

Supporting National Capacity in Palestine

WFP and the Palestinian Authority's Strategic Partnership

Challenges to Food Security in Palestine

High food insecurity and vulnerability in Palestine are a result of severe restrictions on livelihoods and economic activity. Although food is available in Palestine, prices are too high for poor households who spend approximately 50 percent of their household income on food. More than a quarter of all Palestinian households – approximately 1.6 million people – were found to be food insecure in 2014. Half of them are children.

National response and strategic coordination

The 1.6 million food-insecure Palestinians unable to cover their basic expenses are being assisted by the Palestinian Authority, with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) serving refugees, and WFP, in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), supporting non-refugees.

Under its Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation, WFP has three objectives: meeting the food needs and enhancing the food consumption and dietary diversity of the most vulnerable non-refugee populations; fostering early recovery and enhancing the resilience and coping mechanisms of fragile communities in the face of economic hardship and restricted freedom of movement; supporting the Palestinian Authority's capacity to deliver cost-effective and protective national safety nets, and strengthening its readiness to respond to external shocks.

The Palestinian Authority has put in place and relies on a strong national social protection system, through which it provides direct social (including food) assistance, social insurance and social services to the most vulnerable people. The system has been put in place and is implemented with the technical and financial support of international actors, including WFP whose food assistance programme with the Ministry of Social Development is a pillar of the Palestinian Social Assistance system.

Alignment with national policies and sectoral strategies

WFP's interventions align and are integrated in the Palestinian Authority's 2014-2016 National Development and Social Protection Sector Strategic Plans. Under these frameworks, WFP and the Palestinian Authority work toward reducing poverty, marginalization and social exclusion of the most vulnerable.

The Palestinian Authority is involved in the preparation of the new National Plan called the Public Policy Agenda and Sectoral Strategies (2017-2022), and the new Social Development Sector Strategy which will fall under the National Plan. WFP has been providing policy, planning and coordination, in addition to financial support to the Ministry of Social Development.

WFP's capacity development support

WFP has been providing policy, analytic and programme support to the development of the national social assistance system in Palestine, and designed its food assistance programmes with a focus on 'handover' to the Palestinian Authority.

This translates into WFP supporting the Ministry of Social Development on devising and delivering an integrated and needs-based national food safety net reaching 214,000 people with food and cash-based transfer (CBT) assistance, including by providing technical support in the realm of programme design, beneficiary targeting, and monitoring and evaluation.

WFP has also been partnering with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics on food security analysis, needs assessments and multi-stakeholder coordination in the framework of the Food Security Sector, which gathers more than 40 organisations, and with the Palestinian Civil Defence on emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction.





Supporting the National Food Safety Net

WFP supports the Palestinian Authority's social protection system and development priorities through a strong operational partnership with the Ministry of Social Development, using its purchasing power to invest in local purchases and support the local economy.

Food distributions: WFP provides critical food assistance to 157,000 poor and food insecure people, 89,000 in Gaza and 68,000 in the West Bank. This includes 11,000 people in orphanages and other special care institutions. All live below the deep poverty line.

CBTs: WFP assists 57,000 people in the West Bank with electronic food vouchers. CBTs help poor urban and semi-urban families purchase locally-produced nutritious foods in local shops.

They promote women empowerment and improve the nutritional status and dietary diversity of assisted households in a dignified way.

Vouchers and food rations protect families from engaging in negative coping mechanisms such as purchasing food on credit, reducing the variety of consumed food and/or the number of daily meals.

Investing in the local economy

WFP uses its purchasing power as a means of supporting the local economy, fostering agricultural development and connecting small-scale producers, food - processors, retailers and consumers.

By using local retail shops for procurement and distribution and locally-produced commodities, WFP aims at supporting the Palestinian economy and recovery of Gaza.

This inclusive and encompassing approach has enabled WFP to significantly invest and render the Palestinian people and economy more resilient to the protracted crisis and other potential shocks.

Since 2011, WFP has injected over USD 215 million into the Palestinian economy through the use of vouchers and local purchases.

WFP's voucher programme has had a positive economic impact along the food value chain. It resulted in increased sales, investments and job creations in WFP participating shops and dairy processors, and provided a market outlet for locally produced-goods.

230 new full-time jobs were created and participating shop owners were able to invest USD 4,2 million into their business since 2013. Over USD 1 million of annual VAT revenues was generated to the Palestinian Authority.

