**WFP News Video:** Hunger in Syria At It’s Worst Since War Started 12 Years Ago Shot: 6-10March23

Aleppo/Damascus Syria

TRT: 6:50

**SHOTLIST:**

**:00-:09**

Sunrise call to prayer Aleppo city

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 7March23**

**:09-:31**

**GV’s people digging out from earthquake.**

One month after devastating earthquakes struck the region people sift through the rubble to salvage what they can. Between the war and earthquake it is currently estimated that more than 36,000 buildings, the majority of them homes, in Aleppo are uninhabitable. With so much rubble, one needs to look for weeds growing to know which caused the destruction.

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 6March23**

**:31-:49**

GV’s people living in apartments near the frontlines damaged during the war.

Many people have had no choice but to continue to live in damaged buildings.

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 6March23**

**:49-1:03**

GV’s people struggling for normalcy in their ruined neighborhoods. With infrastructure like power plants, schools, transport, hospitals and bakeries destroyed they have had to struggle to survive with little heat, electricity or food.

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 6-7March23**

**1:03-1:26**

**GV’s People living in public playgrounds and parks.**

The recent earthquakes have further terrorized an already traumatized city. People are living in modified playground equipment because they are either afraid of earthquakes or their homes are destroyed or unsafe. With schools being used to shelter displaced families there are fewer and fewer places for children to be children.

**Al-Shahba public garden, Aleppo**

**Shot: 6March23**

**1:26-1:38**

**GV’s woman foraging for edible plants in city park.**

People have resorted to foraging for food to cope with increasing hunger.

**Al-Shahba public garden, Aleppo**

**Shot: 6March23**

**1:38-1:58**

**SOT Sabah (Arabic)**

Sabah standing in front of a destroyed school, is a widow with five children displaced by the earthquakes and currently living at a school-turned temporary shelter.

“The war was difficult, we’ve been through so much, like hunger and shelling. My husband and my brother were killed, but even those days were easier than than now”

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 7March23**

**1:58-2:32**

GV’s Earthquake displaced people living on public school where WFP distributes sandwiches and food rations.

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 6March23**

**2:32-3:03**

**SOT Kenn Crossley WFP Syria Country Director (English)**

“There are neighborhoods in Aleppo which are almost gone. They have been reduced to rubble. All their productive livelihoods, the buildings, the shelters, the places where people were living…gone. The earthquake came and people from there had to move again. They had to move to schools. They had to move to mosques. There was a strong civil society, cooperating partners , NGO’s working to provide hotmeals and shelters to them but really productive livelihoods are what people want, productive livelihoods are what people need but they have been relying on huge amounts of humanitarian assistance.”

**Damascus**

**Shot: 10March23**

**3:03-3:32**

GV’s In Aleppo, WFP distributes food rations to around 650,000 people on a monthly basis. It contains wheat flour, rice, vegetable oil, salt, sugar and chickpeas. Some receive a combination of rations and vouchers.

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 7March23**

**3:32-3:53**

Nawal Shaban bringing WFP food ration to the schoolroom she is staying in with her husband, their 8 children and 2 other families.

Nawal was first displaced by fighting from Idlib 5 years ago and is now displaced again by the earthquake. Her husband is a construction worker but the economic decline has left him without work.

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 6March23**

**3:53-4:09**

Nawal Shaban walks through her war and earthquake damaged neighborhood to show us the house she was living in before the earthquake. She is unable to enter the house because it is unsafe.

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 6March23**

**4:09-4:33**

**SOT Nawal Shaban (Arabic**)

“I fled Idlib when fighting intensified there in 2018, 5 years ago.

I came here so my children can continue their education, and because there was no work there, and because my family and I were in danger from the war.’

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“We’re unable to buy enough food for the children. Many foods are out of reach, like meat and chicken. Electricity is expensive too.”

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 6March23**

**4:33-5:04**

**GV market**

Food prices throughout Syria are at highest in 10 years due to continued drought, fuel and economic crises. Inflation reached 90 percent in 2021, after hitting 114 percent in 2020.

Continued drought has resulted in the lowest wheat production in 50 years. GDP is lowest since mid-1990s.

People must carry around enormous wads of continuously devalued bills to purchase items. The onions you see are considered a luxury item.

**Rural Aleppo**

**Shot: 8March23**

**5:04-5:29**

**GV’s Testing kids for malnutrition**

12.1 million people, more than half the population, are currently food insecure.

2.5 million Syrians are severely food insecure. This means their lives would be at risk without food assistance

Stunting prevalence among children under five years in Syria ranges from 25 to 28 percent and acute maternal malnutrition prevalence ranges from 11 percent in north-west Syria and parts of Damascus up to 25 percent in north-east Syria. WFP treats moderately malnourished kids with fortified nutritional food.

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 6March23**

**5:29-5:53**

**SOT Kenn Crossley WFP Syria Country Director (English)**

“There has been a pandemic, there has been a deep pervasive economic crises. There’s all the heritage of a displaced population which has no productive infrastructure which it can work with. You pile these things together. Hunger is in fact getting worse right when it feels like peace and stability are slowly getting better and better and better in Syria.”

**Damascus**

**Shot: 10March23**

**5:53-6:00**

**GV’s Muna walking in her neighborhood damaged by war and earthquake**

Muna is a widow with six children. She lost her home and husband to the conflict years ago. They rely on WFP’s food assistance although two of her children work to put food on the table. The earthquake caused serious damages to her home so she had to find another place with the support of a local charity. Their education is on a pause after the earthquake as many schools have been turned into collective shelters for earthquake-displaced people.

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 7March23**

**6:00-6:11**

**SOT Muna (arabic)**

“All we can do is hope that this war, this crises, will come to an end.

I have big hope that my children can continue their education. God willing.”

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 7March23**

**6:11-6:50**

Muna prepares and serves a meal of rice and yoghurt for her and her children.

There is only electricity a few hours a day and gas is very expensive and she must cook using the light from her mobile phone.

**Aleppo**

**Shot: 7March23**

**ENDS**

**WFP News Release**

14 March 2023

**HALF OF SYRIA’S POPULATION FACES HUNGER AS CONFLICT PASSES 12-YEAR MILESTONE AND EARTHQUAKES DEEPEN ECONOMIC WOES**

**DAMASCUS** – An average monthly wage in Syria currently covers about a quarter of a family’s food needs, the UN World Food Programme said today, highlighting an urgent need for increased humanitarian assistance as the country grapples with the devastating impact of recent earthquakes and a 12-year-long conflict.

Some 12.1 million people, more than 50% of the population, are currently food insecure and a further 2.9 million are at risk of sliding into hunger. Meanwhile, recent data show that malnutrition is on the rise, with stunting and maternal malnutrition rates reaching levels never seen before.

“Bombardment, displacement, isolation, drought, economic meltdown, and now earthquakes of staggering proportions. Syrians are remarkably resilient but there’s only so much that people can take,” says Kenn Crossley, WFP Country Director in Syria. “At what point does the world say enough?”

The February 6 earthquakes came as food prices in Syria were already soaring. The selection of standard food items that WFP uses to track food inflation has almost doubled in price in 12 months and is 13 times more expensive than three years ago. The upwards trajectory is expected to continue.

The recent earthquakes have highlighted the urgent need for increased humanitarian assistance in Syria, not only for people hit by the earthquakes, but also for those who were already grappling with sky-rocketing food prices, a fuel crisis, and consecutive climate shocks. Food and fuel prices are at their highest in a decade after years of inflation and currency devaluation.

Stunting rates among children have reached 28 percent in some parts of the country and maternal malnutrition prevalence 25 percent in north-east Syria.

A country that used to be self-sufficient in food production now ranks among the six countries with the highest food insecurity in the world, with heavy dependency on food imports. Damaged infrastructure, high cost of fuel and drought like conditions have slashed Syria’s wheat production by 75 percent.

WFP provides food assistance for 5.5 million people across the country, a mixture of food distributions, nutrition programmes, school meals, cash assistance, and support for livelihoods, resilience, and social safety nets. Since the earthquake hit north Syria, WFP has reached 1.7 million quake-affected people, including people who already benefiting from monthly food assistance.

But a funding crunch for WFP in Syria threatens to curtail the assistance, exactly when people need it most. WFP urgently requires a minimum of US$ 450 million to keep up assistance for over 5.5 million people across Syria for the rest of 2023. This includes US$ 150 million to support 800,000 people affected by the earthquake for six months.

Without sufficient resources, WFP will have to drastically reduce the number of beneficiaries it serves from July onwards, leaving millions of people in deep need without food assistance.

“‘The world has now forgotten us. That’s what we hear from many Syrians, and it’s a stark reminder that we need to do more,” said WFP’s Regional Director for the Middle East, North Africa and Eastern Europe Corinne Fleischer. “We need the funds to continue to provide food for millions of families -- until Syrians can feed themselves again.”

As well as providing immediate food assistance, WFP is working on finding long-term solutions to help communities in Syria become less reliant on direct food assistance. Across Syria, WFP supports the rehabilitation of irrigation systems, mills, bakeries, and markets. Such projects carry greater return on investment compared to traditional food distributions. For example, each US$ 1 invested in rehabilitation of bakeries or irrigation canals can reduce the annual cost of general food assistance by over US$ 3.

**Note to the editor:**

Broadcast quality footage available [here](https://spaces.hightail.com/receive/l9GUpPwz2z/am9uYXRoYW4uZHVtb250QHdmcC5vcmc=)  
High-res photos available [here](https://multimedia.wfp.org/Share/6qjpj8mq47q14ve0sp7h3yb5c5e07k22)

# # #

The United Nations World Food Programme is the world’s largest humanitarian organization, saving lives in emergencies and using food assistance to build a pathway to peace, stability and prosperity for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change.

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