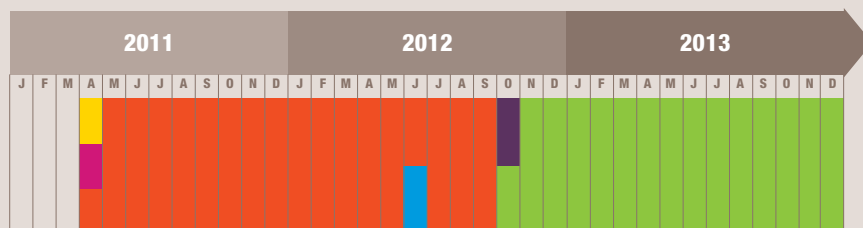


Cash transfer programme fact sheet

Turkish Red Crescent Society

Syrian population movement response programme 2012–present

Humanitarian context



April 2011 ■ Syrians begin to flee and cross the border into Turkey

April 2011 ■ Turkish Red Crescent Society start providing emergency relief in camps as an auxiliary of the Turkish Government

April 2011 – September 2012 ■ On-going programming

June 2012 ■ Turkish Red Crescent Society and World Food Programme (WFP) conduct joint assessment to assess the feasibility of an e-card system

October 2012 ■ First cash disbursements for food purchases using e-card

October 2012 – present ■ Disbursements take place every 15 days and the number of beneficiaries increases steadily



Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection



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Project details

National Society	Turkish Red Crescent Society
Appeal code	MDRTR003
Objective(s)	Meet the immediate food needs of Syrians living in 14 camps in Turkey
Duration	October 2012 – on-going
Location	14 camps ¹
Cost	33,698,660 Swiss francs (CHF) (67,107,512 Turkish lira (TRY)) ² Programme expenditure as of November 2013. Programme is on-going
Main sectors	Food security
Number of households	116,245 households (reached by November 2013)
Selection criteria	Syrians registered in camps by the Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (AFAD)
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract participating shopkeepers • Establish household lists • Crosscheck beneficiary lists with camp management • Explain functions of the e-card to shopkeepers, staff and beneficiaries • Distribute e-cards to beneficiaries • Monitor food prices, quality, and consumption behaviour
Key outcome(s)	Food needs of Syrians registered in 14 camps in Turkey are met through an e-card-based cash transfer programme
Number of staff involved	Total: Turkish Red Crescent Society: 23
Other organizations involvement	WFP
Assessment information used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field surveys and needs assessments by Turkish Red Crescent Society • Joint assessment by Turkish Red Crescent Society and WFP

1. In the areas of Hatay, Kilis, Sanliurfa, Gaziantep, Adana, Osmaniye, Kahramanmaras, Adiyaman

2. Average exchange rate from October 2012 to November 2013: CHF 1 = TRY 1.9914 (www.oanda.com)

Project description

Context and programme choice

Since the onset of the crisis in Syria and as of November 2013, around 660,000 Syrians have taken temporary shelter in Turkey. There are over 200,000 Syrian citizens living in 23 camps across more than ten provinces under temporary protection of the Turkish Government.

As the lead agency in the overall disaster management structure of Turkey, the AFAD has been in charge of camp management since April 2012. The Turkish Red Crescent Society has been working as an auxiliary to the Government of Turkey in providing essential food and non-food relief items, as well as shelter services in the camps.

Assessment and programme design

At the beginning of the crisis, the Turkish Red Crescent Society was covering the food needs of those hosted in the camps by distributing hot meals. Looking for a more cost-effective way of meeting the food needs, the Turkish Red Crescent Society, in collaboration with WFP, discussed

the option of implementing an electronic food voucher programme. In June 2012, they conducted a joint assessment to evaluate the feasibility of such a programme.

Based on previous experiences with cash assistance in urban areas, Turkish Red Crescent Society developed the e-card programme. Electronic food vouchers in the form of e-cards provide households with more freedom to purchase preferred food products from agreed shops and outlets. Furthermore, the e-card system also provides better accountability for the delivery of assistance.

The value of the cash transfer was set at TYR 80 (CHF 40) per person per month. This value was considered adequate to support a person with a well balanced diet of at least 2,100 kilocalories per day. The e-cards would allow households to purchase their food from outlets within the camps or from shops located in the near-by communities.

The monthly assistance for a household is electronically uploaded on the e-card in two instalments of TYR 40 (CHF 20) per family member every 15 days. At the end



A man purchases preferred food products for his family at a participating shop using the e-card.

of the month any balance remaining on the e-card is cleared so that it is not possible to accumulate money.

Certain limitations have been put on the card to ensure that the purchase of products such as alcohol, cigarettes and junk food is not possible. Regular monitoring of shops and households is undertaken to ensure that this criteria is maintained.

When purchasing food products in an outlet or a shop, the household member purchasing the food must be over the age of 18. The household member then produces the e-card and his/her beneficiary registration card. The cashier verifies the number on the beneficiary registration card with the number on the e-card to finalize the transaction.

The Turkish Red Crescent Society monitors and reports any lost, broken and unused cards, and produces monthly project reports to ensure thorough monitoring.

The e-card programme is supplemented by other relief distribution activities carried out by AFAD and the Turkish Red Crescent Society. With the support of its partners, equipment (e.g. electric cooking plates, kitchen sets, mini-fridges and shelves) is being distributed allowing families to cook and store food. Such equipment is a pre-condition for any food voucher programme.

Household selection

All households that are officially registered in one of the 14 camps are automatically included in the cash transfer programme and receive a beneficiary registration card and an e-card.

The camp resident lists are updated on a monthly basis to ensure that only households living in the camps benefit from the cash transfer and other camp services. When a family leaves the camp, they are removed from the camp resident list and must return the beneficiary registration and e-cards.

Cash-based programming facts

Total transfer amount per household	TRY 80 (CHF 40) per household member per month
Number of payments	Two instalments (TRY 40 per household member per 15 days)
Value of cash transfers as percentage of total project cost	94 per cent
Modality	Conditional cash grant (electronic voucher or e-card)
Payment mechanism	Cash transfer through third party (e-card distributed by the National Society and redeemed with traders)
Method of setting value of cash transfer	The amount is based on food costs for 2,100 kilocalories per person per day
Partners/service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP • Halkbank (Turkish state owned bank)
Service provision charges	No service charges

Programme implementation

In October 2012, the Turkish Red Crescent Society, in collaboration with WFP and the Halkbank, launched the electronic food voucher programme in five camps in Kilis and Hatay. The Turkish Red Crescent Society organized training sessions for the camp management, field staff, market owners and workers, and households in order to ensure that everyone fully understands the process and how the e-card is to be used. The training sessions were, and are still, conducted by the Turkish Red Crescent Society. In addition, brochures and posters explaining the programme are distributed in the native language of the households and in the language of the host country. Furthermore, the Turkish Red Crescent Society field teams organized meetings with the heads of households and camp committees to explain the programme.

Once everybody had been informed about the programme, the Turkish Red Crescent Society started to disburse the first e-card through its partner, Halkbank. The programme quickly proved to be a cost-effective alternative to the distribution of cooked meals cutting 70 per cent of the costs and was subsequently expanded to other camps. By November 2013, the e-card programme was running in 14 camps supporting 116,245 households.

The programme is still running³ with more families being included each month. Consequently, the Turkish Red Crescent Society

is continuing its information and monitoring activities, as well as making efforts to improve the system. For example, mini-fridges are being procured and distributed to improve the safe storage of food. The camp managing authorities are in the process of upgrading the camps' infrastructure to match the increase of electricity power needs.

To verify whether the e-card programme covers the needs of the households, several satisfactions surveys were conducted. In these surveys households were interviewed and asked about their general satisfaction with the functioning of the e-card, as well as the quantity and quality of the products they can purchase. This valuable feedback has led to on-going programme refinements to better meet the need and programme objectives.

The Turkish Red Crescent Society also monitors the different outlets and shops that are linked to the programme to check aspects like product quality, variety and prices as well compliance with the programme expectations.

Programme outcome

The e-card programme has become a cost-effective alternative to the distribution of cooked meals. The total cash transfer value for the beneficiaries represents about 94 per cent of the total project cost for the Turkish Red Crescent Society, as WFP and the Government assume some of the indirect costs.

3. As of November 2013

Reflecting on our learning...

The key learning points from this programme for the National Society can be summarized as follows:

1. Cash transfers are a more cost-effective way of meeting basic food needs in camp situations than providing daily hot meals. Families also prefer to have a choice over the food that they eat and how it is prepared. This is especially relevant in temporary camps where cultural preference must be respected but may differ from the host populations' preferences.
2. Changing from in-kind assistance to cash transfer programming for this operation has allowed the National Society to improve its project management skills. Cash-based programming requires good assessments, beneficiary communications and strong monitoring both of the programme and the local market. It requires flexible programme management that can find solutions to unexpected challenges that arise and continually look to refine and improve the programme approach based on monitoring and beneficiary feedback.



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Implementing cash transfer programmes to meet food needs of the Syrian population after providing in-kind food, has allowed me to see that cash transfers in this case are a more respectful mechanism.

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A man receives his e-card after verification using a beneficiary registration card.



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