World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

From the People of Japan

# WFP News Release

4 July 2018

## JAPAN SECURES FOOD ASSISTANCE FOR GAZA'S FAMILIES

**RAMALLAH –** The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) welcomes a contribution of JPY 400 million (just under US$4 million) from the Government of Japan to support some of the most vulnerable Palestinians living in Gaza.

WFP will use these funds to assist 60,000 of the poorest and most food insecure people in Gaza with electronic vouchers they can use to buy nutritious and fresh foods at local retailers. A portion of the contribution will also be used to buy canned tuna to be included in the contingency stocks WFP keeps in case of emergencies.

"This contribution is a symbol of Japan's continued commitment to alleviate the hardship faced the most vulnerable Palestinian families in Gaza," said WFP Representative and Country Director Daniela Owen. "Food assistance and humanitarian support are a lifeline that thousands of families desperately depend on. This is not the time to leave vulnerable Palestinians behind."

With unemployment at 49 percent, half of Gaza's population faces poverty. Families have hit a breaking point and are taking extreme measures to cope with mounting difficulties, including skipping meals. Many have exhausted all their resources and rely on credit, support from friends and relatives to make ends meet.

"The Government of Japan is committed to continuing its unwavering support to ensure that all Palestinians have physical, social and economic access to their daily needs for an active and healthy life," said Japanese Ambassador for Palestinian Affairs, Mr. Takeshi Okubo. "Japan is gravely concerned about the deteriorating socio-economic conditions in Gaza."

The Gaza strip is suffering an acute energy crisis which impacts all economic activities and affects the delivery of essential basic services. The crisis is exacerbating an already fragile humanitarian situation caused by eleven years of economic blockade, strict restrictions on trade and people's movements, salary reductions for tens of thousands of civil servants and a slow post-conflict reconstruction process.

"We are grateful to the Japanese people and government for their support that will undoubtedly enable WFP to work with the Palestinian community to improve nutrition and

build resilience, especially in Gaza," said Palestinian Minister of Social Development Ibrahim Al-Shaer. "We also value the continued support of WFP and our partnership, which has a substantial positive impact on people facing economic hardship."

Since 2011, WFP has injected more than US$175 million into the Palestinian economy through food vouchers. With contributions amounting to nearly US$53 million, Japan is among WFP's top donors in the country, as well as one of the largest donors to WFP globally.

# # #

The United Nations World Food Programme - saving lives in emergencies and changing lives for millions through sustainable development. WFP works in more than 80 countries around the world, feeding people caught in conflict and disasters, and laying the foundations for a better future.

Follow us on Twitter @wfp_media @wfp_mena @wfpgovts

**For more information please contact (email address: firstname.lastname@wfp.org):**

Yasmine Abuelassal, WFP/Jerusalem, Mob. +972 546773170

Raphael Duboispean, WFP/Jerusalem, Mob. +972 546773160

Akihiro Narita, Second Secretary, Representative Office of Japan to Palestine, akihiro.narita@mofa.go.jp