

West Bank and Gaza – Complex Emergency

JULY 20, 2022

SITUATION AT A GLANCE

5.3 MILLION	2.1 MILLION	1.8 MILLION	1 MILLION	600,000
Estimated Population of West Bank and Gaza in 2022	Estimated Number of People in Need in the West Bank and Gaza in 2022	Estimated Number of People in Need of Food Assistance in the West Bank and Gaza in 2022	People Intended to Receive Humanitarian Assistance in Gaza in 2022	People Intended to Receive Humanitarian Assistance in the West Bank in 2022
<i>PCBS – December 2021</i>	<i>UN – December 2021</i>	<i>UN – December 2021</i>	<i>UN – December 2021</i>	<i>UN – December 2021</i>

- President Biden announces additional U.S. humanitarian assistance for vulnerable Palestinians, including \$201 million for State/PRM partner UNRWA activities in multiple countries across the region and \$15 million for USAID/BHA partners in the West Bank and Gaza.
- The Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine and resultant global supply chain disruptions and food price increases have exacerbated food insecurity and generated increased operating costs for relief actors in the West Bank and Gaza.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING For the West Bank and Gaza Response in FY 2022	USAID/BHA ¹	\$24,100,000
	State/PRM ²	\$10,000,000 ³
Total		\$34,100,000

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 5

¹ USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)

² U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

³ State/PRM has provided an additional \$220,300,000 in FY 2022—including President Biden’s July announcement of \$201 million—to UNRWA across the region for its 2022 program budget and emergency appeals, a portion of which may be used in the West Bank and Gaza.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

President Biden Announces Additional Support for Vulnerable Palestinians

On July 15, U.S. President Joseph R. Biden announced additional humanitarian assistance for vulnerable Palestinians and Palestinian refugees. The new funding includes \$201 million in new State/PRM funding to the UN Relief Works and Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for assistance to Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.

In addition, in response to growing food insecurity for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza following the invasion of Ukraine by the Government of the Russian Federation (GoRF), President Biden on July 15 announced \$15 million in USAID/BHA humanitarian assistance via the UN World Food Program (WFP) and two international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) for electronic food vouchers, multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA), and emergency livelihoods support, helping more than 210,000 food-insecure Palestinians meet their household food needs in coming months. This funding from USAID is part of the approximately \$2.8 billion announced by President Biden at the Group of Seven Leaders' Summit in Germany in late June to protect the world's most vulnerable populations amid the escalating food security crisis resulting from the conflict in Ukraine.

Russian Invasion of Ukraine Generates Increased Prices, Exacerbating Food Insecurity

Global supply chain interruptions due to the GoRF invasion of Ukraine have affected the availability of cereals and energy resources, driving global price increases and several food commodity export bans, and significantly affecting import-reliant economies, including the West Bank and Gaza, where an estimated 1.8 million Palestinians were in need of food assistance already in December, before the invasion, WFP reports. As of May, wheat flour prices in the West Bank had increased 30 percent compared with prices in mid-February, while prices in Gaza had increased 36 percent, according to WFP. Additionally, compared with May 2021, the overall food consumer price index had increased by more than 8 percent in the West Bank and Gaza as of May 2022. Due to rising prices, only 11 percent of WFP beneficiaries in the West Bank and 15 percent of those in Gaza reported being able to purchase the same amount of food in May as during April, while 89 percent of respondents in the West Bank and 85 percent in Gaza reported relying on negative coping strategies—such as consuming lower quality food, reducing food consumption, and purchasing food on credit—to meet food needs during May.

As a result of increased food and fuel prices in Gaza, the price of the UNRWA food basket had increased by more than 40 percent as of July 2022 compared to the food basket price in 2021, resulting in a gap of \$72 million in the funding required to maintain the supply of food commodities to sustain more than 1 million Palestinian refugees in Gaza during the September-to-December period.

Violence and Access Impediments Affect Health Care in 2021

During 2021, relief actors recorded nearly 170 incidents of violence against health care infrastructure or the obstruction of health care in the West Bank and Gaza, an increase compared with the approximately 60 incidents recorded in 2020, the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition (SHCC) in July. Incidents affecting health care in 2021 resulted in injuries to 60 health workers and caused damage to 30 health facilities. Violence affecting health systems in the West Bank and Gaza was most intense during the 11-day conflict in May 2021, when more than 50 incidents involving explosive weapons affected health

facilities and workers.

Palestinian health workers and patients are also required to navigate complex administrative and geographic hurdles to access health services, SHCC reports. For instance, ambulances seeking access to Palestinian hospitals in East Jerusalem from the West Bank are required to transfer patients from Palestinian-registered ambulances to Israeli-registered ambulances, which delayed 94 percent of ambulance transfers to East Jerusalem in 2021, thus affecting patient health and outcomes, according to SHCC. Furthermore, 10 percent of patient permit applications for individuals to travel from the West Bank to receive necessary medical care elsewhere were denied in 2021, while 37 percent in Gaza were denied. As of June, Israeli authorities had approved 64 percent of patients' requests to exit Gaza in 2022 for specialized treatment in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the UN reports. Lack of supplies and movement restrictions severely affect Palestinians' access to health care, undermining health outcomes. The USG supports health programming throughout the West Bank and Gaza to bolster health care capacity, and USG partners provide basic primary health care services to communities, including remote and underserved areas across Gaza, to overcome access barriers.

2.1 Million Palestinians in Gaza Affected by Longstanding Movement Restrictions

As of June 2022, an estimated 2.1 million Palestinians in Gaza remained affected by movement restrictions initially intensified by Israeli authorities in 2007. The restrictions continue to limit Palestinians' access to medical treatment, education, and economic opportunities, the UN reported in June. The restrictions also undermine Gaza's economy, driving high unemployment rates—among the highest in the world, with nearly 47 percent of Gazans unemployed during the January-to-March period—and food insecurity, with some 62 percent of Palestinians in Gaza requiring food assistance.

Access impediments include restrictions on the entry of certain goods into Gaza and on Palestinians' access to agricultural land and fishing water in Gaza. Israeli authorities allow Palestinian fisherman to access only approximately 50 percent of fishing waters and have restricted access to land within approximately 1,000 feet of the border, including viable agricultural land. In late June, Israeli authorities fired warning shots near Israeli's perimeter fence or near the coast on more than 30 occasions to enforce access restrictions, injuring three fisherman and two farmers, and damaging two fishing boats, the UN reports. Additionally, during the same period, Israeli authorities levelled land near fences inside Gaza, damaging planted crops.

Meanwhile, restrictions on the entry of goods considered by Israeli authorities as dual-use items—items that can be used for civil and military applications—also continue to undermine Palestinians' access to basic services and ability to rebuild infrastructure following recurrent hostilities. For instance, movement restrictions have impeded Palestinians' access to construction materials and equipment, undermining the quality of education, health, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services available in Gaza. As a result, an estimated 78 percent of water in Gaza is unfit for human consumption, according to the UN.

Masafer Yatta Evictions Elicit Concern from U.S. and UN Representatives

During a UN Security Council (UNSC) briefing on June 27, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Tor Wennesland and Deputy Representative of the U.S. to the UN Ambassador Richard M. Mills issued statements expressing concern regarding evictions of Palestinians in the West Bank's Masafer Yatta community. Masafer Yatta was initially designated as a closed military zone by Government of Israel (GoI) authorities in the 1980s, placing residents at risk of forced eviction, demolition of homes and infrastructure, and transfer. As a result of an Israeli judicial decision issued in

May permitting the forced eviction of residents from closed military areas, approximately 1,200 Palestinians in Masafer Yatta face imminent risk of forced eviction and displacement, potentially the largest displacement of Palestinians since 1967, the UN reports. Overall, approximately 20 percent of the West Bank has been designated as firing zones, affecting more than 5,000 Palestinians across nearly 40 communities.

KEY FIGURES



1.2 Million

People UNRWA intends to reach with food assistance in the West Bank and Gaza in 2022



\$2.6 Million

In dedicated USAID/BHA funding for protection activities in FY 2022



\$9 Million

In dedicated USAID/BHA funding for MPCA activities in FY 2022

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

FOOD SECURITY

Through funding to UNRWA, WFP, and two INGOs, the USG is helping food-insecure Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza meet their basic food and nutrition needs through a variety of complementary modalities, including in-kind food assistance, electronic vouchers, cash assistance, livelihoods support, and emergency cash for work. With State/PRM and other donor funding, UNRWA provides food assistance to more than 1.2 million Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and Gaza affected by deteriorating socioeconomic conditions. Meanwhile, new USAID/BHA funding will enable WFP and two INGOs to provide affected populations with electronic food vouchers, multipurpose cash assistance, and emergency livelihoods support, ultimately helping more than 210,000 Palestinians meet their rising household food needs in the coming months.

PROTECTION

The USG supports a range of humanitarian protection programs for at-risk populations in the West Bank and Gaza, with a focus on the needs of women and children, through UNRWA and the International Medical Corps (IMC). State/PRM partner UNRWA supports children and families with mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS) in schools and health care centers, with an emphasis on the prevention of gender-based violence. Through dedicated State/PRM funding, UNRWA is also enhancing its capacity to identify and correct protection risks in its facilities. Separately, through support to IMC, USAID/BHA funding helps increase access to protection-related health care services and expand MHPSS for conflict-affected Palestinians in Gaza, with a focus on community outreach, group PSS counselling, personalized consultations, and psychological first aid. The INGO also supports the safety and wellbeing of children through the provision of group activities and individual support services for children, as well as support services for parents and caregivers aimed at strengthening the protective environment for children and supporting their resilience and recovery.

MPCA

With funding to Mercy Corps, USAID/BHA supports the distribution of MPCA to help households meet their basic needs, reduce the use of negative coping strategies, and enhance vulnerable individuals' resilience in the face of future shocks. In 2021, Mercy Corps also supported Gazans

affected by the May 2021 escalation with emergency MPCA.



\$2.1 Million

In dedicated USG funding for life-saving health care activities in FY 2022

HEALTH

USAID/BHA and State/PRM support health programming throughout the West Bank and Gaza to reduce the transmission of disease and bolster health care capacity, contributing to reduced preventable mortality and morbidity. State/PRM partner UNRWA provides health services to vulnerable Palestinian refugees in Gaza, including nearly 1.4 million telemedicine calls and more than 18,000 hospitalizations for Palestinian refugee patients who required non-coronavirus disease (COVID-19) treatment in 2021. USAID/BHA partner IMC provides basic primary health care services to communities across Gaza, including remote and underserved areas, to minimize individuals’ travel to already overwhelmed health facilities and overcome access barriers. The INGO also provides training to health care staff and provides trauma referral services at health care centers in Gaza, helping ensure continuity of health care amid the recent escalation of conflict.

CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- Protracted conflict, restricted access to basic services, and the adverse health and socioeconomic effects of the coronavirus disease pandemic have generated significant humanitarian needs in the West Bank and Gaza. Nearly 2.1 million Palestinians—approximately 40 percent of the combined population of the West Bank and Gaza—are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance in 2022, according to the UN. The figure includes the 1.6 million people targeted for assistance in 2022, more than 60 percent of whom reside in Gaza.
- In mid-May 2021, active conflict between Gol forces and Hamas exacerbated humanitarian needs and resulted in civilian casualties and population displacement in Gaza, as well as violence and unrest throughout Israel and the West Bank. Approximately 1.3 million people required humanitarian assistance due to the escalation of violence, some of whom were already relying on humanitarian assistance prior to the hostilities, the UN reports. On May 21, parties to the conflict implemented a ceasefire agreement, ending the 11-day period of active conflict.
- On December 29, 2021, U.S. Ambassador Thomas R. Nides renewed the disaster declaration for the West Bank and Gaza for FY 2022 due to the urgent humanitarian needs resulting from the complex emergency.

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA RESPONSE IN FY 2022¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
USAID/BHA			
Catholic Relief Services	Economic Recovery and Market Systems	West Bank and Gaza	\$5,000,000
IMC	Health, Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Practice, Protection	West Bank and Gaza	\$5,100,000

Mercy Corps	Multipurpose Cash Assistance	West Bank and Gaza	\$9,000,000
WFP	Food Assistance—Food Vouchers	West Bank and Gaza	\$5,000,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING			\$24,100,000
STATE/PRM			
UNRWA	Economic Recovery and Market Systems, Education, Food Assistance, Health, Logistics Support, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	West Bank and Gaza	\$10,000,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING²			\$10,000,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA RESPONSE IN FY 2022			\$34,100,000

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of July 15, 2022.

² State/PRM has provided an additional \$220,300,000 in FY 2022—including President Biden’s July announcement of \$201 million—to UNRWA across the region for its 2022 program budget and emergency appeals, a portion of which may be used in the West Bank and Gaza.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at interaction.org.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: cidi.org
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at reliefweb.int.

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)