

# PRESS RELEASE



## Welthungerhilfe on the 9th Anniversary of the Civil War in Syria: **Refugees Must not Be Used as Political Hostages**

Bonn/Berlin, 11/03/2020. The situation of the refugees in Syria, on the Greek islands, and on the Turkish-Syrian border is becoming increasingly desperate. More than a million people are currently in a disastrous position. This misery can only be ended through political solutions and an end to the war.

“People who have fled because of war, poverty or persecution are effectively being held hostage and used as a political football. The situation is now particularly bad for the refugees in the Syrian province of Idlib. There we are witnessing the worst refugee crisis since the outbreak of war. About a million people have their backs against the wall, and they are defenceless against the military offensives. The overcrowded refugee camps are literally sinking into the mud. Due to the inadequate hygiene conditions, there is a danger that diseases like cholera will spread quickly. We also fear an outbreak of the corona virus, which would have disastrous consequences there. The temporary housing offers no protection against frost and rain. The number of people who can no longer feed themselves has risen to nearly eight million over recent weeks. At the same time, access for humanitarians is becoming increasingly difficult”, warns Mathias Mogge, General Secretary of Welthungerhilfe.

“Over recent weeks, we have supported 170,000 people in the province of Idlib with food and heating fuel, but this is not nearly enough. Hostilities must stop immediately, so people can be reached and finally receive help. An agreement at European level is now also needed, even if only a few countries would be willing to accept refugees. The EU needs to remember its values, like respect for human dignity and observance of human rights”, says Mogge.

Our Regional Director for Syria, Turkey and Lebanon, Dirk Hegmanns, is available for interviews in Germany.

Welthungerhilfe is requesting donations for people in Syria online at [www.welthungerhilfe.de/spenden-syrien/nothilfe-nordsyrien/](http://www.welthungerhilfe.de/spenden-syrien/nothilfe-nordsyrien/)

For further information see <https://www.welthungerhilfe.org/media/>

*Welthungerhilfe is one of the largest private aid organisations in Germany; politically independent and non-denominational. It is fighting for “Zero Hunger by 2030”. Since it was founded in 1962, more than 9,300 overseas projects in 70 countries have been supported with 3.71 billion euros. Welthungerhilfe works on the principle of help for self-help: from fast disaster relief to reconstruction and long-term development cooperation projects with national and international partner organisations.*

### **Issued by:**

Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e.V.

Contact person:  
Simone Pott  
Press spokesperson  
Tel. +49 (0) 228 2288 132  
Mobile +49 (0)172 252 5962  
simone.pott@welthungerhilfe.de

Assistant: Catherine Briones  
Tel. +49 (0)228 2288 640  
presse@welthungerhilfe.de

[www.welthungerhilfe.de](http://www.welthungerhilfe.de)

