

UNRWA EMERGENCY APPEAL CALLS FOR US\$ 414 MILLION TO SUPPORT REFUGEES IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

[منشدة الطوارئ للأونروا تطلب 414 مليون دولار لدعم اللاجئين في الأراضي الفلسطينية المحتلة](#)

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UNRWA today launched an emergency appeal for US\$ 414 million to support some of the most disadvantaged Palestinians in the Middle East – Palestine refugees living in the occupied Palestinian territory.

At a launch event in Geneva, UNRWA Deputy Commissioner-General Margot Ellis said, "It is with a great sense of disappointment that 2014 is ending as yet another year without a durable solution to the plight of Palestine refugees. This year has borne witness to violent conflict in the occupied Palestinian territory that has yet again caused the irreparable and inconsolable loss of lives... 2014 has been a particularly devastating year for Palestinians, who continue to suffer under occupation and who continue to be robbed of their homes, their development and in many cases, their lives."

The Deputy Commissioner-General added that "the Emergency Appeal is symbolic of the collective failure of the international community to end the systematic suffering of Palestine refugees".

"In the absence of political action to end the current occupation, conflict and injustice, the emergency assistance provided by UNRWA and other UN agencies represents a lifeline for Palestine refugees in the occupied Palestinian territory, many of whom cannot survive without such assistance," Ms. Ellis said.

This year's conflict devastated the Gaza economy, which had already been weakened by years of blockade. With even fewer livelihood opportunities, food insecurity has deepened and now represents the bulk of the UNRWA emergency programme. Therefore, the UNRWA emergency programme in Gaza seeks to provide basic food to over 800,000 food-insecure refugees, and provide 245,000 students with one small meal per school day. UNRWA will also provide emergency cash assistance. Additionally, UNRWA will provide emergency health and education as well as counsellors to help address the needs of children and adults in trauma.

In the West Bank, many Palestine refugees are exposed to the risk of home demolitions, forced displacement, military operations and access restrictions. As such, UNRWA emergency interventions will continue to have a strong emphasis on protection. Additionally, six mobile health clinics and six community mental health teams will support over 50 vulnerable communities. UNRWA will provide food assistance and cash-for-work to 35,000 food-insecure refugee households. Additionally, UNRWA will give logistical support to a joint food distribution with the World Food Programme to support vulnerable Bedouin and herder community households in Area C.

Funding shortfalls for essential services for Palestine refugees in the occupied Palestinian territory have become a reality, and demand for these services is growing. UNRWA Deputy Commissioner-General Margot Ellis noted that, "While UNRWA is grateful to donors who have supported the Emergency Appeal, it is the collective responsibility of the international community to ensure that immediate humanitarian and longer-term development needs of this dispossessed community are met."

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\$ 56 million.

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