



SITUATION UPDATE

MAY 2015

SYRIA CRISIS REGIONAL RESPONSE

HIGHLIGHTS

To date efforts to identify the most vulnerable have allowed WFP to reduce its regional caseload by some 400,000 people, allowing scarce resources to be focused on those whose need it the most.

Despite such progress funding shortages force WFP to make even deeper assistance cuts even amongst the vulnerable.

- Evidence finds that affected families are being forced to employ evermore severe strategies to cope with reduced food assistance.



For information on WFP's Syria Crisis Response in 2013 and 2014, please use the **QR Code** or access through the **link: wfp.org/syriainfo**

WFP/Dina ELKASSABY



World Food Programme

As Ramadan begins deeper assistance cuts are foreseen

In May, funding shortfalls continued to affect an estimated 1.5 million beneficiaries who saw the assistance they received cut by 30 percent.

In **Lebanon**, Syrian refugees received vouchers worth US\$19 (reduced from the planned value of US\$27). In **Jordan**, WFP continued implementing its tiered assistance approach. Funding shortages forced a reduction in the voucher value for extremely vulnerable refugees in communities from US\$28.2 to US\$21. Support to refugees in camps and vulnerable refugees in communities were maintained at planned levels - US\$28.2 and US\$14 respectively.

Summary of voucher value cuts during 1st quarter 2015

Country	Voucher value - last quarter 2014 (US\$/per month)	Voucher value - first quarter 2015 (US\$/per month)
Lebanon	30	19
Jordan	33.84 (28.25 in camps)	18.36 (28.25 in camps)
Turkey	30 + ~10 from GoT ³	23.26 (17 in Jan) + ~14 from GoT
Iraq	31	19 (28.2 in Jan)
Egypt	27.97	16.14 (monthly average)

In **Egypt** and **Iraq**, the vouchers were sustained at the reduced values of US\$17 (planned value of US\$24.2) and US\$19 (planned value of US\$28) respectively. **Turkey** maintained the full planned value of their voucher support at US\$23.3 in the 11 camps where WFP is operational.

In June WFP beneficiaries will continue to receive the same levels of reduced assistance. In July, during Ramadan, should the current level of funding be sustained, WFP will be forced to make further cuts. In **Lebanon**, over three quarters of a million Syrian refugees and Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) would receive only 50 percent of the full voucher value needed to ensure sufficient daily nutrition. Similarly in **Egypt**, some 80,000 Syrian and PRS will have their support reduced to only 50 percent of the planned value.

"At current level of assistance, WFP will not be able to pursue the main objective of the operation, namely to improve/stabilize the food consumption of assisted population across the region".

WFP M&E Updates January-March 2015

Sustained reductions exacerbate the impact on the most vulnerable

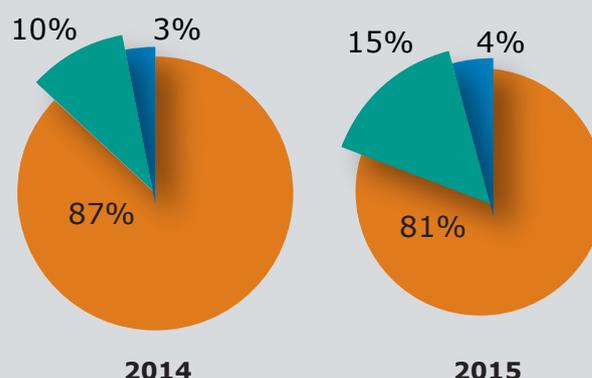
Given that the full voucher value is based on the price of a basic and balanced food basket, the reductions in assistance that started in January in **Jordan, Lebanon** and **Egypt**, and in February in **Iraq**, have had a range of

serious consequences for both refugee families and their host communities.

WFP monitoring (Syria Crisis Regional Response, M&E Updates January-March 2015) has found a significant deterioration in food security levels across the five countries over the first quarter of the year, with 81 percent of households reporting acceptable food consumption¹, down from an 87 percent during the same period in 2014. Furthermore, a severe increase in refugees depleting their assets to meet their food needs was observed in **Lebanon** and **Egypt**, while most refugees in **Jordan** have already exhausted theirs.

Regional food consumption among WFP-assisted households (aggregated) for Quarter 1 in 2014 and 2015

■ Acceptable FCS ■ Borderline FCS ■ Poor FCS



In **Lebanon**, the sale of household goods increased by 50 percent compared to the previous quarter; with one in four respondents reporting having to sell goods over the course of the previous 30 days in order to cope with food shortages. Meals consumed also became less diverse, with relatively lower levels of protein rich food, pulses and vegetables observed in some areas of the country.

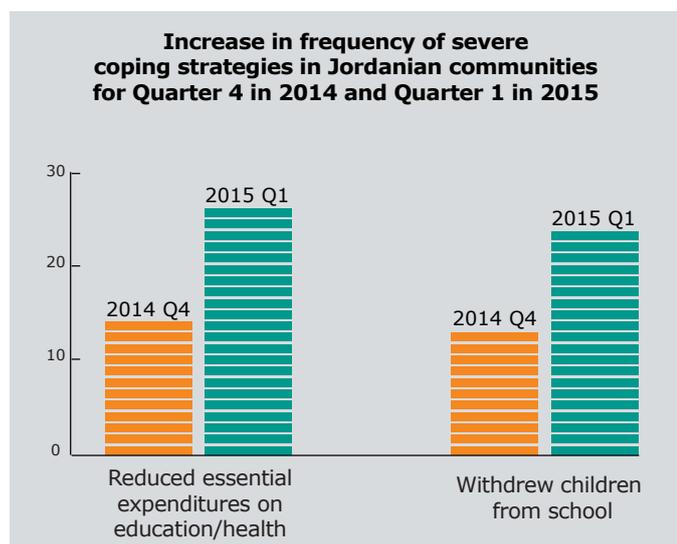
Whilst food security conditions remained stable in refugee camps across **Jordan**, a staggering impact has been observed among refugees in Jordanian communities.

Preliminary results from the 2015 WFP/REACH CFSME (Comprehensive Food Security Monitoring Exercise) indicated that the proportion of Syrian refugees considered food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity having risen from 48 percent in 2014 to 86 percent in 2015.

The CFSME also indicated that there was a sharp increase in the percentage of households employing crisis coping strategies from 30 percent in 2014 to 52 percent in 2015. Similarly, WFP monitoring reported a number of severe strategies to cope with assistance cuts have risen in frequency amongst Syrian

¹The Household Food Consumption Score is a WFP corporate food security outcome indicator. The score is a proxy of household's current access to food and is based on dietary diversity, consumption frequency of food groups, and their relative nutritional importance. It is based on a recall period of seven days.

refugees hosted in Jordanian communities; reduction in expenditure on health and education and withdrawal of children from school almost doubled.



In **Egypt**, though food consumption levels stabilised, this was associated with increased levels of stress for assisted refugees, presumably related to assistance cuts. There have been notable increases in the implementation of both food consumption-based coping strategies, such as borrowing food from relatives and friends and limiting portion size, and asset-depletion ones, such as spending savings and reducing health/education expenditures. Conditions have stabilised for Syrian refugees in **Turkey**, where the government stepped up to cover the WFP funding gap, with no major change in the adoption of coping strategies.

The failure to provide necessary assistance is also likely to have significant protection implications, most worryingly for women and girls, including sexual violence, exploitation for prostitution and trafficking² as a result of their vulnerability to not being able to meet basic needs. UNICEF reports of the increase in child marriages amongst refugee families in **Jordan** from 12 percent in 2011 to 30 percent in 2014. In light of reduced assistance such practices can only be expected to become more frequent.

Should assistance cuts persist or deepen, these alarming trends can only be expected to further worsen. Refugees will endure greater food security and will increase the use of negative coping strategies, which in turn may lead to excessive displacement in search of better access to food– even possibly returning to Syria, knowing full well the dangers. The relationship with the host communities can be expected to deteriorate further as refugees compete for employment, strain public resources, use land for their settlements and, in some cases, detract attention from local vulnerable populations. The overall burden on host countries will grow, particularly in **Lebanon** and **Jordan** where Syrian refugees make up

25 percent and 10 percent of the population respectively, and **Turkey** where the government has so far been filling the vacuum left by the humanitarian agencies. Meanwhile, the increased vulnerability of refugees’ to the influence of extremist groups – stepping in to fill the humanitarian void by offering assistance packages – can only serve to further destabilize the region.



Regional efforts to prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable

In May WFP continued to identify the most vulnerable refugee households in the region through vulnerability assessments. The objective of these exercises is to ensure assistance is targeted to those who need it most and identifying refugees deemed less vulnerable to food insecurity to optimize limited resources.

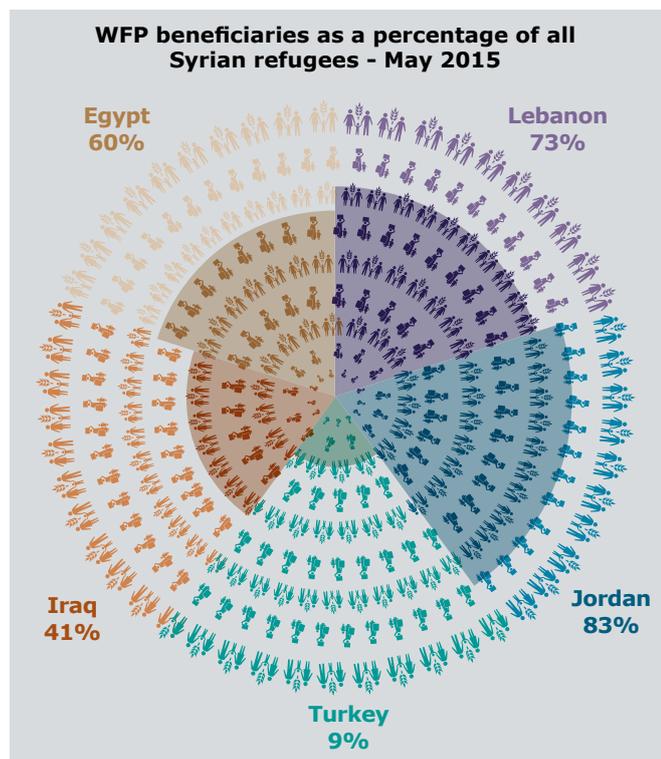
Following **Jordan**’s implementation of a tiered assistance approach since April 2015 and the exclusion of relatively food secure refugees in the host communities, WFP continued to support all camp registered refugees, in addition to vulnerable and extremely vulnerable refugees living in communities. Based on VAF findings and WFP reports 85 percent of refugees in communities are living below the poverty line which suggests WFP’s assistance is evermore critical amongst these households.

Iraq, Lebanon and **Egypt** maintained their respective efforts to refine their operational focus on the most vulnerable. In **Iraq** a comprehensive ‘tent-to-tent’ survey in all nine refugee camps is currently underway; 20,000 surveys will cover the entire camp population. The results from the assessment will be used to define criteria upon which to base a tiered approach to assistance from August onwards.

In **Lebanon**, WFP and its partners continued to conduct household visits to determine eligibility for food assistance. Those deemed to be food secure are gradually being removed from WFP assistance throughout the year. In addition, data collection for the 2015 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VaSYR), a joint UNHCR,

² UNICEF earlier assessments in Jordan indicated that the child marriage rate in the first quarter of 2014 has increased to 32 percent –from a figure of 13 percent pre-war to 18 percent in 2012 and to 25 percent in 2013-. This is expected to further increase with assistance cuts.

UNICEF and WFP multi-sectorial household survey of registered Syrian refugees and those awaiting registration, is expected to be finalized in early July. The results of the analysis will help inform a continued understanding of the vulnerability of Syrian refugees, over time. Outcomes from the VaSYR will inform a continued understanding of the vulnerability of Syrian refugees and support the revision of vulnerability criteria in 2016.



In **Egypt**, the joint WFP/UNHCR household data collection for the remaining 30 percent of registered Syrian refugees is planned to be completed by the end of July. Based on the results, refugees who are deemed not to require assistance will be removed from WFP's programme, reducing its caseload over the following months.

Current numbers of households excluded from WFP assistance

To date, WFP targeting and verification efforts have resulted in the discontinuation of assistance to nearly 400,000 people in the region (see chart below). It is estimated that by end of June, the total number of people omitted in the region will total almost 430,000 which equates to approximately 25 percent of WFP's regional caseload. In order to ensure resources are being channelled to those most in need, WFP will continue to discharge from

	Total number of people removed from WFP assistance as of May 2015
Lebanon	265,063 (146,381 from 2013 and 118,682 in 2015)
Jordan	99,132
Turkey	(66,000 following handover of 9 out of 20 camps to the government)*
Iraq	5,933
Egypt	23,200

* result of prioritisation

its programme those who miss more than two consecutive distributions. It is expected that the targeting and verification efforts will lead to further reductions.

Appeals processes allow refugees to voice their concerns

In the region, **Egypt** and **Jordan** have instituted processes through which refugees who have either been excluded or provided less food assistance as a result of the targeting and verification exercises may appeal the decision.

In **Egypt**, a WFP mailbox created for electronic submission of appeals, as well as paper appeal forms in Arabic have been made available at distribution sites, shops and UNHCR reception areas. The appeal process will be open for 15 days following receipt of an SMS informing the results of the Vulnerability Assessment and thereby the (in)eligibility of individual households for continued assistance.

In **Jordan**, since the roll-out of the tiered approach in April 2015, a similar appeal mechanism has yielded 47,117 eligible appeals filed for reassessment. Approximately five percent of the appeals have already been reviewed by the Jordan Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) team comprised of several UN agencies and international organisations³.

WFP's hotline also permits refugees to voice their concerns regarding targeting and appeals processes. In the month of May, appeal inquiries totalled 58 percent of **Egypt's** hotline calls; similarly in **Jordan** 49 percent of WFP's hotline calls were related to targeting and appeals processes.

In **Lebanon** and **Iraq** comprehensive household-level censuses are currently underway to determine the precise level of vulnerability amongst registered refugees. Based on country-specific needs, reassessment mechanisms may be implemented in due course.

Monitoring excluded households

Monitoring tools, such as indicator lists and questionnaires have been developed to facilitate the monitoring of beneficiaries who have been removed from food assistance programmes. These tools will help detect any deterioration in their food security following their exclusion. In **Jordan**, the updated post-distribution monitoring (PDM) tool was rolled out for both sub-offices during May. Once data collection is completed in **Egypt** the monitoring of households removed from receiving assistance is expected to commence.

Monitoring households omitted from WFP assistance is critical to ensure the accurate and reliable classification of their vulnerability status, thereby facilitating greater accountability to beneficiaries.

³ ACTED, CARE, DRC, Handicap International, UN Women, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, WHO and Premiere Urgence.

Contingency Plans Based on Available Resources June – September 2015

	June	July	August*	September	
LEBANON	<p>Caseload:  791,000 Voucher value: US\$ 19</p> <p>Caseload:  24,000 Voucher value: US\$ 19</p> <p>Caseload:  781,000 Voucher value: US\$ 13</p> <p>Caseload:  24,500 Voucher value: US\$ 13</p> <p>Caseload:  771,000 Voucher value: US\$ 13</p> <p>Caseload:  25,000 Voucher value: US\$ 13</p> <p>Caseload: WFP will consider various scenarios, including focusing only on the most vulnerable groups such as young children and pregnant and lactating mothers. Where possible, better linkages to long-term planning will be made.</p>	<p>Caseload:  2,500 Voucher value: US\$ 28</p> <p>Caseload:  98,000 Voucher value: US\$ 28</p> <p>Caseload:  207,000 Voucher value: US\$ 14</p> <p>Caseload:  240,000 Voucher value: US\$ 21</p> <p>Caseload:  25,000 Voucher value: US\$ 23</p> <p>Caseload:  150,000 Voucher value: US\$ 23</p> <p>Caseload: 125,000 in camps only (as per August plan) (any additional funds would be used for safety net cases in the communities (children under the age of 5 years old, pregnant and lactating mothers, the disabled, the elderly etc.) This would be linked to long-term planning, if possible.</p>	<p>Caseload:  5,000 Voucher value: US\$ 23</p> <p>Caseload:  150,000 Voucher value: US\$ 23</p> <p>Caseload:  15,000 Voucher value: US\$ 23</p> <p>Caseload:  150,000 Voucher value: US\$ 23</p> <p>Caseload:  25,000 Voucher value: US\$ 23</p> <p>Caseload:  150,000 Voucher value: US\$ 23</p> <p>Caseload: Efforts will be made to increase support to vulnerable refugees in communities.</p>	<p>Caseload:  75,200 Voucher value: US\$ 17</p> <p>Caseload:  2,800 Voucher value: US\$ 17</p> <p>Caseload:  71,700 Voucher value: US\$ 17</p> <p>Caseload:  2,800 Voucher value: US\$ 12</p> <p>Caseload:  62,200 Voucher value: US\$ 12</p> <p>Caseload:  2,800 Voucher value: US\$ 12</p> <p>Caseload: Focus on the safety net caseload and linkage to long-term planning.</p>	<p>Caseload:  94,500 Voucher value: US\$ 19</p> <p>Caseload:  94,500 Voucher value: US\$ 19</p> <p>Caseload:  76,300 Voucher value: US\$ 7</p> <p>Caseload:  22,800 Voucher value: US\$ 14</p> <p>Caseload: Focus on the safety net caseload and linkage to long-term planning.</p>
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*All caseloads depend on vulnerability assessments.

 **New arrivals
Syrian refugees**

 **Vulnerable
Syrian refugees**

 **Extremely vulnerable
Syrian refugees**

 **Vulnerable Syrian
refugees in camps**

 **Palestinian refugees
from Syria**

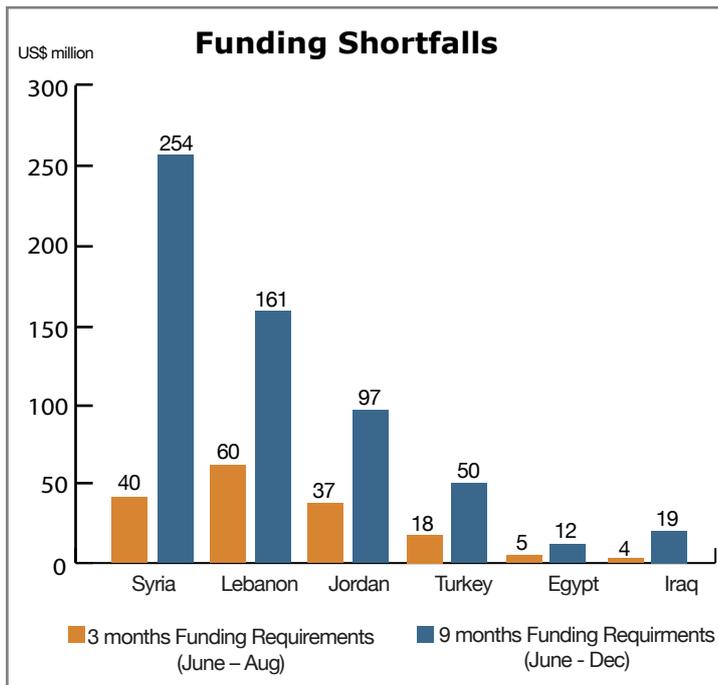
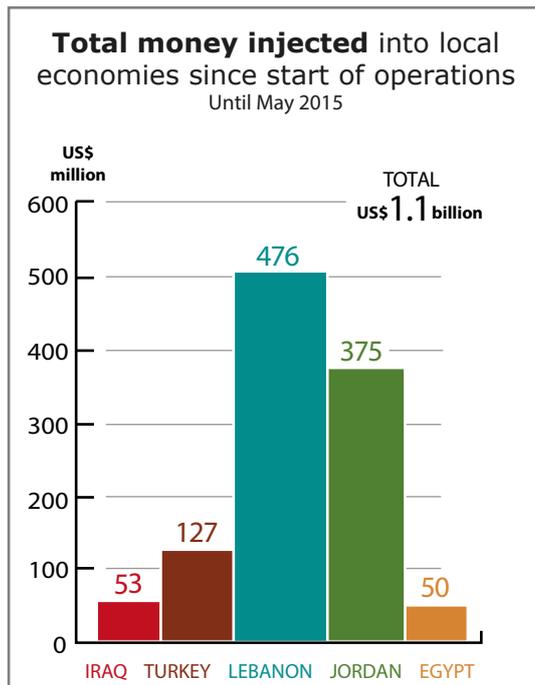
MONEY INJECTED

Since the start of operations, WFP's regional voucher programme has injected a total of **US\$1.1 billion** into the local economies.

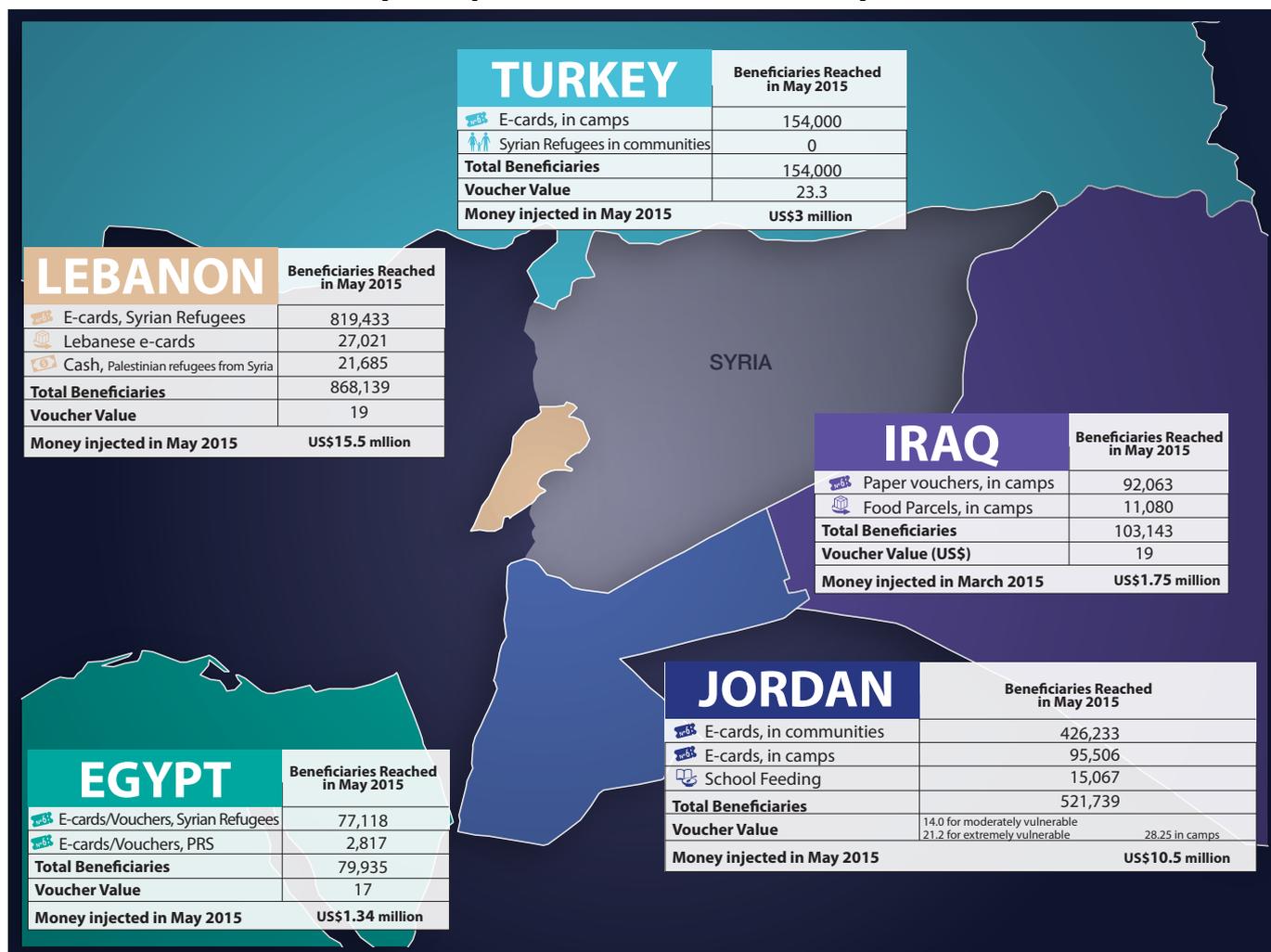
FUNDING

To cover shortfalls for the next three months (June-Aug), WFP urgently requires **US\$125 million** for the region and **US\$40 million** for Syria.

To cover shortfalls until the end of the year (June - December 2015), WFP requires **US\$339 million** for the region and **US\$254 million** for Syria.



WFP Syria Operation at a Glance - May 2015



WFP is grateful for the critical support provided by multilateral donors in response to the Syria crisis, as well as that of Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, China, the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), Denmark, the European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States and private donors.



Donors are represented in alphabetical order.

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