



Palestine FOOD SECURITY SECTOR

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The Food Security Sector (FSS), established in 2012, has been a central part of the humanitarian response in the occupied Palestinian territory over the past years.

Main objective is to address critical needs arising from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, economic instability, and environmental challenges.

Key issues include:

- **Restrictions** impacting food security due to the conflict and occupation.
- **Economic instability** and high unemployment reducing food access.
- **Heavy reliance on food imports**, complicated by movement restrictions.
- **Blockades in Gaza** affecting essential goods' availability and production.
- **Vulnerable populations** facing heightened food insecurity risks.
- **Environmental factors** diminishing agricultural productivity.

Over **100 partner organizations** country-wide are active members in the FSS, including NGOs (international and national), United Nations (UN) agencies and donors.

Food Security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary and food preferences for an active healthy life

VISION

Crisis-affected populations access a sufficient, healthy and appropriate amount of food, directly or by their own means, in a safe, dignified and sustainable manner while affected by crisis.

MISSION

Ensure improved coordination of preparedness, response and recovery actions.

- Palestine is located in the Middle East, on the east coast of Mediterranean Sea,
- Total population is 5.4 M (PCBS, 2024) - 2.2M in Gaza and 3.2M in West Bank
- The State of Palestine claims the **West Bank** (bordering Israel and Jordan) and **Gaza Strip** (bordering Israel and Egypt) with East Jerusalem as the designated capital
- More than 57years of occupation by Israel has left many Palestinians highly vulnerable.



Geopolitical Landscape:

- Palestine faces multifaceted challenges in food security influenced by geopolitical, economic, and social factors.
- Historical conflicts, territorial disputes, and political instability significantly affect food access and stability.

Israeli Occupation's Impact:

- Control over vital resources like water and land exacerbates food insecurity.
- Restrictions of movements, and on access hinder agricultural productivity and economic stability.

Economic Struggles:

- Policies restricting border access, goods flow affect availability and affordability of food items.
- High unemployment rates and limited economic opportunities contribute to food insecurity.

Impact on Agriculture:

- Constraints on land and water hinder local food production.
- Insecurity, bureaucratic impediments, Settlement expansion disrupts agricultural practices and livelihoods.

Humanitarian Crises:

- Ongoing conflicts and displacement intensify food security issues.
- Violence and insecurity disrupt daily life and economic activities.

Health and Nutritional Challenges:

- Data on number of Food Insecure population in WB & EJ?
- Poor water quality, sanitation, and hygiene affect food utilization.
- Decline in dietary quality exacerbates food insecurity.

Urgent Food Security drivers and Concerns:

1. The escalation of Israeli operations in the West Bank raises significant food security concerns.
2. Disruptions in food supply chains, restricted access to resources, and displacement risks contribute to heightened food insecurity.

Impact of Displacement and Access Restrictions:

1. Since October 7, at least 121 Palestinian families comprising 1,149 people, including 452 children, have been displaced due to settler violence and access restrictions.
2. Challenges in delivering essential public services, such as agriculture extension services, worsen the situation for farmers.
3. Access to market, value chain, and agriculture production

Food Security Sector partners in the have initiated the expansion of their food aid efforts through different modalities, aiming to aid communities impacted by repeated incidents and settler violence by providing also fodder for their livestock. However, given the significant shortfall in the funding availability, the support of the activities presents considerable challenges.

Economic Turmoil, seasonal labor and Job Losses:

1. Over 150,000 workers from the West Bank, previously employed in Israel and settlements before the October 7 crisis, lost their jobs, resulting in an overall job loss of 208,000, or 24% of the West Bank's total employment.
2. Job losses affect purchasing power and access to a diverse diet, impacting food availability and prices.

Effects on Olive Harvest and Agriculture:

1. More than 95,000 dunums of olive groves remain unharvested due to restricted access.
2. Farmers have suffered an average loss of more than 1,200 metric tons of olive oil this year, resulting in a direct financial setback of 10 million USD.



Blockade and isolation: Since 2007, imposed by Israel, following the takeover by Hamas. This has led to:

- Severe isolation;
- Severe impact on socio-economic conditions.



Economic deterioration and unemployment: The blockade, along with frequent escalations and restrictions on movement, severely damaged Gaza's economy. This has led to one of the highest unemployment rates globally (45%), forcing many people into poverty (57%) and increasing reliance on humanitarian assistance.



Humanitarian crisis and food insecurity: Gaza was experiencing a prolonged humanitarian crisis characterised by:

- **Food insecurity** among its population (more than 50% need food assistance).
- **Restrictions** on fishing areas and agricultural lands worsen the situation, leading to livelihood challenges and greater dependence on outside humanitarian aid.

Restriction on imports: the blockade significantly restricted the type of items to be imported (**DUAL USE**), including essential food supplies and agricultural inputs, such as seeds and fertilisers.

Agricultural. Livestock and fishing sectors challenges: Movement restrictions and limited access to agricultural and fishing zones **have harmed local food production, leading to reduced yields and catches**, directly affecting food availability and livelihoods. Environmental issues like water scarcity and soil degradation worsen these challenges.

Self-Sufficiency: Despite the numerous challenges, farmers in Gaza have shown resilience and adaptability in managing their livestock, crop, and fishing production under difficult conditions. However, the sustainability of these efforts remains severely constrained by external restrictions and the overall economic situation in Gaza.

Immediate effects of the war:

- **Intensification of the Blockade:** the blockade around Gaza was significantly intensified, further restricting the movement of goods and people in and out of the territory.
- **Closure of Crossings:** Key crossings for goods and people between Gaza and Israel, as well as the Rafah crossing with Egypt, were shut down, severely limiting access to essential supplies and humanitarian aid.
- **Impact on Humanitarian Aid:** The closure of crossings and heightened restrictions led to an immediate cut in the delivery of humanitarian aid and the passage of commercial trucks.
- **Impact of items availability:** The intensified blockade resulted in severe shortages of necessities, including **food, medical supplies, fuel, and water**, putting the civilian population at increased risk.
- **Impact on agriculture:** Water scarcity and electricity shortages have also deeply affected agriculture, a critical source of food and income for many Gazans. Irrigation systems were not able to operate efficiently, affecting crop yields.

Immediate effect on food security

- **Food Availability (internal):**
 - Disruption of agricultural activities and damaged infrastructures.
 - Displaces farmers, leaving no room for food production.
 - Shops reporting depletion of food. The disruption of transportation routes makes the replenishing of shops difficult. Warehouses were mainly in Gaza City
- **Food Accessibility:**
 - Local market disruption made it difficult for people to access and purchase limited food. The risk associated with any movement inside Gaza is compounded by the very low availability, causing food prices to increase and making it unaffordable for many families.
- **Food Utilization:**
 - Very limited access to clean water, sanitation facilities, and healthcare services,
 - Limited or no access to fuel/electricity, impacting the ability to cook and food preservation..

Food Security Sector partners have increased their efforts to address the essential food requirements of "2.2 million individuals daily" while also endeavoring to sustain the functionality of the food value chain and ensure the uninterrupted production of food within Gaza. However, their success in this endeavor has been severely hindered by the blockade, resulting in limited to no progress.



THANK YOU

