

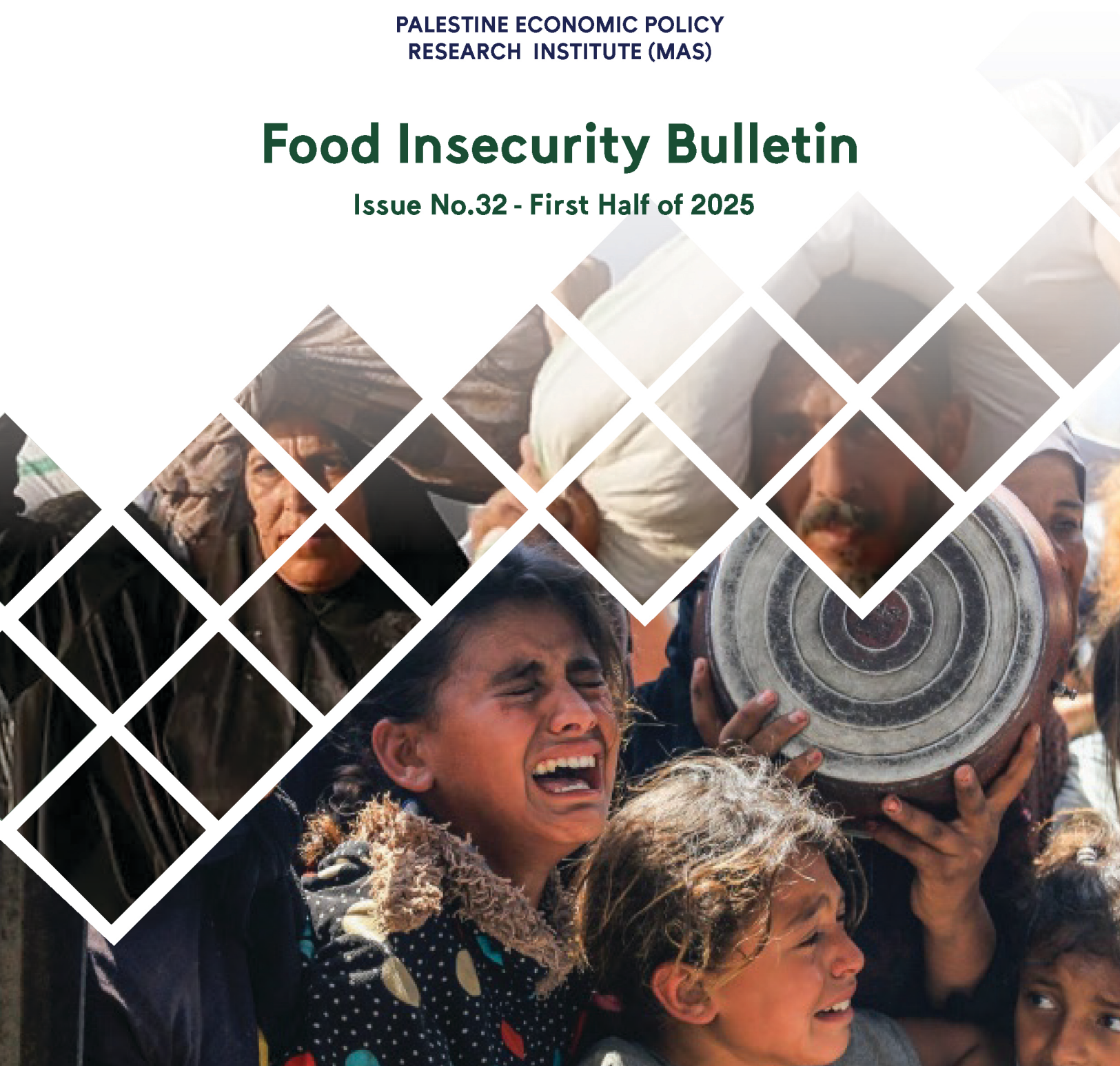


MAS

PALESTINE ECONOMIC POLICY
RESEARCH INSTITUTE (MAS)

Food Insecurity Bulletin

Issue No.32 - First Half of 2025





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FOOD INSECURITY BULLETIN

1/2025 – Issue No.32



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Credit: www.thinkglobalhealth.org



■ Highlights

- The nearly 2-year aggression has left severe nutritional impacts that a 5-week ceasefire could not possibly counter, or indent.
- Nearly a fifth of the population in the Gaza Strip was unable to secure their household needs these past six months.
- The new aid-provision mechanism through the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation has proven successful in killing and maiming hungry Palestinians, not so much feeding them.
- Public anger in the West Bank is yet again renewed as meat prices inflate during the month of Ramadan and religious holidays.
- The previously set quota for quantities of meat has remained nearly unchanged since 1994 despite large population growth.
- Despite the custom-free quota for imported red meat, it is being sold for the same price as meat subjected to customs duties.
- The increase in food prices in the Gaza Strip following the siege has driven both the CPI and FPI for Palestine.
- Key to the effectiveness of the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) is its simplicity, shortness in length, and limited time required to complete it.



I Editorial

The Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS) has been issuing the Food Security Bulletin since 2009, twice yearly, using its own resources to investigate the food security sector in Palestine. The Bulletin aims to support decision-makers and institutions working in the field of food security in Palestine, constituting a useful and periodic reference on the latest developments in the sector. The Bulletin is a useful reference for monitoring trends in the sector and comparing conditions across time. The Bulletin is only one of several MAS research priorities, although as a topic, food security has received significant attention in recent years, especially through collaborative research projects with our partners, particularly the World Food Program (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization.

Considering the ever so increasingly catastrophic conditions with each passing day experienced in the Gaza Strip, the Bulletin since 2024 has been retitled as the “Food (In)Security Bulletin,” in recognition of the extreme food insecurity in Palestine under Israeli occupation policies of weaponizing starvation in its aggression on the Gaza Strip. This Bulletin is the third published since the onset of aggression, which has left devastating food and nutrition crises that by the time this issue was written (July 2025) had reached unprecedented levels, causing the agonizing deaths of over 200 Palestinians from starvation. Within this context, the Bulletin complements efforts by MAS to document and monitor the Israeli aggression on Palestine since 2023 in its multiple social and economic dimensions, and to assess the relief, policy, funding, and institutional requirements to respond to the aggression.

In its first section, this issue sheds light on developments in the first half of 2025 in food insecurity in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. For the Gaza Strip, it reviews how Israel’s total siege policy is crucial when understanding the nutrition devastation in the Gaza Strip. This policy continues to manifest in a clear aim for weaponizing starvation for military aims, including displacing the population. The first section also reveals the power dynamics responsible for starving the population by detailing the impact of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation’s operations on food provisions and the state of insecurity in the Strip. Moving towards the West Bank, the first section also unpacks the reoccurring yearly ordeal regarding meat prices and consumption amidst a quota that has remained nearly unchanged since 1994. Moreover, developments regarding global and local food prices are reviewed in the second section of the bulletin. The impact of the nearly 100-day siege on the Gaza Strip is apparent when analyzing the trends in food prices, most apparent in the Gaza Strip in the second quarter of the year. The data analyzed in this section continue to paint a devastating image that started in October 2023 and continues until today.

The final section continues the Bulletin’s tradition of reviewing and highlighting selected recent publications on food security locally and globally. It begins by reviewing the 2025 Global Report on Food Crises, a report that reviews the latest developments in food crises, their driving factors, indicators, and future outlooks, in selected countries/regions, including Palestine. It also provides



projections regarding food crises across these areas. The Bulletin then reviews several recent peer-reviewed papers on the link between ‘conflict’ and food security in Palestine, in both the Gaza Strip and West Bank. These papers provide evidence to the role of Israeli policies on the deteriorating nutrition and food conditions currently, and prior to the aggression, through exploring and utilizing various socioeconomic and political variables and indicators. In line with the Bulletin’s role of informing researchers and policy makers, the section concludes by reviewing a recent paper that aims to test whether the Food Insecurity Experiences Scale (FIES) is an appropriate tool for measuring food insecurity in volatile contexts similar to the Gaza Strip.

Raja Khalidi
Director General, MAS



I Latest Updates on Food Insecurity (January – June 2025)

I A 5-Week Ceasefire and a 100-Day Siege

The beginning of this year was marked by a short-lived 5-week ceasefire that went into effect on 19 January. The ceasefire mandate clearly stated the daily entrance of 600 aid trucks 50 of which are fuel trucks, in addition to 60 thousand mobile housing units, and 200 thousand tents.¹ The actual number of trucks and equipment entered in the first week was less than agreed, with zero mobile housing units, 10% of the required tents, and less than agreed upon daily average of aid trucks,² further showcasing Israel's renegeing of its obligations, and its commitment to the goal of weaponizing essentials.

The ceasefire did allow some relief after Israel lifted its siege on the enclave, and the halt in Israeli bombardment has also provided a safe space for the re-production of food, particularly in bakeries, and the provision of nutrient supplements, animal feed,³ while about 138 thousand received cash assistance.⁴ Despite some relief, various humanitarian organizations reported that the overall humanitarian situation has not improved.⁵ Moreover, the slight progress in food insecurity levels given the 5-week ceasefire was countered by an intense return to bombardment and deliberate attacks, which has set back any progress at alleviating people's insecurities, causing damage that will likely be irreversible for malnutrition and health. The state of insecurity has quickly deteriorated these past six months given the severely disrupted supply of food by a nearly 100-day siege, and continued destruction of the agricultural sector.

◆ Latest Data on Insecurity

As of May, 93% of the population were facing insecurity levels of Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3 (Crisis) and above, while over half the population in IPC Phases 4 (Emergency) and 5 (Catastrophe/Famine⁶). According to UNICEF, malnutrition among children in the Gaza Strip has reached alarming rates, with over 5,000 children (6 months – 5 years) admitted for malnutrition treatment in May, out of which 636 were admitted for Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM).⁷ ⁸ The number of admitted children has been drastically increasing with each passing month, with a 50% increase between April and May, and an earlier 150% increase between February and April.⁹ In total, around 18 thousand children were admitted for malnutrition treatment since the beginning of this year, until mid-June on an average of over 110 children per day.¹⁰ This is especially concerning given the scarcity of necessary items for their treatment and survival such as safe water, medical care, and Ready-to-Use-Therapeutic-Food (RUTF).

1 <https://gazahcsector.palestine-studies.org/ar/node/4330>

2 <https://gazahcsector.palestine-studies.org/ar/node/4330>

3 <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/02/1159836>

4 <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/02/1160376>

5 <https://tinyurl.com/ar2ep36s>

6 <https://tinyurl.com/5n6cc6t4>

7 <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/more-5000-children-diagnosed-malnutrition-gaza-strip-may>

8 Severe Acute Malnutrition is the most lethal form of malnutrition and refers to the presence of oedema of both feet or severe wasting (weight-for-height/length <3SD or mid-upper arm circumference < 115 mm)

9 <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/more-5000-children-diagnosed-malnutrition-gaza-strip-may>

10 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/07/gaza-evidence-points-to-israels-continued-use-of-starvation-to-inflict-genoc>



Table 1: Current and Projected Acute Food Insecurity¹¹

Phase classification	Percentage out of total population (April - May 2025)	Projection (May - September 2025)
IPC Phase 5	12%	22%
IPC Phase 4	44%	54%
IPC Phase 3	37%	24%
IPC Phase 2	7%	0%
IPC Phase 1	0%	0%

Source: IPC Acute Food Insecurity and Acute Malnutrition Special Snapshot | April – September 2025

To further provide evidence for the role of the siege in famine, February, the month of ceasefire, had the lowest numbers of child malnutrition admissions, as well as overall population food insecurity,¹² despite the less-than-agreed-upon amount of aid that entered. This showcases the severity of the current nutrition crisis.

According to the World Food Program (WFP), the Israeli refusal allow the entry of both food and non-food items, such as fuel and wheat, has severely impacted its bakeries' abilities to operate, rendering all bakeries, which previously supplied half of local consumption of bread, out of service a month into the siege.¹³ A total blockade, as can be seen from the data emerging from the Strip, thus illustrates the dire conditions that refusal of wheat entry causes for people's nutrition. Looking ahead, projections indicate a severely critical situation, with all the population will likely experience high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) by the end of September 2025.¹⁴ Alarming, over a fifth of the population are anticipated to be in IPC Phase 5, and not a single household able to meet essential food and non-food items given the long-term devastation (Table 1).¹⁵

◆ Devastated Local Production

Food supply has also been impacted through the continued destruction of agricultural production by the Israeli war machine. Prior to the aggression, 25% of the population were partially or entirely reliant on the agricultural sector for livelihood,¹⁶ whereas 44% of produce consumption came from locally grown agricultural products.¹⁷ Israel has deliberately targeted and destroyed agricultural land as part of a broader strategy to weaponize food, reinforcing its siege policy. This systematic devastation undermines both local food production and the entry of external food supplies, exacerbating conditions of deprivation and control.

¹¹ For detailed description on each phase: <https://tinyurl.com/5n6cc6t4>

¹² <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/more-5000-children-diagnosed-malnutrition-gaza-strip-may>

¹³ <https://english.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/156169> ; <https://tinyurl.com/44ve9wfs>

¹⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/5n6cc6t4>

¹⁵ <https://tinyurl.com/5n6cc6t4>

¹⁶ <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/gaza-s-agricultural-infrastructure-continues-to-deteriorate-at-alarming-rate/en>

¹⁷ <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=4643>



**Table 2: Cropland Destruction and Damage
by Governorate, 2024-2025**

Governorate	Jun-24		Dec-24		Mar-25	
	Are (Km2)	Percentage	Area (Km2)	Percentage	Area (Km2)	Percentage
North Gaza	23.5	75%	26.4	84%	27.5	88%
Gaza	21.6	69%	25.2	80%	26.6	84%
Deir Al-Balah	14.6	56%	19.4	75%	21.1	82%
Khan Younes	24.6	58%	29.1	68%	32.3	76%
Rafah	9.9	52%	12.7	67%	14	74%

Source: FAO

The percentage of damaged or destroyed cropland in the first quarter of this year has increased in all governorates (Table 2), thereby impacting local production of food, and further impacting people's accessibility to available, and nutritious foods. Given that these three months, until March, included a 5-week ceasefire, it is likely that the second quarter of the year, when the aggression intensified, has seen additional, more substantial destruction, particularly in areas with ongoing military operations, such as Rafah, further diminishing people's chances of survival.

◆ A Surge in Prices

Only minutes separated people from being able to afford to purchase food in the Strip in early March of this year. As Israel announced its complete siege on the Strip on March 2nd, Palestinians in the Strip reported a sudden, unprecedented increase in prices for all basic and non-basic food, and non-food items.¹⁸ People rushed to purchase what they could with what little money they had, but to no avail. The 78-day siege had left the Strip nearly empty of food, and on the verge of famine.

With growing demand for food and non-food items, the first half of the year saw a striking increase in food prices. In comparison with February, an increase of 350-4567% was observed for food prices.¹⁹ With that, the price of cooking a simple, staple household meal increased tremendously (refer to section 2 – food prices).²⁰ Wheat flour, a staple food item, increased by 4900% since February and 3000% compared to pre-aggression prices, while sugar increased by 6310% compared to pre-aggression prices.²¹ As a result, an overall 95% of households reported facing financial hardships that limit their accessibility to purchased food in June.²²

◆ Coping or Survival?

People have been entrenched in a perpetual struggle for survival since 2023, and with recent depletion in food supply, and corresponding increase in prices, coping as a concept became

18 <https://tinyurl.com/y9fmsarz>

19 <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000166964/download/>

20 <https://tinyurl.com/434w5ybn>

21 <http://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/wfp-palestine-food-security-analysis-market-monitor-gaza-june-2025>

22 <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000166964/download/>



Credit: www.aremnews.com



meaningless in encapsulating the true realities behind people's actions regarding food. Adding to the supply crisis is the surge in fees for receiving remittances or for paying using credit cards, reaching 40% the past few months,²³ further exacerbating the crisis of increased prices and placing additional financial pressures on people's ability to sustain themselves.

By June 10,, households across the Gaza Strip were facing extreme difficulties in accessing food. The percentage of households facing challenges differed between governorates; the North of the Strip continuing a similar trend of harsh devastation in comparison to other governorates, with 96% of families unable to easily access food and markets, followed by 82% and 81% of families in Khan Younis and Gaza Strip, and finally 68% in Deir Al-Balah.²⁴ As a result, in April for example, 90% of families resorted to food-related coping mechanisms, such as reducing number of meals.²⁵ Palestinians in these six months have experienced a shift in food systems, with 3-meal-day no longer the norm.

This desperate situation, however, allowed for various forms of social and economic solidarity initiatives to emerge; various reports have highlighted communal trade that allows people to trade in less-needed household items for less available, but needed food supplies, such as trading sugar for wheat.²⁶ Types of food consumed have also changed drastically, with fruits and vegetables, meats, and dairy not present at tables.²⁷ Instead, lentils, flour with water batter or crushed macaroni, are what people have resorted to eat.²⁸

I A Severe Case of Weaponizing Aid

On May 5th, Israel announced a US-Israel-orchestrated new food distribution system, implemented by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) to deliver food, water, and hygiene kits to the Gaza Strip.²⁹ Despite claims of adherence to humanitarian principles, including safe access to aid, the first few days of the plan's implementation showcased how these humanitarian corridors doubled as dehumanizing 'killing zones', for those seeking food and water. Access to these sites and aid has proven perilous for Palestinians; dozens are injured daily while trying to access food aid in one of the four stations,³⁰ resulting in the deaths of 583 Palestinians and injuring over four thousand since the inauguration of the sites in June.³¹

23 <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000166964/download/>

24 <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000166964/download/>

25 <https://tinyurl.com/5n6cc6t4>

26 <https://tinyurl.com/ykvtdekp>

27 <https://tinyurl.com/5n6cc6t4>

28 <https://www.rescue.org/press-release/malnutrition-rates-gaza-skyrocket-irc-warns-israels-new-plans-humanitarian-aid>

<https://mondoweiss.net/2025/07/a-meal-fit-for-a-famine/>

<https://www.actionagainsthunger.org/press-releases/two-months-without-aid-action-against-hunger-warns-of-limited-food-supply-in>

29 <https://static-cdn.toi-media.com/www/uploads/2025/05/Gaza-Humanitarian-Foundation-Memo.pdf>

30 <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-297-gaza-strip>

31 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/29/israel-kills-nearly-600-palestinians-at-aid-centres-all-you-need-to-know>



◆ Fixing What's not Broken?

According to the Foundation's memo, each of the four stations is set to provide aid for 300 thousand people, or 1.2 million people in its initial stage,³² making it woefully insufficient to provide food for the entire population. Taking into consideration the already close-to-famine conditions in the Strip, this means that about half the population will not be benefiting from this scheme, rendering it ineffective to actually alleviate people's food deprivations, which further provides evidence to Israel's ploy to diminish the role of international organizations.

As constantly reported since the aggression, Gaza requires 500-600 aid trucks per day to meet the population's needs. Not even a fraction of the amount needed to sustain necessities, this model will reportedly bring in only 18-50 trucks per day.³³ GHF parcels offer approximately 1,750 calories that are not nutritionally sufficient and lack water and medicine.³⁴ These parcels contain close-to-no nutritional value, only supplied with flour, pasta, beans, tea bags, and a few biscuits, lacking dairy and produce.³⁵ Not to mention, GHF reported the distribution of 48 million meals until 28 June,³⁶ which roughly translated to 1 meal per day per person from 1.5 million Palestinians. By contrast, according to WFP, over 140 thousand metric tons of food,³⁷ feeding the entire population 2-3 meals/day for two months,³⁸ were pre-positioned at aid corridors a few days prior to the commencement of the SDS and were refused entry to the Strip.³⁹

It is important to note that the quantity and frequency of aid deliveries have been jeopardized not due to any shortcomings in the humanitarian system's capacity, but because of Israel's control over border crossings. The Head of the OCHA Office for the oPt emphasized that their team is fully capable of delivering aid where needed; however, it is clear that political agendas are actively obstructing these humanitarian efforts.⁴⁰ During the ceasefire, 35% of the aid that entered the Strip was coordinated through the UN system,⁴¹ which allowed for slight improvement in people's food deprivation, further underscoring the existence of a functioning humanitarian infrastructure already in place.

◆ Hunger as a Tool for Displacement

Central to the discussion of weaponizing starvation debate is also Israel's demographic aims of displacement. The details and events of this seemingly displacement plan are still unfolding, but the latest reports in June provide evidence towards this argument. When dissecting the model further, it appears that three of the four sites are near each other in Rafah, all in close proximity to the Egyptian

32 <https://static-cdn.toi-media.com/www/uploads/2025/05/Gaza-Humanitarian-Foundation-Memo.pdf>

33 According to GHF official page: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61576929655481&sk=photos>

34 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/29/israel-kills-nearly-600-palestinians-at-aid-centres-all-you-need-to-know>

35 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/29/israel-kills-nearly-600-palestinians-at-aid-centres-all-you-need-to-know>

36 <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=122113135742897655&set=pb.61576929655481.-2207520000&type=3>

37 <https://www.wfp.org/news/fresh-bread-returns-first-time-over-two-months-limited-supplies-reach-bakeries-overnight>

38 Calculation based on the assumption that a meal is 0.4-0.6 kg.

39 <https://www.dw.com/en/gaza-aid-group-mired-in-controversy-begins-operating/a-72687371>

40 <https://www.unocha.org/news/ocha-official-slams-gaza-aid-restrictions-deprivation-design>

41 <https://www.unocha.org/news/ocha-official-slams-gaza-aid-restrictions-deprivation-design>



border, and south of the Morag Corridor, which was established to confine Palestinians to the south of the Strip, in line with Israeli strategies.⁴² This means about 900 thousand people would have to receive their aid from Rafah, and only 300 thousand would receive it at the site that is more inwards in the Strip in Gaza Governorate. In parallel, displacement orders have been constantly issued by the Israeli authorities to areas in the North of Gaza and Gaza City, as well as southwest Khan Younis,⁴³ which can only be seen as a way to push people to areas near the distribution sites.

In essence, this distribution model also excludes the most vulnerable who are unable to make the journey to the three sites in the south, like the elderly, the injured and, disabled people. This manufactured scarcity in aid provision creates conditions conducive to forced displacement of the population to ensure their survival. By contrast, within the Strip, OCHA and other aid agencies have constantly been reporting that in June, only a third of aid movements within the Strip were approved by Israeli authorities, while the rest have been denied or impeded.⁴⁴

I Meat Price Inflation in the West Bank

On May 19, 2025, the Ministry of National Economy announced the names of companies and importers benefiting from the live and frozen meat quota for the first quarter of 2025 (table 3).⁴⁵ The announcement sparked controversy, as it usually does, yet the public disdain this year was greater. The deteriorating socioeconomic conditions resulting from higher unemployment, and delays in public sector wages have culminated in a decreased purchasing power that became most evident during the first half of the year with an unprecedented increase in meat prices.

Table 3:Q1-2025 - Number of Meat Quota Beneficiaries

Type of Meat	Quota	Number of Beneficiaries (Companies / Importers)
Frozen Sheep Meat	519 tons	27
Live Sheep	50,000 heads	9
Frozen veal	2606 tons	68

A few days prior, the Palestinian Society for Customer Protection, and the Head of Union of Butcher Shop Owners had called for a boycott on buying red meat and announced the halting of slaughtering sheep for 15 days.⁴⁶ In his statement, the Union's Head referred to the high increase in red meat prices, resulting from limited stock, poor management of importation according to market needs, and lack of governmental support.⁴⁷ Within this context, continuously being brought to the debate is the fact that public employees have been receiving 70% of their wages for several years now, and 35% leading up to the month of Ramadan.

42 <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ce82ene10p0o>

43 <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/gaza-relentless-hostilities-cause-more-deaths-displacement-ocha-update/>

44 <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/unrwa-situation-report-178-situation-gaza-strip-and-west-bank-including-east-jerusalem>

45 <https://mne.gov.ps/newsdetails.aspx?NewsId=7703>

46 <https://tinyurl.com/uwrzddxx> ; <https://tinyurl.com/48depwp4>

47 <https://tinyurl.com/uwrzddxx>



◆ Inflated Meat Prices

Stemming from the free market nature of the Palestinian economy, meat prices are not determined, leading to disparities among traders and sellers. However, reference prices are monthly announced by the Ministry of National Economy. In the first half of the year, the West Bank witnessed continuous increase in the price of meat.⁴⁸ The increase in all types of meat peaked in March (table 4).

Table 4: Monthly Consumer Price Index for the “Meat Fresh, Chilled, or Frozen” Group of Expenditure

	Monthly Consumer Price Index	change from previous month
January	123.2	5%
February	128.7	4%
March	136.8	6.29%
April	137.0	0.14%
May	133.7	-2.40%
June	128.2	-4.11%

Prices of fresh lamb meat range between NIS 120-130/kg, and veal meat range between NIS 70-75/kg.⁴⁹ The quota system presumably should lead to price equilibrium in the market, given that it provides duty-free imports, yet this has not been the case (Box 1).⁵⁰

Chicken, a more affordable protein option than red meat, also increased in price and became a burden on people’s diminished purchasing power these past few months, starting at 14 NIS/kg in January and reaching 17 NIS/kg during Ramadan in March.⁵¹ The price of chicken began to a slight downward trend slightly decreased by the end of the first half of the year as the demand for it decreased, and settled at 14 NIS/kg in June.⁵²

◆ Causes & Law Enforcement

The week prior to Eid Al-Adha, a crisis-management committee was established to manage the increase in meat prices.⁵³ As a result, the Ministry of National Economy published price ceilings for meat products, amidst public worry of increased prices and weak purchasing power.⁵⁴ The

48 <https://tinyurl.com/48b24jhs>

49 <https://tinyurl.com/37v938rk>

50 <https://tinyurl.com/uwrzdx> ; <https://www.aman-palestine.org/activities/28839.html>

51 PCBS, “Average Consumer Prices for selected commodities by region for selected months,” accessed by: <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/>

52 <https://tinyurl.com/4rese9ja> ; PCBS, “Average Consumer Prices for selected commodities by region for selected months,” accessed by: https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/statisticsIndicatorsTables.aspx?lang=en&table_id=4239

53 Members: Ministry of National Economy, Ministry of Agriculture, Civil Affairs Authority, the General Secretariat of the Palestine Cabinet, the security services, the Palestinian Society for Consumer Protection, and the Union of Butcher Shop Owners, Cow and Sheep Farms, in cooperation with sheep importers.

54 <https://www.mne.gov.ps/newsdetails.aspx?NewsId=7709>



announcement also asserted the binding nature of the ceiling, stating that those exceeding the ceiling will be held legally accountable.⁵⁵ On 4 June, the Ministry of National Economy reported issuing 509 warnings to butcher shops across the West Bank, for selling red meat at prices exceeding that the set price ceiling.⁵⁶ Still, the Head of Union of Butcher Shop Owners reported red meat being sold at higher prices than published by the Ministry.⁵⁷ The price ceiling for sheep meat, for example, was set at NIS 40/kg, whereas it was being sold for NIS 50/kg early June.⁵⁸

All those involved within the value chain of meat had contradicting reasons as to why this increase occurred, with each placing blame on others within the chain. Breeders claimed that feed prices have risen, leading to this increase in the meats price.⁵⁹ Butchers, on the other hand, are blaming suppliers for influencing the increase in prices,⁶⁰ likely in relation to setting higher prices despite the existence of the quota. Whereas distributors have reported a marginal increase in shipping costs, in addition to cumulative customs for each day the distribution process is hindered by restrictions.⁶¹ All in all, it appears that price increases across the steps of the value chain of meat production have culminated in this inflation, leaving customers unable to consume it.

◆ Shifting Food Traditions during Ramadan

Each passing month, socioeconomic conditions of Palestinian families continue to decline. During the first half of the year, and in conjunction with two religious holidays, and unpaid public wages, families abandoned key food traditions, and table staples associated with these holidays and undertook austerity measures during the month. All components required to make a stable dessert item in Palestine have increased; Ajwa dates by NIS 2, pistachios by NIS 30-35/kg, and walnuts by NIS 15.⁶² One sweet shop owner estimated a 50% drop in its usually customers during this month.⁶³

Meat prices peaked during Ramadan, at nearly NIS 110/kg at the beginning of the month.⁶⁴ And despite a usual increase in chicken consumption during Ramadan, this year families substituted chicken for more affordable proteins, by adding eggs and legumes to their diets during this month.⁶⁵ The average cost of a staple Iftar meal for a household of four individuals with chicken this Ramadan was roughly NIS 110,⁶⁶ whereas that same meal cost was roughly NIS 75 last Ramadan.⁶⁷ If the chicken in this meal was substituted with red meat, the cost increases to about NIS 180.⁶⁸

55 <https://www.mne.gov.ps/newsdetails.aspx?NewsId=7709>

56 <https://tinyurl.com/bdzh67ph>

57 <https://tinyurl.com/5n7ds9x7>

58 <https://tinyurl.com/5n7ds9x7>

59 <https://tinyurl.com/2f8t52a8>

60 <https://tinyurl.com/2f8t52a8>

61 <https://www.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/114682>

62 <https://tinyurl.com/3sd232ra>

63 <https://tinyurl.com/365mv3z5>

64 <https://tinyurl.com/2f8t52a8>

65 <https://tinyurl.com/3vnxn5mx>

66 <https://tinyurl.com/yvzfuyyz>

67 <https://palgraph.ps/post/12343>

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Although not considered necessary consumption, *Udhiyeh*, a tradition for those able to purchase it, was impacted by price inflation. The price of this year's sheep *Udhiyeh* was no less than NIS 3000 (roughly \$850),⁶⁹ and is thus considered a luxury. This price surpasses previous years by a large margin, for example, the sheep *Udhiyeh* was roughly NIS 2500 in 2023.⁷⁰ People either abandoned this luxury this year or purchased veal instead for its 'affordability'.⁷¹

Box 1: The Meat Quota Dilemma

In Palestine, imported red meat quantities are determined by a quota that is set in the Paris Economic Protocol of 1994 and is annexed in the Gaza-Jericho Agreement. The operational process of this system starts by the Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Agriculture by announcing the selected goods, and their quantities to importers who go through a selection. After which, each importer is informed of their individual share of imports.⁷² Meat and food products require the dual authorization of the Israeli ministries of health and agriculture. Importers of live sheep are required to import a quantity of duty-liable live sheep, above which they will be given the authorization for importing the same amount, duty free.⁷³

The quota originally sets the importation quantities at 40,000 live sheep, 1,000 for live cattle, 1,000 for frozen sheep meat, and 12,500 for meat of bovine animals, fresh, chilled, or frozen, to be entered to Palestine, duty-free.⁷⁴ Despite the population increase, the quota failed to account for this increase and remained largely unchanged since 1994. As of 2025, the quota was slightly (yet informally) adjusted to allow for the importation of 12.5 thousand tons of frozen meat for both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, 800 tons of frozen lamb meat, and 50 thousand live sheep.⁷⁵ Any changes to the quantities must be discussed and approved by a technical sub-committee of the Joint Economic Committee, defunct since 2009, leading to a gap between supply and demand for red meat that is increasingly causing a demand-pull inflation on the price of meat.

About 50 thousand heads of sheep are imported to Palestine annually, as part of the duty-free quota, which can be worth up to NIS15 million, which is meant to positively influence the market prices of meat to benefit customers. Still, red meat is being sold for the same price as duty-paid goods, despite importers benefiting from the exemptions,⁷⁶ rendering the quota useless to customers.⁷⁷ Additionally, according to the original design of the quota system, local meat should cover 85% of market demand, whereas imports should cover the rest, yet this balance remains missing.⁷⁸

69 <https://tinyurl.com/5n7ds9x7>

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71 <https://tinyurl.com/4a75phr8>

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I Food Prices Developments in Palestine and across the Globe

I Global Food Prices (January 2025 – June 2025)

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Food Price Index has been relatively stable in the first half of 2025,⁷⁹ with an overall increase of 3.3 points, and settling at 128 points in June.⁸⁰ From March to June, prices slightly fluctuated but remained between 127-128, as meat and dairy price indices rose driven by increased demand and tighter export supplies worldwide.⁸¹

◆ FAO Cereal Price Index

Despite a slight increase in January and February, cereal prices have decreased between April and June, starting this decrease from 112.6 in February and falling to 109.7 points in March and ending the first half of the year at 107.4 points. June marked the second consecutive month during which global maize prices fell due to intensified competition and good harvest seasons in the northern hemisphere during these two months.⁸² Wheat, on the other hand, experienced a significant global price drop in March due to crop conditions in the Northern Hemisphere exporters, which led to the a 2.6% decrease in global cereal prices during that month and an overall 1.1% decrease compared to the previous year.⁸³ Rice prices took a downward trend due to amiable exports and lower demand from January to March, before rising up again in April due to strong demand and prices for certain varieties of rice, such as the fragrant variety and Indica.⁸⁴

◆ FAO Sugar Price Index

After starting the year with a 6.6% increase between January and February, global sugar prices had an overall decrease in prices in the first half of 2025. Unfavorable sugar season prospects in sugar-exporting countries such as India led to this surge during February,⁸⁵ however, the index registered a total of 8.2-point decrease during these six months. This decrease was driven by lower demand for sugar in processing industries as well as a favorable harvest season worldwide in the first half of 2025.⁸⁶

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80 <https://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>.

81 <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/fao-food-price-index-increases-in-april/en>
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<https://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>.

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83 <https://tinyurl.com/28xy2xph> <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/fao-food-price-index-increases-in-april/en>
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Credit: www.thinkglobalhealth.org



◆ **FAO Meat Price Index**

Global meat prices had an upward trend during the first half of 2025, increasing a total of 10 points. From The index started at 116.7 this January and reached 126 points in June after a 10% increase. The steady rise in prices is primarily driven by higher demand for pig, ovine, and bovine meats during this period. Despite a persistent drop in demand, and correspondent prices for poultry due to import bans due to surplus supply amidst a suspected import ban, this decrease did not equilibrate the increase in other meats, leading to an overall increase in the meat index.⁸⁷

◆ **FAO Dairy Price Index**

Global dairy prices have witnessed an upsurge in the first half of 2025, seeing an April 22.9% increase in prices compared to the cooresponding period last year.⁸⁸ The upsurge in prices, from 143.1 to 154.4 points in January and June respectively,⁸⁹ reflects a historic-high demand for butter as well as cheeses worldwide and especially in the Asian continent, with skim and whole milk powders witnessing fluctuations in demand and prices due to ample supply and lower demand.⁹⁰ This unprecedented increase in dairy prices correlates with a similar increase in the second half of 2013 and the first half of 2014, reaching upwards of 154.6 in February 2014.⁹¹

◆ **FAO Vegetable Oils Price Index**

The Oils Index Global vegetable oil prices have witnessed fluctuations in pricing due to lower or higher demand and prices for certain vegetable oil varieties: palm, rapeseed, soy and sunflower oils⁹². Seasonal output has played a role in these fluctuations, as seen in May when international prices of palm oil declined due to seasonal output and supply availability.⁹³ In February, vegetable oil prices increased by 8%, which was attributed to a general rise in both price and demand for palm, soy, sunflower and rapeseed oil. On the other hand, vegetable oils declined by 2.3% in April due to seasonal outputs.⁹⁴ Higher demand for soy oil as a result of its use in biofuel, drove

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87 <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/fao-food-price-index-increases-in-april/en>
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88 <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/fao-food-price-index-increases-in-april/en>.

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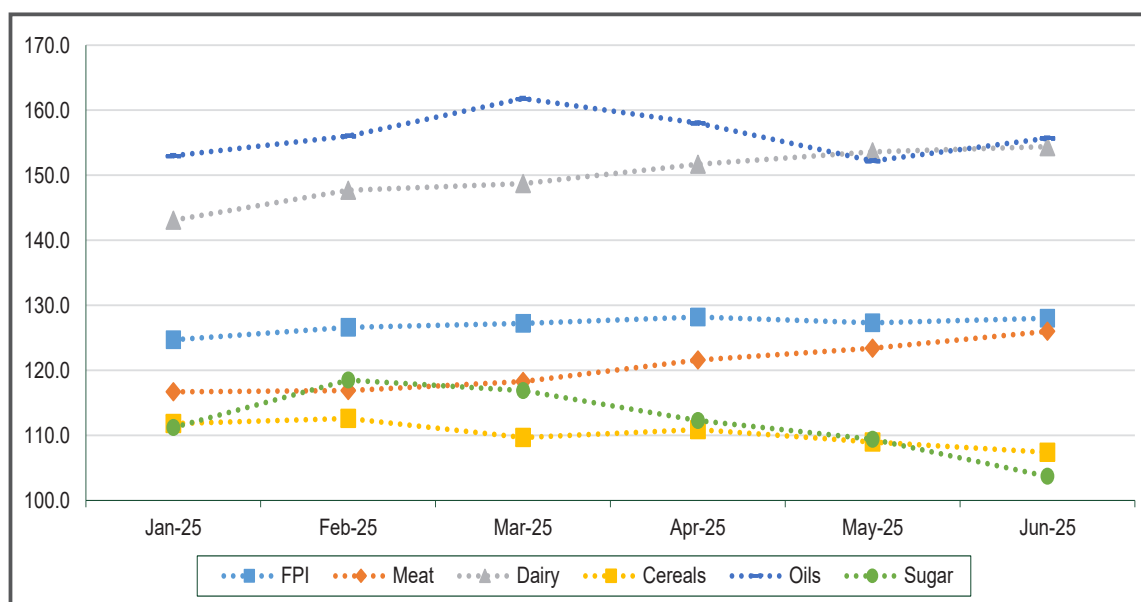
<https://tinyurl.com/yz64zm3>

94 <https://tinyurl.com/3mzukxyc>



prices up from January to April.⁹⁵ Conversely, soy oil prices in May declined due to lower biofuel feedstock demand for soy oil, while they rose again in June.⁹⁶ All in all, the global prices of vegetable oils rose from 153 to 155.7 points from January to June.⁹⁷

Figure 1: FAO FPI and Basic Food Commodities Price Index



Source: FAO, 2025

I Food Prices in Palestinian Markets (January 2025 – June 2025)

The PCBS measures food prices using an index it has developed, namely the Food Price Index (FPI), a component of the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Following a substantial increase in food prices in the Gaza Strip commencing in March, food prices registered a 137.8% increase from January to June 2025, pushing the FPI at the end of the first half of the year to 459.32 points. In correlation with the increase in the FPI, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 63.7% during these six months and registered 255.9 points by June 2025. This increase was solely driven by an unprecedented rise in food prices in the Gaza Strip, which has rose by 1096.5 points between January and June, a record increase of 295.1%..

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95 <https://tinyurl.com/yrkm4aa5>

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Table 5: Six-Month Average for the Palestine FPI and CPI

	Jul-Dec 2023	Jan-Jun 2024	Jul-Dec 2024	Jan-Jun 2025
FPI Palestine	120.28	157.74	220.19	241.85
CPI Palestine	115	149.85	194.72	191.14

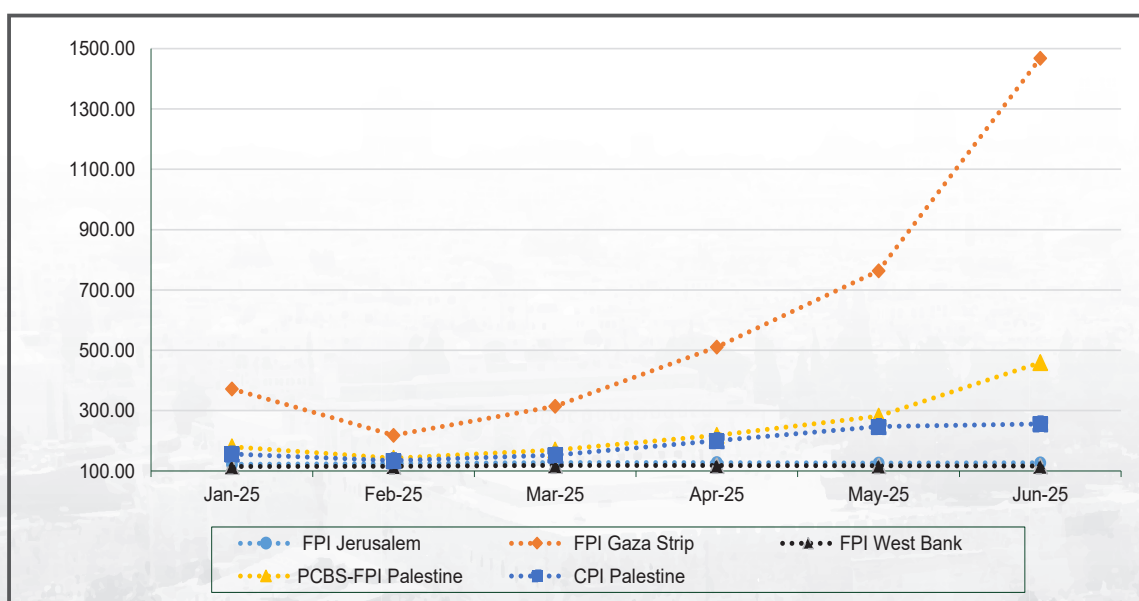
Source: PCBS, FPI and CPI for selected years

Increases in both the FPI and CPI are the highest recorded since the onset of the aggression in October 2023. This is except for fuel prices that have constantly been increasing to similar levels across different periods.

◆ Food Prices by Region

The impact of the Israeli-imposed siege on the Gaza Strip and their control over the borders as a war tactic has culminated in an intense increase in food prices over the past six months. This was manifested in the analysis of both the CPI and FPI during the first half of the year, particularly when comparing the month of ceasefire (February) with other months. While prices remained nearly stable in both the West Bank and Jerusalem, they rose in an unprecedented manner in the Gaza Strip. As shown in Figure 2, food prices sky-rocketed in correspondence with the siege announcement early March. The supply and demand dynamics amidst a total siege have caused the prices of all food groups to increase, albeit differently, with meats, dairy, fuels, and sugars registering the highest increase.

Figure 2: Palestine CPI and FPI



Source: PCBS, 2025

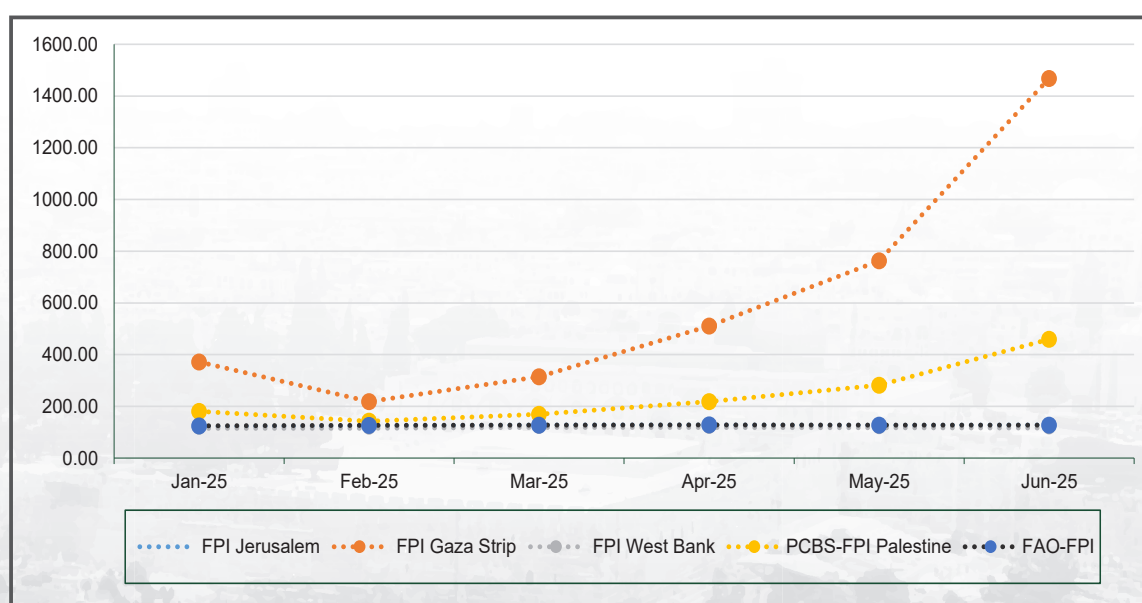


Starting at 371.5 points in January and marginally decreasing during the ceasefire in February by 41.2%, the siege announcement drove a 571.8% increase in the Gaza Strip FPI between February and June. This in turn caused a 148.9% increase in the Gaza Strip CPI from January to June, to reach 777.4 points by the end of the first half of the year. The limited entrance of products through the borders, and the establishment of humanitarian aid sites to deliver food and non-food items late in May did not offset the price surge; quite the opposite, food and non-food items, such as fuel, continued to increase between May and June. The average FPI for the Gaza Strip these past six months was nearly fourfold the previous six months, when the FPI averaged 129.8 points between July and December 2024. The FPI for the West Bank and Jerusalem both registered at very similar points these past six months, as can be seen in figure 2. Both FPIs remained relatively steady during this period despite a 4.1% increase in Jerusalem. The overall FPI averaged 126 points for Jerusalem, and 116.7 in the West Bank.

I The PCBS FPI compared to FAO FPI

This section provides a comparison between the PCBS FPI and FAO FPI, which can be challenging given that the FPI in Palestine is mostly comprised of locally produced foodstuffs, or exports for neighboring countries, with limited impact on global food prices. For comparative purposes, 2018 was adopted as the base year for the FAO's index, instead of 2014-16, to match the base year for the latest census. In the period between January and June 2025, global food prices rose by a mere 2.6, with the FAO index settling at 128 points in June and averaging 127 points for the first half of the year. By contrast, the Palestine FPI registered a much higher increase within the same period, jumping from 180.5 to 459.3 points, marking a 154.4% increase. This sharp increase, as shown in Figure 4, is attributed to the abnormal surge in food and non-food items prices in the Gaza Strip starting March 2025, as a result of the Israeli-imposed siege on the entry of goods and aid, making its FPI higher than the global FPI.

Figure 3: FAO and PCBS Food Price Indices (FPI)



Source: FAO FPI and PCSB FPI, 2025



I Literature Review

This section of the Bulletin reviews the latest important research contributions in the field of food and nutrition security to ensure that interested actors can access a summary of the findings of recent studies in this scholarship, which is of significance not only for global and regional food security policymakers but also for stakeholders. It highlights the most salient global and local literature on food security.

I 2025 Global Report on Food Crises, Joint Analysis for Better Decisions

Global Network Against Food Crises and Food Security Information Network, 2025, Rome

The Global Report of Food Crises (GRFC) is an annual report that acts as a reference document for comprehensive analysis of acute food security on the global, regional, and local levels. It is published by an international consortium of institutional stakeholders. In 2024, the report covered 65 countries across the world, out of which 53 countries have the data required to conduct the analysis. By nature, given the geopolitical trends in the world, the 53 countries were all in the global south, except for Ukraine. The GRFC aims to deliver a comprehensive, census-based analysis of food and nutrition crises, focusing on acute food insecurity, malnutrition, and displacement, to inform policymakers and humanitarian actors. It highlights the primary drivers and risks of food insecurity and malnutrition, while also advocating for sustained prioritization of the sector by policymakers and donors to ensure timely and effective responses.

◆ Global Findings

The key finding of this report is the fact that this is the sixth consecutive year witnessing an increase in high levels of food insecurity around the world. Drivers of this increase most notably included the ongoing conflict and insecurity in several countries such as Palestine, Yemen, Sudan, and South Sudan, and the resulting economic shocks which have severely impacted malnutrition, health, and service provisions. Additionally, the extreme weather was a driver of high levels of acute food insecurity in several regions such as Asia, while flooding and El Niño severely impacted crop production in Southern Africa.

Despite improvements in food and nutrition in 15 of the countries, such as Ukraine and Afghanistan this could not counter the deteriorating food security in 19 of the countries, such as Palestine and Sudan, thereby leading to an increase in insecurity. In comparison to 2023, an additional 13.7 million people faced high levels of food insecurity, bringing the total to 295.3 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity, amounting to 22.6% of the 53 countries analyzed. About 38.7 million children (6-59 months) in 26 countries suffered from acute malnutrition in 2024, with severe cases reported in the Gaza Strip, Yemen, Mali, and Sudan. To put this increase into a broader context, the share of the population facing high levels of acute food insecurity has nearly doubled since 2016 and tripled in terms of the number of people.



In terms of Integrated Phase Classification, the percentage of people facing IPC Phase 2 saw a 2% increase between 2023 and 2024, totaling 344.7 million people in 39 countries, whereas people in IPC Phase 3 saw a 1% increase with 190 million people in 40 countries in crisis. 35.1 million people in 36 countries and territories faced emergency level food crises (IPC Phase 4). However, most devastatingly, the total number of people in IPC Phase 5 nearly doubled since last year, with over 2 million people in catastrophic food insecurity, further highlighting the deteriorating nutritional conditions globally. This massive jump is a direct result of the increasing conflict in multiple countries, including Palestine and Sudan, which made up about 95% of the people classified in this category.

◆ Future Outlook

The main implication regarding the provided data as well as the main drivers of acute food insecurity this year is that insecurity will persist given the unabated and continued conflicts. Conflict will likely further deteriorate the economy and weaken growth prospects in successive years as a result. Additionally, ongoing climate shifts will likely continue to impact food production with increasing earth temperature, resulting in either extremely hot weather or extreme flooding, thereby impacting crops and food production.

Persistent economic shocks for these countries and regions will likely continue to weaken growth prospects, thus impacting food crises. Not to mention, projections of humanitarian funding indicate to a decrease in food sector allocations, and with that the downward trend in funding will disrupt humanitarian operations in areas most needed, such as Yemen and Sudan. All in all, allocations to food sectors could drop as much as 45% in 2025 leaving severe implications on affected populations. Low-income countries will continue to be vulnerable to food crises as a result of reduction in overseas development assistance for those governments.

As a result, an estimated 231.2 million people across 37 countries are projected to face high levels of acute food insecurity in 2025, representing approximately 21.5% of the covered population. Compared to 2024, 14 countries are expected to see worsening conditions, adding 7.9 million more people to those affected.

◆ Palestine Spotlight

Two key drivers framed the food insecurity crisis in 2024; the disruption in livelihoods and food systems given the aggression, and economic shocks as a result of halting all economic activity in the Gaza Strip and resulting price volatility leading to a massive unaffordability of basic commodities including fuel and agricultural inputs. In addition, several other factors have impacted insecurity, including the destruction of WASH infrastructures, the spread of communicable diseases, and restrictions on humanitarian and commercial inflow. In the West Bank, factors include frequent raids and arrests, as well as increased attacks on agricultural workers and prevention from harvesting, not to mention increased movement restrictions that limit access to lands, livestock, and livelihood opportunities, and disrupted private sector production.



I Exploring the Link between Conflict and Insecurity Across the Years

In relation to mobility restrictions, Jennifer Olmsted (2025), when framing case studies from different Southwest Asian and North African contexts, including Palestine, establishes it is essential to observe how food is weaponized by powerful actors, particularly within a historical context where nutritional needs are met through imports.⁹⁸ Olmsted (2025) refers to the current state of insecurity as a 'man-made catastrophe,' asserting the clear role of power in creating insecurity.⁹⁹ And so, links are frequently found between conflict and food insecurity through the deterioration of food accessibility, leading to negative coping mechanisms that result in less nutritious food consumption and less food diversity.¹⁰⁰ This sub-section reviews multiple studies whose findings reflect on the discussion on the relation between conflict and food insecurity.

The first study included in this review is a longitudinal study that uses the Food Consumption Score (FCS) to measure food diversity, using PCBS data from 2014 to 2020, for an analysis of a sample of 23,129 households (Cox et al., 2025). The other two studies employ household surveys to measure the impact of the Israeli aggression on food consumption and insecurity in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The first of the two studies includes 329 participants in the Nablus governorate in the West Bank (Anabtawi et al., 2025), while the latter covers 915 households in the five Gaza Strip governorates surveyed between May-July 2024 (Faris et al., 2025). It is worth noting that this is the first quantitative study on the prevalence of food insecurity in the West Bank.

♦ Observed Impact in Palestine Prior to the Aggression¹⁰¹

The first study reviewed FCS for households from 2014 to 2020 (Cox et al., 2025). With a maximum score of 112, households that have an FCS less than 35 are considered to have 'unacceptable' food consumption status. These households' status would then be classified as either 'poor' (FCS < 21) or borderline (FCS 21- 35). The study has found a nearly 3% increase in the proportion of households having unacceptable FCS, which reflects a growing food insecurity dilemma.

Different factors in relation to the occupation were observed for the Gaza Strip and the West Bank; living in a refugee camp, and female head of household were factors that negatively impacted FCS in the West Bank, and minor mobility restrictions were the factor in the Gaza Strip, while a similar correlation was found between middle-to-lower income and a reduction in FCS in both regions. However, the prevalence of unacceptable FCS was higher in the West Bank than in the Gaza Strip, likely due to the high availability of humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip. Also, in relation to aid, the findings point to the fact that non-refugees and those not receiving aid have slightly higher prevalence rates of unacceptable FCS scores (0.6% compared with 0.4%). Other socioeconomic and demographic factors negatively influencing FCSs include being married, being employed for over 35 working hours a week, and having lower educational levels.

98 <https://www.elgaronline.com/edcollchap-0a/book/9781035333585/chapter6.xml>

99 <https://www.elgaronline.com/edcollchap-0a/book/9781035333585/chapter6.xml>

100 https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5122474

101 Cox, C., Hammoudeh, W., & Lin, T. K. (2025). Exploring the Association of Household Location and Sociodemographic Profile on Decreasing Dietary Diversity in Occupied Palestine: A Serial Cross-Sectional Study. Available at SSRN 5122474.



In terms of FCS progression over time in the West Bank, the study found a 2.51-point decrease in FCS across the years for female-headed households, similarly for households in refugee camps where a 7 points decrease was observed, further highlighting the persistent vulnerability and marginalization these households face. A positive relationship was found between FCS and education level, where a slight improvement is observed for secondary and intermediate higher education levels. Similarly in the Gaza Strip, intermediate education was correlated with a positive increase with an average of 4 points. In terms of income level, a negative association was observed, with a significantly associated decrease of 10.47-13 points in FCS for poor and very poor households. All in all, the study reveals the impact of the occupation on the production of a weak economy, and agriculture, and access to food correlated with a downward trend in dietary diversity.

◆ Food Insecurity During the 2023-Agression¹⁰²

The impact of the aggression on food security has extended past the Gaza Strip to also include households in the West Bank, particularly for already vulnerable communities. Food insecurity, by nature, was more prevalent in the Gaza Strip study sample than in the West Bank's sample. Across the two different scales, the Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM), Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS), and Household Hunger Scale (HHS), nearly all households faced different levels of food insecurity, including severe food insecurity.¹⁰³ The findings also indicate that 95% of households experience different sorts of hunger, with over half the respondents reporting worry about running out of food.¹⁰⁴ The findings also highlight negative coping mechanisms by adults such as reducing meal sizes or number of meals, and a correspondent weight loss.¹⁰⁵ The findings for the Gaza Strip are similar to those in other surveys conducted during the aggression, with particularly in relation to severe increase in BMI and weight, as well as children malnutrition and insecurity (refer to Food Security Bulletin – Issue 31).¹⁰⁶

In the West Bank, among the 328 participants included in an analysis of food security in Nablus, 21.6% were food insecure, with nearly half reporting concern about having enough food (45.7%). Across all five indicators of food security, households experienced varying levels of deprivation. Specifically, 27.2% were unable to eat healthy or nutritious food, 36% reported consuming only a limited variety of foods, 22% had to skip meals, and 25.9% ate less than they felt they needed.¹⁰⁷ A similar correlation between financial security and food insecurity is observed in both regions. Other factors influencing food insecurity in the West Bank are the type of employment, with insecurity being more prevalent among those who receive permits to work in 1948 territories as 60.7% of the sample reported insecurity, whereas for other employment types, such as government,

102 Faris, M., Abutair, A. S., Elfarrar, R. M., Barqawi, N. A., Firwana, A. M., Firwana, R. M., ... & Badawi, R. A. (2025). Catastrophic famine in Gaza: Unprecedented levels of hunger post-October 7th. A real population-based study from the Gaza Strip. *PloS one*, 20(5), e0309854.
; Faris, M., Abutair, A. S., Elfarrar, R. M., Barqawi, N. A., Firwana, A. M., Firwana, R. M., ... & Badawi, R. A. (2025). Catastrophic famine in Gaza: Unprecedented levels of hunger post-October 7th. A real population-based study from the Gaza Strip. *PloS one*, 20(5), e0309854.

103 <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0309854>

104 <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0309854>

105 <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0309854>

106 <https://mas.ps/en/publications/12554.html>

107 <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/380932/1020-3397-2025-3102-118-126-eng.pdf?sequence=1>



independent, and unemployed, people reported food insecurity at a lower rate.¹⁰⁸ This is essential in the context of Israeli policies given the freeze on work permits for 1948 territories workers since the onset of the aggression. Additionally in the West Bank, insecurity was more prevalent in households with unemployed heads of households,¹⁰⁹ while in the Gaza Strip, households reported financial inaccessibility to food, even when food was available.¹¹⁰

The impact of Israeli policies is evident, albeit differently, in each region. The study by Anabtawi et al. (2025), provided evidence for the continuous attacks on refugee camps and found that insecurity in Nablus is more prevalent in refugee households (43.1%) when compared with urban or rural households (13.7% and 19.4%).¹¹¹ Similarly, in the Gaza Strip, households who previously lived in camps have higher odds of food hunger.¹¹² Additionally, displacement in the Gaza Strip is a high driver of insecurity, with higher insecurity reported among those displaced in tents in comparison with those living in homes.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/380932/1020-3397-2025-3102-118-126-eng.pdf?sequence=1>

¹⁰⁹ <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/380932/1020-3397-2025-3102-118-126-eng.pdf?sequence=1>

¹¹⁰ <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0309854>

¹¹¹ <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/380932/1020-3397-2025-3102-118-126-eng.pdf?sequence=1>

¹¹² <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/380932/1020-3397-2025-3102-118-126-eng.pdf?sequence=1>

¹¹³ <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0309854>



Gaza Strip as a Learning Opportunity

Fekih-Romdhane, F., Jebreen, K., Swaitti, T., Jebreen, M., Radwan, E., Kammoun-Rebai, W., ... & Hallit, S. (2025). Dying of starvation if not from bombs: assessing measurement properties of the Food Insecurity Experiences Scale (FIES) in Gaza's civilian population experiencing the world's worst hunger crisis. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 24(1), 80¹¹⁴

This study aimed to test the psychometric properties of the Food Insecurity Experiences Scale (FIES) in the Gaza Strip to ensure that policies or interventions of food security and nutrition are tailored to situations like the Gaza Strip to measure whether the scale accounts for similar emergency settings. It evaluates the relevance of the FIES in capturing food insecurity as a 'lived experience' during instances of man-made hunger. This perspective is especially valuable for researchers seeking to understand how conflict and other human-driven crises not only shape individuals' day-to-day experiences of food insecurity across different contexts and time periods, but also other experiences related to war such as water insecurity, depression, anxiety, and ADHD. It also analyzes the scale's Arabic version to ensure its reliability within this context.

The study utilized a cross-sectional design and collected data through an online questionnaire for a sample gathered through the snowballing approach from Arabic speaking adults living in the Gaza Strip during the current aggression, given the unprecedented devastation. To conduct the assessment, the study analyzed 534 responses over six measures: socio-demographic information, FIES, the four-item Household Water Insecurity Experiences scale (HWISE-4), The Impact of Event Scale-6 (IES-6), The Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9), and The Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9).

The results of the analysis found that the FIES has strong internal reliability and is a consistent measurement across different groups. The cross-gender validity check found that measurement properties were consistent for both genders, indicating that the scale can be applied neutrally across gender. Key to the effectiveness of the FIES is its simplicity, shortness in length, and limited time required to complete it. The findings of the study confirm the validity and reliability of the FIES for assessing food insecurity in affected populations in the Gaza Strip. As it can compare FI prevalence estimates between countries given its generalized standards and thresholds, it was found to have successful adaptations to Palestine during and after the aggression. The Arabic version of the FIES, in particular, provides critical data that supports policy decisions and guides humanitarian efforts aimed at reducing, mitigating, or preventing severe food insecurity, ultimately helping to save lives and protect livelihoods.

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I Definitions

Food Security: The World Food Summit (1996) established that “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”. This widely accepted definition points out to the following dimensions of food security: Food Availability: The availability of sufficient quantities of food of appropriate quality, supplied through domestic production or imports (including food aid);

Food Access: Access by individuals to adequate resources (entitlements) for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. Entitlements are defined as the set of all commodity bundles over which a person can establish command given the legal, political, economic and social arrangements of the community in which they live (including traditional rights such as access to common resources);

Utilization: Utilization of food through adequate diet, clean water, sanitation and health care to reach a state of nutritional well-being where all physiological needs are met. This brings out the importance of non-food inputs in food security;

Stability: To be food secure, a population, household or individual must have access to adequate food at all times. They should not risk losing access to food as a consequence of sudden shocks (e.g. an economic or climatic crisis) or cyclical events (e.g. seasonal food insecurity). The concept of stability can therefore refer to both the availability and access dimensions of food security.

Food Security in Palestine: The Food Security Sector (FSS) in Palestine, co-led by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) in close cooperation with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for the Near East (UNRWA) and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), classify Palestinian households within four categories with respect to food security (2014):

Food Secure: Households that have sufficient food consumption, which they will be able to maintain without use of coping strategies while meeting their essential food and non-food needs;

Marginally Food Secure: Households that risk not being able to maintain sufficient food consumption, and households that have adequate financial means but did not adapt their diet to an acceptable level;

Moderately Food Insecure: Households that face issues with either the quantity or quality of food consumed, which they cannot address due to their limited financial means or without resorting to irreversible coping options;

Severely Food Insecure: Households with a severe or significant consumption gap that they cannot counter through economic means or coping mechanisms.



Poverty in Palestine: The PCBS defines poverty using the budget of a standard household (five members: two adults and three children). There are two distinct poverty lines:

Poverty Line: A standard household with a monthly budget below NIS 2,293 (2011) covering food, clothing, health care, education, transportation, and housekeeping supplies;

Deep Poverty Line: A standard household with a monthly budget below NIS 1,832 (2011) covering food, clothing, and housing costs.

Standard of Living: The Standard of Living is defined as a household's food consumption relative to its total consumption. The PCBS has divided the Standard 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 30-44%;

Lower Standard of Living: Food consumption to total consumption is more than 45%.

Global Hunger Index (GHI): The GHI (2015) measures hunger and malnutrition through four weighted indicators: undernourishment, child wasting, child stunting, and child mortality. The index ranks countries on a 100-point scale and divides them into five categories:

- Low Hunger: 0.0-9.9;
- Moderate Hunger: 10.0-19.9;
- Serious Hunger: 20.0-34.9;
- Alarming Hunger: 35.0-49.9;
- Extremely Alarming Hunger: 50.0-100.0.
- Undernourishment: FAO defines undernourishment as being unable to acquire enough food to meet the daily minimum dietary energy requirements, over a period of one year.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): In 2015, the UN countries adopted a set of 17 goals with 169 targets to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all to be achieved between 2016 and 2030 under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Human Development Index (HDI): The HDI is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: enjoying a long and healthy life; being knowledgeable; and having a decent standard of living. It is calculated based on four indicators: life expectancy at birth, mean years of schooling, expected years of schooling, and GNI per capita (Purchasing Power Parity \$).

Consumer Price Index (CPI): The 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 by the PCBS in calculating the Palestinian CPI, and the items are weighed according to their importance. Food weighs around 40% of the total CPI, transport and communication 13%, and textiles, clothing and footwear 10%.

Food Price Index (FPI): The FPI compiled by FAO represents international prices of food commodities. It is calculated by taking the weighted average of five commodity group price indices: meat, dairy, cereals, oils, and sugar.



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