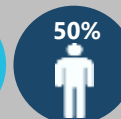




SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES

## WFP Palestine Country Brief February 2020

### In Numbers



**292,171 people assisted**  
in February 2020

**US\$2.77 m** cash-based transfers made

**524 mt of food** distributed

**US\$16.9 m** six months net funding requirements  
(April – September 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**

### Operational Updates

- In February, WFP assisted 240,817 and 51,354 poor food-insecure people in Gaza and the West Bank respectively, predominantly through electronic food vouchers but also through in-kind food parcels. More than 70 percent of the recipients of assistance were women, girls and boys. WFP's food assistance is a fundamental safety net that prevents poor households from falling into deeper poverty and food insecurity.
- WFP lent its Cash-Based Transfer (CBT) platform to the INGO Mercy Corps to provide food assistance to 600 vulnerable families in the Gaza Strip. Mercy Corps is using WFP's CBTs as part of its multipurpose cash assistance project where CBTs and/or direct cash assistance are provided to three groups of families: the first group is receiving CBTs, the second group is receiving direct cash assistance, and the third group is receiving a combination of CBTs and direct cash assistance. Household recipients of CBTs are receiving a monthly electronic voucher card topped up with 247 Israeli Shekel per household to purchase food from WFP's chain of 200 shops across the Gaza Strip. WFP and Mercy Corps are members of the inter-cluster Cash Working Group, which coordinates, promotes and facilitates sustainable activities related to emergency, medium and long-term Cash Programming in Palestine. WFP has been providing data and technical assistance including for a Minimum Expenditure Basket assessment and Food Price Monitoring and Vulnerability assessment.
- A WFP mission from the Regional Bureau and Munich-Based Innovation Accelerator Office visited Palestine to evaluate the Country Office's pilot resilience project. The mission focused on the preparation of a Cost Benefit Analysis of the provision agricultural assets under this project, including hydroponics, to the targeted families. The mission met representatives of different stakeholders including from the Ministry of Agriculture, the Environmental Quality Authority, UN agencies and the private sector to ensure further future coordination and collaboration. Results of the Cost Benefits Analysis are expected in April 2020.

**Contact info:** Yasmine Abuelassal ([yasmin.abuelassal@wfp.org](mailto:yasmin.abuelassal@wfp.org))

**Country Director:** Stephen Kearney

Further information: [www1.wfp.org/countries/state-palestine](http://www1.wfp.org/countries/state-palestine)

**Photo Caption:** Kholoud (34) feeding her children, Amr (4) and Zeinah (3), the traditional *Besara* dish made of fava beans and Mulukhiyah (green leaves). Kholoud bought the fava beans and other basic food from a neighboring shop using a WFP electronic voucher and collected the Mulukhiyah leaves from a field close to the family house in Rafah governorate of the Gaza Strip. WFP/ Ali Jadallah.

## WFP Country Strategy

### Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
<b>268 m</b>	<b>125 m</b>
2020 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (April-September 2020)
<b>48 m</b>	<b>16.9 m</b>

#### 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

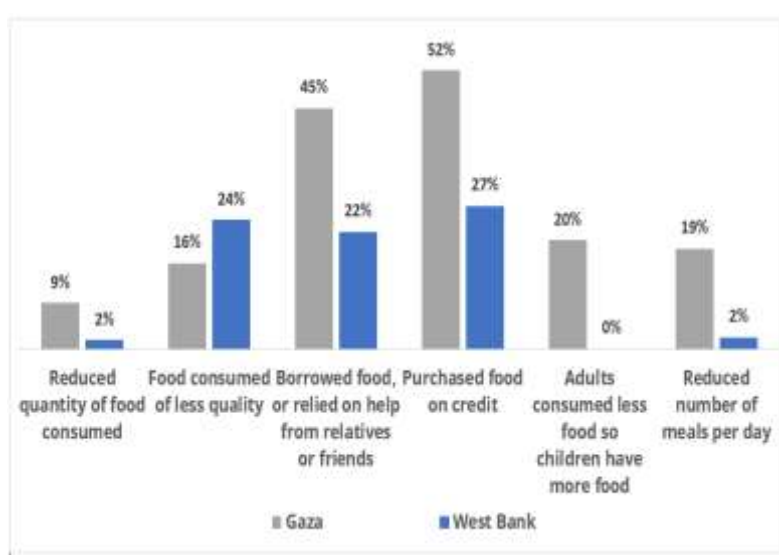
**Focus area :** Resilience-building

##### 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 February, WFP conducted 246 household visits in Gaza and 187 in the West Bank. The average family size was 6 and 5 members, respectively. Women-headed households accounted for 20 percent of those visited. Around 21 percent of the families surveyed had at least one member with special needs, of which 44 percent were women and girls.
- 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 1,535 worth of unpaid bills for electricity and water, and 84 percent owed an average USD 1,719 to friends and relatives. Eleven (11) percent of those interviewed reported an increase in purchasing food on credit and 60 percent reported no change compared to the previous month. Thanks to WFP's assistance, 75 percent had acceptable food consumption levels 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 (51 percent) of an average USD 1,040 per family, and 64 percent said they have an average of USD 1,518 debts to friends and relatives. Twenty-four (24) percent of those interviewed reported an increase in the purchase of food on credit compared to the previous month. Seventy-six (76) percent had acceptable food consumption.
- Almost all visited households expressed their satisfaction with the quality of WFP food assistance (99.6 percent), availability and



variety of commodities in participating shops (99.6 percent), and considered the voucher value as essential in supporting their livelihoods or income (94.4 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 the total people that WFP assists (173,000, divided between 122,000 people in Gaza and 51,000 in the West Bank) 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 to implement livelihood projects for 200 families. These projects include growing wicking bed units, livestock, poultry, green houses and hydroponics. WFP is organizing with the partners two workshops, one in Gaza City and another one in Ramallah (dates to be confirmed given the current declared state of emergency over Covid 19 virus), 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](#).