



E-Food Programme

E-food Assistance to Refugees in Camps

With almost four million refugees — 3.6 of whom are Syrian — Turkey remains the country hosting the greatest number of refugees in the world. By Q1 2021, approximately 60,000 of the most vulnerable refugees are housed by the Government of Turkey (GoT) in camps across the southeast. The majority of the camp residents are from Syria.

WFP, in partnership with the Turkish Red Crescent (Kızılay), provides refugees living in six camps with food assistance through an e-voucher programme. The programme started in 2012 when, for the first time, WFP used e-voucher assistance from the onset of an emergency.

Under this programme, each household receives a card topped up monthly with TRY 120 (USD 17) per person, of which 80 percent is allocated for food. This amount is redeemable in participating shops, giving beneficiaries choice and fostering independence to their lives. Since 2012, the total amount of cash transfers to beneficiaries is USD 241 million.

Objectives

WFP's assistance to in-camp refugees aims to:

1. Ensure vulnerable refugees can consume enough food and have a diverse, healthy diet;
2. Reduce negative coping strategies such as skipping meals or sending children to work instead of school;
3. Enhance national crisis-response capacities.

Achievements

Thanks to this sustained assistance, by Q3 2020:

1. 98 percent of households have acceptable food consumption;
2. Refugees in camps generally consume a wide range of food and are able to have a diverse, healthy diet;



3. Women are involved in decisions on the use of assistance in 89 percent of the households;
4. A strong partnership has been built with both the GoT and Kızılay.

Advocacy

In 2020, WFP advocated with the GoT to increase the amount of the monthly assistance. This led to an increase in the transfer value from TRY 100 (USD 14) to TRY 120 (USD 17) as of January 2021, in line with the inflation rates. This increase followed an additional TRY 1000 (USD 127) top-up distributed in the last quarter of 2020.

Monitoring

A rise in the cost of the basic food items was detected in the last Market Price Monitoring (PMM) and On-Site Monitoring (OSM) report that covered the period between July and September 2020 and that highlighted a 27 percent increase in cost of the food basket.

Assessment

The results of the in-camp COVID-19 intervention Top-Up Satisfaction Survey, which was conducted through the phone between December 2020 and January 2021, showed that over 85 percent of the beneficiaries are satisfied with the top-up assistance and that more than 30 percent of beneficiary households buy food items to sell them back and cover their non-food needs. Also, the results revealed that the majority of the beneficiaries used the amount allocated to non-food items for hygiene purposes.

Thanks to contributions from:



COVID-19 Response

In 2020, WFP conducted three rounds of hygiene kits and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) distributions to both refugees and camp staff in May, June and October. The distributions took place in six camps as part of WFP's COVID-19 response.

Hygiene kits consisted of general cleaning materials for households to cover three months of cleaning needs.

COVID-19 Contingency Plan

Following the COVID-19 restrictions imposed by the GoT, WFP and the Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM) initiated negotiations in Q2 2020 for the activation of an in-camp contingency plan for the distributions of food baskets to quarantined households through the camp market chain in case of a partial or full lockdown in camps. WFP informed DGMM of its readiness to deliver food parcels in any of the six camps. However, the plan hasn't been activated as of March 2021.

Accountability to those in need

WFP and Kızılay continuously monitor the quality of goods and prices in the shops where the e-voucher is redeemable. WFP field teams keep in contact with registered card users to hear their experiences and convey them to the programme. Kızılay has helpdesks in each camp that provide assistance to beneficiaries to replace lost, stolen and/or non-functional cards and receive their feedbacks as well as their complaints.

In addition, Kızılay call center (168) continues to assist beneficiaries in their own languages by providing updated information about the programme and receiving their complaints and feedbacks. While 1200 calls were received in January 2020 through this call center, only 150 calls were received in January 2021. This decreasing trend indicates that beneficiaries are well sensitized about their assistance.

How refugees cook in camps

Each container is provided with electrical stoves and utensils by the GoT, Kızılay and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This means refugees can use their assistance to prepare wholesome meals for their families.

Refugees outside camps

More than 99 percent of refugees in Turkey live outside camps, in towns and villages. Many live in poverty. The most vulnerable of them are assisted by the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) programme, which provides monthly cash assistance to more than 1.5 million refugees, which equals 42.5 percent of the total number of refugees living in Turkey, to help them cover their basic needs.



WFP's e-food card programme is implemented in partnership with the Government of Turkey and TRC.



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