

WFP State of Palestine
Country Brief

Highlights

- When continuously provided, WFP's food assistance is a fundamental safety net for the poorest whose coping mechanisms continue to deteriorate in the face of an acute humanitarian crisis in Gaza.
- WFP's monitoring findings showed that the Food Consumption Scores (FCS) of 65,000 people receiving electronic vouchers greatly deteriorated when assistance was interrupted in January, and improved when it was re-instated in February. Communities assisted by WFP are reliant on external humanitarian assistance to make ends meet.

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	20.9 m	16 m

*April-September 2018

GENDER MARKER 2A

Under its State of Palestine Country Strategy Plan (2018-2022), WFP aims at providing food assistance through cash-based transfers (CBT), using an electronic food voucher (60 percent), and in-kind 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 (2016/17): 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 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.

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 263 million in the economy, including USD 170 million through CBT and 93 million through local purchases.

WFP food assistance 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 implements two 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 and purchasing healthy food on a budget.

In Numbers

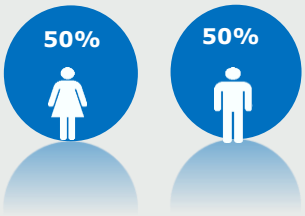
1.6 m food-insecure Palestinians in need of food assistance.

>39% of food-insecure Palestinians in Gaza

13% of food-insecure Palestinians in the West Bank

331,425
People assisted in February
(including 3,609 non-refugee IDPs)

55 percent assisted through CBTs



Main Photo Credit: WFP Palestine
Caption: Sanyora, a single mother of six, relies on external assistance, including WFP's food voucher assistance to meet the household basic needs. And yet this is not enough. WFP's assistance is a critical safety net for thousands of other Gazan families living in deep poverty and whose coping mechanisms are being exhausted in the wake of increased socio-economic hardships.

February 2018

Operational Updates

- In February, WFP assisted 331,425 poor and food insecure beneficiaries: 234,923 in Gaza and 96,502 in the West Bank with food and CBTs. WFP food assistance was critical in meeting the immediate food needs of the most vulnerable in the face of increased socio-economic hardships.
- WFP and its cooperating partner Global Communities are expecting to implement the results of two new beneficiary needs-assessments in the second quarter of the year. These re-targeting exercises were carried-out in Gaza and the Southern Governorates of the West Bank (where the prevalence of food-insecurity is the highest) with a view to prioritise the most food-insecure families, as per WFP's new Country Strategic Plan. WFP will implement the result of these surveys in the second quarter of the year.
- WFP reached a higher number of beneficiaries exceeding its target, to respond to growing humanitarian needs in Gaza. WFP's new CSP allows for more flexibility in responding to changes in needs. WFP allocated the bulk of its resources in Gaza backed by evidence on the deterioration in the Gaza socio-economic landscape. As corroborated by the high unemployment levels (48 percent), people's economic access to food is likely to have deteriorated since the last National Socio-Economic and Food Security Survey, conducted in late 2016, i.e. before an acute energy crisis paralysed all business activities and undermined the delivery of essential basic services.
- WFP resumed its assistance to 65,000 people who were unable to redeem their food voucher entitlements last month due to funding shortages. However, WFP's resourcing limitations led to a 20 percent reduction in their monthly allocation (from USD 10 to 8.3 per person). WFP's monitoring findings showed that the percentage of households with a poor Food Consumption Score (FCS) decreased from 65 percent, when assistance was interrupted in January, to 11 percent when it was partially reinstated in February. In December, when people's full entitlements were met, only 4 percent showed a poor FCS. This testifies to the significant reliance of the poorest on WFP support.
- WFP's household monitoring findings confirmed the increased hardships faced by the most vulnerable, as measured by WFP's Coping Strategy Index (CSI). Compared to February last year, assisted populations in Gaza have increased their negative food coping mechanisms, such as consuming food of lower quality and/or in fewer quantities, purchasing on credit, and reducing the number of meals per day.
- Beneficiaries redeemed more than 40 different types of food products with their food vouchers in January/February compared to 16 in December. Since the beginning of the year, WFP has lifted most of its purchasing restrictions with a view to foster market competition, increase the purchasing power and giving more freedom of choice to affected populations.

Country Background & Strategy

About 2.5 million Palestinians are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection, according to the 2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview. Of those, 1.9 million people, identified as the most vulnerable, will be targeted in 2018 by a range of interventions outlined in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), for a total cost of USD 539.7 million, including USD 289 million for food security activities (USD 44 million from WFP). 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.

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 Palestinian 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

WFP is grateful for the support of Japan, the Republic of Korea, USA, multilateral and private donors.

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