



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Palestine Country Brief June 2021

Operational Context

The month of May witnessed the most intense military hostilities in Gaza since 2014 at the backdrop of a large-scale unrest in East Jerusalem and across the West Bank. A ceasefire between Israel and Palestinian armed groups that went into effect in Gaza on 21 May is still holding. However, the security situation remains volatile. In addition to the loss in life, many of which were children and women, the humanitarian consequences of the 11-days of fighting in Gaza have been devastating, exacerbating the impact of almost 14 years of an Israeli blockade, internal Palestinian political divisions, recurrent escalations, and unabating COVID-19 pandemic. A [Rapid damage and Needs Assessment \(RDNA\)](#), published 6 July 2021, reveals up to USD380 million in physical damage and USD 190 million in economic losses. Recovery needs have been estimated up to USD 485 million during the first 24 months.

Already before the outbreak of the recent hostilities and the COVID-19, food insecurity in Palestine affected nearly a third of the population – about 1.7 million people - and is driven by high poverty and unemployment rates. This number was projected to have increased to 2 million, or 40 percent of the population early 2021. The number of food-insecure Palestinians is almost equally divided between the refugee (55 percent) and non-refugee (45 percent) communities. More than 900,000 non-refugees are assessed to be food insecure in Palestine, 60 percent in Gaza and 40 percent in the West Bank.

The humanitarian context in Palestine has been 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 and periodic armed hostilities have resulted in economic stagnation, high unemployment, poverty, and food insecurity.

WFP regularly provides food assistance to the most vulnerable food insecure groups of the Palestinian non-refugee population. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, WFP scaled up food assistance to meet the needs of additional vulnerable non-refugees who have been affected. Most of the targeted families are headed by women, with elderly people, persons with disabilities and high ratio of dependents.

Under the 2018-22 Country Strategic Plan (CSP), WFP aims at providing food assistance to 435,170 of the most vulnerable non-refugees via in-kind food rations and cash-based transfers in the form of electronic food vouchers and multi-purpose cash. In contribution to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, WFP's assistance goes beyond enhancing people's ability to meet their immediate food needs; it supports community resilience in the face of repeated shocks and increased hardships, contributes to maintaining peace and stability, and stimulates the local economy. WFP also works with national institutions to enhance the capacity of existing social safety nets to assist the poor and vulnerable.

Population: 5.2 million

2019 Human Development Index:
115 out of 189

Poverty rate: 29.2 per cent

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

In Numbers

363,723 people assisted
In June 2021



USD 3.97 m in cash-based transfers made

1,543.7 mt of food distributed

USD 21.8 m six month (July – December 2021) net funding requirements

Operational Updates

- In June, WFP provided food assistance through Cash Based Transfers (CBT) in the form of electronic food vouchers to 309,286 poor and severely food insecure Palestinians both in the West Bank (84,868) and in Gaza Strip (224,418). Of the total people assisted in the Gaza Strip there were 6,867 new beneficiaries that had been affected by May hostilities. Every household received a monthly credit of USD 10.3 per capita to purchase food of their choice from 328 local retailers across Gaza (200) and the West Bank (128).
- WFP continued to provide ready-to-eat food rations (RTEs) to 300 Internally Displaced People (IDPs) who took shelter in two UNRWA schools, one in North Gaza and another in Gaza City, until the 28 June. The IDPs have now fully resettled in alternative accommodation or their homes and are no longer in UNRWA facilities. In addition to canned tuna, which was available in WFP's emergency food stocks in Gaza, WFP provided fresh bread and UNRWA provided canned sardines.
- WFP's regular in-kind food assistance under the second quarter (April-June) were completed in the Gaza Strip reaching 33,340 people. In the West Bank, distributions to the targeted 37,000 Bedouins and herders in Area C started on 21 June and are expected to be completed by 27 July.
- WFP and partners continue preparations to launch the third round of resilience strengthening activities in Gaza and the West Bank. Results of a review of the second phase of the activities in the West Bank-where 170 households and three special care institutions received agricultural assets and trainings show positive impact: the total value of production, including vegetables, livestock and fodder, reached USD 135,855, or an average USD 800 per beneficiary. Around 87 percent of the total production was sold in the local market or to the local communities.
- In the Gaza Strip, the home-based agricultural projects of a few households (out of the total 102 beneficiary households) were impacted by the May armed escalation due to lack of access because of the household's displacement, or lack of irrigation and pest control. WFP will support affected families to repair the damages during the third phase of resilience strengthening activities. Nevertheless, most of the households reported a positive impact, particularly improvement in food diversity consumption despite of scarcity of resources during May armed escalation in Gaza.

Photo: (WFP/Ali Jadallah)

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WFP Country Strategy



Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

| Total Requirements (USD) | Allocated Contributions (USD) |
|--------------------------|--|
| 319 m | 182 m |
| 2021 Requirements (USD) | Six Month Net Funding Requirements (USD) (July– December 2021) |
| 76 m | 21.8 m |

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 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.

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

Monitoring

- WFP conducted face-to-face and telephone monitoring interviews throughout June. The sample included 157 interviews with recipients of cash-based transfers (electronic vouchers) and in-kind food in the **West Bank** and 240 interviews with recipients in the **Gaza Strip**. Twenty-four percent of the interviewed households are headed by women and 29 percent have at least one member with special needs.
- Findings show that of the sampled beneficiary households, 80 percent in **Gaza** and 75 percent in the **West Bank** had an acceptable food consumption, while 20 percent in Gaza and 25 percent in the West Bank did not have access to adequate food, rich with protein, vitamins, and minerals.
- Many families, particularly in Gaza, continued using **negative coping mechanisms** to address their inability to fully meet their food needs. 78 percent of families in Gaza consumed less preferred food or food of lower quality, 70 percent purchased food on credit and 52 percent borrowed food or relied on help from relatives or friends. Meanwhile, 55 percent of families in West Bank consumed less preferred food or food of lower quality, 29 percent purchased food on credit and 32 percent borrowed food or relied on help from relatives or friends. Around 3 out of 10 households in the West Bank and 2 out of 10 households in the Gaza Strip reported increase in the pattern of purchasing food on credit compared to the previous month.
- In the **Gaza Strip**, most of the interviewed heads of household stated that the food assistance from WFP partially covers their food needs (74

percent of households headed by women; 62 percent of households headed by men). However, 26 percent of households headed by women and 37 percent of households headed by men said the food assistance did not meet their needs and requested an increase to the voucher value to cover all their food needs. Meanwhile in the **West Bank**, around half of interviewed heads of households (14 percent of households headed by women; 17 percent of households headed by men) stated that food assistance from WFP does not correspond with their food needs.

- Monitoring results of the pilot Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) in the Gaza Strip during the period from November 2020 until June 2021 show that a significantly higher percentage of the targeted families (1,144) reported that they were mostly or fully able to meet the following essential needs compared to pre-assistance period: 96 percent (vs. 6%) met food needs, 94 percent (vs. 9%) met hygiene need, 85 percent (vs. 11%) met health needs and 83 percent (vs. 7%) met transportation needs. Under the pilot, which will come to an end in July 2021, every household received monthly cash assistance amounting to USD 336 using Bank of Palestine ATM card to cash out money or use it at accredited shops to purchase commodities at their choice. WFP and the Gaza Protection Consortium partner will jointly carry out an evaluation of the MPCA pilot during the third quarter to inform future design and implementation of WFP's multi-purpose cash assistance in Palestine.

Funding and Pipeline update

- WFP seeks to provide food assistance to 435,170 of the poorest and most food insecure non-refugee Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank and East Jerusalem. USD 76 million in funding is required to provide this assistance throughout 2021, and USD 21.8 million over the next six months (July-December 2021).
- Meanwhile, WFP seeks to sustain food assistance to around 351,000 of the poorest and most food insecure non-refugees who regularly rely on this assistance for their survival. With available resources, WFP will be able to provide (i.) CBT (electronic food voucher) assistance to 272,000 people in Gaza and the West Bank until the end of November 2021; (ii.) in-kind food assistance to 72,000 people in Gaza and the West Bank until the end of 2021; and, (iii.) available funding will allow assistance to 7,330 people with multi-purpose cash until the end of July 2021.
- To respond to increasing needs following the recent crisis, WFP requires USD 14 million to be able to provide emergency and recovery assistance over the coming three months in Gaza and the West Bank. In Gaza, as reflected under the Interagency Flash Appeal issued on 27 May, WFP's emergency and recovery activities are targeting affected people who are displaced, staying at host families, and/or have lost their livelihood assets. Assistance will be provided to up to 160,000 affected people through e-vouchers, 7,300 affected people through multi-purpose cash assistance and 500 households through cash for work activities including vocational educational training and employment opportunities, particularly for youth and women, in the local economy.

Assessments

The [WFP Gaza Emergency Food Security Assessment](#) was released in June. The study was undertaken in the period just after the recent escalation of violence in Gaza. The assessment explores the impact of the escalation on food security across Gaza with the following key findings: (i.) Though availability of food in local retail markets was relatively unaffected during the conflict, access to markets was a challenge and prices of agricultural products significantly decreased due to the restrictions on product exports; (ii.) several groups including 2,000 internally displaced families, 20,000 laborers who lost their incomes that became vulnerable and food insecure as a result of the recent conflict escalation; and, (iii.) reinforcing and expanding assistance supporting livelihoods, resilience-building and income-generating opportunities for poor and food insecure households remains crucial in Gaza.

Donors: Canada, ECHO, France, Germany, Japan, the Russian Federation, Spain, Switzerland, UAE, UK, UN Humanitarian Fund (HF), USA and private donors (Strategic Outcome 1). SDG Fund (Strategic Outcome 2). More information [here](#).