



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES



## WFP Palestine Country Brief December 2018

### In Numbers

293 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 2.65 m cash based transfers made

US\$ 31 m six months (February-July 2019) net funding requirements

353,180 people assisted  
in December 2018



### Operational Context

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. Food prices are driven by Israeli markets, where people’s 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.

Under the [Country Strategy Plan \(2018-2022\)](#) (CSP), WFP aims to provide food assistance to up to 314,000 of the poorest and most vulnerable non-refugees to food insecurity in Palestine, primarily in Gaza and Area C in the West Bank where the prevalence of food insecurity is the highest. All WFP-assisted people live below the national deep poverty line of less than US\$ 3.7 per day. The CSP is aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2 ‘Zero Hunger’ and 17 ‘Partnerships for the Goals’.

### Operational Updates

- In December, WFP assisted 353,180 of the poorest and most food insecure people with food and cash-based transfers (CBT), whereof 242,476 people live in Gaza and 110,704 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.
- United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) is working with WFP to provide vulnerable families in the Gaza Strip with winter blankets, clothing and hygiene kits through Cash Based Transfers. The joint initiative is crucial to help poorer families and particularly children, women and elderly people through the winter season amidst a sharp deterioration in humanitarian and socio-economic conditions in the Gaza Strip. Based on their level of need, families will receive a credit between US\$47 and US\$106 on WFP electronic vouchers to purchase hygiene items, blankets, clothing and children’s school uniforms from contracted local retailers. Families benefiting from this programme will also receive awareness sessions on hygiene, and the prevention and control of communicable diseases. WFP’s innovative CBT platform is available for use by other humanitarian actors to provide multiple essential services to vulnerable people rapidly, efficiently, and cost-effectively while injecting much needed cash into the faltering economy of Gaza.
- In collaboration with UNICEF and Save the Children, WFP conducted a quantitative and qualitative nutrition assessment in Gaza to understand the priority needs for caregivers and their children under 6-month age, from 6-month to 23-month age and from 24-month to 59-month age. This multi-sectoral assessment will help to identify knowledge gaps, behavioural patterns and practices which create barriers to food access/affordability of best infant and young child feeding and care practice. A joint WFP-UNICEF assessment was also launched in the West Bank and is planned for Gaza in 2019 to analyse the behavioural determinants contributing to anaemia amongst the Palestinian population. Findings of the two assessments, which are expected in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2019, will better inform beneficiary targeting strategies and improve support behavioural programmes such as the WFP nutrition awareness programme in Gaza and the West Bank.

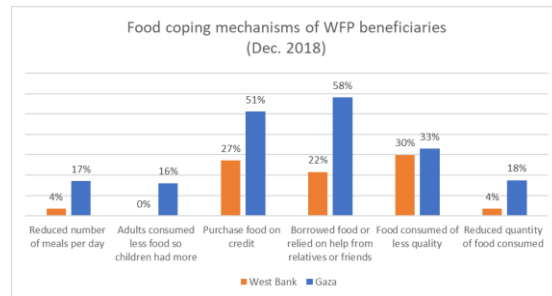
Population: <b>4.9 million</b>	2018 Human Development Index: <b>119 out of 188</b>
Poverty rate: <b>29.2 percent</b>	Chronic malnutrition: <b>7.4 % of children between 6-59 months</b>

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## Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Months (February-July 2019) Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
253 m	54.9 m	31 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 December, WFP conducted 279 household visits in Gaza and 227 in the West Bank. The average family size was 5.7 members in Gaza and 6.4 members in the West Bank.
- Beneficiary households surveyed in Gaza this month were found to be heavily indebted; 59 percent had debts for electricity and water bills, 57 percent had debts for groceries, and 32 percent had debts for friends and relatives. In the West Bank, 57 percent of the surveyed families declared being in debt for electricity and water bills, 62 percent for groceries, and 16 percent for friends and relatives.
- WFP beneficiary heads of households in Gaza and the West Bank reported working 6 and 9 days this month for an average monthly revenue of USD 160 and USD 293, respectively. This represents USD 0.94 and USD 1.53 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 able to fully sustain its operations in Gaza and the West Bank until the end of the year, thanks to multilateral funding and an emergency loan allocated by WFP Headquarters from flexible donors. However, as of 01 January 2019, severe funding shortfalls have forced WFP to cut its assistance, affecting 193,000 in Gaza and the West Bank. 27,000 people in the West Bank are not receiving their CBT entitlements, and another 165,000 people's CBT entitlements in Gaza and the West Bank have been reduced by 20 percent. Unless new funding comes through, WFP will be forced to significantly downsize its operations further in 2019.

## Partnerships

- WFP and other humanitarian and development actors support the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the provision of assistance to vulnerable segments of the non-refugee population. WFP works closely with the Ministry of Social Development, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA) and non-governmental organizations (Global Communities, Ard El Insan, Palestinian Medical Relief Society) to meet the food needs of the most vulnerable food insecure Palestinians.
- WFP's food assistance interventions are aligned with national plans and strategies, namely the National Policy Agenda and the Social Development Sector Strategy covering the period 2017-2022.
- WFP's support to SDGs 2 and 17 is embedded within the 2018-2022 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and 2018-2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) in Palestine, recognising support for SDG 1.

## Donors

- WFP is grateful for the support of: [Canada](#), [European Union \(ECHO\)](#), [Japan](#), [the Republic of Korea](#), [Switzerland](#), [the United States of America](#), and multilateral and private donors (Strategic Outcome 1).

More information [here](#).

**Photo credit:** Women from the Bedouin community of Birin in the southern West Bank during an interactive session organized by WFP's NGO partner the Palestinian Medical Relief Society on gender equality and the importance of women's role in protecting their families' food security and well-being. Bedouin and herding communities in Area C of the West Bank, particularly women and children, are amongst the most vulnerable Palestinians with more than 60 percent suffering from food insecurity. *WFP/Yasmine Abuelassal*.