

UNICEF Humanitarian Action 2010

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

SITUATION UPDATE

The humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) has remained difficult over the first six months of the year. Living under Israeli occupation has meant further erosion of Palestinian livelihoods and a continued denial of basic human rights. The blockade imposed on Gaza since 2007 remains in place, cutting off 1.5 million Palestinians from the outside world, and preventing the entry of sufficient building material for the rehabilitation of damaged houses, schools and other structures. Insufficient fuel needed to operate Gaza's power plant has resulted in a chronic shortage of electricity in Gaza where some areas experience power cuts of up to 12 hours a day. Restrictions on movement in the West Bank continue to limit movement between most Palestinian urban centres or access to areas behind the Barrier, including East Jerusalem.

Within East Jerusalem, over 270,000 Palestinians face continuing social, political and other pressures, resulting in deteriorating living conditions and access to basic services, such as education. The overall situation continues to threaten the health and nutrition of children and women, whereby micronutrient deficiency is a major concern with high levels of anaemia, as well as vitamin A and D deficiencies, recorded in children and pregnant women.¹ A UN survey released in March showed alarmingly high levels of acute malnutrition (5.9 per cent), underweight (15.3 per cent) and stunting (28.5 per cent) among children under five living in Area C herder communities, which strongly correlates with Israeli-imposed restrictions on access to grazing land and natural water resources.

The high salinity of water in Gaza, the depletion of springs and wells in the West Bank and the fact that tens of thousands of households are not connected to piped water, leaves thousands of children without reliable access to safe drinking water or sufficient sanitation facilities. Limited access to a safe learning environment as well as to quality education is further exacerbated as the ensuing blockade has prohibited attempts to reconstruct schools that had been damaged in the early 2009 military incursions. In 2010, only 46 and 50 per cent of 15,544 Gaza fourth-graders attending PA schools passed standardised tests in Arabic and Mathematics respectively.² Similarly, low results in Arabic and Mathematics tests have been recorded in several districts in the West Bank. Given the extraordinary violence witnessed during the military incursions in Gaza early 2009, acute levels of stress and insecurity are still evident in many children, among whom thousands had been orphaned, disabled and /or displaced. Across the West Bank, children are affected by home demolitions, continued military operations, night raids, arrests, detention and torture, harassment at checkpoints, attacks by settlers and violence permeating the home and the streets. At end of April, there were 336 children in Israeli detention facilities, including two children being held under administrative detention.³

KEY RESULTS FOR CHILDREN

Health and Nutrition: Due to very low funding of UNICEF's health and nutrition programme (10 per cent), emergency child nutrition interventions to allow meeting the needs of children with micronutrient deficiencies have been delayed, as have interventions supporting the treatment of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition. The intended early warning of the nutrition surveillance data has not been realised.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: To date, 40,000 children in 80 schools in Gaza have improved access to safe drinking through water tankers. An additional six thousand children in 12 schools in Gaza have benefited from rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities. In line with plans, another 20,000 children will have access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation by year end at the completion of rehabilitation works in 25 schools in West Bank and 20 schools in Gaza. Rehabilitation of damaged sewerage networks is in progress and provision of emergency water supply continues.

Education: Although UNICEF's Education programme funding is at only seven per cent, 2009 rolled-over funds allowed for remedial education sessions to be continued in 68 schools among the lowest performing schools reaching around 19,000 children to improve their language and math skills. An additional 680 teachers have acquired improved skills in teaching and communicating with low achieving children through training workshops.

¹ While figures for 2010 are not available, the anaemia levels for 2008 recorded at 23 per cent in pregnant women and 49 per cent in children 9-12 months of age, as per Nutrition Surveillance Report, 2008.

² Ministry of Education and Higher Education report, 2010.

³ Defence for Children International Palestine Section, April 2010.

Child Protection: As of mid-year, twenty family centres across the Gaza Strip continue to be operational providing a comprehensive package of psychosocial support, learning and recreational activities to children and caretakers. As a result, around 32,000 children out of a planned yearly number of 205,000 children and adolescents are better able to cope with emotional difficulties. Up to 5,000 caretakers and their children have improved skills to protect themselves through a series of awareness raising activities, and 20 professionals have enhanced capacity for case management, assessment and referrals.

Youth and Adolescents: Around 20,000 adolescents benefited from UNICEF's support to 143 adolescent-friendly learning centres with remedial and recreational activities in the West Bank and Gaza.

KEY CHALLENGES

UNICEF programme efforts are hindered by access and restrictions of movement on supplies, equipment and personnel, particularly in the Gaza Strip where the blockade continues. Restrictions on essential water, sanitation and hygiene materials and equipment into Gaza continue to delay the resumption of essential services and hinder the efficiency of water and wastewater facilities. Under-funding to high priority projects in Health and Nutrition projects involving procurement of essential micronutrients and related monitoring services is further increasing micronutrient deficiency, especially among vulnerable communities.

INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

UNICEF provides cluster coordination leadership in WASH and Education. UNICEF also leads the Child Protection Sub-Cluster and significantly contributes to World Health Organization-led health coordination and the Food Security and Nutrition Cluster. UNICEF collaborates with the Government, and, through the Humanitarian Country Team, with UN and NGO partners in its relevant programmatic areas as well as on cross-sectoral issues.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

UNICEF's revised funding requirements⁴ for 2010 amount to US \$24,247,910 aligned with CAP requirements, of which \$8,195,250 has been received, mostly for the Child Protection and WASH programmes. As of mid-year, no funding has been received for coordination activities in Education or Health and Nutrition sectors. UNICEF requires immediate resources to ensure leadership in cluster coordination for WASH, Education and Child Protection, in order to provide a dedicated effective, coordinated and systematic multi-partner approach to respond to and advocate for the needs of children.

Funds received against the HAR 2010 (US\$)				
Sector	Original 2010 HAR requirements	Revised HAR requirements	Funds received	Funding gap
Health and Nutrition	2,750,000	1,706,070	162,079	1,543,991
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	3,690,000	5,008,326	2,436,290	2,572,036
Education	8,300,000	5,052,062	473,991	4,578,071
Child Protection	8,000,000	8,768,835	5,122,890	3,645,945
Adolescents	5,500,000	3,712,617	0	3,712,617
Total*	28,240,000	24,247,910	8,195,250	16,052,660

*The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 7%. The actual recovery rate on contributions will be calculated in accordance with UNICEF Executive Board Decision 2006/7 dated 9 June 2006.

EMERGENCY PROGRAMME PRIORITIES: JULY – DECEMBER 2010

Health and Nutrition

- Micronutrient supplementation with breastfeeding support will be provided to 220,000 children and 100,000 pregnant mothers, including stunted and anaemic children in vulnerable areas.
- The needs of 900 children with severe acute malnutrition will be met by expanded community therapeutic feeding programmes.

⁴ UNICEF is part of the oPt consolidated appeal process (CAP).

- Ten hospital newborn units will be equipped with an extensive package of equipment and medical supplies to improve care for a target group of 3,000 high risk pregnant mothers and newborns.
- A target group of 37,500 sick children will be reached by equipping and training staff in 118 primary health care clinics on the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness approach.
- Accurate and up to date nutrition surveillance data for response monitoring and early warning purposes will be ensured, and coverage of the existing nutrition surveillance system will be expanded to cover more vulnerable populations.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

- Over 70,000 students will benefit from access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation through daily water tanking to 105 schools (80 in Gaza and 25 in West Bank); and through rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities in 45 schools (20 in Gaza and 25 in West Bank).
- Water supply and storage capacity will be improved, benefiting 50,000 inhabitants of Gaza - Middle Area through emergency repairs including construction of a ground water reservoir, installation of a booster pumping station and provision of network extensions.
- Expansion of water networks in south West Bank will improve access of 30,000 people to safe, adequate and affordable drinking water.
- Twenty thousand community members will benefit from minimised risk of sewage population, through the construction of 1,500m of sewerage networks, cleaning of waste water networks, and repair of 300 damaged manholes.
- Hygiene education will be provided in 105 schools to complement advocacy campaigns for safe WASH practices and global hand-washing.
- UNICEF will provide WASH technical leadership, improve emergency response coordination and ensure information management through enhanced utilisation of a common database.

Education

- Twenty thousand children in vulnerable and marginalised areas will be enabled to catch up with basic education through innovative learning activities including remedial education and structured extra-curricular activities.
- Three hundred primary schools will be supplied with education materials, school supplies and equipment to ensure access of children to basic education in affected areas.
- An additional 5,000 teachers and caregivers will be equipped with skills to support their students more effectively through training in innovative pedagogical methods and improved learning spaces in target schools.
- UNICEF will provide technical leadership and improve emergency response cluster coordination in the education sector.

Child Protection

- Support to 30 family centres and 15 psychosocial teams will enable strengthened psychosocial support to at least 30,000 children and 12,500 care givers across the oPt. This will ensure access to protection services that mitigate and remedy harm due to the ongoing violence and conflict.
- The ability of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support agencies to respond to and support children and caregivers in need to mental health and psychosocial support will be increased.
- Through awareness-raising campaigns, the risk of death and injury from mines, unexploded ordnances and other explosive devices will be reduced.
- UNICEF will provide technical inter-agency leadership and improve coordination of the Child Protection, Mental Health and Psychosocial, and 1612 Working Groups and information management.

Adolescents

- In 100 adolescent-friendly learning centres across oPt, 13 – 18 years old adolescents will have access to remedial learning, sports and recreational opportunities.
- Services will be provided targeting adolescents in 30 family centres across Gaza.