



State of Palestine Ministry of Agriculture

“Good Governance for Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition
in the OIC Member Countries”

Presented to the 15th Meeting of the COMCEC Agricultural Working
Group

(September 17th, 2020, Virtual Meeting)

Food & Nutrition Security Governance in Palestine

Palestine Context:

- Life in Palestine is constrained by restrictions on access to resources and the movement of people; restrictions on productive activities; and growing environmental threats.
- The Government of Palestine (GoP) has no control over its borders – land, air or sea, due to the occupation restrictions.

Food Security in Figures

- Around 1.7 million Palestinians (33 % of the population) are food insecure and in need of assistance.
- The available food security data,, showed that food insecurity was particularly severe and worsening in the Gaza Strip where the prevalence of food-insecure people accounted for 68.5 percent.
- Of these some 47 percent were severely food insecure and 22 percent moderately food insecure.

- The situation was less severe in the West Bank, although within it the prevalence of food insecurity has a remarkably different incidence, with Areas being worse-off and bearing peaks of food insecurity among vulnerable communities, like Bedouins and herding communities.
- As such, with the unprecedented impacts associated to the COVID-19 Pandemic, it could be expected that up to 50% of the population might face a condition of food crisis or worse.

The Government On-going Practices related to FNS Governance

- Currently, the food and nutrition security issues are followed up by the SDG 2 Working Group (SDG2WG).
- This group is led by the MoA, as chair of the SDG2WG and includes representatives of the governmental ministries (MoSD, MoH, MoE, MoNE, MoWA, EQA, PWA, PCBS, CWA, and MoL), in addition to representatives of the LNGOs and private sector.

- the Government undertook a strategic thinking process that led to the formulation of the National Policy Agenda 2017-2022 (NPA) and a series of related sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies that address the agriculture sector, such as the National Agriculture Sector Strategy and the National Nutrition Policy, Strategy and Action Plan, among others.
- Several discussions within the Government and other stakeholders call for the establishment of a FNS governance system within a multi-sectoral framework of reference and pivoted around the establishment of a Food and Nutrition Security Council (FNCS).

- In response to the various challenges facing the FNS, the MoA led the SDG2WG's efforts to the development of the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (NFNSP) 2030 and the National Investment Plan for Food and Nutrition Security 2020-2022 (NIP) and submitted them to the Prime Minister Office (Cabinet) in November 2019 for endorsement.
- The NFNSP and the NIP, formulated with support from the FAO-EU FIRST Program, addressed, among others, the FNS governance in Palestine.
- Atlas of sustainable Development: The Atlas was initiated by Prime Minister Office and jointly developed by United Nations Country Team and in coordination of SDGs National Team.

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Zero Hunger

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture



Resilient Communities

Meeting communities' basic needs
Revitalizing agriculture
and strengthening rural communities

2.1.

Universal access to safe and nutritious food

By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)

Regional and territorial disparities, as well as disparities among population groups, are characteristic traits of food insecurity and malnutrition in Palestine. In addition to the disparities between the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the prevalence of food insecurity within the West Bank also has a remarkably different incidence, with Area C being worse-off with the highest peaks of food insecurity among Bedouins and herding communities. Similar pockets of high food insecurity can be found in all disadvantaged groups suffering from vulnerabilities, including female headed households, refugees, small-scale farmers, among others.

Source: Elaboration on SEFSec survey data and selected UNCT studies.

Population Food Insecurity (FIES)

By refugee status

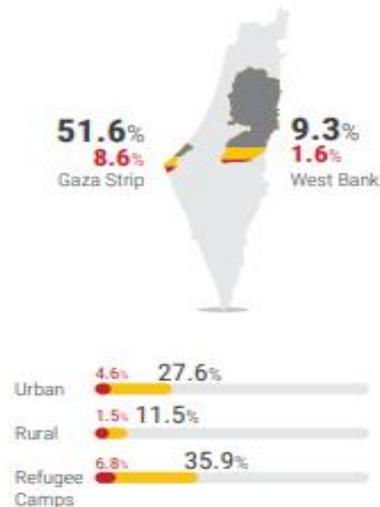


By the sex of the head of the household

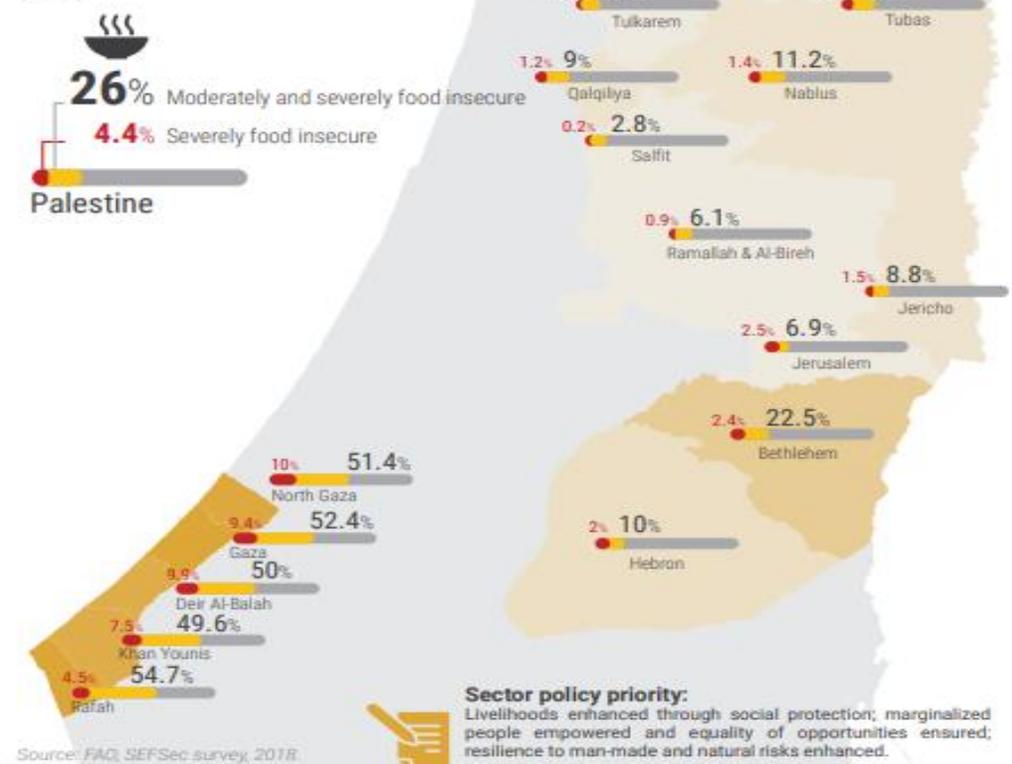


■ Moderately and severely food insecure
■ Severely food insecure

By region and locality type



Population food insecurity per governorates (FIES)



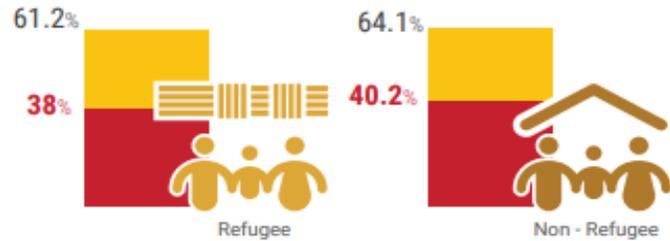
Source: FAQ, SEFSec survey, 2018.

Sector policy priority:

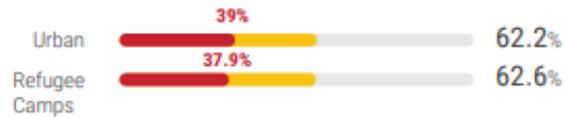
Livelihoods enhanced through social protection; marginalized people empowered and equality of opportunities ensured; resilience to man-made and natural risks enhanced.

Gaza Strip

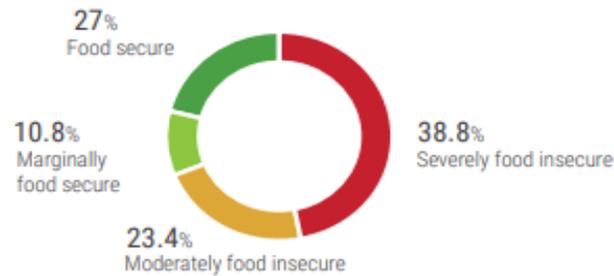
Household food insecurity by refugee status



Household food insecurity by locality type

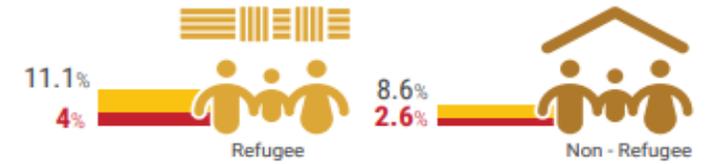


Households food insecurity by severity



West Bank

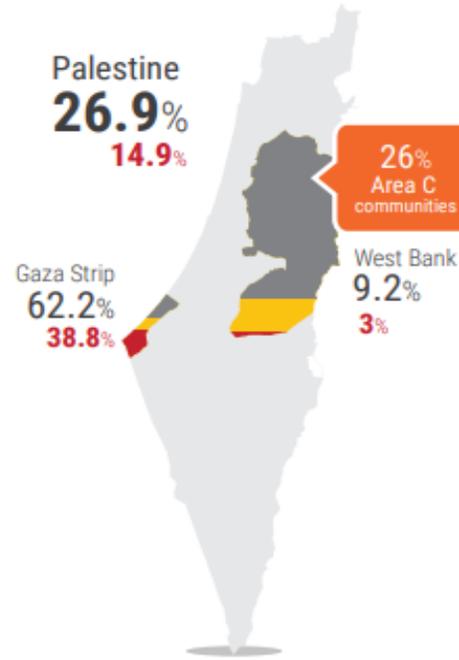
Household food insecurity by refugee status



Household food insecurity by locality type



Households food insecurity by severity



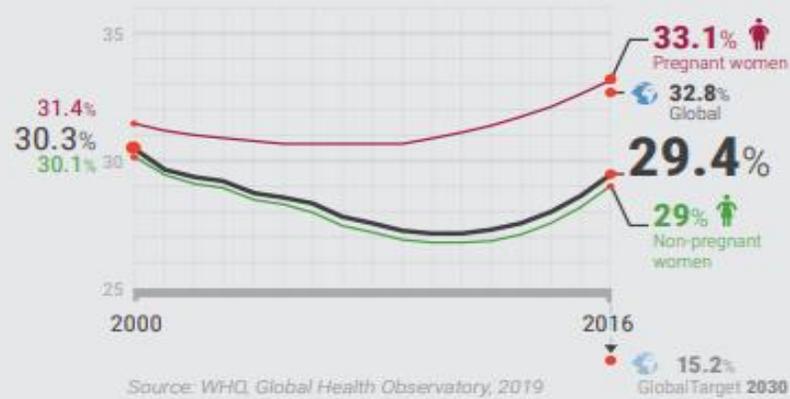
■ Moderately and severely food insecure
 ■ Severely food insecure

Source: FAQ, SEFSec survey, 2018.



"Food insecure households have **more family members** than food secure families, a much **higher economic dependency ratio**, and **lower income**, a higher incidence of **insufficient dietary intake** as well as a **poor or borderline food consumption score**. **Unemployment** of the head of households is more likely among food insecure households than food secure households. And the presence of **disability, elderly, and chronic illness** within the household is correlated with higher levels of food insecurity. Gender also affects (positively for men and negatively for women) the incidence of food insecurity among Palestinian households. Almost one fourth of male-headed households are food insecure, compared to one third of female-headed households, a difference that is relatively stable across time."

Anemia among women of reproductive age



Anemia among pregnant women in **marginalized communities in Jordan Valley**

Source: Palestinian National Institute of Public Health, Prevalence and Determinants of Malnutrition and Intestinal Infections among Children and their Mothers in the Jordan Valley, 2016.

Micronutrient deficiencies in Palestine

Micronutrient deficiency constitutes a public health condition of epidemic proportions. They exact heavy tolls in terms of ill-health, premature death and lost earnings. Deficiencies reduce the work capacity of individuals and entire populations, bringing serious economic consequences and obstacles to national development. They are apparent among the most vulnerable groups of the population such as pregnant or lactating women and children. Deficiencies are largely due to Palestinian household consumption patterns of energy dense rather than nutrient dense nutrition and the insufficient consumption of fruits and vegetables. The prevalence rates of all micronutrient deficiencies (except for Vitamin A and E) tended to be higher in the Gaza Strip than in West Bank across all vulnerable groups, pregnant women, lactating women and children between the ages of 6 and 59 months. Overall, the most vulnerable and poorest are disproportionately affected by micronutrient deficiencies, and these groups stand to gain the most by their reduction.



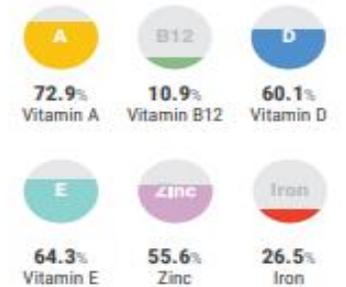
Deficiencies among pregnant women (18 - 43 years)



Deficiencies among lactating women (18 - 48 years)



Deficiencies among children under five (6 - 59 months)



Source: Ministry of Health, Palestinian Micronutrient Survey, 2013; WHO, Micronutrient Deficiency - the Challenge, 2019.

2.2.

End all forms of malnutrition

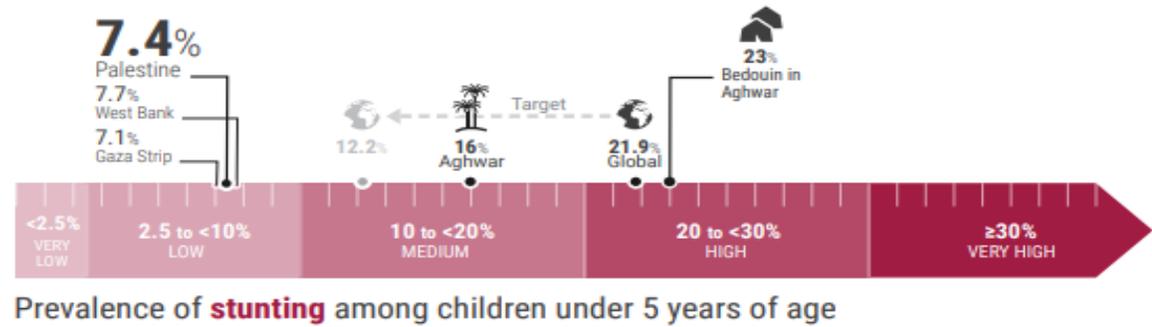
By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.

2.2.1 Prevalence of stunting

Height for age is greater than two standard deviations below the median of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards among children under 5 years of age

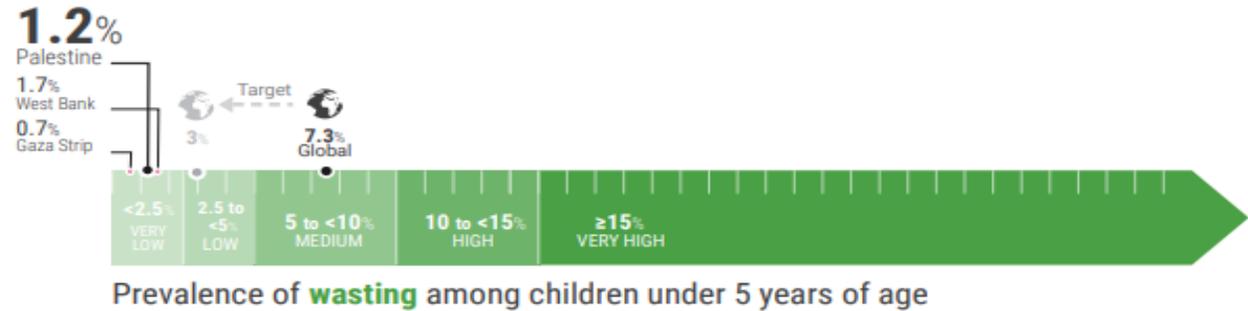


Poverty, food insecurity, poor dietary habits and sedentary lifestyles were found to be the major drivers of malnutrition in Palestine. The prevalence of undernutrition (stunting and wasting) is low at national level. However, a closer look into the Palestinian undernutrition situation reveals higher prevalence among vulnerable communities.



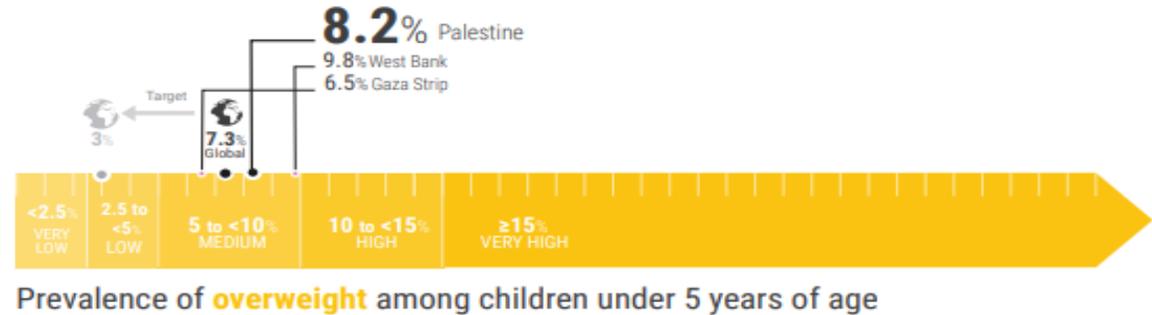
2.2.2 Prevalence of malnutrition

Weight for height is greater than two standard deviations from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards among children under 5 years of age, by type (wasting and overweight)



Sector policy priority:

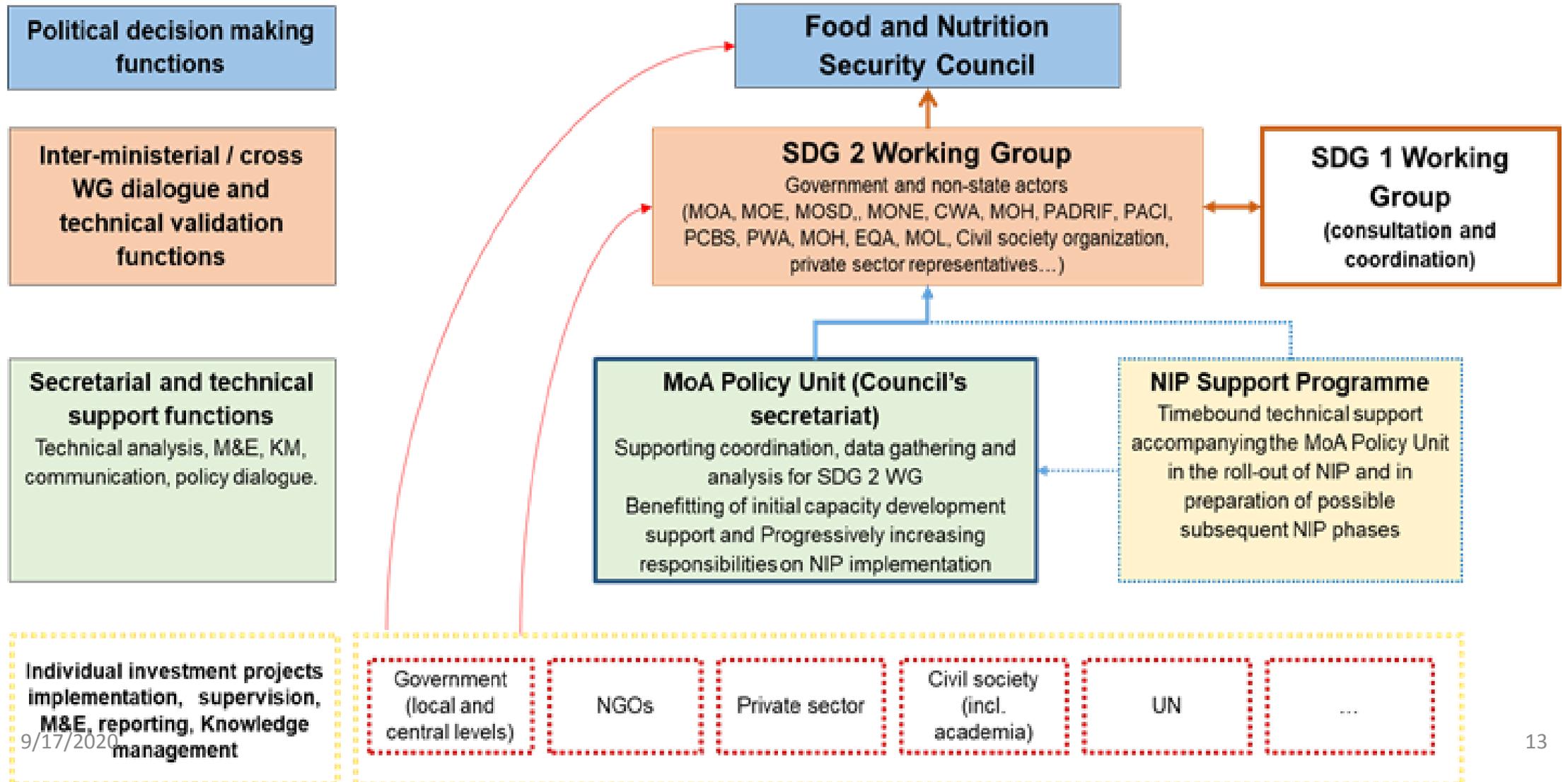
Effectively implement programs promoting nutrition; ensure food safety along all food supply chains; enhance food and nutrition education and awareness.



The FNS Governance's Way Forward

- The Ministry of Agriculture would be responsible for overseeing inter-institutional coordination and policy dialogues on issues addressed by the NFNSP.
- The FNSC would be responsible for decisions at the inter-ministerial level. It would be responsible for coordinating NFNSP/NIP 2020-2022 interventions, overseeing NFNSP implementation and related processes, and providing arguments for higher-level deliberative bodies.
- The SDG2WG would be serving as the technical task force of the FNSC and, assisted by the Policy Unit of the MoA, will monitor and evaluate FNS-oriented interventions.

The three bodies will interact as shown in the figure below.



The Challenges Facing the FNS Governance in Palestine

- Outbreaks of COVID-19 pandemic and increase of infected people.
- Israeli Occupation rules on land confiscation and the Israeli plans to proceed with annexation of parts of agricultural lands specially in the Jordan Valley.
- The government lacks of the human and financial resources needed to address the existing FNS issues. Depending heavily on donor support, which has been shrinking over the past few years, the scarce human and financial resources allocated to FNS hamper the Government ability to respond effectively to people's needs.

Thanks for listening

SAMER TITI

