



# 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)	210 m	166.3 m (79.2%)	15.2 m

\*October 2017 – March 2017, and based on projected requirements for the planned CSP

GENDER MARKER **2A** PRRO 200709

The 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.

Each month, WFP provides food assistance to nearly half a million poor food insecure Palestinians, the great majority living below the deep poverty line on less than USD 3.2 per person per day. WFP food assistance proved to be critical in meeting their daily food needs, but also in protecting their livelihoods and mitigating the devastating and accumulative impact of decades of conflict on their socio-economic status.

The Palestinian Authority is a core WFP 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 in-kind food and cash-based transfer assistance (CBT), using an electronic food voucher. WFP also provides technical support towards programme design, beneficiary targeting, monitoring and evaluation to the Ministry of Social Development.

By purchasing the majority of its food supplies locally and using retail shops for the procurement and distribution of food assistance, WFP aims at strengthening the resilience of local food systems and the wider Palestinian economy to the protracted crisis. Since 2011 and to date, WFP has invested more than USD 244 million in the economy,

**Main Photo** Credit: WFP/ Asmaa Nassar  
Caption: "Food captures moments of joy" Nadia is gathering her children over a healthy and colourful Iftar meal. WFP helps thousands of Palestinian families to enjoy some moments of tranquillity and homely warmth.

## Highlights

- WFP assisted 473,000 food insecure non-refugees in Gaza and the West Bank in September, through both cash-based transfers (CBT) - using an electronic card redeemable in local shops - and in-kind food assistance. Women and children accounted for 70 percent of those assisted.
- WFP needs additional resources to assist 137,000 poor severely food-insecure people across Gaza, where the humanitarian situation shows no sign of improvement, and the West Bank.

including USD 156 million through CBTs and 88 million through local purchases. Approximately 96 percent of WFP food items available through CBTs are produced and/or processed and/or packaged locally.

WFP's CBT platform allows for a flexible, rapidly-scalable and multi-stakeholder 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 conflict, 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 the WFP card. CBT platforms are also effectively used in recovery contexts: since the conflict, WFP continued to partner with UNICEF and teamed-up and/or shared 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 female-headed households. WFP together with the local NGO Ard El-Insan and UNICEF run nutrition education classes to selected WFP beneficiaries. 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.

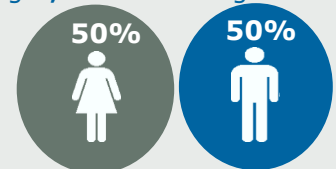
## In Numbers

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

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

**29,000** internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Gaza following the 2014 war, including **8,120** non-refugees

**473,000** People assisted in August  
Including 40 percent through CBTs and 3,609 non-refugee IDPs



September 2017

## Operational Updates

- In September, WFP assisted 473,000 poor and food insecure people: 246,800 people in Gaza and 226,200 people in the West Bank with food and CBTs. WFP food assistance was critical in meeting their immediate food needs and stabilising their dietary diversity, but also in protecting their livelihoods and mitigating the devastating and accumulative impact of decades of conflict on their socio-economic status.
- Gaza's energy crisis, which translates into daily electricity blackouts of 18-22 hours, has resulted in a deepening humanitarian crisis with critical basic services (including hospitals, water supplies, sewage treatment), industries and businesses functioning at minimal capacity. The crisis has a particularly heavy toll on the poorest, including WFP beneficiaries who have increased the use of negative coping strategies, such as increasing debt and cutting meals.
- In application of the recommendation of WFP's 2011-15 external Country Portfolio Evaluation, approved by WFP's Executive Board in February 2016, WFP rolled out its health and nutrition awareness classes in the West Bank. The first sessions were implemented by the local NGO Palestinian Medical Relief Society and delivered to 500 participants in two villages in the Hebron Governorate. Until the end of the year, 3,000 people will be trained, including 2,000 women and 500 primary-school children.
- Together with its cooperating partner Global Communities, WFP is conducting a beneficiary needs assessment in Gaza to review the eligibility of current food assistance recipients and assess the needs of other vulnerable poor food insecure people. This month, WFP completed the training of 60 social workers who started the data collection exercise in North Gaza. A total of 200,000 people will be surveyed until the end of November. Earlier this year, the same beneficiary survey was undertaken in the West Bank. The results will help WFP shape its food security interventions and identify the most food insecure populations whom WFP foresees to assist over 2018-2022 as per its new Country Strategic Plan.
- WFP, together with other United Nations agencies, also provides emergency assistance to those whose houses have been demolished. In September, WFP provided emergency voucher assistance to 26 people for a total of USD 400, following OCHA's recommendations and WFP's assessments. Since the beginning of the year, WFP assisted 258 people with emergency vouchers for a total value of USD 4,300.
- Thanks to additional donor support, WFP was able to avoid an interruption of its voucher assistance, delivered in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development to 57,000 people in the West Bank. These new resources enabled **WFP to reinstate peoples' full voucher entitlements onto their electronic card, from USD 8.3 to USD 10.3 per person.**

## Challenges

- WFP does not have the resources to carry forth its in-kind food distributions with the Ministry of Social Development in both the West Bank and Gaza over September-December. This will impact the food security and livelihoods status of 137,000 poor severely food-insecure people. WFP is in urgent needs of around USD 3.2 million to avert this situation.

## Country Background & Strategy

Food insecurity in Palestine affects 27 percent of the population – or 1.3 million people- and 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. As poor and vulnerable Palestinians spend more than half of their income on food, WFP's assistance is critical to meet their food needs and prevents further deteriorations in their food security and livelihood status. Gaza continues its trajectory of de-development. All socio economic indicators and humanitarian conditions continue to deteriorate, owing to the cumulative effects of a ten-year economic -land, sea, air- blockade (2006), three armed hostilities (2008, '12,'14), the introduction of Israeli restrictions on the entry of goods with a dual civilian/military use (2010) limiting economic growth and post-war reconstruction, Egypt's closure of the smuggling tunnels annihilating the informal economy (2013), the pay cuts of Palestinian Authority public sector workers and the current energy crisis (2017): 40 percent are poor, 39 percent are food insecure, 44 percent are unemployed. The U.N. foresees that Gaza will be "unliveable" by 2020.

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 and a steady decline in living standards. PRRO 200709 combines ongoing operations in the West Bank and Gaza to address urgent humanitarian needs, while supporting early recovery and sustainable, long term food security.

Population: **4.9 million**

2016 Human Development Index: **114 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

## Partnerships

Humanitarian and development actors, including WFP, support the national authority in the provision of assistance to vulnerable segments of the non-refugee population. WFP works closely with the Government, NGOs (Global Communities, Ard El Insan, Palestinian Medical Relief Society) and United Nations partners (UNRWA) to deliver assistance in the form of in-kind food entitlements and cash-based transfers 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 and private donors.

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