

## **Monthly Update on Milk in WFP Syria's School Meal Programme**

### **April 2017**

#### **1. Background**

WFP Syria has been implementing a school meals programme since 2014, and it has gradually been scaled up in different parts of the country. The assistance has traditionally consisted of providing a fortified date bar to children in supported schools, which were selected based on a high prevalence of food insecurity, high number of IDPs and low education indicators.

In 2016, the European Commission made a contribution to WFP's school meal programme in Syria that allows WFP to procure 17,500 mt of UHT milk produced in the EU. The milk will be used in combination with fortified date bars, and will be distributed across two academic years (2016-17 and 2017-18) to children in schools across Syria.

Each child will receive 200 ml of UHT milk (120 kcal), as well as 80 gram of fortified date bars (340 kcal), bringing the total kcal delivery to almost 500 kcal; 30 percent of the daily energy requirement for school children. To ensure delivery of a comprehensive assistance, WFP targets schools already assisted by UNICEF through trainings, teaching material and school supplies.

In January 2017, WFP made the decision to include a quantity of the procured milk into the general food assistance (GFA) programme targeting children from 5 to 12 years of age. This decision was necessitated by operational factors mainly linked to the short shelf life of the milk. Following a modification request in March 2017, WFP and ECHO agreed that the amount of milk reallocated to GFA will not exceed a total of ten percent, or five percent per each academic year, of the total milk tonnage to be procured and distributed under this action (17,500 mt). Any milk reallocated to the GFA programme will be distributed in areas with a high concentration of IDPs and may also be used for inter-agency convoys to hard-to-reach and besieged areas. There are currently no plans to distribute milk in areas covered by cross-border operations from Jordan and Turkey, as WFP and UNICEF are currently not supporting schools in these areas.

#### **2. General Accomplishments**

During the month of April, WFP dispatched 674.416 MT of milk to schools under WFP's school feeding programme, benefitting 14,253 children across Syria. No milk was distributed under the GFA programme in April.

In total, 4,829.69 MT of milk has been dispatched since the beginning of the programme in late 2016, of which 4,346.993 MT has been dispatched under the School Feeding programme and 482.697 MT under the GFA programme.



Dispatches of Milk in April		
	Dispatched to Schools	Allocated to GFA
Quantity of milk dispatched in April	676.416 MT	0
Number of children benefitting from the dispatched milk in April	149,253	0
Cumulative quantity dispatched since the beginning of the programme	4,346.993 MT	482.697 MT

## 2. Challenges

Bureaucratic hurdles and operational constraints remained the biggest challenge that WFP faced during the reporting period. Due to the short shelf life of milk, minor shipping delays coupled with a long clearance process put great stress on the distribution process in April, as this had to be completed prior to the expiry date of the milk. However, a total of 0.668 MT of milk (one pallet) was destroyed in April by WFP, due to the expired shelf life by the time the quantity was cleared by the authorities. Furthermore, the tense security situation across the country resulted in irregular issuances of facilitation letters to dispatch the commodity.

## 3. Any Other Updates

By the end of April, all ECHO-funded milk stocks have been dispatched from WFP's warehouses across the country. The last quantities of the commodity will be distributed in schools before the end of the academic year (second week of May).