



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
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WFP Palestine Country Brief May 2023

Operational Context

In Palestine, protracted conflict, economic stagnation, restricted trade and access to resources, coupled with high unemployment and poverty rates, continue to pose serious challenges to the food security and nutrition situation. As economic conditions worsened due to the global food crisis, the purchasing power of Palestinians is further eroding and disrupting their access to food and other essentials. For vulnerable and food insecure people in targeted communities in Palestine, WFP is the largest provider of food assistance.

In Gaza, 15 years of the Israeli blockade, aggravated by having one of the world's highest unemployment rates and deep poverty, leaves the humanitarian situation dire. In the West Bank, settlement activity and related violence, loss of land, destruction of property, and restricted access to basic services continue undermining Palestinians' livelihoods.

According to the latest Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment of the State of Palestine 2022, one-third of the Palestinian population, 1.84 million people, suffer from food insecurity, of which, 1.1 million are severely food insecure; most of them (90 percent) live in Gaza.

Under the 2023-28 Country Strategic Plan, WFP aims to provide food assistance to 440,500 of the most vulnerable and food-insecure people via in-kind food rations and cash-based transfers in the form of electronic food vouchers. In contribution to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, WFP is supporting community resilience in the face of repeated shocks and increased hardships, through livelihood support, contributing to maintaining peace and stability and stimulating the local economy. WFP also works with national institutions to enhance the capacity of existing social safety nets to assist the poor and most vulnerable. WFP will also support humanitarian and development actors to better serve the most vulnerable people through its on-demand and interagency services, continuing to be the key enabler for the humanitarian response across sectors in Palestine through its cash-based transfers platform.

Population: **5.3 million**

2021 Human Development Index: 109
out of 191

Poverty rate: **31.1 percent**

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

In Numbers

309,444 people assisted
in May 2023



USD 2.67 m cash-based transfers made

USD 558,200 in cash-based transfers made to 24,357 people through WFP's cash-based transfers service provision to humanitarian and development partners

USD 37.2 m six months (June- November 2023) net funding requirements

Operational Updates

- In May, WFP supported 309,444 people in need. Of those, 277,165 received cash-based transfers (CBT). Also, 32,279 people were reached through the quarterly in-kind food distributions with 1,080 mt of wheat flour, chickpeas, lentils, salt and vegetable oil. In-kind distributions have only taken place in Gaza, while West Bank distributions are on hold due to the UNRWA labor strike.
- In May, WFP reduced the standard value of the monthly e- vouchers from USD 12.4 to USD 10.3 per capita and warned of assistance suspension to 60 percent of its caseload in June. Without additional donor funding, WFP will suspend all CBT assistance in August. WFP is actively reaching out to existing and potential donor partners at the country, regional, and global levels to secure the necessary funding.
- The reduction in WFP's assistance is already affecting vulnerable households and the local economy, leading to increased protests that jeopardize social cohesion and stability, particularly in the sensitive political, socio-economic, and security context of the Gaza Strip.
- WFP continued the provision of its technical expertise and CBT platform to eight humanitarian agencies to facilitate the implementation of their projects. Through this service provision in May, WFP enabled assistance to about 24,357 individuals in Gaza and the redemption of about USD 558,200.
- WFP Palestine conducted a series of Conflict Sensitivity (CS) trainings in Jerusalem, Gaza, and Ramallah, aimed at promoting CS efforts and contributing to the operationalization of the HDP nexus in Palestine. Over 180 staff, partners, and NGOs participated.
- WFP continues to monitor market prices and food security. In April, the average value of WFP food ration prices in local currency was 12.2 percent higher than the same month last year. The monthly market dashboard can be found [here](#).

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Photo Caption: A family in Gaza standing in front of their home destroyed during the recent escalation. They are at risk of assistance suspension due to WFP funding shortfalls.
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Country Strategic Plan (2018-2023)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received* (in USD)
534 m	49 m
2023 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (June - November 2023)
149.8 m	37.2 m

* Total received calculated excluding outstanding advances

*2023 requirements include funding for service provision whereas six-months net requirements are only for WFP activities.

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

Strategic Outcome #1: Non-refugees, poor and severely food-insecure people have improved dietary diversity by 2022

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities 01:

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

Strategic Result 2: Support to the implementation of the SDGs (SDG 17)

Strategic Outcome #2: Enhanced capacities of national institutions and systems to identify, target and assist food insecure vulnerable populations in Palestine by 2022

Focus area: Resilience-building

Activities 02, 03:

- Technical support to national ministries and institutions on food security strategy; Provision of a CBT platform to multi-sectoral partners and Government

Strategic Result 8: Sharing of knowledge, expertise and technology strengthen global partnership support to country efforts to achieve the SDGs (SDG target 17.16)

Strategic Outcome #3: Palestinians benefit from the services provided to partners through WFP's delivery platform

Focus area: Resilience-building

Activities 04:

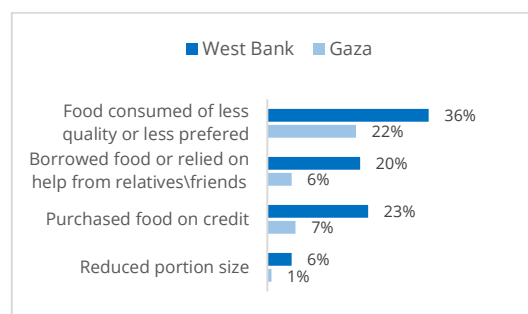
- Service provision of WFP's delivery platform to partners

Monitoring

- WFP has established toll-free hotlines to provide information and collect feedback on assistance. In May, these hotlines received over 12,000 calls. Additionally, around 252,000 SMS messages were sent during May to individuals supported by WFP and service provision partners. These messages informed people about June suspensions, operational changes, and distribution dates.
- WFP conducted 594 face-to-face interviews** with recipients of cash-based transfers (electronic vouchers) and in-kind food across the West Bank and

the Gaza Strip. Fifteen percent of the interviewed families were women-headed households and around 26 percent had at least one person with disabilities.

- WFP food consumption scores (FCS) findings showed that 11 percent of the households in the West Bank had poor FCS, while in Gaza, the percentage has doubled from 7 to 14 percent compared to March. Around 57 percent in Gaza and 67 percent in the West Bank had acceptable score.
- Overall, 35 percent of the interviewed families continued relying on negative coping mechanisms to meet their food needs:



Challenges

- WFP Palestine requires USD 51 million to continue providing assistance until the end of the year. As of 1 June, WFP suspended assistance to around 200,000 people, 60 percent of the current caseload, and will be entirely forced to cease its operations by August.

The Fragile Lifeline That is Slipping Away

On a very lucky month, Mohammed might work for two days – earning around USD 16 that barely sustains the family's basic needs throughout the month. With increasing prices, the situation was harder for Mohammed and his wife Aisha. Slowly but steadily, food items started disappearing from the dining table. First meat, then fish, then olive oil, and recently vegetables, too. During the most recent escalation in Gaza, they lost their home altogether. Now, not only does he worry about feeding his children, but he must also find a shelter for them.

Mohammed found WFP food voucher like a recurring festival, granting his family the freedom to choose the food they can buy. But now, even this is at risk of disappearing. "The day we received the suspension notice felt like a mourning day as if we had lost a beloved family member whose support held us together."



Donors Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the Russian Federation, Spain, Switzerland, UAE, UN Humanitarian Fund (HF), USA, and other private donors: Bank of Palestine and Share the meal (Strategic Outcome 1). SDG Fund, Germany (BMZ) (Strategic Outcome 2). More information [here](#).

Photo Caption: Mohammed and his family walking in front of their severely damaged house after the recent Gaza escalation.
Photo credit: WFP/Ali Jadallah