

WFP State of Palestine
Country Brief

Highlights

- WFP started implementing the new 2018-2022 Country Strategic Plan. WFP's 2018 work plan will prioritise assistance in Gaza as per the greatest needs.
- Whilst the in-kind food entitlements were reduced for 55,000 people, assistance to 65,000 food-insecure people receiving cash-based transfers (CBT) in Gaza was suspended due to insufficient resources.
- WFP's food assistance is a fundamental safety net for the poorest whose coping mechanisms continue to deteriorate. WFP's monitoring findings showed that food Consumption scores (FCS) greatly deteriorated when CBT assistance was suspended: the percentage of households with a poor FCS increased from 4 percent in December 2017 to 65 percent in January 2018.

WFP Assistance

Country Strategic Plan	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6 Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
CSP PS01 Jan-2018-Dec 2022	240.3 m	10.6 m	14.0 m (59%)

*February – July 2018

GENDER MARKER 2A

Under its State of Palestine Country Strategy Plan (2018-2022), WFP aims at providing cash-based transfers (CBT), using an electronic food voucher (60 percent), and in-kind food assistance (40 percent) to up to 314,000 people most affected by food insecurity in Palestine, primarily in Gaza and Area C in the West Bank where the prevalence of food insecurity is the highest.

WFP seeks to assist 220,000 poor severely food-insecure people as identified in the National Socio-Economic and Food Security Survey (2017): 140,000 in Gaza and 80,000 in the West Bank, as well as 35,000 semi-nomadic Bedouins in Area C of the West Bank. Funding permitting, WFP will also reach 59,000 of the most vulnerable moderately food-insecure households headed by women. All targeted populations live below the national deep poverty line on less than USD 3.2 dollars a day.

The CSP also includes resilience-building activities. It focuses on supporting institutional capacity building and engaging in new partnerships with Government, United Nations and NGO partners around the provision and further development of WFP's humanitarian/ development assistance platform that transfers assistance through WFP's electronic card.

The Palestinian Authority is a core WFP partner in Palestine. WFP supports the Ministry of Social Development in the development and delivery of an integrated and needs-based National Food Safety net, reaching poor and severely food insecure people with in-kind and cash-based transfer food assistance. WFP also provides technical support towards programme design, beneficiary targeting, monitoring and evaluation to the Ministry of Social Development.

By purchasing most of its food supplies from local suppliers and using retail shops as the conduit for the procurement and distribution of food assistance, WFP aims at strengthening the resilience of local food systems and stimulating the wider Palestinian economy. Since 2011, WFP has invested more than USD 260 million in the economy, including USD 170 million through CBT and 93 million through local purchases.

Main Photo Credit: WFP Palestine
Caption: Mariam, a ten-year-old girl, is a talented student at the Society of Physically Handicapped People in Rafah City (Gaza), which used to receive WFP's food assistance. Funding shortages led WFP to suspend assistance to 4,000 people living with disabilities in specialised health and other charitable institutions.

WFP food assistance is instrumental in meeting the immediate food needs and improving/stabilising the dietary diversity of poor food-insecure communities, and in mitigating the devastating and accumulative impact of decades of conflict on their living conditions. It has proved to be a fundamental safety net for the poorest whose socio-economic conditions continue to deteriorate in the wake of an acute humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Two reports published in July 2017 by the United Nations Country Team and United Nations Development Programme evidenced the deterioration of all socio-economic indicators. The reports highlighted that Gaza continued its trajectory of de-development

WFP Palestine has been successfully mainstreaming gender equality principles across its activities to better empower women, and meet WFP global gender objectives. WFP supports the capacity of national institutions to ensure that vulnerable and marginalized groups have access to social transfers that are preventive, protective and transformative.

WFP runs nutrition awareness programmes in Gaza and the West Bank, targeting up to 9, 500 beneficiaries including: women (6,000), men (1,500) and children (2,000). The participants attend sessions over a period of six months, which feature interactive discussions and presentations on diet, hygiene, cooking, purchasing healthy food on a budget, and following the conflict in Gaza, psycho-social support for them and their children. The sessions have proved to have a long-term positive impact on participants, supporting women's empowerment and their active role as agents of change within their communities.

In Numbers

1.6 m food-insecure Palestinians in need of food assistance.

39% of food-insecure Palestinians in Gaza

13% of food-insecure Palestinians in the West Bank

263,570
People assisted in January

50% 50%

January 2018

Operational Updates

- In January, WFP assisted 263,570 poor and food insecure beneficiaries: 169,877 in Gaza and 93,693 in the West Bank with food and CBTs. WFP food assistance was critical in meeting the immediate food needs of the most vulnerable, as well as stabilising their dietary diversity. In addition to this, WFP assistance also helps protecting livelihoods and mitigating the devastating and accumulative impact of decades of conflict on their socio-economic status.
- The United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) started the distributions of water, sanitation and hygiene products to 15,000 poor families (90,000 beneficiaries) through WFP's electronic voucher. On top of their WFP food allocations, each family will receive a one-time entitlement of USD 55 over January-March. Hygiene education sessions to participants will be delivered by the local NGO Ard El Insan. This is the fifth consecutive year that WFP and UNICEF partner together in Gaza. In 2017, UNICEF and WFP provided a joint package of food, water and sanitation assistance to more than 7,600 poor households.
- WFP eased the purchase restrictions on all assisted families using CBT. Beneficiaries were able to use their electronic food vouchers for all types of food excluding unhealthy items such as candies, chocolate and soft drinks. Since October last year, all voucher recipients were given the choice and flexibility to redeem their entitlements in all participating shops instead of being assigned to a dedicated one. These initiatives were implemented to foster competition and increase people's freedom of choice and purchasing power with a view to further empower them as drivers of change.
- Acknowledging its benefits on households' nutrition and health awareness, particularly women, WFP resumed its nutrition and health awareness sessions in both Gaza and the West Bank. The classes gathered and were specifically tailored to all household members, including children, men and women, with a view to promote a common understanding of healthy diet.
- Together with its cooperating partner Global Communities, WFP is conducting a beneficiary needs assessment in Gaza to review the eligibility of current food assistance recipients and assess the needs of other vulnerable poor food insecure people. A total of 37,000 households are being surveyed. The re-targeting exercise is expected to be completed in April.

Challenges

- In January, WFP did not have enough resources to provide food to 12,000 poor elderly people, orphans, street children, disabled people, pregnant and lactating women living permanently or semi-permanently in more than 130 charitable or specialized health care institutions targeted in the most food-insecure areas across Gaza (4,000) and the West Bank (8,000).
- Due to funding challenges, 65,000 poor Gazans did not receive their monthly voucher entitlements and 55,000 were provided with reduced in-kind food entitlements in January. The need for WFP's continued food assistance is acute for poor food insecure people in Gaza

Country Background & Strategy

Food insecurity in Palestine affects 27 percent of the population – or 1.3 million people- and is driven by limited economic access to food, arising from restrictions of movement, trade and investment, and high unemployment rates. Food prices are driven by Israel, where people's average purchasing power per person is six times higher than in Palestine, and therefore too high for poor families to afford. As poor and vulnerable Palestinians spend more than half of their income on food, WFP's assistance is critical to meet their food needs and prevents further deteriorations in their food security and livelihood status. Gaza continues its trajectory of de-development. All socio economic indicators and humanitarian conditions continue to deteriorate, owing to the cumulative effects of a ten-year economic -land, sea, air- blockade (2006), three armed hostilities (2008, '12,'14), the introduction of Israeli restrictions on the entry of goods with a dual civilian/military use (2010) limiting economic growth and post-war reconstruction, Egypt's closure of the smuggling tunnels annihilating the informal economy (2013), the pay cuts of Palestinian Authority public sector workers and the current energy crisis (2017): 40 percent are poor, 39 percent are food insecure, 46.6 percent are unemployed. The U.N. foresees that Gaza will be "unliveable" by 2020. As of January 2018, WFP targets 314,000 of the most vulnerable, food insecure non-refugees in Palestine who have been affected by the ongoing conflict and occupation and a steady decline in living standards.

Population: **4.9 million**	2016 Human Development Index: **114 out of 188**
Income Level: **Lower middle**	Chronic malnutrition: **7.4 % of children between 6-59 months**

Partnerships

WFP and other humanitarian and development actors support the National Authority in the provision of assistance to vulnerable segments of the non-refugee population. WFP works closely with the Government (Ministry of Social Development), NGOs (Global Communities, Ard El Insan, Palestinian Medical Relief Society) and United Nations partners (UNRWA,) to deliver food assistance in Gaza and the West Bank.

WFP's food assistance interventions are aligned with national plans and strategies, including the National Policy Agenda 2017 -2022 and the Social Development Sector Strategy 2017-2022 which have identified the provision of continued food assistance to poor and food insecure non-refugee populations and the strengthening of the Palestinian Authority's social protection system as a key priority to alleviate poverty. WFP assistance is also aligned with the 2018-2022 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the 2018-2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) in Palestine, directly supporting SDG 2: Zero Hunger and 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

Donors

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