

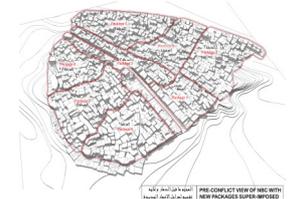


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YEARS

NBC Latest Updates

May 14, 2010



Issue No. 54

Reconstruction:

Concrete works are taking place in the five building blocks which make up Package 1. As part of its efforts to ensure the contractor is able to deliver Package 1 on time, UNRWA met with Al Jihad this week to review the contractor's schedules and plans for delivery of drawings, amount of construction materials and labor.



In response to the un-announced labor strike, UNRWA consulted with Popular Committee and the Factions. All agreed on three points: 1) UNRWA would coordinate with Al Jihad to ensure that there would be no delays in paying laborers; 2) that workers are requested to work overtime keeping in mind that all workers will receive overtime equivalent to time and a half as stipulated by Lebanese Labor law; 3) that laborers better communicate their concerns before striking.

With regards to progress on NBRC, in a meeting held with Popular Committee and Factions, UNRWA was informed of a temporary solution to permit resumption of work on NBC design and planning with the priority n Package 3. The original validation committee has been reinstated to complete the works it has started and will be accountable a temporary committee appointed by the factions made up of 3 engineers and 3 representatives of the Popular Committee. This group will follow up on validation, design and reconstruction. Further meetings are being organized to discuss the role and responsibilities of all parties. It is hoped that everyone will work in the cooperative voluntarily spirit that existed before the recent problems.

Relief and Recovery:

Under the Austrian funded Capacity Building for Women and Girls of NBC project, the deadline to apply for grants has been extended through Monday, May 24. All women who previously owned businesses and who are looking for grants to re-open their business are encouraged to go to NBC's WPC.

Visits to Nahr el Bared:

NBC welcomed a Finnish delegation to the camp who met with community members in plot 774. Finland has contributed to both the relief and reconstruction for which UNRWA extends its gratitude. On May 13, an Italian journalist visited the camp to interview NBC families and follow up on the reconstruction progress. On May 12, eight members of the community traveled to Beirut to attend a signing ceremony and press conference where the United States reiterated its commitment to NBC as it generously donated US\$ 18 million for the reconstruction of NBC and US\$2 million to relief and recovery. Upon listening to the statements made by the community members, the Ambassador commented on their heartfelt nature.

"NLA Services & Camp News"

Relief:

On May 10, the Acting Head of Relief in the north gave a presentation to UNRWA staff on the criteria of eligibility for housing assistance and food support as agreed to by the Relief Beneficiary Review Committee. This briefing which was given to non-relief staff is to improve understanding and the ability to accurately disseminate information at the camp level.

Education:

UNRWA will run a summer recreation project for students from 1 to grade 6. In north Lebanon 1, 500 students from the schools, Majedo, Mazar, Kawkab, Batouf, Majdal, Ramleh and Jenin, will be offered to take part in this first part of the project. The pilot project is designed to meet the needs expressed by the community. It will provide children with different kinds of activities, and thus offer them a much needed break from the difficult living conditions in the camp. Today, UNRWA held its first meeting with parents to inform them about the recreational activities, which will be implemented by Right to Play. The recreational program will take place in two eight-week cycles starting June 21 in Kawkab School in the afternoon five days a week. Early next week, students will bring home a letter and registration form to their parents. UNRWA will offer places on a first-come-first served- basis.

This morning, the Sports' Committee distributed medals and cups to all students who participated in the sports competition during the spring. On May 11, Thierry Pierre, a volunteer from the French NGO "Fin 2 Bombe" began working with students from Batouf and Al-Magdal to spray paint the school wall. All are working under the title of "Art for All and All for Art".

Health:

UNRWA in cooperation with UNRWA staff committee went on a trip to Balbek on May 8, on occasion of the International Nurse Day. During the trip the UNRWA staff confirmed that they will sustain team spirit, and work hard in support to the Palestinian refugees and displaced NBC families.

Camp Activities:

In remembrance of the 1948 Nakba and what the community describes as the "Second Nakba" caused by the conflict in Nahr el Bared in 2007, the Factions and Popular Committee will be running a series of activities including marches, sit-ins and distribution of black flags to commemorate the plight of the Palestinians. Nazareth School in cooperation with Palestinian Arab Cultural Club held on May 13 an exhibit day to commemorate AL-Nakba anniversary.



On the same day, Beit Asfal Al Somoud in Beddawi camp celebrated the graduation of 63 new vocational students from BC and NBC. Students graduating are completing yearlong courses. The graduates are encouraged to go the ILO/UNRWA Employment Services Center in NBC and Beddawi to register into the center's database.

To Set a New Guinness World Record in Commemoration of Al Nakba

On May 15, a group of Palestinian youth will draw the UN resolution 194 that endorses the Palestinian right to return with 6000 scarves. By that they will attempt to beat the current Guinness world record for the longest chain of scarves. The attempt is designed to commemorate the anniversary of Nakba day. A Guinness World Records Adjudicator will be present to officially verify the record attempt, which will involve a drawing of six thousand scarves connected in the shape of the UN Resolution 194, in an effort to break the current record of 2,932 m 5 cm (9,619 ft 6.81 in) made of 5,000 scarves and set in Spain on 29 August 2009. Art bands presenting folkloric dances, songs, and heritage sketches will entertain participants at the festivities, while organizers connect the scarves to achieve a total length of 6,000 m. All are invited to go commemorate Al Nakba in Beirut.

When: Saturday May 15 What Time: 3:00pm

Where: Sportive city of Beirut- Bir Hassan

If there are any misprints or inaccurate statements, please go to Camp Information Office and NMU Communication Office



This newsletter is generously sponsored by European Commission paying for the rental cash subsidies for the displaced families from Nahr el Bared.

PRESS RELEASE

The US Provides a Third Contribution to the Reconstruction of Nahr el-Bared camp



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Beirut May 12

The United States Government announced today a new donation of \$20 million to the Nahr el-Bared camp project in North Lebanon. The announcement was made by US Ambassador Michele Sison at a ceremony held at UNRWA Lebanon Field Office in Beirut, in the presence of the President of the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee Ms Maya Majzoub, the Director of UNRWA Affairs in Lebanon, Mr. Salvatore Lombardo, and a group of displaced refugees from NBC.

The US has always been a generous supporter of UNRWA. Out of the new \$20 million donation \$18 million has been allocated towards the construction of the devastated camp, and \$2 million has been earmarked for relief and recovery support in 2010, which will allow UNRWA to continue providing health, relief, housing and education services to the displaced refugees.

Speaking at the ceremony Ambassador Sison commended "the strong cooperation between UNRWA, the Government of Lebanon, their many partners, and the Palestinian refugee community, as the reconstruction of the camp and surrounding areas moves forward. The United States remains committed to supporting these vital partnerships, with each component – the Lebanese, the Palestinians, the UN, and the international community – each contributing to ensuring that the critical needs of Palestinian refugees and Lebanese civilians affected by the fighting are met, until the process of reconstructing Nahr el-Bared camp is complete."

In her address, Ms Majzoub reiterated the commitment of the Government of Lebanon towards the reconstruction of Nahr el-Bared camp highlighting its partnership and close cooperation with UNRWA to secure a decent life to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon which will reflect positively on the security and stability of Lebanon. She stressed that it is only by joining efforts that challenges ahead can be overcome. Ms. Majzoub thanked the US Government for their new contribution, and for being the "major funder in the reconstruction of Nahr al-Bared Camp for the third year in a row."

Thanking the US for its generous support to UNRWA and to Palestine refugees, the Director of UNRWA Affairs Lebanon, Salvatore Lombardo, said "I am extremely grateful to our generous US donors for this contribution towards the reconstruction of Nahr el-Bared as well as support to relief operations for the 27,000 displaced residents. The reconstruction of Nahr el-Bared will contribute to greater stability for Palestinians and Lebanese alike, and that is why it is so important that reconstruction proceeds quickly. On the 3rd anniversary of the beginning of the Nahr el-Bared crisis I urge other donors to match this amount so that we can address the \$209 million USD funding shortfall and give the refugees some dignity and hope back in their lives".

With this donation, the US will have contributed \$91.8 million in total for Nahr el-Bared since the crisis broke out in 2007 – \$66.5 million for reconstruction, \$25.4 million for relief assistance, including for the construction and equipping of a temporary health centre in the NBC adjacent area. The US contributed \$3.5 million to the UN's initial Flash Appeal (2007), and was the first donor country to respond to UNRWA's Emergency Appeal for North Lebanon (2007-2008) with a pledge of \$10 million. Over 2008 and 2009, the US continued its support for displaced NBC refugees by donating to UNRWA \$48.5 million for the reconstruction of Nahr el-Bared and by providing two donations totalling \$9.31 million to the Relief and Early Recovery Appeal (RERA). With this new donation, the US will have donated \$115 million to UNRWA as a whole in 2010, a most appreciated contribution.

Not an official document

For more information please contact UNRWA Public Information Office tel/fax: 01-840468 e-mail: h.samra@unrwa.org

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وكالة الأمم المتحدة لإغاثة
وتشغيل اللاجئين الفلسطينيين
في الشرق الأدنى

To the NBC Business Owners:

We would like to inform you that the project of providing grants to support reactivating businesses ended in March 2010. This letter will summarize of the procedure and the achievements of the EC funded project. The goals set by UNRWA and approved by the donor were the following:

- To help re-establish and develop economic activities in NBC and BC while avoid market saturation
- To increase income support to reduce dependency on relief assistance
- To create and/or sustain job opportunities
- To provide basic commodities to NBC returnees and improved services in NBC and Beddawi camps

Eligibility Criteria

- The business was in a well known place in NBC and incurred damages during the NBC crisis
- The applicant has already re-opened his business or a new one and he/she needs support
- Neither the applicant nor his family members has benefited from a similar business reactivation grant from any other organisation

Selection Process

- A Grants Committee was formed with the participation of members from: UNRWA, PU, ILO, UNDP and Traders Committee
- Applications were investigated by our team and to verified by the Traders' Committee and the Grant Committee members
- UNRWA's team made a feasibility study and suggested the amount of the grant, using similar projects and similar cases as a precedent
- Applications were presented to the Grants' Committee which decided, based on the information provided, whether to approve a grant or not and to set the amount.

As per this procedure, 768 Grants were disbursed in the amount of US\$ 2,880,000. We remind everyone that this was never meant to be a compensation for losses but a modest push to help start over and reactivate the economy of Nahr el-Bared Camp.

We thank Traders Committee and all partners who helped to implement this project voluntarily (without payment). Grants provided are a demonstration of UNRWA's commitment towards supporting the livelihoods and recovery of NBC. We acknowledge that losses were far more than grants provided.

UNRWA is working hard to secure funding for similar projects that will support enterprises. We ask you to keep reading UNRWA announcements. We apologize that we will not be receiving any application or claim in this regard until further notice. We thank you for your understanding and we reiterate that we will always work for your benefit.