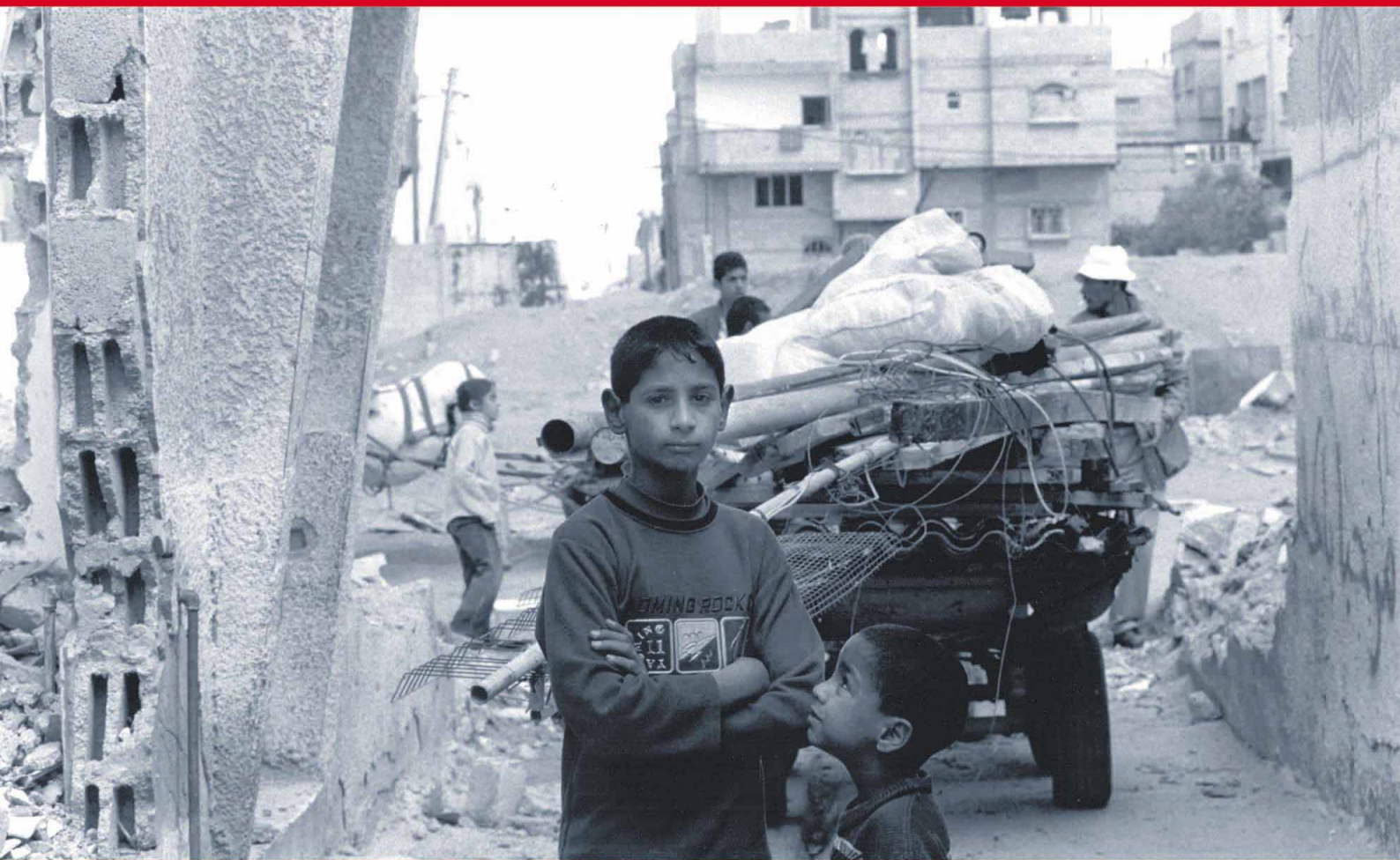


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Emergency Appeal

2008



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providing humanitarian assistance
to palestine refugees since 1950

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Foreword



Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank continue to endure deplorable levels of hardship and despair. As livelihoods crumble and dependency on aid handouts deepens, ever-tightening restrictions on movement and ongoing conflict are placing Palestinian society under considerable and increasing strain.

The situation on the ground has deteriorated in recent months. From my offices in Gaza City I have witnessed first hand the pace and the extent of this decline. In Gaza, the entire population – 1.5 million persons, including one million refugees – are living under conditions of feudal siege, with borders closed to all but humanitarian goods and major reductions in the flow of electricity and fuel. With the private sector incapacitated, increasing numbers are turning to UNRWA for safety net support, including once self-sufficient entrepreneurs and businessmen who are now facing ruin, their operations halted and debt levels rising.

In the West Bank, increasing restrictions on movement – epitomised by the continued construction of the Barrier and its associated regime of closure - limit prospects for social and economic development and violate basic rights and freedoms. 2007 has seen more territorial fragmentation, with access to work, education and health services further compromised. The Government of Israel has recently informed UNRWA of its intention to introduce a new access regime in the West Bank; this would have a major impact on the communities we serve and further limit our ability to deliver vital humanitarian services.

The recent lifting of the embargo on the Palestinian Authority and resumption of salary payments to more than 160,000 public sector employees have had a positive impact on the lives of many Palestinians. We have responded by removing tens of thousands of families from our assistance rolls. At the same time, as a result

of the economic blockade on Gaza and a tightening of the access regime in the West Bank – alongside major hikes in the price of food commodities and increasing operational constraints – humanitarian assistance needs in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) remain extremely high. These needs will not diminish until there is a comprehensive political solution to the conflict.

UNRWA is appealing for nearly \$238 million in emergency assistance in 2008 for Palestine refugees, who remain amongst those worst affected by the protracted conflict. Refugees, who account for over 40 percent of the population of the oPt, consistently suffer higher levels of household poverty and unemployment than non-refugee Palestinians. They remain extremely vulnerable to economic shocks, especially in Gaza, which continues to bear the brunt of the conflict.

We launch this appeal at a time of renewed hope for progress on the political track. The need for such progress has perhaps never been more pressing. A breakdown in the current efforts to restart the peace process would not bode well. Just as the failure to build on the platform created by Israel's disengagement in 2005 ushered in a new spiral of poverty and violence, so any further stalling could cause the conflict to intensify and result in greater misery.

I call on you to support this appeal urgently.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Koning AbuZayd'.

Karen Koning AbuZayd
Commissioner-General, UNRWA

Executive Summary



Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank are living in conditions of severe hardship and social distress. A protracted socio-economic crisis, characterised by draconian restrictions on Palestinian movement and the repeated destruction of physical assets, has seen major increases in poverty and joblessness over the past seven years as household incomes have plummeted. Since the start of the *Intifada* in September 2000, the number of Palestinians below the poverty line has more than doubled; unemployment rates in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) have increased by a similar margin and are now amongst the highest in the world.

Following Hamas' success in the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections of January 2006 the crisis entered a new phase. As a result of the impounding of Palestinian tax and VAT revenues by the Government of Israel (GoI) and the donor boycott of the Palestinian Authority (PA), a quarter of the population was deprived of its main source of income. The Palestinian economy shrunk by 7 – 10 percent in 2006, whilst dependency on aid handouts reached unprecedented levels. Public sector service provision was also curtailed, as a result of strikes by employees and major cuts in resources, which prompted spikes in demand at UNRWA health facilities. Alongside continuing Israeli-Palestinian violence, this period also witnessed unprecedented levels of internal Palestinian conflict. The Gaza Strip, which faced large-scale and sustained Israeli military operations and was the scene of violent clashes between rival factions in the first half of 2007, was worst affected.

The lifting of the international embargo on the PA in the middle of 2007, following Hamas' ousting from the PA after its security forces seized power in Gaza, has relieved some of the pressure. Most importantly, it has allowed the resumption of full salary payments to public sector workers. However, it has been accompanied by a major intensification of the Israeli siege on the 1.5 million residents of Gaza. Since the middle of June, Gaza's main terminals for movement of people and goods have been closed, and tight restrictions placed on the passage of

all non-humanitarian goods through alternative, under-equipped crossing points. A range of basic commodities are currently either unaffordable or unavailable, whilst there are also reported shortages of certain medicines and supplies at hospitals and health clinics.

Closures are wreaking structural and potentially irrevocable damage on an inchoate private sector, with the Palestinian Federation of Industries recently reporting the closure of 95 percent of Gaza's factories and warning that entire sectors could collapse. UNRWA infrastructure projects valued at \$93m have been halted due to a lack of raw materials; under current conditions there is no scope for the resumption of these projects.

The GoI has also recently begun to reduce the supply of electricity and fuel to the civilian population of Gaza as part of a package of increased economic sanctions, despite warnings that such a step would be contrary to its obligations under international law.

In the West Bank, the continued construction of the Barrier and its associated regime is creating further territorial fragmentation. Recent months have seen an increase in the number of movement restrictions, whilst opportunities for rehabilitation and growth are being undermined by the ongoing razing of Palestinian land and the continued issuing of requisition and confiscation orders for Palestinian property. The GoI has recently announced a series of access restrictions which could have major implications on UNRWA's operations, increasing costs and reducing the Agency's ability to meet the needs of isolated communities.

Palestine refugees, who constitute over 40 percent of the total population of the oPt, are amongst those worst affected by the protracted emergency. They continue to endure far higher levels of poverty and unemployment than non-refugee Palestinians - in large measure due to their concentration in Gaza - and typically have fewer resources and assets to draw on in times of crisis.

In light of sharply deteriorating conditions in Gaza and continued vulnerability in the West Bank, in particular for families most affected by Barrier- and access-related restrictions, UNRWA is launching a new appeal for humanitarian assistance in 2008. Interventions are designed to: (i) mitigate the worst impact of the crisis on refugees, through social safety net support for the most vulnerable; (ii) guarantee that access to basic services is not compromised and; (iii) respond to the impact of conflict- and non-conflict related violence. Special capacity components will ensure efficient and responsive service delivery and to support emergency programme development, in line with UNRWA's broader Organisational Development Plan.

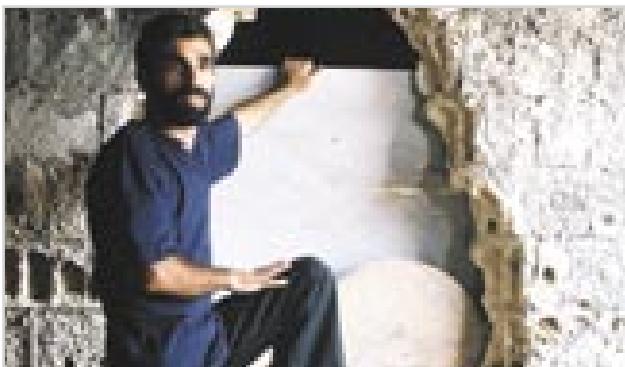
The nature of the emergency

A prolonged and persistent socio-economic crisis

Since the onset of the *Intifada* in 2000, the conflict in the oPt has precipitated the slide of the Palestinian economy into deep recession, leading to unprecedented rates of unemployment and poverty and steep declines in household incomes. Despite population growth of 30 percent between 1999 – 2006, the oPt economy has shrunk by almost 10 percent; by 2006 Palestinian incomes were languishing at 30 percent below their 1999 levels.¹

The complex web of restrictions imposed by the Government of Israel (GoI) on the movement of Palestinians and Palestinian commerce, coupled with the repeated destruction of Palestinian physical assets during Israeli military incursions - particularly in Gaza - has inflicted serious structural damage. This has led to a severe contraction of key private sector industries and generated an environment inimical to sustained growth and foreign investment. With the private sector incapable of absorbing high numbers of new labour market entrants, those unable to find work in an expanded public sector have joined the ever-increasing ranks of those dependent on humanitarian aid.

Against this backdrop, the international embargo on the Palestinian Authority (PA), initiated following Hamas' victory in the Palestinian Legislative Council elections of January 2006, had severe consequences. The withholding of PA customs and VAT revenues by the GoI and the suspension of direct donor funding to the PA – major sources of Palestinian public revenues – prompted an acute fiscal crisis, characterised by the non-payment of public sector wages and the weakening of government operations.²



The direct impact of the fiscal crisis in 2006 was the non-payment of around \$528m in PA employee salaries and a further decline of some US\$170m in recurrent and capital expenditures.³ As a result, following three years of growth, in 2006 Palestinian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) - a measure of the real value of services produced in the Palestinian economy – fell by between seven and ten percent. This compares to a decline of around four percent in Lebanon during the same year, when large parts of the country were devastated as a result of the war with Israel.⁴

Approximately 160,000 public sector employees only received 45 percent of their salaries in 2006, resulting in reduced household income levels for approximately one million persons, a quarter of the total oPt population. Refugees and Palestinians in Gaza, who were more likely to be employed by the PA than their non-refugee and West Bank counterparts,⁵ were those worst affected.

¹ PCBS national income accounts data. For a more detailed discussion of economic conditions in the oPt, see *Prolonged Crisis in the oPt: Recent Socio-Economic Developments*, UNRWA November 2007.

² According to IMF estimates, PA budgetary resources in 2006 were more than one-third lower than in 2005. See: *West Bank and Gaza: Fiscal Performance in 2006*, IMF March 2007.

³ Reduction in PA recurrent and capital expenditures is measured against 2005 expenditures.

⁴ Data for GDP in Lebanon is from the UN statistics division website : Source: UN Statistics Division website: www.unstats.un.org.

⁵ During 2006, 32% of all refugee employment was with the PA, compared to 19% for non-refugees. In Gaza, 42 % of all employed persons worked for the PA, compared to only 17% in West Bank.

There were consequent declines in living levels. According to data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), during 2006 the number of Palestinians living in official consumption poverty increased by almost nine percent, reaching some 1.6 million persons, or 36 percent of the population. Twenty-two percent of Palestinians were living in deep consumption poverty and therefore unable to meet basic needs of food, clothing and housing.⁶ Rates were higher still amongst Gazans and refugees: almost 55 percent of Gazans were below the poverty line in 2006, and 40 percent living in deep poverty. Official and deep poverty rates for refugees stood at 39 and 24 percent respectively. The proportion of working poor also remained high: one in four households with an employed head were below the poverty line in 2006.

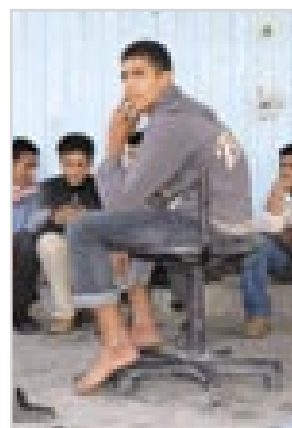
Recent economic developments

Hamas' ousting from the PA government after its security forces seized power in Gaza in June 2007 led to the lifting of the international embargo on the PA. This has allowed the PA to resume full salary payments to public sector employees, thus alleviating some of the worst effects of the crisis. However, these positive impacts have been offset by a frightening intensification of the siege in Gaza, where over one-third of all Palestinians in the oPt and two-thirds of refugees live.

The punitive measures imposed on Gaza by Israel since the Hamas take over include the closure of major crossing

points, restrictions on the entry of goods and an almost blanket prohibition on exports and reductions in power supplies. The inevitable consequence is the further impoverishment of an already vulnerable population, and reductions in levels of essential services.

The ongoing siege is also causing major and possibly irrevocable damage to a private sector that has been ravaged by several years of movement and related restrictions. During the first half of 2007, around 54 percent of work in Gaza was private sector driven, representing around 113,000 jobs.⁷ The majority of industries in Gaza are export driven and also dependent on Israel for raw materials⁸ and cannot function under current conditions. The Palestinian Federation of Industries reported in November that 95 percent of factories in Gaza had closed, leading to over 32,000 job losses.⁹ PCBS data also points to a major contraction of the construction sector, due to restrictions on imports of raw materials. From providing 10 percent of all jobs in 2003, its share of the labour force has now dropped to around three percent. UNRWA infrastructure projects valued at \$93m have been halted as a result of a lack of supplies.



Recent PCBS data indicates sizeable increases in unemployment in Gaza since the Hamas takeover, in a territory where rates were already amongst the highest in the world. Based on the relaxed definition of unemployment,¹⁰ between June and September 37.6 percent of the Gaza workforce was jobless; rates were higher still amongst refugees. This is an increase of almost 20 percent between the second and third quarters of the year, directly affecting over 130,000 persons or around 10 percent of Gaza's population.

In the West Bank, unemployment rates remain much higher than regional averages. Unemployment stood at 25.2 percent during the third quarter of 2007, up from 22.6 percent at mid-year point, largely as

⁶ See *Prolonged Crisis in the oPt: Recent Socio-Economic Developments*, UNRWA November 2007 and *PCBS Poverty in the Palestinian Territory*, August 2006.

⁷ UNRWA staff calculations based on PCBS LFS survey data, January – June 2007 and special data sets produced for UNRWA by PCBS on request.

⁸ *Two Years after London: Restarting Palestinian Economic Recovery*, the World Bank, Sept 2007.

⁹ The Portland Trust, *Palestinian Economic Bulletin*, November 2007.

¹⁰ All unemployment figures are according to the relaxed definition, which includes persons actively looking for work plus those able and willing to work but not seeking employment due to a conviction that no work will be found.

a result of seasonal changes. The proportion of the West Bank work force employed in the agricultural sector, where salaries remain low and many employees work as unpaid family members, continues to grow as movement restrictions limit access to other avenues of productive employment.

Across the oPt, increased unemployment rates since 2000 have translated into higher dependency rates, i.e. the number of persons supported by each worker. By the third quarter of 2007 these stood at 7.4 in Gaza and 4.9 in West Bank, compared to 5.9 and 4.3 on the eve of the *Intifada* in Gaza and the West Bank respectively.

The role of assistance in mitigating the growth of poverty in 2006

Whilst recent PCBS data points to the continuing effectiveness of UNRWA's emergency assistance in mitigating the impact of the crisis on refugees, it also confirms that humanitarian assistance was unable to alter the trend towards growing poverty in the oPt in 2006:

- during 2006, external assistance was responsible for reducing poverty amongst refugees from 47.3% to 39.2%, and amongst non-refugees from 36.6% to 33.9%. Assistance was between two and three times more effective in reducing poverty amongst refugees than non-refugees.
- between 2005 and 2006, the number of poor individuals in the oPt increased by 8.29% and the number of poor households increased by 10%.

UNRWA is the main provider of basic services to Palestine refugees in the oPt and by far the largest provider of humanitarian relief. Research suggests that more effective poverty reduction amongst refugees is due in part to better targeting of assistance and less 'leakage' of such assistance to the non-poor, as well as UNRWA's institutional capacity and the resources provided by donors. In 2006, poverty grew more slowly amongst refugees than non-refugees, further indication of the effectiveness of poverty alleviation interventions for refugees.

Research also indicates that the humanitarian assistance effort fell way short of the addressing the poverty gap, i.e. the amount of additional assistance required to bring poor individuals out of poverty. In 2006, the value of assistance provided by UNRWA to poor refugees in the oPt was around \$100 million. Data indicates that an additional \$484 million in humanitarian assistance would have been required to eliminate poverty amongst refugee households.¹¹

Tightening restrictions on movement and access

Israeli restrictions on the movement of Palestinians and Palestinian goods into and out of the oPt, within the West Bank and between the West Bank and Gaza continue to affect all aspects of Palestinian daily life. They hinder access to basic services, land and livelihoods and limit the potential for growth and development.

It has been widely acknowledged that a comprehensive overhaul of the closure regime is a prerequisite for Palestinian economic stabilization and recovery.¹²

However, the past 12 months have seen further tightening of these restrictions, characterised by the isolation of Gaza since Hamas' takeover and an increasing lack of geographic contiguity in the West Bank due to the continued illegal expansion of the Barrier and its associated regime and other settlement infrastructure. There are concerns in both Gaza and the West Bank that these restrictions may be tightened further in the coming months.

Gaza

Gaza's passenger terminals have been closed to almost all Palestinians since mid-June 2007, effectively imprisoning the 1.5 million residents of the Strip within its borders. Access for critically ill Palestinians needing medical treatment unavailable inside Gaza has also been curtailed, with many facing delays or denial of access. According to OCHA, during October 2007 27 Palestinian patients out of 789 who previously received a permit to leave Gaza for medical treatment were denied access;¹³ in late October it was reported that two Palestinian patients had died within the space of a week at Erez whilst awaiting permission from the Israeli authorities to cross.¹⁴



¹¹ For more details, see *Prolonged Crisis in the oPt: Recent Socio-Economic Developments*, UNRWA November 2007.

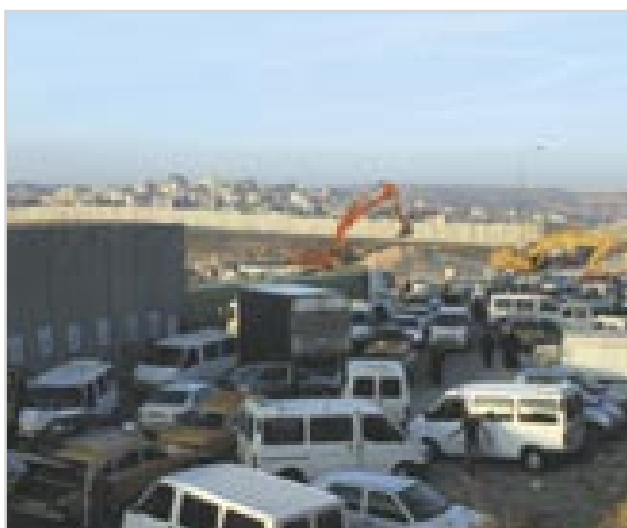
¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Gaza humanitarian situation report 1 – 31 October 2007*, UNOCHA.

¹⁴ Physicians for Human Rights – Israel; PHR – *Israel Appeal*, 1 November 2007.

Commercial crossing points are also standing idle, with cross-border traffic hobbled by closure, restrictions on the entry of non-humanitarian items and a blanket ban on exports. Karni, the main passage for commercial goods, has been closed since 12 June with the exception of the sporadic opening of a single conveyor for grain and animal feed. Alternative crossings at Sufa and Kerem Shalom have been used to transfer humanitarian supplies and very limited quantities of commercial goods, but these facilities are woefully inadequate, with barely sufficient capacity to meet the basic humanitarian needs of Gaza's population. These crossing points lack facilities for handling container traffic, leading to significant increases in operational costs for UNRWA and limiting the Agency's ability to import commodities required for its assistance programmes.

OCHA data indicates that the tightening of the access regime led to a 71 percent decrease in the volume of goods entering Gaza between May and October 2007¹⁵; an average of 253 trucks entered each day in May compared to only 74 per day during October. As a result, an increasing number of food items are unavailable in Gaza or in short supply, including fresh and frozen meat, dairy products and certain fresh fruits, whilst the price of others has continued to rise.¹⁶ WHO has reported shortages of certain medicines, including paediatric drugs, antibiotics and treatments for chronic disease.¹⁷



Furthermore, the Israeli Security Cabinet declared Gaza a 'hostile entity' in late-October and Israel began limiting the flow of fuel and electricity as part of a package of increased economic sanctions. Before their suspension in early November pending further legal review, these restrictions saw an estimated 47 percent decrease in the volume of diesel supplied and nine percent drop in industrial gasoline. Any resumption of these punitive actions – a step which would violate Israel's obligations

under international humanitarian law as an occupying power – would have major implications for the welfare of the population of the Gaza Strip.

West Bank

Throughout 2007, Palestinians in the West Bank have remained subject to a stringent closure regime, which severely limits the potential for economic, urban and agricultural development and is eroding the social and commercial fabric of Palestinian life. Movement into and between major Palestinian population centres, including into East Jerusalem, is being rendered progressively more difficult, hindering access to services and employment and cutting the economic heart out of once thriving commercial hubs. It is also leading to reported increases in internal displacement, as families abandon homes and land to seek a less repressed environment.

The closure regime is epitomised by the Barrier, a complex series of concrete walls, electronic fences, observation towers, trenches, patrol roads and razor wire that was declared illegal by the International Court of Justice in 2004. According to OCHA, by May 2007 approximately 408km of the Barrier had been completed, with a further 10 percent under construction.¹⁸ Nearly 75 percent of the Barrier's projected route lies on Palestinian land east of the Green Line, and it is estimated that over 500,000 West Bank Palestinians – one in five of the total population – live within one kilometre of its route. It is further estimated that 10 percent of all West Bank territory, including East Jerusalem, lies to the west of the projected Barrier route.

In the northern West Bank, seam zone areas, i.e. those areas between the Barrier and the 1949 Armistice Line, were declared closed military zones by the IDF in 2003; all Palestinians aged 16 and above living there or wishing to enter now need permits to do so. This currently affects around 10,000 Palestinian residents and far larger numbers of farmers and agricultural workers. If the same regime is applied across all areas between the Barrier and the Green Line around 60,000 persons will soon require permits from the Government of Israel to remain in their homes.

The Barrier is just the most visible component of a complex web of movement restrictions facing Palestinians in the West Bank, including road blocks, checkpoints, earth mounds and trenches, which have effectively placed around 40 percent of West Bank land off limits to Palestinians. This includes East Jerusalem, where entry for Palestinians holding West Bank identification cards has been restricted since 1993 and further tightened since the start of the *Intifada*.

¹⁵ Gaza humanitarian situation report 1 – 31 October 2007, UNOCHA.

¹⁶ UN Humanitarian Monitor, September 2007

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities, June 2007, UNOCHA.

Despite repeated statements from the Gol pledging to ease movement restrictions inside the West Bank, the number of physical obstacles has increased in 2007, from 528 to 561 between January and October 2007.¹⁹ These are in addition to flying checkpoints, which OCHA currently estimates at around 560 deployments per month.

Humanitarian organisations have also faced heightened restrictions in 2007. Increased demands for searches of UN vehicles and requirements that UN staff must obtain permits to enter seam zone areas are creating major operational difficulties, leading to delays, higher costs and reduced outreach, ultimately limiting agencies' ability to meet the needs of increasingly vulnerable communities. UNRWA has been given to understand that such restrictions will only increase in the coming months, as outlined below:

■ **Entry to Seam Zone areas:** UNRWA has been informed that all staff holding West Bank identification cards will soon require permits to enter seam zone areas, mirroring measures in place for East Jerusalem since 1993. Security checks have also been stepped up at new terminals along the Barrier abutting the seam zone, e.g. at Reihan terminal for entry into Barta'a enclave.

■ **Passage of goods:** further restrictive measures on the passage of goods between Israel and the West Bank have been announced by Israel. Currently, UNRWA transports goods in containers from Ashdod port to various West Bank locations via 12 entry points. In the New Year, Israeli authorities plan to reduce the number of crossing points to six and will also impose a back-to-back transfer system, similar to that which has operated at Karni for several years. UNRWA estimates that this could lead to additional costs of up to \$8,000,000 per year and also fears that the terminals will have insufficient capacity to manage the workload.

■ **Entry to East Jerusalem:** UNRWA has been informed that by the end of 2007 WB-ID holding staff with permits will no longer be able to cross checkpoints into Jerusalem in vehicles, and that the number of checkpoints which staff can use will be reduced from 13 to three or four.²⁰

Protection of civilians

The year 2007 witnessed continuing high levels of Palestinian casualties in the oPt as a result of Israeli-Palestinian violence and unprecedented levels of internal

Palestinian conflict. In both cases, the Gaza Strip was the worst affected. It was the scene of heavy clashes between rival Palestinian factions in the first half of the year and also bore the brunt of Israeli military activity following the collapse of a ceasefire with the IDF in spring 2007.

In 2007, the number of Palestinians killed and injured in internecine violence exceeded the number of those killed due to the conflict with Israel. A total of 444 Palestinians, including 30 children, were killed as a result of internal fighting between January and October 2007, compared to 102 during the first 10 months of 2006.²¹ Ninety-five percent of all such deaths were in Gaza. Around half of these occurred during June, at the height of the clashes between Hamas and Fatah which culminated with the former taking full control of the Strip. Since then there has been a marked reduction in levels of violence, although tensions remain high.

Between January and October 2007, UNRWA data indicates, 329 Palestinians were killed in direct conflict-related violence (i.e. between Israelis and Palestinians) in the oPt. There were at least 39 children amongst the dead, according to OCHA and B'Tselem figures. A further 2,018 Palestinians were injured. During the same period, 10 Israelis were killed and 227 injured. Two-thirds of all Palestinian deaths, and a quarter of all injuries were in Gaza. Overall, there was a reduction in conflict related casualties compared with 2006, partly due to a Gaza-Israel truce which held for the first five months of 2007. Since its breakdown, IDF military operations have resumed, including incursions and targeted assassinations.

In the West Bank, search and arrest campaigns in 2007 have continued with the same intensity as in 2006, with an average of 320 operations per month, compared to 200 in 2005. The focus of such operations has remained area A, i.e. those areas under the control of the Palestinian security forces.



¹⁹ Closure Update October 2007, UNOCHA.

²⁰ UN agencies are already facing major difficulties in operating in East Jerusalem. At any one time between 20 – 25 % of UNRWA staff who require permits to enter East Jerusalem have not received them. Staff are regularly delayed at checkpoints entering the city or face blanket bans on entry, e.g. during Israeli holidays.

²¹ UNRWA, UNOCHA and B'Tselem data. Unless indicated otherwise, all data in this section from UNRWA databases.

UNRWA's response to the crisis



including women and youth, through a broad range of protection strategies, including support to community based organisations and provision of psycho-social support;

- improve its capacity for needs assessment, emergency planning and service delivery, through the development of programme planning and management systems, including as part of the Agency's Organisational Development Plan.

UNRWA's current emergency programme was launched in late 2000. Since then, the scope of the Agency's response has evolved to meet changing humanitarian conditions. Internal capacity for assessment and planning, monitoring and delivery of assistance has also been strengthened to ensure a more effective response in a context of protracted crisis and in line with broader organisational development initiatives within UNRWA.

Throughout, UNRWA has sought to mitigate the worst impacts of the crisis and meet the most pressing basic needs of affected refugees. Priority groups for UNRWA support have included households that have lost homes, livelihoods and family members, those whose access to basic services has been compromised, and persons exposed to violence as a result of the conflict. The past 12 months have witnessed sharply deteriorating humanitarian, economic and social conditions in Gaza and continued vulnerability in the West Bank, in particular for communities most affected by Barrier and other access-related restrictions. As such, UNRWA's strategic objectives in 2008 remain broadly unchanged.

More specifically, the Agency seeks to:

- provide a social safety net to vulnerable refugee families, through targeted programmes of food aid, temporary job creation and cash assistance and provision of temporary shelter;
- ensure refugee access to primary health care and environmental health services, including mobile health services in the West Bank;
- support the development of positive coping mechanisms for particularly vulnerable groups,

Emergency food assistance

Aim:

To alleviate problems of constrained economic or physical access to adequate nutrition amongst refugees

Objectives:

- Gaza: to distribute five rounds of food assistance to 139,000 refugee families (approximately 700,000 persons) and introduce school feeding at UNRWA schools to 198,000 students
- West Bank: to distribute four rounds of food aid to 30,000 refugee families (approximately 135,000 persons)

Activities:

UNRWA is appealing for funds to distribute emergency food assistance to 169,000 registered refugee families (835,000 persons). This includes 139,000 refugee families in Gaza (61 percent of all registered refugee families) and 30,000 in the West Bank (16 percent of all registered families). Food aid is targeted at families facing constrained economic or physical access to food, with parcels designed to cover food needs that refugees cannot acquire through their own means. Parcels will cover a minimum of 61 percent of daily needs in the Gaza Strip and 37 percent in the West Bank, and will include flour, rice, sugar, lentils, whole milk and sunflower oil. In Gaza, each family will receive a single parcel, in accordance with its size, whereas in the West Bank, parcels are designed for three persons; larger families will receive multiple parcels.

The resumption of salary payments to PA employees has led to a reduction in the caseload size compared to 2007 in both fields. In West Bank, a further reduction in the scope of the food aid programme is planned based on field assessments that refugee food needs can be partially met through cash assistance. The consequent budget reduction has been offset by the increased cost of basic commodities – between January 2006 and September 2007 the cost of a food parcel has more than doubled – and increased operational costs in the West Bank resulting from new restrictions on movement.

Increasingly, children are reporting hungry to UNRWA schools in Gaza and without financial means to buy food. In Gaza, the Agency is also planning to introduce a feeding programme for students at its elementary and preparatory schools. A fortified, high-energy biscuit will be provided to 198,000 UNRWA students from the start of the second semester of the 2007/8 school year.

Eligibility:

Food aid will be provided to refugee families without a source of income. In the West Bank, priority will be given to female-headed households and families without breadwinners. *Ad-hoc* distribution of food parcels to internally displaced families or those living in areas under

siege during IDF operations may also be authorised on an exceptional basis. In all cases, eligibility criteria will be assessed by UNRWA social workers.

All students at UNRWA schools in Gaza will be eligible for high-energy biscuits.

Impact:

The distribution of emergency food assistance will mitigate the effects of high levels of food insecurity resulting from continuing hardship. It will reduce the amount of money that households need to allocate to food staples from scarce financial resources and enable allocation to other household priorities, including fresh food. The introduction of a school feeding programme in Gaza will tackle short-term hunger amongst students and contribute to improved attention and learning capacity.



Budget:

	Gaza Strip	West Bank	Total
Operating costs	60,144,814	11,543,996	71,688,810
Administrative costs (11%)	6,615,930	1,269,840	7,885,770
TOTAL	\$66,760,744	\$12,813,836	\$79,574,580

Emergency employment programmes direct hire

Aim:

To alleviate economic hardship at the household level for refugee families without a breadwinner through the provision of temporary work opportunities

Objectives:

- Gaza: the creation of 4,722,500 job days of temporary employment for an estimated 55,950 refugees (total beneficiaries, i.e. job holders and dependents - approximately 250,000)
- West Bank: the creation of 1,242,000 job days of temporary employment for an estimated 34,500 refugees (total beneficiaries – at least 207,000)

Activities:

Under this programme, UNRWA is planning to generate almost six million days of employment for 90,450 unemployed refugees in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. Based on PCBS labour force data from mid-2007, this represents around 80 percent of the unemployed refugee work force in Gaza and 68 percent in the West

Bank. To maximise programme outreach contracts are short, whilst salaries are below market rates, ensuring an element of self targeting and encouraging applicants to seek regular employment if conditions improve.

In Gaza, UNRWA will provide placements for manual, skilled and professional workers and will also offer training and apprenticeships to unemployed graduates of universities and technical training colleges. Job holders will work in UNRWA facilities and installations, as well as in municipalities, community-based organisations, NGOs and – for graduate and apprenticeship training only – private sector organisations.

A special programme component in Gaza will target indebted micro-entrepreneurs, i.e. small business owners burdened with loans from UNRWA's Microfinance and Microenterprise Department that they are unable to pay off as a result of the current situation. Through allowing micro-entrepreneurs to settle their business debt from pay earned from a temporary job placement, this intervention will enable businesses to recover once the economic situation improves, thus promoting self-reliance and contributing to securing a sustainable business environment.

In Gaza, unskilled positions, such as labourers, sanitation workers and guards, will account for around 85 percent of all jobs. Contract length will be three months, and job holders will receive approximately \$260 / month, i.e. \$10 / day on a six day working week. For all other categories of work, contract duration will be between six and twelve months. Wages will range from \$370 - \$500 / month for skilled and professional workers (i.e. \$17 - \$23 / day on a five-day base) and \$250 / month for trainees (i.e. \$11 / day on a five day base).

To reach the target number of beneficiaries in 2008 in Gaza, an expansion of the programme is planned, the scope of which is dependent on the availability and timing of funds. To ensure the efficiency of this expansion, UNRWA is continuing to develop programme capacity and streamlining operational procedures. Through its newly established network of branch offices (Deir El Balah, Rafah, Jabalia and Khan Younis) the Agency plans a more focused approach to identifying new job opportunities. This includes small-scale projects to maintain and rehabilitate public infrastructure and interventions targeting specific economic groups (e.g. fishermen). A small proportion of funding will be used for supporting materials and tools required for such projects.

In the West Bank, all positions are for unskilled and semi-skilled labourers. The Agency plans to create 7,500 placements of three months' duration within UNRWA facilities and installations and 27,000 monthly positions with municipalities and village councils. In all cases monthly salaries will be fixed at \$360. In line with previous years, the programme will run on an April – March calendar.

Eligibility:

Eligibility criteria are based on refugee status, availability of alternative sources of assistance and, in the West Bank only, family size.²² Job holders will only be able to benefit from the programme once during the calendar year and multiple family members cannot be enrolled at the same time. Relatives of UNRWA employees are excluded from the programme, with the exception of the graduate training programme where a small number of



placements will be made available to relatives of staff members.

Job holders will not be able to benefit from selective cash assistance whilst they are enrolled on the programme; in the West Bank, beneficiaries will also be ineligible for food assistance during their period of employment.²³

The Agency will continue to identify new job opportunities for youth, women and disabled applicants and actively promote their hire. UNRWA will aim to ensure that 25 percent of all jobs are held by women in West Bank and 35 percent in Gaza.

Impact:

The job creation programme will temporarily alleviate the impact of high poverty, unemployment and dependency ratios amongst refugees. The payment of cash for work will enable beneficiaries to earn and allocate scarce financial resources to household priorities other than food. Provision of work instead of direct cash grants will contribute towards maintenance of dignity amongst the most vulnerable. The accumulation of work experience, in particular through training programmes, and provision of support to indebted micro-entrepreneurs, will also ultimately have a positive impact on economic recovery. The injection of income into a cash-starved economy will have indirect benefits for local retailers and service providers.

Budget:

	Gaza Strip	West Bank	Total
Operating costs	54,240,000	18,169,580	72,409,580
Administrative costs (11%)	5,966,400	1,998,654	7,965,054
TOTAL	\$60,206,400	\$20,168,234	\$80,374,634

²² In Gaza temporary employment opportunities may also be offered to non-refugee families on exceptional grounds. In the West Bank the programme will only be open to unemployed refugees from families with six or more members.

²³ No such eligibility restrictions are applied in Gaza. Due to constraints on physical and economic access to food and high levels of poverty, job creation and cash assistance support are conceived as supplements to emergency food aid.

Emergency employment programmes indirect hire (West Bank only)

Aim:

To relieve economic hardship at the household level for families without a breadwinner through provision of temporary work opportunities, whilst improving living conditions through development of infrastructure and revitalisation of the local economy

Objective:

- To generate 39,666 days of temporary employment for an estimated 2,691 unemployed refugees inside West Bank refugee camps and villages (total beneficiaries, i.e. job holders and dependents, approximately 16,150 persons)

Activities:

UNRWA's indirect hire programme provides short-term job opportunities through contracts for small-scale labour-intensive works in refugee camps and villages across the West Bank, areas where the PCBS records the highest levels of unemployment.

The Agency works with Camp Popular Committees (CPCs) within camps and local organisations in villages on projects to improve, rehabilitate and develop physical infrastructure whilst generating temporary employment. Based on the experience of previous years, potential projects include: the laying, repair or maintenance of pathways, sewers and drains; the building of retaining and boundary walls; the rehabilitation of cisterns; maintenance of agricultural roads and drains; and cleaning and removal of solid waste. Damages, including those caused during IDF incursions, will also be repaired. Positions are rotated on a fortnightly basis to ensure maximum programme outreach. Beneficiaries (labourers and foremen) will receive an average wage of \$15 per day, i.e. below market rates.



Eligibility:

Eligibility criteria are based on refugee status, availability of alternative sources of assistance and family size. No restrictions are placed on eligibility for other types of assistance during the period of employment. Due to the short contract length, refugees may benefit from the programme twice during the appeal period.

CPCs and village councils are responsible for recruitment on the basis of UNRWA's criteria. UNRWA's Environmental Health Division will maintain close contact with partners during all stages of the project cycle. Close monitoring by UNRWA engineers and environmental health workers will ensure adherence to Agency standards.

Impact:

The programme will provide unemployed workers with a basic level of income, thereby reducing dependency on social welfare handouts and resultant loss of dignity. In addition to increased income at household level and injection of funds into cash starved economies, refugees will benefit from a cleaner environment and improved infrastructure and sanitation.

Budget:

	West Bank
Operating costs	1,153,196
Administrative costs (11%)	126,852
TOTAL	\$1,280,048



Emergency cash assistance

Aim:

To mitigate the impact of increasing poverty amongst Palestine refugee families through the provision of cash subsidies

Objectives:

- Gaza: provision of \$20,270,270 in emergency cash grants to an estimated 77,000 refugee families (approximately 385,000 persons)
- West Bank: provision of \$18,000,000 in emergency cash grants to up to 60,000 refugee families (approximately 300,000 persons)

Activities:

During 2008, UNRWA plans to distribute 137,000 cash grants to the most vulnerable families in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. Cash will enable refugees to meet their basic needs and will act largely as a complement to food aid. Beneficiaries will include: (1) families that have lost their source of income due to lost employment, the death or injury of the breadwinner and; (2) families whose homes have been damaged or destroyed.

The scope of these basic needs includes protecting access to education, health care and a healthy diet, as well as purchases of other essential non-food items, such as detergents and utility bills, and support towards the provision of post-injury social care.

In Gaza, payment of relocation related expenses will enable displaced families whose shelters are damaged during IDF military operations to source temporary, alternative accommodation.

The size of the cash grant will vary in accordance with the specific need but will average around \$300 in both fields. The majority of families will receive a one-time grant, although repeat assistance may be authorised on the basis of need, particularly for relocation fees, and depending on the availability of funds. In Gaza, cash grants may also be issued for widely-targeted distributions, such as the *Back to School initiatives* in 2006 and 2007.

Eligibility:

Eligibility will be determined by assessments of social workers (loss of income), engineers (damaged / destroyed homes) and medical officers (post-injury care). Families will not be eligible for cash assistance whilst a member is employed through the job creation programme. Payments may be authorized for non-refugees in cases of exceptional need and where no alternative source of assistance is available.

Impact:

The emergency cash assistance programme will mitigate the impact of the protracted socio-economic crisis on refugee families in the oPt. It provides UNRWA with a mechanism to respond quickly and flexibly to crisis needs in a rapidly changing environment and allows refugees to determine and meet a range of essential priorities.

Budget:

	Gaza Strip	West Bank	Total
Operating costs	20,270,270	21,292,570	41,562,840
Administrative costs (11%)	2,229,730	2,342,183	4,571,913
TOTAL	\$22,500,000	\$23,634,753	\$46,134,753

Social Safety Net Project in the West Bank

In the West Bank, an integrated approach to the provision of social safety net support will be introduced under this appeal, aimed at improved targeting of assistance – food aid, employment and cash assistance – to specific needs of vulnerable refugees. This will be achieved through the development of a common database in which all information related to applicants (including needs assessment data), selected beneficiaries and assistance received will be stored. The database will generate monitoring indicators on programme implementation and the evolution of beneficiaries needs, and will also provide information on the impact of assistance.

Baseline information for the Social Safety Net Project will be derived from the findings of UNRWA's *Household Economy Study in the West Bank*, conducted during 2007. This research will provide data on the socio-economic conditions of 85,000 refugee families or 60,000 households, including almost all camp residents as well as beneficiaries of UNRWA's emergency assistance living outside camps. Data will be regularly updated through information supplied by applicants to the programme.

Temporary shelter and shelter repair (Gaza Strip only)

Aim:

To provide temporary shelter and shelter repair to refugees whose homes are damaged during the course of IDF military operations or natural disasters or as a result of other non-conflict related disasters

Objective:

- To fund shelter repairs for 5,000 refugee families whose homes have been damaged.

Activities:

Since September 2000, several thousand refugee homes in Gaza have been destroyed during IDF military

operations or as a result of natural or man-made disasters. Reconstruction of these shelters has formed a major component of UNRWA's project activities in Gaza over the past several years. By 8 November 2007, the Agency had reconstructed 1,029 destroyed homes and repaired a further 3,939.

Under this appeal, UNRWA is seeking funding for provision of immediate relief assistance to refugee families forced to flee their homes as a result of natural or man-made disasters. This includes a basic package of relief items, including mattresses, kitchen kits, blankets and tents, as well as cash assistance for minor shelter repairs. In the event of large-scale displacement, UNRWA will provide and manage temporary shelters for affected families.



The following three types of intervention are envisaged for shelter repair, depending on the scale of the damage:

- Minor repairs, including broken glass, damage to windows and light damage to the external walls of the shelter. On the basis of an assessment by Agency technical staff, the affected family will receive a cash grant to implement the necessary repairs. This grant will normally be under \$1,000.
- Moderate (non-structural) damages, including holes in walls, broken roof sheets and damage to windows. On the basis of an assessment by Agency technical staff, the affected family will receive cash assistance in instalments to carry out the necessary repairs. The estimated value of the total grant will not normally exceed \$4,000.
- Serious damages, including structural damage, damage beyond repair or total demolition. Repairs will be implemented by UNRWA using third party contractors, according to Agency emergency procurement procedures. Pending the completion of works, cash assistance may be issued by UNRWA social workers for temporary accommodation (as reflected

under *Emergency Cash Assistance*, above). In the event of larger-scale displacement, affected families will be housed in temporary shelters managed by the Agency and will receive necessary food and non-food items, as listed above.

In the case of minor and moderate repairs, beneficiaries will sign an undertaking to complete the repairs within a specified time frame. Follow-up assessments will be conducted by UNRWA technical staff to verify work in progress and completion. For serious damages, works will be implemented under the technical supervision of UNRWA technical staff, who will verify satisfactory completion.

Impact:

This intervention will ensure rapid repairs to shelters damaged as a result of ongoing conflict in Gaza or due to other disasters, thus minimising the impact on the lives of affected families. The provision of temporary shelter in the event of major damages will ensure adequate, secure and dignified standards of shelter for displaced families.

Budget:

	Gaza Strip
Operating costs	1,801,800
Administrative costs (11%)	198,200
TOTAL	\$2,000,000

Emergency health

Aim:

To guarantee access to primary health care services for Palestine refugees in the oPt, mitigating the impact of closures and responding to increased demand for services

Objectives:

- Both fields:
 - procurement of additional medical supplies and equipment to response to continued increase in demand due to the ongoing crisis
- West Bank only:
 - operation of five mobile health clinics offering a wide range of free services to refugees living in isolated areas and those most affected by movement restrictions and the Barrier
 - provision of subsidised hospital care to refugees living in isolated areas through contracts with six hospitals



Activities:*West Bank:*

UNRWA will continue to operate five mobile health clinics to provide services for 60,000 refugees living in 60 different locations in Barrier-affected areas. A range of free curative and preventive services will be provided, including treatment for non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and hypertension, provision of vaccines and ante-natal care, and basic primary health services.

Each mobile health clinic has the capacity to conduct 110 visits and provide services to 13,200 persons per month. As per current practice, visit schedules will be established at the field level and co-ordinated with other service providers and announced through mosques and community centres and by UNRWA staff.

The Agency will also agree contracts with six hospitals to facilitate the provision of subsidized specialist care to refugees across the West Bank. This service will

be primarily targeted at refugees unable to access previously contracted hospitals. UNRWA will also use its vehicles to transport patients across checkpoints from Jenin and Nablus to its hospital in Qalqilya. As part of this intervention, UNRWA will also fund additional staffing and the procurement of necessary supplies and equipment.²⁴

Gaza:

In order to address and manage the expected continued high demand on UNRWA services, the Agency plans to procure general and specialised medical supplies and equipment, including laboratory, physiotherapy and dental equipment and accessories, as well as air conditioning units for rooms where ultrasound machines are placed and ICT equipment.

In all cases UNRWA will seek to procure medical equipment locally, whenever possible.

Increased demand for UNRWA primary health care and environmental health services

Since the PLC elections in January 2006, UNRWA has faced a considerable increase in demand for primary health services, as well as regular appeals for assistance from resource-starved municipalities and other providers of public utilities.

Primary health care

The number of primary health care consultations at UNRWA clinics has continued to rise year on year. Demand in 2006 was around 10 percent higher than in 2005, whilst the number of consultations during the first half of 2007 was 20 percent higher than the same period in 2006. This is due primarily to the PA's inability to replenish vital medical supplies at its clinics and the inability of refugees to pay nominal prescription fees at PA and NGO health centres. The situation has been compounded by periodic and often protracted public sector strikes.

Whilst the socio-economic situation remains unchanged, UNRWA assumes that demand for its services will remain high in 2008. With further Israeli-enforced movement restrictions planned in the West Bank, the Agency also assesses that access to basic and specialised health services for refugees will continue to be compromised.

Environmental health

The financial crisis facing the PA has left many water institutions unable to replenish fuel stocks and supplies vital for the management of ongoing operations, including water treatment plants, waste disposal and sewage systems and pest control. The risk of public health emergencies has been increased by persistent underfunding of investment and maintenance needs in this sector, repeated damage to infrastructure during IDF incursions, and – in Gaza – restrictions on the entry of essential supplies and Israel's decision by Israel to cut electricity supplies. UNRWA plays an important role in the delivery of environmental health services to refugees in camps and surrounding areas. Emergency planning for 2008 assumes that threats to the delivery of essential public health service will not diminish during the next 12 months.

²⁴ Additional staffing in Gaza is provided through the professional component of the JCP.

Eligibility criteria:

Mobile clinics will provide services to both refugees and non-refugees without adequate access to health services. Other services will be provided in accordance with standard UNRWA procedures.

Impact:

This intervention supports the provision of comprehensive coverage of primary health care services to refugees and ensures access to basic health care for refugees and non-refugees in the West Bank affected by movement restrictions.

Budget:

	Gaza Strip	West Bank	Total
Operating costs	1,612,400	3,234,624	4,847,024
Administrative costs (11%)	177,400	355,809	533,209
TOTAL	\$1,789,800	\$3,590,433	\$5,380,233

Emergency environmental health

Aim:

To ensure access to adequate water and sanitation services for refugee communities in camps and surrounding areas and prevent public health catastrophes

Objective:

- Provision of emergency assistance to municipalities and other service providers to ensure continued public health services, such as water treatment, sewerage and waste-water removal

Activities:

UNRWA will continue to respond flexibly and rapidly to any appeals from water providers for supplies, equipment and technical support and ensure the ongoing delivery of essential environmental health services in camps and surrounding areas in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. This includes:

- provision of fuel and spare parts to municipalities and Camp Popular Committees (West Bank only) for operation of water and waste water treatment plants and solid waste management services;
- provision of chemicals, oil and tools to municipalities for vector and pest control campaigns;
- hiring of contractors to remove waste from unofficial landfill sites to official dumping grounds when the former are used to collect waste whilst roads are blocked during IDF incursions;
- supply of plastic water tanks, toilet and shower units to families temporarily displaced as a result of IDF operations;



- conducting and supporting emergency repair and rehabilitation operations following IDF incursions.

UNRWA will co-ordinate all its activities in this sector with other aid agencies, municipalities and environmental health service providers to avoid overlap and ensure the most effective use of limited resources.

Impact:

The rapid provision of emergency support to public health service providers in the oPt will mitigate environmental health risks for both refugee and non-refugee communities. This intervention will also contribute to better access to water and related public utilities.

Budget:

	Gaza Strip	West Bank	Total
Operating costs	1,000,000	924,336	1,924,336
Administrative costs (11%)	110,000	101,677	211,677
TOTAL	\$1,110,000	\$1,026,013	\$2,136,013



Community-based interventions for vulnerable groups

The protracted conflict in the oPt has had a detrimental impact on the social, psychological and physical wellbeing of Palestinians. Refugees – dispossessed, often destitute and concentrated in Gaza, which continues to bear the brunt of the conflict – are amongst the most affected. High levels of violence have led to increasing incidence of psychological and psychiatric problems, including stress, anxiety, depression and psychosomatic disorders. Children are particularly vulnerable. A 2003 survey conducted by the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme in Gaza found that 32.7 percent of all Palestinian children had begun to develop acute symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, whilst a more recent study found that 75 percent of children in Gaza and 79 percent of their parents had witnessed assassinations carried out by Israeli forces, whilst almost all had experienced sonic booms and witnessed IAF aerial bombardments and shellings.

To mitigate the effects of continuing economic hardship and prevailing violence on the most vulnerable refugees, UNRWA has designed a special package of activities and interventions as part of this appeal. Implementation modalities will differ in the two fields, but will include ongoing community mental health programmes as well as educational and recreational activities and interventions targeting youth.

A number of these interventions will be implemented through Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), which offer a range of vital services to vulnerable refugees (children and youth, persons with disabilities, women and the elderly). The sustainability of these services, which include skills training, special education support, recreational activities, civic education and physical rehabilitation, is increasingly jeopardised by the ongoing crisis. This reduces avenues of external funding for such organisations and also impacts of refugees' ability to contribute towards costs.

Support to community-based organisations (Gaza Strip only)

Aim:

To provide emergency support to CBOs to ensure the continued provision of essential services and activities

Objective:

- To provide emergency financial support through grants to CBOs in Gaza that offer services to vulnerable groups of refugees, including children and youth, the disabled, elderly and women.

Activities:

Under this activity, UNRWA will provide financial grants to CBOs to support the continued operations of essential services and activities for vulnerable groups within the refugee community. This represents the continuation of an intervention that was first introduced in the 2007 Emergency Appeal and CAP. Grants will be awarded on the basis of project proposals submitted by the CBOs and assessments by UNRWA staff, as part of an ongoing process of consultations with community members and representatives of the sectors in which the CBOs are active. Activities will also be monitored by UNRWA Education, Relief and Social Services and Operational Support staff.

In addition, the Agency will also provide support through the job creation programme to maintain the essential staffing of CBOs.



The size of grants awarded will be determined on the basis of applications received. The Agency plans to continue its 'summer games' initiative. Under this programme in 2007, around 200,000 children and youth participated in summer camps, sporting events and theatre over a two-month period.

Impact:

The provision of financial assistance and staffing will allow CBOs in Gaza to continue with the delivery of essential services and activities to particularly vulnerable groups. Care will be exercised to avoid the creation of a dependency relationship so that the sector may quickly resume its independence of operation once economic and social conditions improve.

Budget:

	Gaza Strip
Operating costs	4,953,000
Administrative costs (11%)	544,500
TOTAL	\$5,497,500



Community mental health (Gaza Strip only)

Aim:

To assist refugee household coping mechanisms by addressing the psycho-social distress caused to refugees by the prevailing violence and economic hardship, with a particular focus on refugee children and youth

Objective:

- To provide counselling and mental health support to vulnerable refugees, including approximately 7,000 persons through individual counselling, 25,000 persons through group counselling, and around 240,000 persons through mental health awareness activities (including all students at UNRWA schools).

Activities:

UNRWA is seeking emergency funding to maintain the operation of its Community Mental Health Programme in 2008. The Agency currently has 189 specially recruited and trained counsellors based in its schools, health and social services centres and CBOs inside and outside camps across Gaza. Counsellors provide a range of services, including group and individual counselling, referrals and home visits, with a special focus of refugee children and youth and their families. Their work seeks to encourage the development of constructive coping strategies and promote mental well-being, whilst also enabling vulnerable refugees to make a positive contribution to the development of their communities.

Budget:

	Gaza Strip
Operating costs	2,100,000
Administrative costs (11%)	231,000
TOTAL	\$2,331,000

In 2008, UNRWA plans to further develop life skills education programmes for children, aimed at increasing students' resilience to stress using a range of tools and techniques, including art and games for younger children and stories and drama for older students.

Another component of the programme focuses on raising awareness of mental health issues through public campaigns targeting children and adults. Campaigns seek to overcome prevailing social stigma and foster self-care amongst the most vulnerable and cover a range of issues, including behavioural problems, discipline, interaction between schools and communities and stress.

The Agency is also seeking funding for continued training of counsellors during 2008, using specialised NGOs contracted for this purpose.

Impact:

The continuation of this programme in 2008 will help to mitigate the impact of prevailing violence, economic hardship and isolation on the refugee population of Gaza, particularly children and youth. Through a range of interventions provided by professional counselling staff, refugee households will be encouraged to develop and foster positive coping strategies which will help refugees to address their own needs and contribute towards community development.



Children and youth assistance project (West Bank only)

Aim:

To enhance the well-being of refugee children and youth in the West Bank by combating violence, supporting the development of constructive coping mechanisms and improving their psycho-educative situation

Objectives:

- Provision of counselling and mental health support to almost 160,000 refugees in individual and group counselling sessions
- Training of 1,261 UNRWA staff, including counsellors, teachers, school supervisors, social workers and 500 CBO employees on child and youth work
- Life skills workshops for 75,000 refugee children and youth
- Awareness raising campaigns for 55,401 individuals
- Recreational activities for a pool of approximately 200,00 individuals

Activities:

UNRWA is seeking funding for special interventions for refugee children and youth in the West Bank. The children and youth assistance project integrates the ongoing community mental health programme with new activities in education and social services. It seeks to counter the immediate and longer-term impact of continuing conflict, economic hardship, occupation and Barrier-related dislocation, in particular on refugee children and youth. Interventions will mitigate the consequences of the prevailing crisis on the mental health of refugee children and youth and support the delivery of basic education services.

The project will be implemented through the Agency's schools, health centres, social services offices in the West Bank refugee camps and also through UNRWA-supported CBOs. Planned activities include group and individual counselling sessions, including for students with learning difficulties, life-skills workshops for refugee children and youth, recreational programmes for youth and awareness-raising campaigns. Community interventions will empower refugee families and help them to cope positively with their environment.



A special training component will focus on developing theoretical and practical knowledge on child development and psycho-educational issues amongst UNRWA educational staff and CBO workers. This includes the development of professional guidelines outlining principles and standards for working with children and youth. As UNRWA seeks to strengthen its links and interactions with community networks, CBO employees working with children and youth will receive training on the detection and treatment of stress and other related conditions, and the special needs of the young.

Impact:

This project will mitigate the impact of the prevailing conflict on the mental health of refugees in the West Bank, particularly children and youth. Interventions will foster the development of constructive coping mechanisms amongst refugee communities and households and contribute towards community development.

Budget:

	West Bank	Total
Operating costs	1,940,331	1,940,331
Administrative costs (11%)	213,436	213,436
Sub-total	2,153,767	2,153,767
Available resources	1,035,506	1,035,506
TOTAL	\$1,118,261	\$1,118,261



UNRWA's Operations Support Officer Programme

Since 2001, the Operations Support Officer (OSO) programme has supported the delivery of UNRWA's emergency services in the oPt in conditions of heightened restrictions on access and movement within Palestinian areas. OSOs have facilitated delivery of essential aid to refugees in isolated communities, including those under military siege or curfew, and coordinated UNRWA and inter-agency responses to conflict- and non-conflict-related crises. In early 2007 Gaza OSOs managed the inter-agency relief effort following the flooding of a wastewater pool in Beit Lahia. OSOs have also contributed to the strengthening of internal and inter-Agency preparedness for emergencies and crises, conducted research in a range of areas, including the Barrier and Bedouins and supported UNRWA relief efforts in Lebanon.

Currently there are around 30 international OSOs and Palestinian Assistant OSOs in the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

Operations Support Officer Programme

Aim:

To reinforce UNRWA's delivery of emergency and regular services in the context of the continuing crisis in the oPt

Objectives:

- To improve delivery of UNRWA's humanitarian assistance through:
 - regular and systematic monitoring of living conditions of Palestine refugees and other persons of concern to UNRWA, including access to humanitarian assistance from UNRWA and other service providers
 - provision of logistical support and facilitation of access to humanitarian aid convoys to minimise any disruption to services
 - development of emergency response mechanisms, including rapid assessment of crisis situations and co-ordination of humanitarian response efforts in crisis situations
- To safeguard the neutrality and integrity of UNRWA's programmes and installations
- To monitor the problems that affect the human dignity, physical safety, welfare and protection of Palestine refugees and other persons of concern to UNRWA

Activities:

OSOs will monitor changing humanitarian conditions on the ground in the Gaza Strip and West Bank through regularly circulating through Palestinian areas, including refugee camps, and consulting with refugee communities and households on assistance needs and priorities.

They will identify where additional assistance is required or where resources are running low, thus ensuring that UNRWA remains responsive to emerging and urgent needs and is able to alleviate undue suffering amongst refugees. Programme staff will also identify issues of particular concern and ensure effective follow-up. This includes provision of technical guidance and advice on issues related to protection.

OSOs will gather and analyse data and report on key humanitarian indicators, including in liaison with other actors, such as OCHA. Through monitoring of refugees' access to services from UNRWA and other service providers, including local authorities, OSOs will assist the Agency's strategic programme planning and helping to ensure the efficiency of its humanitarian response.

OSOs will also monitor and address issues related to access of Agency personnel, vehicles and supplies into, out of and within Palestinian areas. They will continue to negotiate the passage of UNRWA personnel, supplies and vehicles, including ambulances, through military and police checkpoints.



When required, OSOs will intervene with Israeli military and police agencies to safeguard the privileges and immunities which UNRWA enjoys under international law. In the West Bank, where internal access issues persist and are deteriorating, OSOs will also continue to facilitate the passage of staff members.

OSOs will assess the protection needs of the civilian population rendered vulnerable by the conflict; in the West Bank, this will include communities in the vicinity of or directly affected by the Barrier. Vulnerable refugee communities, including herders and Bedouin, will be identified and mapped.

OSOs will conduct regular inspections of UNRWA's property and assets, including UNRWA facilities, to ensure that they are used only as intended and to assess any damages sustained as a consequence of hostilities. In their interactions with the refugee community, OSOs will reinforce the purpose of UNRWA's mandate and the Agency's neutrality.

Impact:

The OSO programme has a proven record of enhancing the operational effectiveness of UNRWA's programmes. Its continued operation will ensure that UNRWA is able to respond effectively to rapidly changing conditions. It will enable UNRWA to minimise any disruptions in provision of humanitarian services and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its humanitarian assistance and protection role. It will also provide important visible reassurance to the refugees so that UNRWA remains a source of strength and stability.

Through sharing of data and information with other service providers, OSOs will improve collective understanding, particularly in the humanitarian and development communities, of the impact of the current crisis on the lives of Palestine refugees.

Budget:

	Gaza Strip	West Bank	Total
Operating costs	1,220,721	1,961,757	3,182,478
Administrative costs (11%)	134,279	215,793	350,072
TOTAL	\$1,355,000	\$2,177,550	\$3,532,550

Note: This programme is fully funded until August 2008. Owing to contracting and recruitment requirements, under this appeal the Agency is seeking funding from September 2008 – August 2009.

Emergency Capacity

Aim:

To strengthen UNRWA's capacity to manage and deliver emergency operations and services, including improved co-ordination, monitoring, preparedness and contingency planning

Objectives:

- to reinforce planning, management and monitoring/evaluation of emergency activities through dedicated capacity at field and HQ level, in order to ensure that UNRWA is able to efficiently and effectively respond to demand for emergency assistance
- to maintain consistent and co-ordinated planning and implementation of emergency programmes in the two fields, in accordance with programme activities in other areas of UNRWA's work.

Activities:

UNRWA is seeking continued funding for capacity components included in the 2007 appeal, in order to strengthen the functions of needs assessment, situational analysis and programme planning and design in its oPt

fields and at HQ level. Additional staffing is required at operational and managerial levels to ensure the consistent implementation of emergency programmes and to ensure that reforms to the emergency programme are embedded in the Agency's broader Organisational Development Plan to the fullest possible extent. Within these parameters the scope of activities will include:

- the employment of essential field staff to cope effectively with the increased workload generated by the implementation of large scale emergency operations;
- procurement of goods and contracting of essential infrastructure services to support ongoing and planned activities, including security works and facilities;
- maintenance of an emergency programme management function in the West Bank and the establishment of such a function in Gaza;
- establishment of a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit in the West Bank;
- retention of an Emergency Officer at HQ level;
- retention of an Access Officer within the Department of Legal Affairs.



Impact:

Resources for capacity and co-ordination will enable the Agency to meet the continued high demand for emergency programme services and to implement

programmes efficiently and effectively in accordance with established criteria through improved co-ordination, management and field monitoring.

Budget:

	Gaza Strip	West Bank	HQ	Total
Operating costs	4,180,180	3,012,445	335,283	7,527,908
Administrative costs (11%)	459,820	331,369	36,881	828,070
TOTAL	\$4,640,000	\$3,343,814	\$372,164	\$8,355,978

Note: Ongoing interventions are fully funded until June 2008. Due to contracting and recruitment requirements, under this appeal the Agency is seeking funding for these components from July 2008 – June 2009

Co-ordination, monitoring and reporting

Throughout 2007, UNRWA remained a full and active partner in inter-agency co-ordination, planning and monitoring mechanisms in the oPt, including the Consolidated Appeals Process, Needs Analysis Framework and related sectoral working groups. As part of the preparation process for the 2008 CAP, UNRWA participated in the following eight CAP/NAF sector working groups:

- Food aid and food security
- Job creation and cash assistance
- Health

- Child protection and psycho-social support
- Water and Sanitation
- Education
- Protection / Human Rights / Rule of Law
- Co-ordination and Support Services

The Agency submitted projects to all sectors, with the exception of the Education and Protection / Human Rights / Rule of Law sectors, and these projects appear in the 2008 CAP for the oPt. The substance of these projects is reproduced above.

During 2008, UNRWA will continue to chair the job creation and cash assistance working group and to

contribute to the monthly OCHA Humanitarian Monitor, which provides quantitative and qualitative data on key indicators and analysis of emerging trends.

UNRWA will provide six monthly progress reports on implementation of activities under this appeal, in addition to reporting to individual donors based on specific bilateral arrangements and CAP reporting at mid and mid-year points.

In August 2007, UNRWA and the PCBS signed a Memorandum of Understanding governing exchange of data between the two parties. Under the terms of this agreement, PCBS has begun to provide UNRWA with special data sets on macro-economic, demographic and social conditions in the oPt, which allow UNRWA

to monitor macro-economic impacts of the current crisis in the oPt and related changes in Palestinian living conditions. For its part, the Agency has furnished PCBS with regular data and information on its services and operations, to inform PCBS national accounts, demography and social statistics reporting.

The data received from PCBS has been the basis of UNRWA's *Recent Socio-economic Impacts* reports, the second of which was published in November 2007. These reports help to enrich collective understanding of the impact of the protracted crisis in the oPt, inform UNRWA's long-term strategic and programmatic planning and provide evidence of the impact of emergency relief assistance.



Emergency Appeal Budget Summary

	Gaza Strip	West Bank	HQ Amman	Total
Food Assistance	66,760,744	12,813,836	0	79,574,580
Direct Hire Employment	60,206,400	20,168,234	0	80,374,634
Indirect Hire Employment	0	1,280,048	0	1,280,048
Emergency Cash Assistance	22,500,000	23,634,753	0	46,134,753
Temporary Shelter and Shelter Repair	2,000,000	0	0	2,000,000
Emergency Health	1,789,800	3,590,433	0	5,380,233
Emergency Environmental Health	1,110,000	1,026,013	0	2,136,013
Support to CBOs	5,497,500	0	0	5,497,500
Community Mental Health	2,331,000	0	0	2,331,000
Children and Youth Assistance Project	0	1,118,261	0	1,118,261
Operations Support Officers	1,355,000	2,177,550	0	3,532,550
Emergency Capacity	4,640,000	3,343,814	372,164	8,355,978
TOTAL	\$168,190,444	\$69,152,942	\$372,164	\$237,715,550



UNOCHA maps of the Gaza Strip and West Bank





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providing humanitarian assistance
to palestine refugees since 1950

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