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**UNRWA SEEKS \$30 MILLION FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO YARMOUK AND OTHER AREAS****17 April 2015****Jerusalem**

UNRWA is seeking an immediate injection of US\$ 30 million to provide life-sustaining assistance to the 18,000 civilians from Yarmouk, including 3,500 children, and those affected by conflict and displacement in other areas, during an initial 90 day rapid response. This emergency call for funds forms part of the [UNRWA Syria Crisis Appeal](#), which provides critical humanitarian support to 480,000 Palestine refugees throughout Syria and to those displaced to Lebanon and Jordan.

"This remains a volatile, rapidly changing environment of armed conflict and we must be prepared to respond to those in need, wherever they are", explains Michael Kingsley-Nyinah, UNRWA Director in Syria.

Over the past days, UNRWA has significantly expanded its response in areas neighbouring Yarmouk, where civilians from Yarmouk have sought shelter. Yesterday, UNRWA was able to hold a fourth distribution mission to Yalda, an area the Agency previously had not had presence, but which now temporarily hosts hundreds of families displaced from Yarmouk. UNRWA will expand this operation to the neighbouring areas of Babla and Beit Saham in the coming days. Emergency aid is distributed by UNRWA staff and medical personnel have established a mobile health point, treating over 400 patients over the previous days. Assistance is provided to Palestinian and Syrian families displaced by the eruption of violence in Yarmouk, and also host communities of Yalda, Babla and Beit Saham. UNRWA missions deliver a broad range of critical humanitarian materials to each of these families, including food, medical supplies, water purification treatments, mattresses, blankets, family kitchen sets and hygiene kits.

"The cooperation with a wide range of partners, including local leaders and the Syrian authorities, has been constructive," explains Michael Kingsley-Nyinah, "We are also grateful for support from some key donors, who have fully grasped the urgency of the situation. But the Agency cannot fully respond to this escalation without a major increase in funding."

The desperate situation in Yarmouk characterizes the severe suffering of civilians trapped in the Syria conflict, and the particular vulnerability of Palestine refugees. Yarmouk has been cut off from the world for almost two years, with the remaining residents deprived of food, water, and subjected to frequent eruptions of armed violence. Despite intermittent distributions of humanitarian aid by UNRWA, the situation in Yarmouk is one of extraordinary misery. Yarmouk is not the only crisis facing Palestine refugees in Syria: UNRWA requires generous contributions to ensure that the needs of 480,000 Palestine refugees in Syria are met.

Addressing the international community, UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl, in his foreword, describes the urgency of the response. "The eyes of the world are on Yarmouk. But the eyes of all Palestine refugees in Syria are on us. Let us make sure they will not find our resolve wanting."

[Click here](#) to read the full appeal.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and is mandated to provide assistance and protection to a population of some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip to achieve their full potential in human development, pending a just solution to their plight. UNRWA's services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, and microfinance.

Financial support to UNRWA has not kept pace with an increased demand for services caused by growing numbers of registered refugees, expanding need, and deepening poverty. As a result, the Agency's General Fund (GF), supporting UNRWA's core activities and 97 per cent reliant on voluntary contributions, has begun each year with a large projected deficit. Currently the deficit stands at US\$ 100 million.

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