SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Palestine in Action

WFP's Country Strategic Plan (2018-22)

Under WFP's new Country Strategy Plan (CSP), WFP aims at providing cash-based transfer (60 percent) and in-kind food (40 percent) assistance 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 focuses on assisting 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 also aims to reach 59,000 of the most vulnerable moderately food- insecure women who are heads of households. 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.

Alignment with national and U.N. strategies

The CSP aligns with national plans, namely the Palestinian 2017-2022 National Policy Agenda and Social Development Sector Strategy, which have identified the provision of continued food assistance to poor food insecure populations and the strengthening of the Palestinian Authority's social protection system as a priority to alleviate poverty. It is also aligned with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supporting SDG 2 "Zero Hunger" and SDG 17 "Partnerships for the Goals" as embedded within the 2018-22 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and 2018-20 Humanitarian Response Plan.

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, through the Ministry of Social Development. WFP has been partnering with the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics on food security analysis, needs assessments and multi-stakeholder coordination which takes place n the framework of the Food Security Sector.

WFP
World Food Programme

March 2018

Gaza continues to suffer from a severe energy crisis that impacts all economic activities and affects the delivery of essential basic services, including life-saving medical interventions and water supplies. The crisis is exacerbating an already fragile humanitarian situation caused by eleven years of economic blockade, import and export restrictions and periodic escalations of hostilities (2008,12 and 14). Against this backdrop, almost half of the population is unemployed and at least 39 percent food insecure, plunging Gaza on a trajectory of de-development. The multi-faceted crisis takes the heaviest toll on the poorest, including WFP beneficiaries who have resorted to negative coping strategies such as reducing the number of daily meals per day, taking on loans from retailers, or relying on support and charity from friends or relatives. When continuously provided, WFP food assistance is a fundamental safety net for tens of thousands poor families whose hardships continue unabated.

Challenges to Food Security in Palestine

Food insecurity stems from lack of access to food, linked to poverty and lack of employment opportunities. Although food is available in Palestine, prices are too high for poor households who spend approximately 50 percent of their household income on food. 22.5 percent of all Palestinian households – approximately 1.3 million people – are food insecure. The prevalence of food insecurity is more acute in Gaza (39 percent), and among the Bedouin and herding communities (61 percent) in area C of the West Bank. Across all governorates, the average food insecurity rate in the West Bank is 13 percent.

WFP's food assistance in Palestine

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.

General Food Distributions: WFP aims at reaching nearly 110,000 food-insecure people across Gaza and the West Bank, including 35,000 marginalized Bedouins and herders in area C of the West Bank (together with UNRWA). The WFP food basket is comprised of wheat flour, pulses, salt and vegetable oil. Distributions take place on a quarterly basis.

Cash-based transfers: WFP aims at assisting 188,400 with cash-based transfers (CBT) using electronic food vouchers. Families receive a monthly entitlement of USD 10.3 per person. CBT help poor urban families purchase a wide range of food products, most of them produced/processed/packaged locally, in selected retail shops. WFP's participating shops use an electronic terminal, similar to a credit card machine, where beneficiaries swipe their e-vouchers to purchase food. CBT stimulate the local economy by increasing sales of locally-produced goods and fostering investment and employment. They also protect families from engaging in negative coping mechanisms such as purchasing food on credit, reducing the variety of consumed food and reducing the number of daily meals.

The CBT platform simplifies and gives more flexibility to distribution processes, reduces the risk of fraud and abuses, and improves overall verification and monitoring mechanisms. It is a cost efficient modality for inter-sectoral partnerships. WFP has strategic multi-sectoral partnerships in place with UNICEF and UNRWA who have been using WFP's voucher platform to deliver their own humanitarian supplies (e-wallet). During the 2014 Gaza armed hostilities, WFP, Oxfam and UNICEF successfully scaled up their assistance to reach and provide food, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) items to more than 300,000 people in less than two weeks.

WFP will aim at introducing direct cash assistance to 15,700 people per year throughout the life of the CSP. CBTs increase WFP's ability to deliver the most adapted and cost-efficient response for greater transparency, choice, value for money and accountability towards our beneficiaries and contributing donors.

Supporting 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 along the food value chain.

Since 2011, WFP has injected over USD 260 million into the Palestinian economy through local food purchases (USD 90 million) and the use of vouchers (USD 170 million). Two WFP studies (2014, 2016) have highlighted the multiplier and trickle-down effect of vouchers along the food supply chain, leading to increased sales, profits and investment (including job creation) generated among participating shops, food processors and dairy farmers.

Gender equality and women empowerment

As reflected by its high Inter Agency Standing Committee Gender Marker (2A), WFP Palestine has been successfully mainstreaming gender equality principles across its activities to better empower women, provide food assistance adapted to different needs, foster equal participation and enhanced decision-making by women, and promote gender and protection.

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. Disability is a key vulnerability factor taken into consideration in targeting poor and food insecure households. Around 40 percent of assisted households in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development have at least one family member with a disability in the Gaza Strip and 30 percent in the West Bank.

WFP runs a nutrition awareness programme in Gaza and the West Bank, targeting respectively 6,500 and 3,000 women, men and children beneficiaries of WFP's food assistance. 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. The sessions have proved to increase the knowledge of all family members on healthy eating habits. They also support women's empowerment and their active role as agents of change within their communities.

Photo page 1: WFP /Eyad Al Baba