



## **FSS COVID-19 Crisis Sitrep-06 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

**KEEP AGRI-FOOD VALUE CHAINS ALIVE --> FEED THE COUNTRY --> SAFE LIVES**



### **1. Concerns, Priority Needs, and Gaps update**

#### **West Bank and Gaza Strip**

- **Expanding the list of new poor families**

MoSD indicated that the new poor families were not previously registered. According to MoSD, COVID-19 has significant impact on individuals and families. The new poor come from those who have lost their job, and have no source of income, whereas the income threshold is 1,400 NIS (minimum wages). MoSD confirmed that is expected that 100,000 families will be added to their list by end of April.

- **Agricultural inputs availability and cost**

- Fodder low availability and high price for producers continue to represent a strong constraint for Bedouins and herders. Herders are worried about future fodder supply, as the grazing season is coming to an end.
- Also, fertilizers and pesticides price has been growing for the last three weeks. Only fuel price has declined, although this does not compensate for the price increase of major inputs costs.
- Due to low demand on the market, some producers reported to have ceased, reduced or postponed their production.
- The overall agri-food market continues his negative trajectory triggered by low demand due to low purchasing power, high inputs price, local market and recent export closure, interruption of traditional informal credit payment system in favour of cash upfront only payments.
- Dry herbs sector exports stopped due to low demand from destination markets, causing significant losses to the economy (about US 600,000 monthly for the second month in a row with 300 wage laborers and their families being affected)
- Negative coping mechanisms are being observed like borrowing food, skipping meals or eating cheaper foods for an increasing number of households
- The World Bank forecasts a contraction in the Palestinian economy in 2020, which could reach 7%, in case the crisis resulting from the outbreak of the COVID-19 is exacerbated. The Palestinian economy is facing a very dangerous situation with the suspension of various sectors due to pandemic measures, at a time that lacks any tools for financial stimulus, liquidity pumping, or borrowing.

## West Bank

- **Heavy losses are expected for the livestock sector.**

In West Bank, there are currently more than 470 thousand heads of fattened sheep (at a weight of 50 kg) and nearly 17 thousand heads of calves (at an average weight of 350 kg) and meat production is estimated at (30 thousand MT of meat) at an estimated value with 200 million dollars, which is supposed to be marketed between first of March and the end of the Eid al-Adha season, in addition to that the peak of the Palestinian seasons of meat consumption in weddings, and the month of Ramadan.

This sector has been subject to complete paralysis since the start of the current crisis. According to the appeal lunched by UAWC recently, there was a great decline in the consumption of red meat, the demand decreased to more than 15%. There are more than 1,600 small farmers in addition to about 500 medium-size farmers working on fattening sheep and calves. Hebron Governorate is the largest in terms of numbers of sheep and fattened calves, followed by the Governorate of Bethlehem and then the governorates of the northern West Bank. The continued rise in the weights caused an increase in the costs and inputs of fattening with a decrease in the selling prices of live weight. Prices are constantly falling and there is no marketing. The cost of producing 1 kg of lamb meat is 4.5 dinars, while now the selling price has fallen below 5 dinars. There is no consistent demand, and the price is expected to decline during the coming period, even below 4.5 dinars.

## Gaza Strip

- MoL in Gaza completed the registration of daily-waged workers who lost their source of income due to the measures imposed by the local authorities in response to COVID-19 pandemic. Out of 130,000 registered workers, MoL mentioned that around 38,000 workers (hence HHs) are on the top of being eligible for receiving urgent humanitarian assistance based on the poverty status and other socioeconomic conditions.
- Prices of one-day-old chicks were significantly increased to reach almost double price. MoA explained this is due to the huge demand on chicks by the majority of breeders because of Ramadan and their expectation of increase demand on poultry meat. In the same context, around 30% increase of fodders were also noticed following the increased demand on chicks.
- With the new wave of arrivals to Gaza last week from Egypt, quarantine centres are hosting approximately 2,000 persons. MoSD mentioned that there are some **concerns about the continuation of food assistance to people in these quarantine facilities**. While Qatar has so far been able to support the provision of daily meals, there is no certainty that this assistance will continue. MoSD highlighted that much more predictability is required especially during the holy month of Ramadan. There is also a considerable number of people in quarantine facilities with health conditions and/or with special food requirements.



## 2. Response Strategy and Challenges Update

### West Bank and Gaza Strip

- **Updating the list of new poor families**

MoSD triggered the process of updating their database in order to include the new poor families. A form has been prepared to be filled by all the information needed. It has been disseminated to the MSD offices in all governorates, in addition to the municipalities/local councils and the General Workers Union. The information gathered through this process will be divided into two parts. The first part is for unemployed workers, and they are dealt with by the Ministry of Labor, in order to elaborate list of unemployed workers. The second part is about the new poor families, their living standards and the level of poverty.

### West Bank

- In response to last MoSD and MoA appeal about helping and supporting poor and vulnerable families and farmers due to the COVID-19 pandemic by including agriculture commodities in the food parcels. Local NGOs in West bank during last week started the process of distribution of more than 60 tonnes of vegetables and 5 tonnes of dates as direct support for both poor farmers and families.
- Home garden distribution is taking place, with around 90 percent of the activities already completed – around 1.1 million vegetable seedlings have been distributed across the West Bank.

### Gaza Strip

- Additional 7,000 daily waged workers received cash assistance (100 US\$) as part of DFA grant to those workers affected due the COVID-19 pandemic, reaching the target announced by MoL.
- Responding to COVID-19 impact at household level food security, WFP is engaged in the assistance of additional new 254 families (nominated by MoSD), equivalent to around 1,200 individuals, with CBT assistance. The new families will receive this temporary assistance for a period of three months (April – June 2020). This assistance comes on top of the current caseload in Gaza Strip, which is equivalent to around 256,000 beneficiaries.

Summary of activities implemented by FSS partners:

Objective	Organisation	Activity	Beneficiary/recipient	Geographical area
<b>Reducing the Food Security impact on vulnerable households and most vulnerable people</b>	UNRWA, Gaza	Concluded home delivery of in-kind food baskets (Q1 distribution) to a total of 73,000 households	73,000 Palestine refugee households	Across Gaza
	PARC	Distribution of food parcel (vegetables, dates and Olive oil)	3,000 HH	Jerusalem
	ICO.UAE	Delivery 1 Kg bread	30,700 HHs in affected & vulnerable communities	Gaza, WB Jerusalem
	SIF	Food parcels for vulnerable families	192	Nablus Governorate
	Community initiatives	Provision of vegetables parcels to most vulnerable HHs affected due to CO-19	257 HHs	Khan Yunis
	UNRWA West Bank	Delivery of in-kind food baskets to vulnerable families to a total of 103 households	103 HHs	Bethlehem
	UNRWA West Bank	WFP-UNRWA distributed 1495 food parcels to Bedouin communities.	444 HH	West Bank
	WFP	Support and distribute e-voucher to 17,000 people non refugees' people in both West Bank and Gaza Strip – most vulnerable groups by COVID 19 – disabled, elderly and pregnant and lactating women	17,000 people	West Bank and Gaza Strip