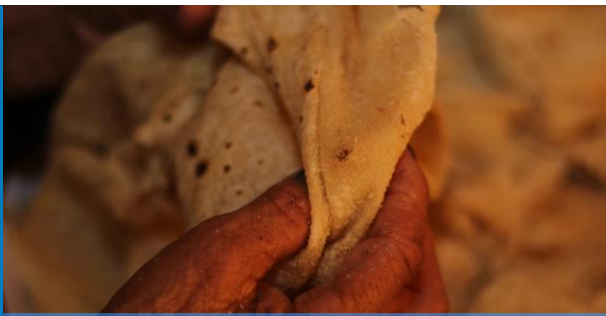




SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Palestine Country Brief September 2021

Operational Context

The month of May witnessed the most intense military hostilities in Gaza since 2014 with the backdrop of large-scale unrest in East Jerusalem and across the West Bank. A ceasefire between Israel and Palestinian armed groups that went into effect in Gaza on 21 May is still holding, though the security situation remains volatile. In addition to the loss of life, many of which were children and women, the humanitarian consequences of the eleven days of fighting in Gaza have been devastating, exacerbating the impact of almost 14 years of an Israeli blockade, internal Palestinian political divisions, recurrent escalations, and an unabating COVID-19 pandemic. A [Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment \(RDNA\)](#), published on 6 July 2021, assesses there are up to USD 380 million in physical damage and USD 190 million in economic losses. Recovery needs have been estimated up to USD 485 million during the first 24 months.

Even before the outbreak of the recent hostilities and COVID-19, food insecurity in Palestine affected nearly a third of the population – about 1.7 million people – and is driven by high poverty and unemployment rates. This number was projected to have increased to 2 million, or 40 percent of the population in early 2021. The number of food insecure Palestinians is almost equally divided between the refugee (55 percent) and non-refugee (45 percent) communities. More than 900,000 non-refugees are assessed to be food insecure in Palestine, 60 percent in Gaza and 40 percent in the West Bank.

WFP regularly provides food assistance to the most vulnerable food insecure groups of the Palestinian population. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, WFP scaled up food assistance to meet the needs of additional vulnerable non-refugees who have been affected. Most of the targeted families are headed by women, with elderly people, persons with disabilities and high ratio of dependents. WFP also provided emergency and recovery food assistance to people affected by the recent round of hostilities in Gaza.

Under the 2018-22 Country Strategic Plan (CSP), WFP aims at providing food assistance to 435,170 of the most vulnerable non-refugees via in-kind food rations and cash-based transfers in the form of electronic food vouchers and multi-purpose cash. In contribution to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, WFP's assistance goes beyond enhancing people's ability to meet their immediate food needs: it supports community resilience in the face of repeated shocks and increased hardships, contributes to maintaining peace and stability, and stimulates the local economy. WFP also works with national institutions to enhance the capacity of existing social safety nets to assist the poor and vulnerable.

Population: 5.2 million

2019 Human Development Index:
115 out of 189

Poverty rate: 29.2 percent

Severe and moderate malnutrition:
7.4 % of children between 6-59 months

In Numbers

350,000* people assisted
In September 2021



US\$4.1 m in cash-based transfers made

910 mt of food distributed

US\$ 22.1 m six-month (October 2021 – March 2022)
net funding requirements

*Estimate; figure not yet finalized.

Operational Updates

- In September 2021, WFP reached about 350,000 **people in need** through cash-based transfer and in-kind food support. The total amount of cash delivered to people in need was fully redeemed in September, injecting the local economy with USD 4.1 million.
- WFP worked with UNICEF and the Ministry of Health on the preparation of the nationally owned **Social Behavior Change Communications (SBCC)** action plan, the launch of which [took place on 14 September](#).
- WFP's planning for the launch of WFP's **nutrition SBCC activities in Gaza and the West Bank** also continued during September. The SBCC activities, which will be implemented through WFP local partner Juzoor, are planned to launch in October and will focus on reducing anaemia amongst pregnant and lactating women and mothers of children under the age of five years.
- WFP and its local partners have started the next phase of the **resilience-building interventions** where WFP is supporting 200 smallholder farmers in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The selected smallholders will receive a comprehensive package of agricultural input and necessary training in the coming months to enhance their resilience and diversify income sources. Some beneficiary families from the previous round whose agricultural assets were impacted by the May armed escalation due to household's displacement, or lack of irrigation and pest control, will receive WFP's support to ensure repairment of damages. Around 400 smallholders have benefited from these interventions over the last two years.
- After an initial ten-month pilot, in August WFP began providing **emergency multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA)** assistance (US\$ 265 per household per month) for three months through a contribution from the EU to around 24,000 people (4,000 families) who were affected by the escalation of violence in May. MPCA is particularly useful in reaching both emergency and recovery outcomes providing humanitarian support while also stimulating the local economy.
- WFP Palestine is taking the first steps to develop the new Country Strategic Plan (CSP), the guiding document for the next five years that outlines the strategic approach to reaching the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs): SDG 2, Zero Hunger, and SDG 17, partnering to support the implementation of the SDGs, in Palestine. The current CSP started in 2018 and will run until early 2023, after which the new CSP will begin, fully aligned with the new and updated national plans and priorities, as well as the updated UN inter-agency planning on development engagement.

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Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)	
Total Requirements (USD)	Allocated Contributions (USD)
358 m	223 m
2021 Requirements (USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (USD) (October 2021- March 2022)
116 m	22.1 m

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food (SDG 2)

Strategic Outcome # 1: Non-refugees, poor and severely food-insecure people have improved dietary diversity by 2022
Focus area : Crisis response

Activities: - Provision of unconditional food assistance - including through cash-based transfers (CBT) and in-kind modalities- and nutrition information to poor and food-insecure households.

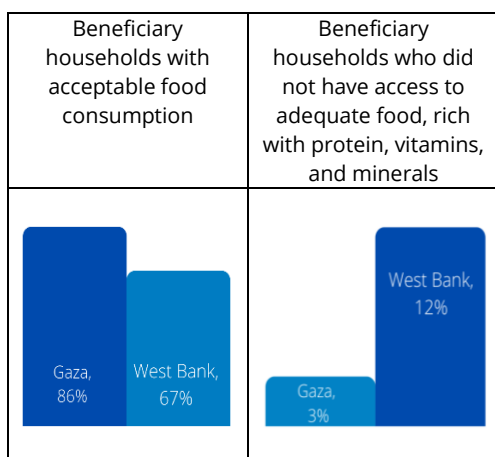
Strategic Result 2: Support to the implementation of the SDGs (SDG 17)

Strategic Outcome 2: State of Palestine institutions have enhanced capacities and systems to identify, target and assist food-insecure vulnerable populations by 2022
Focus area : Resilience-building

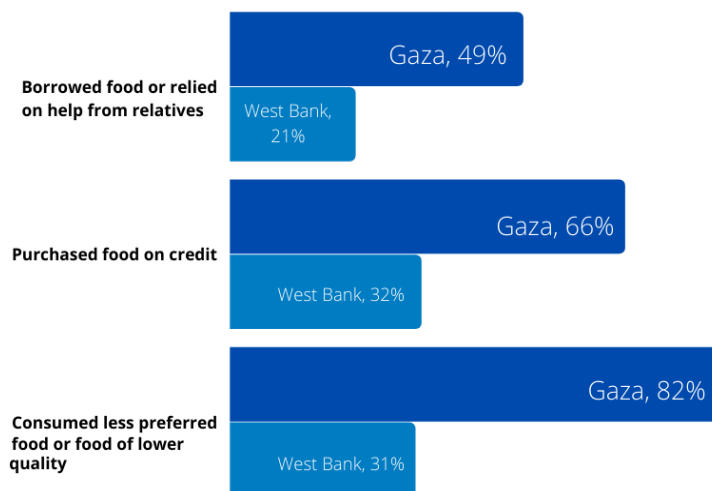
Activities: Technical support to national ministries and institutions on food security strategy; Provision of a CBT platform to multi-sectoral partners and Government

Monitoring

- WFP conducted face-to-face and telephone monitoring interviews throughout September. The sample included 218 interviews with recipients of cash-based transfer (electronic vouchers) and in-kind food in the **West Bank**, and 399 interviews with recipients in the **Gaza Strip**. Twenty-one percent of the interviewed households are headed by women and 16 percent of the families interviewed had at least one member with special needs.
- Findings show that of the sampled beneficiary households, 86 percent in **Gaza** and 67 percent in the **West Bank** had acceptable food consumption, **while 3 percent in Gaza and 12 percent** in the West Bank did not have access to adequate food, rich with protein, vitamins, and minerals.



- Many families, particularly in Gaza, continued **negative coping mechanisms** to address their inability to fully meet their food needs. 82 percent of families in Gaza consumed less preferred food or food of lower quality, 66 percent purchased food on credit and 49 percent borrowed food or relied on help from relatives or friends. Meanwhile, 31 percent of families in the West Bank consumed less preferred food or food of lower quality, 32 percent purchased food on credit and 21 percent borrowed food or relied on help from relatives or friends. 12 percent in **Gaza** and 11 percent in the **West Bank** reported an increase in the pattern of purchasing food on credit compared to the previous month.



- In the **Gaza Strip**, most of the interviewed heads of households stated that the food assistance from WFP partially covers their food needs (66 percent of households headed by women; 80 percent of households headed by men). However, 34 percent of households headed by women and 18 percent of households headed by men said the food assistance did not meet their needs and requested an increase to the voucher value to cover all their food needs. Meanwhile in the **West Bank**, a few of the interviewed heads of households (24 percent of households headed by women; 36 percent of households headed by men) stated that food assistance from WFP partially covered their food needs, while 76 percent female headed-households and 67 percent of male headed-households believed that the voucher value did not correspond with their food needs.

Funding and Pipeline update

- WFP Palestine seeks to provide food assistance to 435,170 of the poorest and most food-insecure non-refugee Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank and East Jerusalem. In order to be able to reach this figure, a total of USD 22.1 million over the next six months (October 2021- March 2022) is required.
- Meanwhile, WFP seeks to sustain food assistance to around 351,000 of the poorest and most food-insecure non-refugees who regularly rely on this assistance for their survival. With available resources, WFP will be able to provide (i.) CBT (electronic food voucher) assistance to 272,000 people in Gaza and the West Bank until the end of December 2021; and (ii.) in-kind food assistance to 72,000 people in Gaza and the West Bank until the end of 2021.
- Considering the office's additional service provision projects during the fourth quarter of 2021, a **budget revision** of the Country Strategic Plan was approved by WFP Executive Board for the WFP Palestine operation.

Donors: Canada, EU, France, Germany, Japan, the Russian Federation, Spain, Switzerland, UAE, UK, UN Humanitarian Fund (HF), USA and private donors (Strategic Outcome 1). SDG Fund (Strategic Outcome 2). [More information here.](#)

Photo: From the in-kind food support she receives from WFP, a mother makes bread. (WFP/Nizar Khadder)