



## ECHO FACTSHEET

### Occupied Palestinian Territory and Lebanon

West Bank, Gaza, and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon

#### Facts & Figures (2012)

Palestinian refugees and non-refugees living in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank continue to suffer from the on-going conflict and occupation, in particular:

- The 1.64 million inhabitants of the Gaza Strip, most of them refugees.
- The 150,000 Palestinians living in Area C.
- The 7,500 Palestinians living in the Seam Zones.
- The 284,000 Palestinians living in East Jerusalem.

Lebanon hosts 270.000 Palestinian refugees and more than 10,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria who have recently crossed the border due to the conflict.

European Commission humanitarian funding in 2012: €42 million for the oPt (57% for Gaza) and €5 million for Lebanon

Total funding from 2000 to 2012: over €642 million

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*Bedouins are among the poorest and most marginalised populations in Palestinian society. Most live in precarious conditions in makeshift shelters. FBaroud © EC / ECHO*

#### Key messages

- International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and human rights violations in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) and the fragmentation of the territory have led to the isolation of civilians who are affected by movement restrictions and are denied access to their land and to basic services.
- The Gaza blockade continues to severely restrict the movements of people and goods on land, air and sea, and has led to a 'de-development' of Gaza with degrading living conditions, increasing poverty, and a serious decline in essential services and infrastructure.
- In the West Bank, the intensification of forced displacements, demolitions and settlements (illegal under IHL) as well as settler violence, is increasing Palestinian vulnerability and dependency to external assistance.
- In the oPt the European Commission humanitarian aid (ECHO) contributes to addressing the protection needs of the most vulnerable and to ensuring access to basic services such as food, water and health.

# Humanitarian situation and needs

## A long lasting humanitarian challenge

**Despite continuous efforts made by the humanitarian community to alleviate human suffering and meet the most urgent needs, Palestinians are increasingly in need of protection.**

**The situation of conflict and occupation** in the West Bank and in Gaza has provoked a long-lasting protection crisis with humanitarian consequences notably in terms of access to health, water, education and livelihood opportunities, which in turn is increasing economic and social despair among Palestinians.

The **Gaza blockade** continues for the sixth year to impact the lives and livelihoods of all Gazans, driving many of them deeper into poverty and unemployment. Around 80% of the 1.6 million populations have to rely on external assistance. The military operation "Pillar of Defence" carried out between 14 and 21 November is adding another layer to the existing humanitarian needs in terms of health, shelter, access to safe water, protection notably because of unexploded remnants, and psychosocial support.

In the **West Bank** home to 2.65 million people, the Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, the Seam Zones (located between the Barrier and the 1949 Armistice green line) and in Area C (area under full Israeli control that represents 60% of the West Bank), are facing ever growing pressure in terms of movement and access restrictions, demolition of houses and livelihood assets, forced transfer as well as settlers' violence.

In **Lebanon**, there are 270.000 Palestinian refugees living in 12 camps and gatherings. Those registered to UNRWA, the United Nations Agency responsible for Palestinian refugees in the Middle East, receive comprehensive support. However, some Palestinians did not have the possibility to register with UNRWA on time and others found no place in the densely populated camps. The camp of Nahr el-Bared that has been destroyed in 2007 has still not been fully rebuilt and some 50,000 refugees remain displaced. The situation in Lebanon is compounded by the arrival of refugees fleeing Syria, including more than 10,000 Palestinians refugees who were living in Syria.

## The European Union's Humanitarian Response

### European Commission funding in the oPt

The funding benefits more than 2 million Palestinians. Almost a quarter of the €42 million budget is allocated to core actions such as humanitarian coordination (all over the oPt), legal assistance to families living in Area C and East Jerusalem, and emergency response to demolitions and evictions. Nearly €20 million is going towards food assistance, primarily in Gaza (food distribution and food vouchers) and to a lesser extent in the Area C of the West Bank (cash-for-work). Funding is also geared towards support to wash, psycho-social and health interventions amongst populations most affected by the occupation.

- **Protection of the vulnerable:** Through its partners, ECHO monitors what is happening in the West Bank and in Gaza in terms of respect of International Humanitarian Law. It also provides emergency assistance and legal assistance to vulnerable families who are at risk of, or are forced to abandon their homes and livelihoods, or who are victims of settlers' violence.
- **Feeding the most vulnerable:** Food is provided to 1.2 million people including 70,000 who receive fresh vegetables (in Gaza). ECHO also supports cash-for-work programmes that offer short-term employment to help the most vulnerable.
- **Access to healthcare and psychosocial support:** ECHO contributes to the functioning of clinics and to the provision of essential medicines so that over 1 million Palestinians can access primary healthcare. It also supports life-saving medical treatments in Gaza. Psychosocial support is provided to strengthen the resilience and positive coping mechanisms of the population.
- **Providing clean water:** Access to water is one of the most difficult issues faced by Palestinians, in Area C in the West Bank (even more when the population is affected by drought) but also in Gaza where 90% of the water is unsafe for human consumption. ECHO finances programmes that provide 300,000 Bedouins and herders with clean water, through water trucking or through the rehabilitation or construction of cisterns and wells, and in Gaza ECHO supports innovative actions such as vouchers for clean water.
- **Support to coordination and security:** ECHO supports the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (OCHA) in its coordination role. ECHO is also proactively involved in coordination fora such as the Humanitarian Donors' Group.

### European Commission funding in Lebanon

In 2012 assistance is continuing to be provided to around 100,000 vulnerable Palestinians mainly for shelter, access to secondary health care, elderly health outreach, and for protection. Food assistance is being provided to the vulnerable Palestinians still displaced in the camp of Nahr el-Bared. Emergency support (health, winterisation and protection activities) is being provided to Palestinians arriving from Syria and to their host communities.