



Promoting long and healthy lives in Gaza

As a result of years of socio-economic decline, conflict and closure, the health sector across the Gaza Strip suffers from lack of adequate physical infrastructure, insufficient training opportunities, overstretched facilities, and frequent interruptions of services due to power cuts. At the same time, the health of the population is at increasing risk. Food insecurity and rising levels of poverty have meant that most of the population do not receive their daily caloric requirements, while over 90% of the water in Gaza has been deemed unfit for human consumption.

Through 20 healthcare centres across the Gaza Strip, UNRWA offers comprehensive primary healthcare to over 1.1 million Palestine refugees from birth through to active ageing. Since 2007, the Agency has promoted excellence in its healthcare through better regulating prescription practices, engaging the community in healthcare through health education and health centre friends committees, and reforming health centre management. In recent years, the Agency has prioritised improving psycho-social support to a population in need and raising awareness and acceptance of family planning in Gaza.

At UNRWA we believe that each and every child has the right to an education that helps them achieve their full human potential. UNRWA's education system helps refugee children to thrive, achieve, and to grow up understanding their rights and respecting the rights of others. Moreover, UNRWA provides young people with the opportunity to learn new skills that will lead to work. This helps individuals and families escape poverty and attain their goals. We believe that to invest in the education and training of Palestine refugees is to invest in peace. **Peace starts here.**

Peace starts with . .

Promoting long and healthy lives in Gaza

Providing comprehensive primary healthcare services

Through 20 health centres across the Gaza Strip, UNRWA offers comprehensive primary healthcare to over 1.1 million refugees. The Agency provides general clinic, laboratory and personalised maternal health services and family planning in all health centres. It also provides radiology services in six health centres, dental clinics in 15 health centres, and physiotherapy clinics in nine health centres.

In order to offer Palestine refugees the best possible healthcare under challenging circumstances, UNRWA introduced its Excellent Health Services Initiative in Gaza. Through the Initiative, UNRWA has:

- Reduced antibiotic prescription rates from more than 55% to within 1% of the WHO standard (25%);
- Enriched community relations through the formation of a "Friends Committee", comprised of key community members, at each health centre;
- Expanded health education through extensive community outreach sessions, contributing to an increase in the number of children monitored for growth and development; and
- Reformed health centre management by empowering the head of each health centre to manage and lead their team.

At a glance...

- 1.1 million refugees
- 20 healthcare centres across the Gaza Strip which offer:
 - Comprehensive primary healthcare
 - Personalised family planning
 - Radiology (in six centres)
 - Dentistry (in 15 centres)
 - Physiotherapy (in nine centres)
 - Psycho-social care (one counsellor per centre)
 - Special Education Needs comprehensive health assessments (in six centres)

Assisting under-achieving children through in-depth health assessments

Across the Gaza Strip, psychological trauma, poverty and environmental degradation have had a negative impact on children's physical and mental health. In order to assist those most affected, UNRWA established Special Education Needs clinics in six of its health centres. It then identified those students who failed every subject in their exams and provided them with a comprehensive physical and mental health assessment. The diagnoses have enabled UNRWA to immediately improve the daily lives of some students - by providing hearing aids, reading glasses and treatments for bacterial disease - while arranging for other students to receive longer-term care. This initiative is dependent upon funding through the Gaza Emergency Appeal.

Offering psycho-social support to a population in need

Many Palestine refugees in Gaza suffer from anxiety, distress and depression. UNRWA has offered support to a population in need by placing psycho-social counsellors in its schools where they support children whose problems include: lack or absence of motivation in school, violence, fear, sleeplessness and inability to concentrate. In 2009, the Agency increased the scope of its psycho-social support, placing one counsellor in each of its health centres to assist the chronically ill, those with depression and victims of violence. The placement of counsellors in schools and health centres is made possible through the funding of the Gaza Emergency Appeal.

Engaging men in family planning

Through considerable effort, the acceptance and number of family planning users in Gaza has risen significantly in recent years. In 2009, UNRWA provided nearly 47,500 people with family planning services. In 2011, UNRWA is aiming to further increase this number through a series of community outreach workshops targeting men.

UNRWA provides assistance, protection and advocacy for some 4.7 million registered Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the occupied Palestinian territory, pending a solution to their plight. The Agency's services encompass education, health care, social safety-net, camp infrastructure and improvement, community support, microfinance and emergency response, including in times of armed conflict.

Through these services UNRWA strives to help Palestine refugees achieve a decent standard of living, long and healthy lives, knowledge and skills and full enjoyment of human rights. These goals are formulated according to the UN criteria for human development.