



# URGENT APPEAL

## FAO's role in the Revised 2013 Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan

JUNE 2013

### FAO URGENT FUNDING REQUIREMENTS: USD 41.7 MILLION

- Since March 2011, unrelenting violence in Syria has caused over 80 000 deaths and injured countless civilians.
- Around one-quarter of Syria's population has been uprooted, including 4.25 million people displaced internally and over 1.5 million refugees in neighbouring countries.
- An estimated 6.8 million men, women and children are highly affected and require urgent assistance.
- The [Revised 2013 Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan](#) takes stock of increased needs across all sectors and seeks over USD 1.4 billion for critical assistance through December 2013.
- Restoring agriculture and livelihoods is a top priority of the appeal.



### CHALLENGES FACING AGRICULTURE AND LIVELIHOODS

#### Millions in Syria face hunger, unable to produce, access or afford enough food.

Between June and December 2012, the number of food insecure people rose from 3 to 4 million – equivalent to an increase of more than 5 500 people each day. This number may rise further as reduced food production and availability, soaring food costs, rising unemployment and reduced government subsidies increasingly take their toll.

#### Agriculture and livelihoods at risk.

Syria's capacity to produce food has decreased significantly. Many farmers and herders cannot access or afford their very means of production. Agricultural labour and inputs – such as fertilizer, seeds, diesel and animal feed – have declined in availability and increased in price. Continued violence has prevented access to livestock grazing areas and farmland during important stages of crop development. Infrastructure has been damaged, affecting irrigation, processing, storage and transport. The repercussions are being felt all along the value chain, from production to consumers' physical access to stores.

#### A shift from centralized to household-level food production.

The crisis is profoundly transforming the Syrian agriculture sector. The country's heavily subsidized and centralized farming and livestock system is no longer functioning and cannot be restored in the foreseeable future. A rise in small-scale private and family level production is becoming the most feasible agricultural activity and viable alternative for household food security. Gearing assistance to these emerging production systems is critical to halt the drastic decline in domestic food production, in particular for cereals.

#### 2013 wheat planting season – a turning point for food security.

The 2013 wheat harvest is estimated at 2.4 million tonnes: 15 percent less than 2012 and 40 percent below the ten-year average prior to the crisis. Another year of low staple food production would be catastrophic, increasing food requirements beyond humanitarian capacity to respond, and likely contributing to further food price hikes and greater levels of displacement. Many farmers urgently need wheat seeds and fertilizer in order to plant by October 2013. Those who miss the season will be unable to harvest wheat again until summer 2015.

### KEY FACTS

**Agriculture contributes 17% of GDP.**

**Agriculture employs 25% of Syria's labour force.**

**Nearly 50% of Syria's population lives in rural areas.**

**Food imports cover approximately 50% of domestic food needs.**

## Threats to livestock survival and health.

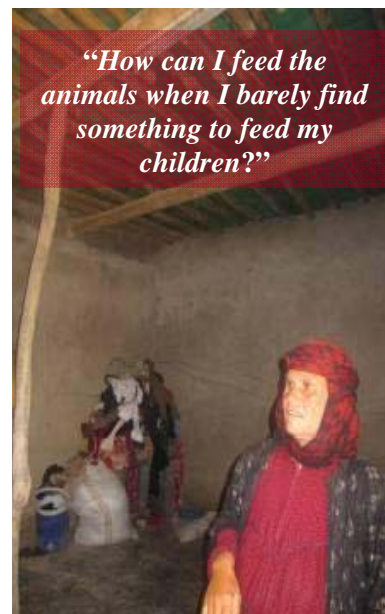
The livestock sector – already weakened from drought – is severely affected by reduced access to feed sources, high animal feed costs, limited veterinary supplies and services. Unable to cope, vulnerable herders are selling their animals below-market value and losing a critical source of food and income. Reduced access to veterinary services, combined with uncontrolled livestock movement, poses severe threats to animal and human health within and across Syria's borders. Containing such risks is urgent and time-critical.

## Food access (physical and economic) is severely constrained.

The crisis has severely disrupted food supply networks and physical access to markets. At the same time, food prices and unemployment continue to rise and diminish household purchasing power. Traditionally cheaper sources of animal protein – e.g. chicken and eggs – have reduced in supply and increased in cost in the last year due to the destruction or closure of poultry farms. Increasing backyard food production (e.g. vegetables and poultry) will be crucial to improving food access and affordability, especially among displaced people and their host communities.

## Damage to rural infrastructure.

The irrigation sector has suffered significant damage and is particularly critical in drought-affected areas (especially northern Al-Hassakeh and Ar-Raqqa) and along the Euphrates River, part of the country's breadbasket. Where security permits, productive infrastructure – e.g. irrigation canals, water troughs and market roads – require urgent repair to restore and expand food production.



## FAO SEEKS USD 41.7 MILLION

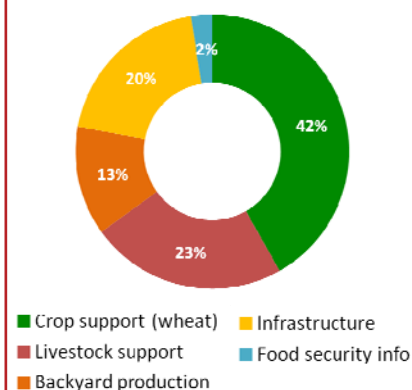
There is a limited window of opportunity to ensure crisis-affected families do not lose vital sources of food and income. Within the Revised 2013 Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan (SHARP), FAO seeks urgent funding to assist 768 000 people (96 000 families) through the following activities:

- Provide quality **wheat seeds and fertilizer** to 25 000 affected farming households **\* funds required by August to ensure planting in October 2013.**
- Distribute **emergency feed and veterinary supplies** to save the livestock of 30 000 families.
- Provide **backyard gardening and poultry kits** to 29 000 families, with particular focus on women and areas with high concentrations of displaced people.
- Engage 12 000 families in **cash-for-work programmes** to rehabilitate vital rural infrastructure, such as irrigation canals, water troughs and market roads.
- Strengthen **data collection, analysis and sharing** to optimize food security assistance to populations most in need.

## SHARP FUNDING NEEDS

Total funding  
USD 1 409 812 466

FAO funding  
USD 41 696 000



Food and Agriculture  
Sector coordination co-led  
by WFP and FAO.



FAO project proposals within the Revised 2013 SHARP are available at: <http://ops.unocha.org/>.

SYR-13/F/58318/R	Crop support (wheat)	USD 17 540 000
SYR-13/A/57229/R	Emergency livestock support	USD 9 750 000
SYR-13/A/57227/R	Backyard food production	USD 5 140 000
SYR-13/F/57228/R	Infrastructure repair (cash-for-work)	USD 8 216 000
SYR-13/F/58320/R	Food security information	USD 1 050 000

Eriko Hibi  
FAO Representative, Syria  
+ 963 11 612114300  
Eriko.Hibi@fao.org

FAO Representation in Syria  
Majzoub building, 38 Farabi Street  
East Mezzeh, Damascus, Syria  
(PO Box 10709, Damascus)

Daniele Donati  
Emergency and Rehabilitation Division  
+39 06 570 53032  
Daniele.Donati@fao.org

FAO Headquarters  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla  
00153, Rome, Italy