



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Palestine Country Brief February 2019

In Numbers

259,233 people assisted
in February 2019



USD 2.23 m cash-based transfers made

USD 23 m six months (March-August 2019) net
funding requirements

Operational Context

Food insecurity in Palestine affects nearly a third of the population – about 1.6 million people - and is driven by high poverty and unemployment rates. The number of food-insecure Palestinians is equally divided between the non-refugee (45 percent) and refugee (55 percent) communities. 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. Though Poverty (13.9 percent) and food insecurity (11.6 percent) are less widespread than in Gaza, they 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 stability, advances the United Nations County Team 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. WFP launched its 2019 funding appeal of US\$ 57 million and awareness-raising video campaign on Gaza's spiralling humanitarian needs (available [here](#)).

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 February, WFP assisted 259,233 of the poorest and most food insecure people, 208,878 people in Gaza and 50,355 people in the West Bank, with a combination of food and cash-based transfers (CBT). WFP's food assistance is a fundamental safety net that enables poor households to meet a share of their daily food needs, alleviating their reduced purchasing power and preventing them from falling into deeper poverty.
- In the worsening humanitarian context of Gaza, the provision of WFP's assistance is a lifeline for the poorest segment of the population who continue to rely on negative strategies to cope with reduced livelihood opportunities and the degradation of their living conditions, digging deeper into their resilience. Since January, over 115,000 people have been receiving reduced voucher entitlements (USD 8 per capita instead of USD 10.3), as a result of WFP funding shortages.
- WFP and UNICEF continued to partner to provide a joint package of food, winter clothes, blankets, school uniforms and hygiene items to 6,000 families through their WFP electronic voucher. Each recipient household was able to redeem their card for a list of pre-approved products throughout a network of 83 WFP-contracted retail shops. Given the range of deprivation in Gaza, the provision of an integrated package of assistance brought critical relief for a highly vulnerable population. It demonstrated the ability of U.N agencies to 'deliver as One' for greater complementarity, cost-effectiveness and impact.
- Due to insufficient resources 27,000 people in the West Bank, did not receive their food voucher entitlements, while 51,000 people saw their cash transfers cut off by 20 percent. A WFP video showing the impact of the suspension of WFP assistance on one assisted family is available [here](#). Although the prevalence of poverty and food insecurity is higher in Gaza, the West Bank hosts almost 30 percent of the food-insecure non-refugees (235,000), twice as many as the food-insecure refugees (108,000 – SEFSEC, 2018). According to WFP 2018 monitoring findings, assisted populations relied on an average daily income of USD 1.40, well below the deep poverty line of USD 3.70. Purchasing food on credit was the most frequent coping mechanism (40 percent).

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Photo Caption: In Gaza, Jalfadan (35) and her 1-year old child Masoud are increasingly reliant on WFP's food assistance to meet their food security needs. WFP/Khaled Abu Shaaban

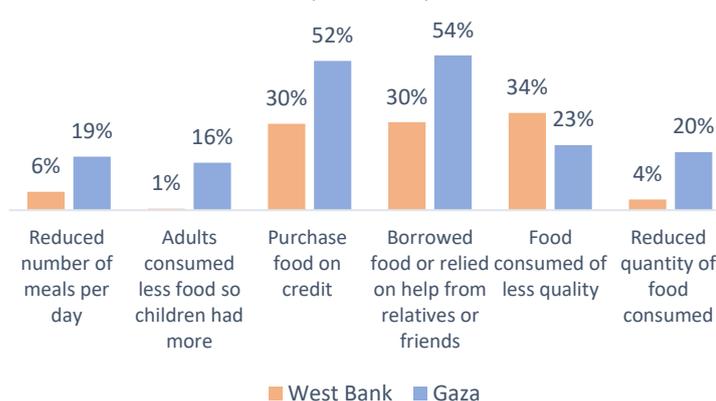
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
253.2 m	66.5 m
2019 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (March - August 2019)
48.6 m*	23 m

* To undergo a budget revision to reflect the increase in severe food-insecurity levels recorded among the non-refugee population

Food coping mechanisms of WFP beneficiaries (Feb. 2019)



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 February, WFP conducted 328 household visits in Gaza and 187 in the West Bank. The average family size was 6.1 members in Gaza and 5.2 members in the West Bank.
- Beneficiary households surveyed in Gaza this month were found to be heavily indebted; 73 percent had debts within a range of USD 2,500-3,870 worth of unpaid bills for electricity and water, grocery shopping, and line of credit with friends and relatives. In the West Bank, a smaller population of families surveyed (57 percent) had accumulated debts with amounts between USD 2,280-3,700.
- 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 165 and USD 305, respectively. This represents USD 0.90 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

- With the resources currently at its disposal, WFP is only able to stretch its ongoing and reduced level of assistance until early July. Unless new funding comes through, WFP will be forced to downsize its operations further in the second trimester of 2019.
- 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), 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, e.g. direct cash-transfers, medical allowances, education and electricity subsidies, in addition to specialised human services, e.g. 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 whose access to social protection had been curtailed. 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 locals NGOs in both Gaza and the West Bank.

Donors

- WFP is grateful for the support of: [Canada](#), [European Union \(ECHO\)](#), [France](#), [Germany](#), [Japan](#), [Kuwait Red Crescent](#), [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](#).