



Palestine refugees employed through the UNRWA Cash-for-Work programme pack food items at the Beach Distribution Centre in Gaza during the COVID-19 pandemic. © 2020 UNRWA Photo by Khalil Adwan

# occupied palestinian territory emergency appeal 2021

Exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) is critical and deteriorated sharply in 2020. It is causing deep insecurity amongst Palestine refugees across Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The UNRWA Emergency Appeal lays out the responses required in 2021 to mitigate the impact of the crisis on this vulnerable community.

In Gaza, Palestine refugees are struggling with high levels of poverty, food insecurity and joblessness, as the illegal blockade entered its fourteenth year in 2020. Economic indicators reflect the severity of the protracted crisis, aggravated by COVID-19 and the accompanying lockdowns and curfews. The unemployment rate stood at 49 per cent in the third quarter of 2020. The crisis has eroded coping mechanisms and the living conditions of Palestine refugees who remain highly dependent on the humanitarian assistance provided by UNRWA to meet basic needs. The volatile security situation, compounded by political instability, the chronic electricity crisis and lack of access to clean water deepen the extreme hardship that Gaza's people endure. The situation is taking a heavy toll on the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of individuals and communities, with women and children at particular risk.

In the West Bank, Palestine refugees are an especially vulnerable group, with higher than average rates of unemployment and poverty. They are subjected to a range of protection threats arising from the Israeli occupation. In 2020, Israeli Security Forces (ISF) mounted operations regularly, often in refugee camps, resulting in injuries and at times deaths. Israeli settler violence against Palestinians has also continued. In the first nine months of 2020, UNRWA registered a worrisome increase in the number of demolitions of Palestinian-owned structures, as well as in the displacement of Palestinian families, with refugees disproportionately affected. Restrictions on freedom of movement, expansion of illegal Israeli settlements and widespread exposure of children to violence and the risk of detention by Israeli authorities also continued. Protection threats, as well as socio-economic hardship, have increased significantly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**In 2021, UNRWA requires US\$ 231 million to address the priority humanitarian needs of Palestine refugees in Gaza and the West Bank. The Agency's appeal is guided by the following three strategic priorities:**

**Strategic Priority 1:** Crisis-affected Palestine refugee households facing acute shocks have increased economic access to food through food aid, cash-for-work and emergency cash assistance.

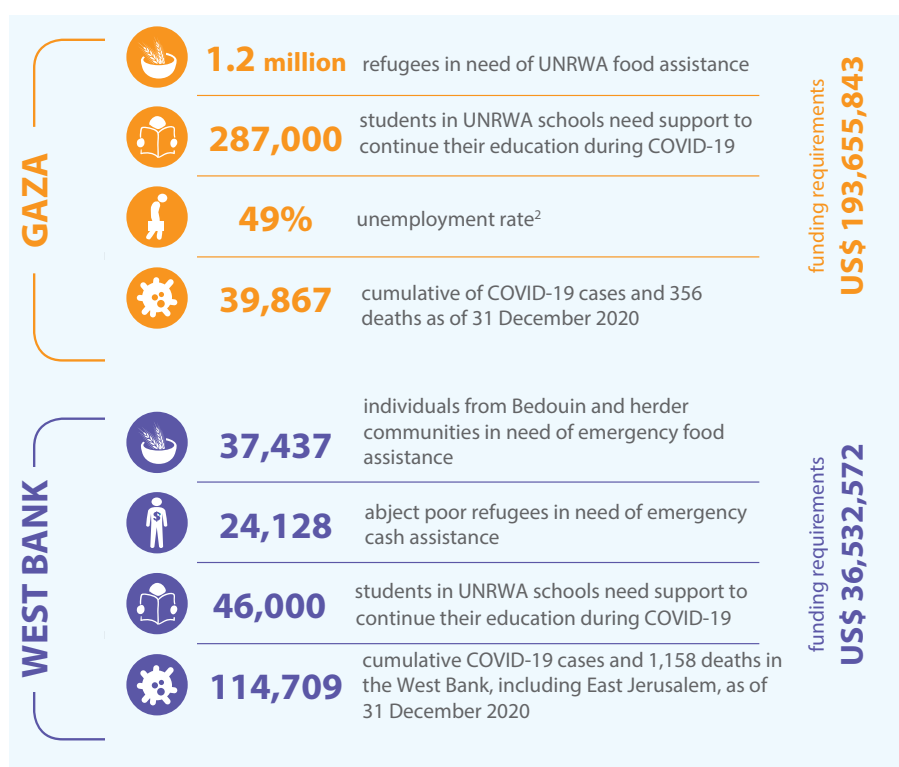
**Strategic Priority 2:** Palestine refugees maintain access to critical services and are protected from the most severe impacts of the crisis, including during the emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Strategic Priority 3:** Effective management and coordination of the emergency response is ensured to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of programme delivery.



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**Total funding requirements: US\$ 230,620,760<sup>1</sup>**



## UNRWA emergency interventions in the oPt in 2021

<b>Food Assistance</b>	Food parcels to 1.2 million Palestine refugees in Gaza, as well as 37,437 Bedouin/herders and 18,000 vulnerable refugee households affected by COVID-19 in the West Bank.
<b>Cash-for-Work</b>	Temporary employment opportunities for 21,000 Palestine refugees in Gaza.
<b>Emergency cash assistance</b>	Emergency cash assistance through the e-card modality to 24,128 abject poor refugees in the West Bank. One-off cash assistance to 180,000 extremely vulnerable refugees in Gaza to alleviate the additional hardship caused by COVID-19.
<b>Emergency health</b>	Continued access to primary, secondary and tertiary health care for Palestine refugees in Gaza and the West Bank, ensuring that COVID-19 prevention measures are in place.
<b>Education in Emergencies</b>	Continuity of learning for 287,000 students in UNRWA schools in Gaza and 47,627 students in UNRWA schools and TVET centres in the West Bank through different learning modalities adjusted to the COVID-19 context.
<b>Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)</b>	Support to students, parents, families and communities in Gaza through UNRWA MHPSS network in schools and health centres, including through remote modalities to respond to the additional challenges posed by COVID-19.
<b>Protection and Neutrality</b>	Respond to the protection needs of the most vulnerable Palestine refugees in Gaza and the West Bank, and provide immediate response to Gender-Based Violence and child protection cases including through remote modalities during COVID-19. Monitor, document and report on protection incidents affecting Palestine refugees and address International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL) concerns in the West Bank. Safeguard the neutrality of UNRWA installations in Gaza and the West Bank through installation inspections.
<b>Environmental Health</b>	Maintenance of environmental health services in 19 refugee camps in the West Bank to prevent any additional health hazards during COVID-19.
<b>Emergency Preparedness and Coordination and Management</b>	Enhanced capacity at field level to address sudden on-set emergencies and at HQ level to support overall coordination and management of the response.

<sup>1</sup> This amount also includes US\$ 432,345 for regional needs.

<sup>2</sup> Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Q3 2020.



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

[www.unrwa.org](http://www.unrwa.org)

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 5.7 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 services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance and emergency assistance. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions.