



## gaza: summary of 2016 operational achievements



### Construction of schools and infrastructure projects:

In 2016, UNRWA completed the construction of 24 new school buildings, addressing the current and future needs of UNRWA students. In addition, over the past year the infrastructure and camp improvement programme completed the construction of two health centres, four infrastructure projects, a solid waste transfer station, a public library and storm water harvesting projects in various schools across Gaza. Moreover, UNRWA identified 50 schools that will serve as designated emergency shelters and started to upgrade them with solar systems, elevated generators, shower blocks, sheds and purification plants to ensure access to potable water. As of the end of November, 30 infrastructure projects worth US\$ 64.45 million were under implementation. The total value of UNRWA projects approved by the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) as of the end of 2016 was US\$ 241.3 million. In 2016 GFO expended US\$121.8 million across contracted projects and self-help shelter assistance, generating a total of 8,923 full-time job-equivalents (FTEs) over one year.



**Education for refugee children:** In August over 262,000 refugee children started the 2016/17 school year – an increase of 12,000 students compared to last year. The students are taught by 8,520 teachers in 267 UNRWA schools across

Gaza. During the Summer Fun Weeks in July and August, UNRWA offered sports, cultural and educational activities to over 165,000 refugee children. Over 36,000 students also attended the 18-day-long Summer Learning Programme, at the end of which they were able to repeat their previously failed exams. In December 2016, the Agency hired 600 support teachers (300 for Arabic language and 300 for Mathematics) for six months under its Graduate Training Programme (GTP).

**Creating jobs/Cash for Work:** Between January and November 2016, UNRWA created job opportunities for approximately 19,200 beneficiaries through the Job Creation Programme (JCP), injecting US\$ 13.86 million into the Gaza economy. Of the total jobs, approximately one third were awarded to women and over 4,600 to young adults (between 18 and 26 years of age).



Given the worsening socioeconomic situation in the Gaza Strip, the Agency has increased its JCP, from 17,060 opportunities in 2013 to 20,550 jobs in 2014 and 32,000 in 2015. Due to a lack of funding, the number of offered job opportunities decreased greatly in 2016. UNRWA also addresses high unemployment through its Graduate Training Programme (GTP) by generating opportunities for fresh graduates. In 2016, 1,942 graduates benefited from the GTP; overall, since its inception in 2001, over 32,000 fresh graduates were awarded with job opportunities.

**Relief and social services:** In 2016, UNRWA distributed food assistance to over 960,000 beneficiaries in four distribution rounds. In the second quarter of 2016 the Agency, for the first time, distributed the newly improved food



baskets, which include lentils and chickpeas – and canned sardines – in the ration for Social Safety Net beneficiaries (abject-poor beneficiaries: those households living below US\$ 1.74 per capita per day). To define Palestine refugees' eligibility for services ([Poverty Assessment System](#)), in 2016, social workers from the relief and social services programme (RSSP) conducted an average of almost 10,000 home visits per month. In addition, RSSP provided monthly assistance to approximately 700 women, 1,000 persons with disabilities – including around 80 with assistive devices – and 1,800 children and youth. The programme also offered sponsorships to approximately 7,900 orphans and directly supported 132 visually impaired children through the UNRWA Rehabilitation Centre for the Visually Impaired in Gaza city.

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**Providing shelter:** UNRWA managed to pay **all 2016 quarterly rental subsidy payments** to eligible, still-displaced Palestine refugees in Gaza. As of end of December, more than **1,300 families** have completed or were in the process of completing the **reconstruction** of their totally destroyed homes with support from UNRWA; furthermore, over **81,000 families** have either completed or were completing the **repair** of their damaged homes (all levels of damage). UNRWA has funding for the reconstruction of approximately 1,900 homes, all of which are currently either completed or ongoing. At the end of 2016, due to various interventions from UNRWA, **400 families** who were pending approval from the Government of Israel since May to start reconstructing their home received clearance through the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism. In total, as of the end of 2016, UNRWA has distributed over **US\$ 229.6 million** for its self-help shelter repair and reconstruction programme. In 2016, UNRWA also completed the third phase of the Rafah Rehousing Project, which since its commencement has provided more than **1,700 housing units for some 10,000 refugee families**.



**Supporting youth:** In 2016, **3,520 students** were enrolled in regular **technical and vocational training** courses and in the vocational training initiative for vulnerable youth at the two UNRWA Vocational Training Centres, one in Gaza city and the other in Khan Younis, southern Gaza. Out of them, 1,110 students freshly started their training in September, and over 1,230 students completed their studies and celebrated their graduation in 2016. Further, around **735 youth** of the vocational training initiative were facilitated an **apprenticeship** in the local market. **Fifty-seven per cent of all students** come from **Social Safety Net households** – meaning those families that are living below US\$ 1.74 per person per day. To date, **more than 22,000 students** have completed the UNRWA Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programme. To celebrate **International Youth Day** on 12 August the UNRWA Gender Initiative organized a two-day training, awareness sessions and an advocacy campaign on recycling and resource efficiency for over **400 young persons** (200 women and 200 men) across the Gaza Strip. Moreover, RSP provides regular **sports activities** for over **3,000 youth** per month through its **Youth Activity Centres** in refugee camps.



**Supporting business:** Through its Microfinance Department (MD), UNRWA helps address the needs of the **entrepreneurial and unbanked sector of the community**, including low-income Palestine refugees. In 2016, the MD disbursed almost **5,000 loans** worth over **US\$ 7.3 million**. It also provided fresh graduates, university students and professionals with different technical training, some of which focus on 'Job Hunting', 'Project Management' and 'Gender Awareness'. In 2016, the MD conducted **86 courses** for **1,700 participants**. Just above 43 per cent of MD clients are female, and

more than 32 per cent are below 30 years old. UNRWA launched the microfinance initiative in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) in the early 1990s and expanded operations to Syria and Jordan in 2003. Since 1991, the MD in Gaza has issued almost **120,000 loans worth approximately US\$ 153 million**. In July, the MD organized its **first trade fair** in Gaza to display the products and services from 41 different small and microenterprises run by Palestinians benefiting from UNRWA microfinance loans.

**Health care and psychosocial support:** UNRWA employed **166 doctors and 328 nurses** who provided quality primary health care in **21 health centres (HCs)** in Gaza, serving over **1 million patients** on a quarterly basis. To improve the management and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), in 2016 the health programme introduced a **life-saving drug** for both diabetes and hypertension called statin. Fifteen medical officers completed their postgraduate diploma in Family Medicine, which UNRWA implemented for the first time in cooperation with Westminster University and Azhar University. In the beginning of 2016, the Agency launched a pilot project in the **Saftawi Health Centre**, in North Gaza, to fully **integrate mental health care** within its primary health-care services. Over the past year, the HC screened over 4,700 clients and almost 500 patients received mental health care and psychosocial support from health centre staff. Furthermore, the Agency maintains a Community Mental Health Programme (CMHP) and a network of over **230 counsellors and 185 psychosocial facilitators** in UNRWA schools, as well as **23 counsellors and five legal advisors** in its health centres. Counsellors provide structured group or individual counselling.



**Empowering women:** In 2016 the UNRWA Gender Initiative implemented the '**Empowerment Programme for Female Heads of Households (FHH)**' project; over **650 female heads of households** benefited from 18 training sessions on self-development, financial literacy and household management. Furthermore, **950 female graduates** completed the three-month **Young Women Leadership Programme (YWLP)** focusing on management, information technology and advanced English; 621 female graduates accessed a three-month work placement as part of the YWLP. During the **16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV)** campaign in November and December 2016, the UNRWA relief and social services and education programmes, as well as the Gender Initiative and Communications Office, provided a variety of activities, ranging from **awareness sessions** and **training** on human rights for teachers and students on early marriage, adolescent health, GBV and women's rights; the launch of a **radio programme** in partnership with a local radio station; and **open discussion forums** on causes and consequences of GBV within community-based organizations and women's programme centres across the Gaza Strip.



united nations relief and works agency  
for palestine refugees in the near east

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