



WFP Palestine Country Brief January 2020

Operational Context

The humanitarian context in the State of Palestine remains directly tied to the impact of the Israeli occupation. Restricted movement of people, access to resources and basic social services, together with recurrent expropriation of land, settler violence, civil unrest and periodic large-scale armed hostilities have resulted in economic stagnation, high unemployment, poverty and food insecurity. The prolonged conflict has disproportionately affected women, men, girls and boys. Women headed households represent 11 percent of the total households in Palestine ;however, they account to almost 20 percent of families suffering from extreme poverty. Adolescent boys and girls living in poverty have lower access to quality services. Boys face higher rates of child labour and girls higher rates of child marriage.

WFP provides food assistance to the most vulnerable groups of the Palestinian non-refugee population while the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) assists Palestinian refugees. According to the [latest national estimates \(December 2018\)](#), food insecurity in Palestine affects nearly a third of the population – about 1.7 million people - and is driven by high poverty and unemployment rates. The number of food-insecure Palestinians is almost equally divided between the refugee (55 percent) and non-refugee (45 percent) communities. More than 700,000 non-refugees are assessed to be food insecure in Gaza (465,000) and the West Bank (235,000), including 404,000 in a severe state.

The provision of WFP's assistance goes beyond serving the purpose of enhancing people's ability to meet their immediate food needs; it supports community resilience and empowerment in the face of repeated shocks and increased hardships, contributes to maintaining peace and stability, and [stimulates the local economy](#).

Under [2018-22 Country Strategic Plan \(CSP\)](#) and in contribution to SDG 2 , WFP aims at providing food assistance to 404,000 of the most vulnerable non-refugees via in-kind food rations and electronic food vouchers topped up with a monthly credit of USD 10 per person. Assisted communities can redeem their entitlements in a network of 275 local retail shops across Gaza (200) and the West Bank (75). WFP also works with national institutions to enhance the capacity of existing social safety nets to assist the poor and vulnerable.

Population: **4.9 million**

2019 Human Development Index: **119 out of 189**

Poverty rate: **29.2 percent**

Severe and moderate malnutrition: **7.4 % of children between 6-59 months**

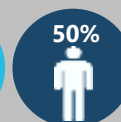
In Numbers

277,643 people assisted
in January 2020

US\$2.8 m cash-based transfers made

97 mt of food distributed

US\$13.8 m six months (March-August 2020) net funding requirements



Operational Updates

- In January, WFP assisted 223,113 and 54,530 poor food-insecure people in Gaza and the West Bank respectively, predominantly through electronic food vouchers but also through in-kind food parcels. WFP's food assistance is a fundamental safety net that prevents poor households from falling into deeper poverty and food insecurity.
- Initial findings of a participatory gender analysis which has been conducted on behalf of WFP by the Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD) are being finalized to be available in early March. A key recommendation of the initial findings is to empower women through economic resilience activities and use WFP's comparative advantage of having close operational presence to beneficiary households as leverage to sensitize the local communities, including women, men, girls and boys on different gender related issues. The analysis aims at facilitating WFP's ongoing effort to develop a gender-transformative strategy for WFP in Palestine by informing the specific needs, interests, priorities, vulnerabilities and capacities of women, men, girls and boys in Palestine. It will further enhance mainstreaming of gender equality in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of WFP activities for them to be more effective, efficient and empowering.
- WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have finalized the initial findings of their joint analysis on the barriers to positive infant and young child feeding and maternal nutrition behaviours in Gaza and the West Bank. Based on these findings, the two agencies in coordination with stakeholders, are designing a multi-sectoral and multi-year action plan for nutrition-sensitive Social Behavioural Change Communications (SBCC) interventions to vulnerable communities in 2020.
- WFP lent its Cash-Based Transfer (CBT) platform to UNICEF to provide hygiene and cleaning materials to more than 3,000 vulnerable families across the Gaza Strip. The target families, which are recipients of WFP CBT assistance (monthly US\$10 per person) , received a cash value of 200 Israeli Shekels on their WFP voucher card to purchase hygiene and cleaning materials at around 200 shops participating in WFP CBT programme. This one-time complementary assistance has prioritized families living in areas prone to flooding, headed by women and with dependents suffering from disabilities.

Photo Caption: Naderah (57) proudly showing the fresh fish she collected from Gazan fishermen to sell at the market. WFP's CBTs help Naderah's extended family have basic food like dairy products and cereals available at home while she can complement other food from her income. WFP/ Ali Jadallah.

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WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
268.4 m	123 m
2020 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (March-August 2020)
48 m	13.8 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food (SDG 2)

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: Support to the implementation of the SDGs (SDG 17)

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

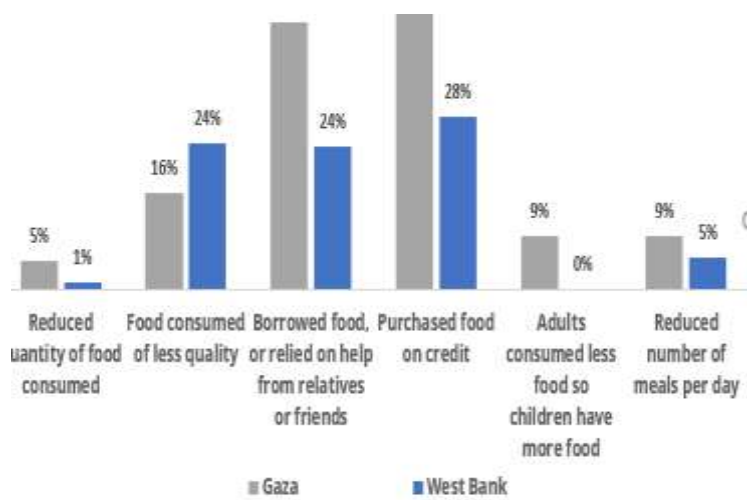
Focus area : Resilience-building

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 272 household visits in Gaza and 186 in the West Bank. The average family size was 6 and 5 members, respectively. Women-headed households accounted for 19 percent of those visited. Around 21 percent of the families surveyed had at least one member with special needs.
- With limited economic opportunities, vulnerable communities in Gaza have been resorting to consumption based coping mechanisms, and falling into a cycle of indebtedness to meet their most pressing needs (see graph). Around 91 percent had debts of an average USD 1,230 worth of unpaid bills for electricity and water, and 84 percent owed an average USD 1,695 to friends and relatives. Four (4) percent of those interviewed reported increase in purchase of food on credit and 76 percent reported no change compared to the previous month. Thanks to WFP's assistance, 76 percent had acceptable food consumption of different food groups during the 7 days preceding the survey.
- In the West Bank, a smaller proportion of families reported debts for electricity and water bills (45 percent) of an average USD 1,190 per family, and 65 percent said they have an average of USD 1,630 debts to friends and relatives. Twenty-five (25) percent of those interviewed reported an increase in purchase of food on credit compared to the previous month. Seventy-one (75) percent had acceptable food consumption.
- Almost all visited households expressed their satisfaction with the quality of WFP food assistance (98 percent), availability and variety of commodities in participating shops (98 percent), and



considered the voucher value as essential in supporting their livelihoods or income (99 percent).

Funding and Pipeline update

- Currently, WFP is funded to distribute its electronic food vouchers to 272,000 people and in-kind food parcels to 72,000 people until the end of the of June 2020.
- Funding limitations prevent WFP from meeting its CSP target (404,000) and extend its support to all food-insecure non-refugee people in Palestine (around 700,000 people).

Partnerships

- WFP provides food assistance and supports the Palestinian Authority to meet the essential needs of the poorest groups of the non-refugee population. Around 50 percent of total people WFP assists- 173,000 people in Gaza (122,000) and the West Bank (51,000) - receive complementary food assistance from WFP on top of their national social benefits, including direct cash transfers. Due to funding limitations, the welfare system is currently facing financial constraints to support all those in need, resulting in an extensive waiting list.
- Through its other implementing INGO partners, Global Communities and Oxfam, WFP aims to reach 130,000 people among the most vulnerable and severely food-insecure, whose access to social protection had been curtailed. WFP also works with 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 (37,000 people).
- WFP is partnering with OXFAM in Gaza and with the Applied Research Institute Jerusalem (ARIJ) in the West Bank implementing livelihood projects for 200 families livelihood activities including growing wicking bed units, livestock, poultry, green houses and hydroponics. WFP is organizing with partners two workshops, in GazaCity on 9 March and in Ramallah on 17-18 March, to discuss the results, challenges, and opportunities for scale up of this activity and potential engagement of Gaza's private sector.

2019 Donors: Canada, European Union (ECHO), France, Germany, Japan, Kuwait Red Crescent, Multilateral donors, the Russian Federation, South Korea, Spain, United Kingdom, United Nations Central Emergency Fund (CERF), UN Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPF), and private donors (Strategic Outcome 1). SDG Fund (Strategic Outcome 2). More information [here](#).