

# WFP State of Palestine Country Brief

## 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. 2017)	209.5 m	143.6 m (69%)	10.7 m (35%)

\*February - July 2017

### GENDER MARKER 2A PRRO 200709

Under its Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) 200709, with an approved budget of USD 210 million over 2015-2017, WFP has three objectives: 1) meeting urgent food needs and enhancing the food consumption and dietary diversity of the most vulnerable non-refugee populations; 2) supporting livelihoods, fostering early recovery and enhancing the resilience and coping mechanisms of fragile communities in the face of socio-economic hardships; 3) supporting the Palestinian Authority's capacity to deliver cost-effective and protective national safety nets, and strengthening its readiness to respond to external shocks, in collaboration with United Nations agencies.

The Palestinian Authority is WFP's primary partner in Palestine. WFP supports the Ministry of Social Development in the development and delivery of an integrated and needs-based National Food Safety net, reaching 214,000 people with food and cash-based transfer (CBT) assistance. WFP also provides technical support towards programme design, beneficiary targeting, monitoring and evaluation, and works in partnership with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics on food security analysis, needs assessments and multi-stakeholder coordination in the framework of the Food Security Sector, which gathers more than 40 organisations.

WFP links its food assistance 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 215 million in the Palestinian economy, including USD 135 million through CBTs. Approximately 96 percent of WFP food items available through CBTs are produced and/or processed locally.

In 2009, WFP Palestine pioneered the first CBT assistance modality in the Middle-East. The platform has since been upgraded, taking advantage of new technologically-advanced systems and processes. WFP's CBT platform allows for a flexible, rapidly-scalable and multi-stakeholder

**Main Photo** Credit: WFP/ Asmaa Nassar  
Caption: Yasmine is enjoying an egg for breakfast. WFP's food assistance via CBT enables Palestinian families to buy vitamin and mineral-rich food such as dairy products, bread, pulses, canned tuna and of course Yasmine's favourite: eggs.

## Highlights

- Thanks to donor support, WFP assisted 470,000 food insecure non-refugees in Gaza and the West Bank in January through cash-based transfers (CBT), using an electronic voucher redeemable in local shops, and direct food assistance. Women and children accounted for 70 percent of those assisted.
- Despite reaching 180,000 people, funding constraints forced WFP to reduce its voucher value by 20 percent in January.

humanitarian response in times of crisis, fostering aid complementarity, cost-effectiveness and impact. Use of an "electronic wallet" made it possible for other organisations to deliver assistance through the same card. During the 2014 Gaza war, WFP reached 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 WFP Common Card. 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 Gaza. In the West Bank, the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) has been using WFP's voucher platform to deliver its food assistance to 47,000 refugees since 2015.

WFP's activities in Palestine promote and support women's 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 women-headed households. To strengthen the nutritional impact of its CBTs, WFP together with the local NGO Ard El-Insan and UNICEF run nutrition education classes to 5,700 voucher recipients, including 3,200 women, 1,500 men and 1,000 primary school kids 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 a healthy diet. The programme is critical as 50 percent of the population suffers from more than one micronutrient deficiency. The sessions have a long-term positive impact on levels of nutritional and dietary knowledge and healthy cooking habits among participants. Since 2011, 4,850 women and their families have benefitted from the training.

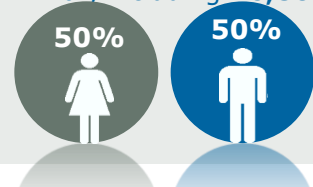
## In Numbers

**1.65 m** food-insecure Palestinians in need of food assistance, including:

**745,000** non-refugees in need of food assistance

**60,000** internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Gaza following the 2014 war, including **16,800** non-refugees

**People Assisted**  
January 2016



## Operational Updates

- In January, WFP assisted 469,071 poor and food insecure people: 232,793 people in the West Bank and 236,278 people in Gaza with food and CBTs. Of this 214,000 (45 percent) people were assisted in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development under the Palestinian Authority's Social Protection System.
- As part of two new partnerships, WFP is now delivering its cash-based transfers in Gaza to 70,000 people with the INGO Global Communities (with whom it already partners in the West Bank), and the Ministry of Social Development reaching 10,000 people under the National Food Safety Net. WFP will further scale-up its CBT assistance in Gaza by providing voucher assistance to another 10,000 people currently receiving food rations through the Ministry by March. This transition is aligned with WFP's strategy to provide a diversified diet to the people targeted for food assistance, support the Government national plan and food security objectives and boost the local economy by using retail shops for distribution of locally-produced food commodities.
- WFP's nutrition education classes for CBT recipients, in majority households headed by women, resumed in Gaza. Acknowledging its benefits on women's nutrition and health awareness, self-image and empowerment, and in a bid to foster programme complementarity, WFP has expanded the scope of its intervention, reaching more women, and, for the first, tailored specific classes for primary school children who will be taught about healthy eating habits through interactive and participatory sessions.
- The newly-released Humanitarian Response Plan 2017, under which WFP operates in Palestine, targets 1.65 million food-insecure Palestinians, 35 percent of whom being non-refugees (640,000). Following the one-year extension of its [PRRO](#), WFP aims at providing food assistance to 496,000 people for a total cost of USD 60 million. WFP will focus on expanding nutrition education and CBT, prioritising people with high vulnerability, including households led by women, the elderly and disabled people, Palestinians in Gaza and Area C of the West Bank, whilst contributing to government-level sustainable strategies and institutional development.
- WFP and UNICEF have signed a new agreement to deliver joint WASH/food assistance through WFP's Common Card to 620 families (approximately 3,500 people) in Gaza. In February, each household will receive USD 130 credited onto their voucher card to purchase water, sanitation, hygiene and winterisation items in WFP contracted shops. They will also be trained on best hygiene and health practices by the local NGO Ard EL Insan.
- WFP and the private sector company REACH, a subsidiary of the Palestinian Telecommunication Group (PALTEL), have agreed to set-up a specialized telephone call centre service to answer inquiries, requests for information and complaints of WFP beneficiaries across the West Bank and Gaza. This toll-free number will be put into service in February. This new mechanism will add on existing WFP's monitoring tools and increase accountability towards assisted people.

## Challenges

- Insufficient and inflexible funding is hampering WFP's ability to operate and meet all of the immediate food needs of a highly-vulnerable population. As contingency measures, WFP was constrained to reduce the voucher entitlements of 20 percent for 177, 000 people in January. Additional support is required to build on achievements and prevent a deterioration in the food security and nutrition status of the poorest Palestinian people.

## 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 in Palestine is driven by limited economic access to food, arising from restrictions of movement, trade and investment, and high unemployment rates. Food prices are driven by Israel, where people's average purchasing power per person is six times higher than in Palestine, and therefore too high for poor families to afford.

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 people are food insecure, and one in three is severely affected by food insecurity. 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 their food security and livelihood status, and prevents them from engaging in negative coping mechanisms, such as selling their assets.

WFP targets nearly 500,000 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.

Population: **4.8 million**

2015 Human Development Index: **113 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **7.4 % of children between 6-59 months**

## Partnerships

Supporting enhanced food security is a task shared by WFP, the Palestinian Authority, UNRWA and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) with close links to activities of UNICEF and other partners. WFP works closely with the Government, NGOs (Global Communities, Ard El Insan) and United Nations partners (UNRWA) to successfully deliver food and cash-based assistance in Gaza and the West Bank. WFP co-leads, together with 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: [Belgium](#), [Canada](#), [ECHO](#), [France](#), [Italy](#), [Japan](#), [Kingdom of Saudi Arabia](#), [Norway](#), [OCHA](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Spain](#), [Switzerland](#), [United Kingdom](#), [USA](#), multilateral donors.