

WFP Palestine | Brief

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COUNTRY STRATEGY

WFP's vision is to support the Palestinian Authority to use new and innovative approaches to build food security sustainably. In 2015, WFP aims to reach 566,940 of the most vulnerable, food insecure non-refugees in Palestine who have been affected by the ongoing conflict and occupation, a fiscal crisis and a steady decline in living standards. The Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO), launched in 2015, combines operations in the West Bank and Gaza to coherently address food insecurity needs in Palestine. In addition, WFP has a Special Operation (SO) supporting the Food Security Sector. WFP has been present in Palestine since 1991.



OPERATIONS

	Project Duration	Planned number of people	Total requirements (in USD)	Total received (in USD)	Total Funded (%)	6 Months Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*	Top 5 Donors
PRRO 200709 - Food Assistance for Food-Insecure Populations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip	Jan 2015–Dec 2016	566,940	145,053,535	57,537,011	40%	12,277,640	USA, Japan, European Commission, UK and Switzerland
SO 200560 - Strengthening the Food Security Coordination Platform in the State of Palestine	Jun 2013 - May 2015	n/a	1,257,892	827,779	66%	n/a	European Commission and Canada

*July-December

Summary of WFP assistance:

WFP addresses urgent food needs, resilient livelihoods, economic activity and emergency preparedness. Supporting enhanced food security is a task shared by the Palestinian Authority, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and WFP, with close links to activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UNICEF and other partners.

WFP targets 566,940 people for assistance through general food distributions (GFD), electronic vouchers, food assistance for assets, food for training and schools meals. It has three main objectives: i) meeting food needs; ii) supporting the re-establishment of livelihoods and food security of communities most affected by conflict through conditional e-vouchers and school meals; and iii) supporting the Palestinian Authority's national safety net by strengthening the Government capacity. WFP's purchasing power supports local production and reinforces the Palestinian economy.

WFP's e-vouchers are a platform for a range of interventions, including:

- Food assistance for more than 160,000 people assisted by WFP and 45,000 people assisted by UNRWA
- Support for the elderly and for those with health related issues for about 14,000 people with two NGO partners
- Water and sanitation assistance for 84,000 people with UNICEF
- Education support for 42,000 students with UNICEF

In the last three years, WFP has injected more than USD 150 million in the local economy, of which USD 84 million was through e-vouchers and USD 70 million through local purchases of food. This supports 252 local stores in the West Bank and Gaza which has provided USD 772,000 of investments and 485 new jobs in stores and at producer levels (2014 WFP Secondary Impact study).

WFP co-leads, with UNRWA and FAO, the Food Security Sector which strengthens food security analysis and response and links humanitarian and developmental interventions for the Palestinian Authority. More than 40 organisations participate in the Food Security Sector.

WFP's assistance in Palestine is aligned with the National Development Plan, the Ministry of Social Affairs' Business Plan and the Social Protection Sector Strategic Plan. WFP's work contributes to five of the six pillars of the 2014-2016 UN Development Assistance Framework and the annual Humanitarian Programme Cycle. WFP's operations in Palestine contribute to achieving Millennium Development Goals 1, 2, 3 and 7.

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

ACHIEVEMENTS	ISSUES/CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFP and UNRWA jointly provided daily food rations to up to 5,000 people who remained in emergency shelters in Gaza during April and May. As of June, WFP and UNRWA phased out food assistance to internally displaced persons after UNRWA closed the last emergency shelter. Some 30 families moved from the shelter to temporary rented accommodation, paid by UNRWA. A WFP assessment showed that an additional 17,500 people in Gaza, in addition to 280,000 people that are part of WFP's regular programme, are in need of food assistance. These people are still suffering from the effects of the conflict in Gaza during the summer of 2014 and the socio-economic consequences. WFP will reach 17,500 people with e-vouchers starting in September. WFP assisted more than 160,000 people in the West Bank and Gaza each month between April and June with e-vouchers and 278,000 people with food rations. During an official ceremony in June, WFP handed over emergency preparedness tools to the Palestinian Civil Defense (PCD). The tools support the PCD's response capacity during emergencies and will help further build their ability to respond rapidly and timely to emergencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaza's economy is on the verge of collapse with the highest unemployment rate in the world (43 percent), while the overall pace of reconstruction has been slow, prolonging the hardship of some 100,000 internally displaced persons. Internal political strife hinders the work of the Palestinian National Consensus Government and impedes Gaza's reconstruction. Eight out of ten people in Gaza receive some kind of social assistance, and nearly 40 percent of them still fall below the poverty line (World Bank, May 2015). Humanitarian aid organisations are at risk of cutting assistance due to unprecedented funding shortages. UNRWA may be required to close around 350 schools in Palestine for the 2015-2016 semester due to a USD 100 million deficit. This would impact 275,000 school children in the West Bank and Gaza as well as 90,000 education staff. As the stalemate in the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks continues, the security situation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, remains tense. WFP urgently needs USD 12 million to purchase food and deliver e-vouchers in the West Bank and Gaza.

PARTNERSHIPS

WFP continues to expand its partnerships and to date is working with the following partners:

- WFP and UNICEF are joining forces to run Nutrition Awareness Sessions for people receiving WFP's electronic food vouchers in Gaza.

- WFP and Médecins du Monde (MDM) worked together providing e-vouchers for hygiene products for more than 9,000 people.

WFP and HelpAge work to meet the specific needs of elderly people by providing e-vouchers for food to 6,000 people, using WFP's voucher system.

- WFP and UNRWA run a joint programme in the West Bank, providing food assistance to 30,000 Bedouin and herders each month, and have launched a voucher programme for 45,000 people in 11 governorates of the West Bank in 94 shops. WFP is acting as a service provider to UNRWA using its existing e-voucher system.

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Palestine is a lower middle income territory with significant income disparities. Average purchasing power per person in Palestine is USD 5,167 while Israel is USD 29,966 (2014 Human Development Index using the Purchasing Power Parity measure). The Palestinian economy is dependent on external aid and is closely linked to the Israeli economy, with Israel as the main market for exports and imports and an important employer of Palestinian labour. In 2014, the Palestinian economy is likely to have contracted by nearly 1 percent, the first such contraction since 2006, according to the IMF. At the end of 2014, nearly one in five persons in the West Bank, or 19 percent, were unemployed, while unemployment levels reached 43 percent in Gaza.

Results of the 2013 Socio-Economic and Food Security Survey showed food insecurity remained at high levels, with a third of the households – 33 percent or 1.6 million people – food insecure. In Gaza, food insecurity levels remained at 57 percent and in the West Bank food insecurity remained at 19 percent. Although food is available in Palestine, price levels are too high for poor households, who spend approximately half of their income on food. High food insecurity and vulnerability are a result of severe restrictions on livelihoods and economic activity.

The blockade of Gaza, recurrent conflict, the occupation of the West Bank and the separation barrier, have resulted in high levels of protracted humanitarian needs, interrupted economic activity and further restricted movement and access.

Peace talks on a two state solution were suspended in 2014. In 2014, a 51 day conflict in Gaza devastated the lives of many people and caused widespread destruction to infrastructure, homes and livelihoods. The West Bank witnessed rising tensions and saw the highest level of displacement since six years. The current situation in Palestine is unsustainable and humanitarian needs are of great concern.

