



Joint Rapid Food Security Survey in the occupied Palestinian territory

Main Findings

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)
World Food Programme (WFP)

June 2008

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The Assessment

- The field work took place in the period between March 24 and April 4.
- Quantitative survey comprised of 2,133 household questionnaires in the WBGS.
- Qualitative assessment: 300 semi-structured Interviews with key informants and community organizations

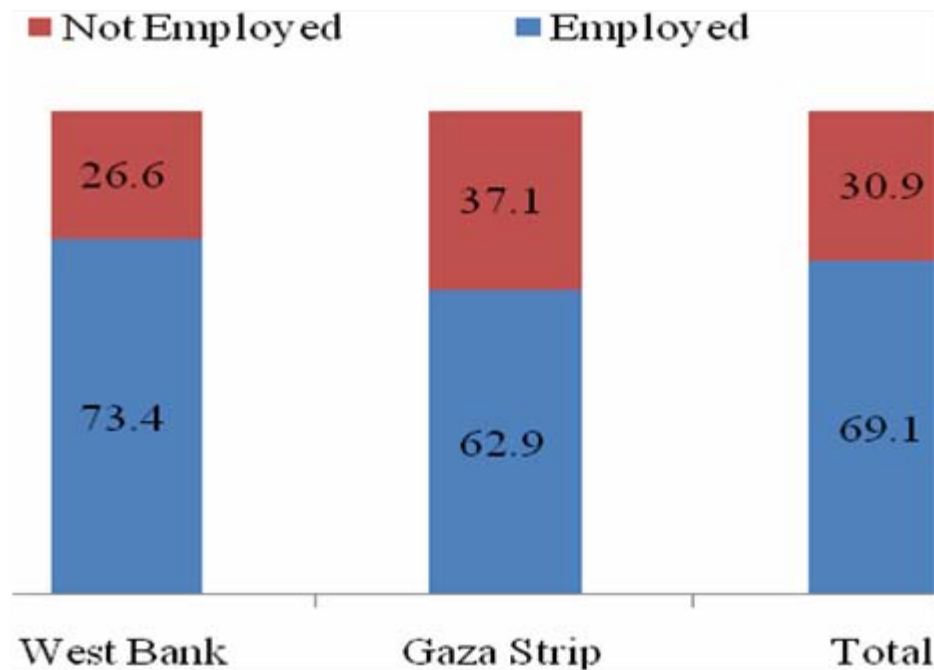
Context at the time of the study

- The **consumer price index for food has risen** from March 2007 to the end of April 2008 by 14.6 percent in the WB and 16.3 percent in GS (PCBS, 2008). Price of wheat flour increased by 73 percent in the WB and 68 percent in the GS.
- There is high **dependency on imported food items** for household food consumption. Less than 5 percent of the cereals and pulses consumed in the WBGS is locally produced.
- **Local production of food**, as well as rural livelihoods dependent on agricultural production, have been hit by three major shocks in recent months: the complete closure in the GS, the late frost, and a still ongoing drought in both the GS and the WB. This has lead to large fluctuations in the price of locally grown products.

Key Findings - Employment

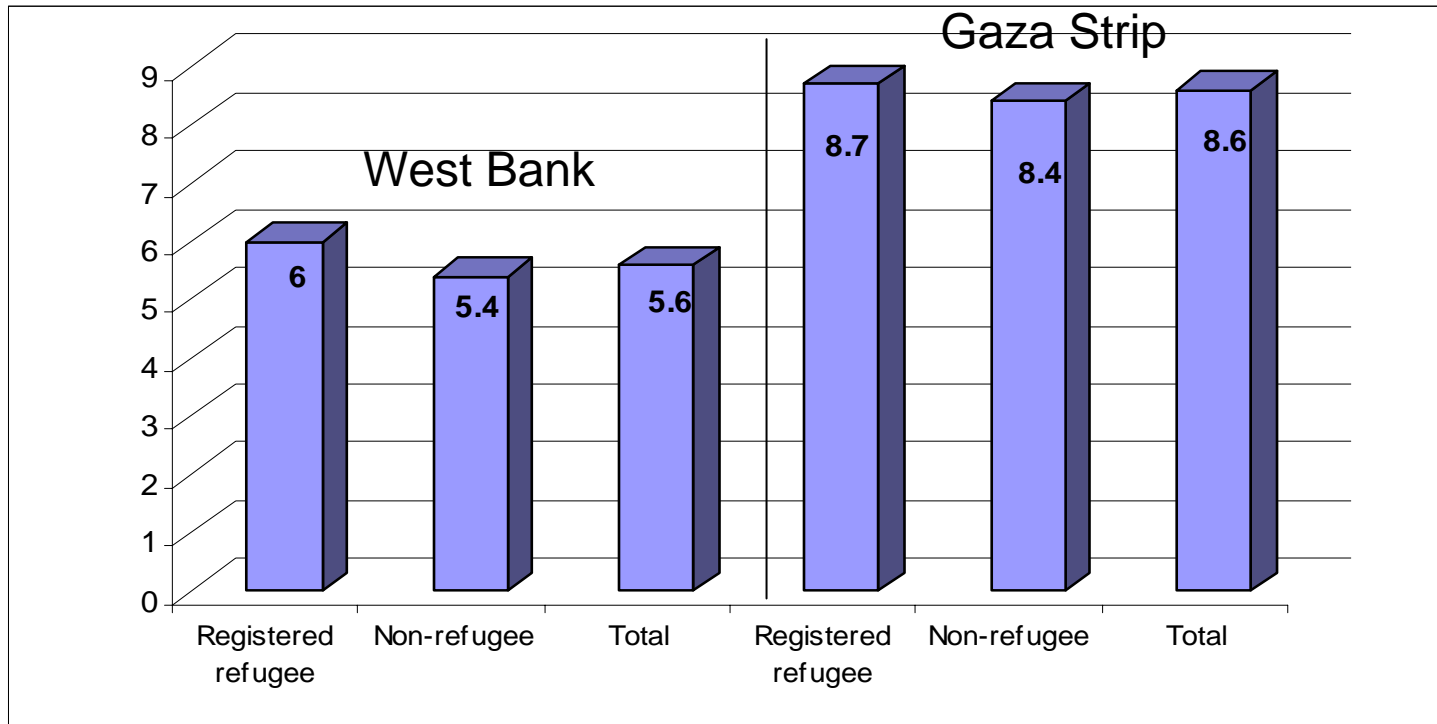
Many breadwinners are jobless

Distribution of breadwinners with respect to employment status



Key Findings - Dependency Ratio

Each worker supports many

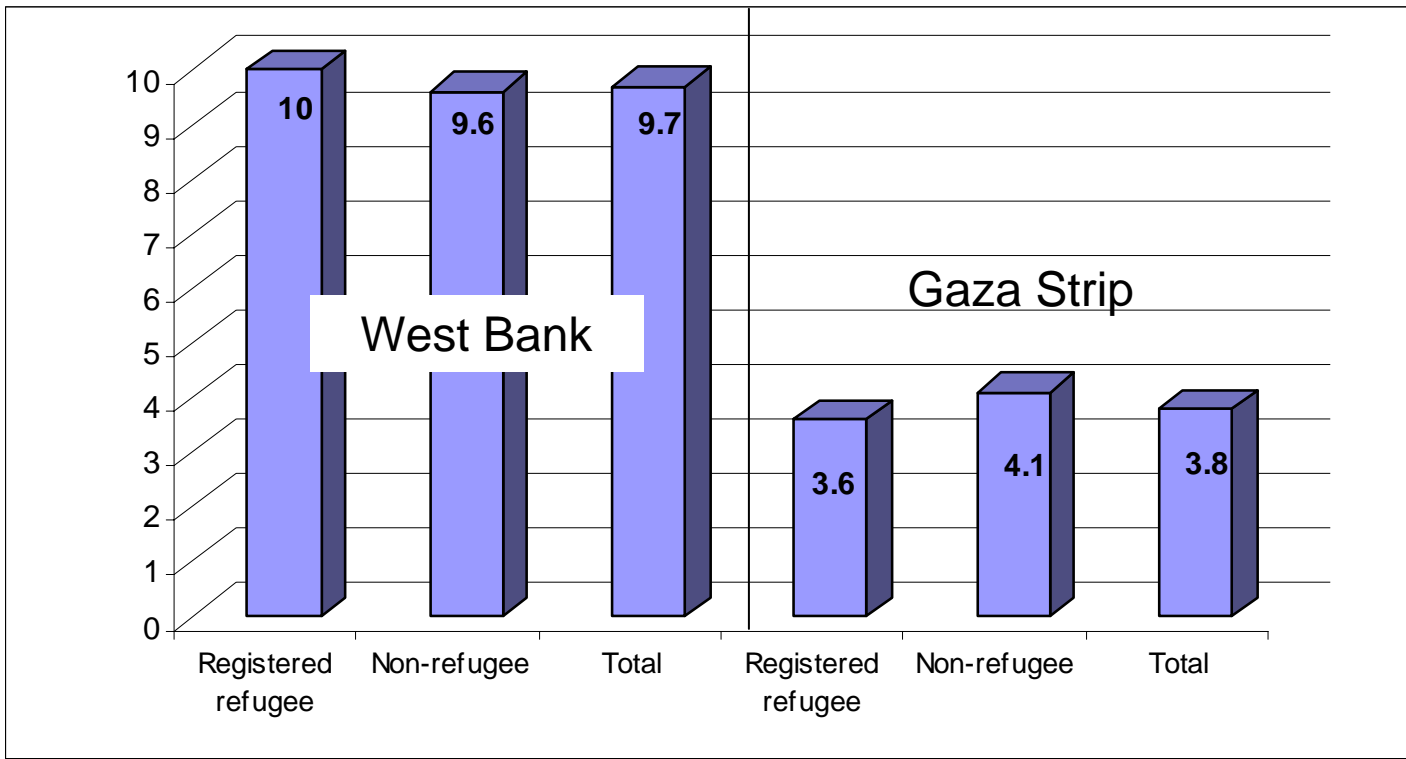


The economic dependency ratio is calculated by dividing the population by the total number of working persons.

Key Findings - Loss of Jobs

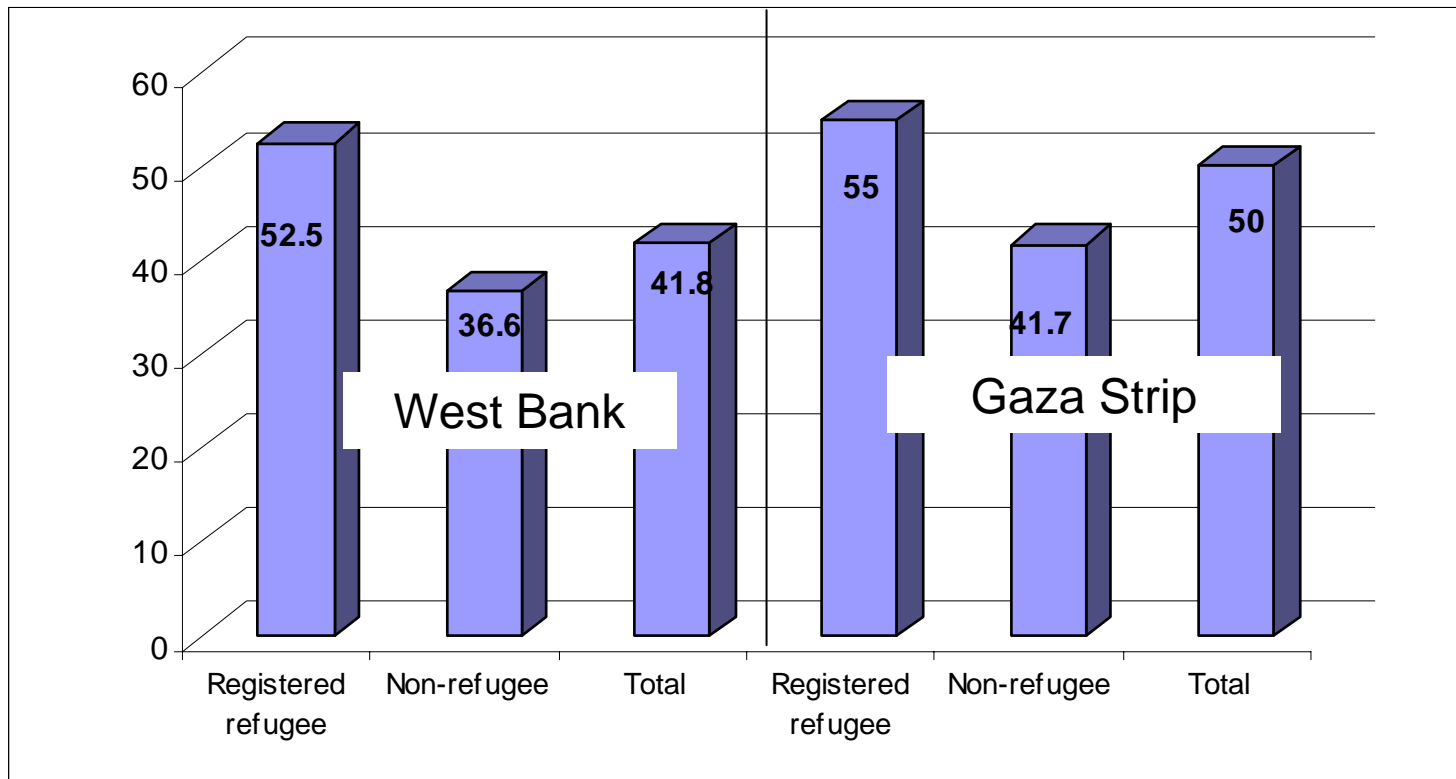
Many jobs lost in the first quarter of 2008 in WB, most jobs had already been lost in GS

Percentage of households reporting loss of 1 or more jobs



Key Findings - Loss of Income as a result of the loss of job

Percentage of income that the job loss caused as a percentage of total household income



Key Findings - Loss of income

Besides loss of jobs, other reasons for loss of income:

- loss of business or worsening business conditions (62.1%)
- loss of salaries (37.7%)
- lower levels of remittances (29%)
- lower levels of assistance (13.4%)

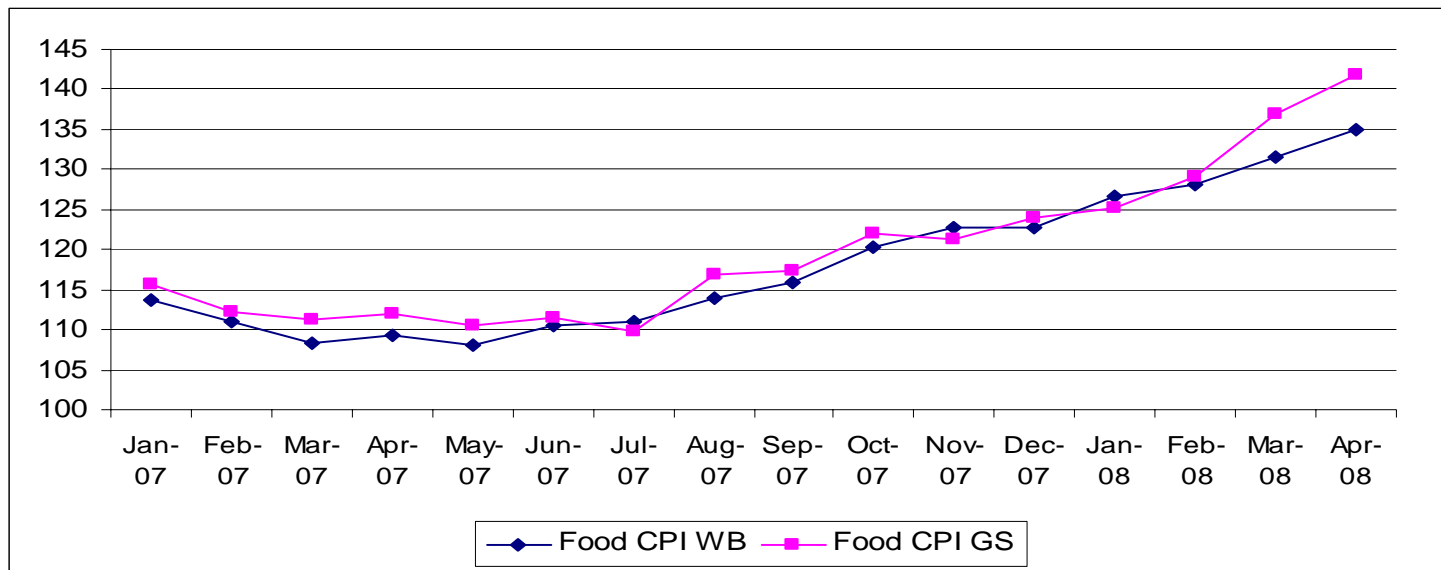
Key Findings - Expenditures on food

- **Expenditure on food has decreased among the various population groups.**
 - 66% of the households in poorest quintile have decreased their expenditures on food, while at the same time the price of food items has increased.
- **Half the surveyed population have decreased their spending on food, 89 percent reduced the quality, 75 percent reduced the quantity**
- **Share of food expenditure over total household expenditure has increased:**
 - reached 60% overall (36% in PECS 04), 56% (35.5%) in WB and 66% (37%) in GS.
 - very high for poorest 20% of the population at 73%.

Key Findings - Increase in Food Prices

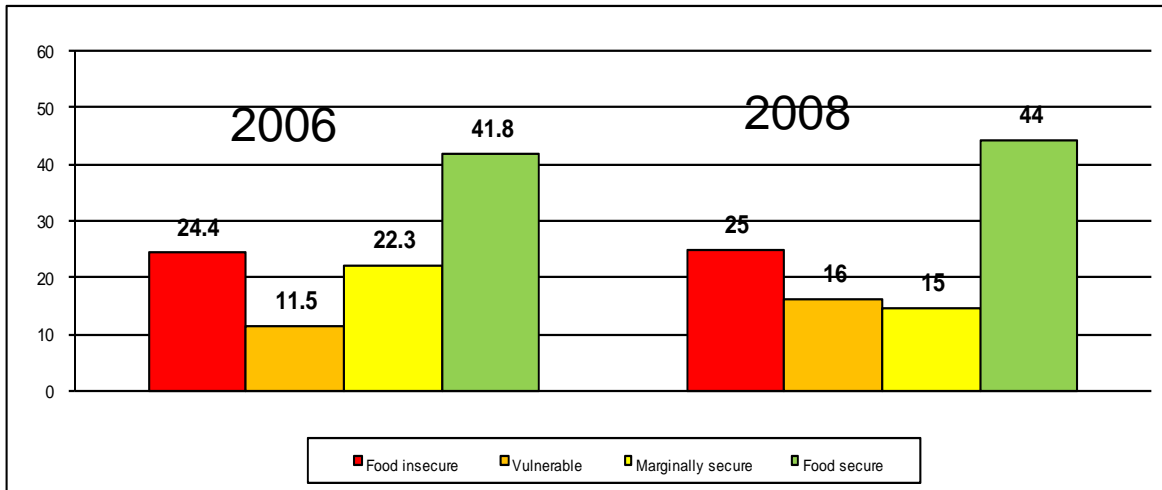
Almost all the surveyed households (96.8 percent) affected by the recent increase in food prices.

Evolution of Monthly Food CPI (Jan 07- Apr 08).

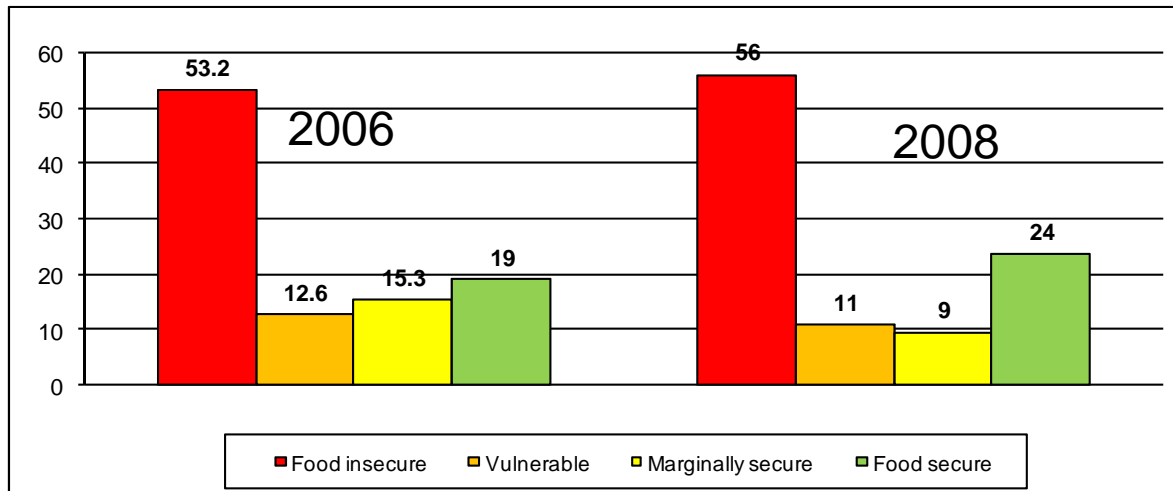


Food Insecurity Levels

West Bank

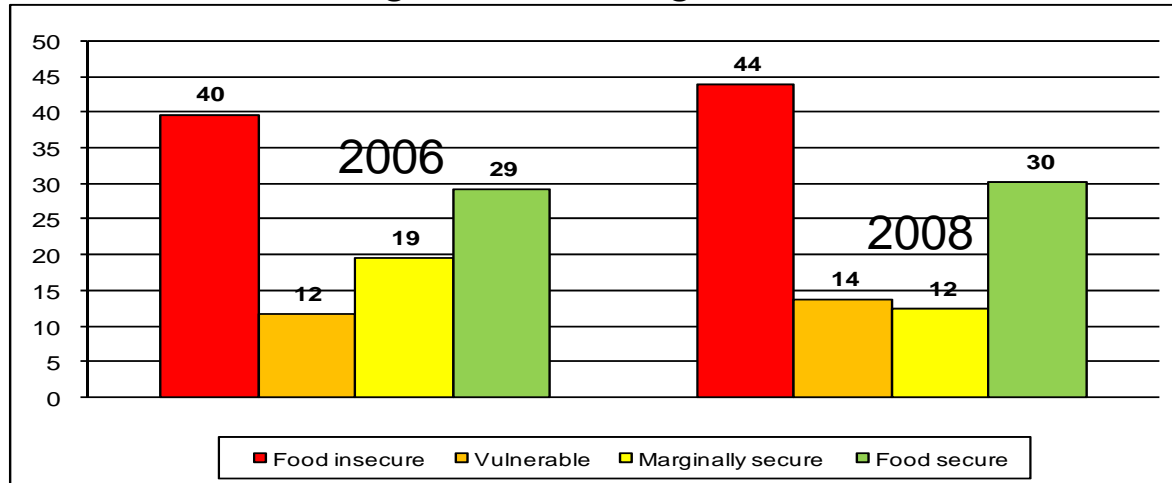


Gaza

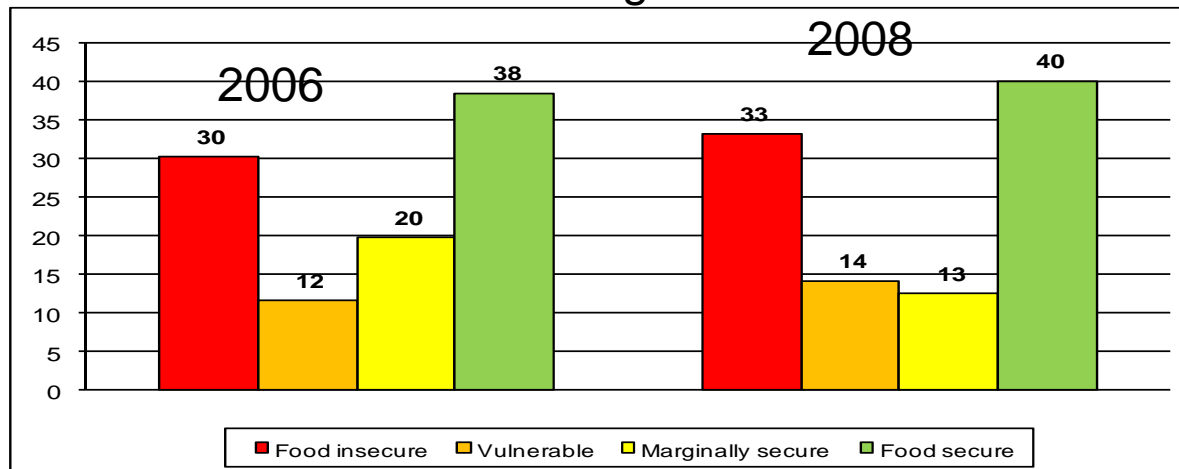


Food Insecurity Levels

Registered Refugees



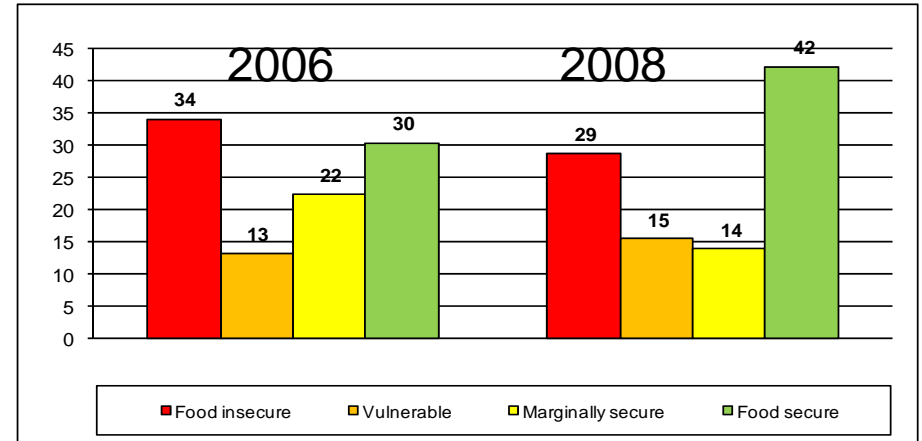
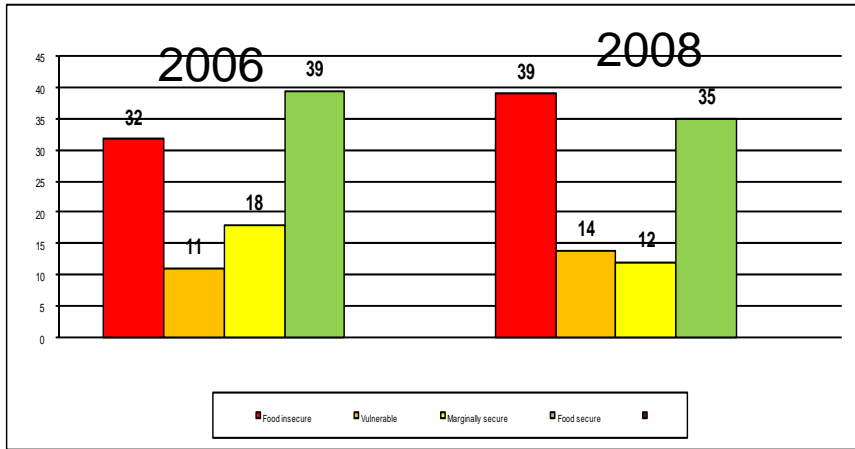
Non-refugees



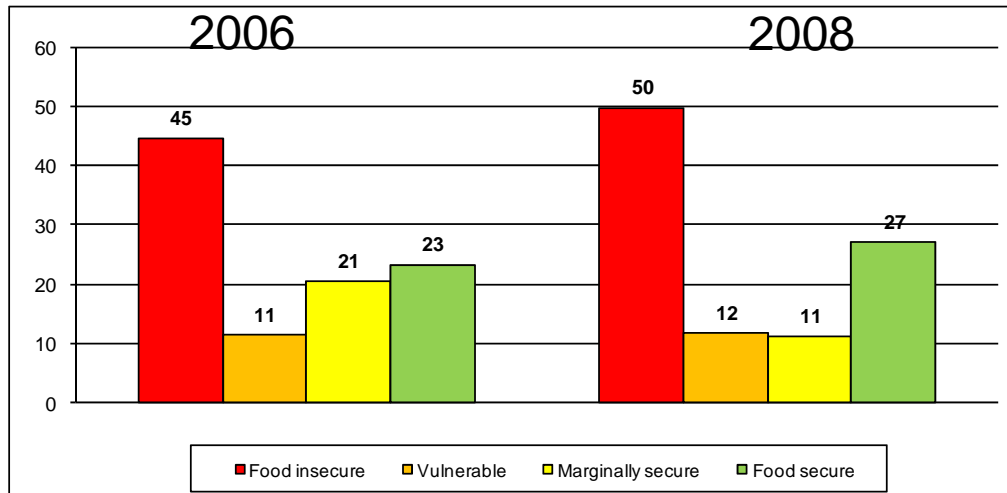
Food Insecurity Levels

Urban

Rural

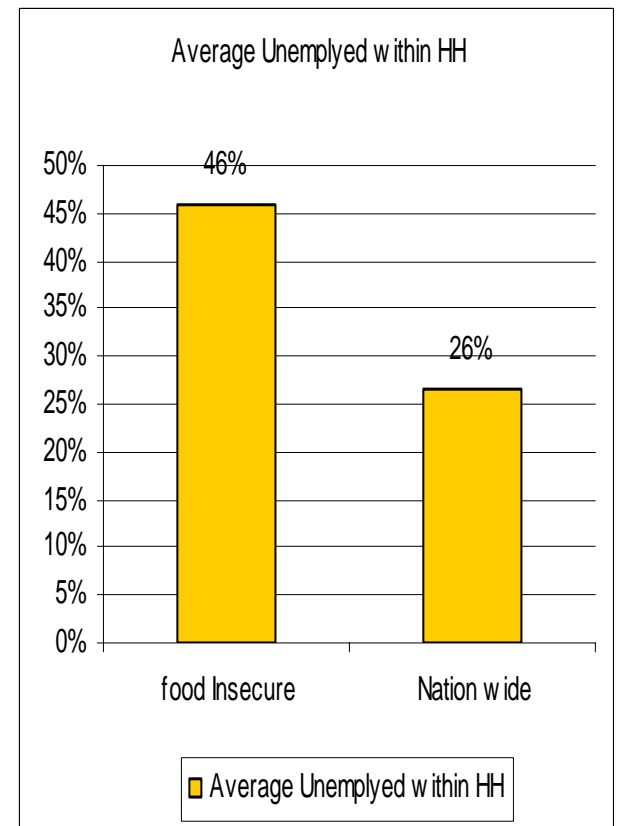
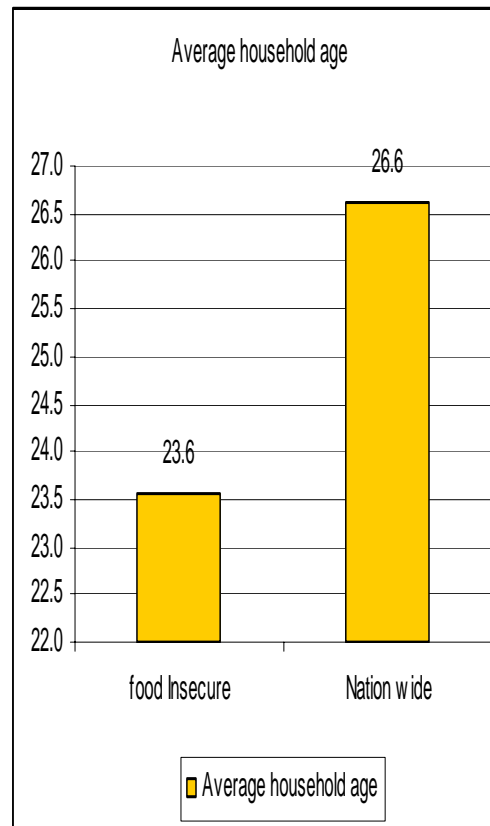
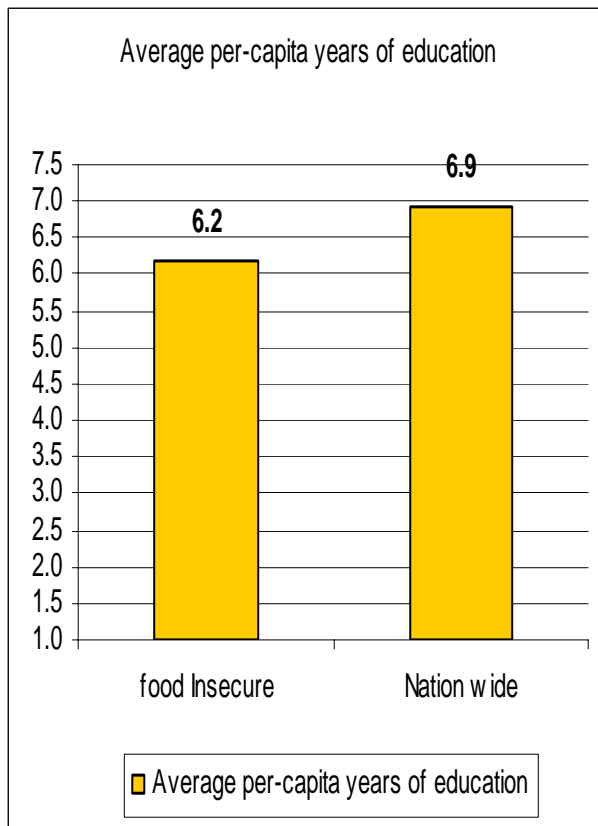


Refugee Camps



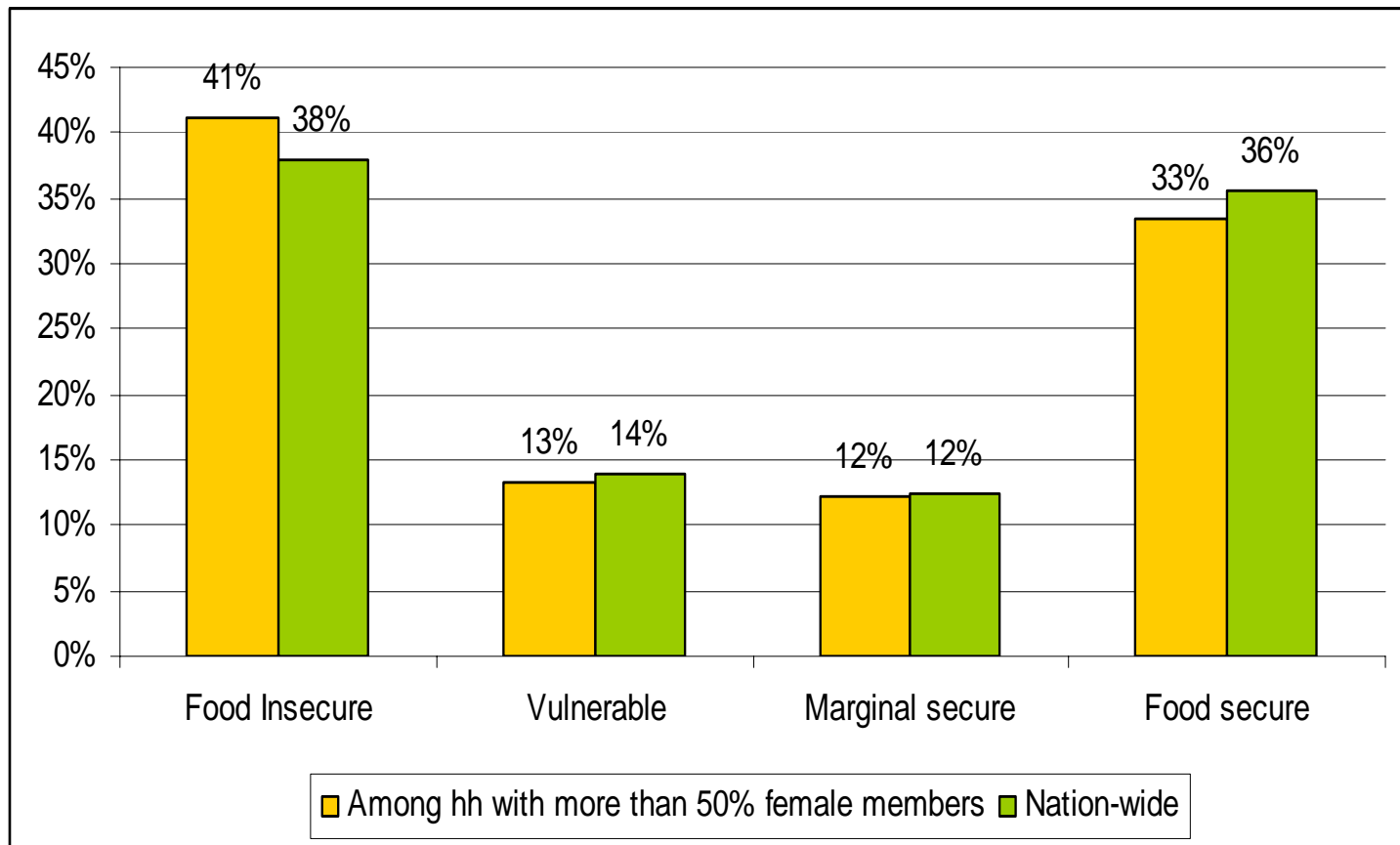
Food Insecurity Profiling

Young families, low education, unemployed



Food Insecurity Profiling

Higher vulnerability for families with many women



Coping mechanisms

- **59 percent of households are now relying on credit to buy food.** There is progressively less informal credit available (retailers are putting ceilings) while traders are extending credit only for essential items.
- **Most Palestinians have not paid their utility bills** (water and electricity) for many months
- **Palestinians are eating less, including fresh fruit, vegetables and meat. Many parents reduce their intake to allow for their children to eat.**

Reliance on aid

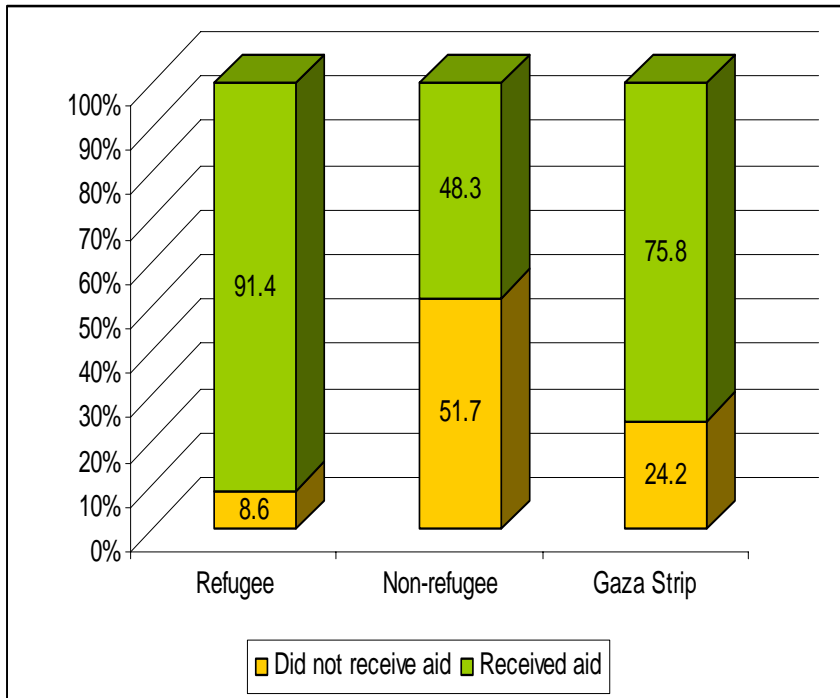
- Food aid and other safety nets have played a major role in mitigating the crisis.
- In GS 60 percent of households cite emergency assistance as a secondary source of income.
- For 52 percent of households, received assistance has become more important to their livelihood in the last three months.

Key Findings – Receiving Aid Over the Last 3 months

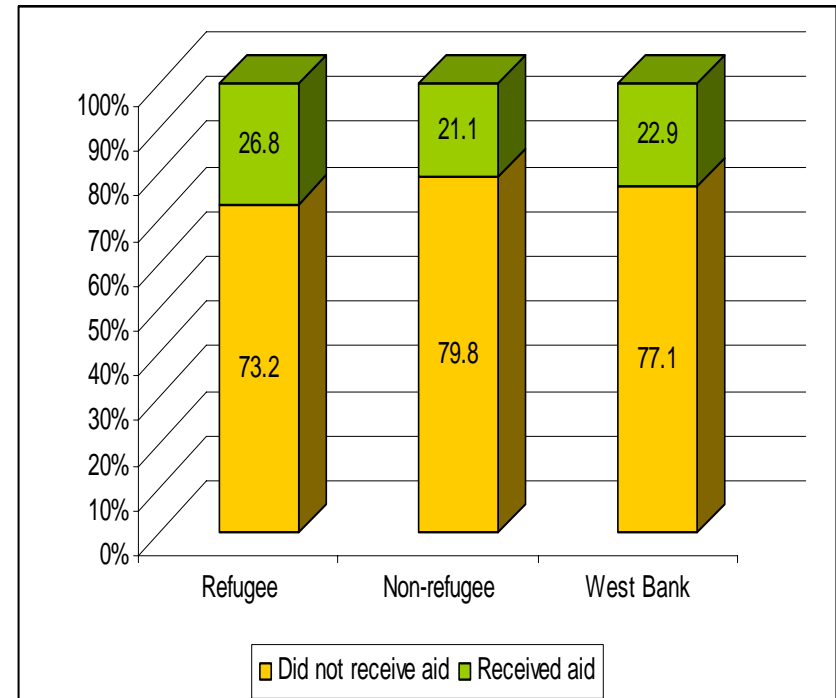
45% out of the total population:

76% in GS, 23% in WB

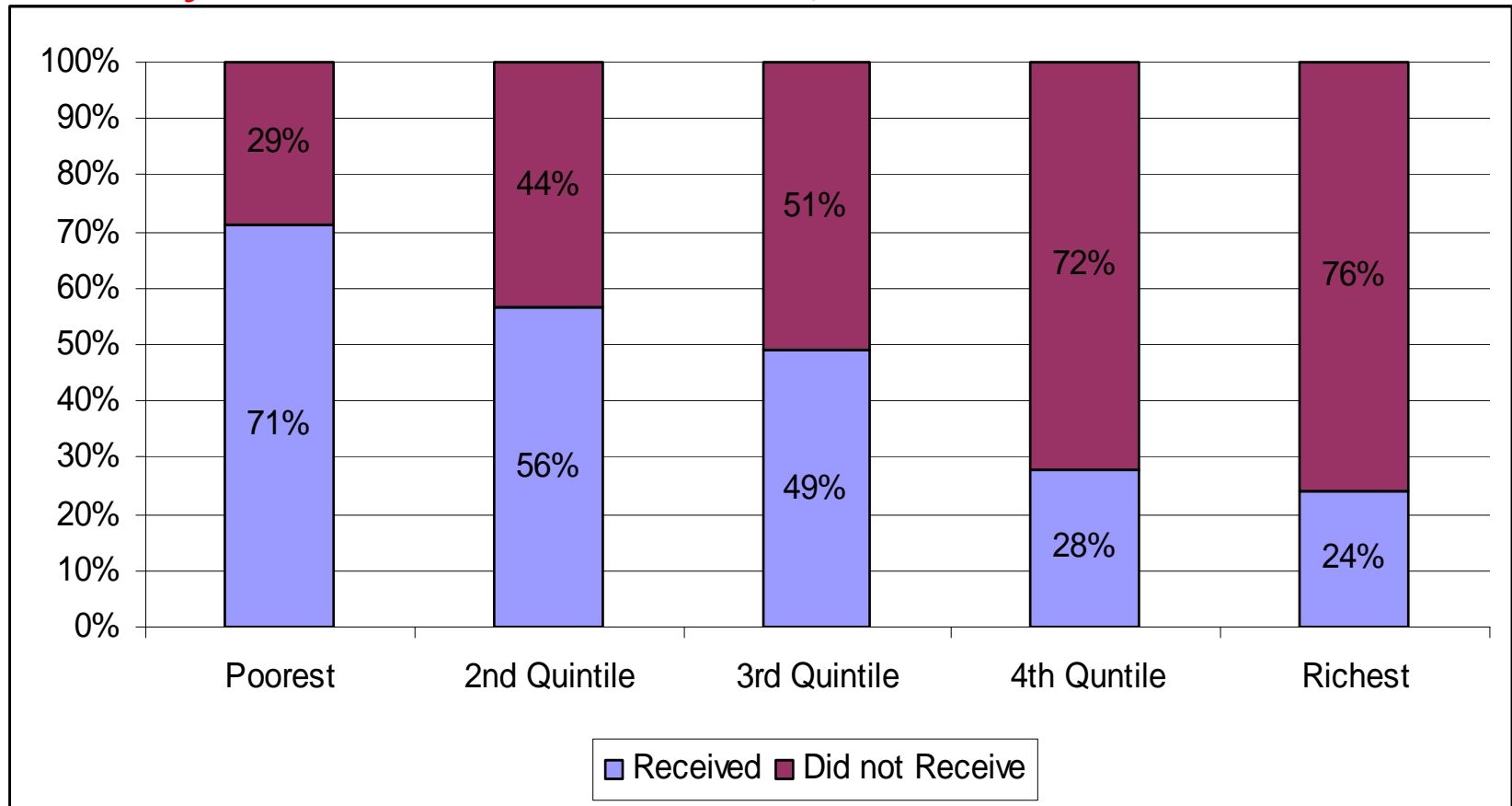
Gaza Strip



West Bank



Distribution of Households who Received/did not Receive (any kind of) Assistance by Expenditure Quintile



Under-coverage might include the "newly needy" not yet addressed by the targeting systems

Over-coverage might include those less needy thanks to the assistance provided

Not bad compared to other countries (World Bank 2004), these data require further analysis

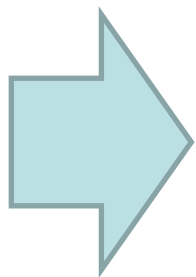
Of the poorest expenditure quintile, 68% rely extensively or totally on aid

General conclusions

- **Access/movement restrictions**
- Soaring food prices + falling incomes + high unemployment are **affecting food security**
- **Purchasing power**: double shock from decreasing income and increasing prices (food prices)
- More people may be falling into the **humanitarian caseload**
- International market prices undermine **agencies' resourcing and response capacity**
- The productivity in the **agricultural sector** is weakened by regional drought, land degradation and marketing constraints

Recommendations – Policy areas

- Fiscal, trade and exchange rate policy
- Poverty alleviation, Safety nets and Food assistance
- Agriculture (crops, livestock, water)



Monitoring system for
evidence-based policy

Recommendations - Poverty alleviation, Safety nets and Food assistance

- Meet the **immediate needs of the destitute** (Social/Special hardship Cases)
- Assist the **newly needy** with adequate levels of emergency assistance
- Complement **food assistance with livelihood support**
- Increase the **predictability of aid resources** to optimize safety nets and caseload coverage
- Enhance ongoing efforts for **improved targeting** between WFP and UNRWA, in consultation with MoSA
- Specifically for WFP and FAO, support to MoSA and implementing agencies to improve **social protection** programmes

Recommendations – Protection of Agriculture based livelihoods

- Enhance food production through **inputs**
- Creation/rehabilitation of **productive assets** (land reclamation, water infrastructure)
- **Support services and insurance** in the agriculture, livestock and water sectors
- On-farm and off-farm **income generating activities** and vocational training (e.g. food processing)
- Support the **Ministry of Agriculture and NGOs** with technical assistance and enhanced coordination