



## “I couldn’t remember the last time we ate fresh fruit and vegetables”



Project helps 3,600 of the most vulnerable Gazan families affected by COVID-19 meet their essential food needs



Using a CRS e-voucher, Mohammed selects the vital food and living supplies he needs most. Photo by Mohamed Reefi for CRS

Mohammed and his six family members live in Gaza city. Before the COVID-19 outbreak, he worked as a repairman at a wedding venue. When virus precautions closed all venues, he was left without an income, leaving him unable to provide food and basic living supplies for his large family, including his parents. The situation worsened after his elderly father became infected with the virus and died in late December. As a result, his family was quarantined, unable to leave their house for two weeks.

Thanks to generous funding from the occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund, Mohammed and his family are receiving three months of assistance from Catholic Relief Services and our local partners—the Life and Hope Association and the Palestinian Organization for Development—to buy vital food and basic living supplies. They are among the 3,600 families selected across the Gaza Strip to participate in the project, given the impact of COVID-19 on their ability to meet their basic needs. This support is critical for Mohammed’s family. They are now accessing a diverse and healthy diet that was impossible before.

Mohammed was desperate to provide food for his family. “I used the assistance to buy many food items, including cheese, canned items, beans, vegetables and poultry.”

As COVID-19 broke out in Gaza, CRS modified its project to ensure Mohammed’s and other families could safely redeem their electronic vouchers. CRS and its vendors put protective measures in place in the shops. CRS also uses text messages, phone calls and flyers to ensure families have accurate and timely information on how to stay safe while accessing project services. CRS vendors deliver to families who prefer such an option.

“ They were the hardest days of my life. I was unable to provide food or hygiene materials to protect my family, and I couldn’t go out to seek help. When I heard from CRS, I was very happy and relieved.

**Mohammed**  
Project participant, Gaza

