



WFP oPt SitRep, January 2011

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HIGHLIGHT: If funds are not secured in the coming weeks, WFP will be forced to halt its most crucial operations starting from **April 2011**. WFP oPt has already reduced food rations to destitute families, decreased of the value of the food voucher and suspended the planned expansion of the voucher programme in the West Bank.

Overview of WFP activities in oPt

WFP has been providing food assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) since 1991. The Country Office is located in Jerusalem, and is supported by an office in Gaza, two sub-offices (Nablus and Hebron) and one port office (Ashdod). WFP employs over 110 staff in the oPt, both national and international.

WFP currently meets the food needs of the most vulnerable non-refugees in the oPt through two operations:

- 1) A Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) in the West Bank (2011-2012);
- 2) An Emergency Operation (EMOP) in the Gaza Strip (2009-2011).

A new PRRO for the West Bank for the period 2011-2012 has been approved at the November 2010 session of the WFP Executive board. The PRRO targets a caseload of 454,500 non-refugee beneficiaries, with a particular focus on priority areas such as Area C and the Seam Zone. Assistance is provided through the following components: (i) Emergency relief for the destitute; (ii) Livelihood support for vulnerable households (general food distributions and vouchers); (iii) School Meals in the most food-insecure areas, and (iv) a new Voucher-for-Work and Voucher-for-Training component to contribute to and promote self-reliance by preserving agricultural assets to restore livelihoods.

Following its successful roll-out in the West Bank, the Urban Voucher EMOP has been integrated as part of the livelihood support for vulnerable groups component in urban and semi-urban areas. The caseload will be gradually expanded to 90,000 beneficiaries by the end of 2011, should the funding situation allow it.

The Gaza EMOP will be running until December 2011. The EMOP currently targets 313,000 non-refugee beneficiaries through general food distributions, vouchers and school feeding, i.e., 70 per cent of the non-refugee population in Gaza, aiming at meeting the immediate needs of the population affected by the conflict as well as improving the food consumption of families and individuals in need. The pilot voucher enables 15,000 beneficiaries to access a range of various commodities including protein-rich food (dairy products and eggs) directly from small and medium-sized shopkeepers while saving cash for other essential food and non-food commodities.

WFP thrives to maintain the enrolment of children and enhance concentration levels in schools through the daily distribution of snacks to 92,000 schoolchildren, included in the total caseload.

Percentage of household cash expenditure devoted to food*:

Gaza Strip 70%
West Bank 52.5%

Food insecurity rates*:

Gaza Strip 52 %
West Bank 22 %

*2010 Socio-Economic and Food Security Survey (WFP/FAO/PCBS)

Unemployment rates (ILO definition)**:

Gaza Strip 40.5%
West Bank 20.1%

**PCBS 2010

January 2011 operational update

EMOP 10817.0 Gaza

Food distributions

1,104 mt

Beneficiaries reached

146,353 (incl. 14,593 voucher benef.)

Cooperating partners

CHF, MSA, Oxfam GB, MoEHE

Urban Voucher Project

Beneficiaries reached

32,724

Cooperating partners

CRS, ACF

PRRO 10387.1 West Bank

Food distributions

5,578 mt

Beneficiaries reached

75,039

Cooperating partners

MSA, MoEHE





WFP Executive Director visits the West Bank



WFP's Executive Director, Josette Sheeran, carried out a visit to the West Bank on 17 January, during which she visited WFP projects and met with beneficiaries, government officials, partners and WFP staff.

Sheeran travelled to Hebron, to meet with primary schoolchildren in the oldest school of the city and see the impact that the school feeding project has on the well-being of many children in the West Bank.

School feeding, concentrated in governorates with high unemployment and poverty levels, is a safety net mechanism and an incentive to maintain girls and boys in schools. More than 75,000 schoolchildren receive WFP's school snacks in the West Bank.



Sheeran also stopped in a shop participating in the innovative electronic food voucher project. Food vouchers allow WFP to address hunger when food is available but people are unable to afford it. At the same time, the activity injects cash into the local economy, thereby supporting local producers.



Sheeran thereafter met with high level Palestinian officials including the Minister of Education, the Minister of Social Affairs, and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad in Ramallah.

2010 Socio-Economic and Food Security Survey (SEFSec)

(further to the Dec2010 Sitrep)

The definition of food insecurity in the oPt combines income and consumption levels measured in US\$ per adult equivalent per day and includes whether there has been no change or a decrease in food and non-food expenditures.

As such, the measurement of food insecurity considers only the problem of economic access to food and essential non-food items resulting from the lack of income-earning possibilities for Palestinian households.

Other dimensions of food security, including food availability and food consumption, are generally less problematic. Food is normally supplied in sufficient quantities and with an acceptable variety in local markets, mainly from imports. Yet, current availability of food on the market could be hampered given the volatility of the peace process and the high dependency on Israeli and international markets.

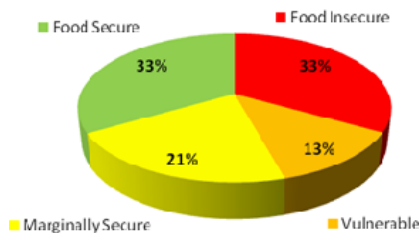
The SEFSec is part of a broader monitoring system in the oPt and is supported by WFP and FAO, in collaboration with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS).

The findings show that 33 percent of the total Palestinian population con-

tinue to be food insecure. Additionally, 13 percent are vulnerable to food insecurity, 21 percent are marginally secure and 33 percent are food secure. In absolute terms, 1.43 million people in the oPt are food insecure.

The prevalence of household food insecurity in the Gaza Strip remains very high at 52 percent with an additional 13 percent of the households vulnerable to food insecurity. In absolute terms, some 821,109 Gaza Strip people are food insecure.

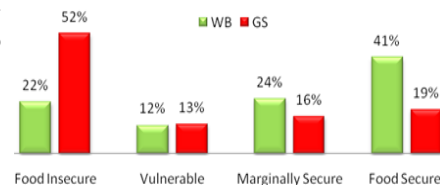
oPt Food Security Levels 2010



High food insecurity levels also persist in the West Bank with 22 percent of households who are food insecure and an additional 12 percent who are vulnerable to food insecurity. In absolute terms, some 613,142 West Bank people are food insecure. By contrast, almost half of the households in the West Bank are food secure compared to less than one fifth of the Gaza households.

While there has been a slight decrease in the level of food insecurity between 2009 and 2010, the West Bank regional breakdown shows that these improvements are unevenly spread, favouring Central West Bank, while food insecurity deteriorated in the North and South, as well as for refugee populations.

Food Security Levels 2010 in oPt by Region



The food insecurity level in the Gaza Strip remains high, and the decrease maybe somewhat artificial given the peak of food insecurity faced in 2009 in the aftermath of Cast Lead, and the subsequent massive international aid has protected access to food.

The final SEFSec report will be circulated in February 2011.

Other Assessments & Surveys

The results of the studies and assessments conducted in 2009 have been compiled into a **Comprehensive Food security and Vulnerability analysis**, which was published in December 2009.

A **Food Security Atlas**, prepared by WFP in collaboration with the Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem, was launched in February 2010.

A **study on the access restricted area** has been carried out in the Gaza Strip in partnership with OCHA in order to measure the impact of the Buffer Zone on the livelihoods of the populations living in and near the area, as well as quantify the damages and agricultural losses. The report was published in August 2010.

A **Mid-Term Review** for the voucher component of the Gaza EMOP was carried out in January and February 2011, providing guidance

for 2011 programme modalities. The report is expected in March 2011.

In February 2011, WFP will carry out an assessment on the **transfer of goods in the Gaza Strip**. The assessment will analyze the effect on food security and socio-economic conditions at household and market levels, following the Israeli announcement of the "easing of the blockade" on 20 June 2010.

All assessments and surveys are available on www.wfp.org

Funding Crisis

CONFIRMED CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2011

Cyprus US\$ 500,000

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Humanitarian needs in the occupied Palestinian territory remain high due to the long term impact of the imposed blockade and closure policy, compounded by the effects of the recent rise in global food prices. Families in Gaza remain completely reliant on international humanitarian assistance while the poorest populations of the West Bank are faced with stagnant economic growth, high unemployment, and are struggling to provide a balanced diet for their children.

The Palestinian Authority has widely recognized the importance of humanitarian assistance as a necessary approach to prevent further deterioration of living conditions and to provide the space necessary for political and developmental efforts to take hold. Humanitarian assistance in oPt helps to foster conditions for reduced dependency and sustainable and equitable growth.

In order to address these urgent needs, WFP oPt is implementing programmes that aim to meet nutritional needs, improve dietary diversification while at the same time supporting the local economy through the purchase of locally produced and processed food. WFP programmes focus on the poorest families by using an advanced targeting system called the “Proxy Means Test Formula” that was developed in partnership with the European Union and the World Bank. WFP is using this tool to reach beneficiaries through an electronic voucher programme, in-kind food distribution to destitute families, and school feeding activities. With generous donor support in 2009 and 2010, WFP oPt was able to meet these urgent humanitarian needs, but by 2011 this funding has been depleted. As of the first quarter of 2011 there will be severe shortfalls of **US\$ 27 million in the West Bank and US\$ 24.9 million in Gaza.**

If funds are not secured in the coming weeks, WFP will be forced to halt its most crucial operations starting from April 2011. In order to deal with the crisis, WFP oPt has already reduced food rations to destitute families, decreased the value of the food voucher and suspended the planned expansion of the voucher programme in the West Bank.

West Bank PRRO 200037

Targeted Food Assistance to Support Destitute and Marginalized Groups

The PRRO, approved by the Executive Board in November 2010, will run until December 2012 and has a budget of US\$ 108.6 million. Carry-overs from the previous PRRO are covering some of the needs for the first half of 2011, however, some activities remain completely underfunded and face the prospect of suspension in 2011.

The PRRO activities meet the food needs of the most vulnerable and food insecure non-refugee Palestinians in the West Bank through a combination of food and cash voucher assistance. The PRRO supports the Palestinian Authority’s *Social Safety Net* by using tools aimed at reducing hunger, strengthening government capacity and expanding domestic production through local purchase. Among the West Bank activities, the following are most concerning:

West Bank Activity	Current beneficiaries	Pipeline Break	Contributions Needed	2011 Shortfall
Assistance to the Destitute	126,000	July 2011	February 2011	US\$ 15.0 million
Assistance to Bedouins and Herders in Area C	35,000	July 2011	February 2011	
Food Voucher Project	45,000	April 2011	March 2011	US\$ 12 million
Most Urgent Shortfalls 2011				US\$ 27 million

Impact of the shortfall

Assistance to the Destitute — This programme aims at supporting 136,000 people who live below the deep poverty line and is a key pillar of the *Social Safety Net* that has been rolled-out by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Due to anticipated funding shortfalls, the food ration size for this group, the poorest families in the West Bank, has already been reduced by 25 percent for some foods. Further reductions are anticipated in the first quarter of 2011, devastating these families who all live below the extreme “deep” poverty line and are particularly vulnerable to food shocks such as the recent rise in food prices. In addition, the disruption of this activity will compromise progress made within the national *Social Safety Net* reform and harm the ability of the PA to eventually take over the programme.

Assistance to Bedouin Herders in Area C — In partnership with UNRWA, this is a vital programme that reaches 35,000 Bedouins and herders in Israeli-controlled Area C of the West Bank.

Since the launch of this activity in 2009, WFP/UNRWA have succeeded in reducing food insecurity from 80 to 55 percent in some communities. If funding for this programme is not secured, these gains will be lost.



West Bank Food Voucher Project — Currently, only 35,000 beneficiaries out of the 80,000 beneficiaries planned are benefiting from the voucher programme which allows them to get protein rich commodities at local shops, an important complement to their daily diet. An additional 10,000 destitute urban people receive a voucher for bread along with a food ration.

Due to the lack of funding, WFP could not implement the planned expansion and has maintained a caseload of 35,000. As a result, 45,000 people who should have benefited from this programme have now been left out. Those who remain in the activity have had their voucher value reduced by 20 percent. The rural voucher-for-work activity for 25,000 people has been postponed. Complete closure of the voucher activities, a real possibility as early as March 2011, would eradicate two years of success in reducing the level of “poor” protein consumption among poverty-stricken families and negate the positive effect that this programme has had on the local economy. It would also compromise efforts invested in the roll-out of the E-voucher modality, a system designed to facilitate transition and hand-over to the PA, the first of it’s kind in the Middle East.

Gaza Strip EMOP 10817.0 Operation “Lifeline Gaza”

The Gaza Operation was launched as an emergency response to the military conflict of January 2009 and is expected to run until December 2011. The EMOP provides 70-80 percent of the daily caloric needs of food insecure non-refugees in Gaza. The effects of several years of political, civil, and military conflict have been devastating on the Gazan population with food insecurity levels above 55 percent for non-refugees. Unemployment is among the highest anywhere in the world, at nearly 40 percent.

WFP oPt implements programmes that assist the most vulnerable households with traditional food distribution as well as innovative programmes like food vouchers. There is a strong focus on local purchase and promotion of local markets to stimulate economic activity. The funding shortfall for the Gaza EMOP remains a cause for serious concern. Pipeline breaks will begin in March 2011. Among the Gaza activities, the following are most concerning:

Gaza Strip Activity	Current beneficiaries	Pipeline Break	Contributions Needed	2011 Shortfall
Assistance to the Destitute	90,000	May 2011	February 2011	US\$ 16 million
Food Voucher Project	15,000	June 2011	May 2011	US\$ 1.9 million
School feeding	92,000	March 2011	February 2011	US\$ 7 million
Most Urgent Shortfalls 2011				US\$ 24.9 million

Impact of the shortfall

Assistance to the Destitute — As part of the social safety net reform, this activity distributes food rations once every two months to the most destitute non-refugee families. The ration covers 70-80 percent of the daily caloric needs of the beneficiaries.

These non-refugee families rely almost completely on emergency food assistance provided by WFP. A cut in the ration would significantly affect the food security of these families, many of whom have been affected by military conflict, long-term unemployment, or lack of access to lands and fishing areas. Disruption of this activity will compromise the national social safety net reform and the harmonization efforts in the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

Food Voucher Project — 15,000 beneficiaries receive a monthly food voucher which they redeem for protein rich commodities at local shops.

If funding is not secured for the second half of the year, WFP will again have to reduce voucher rations for 15,000 beneficiaries. Closure of this activity remains a possibility in 2011 and will compromise efforts to introduce new modalities of assistance in Gaza. This is particularly worrying when the logistical costs and challenges of delivering large quantities of food into Gaza are consid-

Critical Points

1. WFP oPt operations are facing critical pipeline shortfalls and funds must be secured by February 2011;
2. In order to continue our West Bank voucher activity beyond March 2011, WFP oPt requires US\$12 million. To maintain assistance to destitute families and Bedouins in the West Bank we would need a minimum of US\$ 15 million.
3. In Gaza, the Assistance to the destitute programme urgently requires US\$ 16 million with an additional US\$ 1.9 million for the voucher programme. **The imminent projected shortfall in oPt for 2011 is US\$ 51.9 million with West Bank programmes particularly exposed to risk;**
4. Suspension of programmes will have severe impacts on highly vulnerable non-refugee families. These families will resort to negative coping mechanisms and fall into deeper destitution. Additionally, continued assistance to the refugee section of the population by other organizations could stimulate tensions in areas where refugees and non-refugees are living together.