
- 0123 cutaways of Fayyad Haydar talking to Syrian refugees
- 0126 SOT (Arabic) Fayyad Haydar
"In our municipality, there are around 16,000 registered refugees. 40% of them live in houses and 60% in tents."
- 0138 Views of a tented settlement for Syrian refugees in Qob Elias
- 0154 WFP together with partner NGO Handicap International handing out food parcels and non-food items to Syrian refugees at a distribution site in Fa'our village, central Bekaa
- 0158 Syrian refugees waiting at the distribution site in Fa'our
- 02 08 Syrian refugee woman, Iman, receiving WFP food parcels
- 0214 SOT (Arabic) of Iman (22 years old), Syrian refugee mother who fled with her 4 children from Al-Qusayr in Homs in early May to Hesieh (25 Km South of Homs) where she stayed for 3days before she crossed to Fa'our in the Bekaa.
"I came from Al-Qusayr, went to Hesieh first then to Lebanon. I came with my neighbours. I told them, take me with you wherever you go. Here I am staying at my neighbors' house with my kids and now I am receiving food assistance."
- 0228 Close up of boxes of food assistance.
WFP provides 42.8 kg of food commodities containing oil, cheese, tuna and canned meat, coffee, pasta, Halava, wheat flour, bulgur, sugar, rice, and dry pulses enough for a family of 5 people for one month. This assistance is given to newly arriving families who are vulnerable and

- 0233 have not yet registered with UNHCR.
SOT (English) of Ingolfur Palsson, head of WFP sub-office in the Bekaa
“Every month we have 50,000 people crossing the border to Lebanon coming from Syria. And every month we are increasing our capacity to meet the needs of these people. For us, food is the highest priority for these people at the moment. We’re able to cope, but it’s getting more and more difficult.”
- 0250 Food voucher distribution site in Bar Elias in the Bekaa
0257 WFP handing out food vouchers to Syrian refugees in Bar Elias. The WFP food voucher in Lebanon has a value of US\$27 per person per month. It helps both refugees and the local economy.
- 0304 Close up to a food voucher
0307 Amira, a Syrian refugee, using the WFP voucher to buy food from a local shop in Bar Elias
- 0313 Amira redeeming the voucher at the counter
0317 SOT (Arabic) of Amira, 40 year old widow with 4 children. She fled from Al-Qusayr 7 months ago and lives in a tented settlement in Bar Elias
“I came from Al-Qusayr. I fled with my children because of the shelling. Here we receive food vouchers that help us buy what we need. Life here is so difficult.”
- 0332 General shots of the street in the Bekaa

Shot: 23rd May 2013 Yerevan, Armenia

Shotlist:

- 03 39 GV’s Yerevan
04 03 Set-up shots: Maral Narbandy 49, yrs old fled Aleppo, Syria in April 2013. When her home was occupied by Government and then opposition soldiers she and her two sons paid \$150 each to opposition forces to smuggle them out of Syria thru Turkey and Georgia to Yerevan. She works 12 hours a day/6days a week in a cafe but its not enough to pay rent and food. Her sons have not found work.
- 04 31 SOT Maral Narbandy (Armenian):
“Thank God, we managed to flee from Aleppo without trouble. There were so many who died from bombing, bullets, and snipers. You could not stand like this in the street. But thank God, we were not slaughtered on the road either, nothing happened to us. We freed ourselves and now we are here. Still, our future is ruined, what is awaiting us here?”
- 04 57 Maral Narbandy makes tea
05 06 End slate



For more about the story, please contact :
Laure Chadraoui laure.chadraoui@wfp.org +962 79 5917987

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

MR JONATHAN DUMONT, Senior Public Affairs Officer, Communication Branch of the World Food Programme, a UN agency with its Headquarters based in Rome, is travelling to Burkina Faso from March 12 – 16 to officially monitor the World Food Programme's operations.

Any assistance which can be provided to Mr DUMONT will be appreciated.

Thank you.

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Steve Taravella
Deputy Director of
Communications (acting).
Communications Division

