Operational Context

In Palestine, protracted conflict, economic stagnation, restricted trade and access to resources, coupled with high unemployment and poverty rates, continue to pose serious challenges to the food security and nutrition situation. As economic conditions worsened due to the global food crisis, the purchasing power of Palestinians is further eroding and disrupting their access to food and other essentials. For the Palestinian population, 1.84 million people suffer from food insecurity, of which, 1.1 million are severely food insecure; most of them (90 percent) live in Gaza.

In Gaza, 15 years of the Israeli blockade, aggravated by having one of the world’s highest unemployment rates and deep poverty, leaves the humanitarian situation dire. In the West Bank, settlement activity and related violence, loss of land, destruction of property, and restricted access to basic services continue undermining Palestinians’ livelihoods.

According to the latest Multisectoral Needs Assessment of the State of Palestine 2022, one-third of the Palestinian population, 1.84 million people, suffer from food insecurity, of which, 1.1 million are severely food insecure; most of them (90 percent) live in Gaza.

Under the 2023-28 Country Strategic Plan, WFP aims to provide food assistance to 440,500 of the most vulnerable and food-insecure people via in-kind food rations and cash-based transfers in the form of electronic food vouchers. In contribution to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, WFP is supporting community resilience in the face of repeated shocks and increased hardships, through livelihood support, contributing to maintaining peace and stability and stimulating the local economy. WFP also works with national institutions to enhance the capacity of existing social safety nets to assist the poor and most vulnerable. WFP will also support humanitarian and development actors to better serve the most vulnerable people through its on-demand and interagency services, continuing to be the key enabler for the humanitarian response across sectors in Palestine through its cash-based transfers platform.

Operational Updates

- In June, WFP supported 205,906 people in need. Of those, 140,700 received cash-based transfers (CBT) and 65,206 people were reached through the quarterly in-kind food distributions with wheat flour, chickpeas, lentils, salt, vegetable oil, and local olive oil. Around 602 mt of food commodities were purchased from local suppliers in Gaza.

- WFP continued the provision of its technical expertise and CBT platform to eight humanitarian agencies to facilitate the implementation of their projects. Through this service provision in June, WFP enabled assistance to about 626,338 individuals in Gaza and the redemption of about USD 9.7 million.

- In June, WFP started the first cycle of local olive oil distribution with 14 mt delivered to 26,678 Palestinians in Gaza as part of its in-kind basket. Distribution in the West Bank will start next month. This is in line with WFP’s commitment to support local food producers and businesses.

- On 13 and 14 June, WFP conducted a workshop with the Ministry of Social Development attended by 45 staff members from both organizations, building upon the existing joint Memorandum of Understanding. The focus areas for collaboration included targeting, data analysis, early warning system, GIS system, complaint, and feedback mechanism, monitoring and evaluation, resilience and economic empowerment.

- WFP continues to monitor market prices and food security. Monitoring showed that almost all interviewed individuals (97.5 percent) experienced a decline in their food consumption, reducing or eliminating food items after the suspension of WFP food assistance. Certain commodities, notably tomatoes, witnessed a significant price surge of 46.6 percent compared to last month in the West Bank. The monthly market dashboard can be found here.

In Numbers

- 205,906 people assisted in June 2023
- USD 1.3 m cash-based transfers made
- USD 9.7 m in cash-based transfers made to 626,338 people through WFP’s cash-based transfers service provision to humanitarian and development partners
- USD 40.5 m six months (July-December 2023) net funding requirements

In Numbers

- Population: 5.4 million
- 2021 Human Development Index: 109 out of 191
- Poverty rate: 31.1 percent
- Severe and moderate malnutrition: 7.4% of children between 6-59 months
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2028)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Requirements (in USD)</th>
<th>Total Received* (in USD)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>608 m</td>
<td>67 m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2023 Requirements (in USD): Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (July - December 2023)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>224 m</th>
<th>40.5 m</th>
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* Total received calculated excluding outstanding advances

WFP Strategic Outcome 1: People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs.

Country Strategic Plan Outcome #1: Vulnerable and food-insecure people in Palestine have improved ability to meet their food and nutrition needs throughout the year.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activity 1: Provide unconditional food assistance and social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) to vulnerable and food-insecure people.

WFP Strategic Outcome 2: People have improved and sustainable livelihoods.

Country Strategic Plan Outcome #2: Vulnerable people in Palestine, including youth, women, and persons with disabilities have improved access to livelihood opportunities and resilience to shocks by 2028.

Focus area: Resilience-building

Activity 2: Provide livelihood support (including skills training, asset creation and income-generating opportunities) to vulnerable people, with a focus on women, youth and persons with disabilities.

WFP Strategic Outcome 4: National programmes and systems are strengthened.

Country Strategic Plan Outcome #3: National institutions in Palestine have enhanced capacities to enable more sustainable, inclusive and integrated national systems and services, including social protection, by 2028.

Focus area: Resilience-building

Activity 3: Provide technical expertise, capacity strengthening and support to national institutions to facilitate the implementation of national strategies and plan

WFP Strategic Outcome 5: Humanitarian and development actors are more efficient and effective.

Country Strategic Plan Outcome #4: Humanitarian and development actors in Palestine have access to efficient and effective services and support throughout the year

Focus area: Resilience-building

Activity 4: Provide cash-based transfer platform services to humanitarian and development partners to enable them to meet the needs of targeted populations

Activity 5: Provide inter-agency services and technical expertise to regional and national institutions and humanitarian actors

Monitoring

- WFP has established toll-free hotlines to provide information and collect feedback on assistance. In June, these hotlines received over 13,700 calls. Additionally, around 850,000 SMS messages were sent during June to individuals supported by WFP and service provision partners. These messages informed people about suspensions, operational changes, and distribution dates.

- Following the suspension of WFP food assistance, WFP conducted qualitative monitoring calls with those affected. Almost all those interviewed (97%) reported a decline in their food consumption patterns after the ration cuts. Many of them stated they have either reduced or completely stopped consuming dairy products, pulses, rice, meat, canned food, eggs, and fruits.

- WFP conducted 404 face-to-face interviews with recipients of CBT (electronic vouchers) and in-kind food across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Around 32 percent of the interviewed families were households headed by women and 23 percent had at least one person with disabilities.

- WFP food consumption scores (FCS) findings showed that 8 percent of the households in the West Bank and 14 percent in Gaza had poor FCS. Some 57 percent in Gaza and 71 percent in the West Bank had acceptable score. Overall, 40 percent of the interviewed families continued relying on negative coping mechanisms to meet their food needs due to the global surge in food prices and the assistance cuts starting from June:

Challenges

- WFP Palestine requires USD 40.5 million to continue providing assistance until the end of the year. As of 1 June, WFP suspended assistance to around 200,000 people, 60 percent of the current caseload, and will entirely be forced to cease its operations by November.

A Gift from Palestinians for Palestinians

Ahmed, a skilled worker currently facing unemployment, carries the hardships his extended family face. Ahmed’s family receives in-kind food assistance from WFP, a basket that is meant to sustain the family for three months. Among the items in the basket in this round, they received a bottle of precious olive oil. Ahmed, like many Palestinians, knows its significance for his family. “When we receive it, we don’t have to worry about basics for a while. The basket is a ray of hope” says Ahmed.

The olive oil was made by Palestinian farmers for Palestinians. A gift that transcended its practical purpose, reminding families that they are not alone and that their community stands with them in solidarity.

Donors

Caritas France, Germany, Japan, the Russian Federation, Spain, Switzerland, UAE, UN Humanitarian Fund (UNH), USA, and other private donors: Bank of Palestine and Share the meal (Strategic Outcome 1), SDG Fund, Germany (BMZ) (Strategic Outcome 2). More information link.

Photo Caption: Ahmed and his family making some freshly baked manaqeesh in their clay oven. Photo credit: ©WFP/Ali Jadallah