



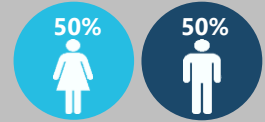
World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Palestine Country Brief May 2020



In Numbers



315,329 people assisted
in May 2020

US\$3.95 m cash-based transfers made

33.4 mt of food distributed

US\$17.5 m six months (July – Dec. 2020) net funding requirements

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 335 local retail shops across Gaza (200) and the West Bank (135). 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**

Poverty rate: **29.2 percent**

2019 Human Development Index: **119 out of 189**

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

Operational Updates

- WFP distributed electronic vouchers to 67,600 newly registered beneficiaries who have been affected by the Coronavirus (COVID-19). As of May, 40,000 of them were able to redeem their vouchers. Most of the targeted affected people (99%) live in the West Bank where the impact of closures and movement restrictions have been more pronounced on the labour force. Nearly half of the targeted households in the West Bank are headed by women, 12 percent are elderly people and 9 percent are persons with disabilities.
- In May, 314,173 poor, food-insecure people received **Cash-Based Transfers (CBT)** in the form of electronic food vouchers: 223,762 in Gaza and 90,411 in the West Bank. This included around 40,000 of the new targeted people who redeemed their vouchers in May.
- WFP provided an extra monthly cash top up (USD 5) per capita to 165,000 people who are regularly assisted through its CBT assistance in Gaza and the West Bank. This aims at alleviating the impact of COVID-19 on people's already fragile livelihoods, helping them to offset some of their scarce resources to spend it on other essentials such as health and hygiene.
- Under the second quarterly distribution cycle (April- June), in-kind food distributions were launched in Gaza on 31 May and are expected to be concluded within one month. 1,156 people received their food entitlements under extra safety and crowd management measures with use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including gowns, gloves, masks and hygiene materials. WFP in partnerships with Oxfam is regularly assisting 35,000 people through in-kind food rations in Khan Yunis and North Gaza governorates. In-kind food distributions to 37,000 Bedouins and herders in Area C of the West Bank will start in June.
- WFP is preparing to inaugurate a Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) pilot programme in the Gaza Strip. With support from DG ECHO, WFP will provide direct cash to 1,114 new households to cover their essential needs such as food, shelter, health and education. The selection of households who live below the deep poverty line gives priority to households with high ratio of dependents, headed by women, suffering from chronic illness and disabilities and elderly people.

Contact info: Yasmine Abuelassal (yasmin.abuelassal@wfp.org)
Country Director: Stephen Kearney
Further information: www1.wfp.org/countries/state-palestine

Photo Credit: Oxfam. Families collecting their in-kind food rations at a distribution site in Gaza amidst anti-COVID 19 measures WFP and implementing partner Oxfam put in place .

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

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: 1) Provision of technical support to national ministries and institutions for implementation of the food security strategy; 2) Provision of a CBT platform to multi-sectoral partners and Government (Service provision and platforms activities)]

Monitoring

Necessary precautionary measures due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) mean reduced physical access to communities, as face-to-face data exposes field staff and beneficiaries to risk of contagion. WFP continued monitoring at household level via phone interviews. This precautionary measure will be revised once the situation has been reassessed.

- Monitoring findings showed continued use of negative coping strategies by targeted households, such as increased debt.
- In the West Bank, in terms of **purchasing habits and debt**, 60 per cent of households reported owing debt to grocery shops. More than a third of these households reported an increased pattern of purchasing food on credit compared to the previous month.
- In Gaza, 62 per cent of interviewed households reported owing **debt to grocery shops**. For those households, 65 per cent reported an increased pattern of purchasing food on credit compared to previous month, and 30 per cent reported no change.
- Almost all the interviewed households **expressed their satisfaction** with the availability and variety of commodities in participating shops (98.5 percent) and consider the voucher value as **essential in supporting their livelihoods**.

Beneficiary Sample: In May, WFP conducted 335 household phone interviews in Gaza and 118 in the West Bank. Women-headed households accounted for 28 percent of those interviewed. Around 22 percent of the families interviewed had a at least one member with special needs. During the month of Ramadan, WFP does not collect monitoring data related to coping mechanisms and FCS because people's eating habits drastically change and inputs would give skewed data.

Funding and Pipeline update

- In response to the increase in needs associated with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis, WFP is providing assistance for three months (May-July): 1) CBT assistance to 67,600 new non-refugee people; 2) an extra monthly USD 5 food voucher top up to 170,000 non-

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022) Funding Requirements

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
268 m	144 m
2020 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (July – Dec 2020)
48 m*	17.5 m

* A budget revision is underway to reflect an increase in the number of targeted beneficiaries, from 314,000 to 426,000. The budget revision is expected to be approved by mid-June 2020.

refugees who regularly receive WFP CBT assistance. This has been possible after WFP received an Immediate Response Allocation (IRA) internal loan worth of USD 5.70 million to respond to the needs of people affected by COVID-19. This loan needs to be repaid.

- To sustain assistance under the Coronavirus (COVID-19) context beyond July to the newly registered people, **WFP needs USD 2.5 million for each additional three months**.
- WFP has available funding to maintain food assistance to the regularly assisted beneficiaries in Gaza and the West Bank until the end of September 2020. **WFP needs an additional USD 13 million to be able to continue providing food assistance until the end of 2020**.

Partnerships

- WFP regularly supports the Palestinian Authority to meet the essential needs of the poorest groups of the non-refugee population. Around 50 percent of the total number of people WFP assists (174,200 people) of whom 123,200 are 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, from the Ministry of Social Development. WFP assistance to newly registered non-refugees who have been affected in the context of COVID-19 is carried out in collaboration with the MoSD. All targeted affected people live below the deep poverty line and enrolled in the National Social Safety Net programme but did not receive WFP food assistance prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 crisis.
- Through its other implementing INGO partners, Global Communities and Oxfam, WFP aims to reach 135,000 people among the most vulnerable and severely food-insecure, whose access to social protection had been curtailed. WFP also works with UNRWA 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 in collaboration with Oxfam in Gaza and the Applied Research Institute Jerusalem (ARIJ) in the West Bank prepared proposals for the second round of resilience strengthening activities which are implemented as of mid-May 2020 until March 2021. Under these activities, 100 households in Gaza and another 100 households in the West Bank will receive climate-smart agricultural assets such as wicking beds, hydroponics and home gardens to improve their dietary intake and to support income generation. WFP and partners are exploring with the Ministry of Education the possibility of cultivating gardens in schools and providing wicking beds and hydroponic units to social institutions.

2020 Donors: Canada, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, Spain, Switzerland, UN Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPF), and private donors (Strategic Outcome 1). SDG Fund (Strategic Outcome 2). More information [here](#).