



UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

**DONOR UPDATE 26 APRIL 2002
100-Day Plan of Action**

URGENT NEEDS IN PSYCHO-SOCIAL COUNSELLING, EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE AND DEVELOPMENT

- **More than 600,000 children directly exposed to ongoing violence**
- **Children without access to basic health services and unable to attend school**
- **US\$1.8 million needed to support emergency interventions**

1. EMERGENCY OVERVIEW

Since the beginning of the latest Israeli military offensive on 29 March this year, the population of the Occupied Palestinian Territory has experienced the most difficult period since the Al Aqsa Intifada started in September 2000. More than 600,000 children have had to live under curfew for almost a month now, often without electricity, water, sufficient food and medicines. The ongoing violence is detrimental to Palestinian children's psychological well-being and their ability to concentrate and learn. Traumatic events such as the death or injury of family and friends, house-to-house searches, and the humiliating round-up and detention of fathers and brothers cause irreparable damage to children's confidence in adults; increase their acceptance of violence as a method for resolving problems; and dim their hope in the future. No lasting peace can be built upon such foundations.

Access of civilians to basic services and access of humanitarian workers to these civilians in urgent need is currently, severely restricted. Humanitarian workers also face many obstacles and delays when allowed to access the populations in need. To avert a worsening of the crisis, particularly in respect to children, considerable advocacy must continue if humanitarian access is to improve. Strictly enforced Israeli military curfews on Palestinian cities and towns have been partially lifted. However, access in and out of these areas is still severely limited. Without exception, Palestinians cannot exit affected areas and those in surrounding villages cannot access basic social services offered in nearby cities. Regular immunization activities have been interrupted, the number of deliveries to hospitals has significantly decreased. As a result, medicines are in short supply in many localities.

Over the past month, students in eight West Bank districts have been prevented from attending school. It is estimated that some 11,000 classes have been missed and 55,000 teaching sessions have been lost. Fifty Palestinian schools have sustained Israeli military damage, of which 11 have been totally destroyed, 9 have been vandalized, 15 have been used as military outposts and another 15 as mass arrest and detention centres. MOE headquarters and district offices raided by the Israeli military have sustained considerable damage. In Ramallah, equipment and educational material provided by the international donor community was looted by the Israeli military and computer networks were destroyed. Some 275 schools are situated close to flash points in the current conflict.

Since gaining access to Jenin on the 19th April 2002, 80 UXO's (unexploded ordinances) have been safely removed. Many other UXOs are strewn around Jenin, posing a major risk to children's lives. UNICEF has already begun a public awareness campaign about the same. Reports indicate an abundance of such ordinances and an extremely limited capacity to disable them given access and other restrictions.

2. UNICEF ACTIVITIES

UNICEF has long been assisting the children of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) in the education, health and psychosocial areas. The immediate task at hand is to support the Palestinian Authority (PA) as they address the short-term needs of children affected by the current crisis. This will require accelerating assistance over the coming weeks to build the capacity of

the PA, NGOs and community groups to re-establish basic social services for children in the areas of education and health. UNICEF will also expand its advocacy role to promote the re-establishment of basic services for children. In the current crisis, UNICEF's priorities are to ensure children's access to basic health services including support to immunisation activities, provide psychosocial support, raise UXO awareness, ensure a safe school environment for children and provide remedial education approaches for those children who have been affected by violence and curfews. UNICEF partners in the OPT include the Secretariat of the National Plan of Action for Palestinian children, the Palestinian ministries of education, health, and social affairs, and NGOs, specialising in psychosocial interventions.

Recently, UNICEF has mobilised its support to include:

- **Remedial education:** Supported the development of a community-based education programme in Hebron and Khan Younis in order to assist thousands of children, whose education was disrupted due to closures, to continue their studies. The programme involved teachers, parents, local TV networks and the district directorate.
- **Back to School Campaign:** Technically supported a national media and communications campaign and provided 2,500 uniforms for girls, 2,500 shirts and pants for boys, and 2,623 book bags.
- **Design and implementation of the Palestinian Psycho-Social Code of Conduct** and technical support for psychosocial services in the OPT, including support for specific interventions;
- **Training** of 320 school teachers, 2,408 kindergarten teachers and 550 school counsellors in psychosocial interventions;
- **Provision of some 180 school bags** to families whose houses were demolished in Rafah and Khan Younis in the Gaza Strip;
- **Provision of staff training and surgical equipment**, disposable, chemicals and reagents to the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Red Crescent.
- Support to the MOH to undertake **immunisation campaigns**, in order to reach populations in difficult to access areas.
- Support for the production of **communications materials** on key aspects related to children's health and nutrition.

Since late March 2002, many of these activities have been accelerated as follows:

- UNICEF international staff are **transporting vaccines** from the central cold-chain in Ramallah **and essential drugs, syringes** and other medical disposables to all main hospitals to restart routine vaccination services (Counterparts are not permitted by the Israeli military to transport them).
- **50,000 Oral Rehydration Salt sachets** are being distributed to the main hospitals/health facilities to address outbreaks of diarrhoeal diseases .
- **Emergency deliveries of food** to child protection institutions, and for families under 24 hour curfew in Nablus, Jenin and Bethlehem.
- An **assessment of food needs** by all child-care institutions has been carried out and will form the basis of expanded support.
- A **back to school campaign** currently underway seeks to promote the return of children and teachers to school. UNICEF will also provide basic educational supplies to families whose homes have been destroyed. Teachers and health workers have received psychosocial briefings from UNICEF experts.
- **Psycho-social telephone hotlines** have been set-up and are fully functional in Ramallah, Nablus and Gaza .
- In the context of **psychosocial interventions**, "Fun Days" for children have been organised in Jenin to enable children to play and express themselves.
- Organisation of rapid **UXO assessment and awareness campaigns in Jenin** for children through the distribution of leaflets, use of loudspeakers and house to house visits by youth and women's teams .

3. UNICEF PLANNED INTERVENTIONS

Psychosocial support

UNICEF plans to support psychosocial interventions that are in line with the Palestinian Code of Conduct for Psychosocial Intervention (a policy initiative led by UNICEF) for all stages of childhood. Psychosocial services and food, water and other basic supplies will be provided to children's institutions, including specialised schools, orphanages, and rehabilitation centres for adolescents in conflict with the law. Training in psychosocial development will be expanded for parents, social workers, and kindergarten and nursery staff. UNICEF aims to set-up psychosocial services in primary health care facilities as part of the child health services, and mentoring programmes in schools. Participation opportunities for adolescents will be expanded through the establishment of youth-to-youth hotlines in order to increase their community participation. In addition, community-based, multi-disciplinary teams will be set up in communities severely affected by violence and increasing rates of poverty. Support will also be given to strengthen the capacity of psychosocial experts.

Education

UNICEF plans to undertake several measures for Palestinian children whose education has been disrupted by the current situation. In order to enable children to continue their educational activities, UNICEF will be developing self-learning packages for teachers and parents, enabling self-learning that does not require their presence at school. The capacity of school inspectors to supervise and of teachers to implement the programme will be strengthened. Furthermore, a TV/radio distance learning programme will be developed. Assessments will be supported for identifying appropriate locations for establishing learning centres. The "back-to-school" campaign will continue to be supported at the district and national levels throughout August/September 2002.

For schools that are still operational, UNICEF will continue to support them in becoming safer environments for children. Teachers will be given training to increase their ability to recognise signs of distress among pupils, to counsel them appropriately and to refer them to trained school counsellors. Psychosocial support will also be extended to teachers to cope with ongoing traumatic events. In addition, self-help, and life skills components will be introduced into the national school curriculum. Limited cash assistance will be provided to schools to improve their environments.

Women's health and early childhood

UNICEF plans to support the strategy put in place by the Palestinian Ministry of Health to strengthen access to primary healthcare. UNICEF will also support Early Childhood Care for Development, which will include activities such as restoring and upgrading early childhood facilities and training of primary healthcare staff. In addition, UNICEF will support child health services, including mop-up campaigns to ensure the eradication of polio and eliminate measles in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. These campaigns will require supply and logistical support, the strengthening of the cold chain, and the access to hard-to-reach populations. UNICEF also plans to support interventions aimed at addressing the impact of violence on women, including mass media campaigns and workshops at the community level.

The table below details planned activities and the estimated budgets:

Table 1: EMERGENCY FUNDING REQUIREMENTS		
	Sector	Budget (US\$)
1	Psychosocial Support	600,000
1.1	Telephone Counseling and Radio Programme	50,000
1.2	Emergency Psychosocial Teams (including Youth volunteer teams, training of Jerusalem/Palestinian Israelis, Short-term Emergency reaction, Emergency teams.	180,000
1.3	Emergency Psychosocial Packages (2,000 families)	100,000
1.4	Training and Supplies	150,000
1.5	Project Support	120,000
2	Education	800,000
2.1	Remedial and Distance Education	80,000
2.2	National and District- based back to school campaigns (10 districts, and support to vulnerable families)	240,000
2.3	Child-friendly schools (school renovations, educational materials, training of school counselors, Psychosocial interventions for school staff, teacher training on life skills based education)	320,000
2.4	Project Support	160,000
3	Child Health & Development	400,000
3.1	Child Health services	120,000
3.2	Early Childhood Care for Development	200,000
3.3	Project support	80,000
TOTAL BUDGET (Not including CAPS)		1'800,000

4. IMPACT OF INSECURITY

UNICEF assistance to Palestinian children will be seriously impeded as long as access remains restricted. Thousands of children will have difficulties continuing their education. For children currently able to attend school, learning will be greatly undermined if psychosocial support is not provided. This could potentially lead to an increased rate of dropouts among school children and increased difficulties in bringing them back to school. The development of more than 600,000 Palestinian children will be severely impaired due to a lack of access to basic social services, and psycho-social support. This will also undermine their ability to function as responsible parents, citizens and leaders of the future and thereby impact upon the likelihood of a just, secure and sustainable peace being achieved in the Middle East.

Details of the Occupied Palestinian Territory emergency programme can be obtained from

Pierre Poupard
Special Representative
Occupied Palestinian Territory
Tel: + 972 2 583 0013
Fax: + 972 2 583 0806
E-mail: ppoupard@unicef.org

David S. Bassiouni
UNICEF EMOPS
Geneva
Tel: + 41 22 909 5503
Fax: + 41 22 909 5902
E-mail: dbassiouni@unicef.org

Dan Rohrmann
UNICEF PFO
New York
Tel: + 1 212 326 7009
Fax: + 1 212 326 7165
E-mail: drohrmann@unicef.org