



WFP State of Palestine Country Brief

Highlights

- Lack of sufficient resources compelled WFP to significantly reduce the food entitlements of 89,000 people in Gaza in July, August and September. Additional donor support is urgently sought from October onwards.
- In September, thanks to contributing partners, WFP assisted more than 480,000 food insecure non-refugees in Gaza and the West Bank through both cash-based transfers, using an electronic voucher redeemable in local shops, and direct food assistance. Women and children accounted for 70 percent of those reached.
- WFP continues upgrading its emergency preparedness response in coordination with other UN partners in Gaza.

WFP Assistance

Food Assistance for Food-Insecure Populations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6 Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
PRRO 200709** (Jan. 2015 – Dec. 2016)	151.4 m	116.9 m (77%)	22.1 m (65%)

*October 2016 – March 2017
** Budget revision ongoing

GENDER MARKER 2A PRRO 200709

Resources permitting, WFP's Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) 200709 aims to assist 496,000 non-refugees in Palestine, amongst the most vulnerable: 249,000 people in Gaza and 247,000 in the West Bank, through food distributions and Cash Based Transfers (CBT) using electronic vouchers. The PRRO has three main objectives: meeting the food needs of the most vulnerable non-refugee populations; fostering early recovery and enhancing the resilience and coping mechanisms of fragile communities in the face of economic hardship and restricted freedom of movement; and supporting the Palestinian Authority's (PA) capacity in delivering its national food safety net.

WFP links its social transfers to local production and uses its purchasing power to foster agricultural development and connect small-scale producers, food-processors, retailers and consumers. Since 2011, WFP has invested more than USD 200 million in the Palestinian economy, including USD 125 million through CBTs. More than 99 percent of WFP food items available through CBTs are produced and/or processed locally.

In 2009, WFP Palestine pioneered in devising the first CBT platform of its kind in the Middle-East. The platform has since been upgraded taking advantage of new technologically-advanced systems and processes to allow for rapid scale-up, real-time payment and monitoring. WFP's innovative CBT platform allows for a flexible, rapidly-scalable and multi-stakeholder humanitarian response at times of crisis, fostering aid complementarity, cost-effectiveness and impact. During the 2014 Gaza conflict, WFP was able to reach more than 300,000 people in less than two weeks with CBTs, including 84,000 who received complementary water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) assistance from UNICEF through the same WFP platform. CBTs are also effectively used in recovery contexts: since the war, WFP continued to partner with UNICEF and teamed-up and/or lent its CBT technology to Oxfam, Help Age and Médecins du Monde. In the West Bank, the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

has been using WFP's vouchers to deliver its food assistance to 47,000 refugees since 2015.

WFP's activities in Palestine were ranked with a high Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Marker (2A), which is testament to WFP's high involvement in promoting and supporting women empowerment and gender equality in all its interventions. Food distribution points and partner retailers are easily accessible for women and are located in areas close to households led by women. To strengthen the nutritional impact of its CBTs, WFP together with OXFAM, UNICEF and the local NGO Ard El-Insan runs a nutrition awareness campaign for 2,500 women and 1,000 men receiving CBTs in Gaza. Interactive sessions have been instrumental to strengthen women's role as autonomous decision-makers and promote a common understanding of the importance of healthy diet. The programme is critical as 50 percent of the population suffers from more than one micronutrient deficiency. Since 2011, 4,850 women and their families have benefitted from the training.

WFP's interventions in Palestine are aligned with the National Development Plan, the Ministry of Social Development's Business Plan and the Social Protection Sector Strategic Plan. They are integrated in the 2014-2016 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan, directly supporting Sustainable Development Goals 2: Zero Hunger and 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

In Numbers

1.6 million food-insecure Palestinians in need of food assistance, including:

745,000 non-refugees in need of food assistance

65,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Gaza following the 2014 war

482,009 People assisted* including 35% through CBTs September 2016



* Conditional activities and school feeding have been interrupted due to lack of funding.

Main Credit: WFP Palestine

Photo Caption: Salima and her family are among the 180,000 poor and food-insecure Palestinians, including 70,000 in Gaza, receiving WFP cash-based assistance.



September 2016

Operational Updates

- In September, WFP assisted 482,009 food insecure (244,734 people in Gaza and 237,276 people in the West Bank) with food assistance and CBTs. Almost 45 percent of them (214,000) are assisted in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development under the framework of the Palestinian Authority's social protection system.
- The Palestinian Authority is involved in the preparation of the new National Plan called the Public Policy Agenda and Sectoral Strategies (2017-2022) and the new Social Development Sector Strategy which will fall under the National Plan. WFP has been providing policy, planning and coordination, in addition to financial support to the Ministry of Social Development to this end.
- Alongside particularly high food insecurity levels, the Bedouin and herding communities in Area C are facing mounting challenges to their livelihoods and a coercive environment to relocate: demolition of homes and agricultural assets, land confiscation, displacement and settlers' violence. Meeting the needs of these communities continues to be priority for WFP and UNRWA, who together provide critical in-kind food assistance to 30,000 vulnerable people.
- WFP will extend its activities in Palestine until the end of 2017, to align with national plans and the new UNDAF starting in 2018. This extension takes into account recommendations of the 2015 Country Portfolio Evaluation, with a focus on scaling up CBTs and nutrition education, prioritising people with high vulnerability, including households led by women, Palestinians in Gaza and Area C of the West Bank, and supporting the government's social safety nets and strengthening its capacity.
- In September, WFP and UNICEF jointly assisted 3,700 households with food and WASH items, using WFP's One Card. The partnership will be renewed in October towards the same households which will have their voucher card credited with an additional NIS 200 (equivalent to USD 50) to purchase WASH products, on top of food items.
- WFP is conducting an evaluation of the economic benefits and secondary impact of its CBT programme, covering the period 2011-2016. Results will be available at the end of the year. Previous evaluations (2011-2014) showed the significant contribution of WFP's CBT on participating shops and dairy processors' sales and investments.

Challenges

- Reduced funding is hampering WFP's ability to operate and meet the immediate food needs of a highly-vulnerable population. In Gaza, WFP needs immediate resources of USD 4.5 million to provide a full food basket to 89,000 people assisted in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development during the October-December distribution cycle.
- As available financial resources will be exhausted by the end of the year, WFP urgently requires additional funds to be able to deliver timely and sufficient food assistance to people in need in early 2017.

Country Background & Strategy

Decades of occupation coupled with severe restrictions on the movement of people and goods have undermined the living conditions and reduced access to livelihoods for Palestinians. Food insecurity is mostly due to a lack of economic access: food prices are mainly driven by Israel and out of reach for many poor households - the GDP per capita in Palestine (USD 4,700) is six times less than that of Israel (USD 30,000).

The impact of the 2014 conflict in Gaza continues to be devastating to the Palestinian people and economy. Against this backdrop, more than 27 percent of the population - or 1.6 million people - suffers from food insecurity. In Gaza, one in two is food insecure, and one in three is severely affected. As poor and vulnerable Palestinians spend more than half of their income on food, WFP's assistance is critical to meet their food needs. This prevents further deteriorations in food security and livelihood status, and prevents negative coping mechanisms.

WFP targets 600,000 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. PRRO 200709 combines ongoing operations in the West Bank and Gaza to coherently address urgent humanitarian needs in Palestine, while supporting early recovery and sustainable, long term food security for non-refugees.

WFP has been present in Palestine since 1991.

Population: **4.4 million**

2015 Human Development Index:
113 out of 188

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Partnerships

Supporting enhanced food security is a task shared by WFP, the PA and UNRWA with close links to activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UNICEF and other partners. WFP works closely with government, NGOs (Oxfam GB, Global Communities) and UN partners (UNRWA) to successfully deliver food and CBT assistance in Gaza and the West Bank. WFP co-leads, together with UNRWA and FAO, the Food Security Sector which aims to strengthen food security analysis and response, and link humanitarian and development interventions for the Palestinian Authority.

Donors

WFP is grateful for the unwavering support of its longstanding partners, namely: [Canada](#), [ECHO](#), [France](#), [Japan](#), [Kingdom of Saudi Arabia](#), [OCHA](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Spain](#), [Switzerland](#), [United Kingdom](#), [USA](#), and [multilateral donors](#). Additional resources are critical to enable WFP to build on its achievements and prevent a deterioration in the food security and nutrition status of the poorest Palestinian people.

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