

FOOD SECURITY BULLETIN

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EDITORIAL

The first food security assessment in the occupied Palestinian territory took place in the year 2003. The assessment concluded that more than one third of the Palestinian population suffers from food insecurity, in addition, more than one tenth of the population are vulnerable to food insecurity. Since that date, international organizations such as the FAO, the WFP, and UNRWA have been monitoring, on a periodic basis, the food security situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Moreover, during last year the FAO and the WFP, in cooperation with the PCBS, conducted an annual survey entitled 'Food Security and Social and Economic situations for Palestinian Families'. The results for this year are expected to be released at the end of August. It should be mentioned that during the last seven years (since conducting the first assessment for food security in the Occupied Palestinian Territory), no noticeable improvement has occurred in levels of food insecurity among Palestinian families, it is more probable that levels of food insecurity have worsened, especially in the Gaza Strip.

This may be the issue that urged the Union of Agricultural Work Committees, in early July of this year, to conduct a workshop entitled "Let Us Work Together for Palestinian Sovereignty over Our Food Resources", in its efforts to establish sovereignty over the food resources and the natural resources; stressing that this is a right that should not be neglected.

The concept of 'Food Sovereignty' was developed by members of "Via Campesina", the international peasants' movement, in 1996 on the occasion of the World Food Summit. Namely, they claimed the "right" of peoples to define their own food, agriculture, livestock and fisheries systems, in contrast to having food largely subject to international market forces.

The participants in the workshop were keen to stress that the food security and food sovereignty are two different concepts; while the first is limited to the need to obtain enough food, there is also an increasing need to adopt and embrace the concept of food sovereignty in a way that allows the Palestinian population to obtain sovereignty over their own natural resources. Palestinian farmers have the right to decide what and when to plant, and the right to protect their land, the right to freely access their land in a safe and secure way and the right to use their own water resources as they see fit. These rights are guaranteed by international law, but the realisation of these rights still continues to be limited by numerous obstacles, with the occupation being the biggest of these.

The participants all agreed on the importance of the fact that a lack of food sovereignty is one of the truest expressions of Palestinian suffering. At the end of the workshop it was agreed that there was a need to establish a specialized committee consisting of non-governmental and governmental institutions to continue the discussion of the subject in order to pursue the goal of food sovereignty as a reality and achieve food security in the occupied Palestinian territory.

Definitions

Food Security:

The World Food Summit (1996) defines food security as a general state “When all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs for a productive and healthy life”. Four elements coexist in this definition:

- Food availability – whether produced locally or imported.
- Food accessibility – where all individuals have access to adequate resources to meet appropriate dietary needs.
- Food stability – where access to adequate food is permanently secured, with no risk of shocks.
- Food utilisation – the consumption of food with adequate sanitation, clean water and where health care is provided.

Food Security in the Palestinian Territories:

The World Food Programme (WFP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) divide Palestinians families into four categories with respect to food security (2009):

- Food secure: Households with income and consumption above USD5.6/adult equivalent/day.
- Marginally secure: Households with either income or consumption (not both) above USD5.6/ adult equivalent /day.
- Vulnerable to food insecurity: Households with both income and consumption below USD5.6/ adult equivalent /day.
- Food insecure: Households with income and consumption below USD4.7/ adult equivalent /day.

Note: Food security or poverty are measured based on household consumption or income. Usually, household consumption is higher than household income due to the foreign assistance provided to needy families and the coping mechanisms adopted, (such as self-production of food).

Poverty in the Palestinian Territories:

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) defines poverty using the budget of a standard household, (six members: two adults and four children). There are two poverty lines:

Deep poverty line: A standard household with a monthly budget below NIS1,886 (2007) covering: food, clothing and housing costs.

Relative poverty line: A standard household with a monthly budget below NIS2,362 (2007) covering: food, clothing, housing, health care, education, transportation and housekeeping supplies.

Consumer Price Index (CPI):

CPI is mostly used as a tool for measuring inflation and increases in the cost of living. It is calculated by taking price changes for the items in a predetermined basket of goods and averaging them. There are 568 items, (goods and services) used in calculating Palestinian CPI and the goods are weighted according to their importance. Food weighs around 40% of the total CPI, transport and communication around 12.7% and textiles around 10%.

Level of Living:

This is defined as a household’s food consumption relative to their total consumption. The PCBS has divided Level of Living into three categories:

- Higher Standard of Living: food consumption to total consumption is less than 30%.
- Middle Standard of Living: food consumption to total consumption is between 30-44%.
- Lower Standard of Living: food consumption to total consumption is between 45-100%.

Global Hunger Index (GHI):

The GHI measures hunger and malnutrition with three equally weighted indicators: proportion of undernourished as a percentage of the population; prevalence of underweight children under the age of five; and mortality rate of children under five years. The index ranks countries on a 100 point scale. Less than 4.9 reflects ‘low hunger’, 5-9.9 is ‘moderate’, 10–19.9 is ‘serious’, 20–29.9 is ‘alarming’ and 30% is ‘extremely alarming’. (International Food Policy Research Institute- IFPRI 2008).

FAO Food Price Index (FFPI):

The FFPI represents international prices of food commodities. It is calculated by taking the average of six commodity group price indices (meat, dairy, cereals, oils, fats and sugar). The indices are weighted with their average export shares.

Millennium Development Goals:

In the year 2000, the UN, G8 and other international organizations adopted a set of eight development goals, (18 targets) to be achieved by 2015. Goal 1 has three targets: to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 per-day, to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people, and to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people suffering from hunger.

Israeli Closure and Obstacles:

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OCHA) defines Israeli Closure and Obstacles as a policy of physical barriers, permit requirements and other administrative restrictions used to control Palestinian pedestrian and vehicular movement, including, checkpoints, partial checkpoints, earth mounds, road blocks, road gates, etc.

Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP):

Every year a number of aid organizations, including UN institutions and NGOs, jointly plan, coordinate, implement and monitor their response to emergencies and appeal for funds together rather than competitively. This process is called the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP). The total financial requirements of the CAP in the occupied Palestinian territory for the year 2010 amounted more than 664 million dollars to implement 236 humanitarian and rehabilitation projects; 147 projects will be implemented through UN agencies and 89 projects will be implemented through international and local NGOs.



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Development in Food Security in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

In the middle of March of this year, a focus group was convened by the World Food Program (WFP), The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), to discuss the second round of the “Food Security and Economic and Social Conditions for Palestinian Families” Survey, that was taken during the first months of 2009. This focus group included representatives from institutions operating in the field of food security, including MAS. During the discussion of the second round of the survey several issues were raised, including the importance of the distinction between household expenditure and food consumption; an issue that was not raised during the first round of the survey. A discussion also took place regarding the reorganization of the section concerned with aid type (i.e. food aid, cash aid etc) and aid source (i.e. international, domestic, governmental, non-governmental etc). The primary results of the second round of the survey are expected to be released in late August 2010.

It is unlikely that the results of the second round of the survey will differ significantly from those of the first, especially considering the restrictions imposed on the occupied Palestinian Territory. In addition to the Israeli siege, which continues to be imposed upon the Gaza Strip, Israel continues its efforts to prevent the delivery of aid directly to Gaza by sea. In late May of this year, for example, the Israeli Military attacked the freedom flotilla that was in international waters but en route to Gaza. The situation in the West Bank also remains problematic. The following sections will discuss the differences in the food security situation in Area C, which comprises 60% of the West Bank, as compared to areas A and B.

Food Security in Area C in the West Bank

In February 2010, UNRWA, UNICEF, and the WFP surveyed the socio-economic, nutritional and food security situation for herding and Bedouin communities living within Area C. Area C was selected due to the restrictions and obstacles imposed by the Israeli Military on the movement of people and goods. These restrictions have resulted in only limited access to graz-

ing land, water resources and, as a consequence, food sources.

The results of the survey, that sampled 5200 herding households, indicate severe levels of food insecurity and malnutrition. 79% of the surveyed households suffer from food insecurity. In contrast, in the West Bank in general, no more than 25% suffer from food insecurity (see Figure 1).

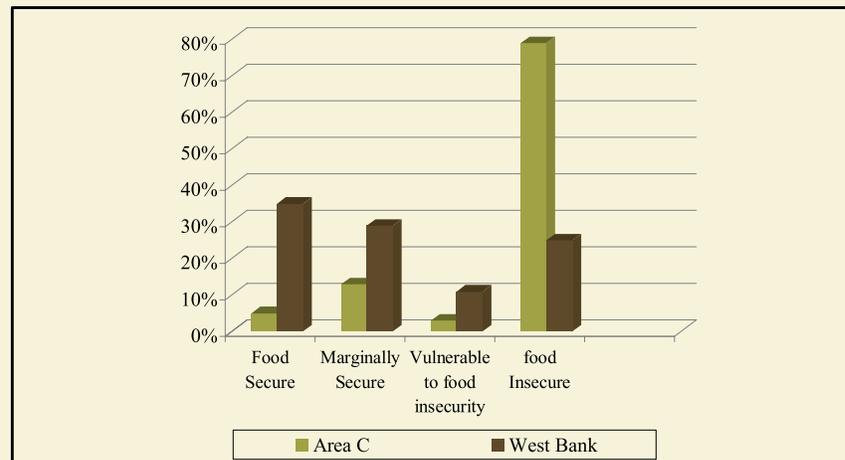
Malnutrition indicators should be a considerable source of worry, especially for children less than 5 years of age, for the percentage of those effected by wasting, underweight and stunting were 5.9%, 15.3% and 28.5% respectively. Approximately 46% of children suffer from diseases caused by malnutrition. Table 1 clarifies the degree of suffering experienced by these families compared to that experienced by the average Palestinian.

The majority of the families that were surveyed suffered from problems regarding the availability of energy sources and electricity supply. The rate of families that don't

have a power supply is 41%. These families suffer from am shortage of clean water and safe housing. The average monthly income for these families is NIS 1,024 which is very low compared with the average monthly income of the West Bank, which amounts to NIS 2554.

There is an urgent need to try to address existing levels of food insecurity and malnutrition in these areas, and work to provide key services like water, food and healthcare. However, it is important to reaffirm what the Palestinian Minister of Agriculture emphasized during the World Summit on Food Security in 2009, regarding the importance of forming a committee to investigate the facts of the Food Security situation in the occupied Palestinian Territory, and the obstacles that Palestinians face in alleviating food insecurity. It is also critical to break the siege of Gaza, allow food products to enter, and stop the looting of Palestinian agricultural land for the construction of Israeli settlements.

Figure 1: Food security levels among households in Area C



Source: UNRWA, UNICEF and WFP, (February 2010).

Table1: Health Indicators in Areas classified as Area (C) in the West Bank Compared with the oPt in General (%)

Health Indicator	Area (C), 2009	Average oPt, 2006
Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM)	5.9	1.4
Under Weight	15.3	2.9
Stunting Prevalence	28.5	10.2

Source: UNRWA, UNICEF and WFP, (February 2010).

Food Prices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

The Food Price Index in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) witnessed fluctuations during the first half of 2010. Figure 2 traces the development in the index and shows the variations between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which reached more than 6 points during January 2010 (142 points in the West Bank compared to 148 points in Gaza). It should be noted that the disparity in food prices between the two regions was higher during the year 2009 when the difference reached more than 12 points (see bulletin issue No.3).

Figure 2 shows that the gap in the food price index between the West Bank and Gaza was at its peak in the month of January of the year 2010. While during March and April, the gap started to decrease, then stated to increase again and continued to during the last two months of the first half of 2010. It is worth mentioning that this rise and decline in the Food Price Index in the oPt is only a mirror of the Food Price Index for the international markets. Considering that most of the basic food commodities in the Palestinian market are imported goods, the rise and fall of food prices in global markets is reflected directly in the Palestinian market (for more details about food prices in the global markets see page 7).

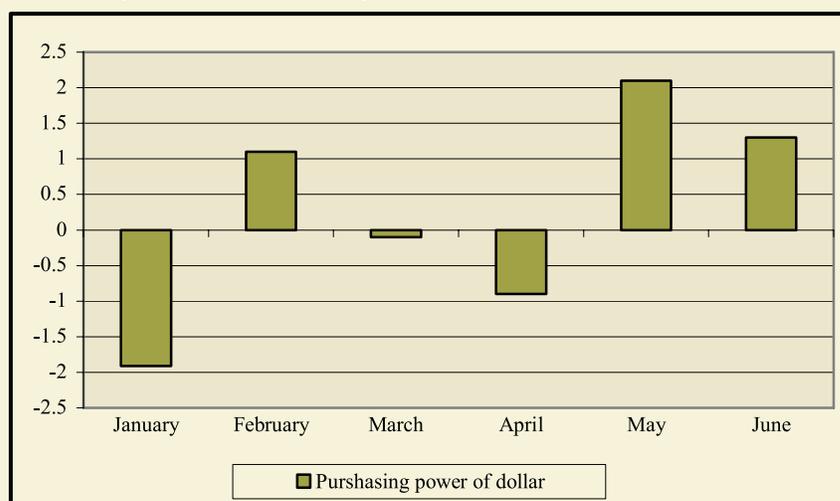
Table 2 traces developments in the prices of basic food commodities in the occupied Palestinian territory during the first half of 2010. Rice reached a record low during June at over 145 NIS compared with 174 NIS during June of the same year (a decrease of about 17%). The prices of meat and olive oil, which are local commodities

Table (2): Average consumer prices of selected food items in the Palestinian Territory (prices in NIS)

	Unit (kg)	January	February	March	April	May	June
Rice "sunwhite"	25	174	175.5	162.5	158	157.5	145
White flour	60	173	171	171	172.5	172	164
White bread -local	1	4	4	4	4	3.9	3.8
Tnova Milk 3% fat	1	6.9	6.8	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.7
Fresh beef meant	1	47.8	47.5	48	47.8	47.8	48.4
Olive oil	1	36.1	36.1	36.1	35.8	35.6	36.2
Sugar -England	50	160.9	164.8	168.9	156.6	152.5	150.8

Source: PCBS, 2010

Figure (3): Purchasing Power of Dollar in the oPt (%)



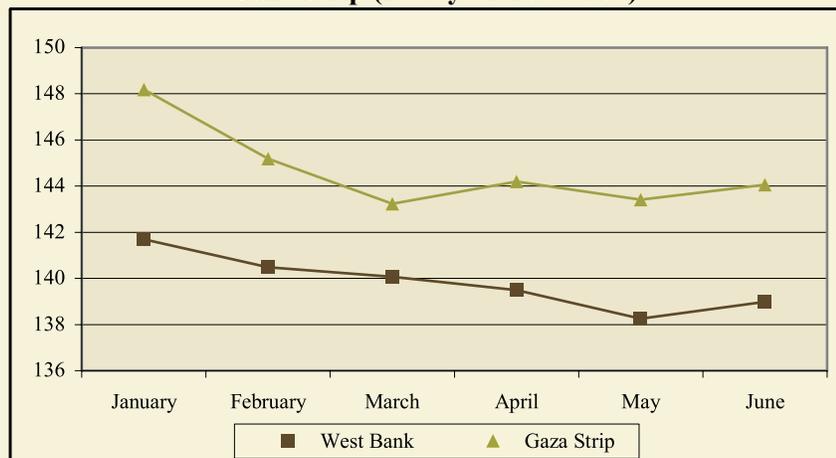
Source: Palestine Monetary Authority, unpublished data, 2010

and might not be affected by global food prices, showed a degree of stability during the first six months of 2010.

Purchasing Power

The rise and decline of food prices in the Palestinian territories affects the purchasing power of the Palestinian consumer. Since purchasing power is inversely proportional to the consumer price index (which increased during the first six months of 2010 by 4% compared to 2009 levels), this rise in prices has therefore weakened the purchasing power of the Palestinian citizen. The other key factor affecting purchasing power is the exchange rate of the shekel against the dollar for people who receive their salaries in dollars. Dollar exchange has witnessed huge fluctuations during the first half of 2010 (see figure 3). This fluctuation in dollar exchange and the increase in the consumer price index has increased the uncertainty regarding purchasing power for those who receive their salaries in dollars.

Figure (2): Food Price Index in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Base year 2004=100)



Source: PCBS, 2010

Food Aid Activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

UNRWA and the World Food Program (WFP) are crucial to the provision of food aid within the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). By mid 2010, UNRWA was providing food aid to more than 1.1 million refugees in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (see scheme). The WFP provides food aid to 811 thousand beneficiaries in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This means that around 47% of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza were receiving food aid from these two organizations by mid 2010. In addition to UNRWA and the WFP there are a number of local and international NGOs that provide food aid to non-refugee families, particularly in times of emergency. In this issue we will focus on Islamic Relief Palestine and its Family Sponsorship Project in the West Bank. The project targets 500 families, amounting to a total of 3000 individuals, who are not eligible for assistance from UNRWA, the WFP or any other organization.

Islamic Relief in the West Bank

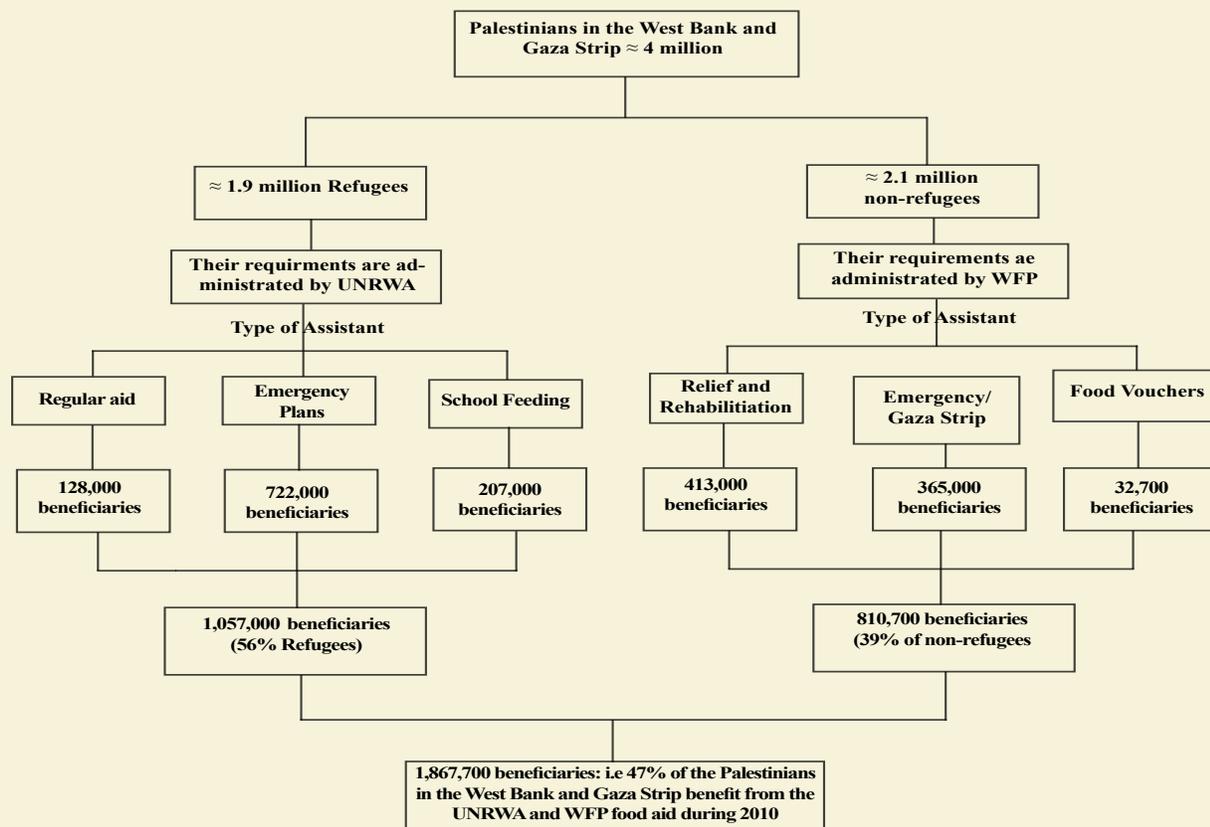
Islamic Relief has operated in the oPt since 1998. It implements its projects through three overarching programs: the relief and emergency program, the development program, and the childcare program. Since June 2010 Islamic relief has run a family sponsorship project for vulnerable and marginalized families. This project provides each family with food parcels for one year, thus the program will culminate in the middle of 2011. The mechanisms of distribution employed by the project are detailed below.

This project aims to target the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in the West Bank, especially families that live in area C. It also directly targets 500 families in the northern and the southern areas of the West Bank (almost 3000 thousand), these families will be selected in accord-

ance with a set of criteria specified by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The project aims to support target families to escape from poverty by, firstly, providing target families with their immediate nutritional needs (rice, oil, sugar, beans, pasta, tomato paste, salt) to the equivalent of \$50 each month; amounting to \$600 per family over the course of the project and, secondly, provide the targeted families with tools for home food production in order to grow home gardens. In total, each family will receive a total of \$900 during the lifetime of the project. Islamic Relief estimates that each 500 m² home garden will produce approximately 893Kg of vegetables each season.

As is common in most food assistance programs, the total capital directed to the beneficiaries is no more than 50% of the total cost (600\$*500 beneficiaries + 900\$ * 500 beneficiaries - the total cost will exceed \$1.4 million).

Food Aid by type, Organizations and the no. of Beneficiaries in the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the first half of 2010



≈ means approximate value

Source: Population census from PCBS, Press release July 2010 http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/PeopleDay_2010E.pdf. Refugees statistics from UNRWA <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/20100628261.pdf>. The data of WFP aid beneficiaries was collected out of the WFP "Food Vouchers" program documents, and the emergency aid project to Gaza strip and the Relief and Rehabilitation project. The data of UNRWA aid beneficiaries was provided by UNRWA to MAS.

The Sectoral National Strategies and Aspirations for Achieving Food Security in the occupied Palestinian Territory (2011-2013)

In 2007 the Palestinian National Authority began a new phase in the planning process. This included the application of a medium-term expenditure framework. This decision was part of the broader process that resulted in the 2008-2010 Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (PRDP), which received general acceptance from both international and national parties and formed a basis of all the major development projects of the Palestinian Authority. The plan includes general trends for the four sectors it discussed (the social sector, economic sector, infrastructure and governance sectors). Recently, the National plan being prepared for the years 2011-2013 not only breaks down the national strategy by into 4 sectoral areas, but also, breaks these down further into 23 sub-sectors. It should be mentioned that two of the most important sectoral strategies discussed achieving food security in the Palestinian territory. These are: the strategy of social protection and the strategy of the agricultural sector. We will present the objectives and general policies that were adopted by the government towards achieving food security through these two strategies.

The Social Protection Strategy

The social protection sector strategy addressed social protection cases in the occupied Palestinian territory. In its broader context, this includes services provided to the poor, marginalized and vulnerable, and it extends services to include social security. This strategy stems from the social protection principle that is based on the internationally recognised right to social protection and on the program of the thirteenth government entitled "Ending the Occupation and Establishing the State" that aims to improve standards of living and individual welfare. The strategy includes six main objectives and will work towards achieving them in the medium and long term. These objectives are:

1. The reduction of poverty: This includes protecting families from food insecurity, inducing economic empowerment and guaranteeing that the marginalized and the poor receive essential services for free. As for political interventions that are designed to achieve this objective, they include:

- Granting food and financial assistance to poor families
- Cooperating with the private sector to encourage socially responsible investment in regards to the target categories
- Providing financial grants to the poorest families in order to implement income generating projects.
- Providing financial loans to the poorest families to execute income generating projects.
- Studying the possibility of empowering poor families through the development of a bank providing financial services, specifically tailored to the needs of the poor.
- Providing free health insurance to the poor.
- Providing free education to the poor.
- Improving the residential situation of the poor families.

2. Providing a legal environment that ensures access to justice in order to guarantee a national social protection programme that is capable of guarding the dignity of the Palestinian people. This objective is connected to the issue of food security through political interventions based on reviewing the existing laws and approving them; such as reviewing and approving the law of 'zakat', adjusting and approving the draft of the charities act, the enactment of new laws such as the social security law and the tax for social protection.
3. Protecting and empowering the weak and the marginalized: which include the following four categories; elderly people, people with disabilities, children and families. The political interventions designed to protect these categories include the provision of means of turning needy families into self-supporting families, and the provision of care to those with special needs.
4. Promoting cooperation between the parties involved in designing, implementing and monitoring the policies and programmes of social protection, through the promotion of partnerships between the public, private and non-governmental sectors for the design, implementation and monitoring of the policies and programmes of social protection, under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs, and enforc-

- ing the role of the ministry in regards to the coordination and supervision of relevant parties.
5. Developing the institutional environment of the social security sector: through the building of institutional capacity within the Ministry of Social Affairs, as a leader for and coordinator of this sector in order to successfully accomplish its missions, and the building of institutional capacity within charities and the 'zakat' committees in addition to other relevant partners in the social security sector.
 6. A complete system of social guarantees: through the consolidation of the retirement system and the expansion of the number of participants in the health insurance scheme.

The Agricultural Sector Strategy

The future vision of the agricultural sector is, in short, the development of 'sustained feasible agriculture capable of achieving food security and competing locally and internationally through the optimal use of resources as part of comprehensive development that secures the sovereignty of the Palestinian people over their land and resources, with the eventual aim of establishing a Palestinian state'. In light of this vision, the agricultural sector strategy seeks to achieve a number of key objectives; most important of which are:

1. Promoting the steadfastness and adherence of farmers to the land.
2. Management of natural resources in a way that is both sustainable and efficient.
3. Providing an institutional framework for the agricultural sector and rehabilitation of human resources.
4. Improving the productivity of the agricultural sector in terms of both crops and livestock with the overall aim of achieving food security.
5. Improving agricultural productivity in order to compete in both local and international markets.

Finding operational policies for achieving the objectives of the social security strategy and the agricultural sector strategy, would necessarily lead to improving the level of food security in the occupied Palestinian territory.

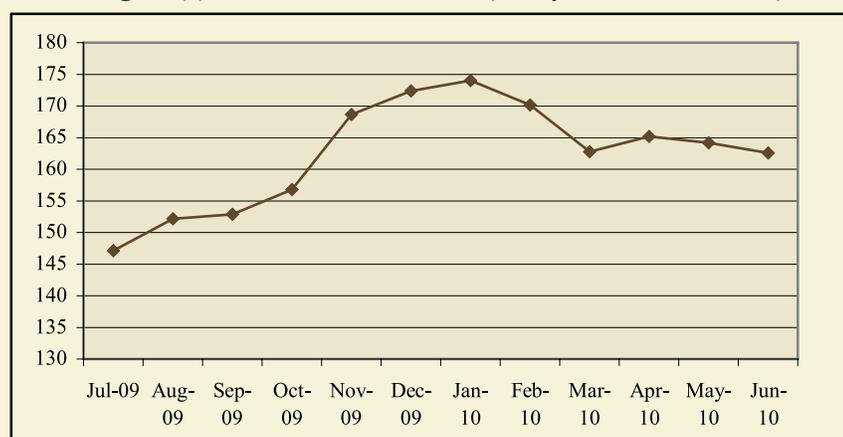
World Food Security

Food prices in global markets witnessed an increase during the first half of 2010 in comparison with the second half of 2009. The FAO Food Price Index rose with an average of 162.6 during June 2010 in comparison with 147.1 points during July 2009. It is obvious that the index reached its peak at the beginning of 2010 then continued declining until the beginning of April. It then witnessed a slight increase followed by another decline that continued until the end of June (see figure 4). Probably one of the main reasons for these fluctuations in the prices of food in the global markets is commercial speculation; which involves the withdrawal of crops from international markets due to expectations of future price increases.

Table 3 tracks the changes in the index of the prices of the five basic food categories that represent the index of the food prices in international markets. Studying the table leads us to several conclusions, most importantly:

- * The price index for each of the oil, meat and dairy products categories during the first six months of 2010 was higher than the averages of 2009. The oil price index reached its highest level during the first half of 2010. In March it reached 175 points then declined again.
- * The cereals category index witnessed a continuous decline during the first six months of the year 2010. Where the index reached 152 point during June 2010 in comparison with 174 points during the year 2009 (with a 13% decline).
- * Prices for the sugar category witnessed an increase during the year 2009, continuing until the beginnings of 2010. However, it declined again from March 2010 onwards. The sugar price index reached 224 points during June 2010 in comparison with 376 points during January of the same year.

Figure (4): FAO Food Price Index (base year 2002-2004=100)



Source: FAO organization

Table (3): Main Food Commodities Price Index (base year 2002-2004=100)

	Sugars	Oils	Cereals	Dairy	Meat
2009	257	150	174	142	118
January 2010	376	169	170	202	124
February 2010	361	169	164	191	125
March 2010	265	175	158	187	129
April 2010	233	174	159	204	137
May 2010	216	170	155	209	136
June 2010	224	168	152	203	136

Source: www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation.

Table (4): World Cereal Market (million tons)

	2009/10 estimate	2010/11 forecast	Change between the two seasons (%)
Supply Indicators			
World production	2253.1	2279.5	1.2
Developing countries	1229	1262.5	2.7
Developed countries	1024.1	1017	-0.7
- Wheat	682.4	676.5	-0.8
- Coarse grain	1115.2	1130.9	1.4
- Rice	455.5	472.0	3.6
Demand Indicators			
Total utilization	2223.4	2268.1	2
Developing countries	1360.6	1387.4	2
Developed countries	862.8	880.7	2
- Wheat	662.8	675	1.8
- Coarse grain	116.1	1139.2	2
- Rice	444.5	453.9	2

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization, Food outlook, June 2010.

World Cereal Production

The latest estimations of the FAO (June, 2010) assume that there will be a slight increase in world cereal production during

this season. The production of cereals is expected to increase from 2,253m tons during the season of 2009/2010 to 2,279m tons during the season of 2010/2011 (an increase of 1.2%), as table (4) indicates.

It is noticed that the increase in the world production of cereals will be in developing countries, where cereals production is expected to increase by 2.7%. In addition it is expected that cereals production will decline in developed countries by 0.7% during 2010/2011 in comparison with the previous season.

As for demand, it is expected that global cereals consumption will increase at an average rate of 2% in 2010/2011, where the quantity of cereals internationally consumed will increase to 2,268m tons in comparison to 222,3m tons in 2009/2010.

Literature on Food Security

Challenging Choices: Protection and Livelihoods in Conflict

Case studies from Darfur, Chechnya, Sri Lanka and the Occupied Palestinian Territories

By: Susanne Jaspars and Sorcha O'Callaghan

Humanitarian Policy Group Report 31, May 2010. Issued by Overseas Development Institute (ODI). London, United Kingdom.

The aim of the study is to examine whether there exists a complementary relationship, and if so, the extent of this relationship, between the two primary strategies employed by humanitarian organisations when intervening in conflict zones, livelihood-based approaches and the provision of security through protection. A key stimulus of the work is the fact that these two approaches are, in general, implemented in parallel or entirely separately even though evidence suggests that the two are linked and thus should be treated as interconnected issues. In addition, the study examines which policy initiatives can be employed to harmonize the two approaches in a way that reduces the risks that conflict-affected populations face.

The study begins with a literature review and a selection of interviews with representatives from humanitarian organisations in order to access existing stores of knowledge regarding the connections between protection and livelihood-based approaches, threats, community responses and efforts by practitioners to harmonize the two strategies. The research also includes a number of country case studies, specifically, the examples of Darfur, Sri Lanka, Chechnya and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

This review will focus on the lessons that were drawn from the example of the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The research that was conducted in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip examined various at-risk groups that have faced hardship or loss of income sources due to the ongoing Israeli occupation, with a focus on the denial of access to land and property. The groups studied included farmers affected by the Separation Barrier, Palestinian communi-

ties in Hebron that have been affected by violence from the settler community that have illegally occupied the old city, refugee camps that have been affected by incursions by the Israeli Defence Force and Bedouins affected by the restrictions imposed on their movement, settler violence, and drought.

The study discusses the nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict throughout its 60 year history, and its effects on the security and livelihoods of Palestinians. Some of the examples presented in the study were; incidence of settler violence against Palestinians that resulted in death and injury, as well as damage to individual livelihoods, property and other assets, destruction of crops, constraints on access to agricultural land and displacement. The longstanding and multi-faceted bureaucracy of restrictions and control over movement and access to land and property fundamentally affects livelihoods. Moreover, the blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip following the takeover of Hamas in 2006 has devastated the economy by disrupting markets, distorting prices, and degrading the infrastructure and public services. Movement outside of Gaza has been almost impossible since 2007; fishing is limited to an area that extends no more than 3 miles off the coast, and farmers attempting to reach their land risk being shot at by Israeli soldiers. In the West Bank, the Barrier has resulted in the loss of 10% of West Bank territory with fewer than 1 in 5 farmers obtaining the necessary permits from Israel to reach their land holdings - obtaining the permits is a difficult, costly, unpredictable and extremely time-consuming process. Add to that the restrictions on the movement of goods and the increased transport costs that are incurred due to the Israeli closure policy, which undermines the competitiveness of Palestinian products in international markets.

The research shows that, for people affected by conflict, livelihoods and security are intimately connected. The threats to people's livelihoods and their security from the negative affects of the occupation are linked, as is people's vulnerability to these threats and their capacity to respond. This means that the humanitarian community must make greater efforts to link policies of protection to the livelihoods of those they are trying to protect. The analysis shows that most humanitarian agency representatives interviewed agreed that the two 'issues' were linked, and that steps needed to be taken

urgently to address this. The failure to link the two in practice was generally considered to be a result of the mandates of particular agencies, which tended to lean more towards either provision of protection or a focus on livelihoods, as well as institutional capacity and funding constraints. Although the threats faced by civilians are direct violations of international law, they also represent a failure of the international community and protagonists in the conflict. This can make the international community appear complicit in those abuses and injustices. In the absence of such advocacy, the provision of assistance risks becoming a replacement for effective intervention. In the Occupied Palestinian Territories, for instance, the readiness of international donors to address the humanitarian consequences of conflict and occupation undermines Israel's accountability for its actions, and implicates donor governments in the policies of the occupation and the cycle of destruction and reconstruction in the territories.

The study highlights the need for a radical rethink on the part of the international community in regards to how it responds to the risks facing by conflict-affected populations.

MAS Food Security Unit Publication

- Agricultural Insurance in Palestine: Current Conditions and Recommendations for Future Policy.
- Food Security and Viral Diseases (in Fruit Trees).
- Cash Versus In-Kind Assistance: Statistical Study of a Household Survey in Palestine.
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