

Annex II
Action Fiche for the West Bank and Gaza Strip/ ENPI

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE OPERATION

Beneficiaries:	Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip
Implementing Organisation:	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)
Operation title:	UNRWA: Contribution to the 2010 Regular Budget
Amount	EUR 66 million
Implementing Method	Project approach – joint management with an international organisation (FAFA)

2. CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION OF THE OPERATION

2.1. Context of the Operation

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) provides education, health, relief and social services, microfinance, housing and infrastructural support to approximately 4.7 million registered Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Established by the UN in 1949 to carry out direct relief and works programmes for Palestine refugees, the Agency began operations in 1950. In the absence of a solution to the Palestine refugee problem, the General Assembly has repeatedly renewed UNRWA's mandate, most recently until 30 June 2011¹.

As agreed through the Joint Declaration signed by the Commission and UNRWA in February 2007, the European Commission, with an annual contribution of EUR 66 million until 2010, helps UNRWA address the priority needs of the refugees through the provision of basic social services.

The last few years have witnessed growing concern among the refugee community and in the region over the decline in UNRWA services. Successive funding shortages and subsequent austerity measures and cost reductions have prevented programmes from expanding in tandem with the growth in the refugee population. This has led to the reduction of ongoing programme activities and precluded certain actions which normally would be part of UNRWA's regular programme of work. It also had a direct impact on the increased class size in UNRWA schools, rising patient/staff ratios in

¹ The General Assembly is responsible for renewing the UNRWA's mandate every three years; 2011 is the next year the mandate will be up for renewal.

the health services, and higher caseloads for social workers dealing with the poorest refugees.

UNRWA has more than 29,500 staff posts to cover for services provided to 4.7 million refugees. The Regular Budget, including the General Fund and in-kind contributions, is the Agency's primary means of sustaining core services. The planned amount for the Regular Budget for 2009 was of USD 545.6 million, out of which USD 107 million remain unfunded (which has led to a cutback of basic services). This does not include funding for emergency appeals, organisational development or specific projects (like Nahr El-Bared)².

The planned budget for 2010 amounts to over USD 600 million³. This year's budget reflects the introduction in the Agency of new approaches to strategic planning and results based budgeting as a result of UNRWA's reform process. Its structure reflects the Agency's Medium Term Strategy for 2010-2015 and its contents are product of the implementation of programme cycle management⁴.

The ability of the Agency to provide its services is entirely dependent on sufficient voluntary contributions made available annually. The annual contribution to the General Fund for the period 2007-2010 was agreed

Over the past five years, the Commission has contributed over EUR 326 million to UNRWA's Regular Budget. In 2008 and 2009, the Commission also supported the Agency's Organisational Development through a contribution of EUR 1 million per year. Moreover, the Commission has supported the Special Hardship Cases programme (approximately EUR 5 million/year) for the last years as well as other specific and ad hoc programmes. Additional Commission financial support to UNRWA is provided through ECHO-funded humanitarian operations⁵ and other ad hoc contributions including the Food Facility instrument⁶ as well as the Instrument for Stability⁷.

Since 1971, the European Commission has contributed annually to UNRWA's Regular Budget. The European Commission contribution to the General Fund for the period 2007-2010 represents 25% of UNRWA's core budget, while the European Union as a whole contributes to over 62%.

² The total funding needs of UNRWA for 2009 amount to USD 1,372.9 million, out of which USD 545.6 million were allocated to the Regular Fund.

³ See biannual budget at: <http://www.un.org/unrwa/publications/pdf/comgen-report2008-add.pdf>

⁴ The MTS 2010-2015 identifies four human development goals and subsequently 15 strategic objectives for the medium term, reflected in concrete Implementation Plans for each Field Office and Headquarters for 2010-2011. (http://www.un.org/unrwa/publications/pubs08/mts_report_2010_2015.pdf)

⁵ ECHO funding in 2009 amount to EUR 14.33 million

⁶ Food Facility instrument in support of UNRWA's Social Safety Net Programme in the West Bank and Gaza Strip – EUR 39.7 million.

⁷ Instrument for Stability (IfS) support to: UNRWA's Emergency Job Creation Programme (JCP) in the Gaza Strip – EUR 13 million & UNRWA's provision of adequate shelter for displaced Palestine refugee families and Palestinian civil society in the camps of Beddawi and Nahr El-Bared - North Lebanon – EUR 5.1 million.

3. RATIONALE OF THE INTERVENTION

Continued Commission support to UNRWA is an essential element of the EU strategy for the Middle-East Peace Process. One of the key elements of this strategy is to confirm the EU commitment to keep a close watch on the refugee issue, including during final status negotiations.

The proposed Commission-funded operation directly addresses the problems associated with service provision in the refugee camps. The regular programmes financed under the General Fund include UNRWA's education programme, health programme, and relief and social services programme.

The present grant agreement takes into consideration the support UNRWA is receiving from the international community, including EU Member States (EU MS provided around 28% of their contributions to UNRWA's Regular Budget in 2009). An added element of consideration is the increased burden on the Agency imposed by the ongoing crisis in the West Bank and Gaza, the demographic growth rate of the refugee population, and cost increases due to the higher operational charges related to the movement and access restrictions imposed by Israeli authorities as well as the depletion of all reserves⁸.

3.1. Overall objectives

The overall objective of the Operation is to provide support to the education, health, relief and social services programmes of the UNRWA.

3.2. Specific objectives

Education programme: to provide, within the framework of the curricula prescribed by the host countries and by the Palestinian Authority, general basic education, teacher education and vocational and technical education for Palestine refugees to enhance their educational opportunities at all levels of the educational system.

Health programme: to protect, preserve and promote the health of the registered Palestine refugees by providing access to comprehensive, quality basic health services.

Relief and social services programme: to provide a social safety net for Palestine refugees most affected by poverty promotes the self-reliance of less advantaged members of the refugee community, especially women, children, youth and persons with disabilities.

3.3. Expected results

The main result of the Operation is the sustained delivery of essential public services to Palestine refugees.

⁸ The Agency has traditionally used its diminishing reserves towards bridging its chronic funding gaps.

3.4. Activities

The main programmes operated by UNRWA include the following activities:

3.4.1. Education Programme

Education services are currently provided through 689 UNRWA elementary, preparatory and secondary schools⁹ and ten vocational training centres (in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank and the Gaza strip) staffed by more than 21,000 teachers and attended by around 480,000 pupils.

In the West Bank and Gaza the education system as a whole has been severely disrupted by the armed conflict, curfews, closures and access problems since the Intifada. Working conditions for teachers have deteriorated, which has an impact in the staff morale and the difficulty to recruit and retain competent staff.

UNRWA's objectives for the medium term focus on improving the quality of education and ensuring access for all Palestine refugee's children, including those with special educational needs. A comprehensive review of UNRWA's approach to education is taking place in 2009 and its findings will be reflected in the future Agency planning.

The needs in this sector are high: education facilities in many areas are overcrowded and under-equipped. Double shifting in 77% of UNRWA schools, rented schools in poor conditions and the lack of recreational facilities severely limits the education possibilities for refugee children.

The first priority of the Agency is to ensure the continued operation of its schools and the provision of additional places as the refugee population grows. Tackling double shifting, unsuitable school premises and reducing pupil-teacher ratios and class occupancy rates are also between the most important tasks of UNRWA in this sector.

Other objectives of the Agency in this area include:

- upgrading the quality of teachers through a Teacher and School Development Strategy, focusing on improving the pedagogical skills of teachers in particular and making greater use of information and technology based approaches.
- strengthening support for children with special needs, through the establishment of Special Educational Needs Support Centres in each field and expanding the school-based learning support programme; and improve access to education opportunities for learners with Special Education Needs (SEN- around 20% of children). Over the next biennium, UNRWA will implement a new framework for support to SEN children, which includes the establishment of specialised support centres, expert medical and psychosocial assessment and special training for teachers.

⁹ Secondary schools (6) in Lebanon only.

- promoting respect for human rights and eliminating violence from schools, through dedicated programmes, and adapting curriculum and textbook content to further reinforce tolerance and respect for human rights.

3.4.2. *Health Programme*

UNRWA's health programme is community-based, with the emphasis placed on primary health care and with a very selective use of hospital services. Approximately three million refugees (66% of UNRWA registered refugees) make use of UNRWA health facilities. Primary care is provided through UNRWA's own 137 facilities, serving approximately 9.5 million patient visits per year. Secondary care is provided through contractual arrangements with governmental or non-governmental hospitals or through partial reimbursement of the costs of treatment. Two thirds of the refugee population consist of women of reproductive age and children below 15 years of age, thus making maternal and child health, including family planning services, a priority area.

The quality of service delivery is affected by the excessive workloads borne by Agency staff (e.g. Agency-wide average of 96 consultations per doctor per day) and chronic staff shortages and difficulties in attracting and retaining qualified staff, deteriorating health infrastructure and outdated equipment as a result of under investment. The cost of medical supplies and hospital care is also rising. UNRWA aims at reinforcing the staffing of the existing facilities, establishing new ones and renovating and updating existing facilities and medical equipment.

Water, sanitation and environmental conditions are poor, particularly in Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon. For this reason, the Agency is working to improve the environmental conditions in the camps in coordination with local authorities and with special emphasis on wastewater disposal and solid waste management.

Refugees face the threat of resurging and newly emerging infectious diseases; increased morbidity and mortality from non-communicable diseases; mental and psychological problems; and high prevalence of micronutrient deficiencies. This is leading the Agency to introduce new programmes (mental health, psychosocial counselling) as well as putting in place an active intervention strategy for surveillance, prevention, early detection and management of these diseases in an effort to avoid the high cost of treating their complications/disabling effects at the secondary/tertiary care levels.

3.4.3. *Relief and Social Services*

The Agency provides eligible refugees with a range of services including food support, shelter rehabilitation, and selective cash assistance for Special Hardship Cases (SHCs). Over 263,000 persons are currently benefiting from the cyclical assistance under this Special Hardship Case programme. This assistance is primarily directed to families headed by women, families without a male adult medically fit to earn an income and to the elderly who can not support themselves.

Moreover, community support services encourages self-reliance in the refugee community through poverty alleviation schemes, and community-based, locally-managed institutions and services concerned with women and development, the

rehabilitation and integration of refugees with disabilities, children and youth activities and leadership training. One of these services, the Microcredit Community Support Programme, provides small loans to over 20,000 refugees through group guaranteed lending and individual loan programmes.

4. DURATION AND LOCATION OF THE OPERATION

4.1. Duration of the operation

The overall Operation has an implementation period of 12 months.

4.2. Location of the operation

The Operation will be implemented in all areas of operation, i.e. in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

5. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

5.1. Implementation method

The programme will be implemented through joint management through the signature of contribution agreement with UNRWA and within the framework of the European Commission-UN Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA).

5.2. Procurement and grant award procedures

For agreements with international organisations, all contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the international organisation concerned.

6. GENERAL MONITORING OF UNRWA PERFORMANCE

A Joint Annual Performance Review of UNRWA's main operations will be conducted in November 2009. The review, as has been the case over the past two years (2007- 2008), will be based on a predefined set of result-based indicators and targets, as well as milestones identified for the implementation of the Organisation Development process (See table below).

Following the outcomes and results of the 2009 Joint Review with UNRWA, a decision will be taken regarding future annual performance reviews of UNRWA's core programmes. More specifically, this would entail either a modification of the indicators stated below, or, the adoption of UNRWA's programme strategic framework as it has been elaborated within its Medium Term Strategy (2010-2015).

Indicators which will be reviewed in 2010 will be annexed to the final contribution agreement.

Type/periodicity	Indicator	Baseline/results/targets ¹⁰
Health		
Impact/ medium-term	1. Infant mortality rate	03: 22.5 06-07: 22 (target) Measurement underway in 08 08-09: 20 <i>10-11: 20</i>
Result/annual	2. Percentage of pregnant women who register during the 1st trimester	05: 57.5%, 06: 65.8 % 07: 72.1% (07 target 70%) 08-09: 75% 10-11: 80%
Result/annual	3. Percentage of newly detected cases of all non-communicable diseases under monitoring and treatment	05: 8% 06: 11.1% 07: 13.0% (07 target 15%) 08-09: 20% 10-11: 25%
Output/annual	4. Average daily medical consultations per doctor	05: 110 06: 95 07: 96 (07 target 90) 08-09: 80 10-11: 70
Education		
Impact/medium-term	5. Educational achievement trends (new indicator to be measured by	On Track – To be measured by DoE

¹⁰ In addition to baselines and targets, the above table summarises the initial results of the 2008 external review (achieved in 2007 or during the 2007-2008 school year). New results were marked **in bold** and the respective targets in brackets (revised targets are *in italics*).

	systematic UNRWA Monitoring Learning Achievement Tests)	
Output/annual	6. Percentage of schools operating in a double-shift	05-06: 77% 06-07: 77.63% 07-08: 77.11% On Track in four Fields (07-08 target 70-75%) 08-09: 70% 10-11: 65%
Result/annual	7. Pass rate of students in the national exams in Lebanon (preparatory school)	04: 53% 06-07: 45.2% 07-08: 46.76% (07-08 target 60-70%) 08-09: 55% 10-11: 65%
Result/annual	8. Percentage of VTC graduates in employment 12 months after graduation	05: 78% 06: 81.9% 07: 81.84% (07 target 80%) 08-09: 85% 10-11:90%
Relief and Social Services		
Impact/medium-term	9. Percentage of refugees below the abject poverty line (food consumption poverty line)	On Track – To be measured by RSSP
Output/annual	10. Number of refugees (in thousands) who benefit from certain services of the Community Based Organizations (W: women – skills training, D: persons with disabilities – direct rehabilitation , Y: children and youth – recreational activities)	06-07: 17.7 W 30.4 D 97.4 Y (06-07 target 15W, 25D, 50Y) 08-09: 18W, 35D, 75Y
Housing and Camp Improvement		
Output/annual	11. Percentage of SHCs, whose shelters are in need of rehabilitation,	05: 3.4 %

	which have benefited from rehabilitated, extended or reconstructed shelters	06: 9 % 07: 19% (07 target 10%) 08-09: 20% 10-11:30%
Microfinance and Micro-enterprise		
Output/annual	12. Percentage of loans given to informal sector clients	07: 78% (target 80%) 08-09: 80% 10-11: 80%