

## BUDGET INCREASE TO EMERGENCY OPERATION SYRIA 200339 BUDGET REVISION 7

### Emergency food assistance to people affected by unrest in Syria

Start date: 13/10/2011   End date: 31/12/2012  
Extension period: Six months   New end date: 30/06/2013

	Cost (United States dollars)		
	Current budget	Increase	Revised budget
Food cost	90,648,386	98,594,505	189,242,891
External transport	5,305,761	3,099,727	8,405,488
LTSH	9,442,470	10,066,857	19,509,327
ODOC	6,124,073	3,095,820	9,219,893
DSC	15,534,438	8,692,006	24,226,444
ISC (7.0 percent)	8,893,859	8,648,424	17,542,283
<b>Total cost to WFP</b>	<b>135,948,986</b>	<b>132,197,339</b>	<b>268,146,325</b>

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### NATURE OF THE INCREASE

1. This budget revision to emergency operation (EMOP) 200339 responds to the worsening situation in Syria and proposes extending the current operation for six months (January-June 2013) to:
  - continue to support 1.5 million beneficiaries with emergency food assistance through general food distributions; and
  - provide a lipid-based nutrient supplement to 50,000 children aged 6-35 months to help prevent acute malnutrition.
  
2. This budget revision will result in increased commodity requirements of 88,182 mt at a food cost of US\$98.6 million; and increased associated costs of US\$33.6 million. The overall project budget will increase from US\$136 million to US\$268 million.

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## JUSTIFICATION FOR BUDGET INCREASE

### Summary of Existing Project Activities

3. EMOP 200339 “Emergency food assistance to people affected by unrest in Syria” has been scaled up six times as the situation in Syria has deteriorated. Since September 2012, this EMOP has been targeting 1.5 million people.
4. Food assistance is provided through a food ration that covers 60 percent of daily energy requirements on the basis that the Government subsidizes bread, the staple food in the Syrian diet. The Government maintains a strategic wheat stock which can reportedly meet food needs for approximately two years and is replenished through tenders when necessary.<sup>1</sup> Since October 2012, the general food ration has included blanket supplementary feeding rations of specialised nutrition products suitable for young children.

### Conclusion and Recommendations of the Re-Assessment

#### *Context*

5. Despite ongoing diplomatic efforts, the conflict in Syria has spread to all parts of the country. Since July, Aleppo, Syria’s second city and home to the largest population, has been strongly contested and remains extremely insecure. Since early November, the capital, Damascus, has become insecure, with signs of conflict reaching most areas, including the neighbourhood of the WFP country office.
6. In October, the office of the Prime Minister estimated 3.2 million people (670,000 families) to be displaced. The 2013 Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan<sup>2</sup> considers that around 4 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, whether they are affected directly or indirectly, including those affected by the drought. As under the previous plans, the directly affected populations include those injured during the events, families who lost their breadwinners or left their home areas, as well as relatives, friends and communities hosting them. The Government, through the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) requested WFP for food assistance for 2.5 million people in October 2012.
7. The Government has hosted thousands of displaced families in over 2,000 accommodation centres in recent weeks. Of 850 schools occupied by families, 600 were evacuated into other public buildings for the beginning of the school year, but there are still 1,500 communal centres occupied by internally displaced persons (IDPs). The Government is coordinating assistance through its line Ministries, SARC and

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<sup>1</sup> Prime Minister’s speech, 3 October 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan (1 January - 30 June 2013), Government of Syria, Prepared in coordination with the United Nations System, 19 December 2012.

community-based charities to provide basic services to displaced families.

8. Only 73 percent of schoolchildren reported back to school in the first week of the school year. Many children have been displaced with their families, or their families do not send children to school because of fears for their safety.
9. The health sector is badly affected by the crisis. Recent data from the Ministry of Health show that 35 percent of hospitals and 10 percent of health centres are damaged. Before the current events started in March 2011, over 90 percent of medicines in Syria were locally produced. The combined effects of economic sanctions, currency fluctuations, unavailability of hard currency, fuel shortages, and increases in operational costs have reduced the production of medicines and other pharmaceutical products. In affected areas, there is a critical shortage of life-saving medicines. Even when limited medicines and supplies are available, their equitable distribution is difficult due to the current situation. The health situation is worsening with each week the crisis continues.
10. The fuel sector has been heavily affected by international sanctions and attacks on fuel supply routes. Damages incurred by the oil export sector in 2012 amount to 245 billion SYP (about US\$3.2 billion). There are severe shortages of cooking fuel and heating fuel across the country, with long queues at suppliers of fuel and gas cylinders. The Government is trying to ensure that heating fuel is available for the winter and plans to distribute 200 litres of heating oil per family.

### *Food Security and Nutrition*

11. The June 2012 joint rapid food security and needs assessment mission identified 3 million people “at risk” of severe food insecurity, and recommended immediate provision of food to 1.5 million people. This mission was led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform and included both WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). This assessment is currently being updated, using the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform enumerators in all governorates, with technical support from FAO and WFP. The results are expected to be available in early 2013, and will provide a more detailed snapshot of the food security situation.
12. Through WFP monitoring, it is evident that the limited livelihood opportunities for displaced families are causing problems related to low food intake and poor health. For example, in Al-Shaddadi village of El Hasakeh governorate, mothers are replacing milk with bread and tea for children under 2; increased cases of malnutrition have been treated by the SARC children’s hospital in Aleppo.

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<sup>3</sup> Stunting prevalence 20-29 percent is “medium”, 30-39 percent is “high” and 40 percent is “very high”. Cut-off values for public health significance. WHO 1995. [www.who.int/nutgrowthb/en](http://www.who.int/nutgrowthb/en). Wasting prevalence 5-9 percent is “poor”, 10-14 percent is “serious” and above 15 percent is “critical”. WHO 1995. Cut-off values for public health significance [www.who.int/nutgrowthb/en](http://www.who.int/nutgrowthb/en)

<sup>4</sup> According to the Ministry of Health, 363,000 children were measured in the first half of 2011 compared to only 109,000 in the first half of 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Admission criteria : all children from 6-35 months with MUAC <135 mm and > 125mm.

13. A substantial population now relies on food assistance as their only means of meeting their dietary requirements; the number of food distribution points has increased by 41 percent since the scale-up in August 2012 to assist an increasingly needy population. Recent monitoring findings indicate that there has been further deterioration in household food consumption patterns for displaced households living in public buildings, who are less likely to have other income sources and thus more likely to have poor dietary diversity. Of interviewed households, 17 percent reported “poor” food consumption and 33 percent “borderline” food consumption. These are not necessarily representative of the entire country but indicate growing difficulties.
14. Monitoring results confirm that needs all over Syria are continuing to increase in urban, peri-urban and rural areas. In the past few months, food assistance through general food rations has been prioritized for displaced families, leaving little scope to include other food-insecure groups, such as: (i) people located in or near areas subject to armed activities; (ii) host families and communities; and (iii) poor people in urban and rural areas affected by the multiple effects of the current events. The latter group is of particular concern: agricultural labourers have returned to their home areas in the northeast governorates in tens of thousands due to the insecurity in their previous areas of employment in the south (particularly Dera’a governorate). The labourers are destitute and feel aggrieved that IDPs in the area are prioritized to receive food assistance while the returning labourers are not included.
15. In all monitored locations, SARC has requested an increase in the number of beneficiaries. WFP is aware of the need to scale-up humanitarian assistance; however, limitations on the feasibility of operational scale-up are imposed by the current context in the country. There is a lack of clear assessment data upon which to base a substantially larger operation. There is a very narrow partnership base: WFP is only able to operate through SARC and has not received permission to work through other national or international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with the exception of Al Birr in Homs. Working largely through one organization, which has a limited capacity to implement and report, has restricted scaling-up the EMOP. Thus the current beneficiary number will be maintained and when credible assessment analysis is available and humanitarian space is enhanced, the scale of the operation will be re-considered accordingly.
16. There are some reports of subsidized bread no longer being available in “hotspot” areas due to the destruction of bakeries and other disruptions. To date, there are no reports of people not having access to bread - although private bakeries are selling bread at a much higher prices (50-60 SYP per kg compared to 15 SYP per kg for government-subsidized bread) and people may have to travel to different villages to buy it. Price monitoring in recent months has shown sporadic increases in the price of bread throughout the country, which often occur following a deterioration in security in a particular area. WFP will continue to monitor availability and prices.
17. Beneficiaries have requested the food basket include more ready-to-eat and canned items that are quick to cook because of the lack of fuel and cooking utensils.

Beneficiaries report that they swap items in the food basket that they receive in larger quantities for other essential items such as tea; they would accept smaller quantities per item in order to have a wider variety of food items in the basket.

18. There is no up-to-date nutritional data that gives an accurate nationwide picture. A nutritional assessment has still not been permitted and the last multiple indicator cluster survey dates back to 2006. Other tools commonly used in emergency situations are currently not possible in Syria. Nutritional information is largely anecdotal and the evidence of a worsening situation nationwide is based on the observable deterioration.
19. Mid-year results (July 2012) of nutritional surveillance suggest malnutrition prevalence is within “acceptable” range, i.e. stunting 4.3 percent; underweight 3.7 percent; wasting 4 percent.<sup>3</sup> However, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) cautions that these results are based on measurements of children in accessible primary health care centres, and notes there is a 60 percent decrease in the number of children measured in 2012 compared to the same period for 2011 due to access problems and interruption of health services in affected areas.<sup>4</sup> There is concern that the most vulnerable children, including those in displaced families or living in remote areas, are not being surveyed.
20. The 2009 Syrian Family Health Survey may provide the most realistic reference for the nutritional status of Syrian children prior to the crisis. Results indicated: stunting 23 percent; underweight 10 percent; wasting 9 percent. Exclusive breastfeeding was 43 percent while the proportion of new-born introduced to breastfeeding within the first hour was 42 percent.
21. Based on the pattern of the crisis and the data available, WFP and UNICEF have agreed on joint action plans and implementation modalities with the Ministry of Health for a nutritional response focusing on young children, and pregnant and nursing mothers.
  - WFP’s responsibilities are linked to the prevention of acute malnutrition in children aged 6-35 months.
  - UNICEF will be responsible for the treatment of acute malnutrition (moderate and severe). The details are still being finalized, but will be based on mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) screening<sup>5</sup> of children in all governorates, through an outreach campaign with participation from existing primary health care centres and designated local charities, supported by SARC.
  - WFP and UNICEF will provide technical support in planning, training on MUAC, procurement and delivery of appropriate feeding products, distributions, and monitoring. The MUAC screening will also help WFP and UNICEF collect data to guide further response.

## Purpose of Budget Increase

22. Taking into account of the deterioration of the security throughout the country, the protracted nature of the situation and an escalating number of families who have moved from their homes, sometimes more than once, it is necessary to plan emergency food assistance until mid-2013.

### *Beneficiaries*

23. WFP has not increased the number of beneficiaries under this EMOP for January-June 2013 compared with the last quarter of 2012. When more evidence is available and humanitarian space is enhanced, WFP's beneficiary planning figures may be revised for 2013. The continuation of monthly general food rations to 1.5 million people and the provision of a supplementary feeding product to 50,000 children under 3 falls within the broader framework of the proposed 2013 Syria Humanitarian Response Plan.

<b>TABLE 1: BENEFICIARIES BY ACTIVITY</b>			
Activity	Current	Increase	Revised
General food rations	1,500,000	0	1,500,000
Prevention of acute malnutrition	0	50,000	50,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,500,000</b>		<b>1,500,000</b>

Children benefiting from supplementary food are also beneficiaries of general food rations so there is no change in the total numbers of beneficiaries.

### *Nutritional considerations and rations*

24. The food basket for general rations is almost the same (see Table 2), with the calorie value having been recalculated based on 5 litres of vegetable oil per family, rather than 5 kg per family.
25. The general food ration is based on a family size of five people. A mixed food basket of commodities most familiar to Syrians has been requested by SARC and beneficiaries to meet the local dietary standards, culture, and the need for ready-to-eat food (most beneficiaries lack fuel and cooking facilities). Rice specifications will be changed to short or medium-grained rice rather than long-grained rice, recognizing the strong preference of beneficiaries. The ration includes canned beans, canned fish, tea, and tomato paste. Canned beans provide diet diversity in addition to the dried pulses; canned fish is a high-protein source. Syrians drink tea throughout the year, together with sugar and bread, as the normal breakfast meal. Tomato paste is a basic food item used in a wide-range of home-cooked meals, particularly for pasta which is also included in the food basket.

26. For the prevention of acute malnutrition, a ready-to-use supplementary food will be provided to children as part of the blanket supplementary feeding programme for children under 3. WFP will prioritize the governorates with high numbers of displaced families, areas where food insecurity is particularly high, and areas where previous data indicate that chronic malnutrition has been a concern.
27. Plumpy'doz™ is the preferred product for prevention of acute malnutrition and will be programmed to first-priority areas. An in-kind donation of Nutributter™ has also been forthcoming and will thus be programmed to second-priority areas. WFP also intends to procure Super Cereal Plus as a fortified, calorie-dense weaning food for the most vulnerable families in the months ahead.

<b>TABLE 2: REVISED DAILY RATION FOR GENERAL FOOD RATION (g/person/day)</b>				
	Current (g)	Calories	Revised (g)	Calories
Rice	100		100	
Bulgur	33		33	
Pasta	33		33	
Pulses	50		50	
Vegetable oil	33		30	
Sugar	33		33	
Iodized salt	5		5	
Tea	7		7	
Tomato paste	7		7	
Canned fish	13		13	
<b>Total</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>1,233</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>1,205</b>
% of energy supplied by protein		10.4		10.8
% of energy supplied by fat		27.3		26.3

<b>TABLE 3: SUPPLEMENTARY FEEDING RATIOS BY COMMODITY (person/day)</b>		
	Grammes	Calories
Ready-to-use supplementary food	20	108
Super Cereal Plus	100	394
High-energy biscuits	33	149
Plumpy'doz™	46	247

Note: WFP's preferred commodity is Plumpy'doz™ but in-kind donations of HEBs and Nutributter have also been accepted.

### *Implementation arrangements*

28. Outside of Damascus, WFP has four sub-offices. Qamishly sub-office was established in June after Deir Ezzor sub-office was relocated due to insecurity. Aleppo sub-office was established in July due to the escalation of the crisis in the north. Homs sub-office was established in November. Tartous sub-office has a recently established packing facility and increased warehouse space.
29. In order to ensure a flexible logistics network, corridors through Jordan and Lebanon have been established (with Turkey on standby should the situation improve for connections from there). Warehouse capacity has also now been established in Qamishly (east), Aleppo (north), Damascus (south), and Tartous (west), with two packaging facilities in Damascus and a third one recently established in Tartous and which is now operational. To manage this, 12 international logistics officers will be deployed within Syria (Damascus and sub-offices) and in the region as necessary. A Radio Frequency Identification system is being planned to track commodities remotely in areas where access is limited. In addition, 50 mobile warehouses with equipment, and 14 office and pre-fabricated units have been procured to augment storage capacity at extended delivery points and final distribution points.

### *Performance monitoring*

30. To date, WFP has managed to monitor 25 percent of the distribution sites across Syria. WFP monitors interview beneficiaries at distribution sites; post-distribution monitoring through interviews at household level has not been possible due to insecurity and sensitivity. It has not been possible to establish a beneficiary feedback mechanism such as a “hotline” in the current political climate, particularly with the communication obstacles affecting many of the areas where distributions occur. Monitoring is becoming increasingly difficult, but WFP has increased the number of monitors in each sub-office and has procured ten armoured vehicles. A further eight armoured vehicles are currently ordered for delivery in early-2013, as each sub-office needs at least two.
31. Monitoring findings have been incorporated into the programme design, having influenced the packaging and distribution modalities, the choice and quality of items in the food basket and the coverage of locations. Regular coordination meetings with other food assistance actors - particularly the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies - has allowed identification of under-served areas. All partners for food assistance have been working through SARC. Despite the challenges, WFP Syria is committed to continue to explore and implement strategies to assure, to the greatest extent possible, accountability and protection of its beneficiaries as defined in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee framework.



## Hazard / Risk Assessment and Preparedness Planning:

32. As part of an inter-agency contingency planning initiative, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) has agreed on three broad scenarios which cover the spectrum of “*continued conflict escalation, political settlement and breakdown of authority*”. Within this context, the following contextual, programmatic and institutional risks have been identified, together with mitigation actions:
33. *Contextual Risks:*
- Civil unrest prevents WFP from operating in Syria: WFP may be obliged to switch to partial or full-scale remote operations (i.e., not based in-country) and continue with telecommuting arrangements where possible.
  - Escalation in the number of people in need: WFP is building preparedness for itself and partners for a potential rapid scale-up in the provision of assistance. This includes pre-positioning commodity stocks in neighbouring countries and establishing a fuel depot in Damascus under a WFP special operation to meet increased transport requirements.
  - Humanitarian space is shrinking while humanitarian needs are escalating: WFP continues dialogue with government counterparts and works with the UNCT to maintain presence on the ground, implement activities and advocate for access to all affected areas, irrespective of political control. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is working with the Joint Special Envoy to deliver humanitarian assistance to sieged areas of Syria, notably in Homs and Dara’a. The areas north of Aleppo are inaccessible from Syria and WFP is developing strategies to reach people in these areas.
34. *Programmatic Risks:*
- Absence of detailed, accurate or regular needs assessments due to government restrictions: WFP continues to verify food security information through beneficiary contact at distribution sites, tracking food prices, and triangulation of data from different sources.
  - Lack of capacity of cooperating partner (SARC) and government counterpart: WFP will continue to support and build SARC’s coordination, planning and implementation capacity. WFP will also continue to seek permission from the Government to engage new cooperating partnerships with local and international NGOs and will continue to independently verify commodity deliveries where possible.
  - Limited local food supplies and insufficient regional prepositioned stocks: WFP currently has 18,000 mt storage capacity in Syria with an additional 5,000 mt in Irbid, Jordan. Subject to funding availability, an additional 50,000 mt can be procured from the region and stored in a neighbouring country (or countries) to facilitate a scale-up, should the situation warrant.
  - Increasing insecurity escalates transport rates or prevents deliveries: A contingency for price increases will be included in the landside transport, storage and handling budget, and procurement will be in small batches to keep budgets

tight and realistic. Additional intra-governorate service providers for transport will be identified.

35. *Institutional Risks:*

- Negative media portrayal of WFP’s cooperating partner SARC: The International Committee of the Red Cross and the UNCT will continue to advocate for increased humanitarian access, engagement of national and international NGOs, and international monitoring of the humanitarian response in Syria.
- Staff safety and access restriction: upgrades for facilities and communications equipment are required to meet United Nations minimum operating security standards. Security arrangements are being increased. WFP Syria now has three field security officers and more will be deployed to sub-offices shortly. WFP has armoured vehicles to increase staff safety for monitoring. In “no-go” areas, regular telephone contact is maintained with SARC staff and, in some cases, with local charities on the ground. WFP is leading a United Nations/NGO emergency telecommunication coordination group, which aims to enable the humanitarian community to operate as safely as possible and to work on resolving licensing issues so that agencies can import vital communication equipment for humanitarian operations.

36. In order to ensure that suitable and robust systems are in place to cope with the rapidly evolving situation, WFP is in the process of conducting forward contingency planning and strengthening response systems accordingly.

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## REQUIREMENTS

37. The proposed six-month extension of the EMOP will increase both food requirements by 88,182 mt and associated costs, an increase of US\$132 million. The budget revision will bring the total cost of the EMOP to US\$268 million (see table on page 1 for overall costs and Annex I-A for costs by commodity and cost element).

<b>TABLE 4: FOOD REQUIREMENTS BY ACTIVITY TYPE</b>				
Activity	Commodity/ Voucher	Food requirements ( <i>mt</i> )		
		Current	Increase	Revised total
General food ration	Commodity	93,381	84,240	177,621
Prevention of acute malnutrition	Commodity	2,720	3,942	6,662
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Commodity</b>	<b>96,101</b>	<b>88,182</b>	<b>184,283</b>

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## RECOMMENDATION

This proposed budget revision for an extension in time with additional commitments of food and associated costs, resulting in the revised budget for Syria EMOP 200339, is recommended for approval by the Executive Director and the Director-General of FAO.

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## APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin  
Executive Director  
United Nations World Food Programme

Date: .....

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José Graziano da Silva  
Director-General  
Food and Agriculture Organization of  
the United Nations

Date: .....

## ANNEX I-A

<b>BUDGET INCREASE COST BREAKDOWN</b>			
Food <sup>6</sup>	Quantity (mt)	Value (US\$)	Value (US\$)
Cereals	45,000	32,760,000	
Pulses	13,500	11,961,000	
Oil and fats	8,190	11,875,500	
Mixed and blended food	3,942	6,839,505	
Others	17,550	35,158,500	
Total food	88,182	98,594,505	
Subtotal food and transfers			98,594,505
External transport			3,099,727
Landside transport, storage and handling			10,066,857
Other direct operational costs			3,095,820
Direct support costs (see Annex I-B)			8,692,006
Total WFP direct costs			123,548,915
Indirect support costs (7.0 percent) <sup>7</sup>			8,648,424
<b>TOTAL WFP COSTS</b>			<b>132,197,339</b>

<sup>6</sup> This is a notional food basket for budgeting and approval. The contents may vary.

<sup>7</sup> The indirect support cost rate may be amended by the Board during the project.

## ANNEX I-B

<b>DIRECT SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS (US\$)</b>	
Staff and staff-related costs	
International professional staff	1,306,507
International general service staff	-
Local staff - national officers	221,960
Local staff - general service	348,453
Local staff - temporary assistance	832,947
Local staff – overtime	47,400
Hazard pay and hardship allowance	627,800
International consultants	330,374
Local consultants	-
United Nations volunteers	-
Commercial consultancy services	-
Staff duty travel	1,434,330
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>5,149,772</b>
Recurring expenses	
Rental of facility	-
Utilities	111,600
Office supplies and other consumables	218,104
Communications services	454,656
Equipment repair and maintenance	10,200
Vehicle running costs and maintenance	86,000
Office set-up and repairs	27,500
United Nations organization services	30,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>938,060</b>
Equipment and capital costs	
Vehicle leasing	102,000
Communications equipment	1,170,974
Local security costs	1,331,200
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2,604,174</b>

<b>TOTAL DIRECT SUPPORT COSTS</b>	<b>8,692,006</b>
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## ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

DSC	direct support costs
EMOP	emergency operation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IDP	internally displaced person
ISC	indirect support costs
LTSH	landside transport, storage and handling
MUAC	mid-upper arm circumference
NGO	non-governmental organization
ODOC	other direct operational costs
SARC	Syrian Arab Red Crescent
SYP	Syrian Pounds
UNCT	United Nations country team
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization