



IN NUMBERS



6.7 million

people food insecure and
4.5 million at risk



6.18 million

people internally displaced



USD 120 million

required for FAO's 2018 Humanitarian
Response Plan

KEY MESSAGES

- **6.7 million people are food insecure and a further 4.5 million are at risk of food insecurity** due to asset depletion to maintain food consumption.
- **6.18 million people are displaced**, while 5.64 million have sought refuge in neighbouring countries.
- **A quarter of households continue to rely on poor quality and insufficient diets.** Despite overall improvements in access to food, some 44 percent of households reduced the number of meals consumed and more than 35 percent restricted consumption of adults to prioritize children.
- **Humanitarian access continues to improve** with 324 000 out of a total of 6.18 million internally displaced people (IDPs) in hard-to-reach locations.
- **Wheat production fell to a 29-year low of 1.2 million tonnes** according to a recent joint FAO/World Food Programme (WFP) Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM) report. Urgent seed distribution for the current winter season is recommended to avoid the cumulative impact of wheat shortfall.
- **Herd sizes have stabilized albeit at low levels.** The main challenges for livestock keepers are lack of feed and veterinary services due to restricted access to traditional grazing areas and slow recovery of pasture because of high livestock density in some areas, meaning fodder prices increased.

CURRENT SITUATION

Food security in parts of the country remain far worse than before the crisis. Across the Syrian Arab Republic, the main shocks to households' food security remain insecurity and safety concerns, drought and climate change. Impacts include reduction of livelihood assets (human, financial, social, physical and natural) and negative effects on food and income. The situation has worsened due to sanctions, which has significantly impacted the economy. The country is experiencing population movements, a reduced labour force (especially for the agriculture sector), lack of financial resources due to high unemployment, physical destruction of agricultural infrastructure, high input prices, lack of good quality inputs and heavy reliance on food assistance.

Approximately 6.7 million people are food insecure and a further 4.5 million are at risk of food insecurity (55 percent of the population). This is a 3 percent and 12 percent increase in the people who were food insecure and at risk of being food insecure respectively from the beginning of the year.

Some 6.18 million people remain internally displaced. Between January to July 2018, around 1 million people returned to their homes due to improved security and de-escalation initiatives. Returns in some locations, especially Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor, were hampered by the presence of unexploded ordnance. Damage to basic infrastructure needed for returnees to resume productive activities is another factor slowing the return process.

Improved security within the country and reopening of supply routes led to some recovery of trade and functioning urban markets. In parts of eastern Aleppo city, destroyed markets are slowly recovering. Food prices continue to be high compared to two to three years ago, but have slightly decreased in parts of the country.

Humanitarian access continues to improve with 324 000 out of a total of 6.18 million IDPs in hard-to-reach locations.

CHALLENGES FACING THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Wheat production fell to a 29-year low of 1.2 million tonnes according to a recent joint FAO/WFP CFSAM report. This is about two-thirds of 2017 levels and about 30 percent of the pre-conflict average of 4.1 million tonnes (2002–2011). The drop in wheat production is due to an extended period of dry weather early in the cropping season followed by heavy out-of-season rains and high temperatures. The late start of rains meant only 38 percent of rain-fed wheat was harvested. The heavy end of season rains also caused losses to irrigated wheat, and damaged wheat grain quality. Urgent seed distribution for the current winter season is recommended to avoid the cumulative impact of wheat shortfall.

A quarter of households continue to rely on poor quality and insufficient diets. Despite overall improvements in access to food, some 44 percent of households reduced the number of meals consumed and more than 35 percent restricted consumption of adults to prioritize children and breastfeeding and pregnant women. The situation is more difficult among IDPs, returnees and households headed by women.

Herd sizes have stabilized albeit at low levels. Various ecto- and endo-parasites affecting cattle, sheep and goats were reported in some governorates. Early signs of cattle emaciation were witnessed in Idleb, while diseases affecting sheep and goats were reported in Rural Damascus, mainly due to the shortage and high costs of vaccines. Poor livestock nutrition has worsened the impact of these infections.

FAO RESPONSE, TARGETS AND FUNDING

2018 RESPONSE

Between January and October 2018, FAO reached 273 594 people including in cross-border operations.



In October 2018, FAO reached 4 428 people through:



Family farming for vegetable production

598 farming families (3 588 people) in Lattakia governorate received vegetable packages and olive saplings to restore planting activities.



Access to natural resources

140 farming families (840 people) in Hama and Tartous governorates received drip irrigation kits to support sustainable water resource management.

2018 PRIORITIES



Sustainable management of natural resources

integrated management of land and water resources • protection of genetic material • provision of alternative sources of energy



Support staple food production

wheat, barley and pulse seed • increase the capacity of seed production • training on improved cropping methods • rehabilitate damaged irrigation infrastructure • technical training • improve the capacity of technicians and seed producers



Increase household nutrition and income

food processing, food quality and safety and marketing • vegetable kits • poultry distributions • conditional cash transfers • vouchers • technical training



Increase and protect livestock assets

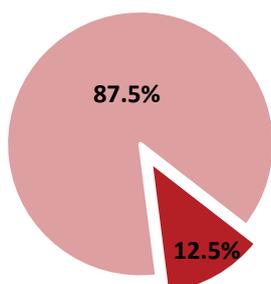
animal feed • livestock vaccination and treatment campaigns and inputs • veterinary capacity • animal restocking • capacity development



Planned, collective response

coordination • drought early warning and food security information systems • needs assessment, monitoring • planning and strategy development • data collection, analysis and reporting • capacity building

FUNDING



- Funding to-date: USD 14.95 million
- Funding gap: USD 105.05 million

Resources partners: Belgium, European Union, Italy, Japan, OFDA, UNFPA, United Kingdom, UNOCHA.

FAO requires USD 120 million

To assist 2.3 million people

COORDINATION

FAO supports the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform to coordinate the agriculture sector by bringing together all actors for better planning, programming and implementation of activities.

FAO/WFP conducted a joint CFSAM between 25 June and 19 July 2018 to estimate crop production and to assess the overall security situation. The report was released on 9 October 2018.

CONTACT

Mike Robson | FAO Representative | Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic | mike.robson@fao.org

Dominique Burgeon | Director, Emergency and Rehabilitation Division and Strategic Programme Leader – Resilience | Rome, Italy | TCE-Director@fao.org