



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Palestine Country Brief January 2019

In Numbers

259,060 people assisted
in January 2019



US\$ 2.17 m cash- based transfers made

US\$ 20.4 m six months (February-July 2019) net
funding requirements

Operational Context

Food insecurity in Palestine affects nearly a third of the population – about 1.56 million people - and is driven by high poverty and unemployment rates. Food prices are driven by Israeli markets, where the average purchasing power per person is six times higher than in Palestine, and therefore too high for poor Palestinian 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, with 7 out of each 10 people being food insecure and more than half of the population living in poverty and without a job. In the West Bank, the prolonged period of slow economic growth, restrictions on movement, trade, investment, and access to land and water resources, together with higher food prices, continue to erode the fragile livelihoods of poor Palestinians. Poverty (13.9 percent) and food insecurity (11.6 percent), while less widespread than in Gaza, are still entrenched and more localised to pockets of land, particularly in the Southern Governorates. More than 60 percent of the Bedouin and herding communities in Area C of the West Bank are food-insecure.

The provision of WFP's assistance goes beyond meeting people's immediate food needs: it promotes community resilience and empowerment in the face of increased hardships, contributes to sustain stability and advance the United Nations Country Team's humanitarian-development-peace building agenda, and stimulates the local economy.

Under the [Country Strategy Plan \(2018-2022\)](#) (CSP), WFP aims to provide food assistance to 368,700 of the poorest and most vulnerable non-refugees affected by food insecurity across Palestine. All WFP-assisted people live below the national deep poverty line of less than US\$ 3.70 per day.

Population: 4.9 million

2018 Human Development Index: 119
out of 188

Poverty rate: 29.2 percent

Chronic malnutrition: 7.4 % of children
between 6-59 months

Operational Updates

- In January, WFP assisted 259,060 of the poorest and most food insecure people with food and cash-based transfers (CBT), whereof 209,066 people live in Gaza and 49,994 people live in the West Bank. WFP's food assistance enables poor households to meet a share of their daily food needs and alleviates the decline in their purchasing power. It is a fundamental safety net that keeps them from falling into deeper poverty as well as a critical form of economic transfer that allows families to spend their meagre resources on other essentials.
- [As a result of funding shortfalls](#), WFP had to cut off assistance to 27,000 poor food-insecure people in the West Bank and reduce the CBT entitlements of another 166,000 across Gaza (115,000) and the West Bank (51,000) by 20 percent (from US\$ 10 to US\$ 8 per capita/month). WFP has been collecting quantitative data and qualitative feedback from affected communities to measure the impact of these cuts on their food security status. Results will be available in March.
- Without new funding, WFP will be forced to downsize its operations further in the second trimester of 2019. Last month, WFP launched its 2019 WFP's funding appeal of US\$ 57 million, as well as its awareness-raising video campaign on Gaza's spiralling humanitarian needs (available [here](#)).
- These forcible measures come at a time when food insecurity is on the rise, hitting one third of the population as the preliminary findings of the [Food Security Sector's Socioeconomic and Food Insecurity Survey](#) (Dec. 2018) revealed. This includes an estimated 700,000 non-refugees, of whom 465,000 are in Gaza and 235,000 in the West Bank. This is twice as many people in need of support as WFP is now in a position to assist within the framework of its CSP.
- The current suspension and reduction of assistance will have a negative trickle-down impact on the local economy. Through CBTs, WFP injects US\$3.5 million into the local economy with positive spillover effects on job creation and investment in the agro-industrial sector. Read about [WFP new story](#) about the multi-dimensional socioeconomic gains triggered by WFP's voucher interventions in Gaza.

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Photo Caption: An extended family in Deir-El Bala (Gaza) receiving WFP's voucher support. WFP/Raphael du Boispean

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
253.2 m	56.9 m
2019 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (February – July 2019)
48.6 m	20.4 m

*The Net Funding Requirements include the repayment of IRA allocation of USD 10 m.

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome # 1: Non-refugees, poor and severely food-insecure people (primarily in the Gaza Strip and Area C of the West Bank) have improved dietary diversity by 2022

Focus area : Crisis response

Activities:

- Provision of unconditional food assistance – including through cash-based transfers (CBT) and in-kind modalities- and nutrition information to poor and food-insecure households (Unconditional resource transfers to support access to food).

Strategic Result 2: Partner to support implementation of the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 2: State of Palestine institutions have enhanced capacities and systems to identify, target and assist food-insecure vulnerable populations by 2022

Focus area : Resilience-building

Activities:

- Provision of technical support to national ministries and institutions for implementation of the food security strategy
- Provision of a CBT platform to multi-sectoral partners and Government (Service provision and platforms activities)

Monitoring

- In January, WFP conducted 692 household visits including 405 in Gaza (59 %) and 287 in the West Bank (41%). The average family size was 5.5 members in Gaza and 5.1 members in the West Bank.
- Beneficiary households surveyed in Gaza this month were found to be heavily indebted; 67 percent had debts for electricity and water bills totalling an average of USD 2,540; 68 percent had debts for groceries (USD 250); and 36 percent had contracted loans from friends and relatives (USD 1,100). In the West Bank, a smaller population of the families surveyed had accumulated the aforementioned debts (respectively 47, 57 and 15 percent) with similar amounts.
- WFP beneficiary heads of households in Gaza and the West Bank reported working 7 and 5 days this month for an average monthly revenue of USD 170 and USD 297, respectively. This represents USD 1.03 and USD 1.95 per person and per day respectively – without social assistance - while the deep poverty line is set at USD 3.70.
- Findings show that WFP beneficiaries continue to adopt negative coping mechanisms (see table) in trying to meet their daily food needs and fill their consumption gap after receiving WFP's assistance. These mechanisms are persistent for an acutely vulnerable population.

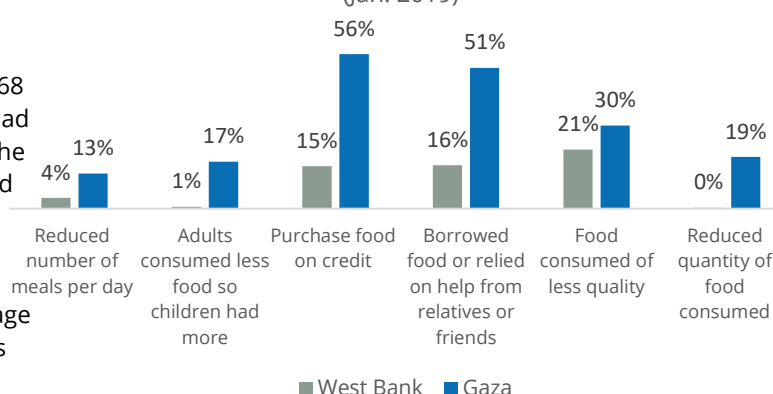
Challenges

- WFP was still able to continue assisting 259,060 people in January at a full and reduced scale, thanks to multilateral funding and an emergency loan allocated by WFP Headquarters from flexible donors last year. This reflected the strong commitment of WFP to maintain assistance in Palestine, recognising the imperative to respond to acute and growing humanitarian needs in Gaza. This support is however not sustainable.
- The gap between newly-assessed food security needs and available resources is widening. Consequently, WFP finds itself unable to reach all severely food-insecure non-refugee populations (estimated to be 404,000 people), which is the main objective of its CSP.

Partnerships

- WFP supports the Palestinian Authority in the provision of food assistance to the poorest groups of the non-refugee population that have been enlisted in the national welfare system and receive social protection benefits, such as direct cash-transfers, medical allowances, education and electricity subsidies, in addition to specialised human services, such as child protection and disability support.
- Through its other implementing INGO partners, Global Communities and Oxfam, WFP reaches some of the other poor food-insecure groups who do not have access to national social protection whilst being eligible for it. WFP also works with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA) to meet the food needs of mixed refugee and non-refugee Bedouin and herding communities in Israeli-controlled Area C of the West Bank.
- Complementary to the provision of food assistance, WFP delivers nutrition and health education sessions all year round with local NGOs in both Gaza and the West Bank.

Food coping mechanisms of WFP beneficiaries (Jan. 2019)



Donors

WFP is grateful for the support of: [Canada](#), [European Union \(ECHO\)](#), [France](#), [Germany](#), [Japan](#), [the Republic of Korea](#), [Switzerland](#), [the Russian Federation](#), [Spain](#), [the United States of America](#) and multilateral and private donors (Strategic Outcome 1). More information [here](#).