

[Donate \(/donate\)](#)

[Home \(/\)](#) » [Newsroom \(/newsroom\)](#) » [Emergency Reports \(https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/emergency-reports\)](https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/emergency-reports) » [Gaza Situation Report 205](#)

[Back to Newsroom \(/newsroom\)](#)

GAZA SITUATION REPORT 205

10 September 2017



(https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/news_articles/news_article_79071_32266_1505033063.jpg)

Two UNRWA students in the first school day. Photo credit: ©UNRWA Gaza 2017. Photo by Rushdi Al-Saraj.

08 August – 21 August 2017 | issue 205

HIGHLIGHTS

- The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) sees education as a major investment in dignity and human development and as a source of stability for Palestine refugees. The Education Programme in Gaza is UNRWA's largest despite the fragile situation, lack of infrastructure and financial constraints. Providing quality, equitable and inclusive basic education is one of the Agency's strategic outcomes, as identified in the current Medium-Term Strategy 2016-2021. In emergencies, education provides the physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection that sustains and saves children's lives and is a major component of strategies for

child protection. Through its education programme UNRWA contributes to achieving the UN Global Sustainable Development Goals, particularly the third goal, which calls for ensuring inclusive and quality education for all and promoting lifelong learning (<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>).

- On 23 August, over 271,216 students (131,534 girls and 139,682 boys) started the 2017-2018 school year in 276 UNRWA schools across Gaza, which is an increase of 9,000 students as compared to last year. 8,745 teachers support the teaching of our students. The rising numbers of students attending UNRWA schools, together with an overall growth in need has increasing put pressure on the Agency's programmes and services. Over the past year, to accommodate the students and provide them with an appropriate learning environment, UNRWA has invested in the infrastructure of its school buildings, including improved access to safe, drinking water and sanitation, continuous electricity supply, and, where necessary, rehabilitation of premises. In the first school week, the Agency distributed stationary packages, ensuring that all students are appropriately equipped for their classes. To mark the new school year, the Deputy Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza, Mr. David De Bold, together with Chief of Gaza Field Office Education Programme, Mr. Farid Abu-Athra, met in Gaza Training Centre (GTC) area education officers and school principals across Gaza Strip. During the visit, both congratulated the staff on the new school year and briefed them about the increase in number of students, the newly-constructed schools, and staff recruitment.
- For the second year, in cooperation with the Japan Gaza Innovation Challenge Initiative, UNRWA hosted the Gaza Entrepreneur Challenge 2017 from 12 to 14 August 2017. The main focus of this contest was on supporting entrepreneurial projects that contribute to enhancing the living conditions in Gaza. Eighty business applications designed by young Gazans were presented to the panel. The ideas presented spanned various fields, including health care, nutrition, water management, recycling, agriculture, education and manufacturing. Participating teams attended workshops on topics such as entrepreneurship, essential skills, and knowledge for success, and were given opportunities to connect with and learn from Japanese investors and social innovators. The challenge was supported by local entrepreneurial incubators in Gaza, including the UNRWA social enterprise spin-off Gateway. ECHOHOME won this year's contest with their environmentally-friendly and innovative plan to produce renewable household energy through a composting process. The team will be awarded a financial prize of US\$ 5,000, along with technical support to start their business and a training trip to Japan.
- 12 August marked International Youth Day. This year's theme, "youth building peace", was dedicated to celebrating young people's contributions to conflict prevention and transformation, as well as inclusion, social justice and sustainable peace. This occasion was a unique opportunity to shed light on UNRWA's ongoing commitment to empower Palestine refugee youth amid the hardships they encounter. To celebrate International Youth Day, the Gender Initiative hosted a debate between two youth teams on whether the existing work in Gaza is sufficient for youth involvement in promoting gender equality, with the debate marking the end of a training programme for youth on debating. The UNRWA Relief and Social Services Programme held a series of activities, including an awareness session for Palestine refugee youth on peace, non-violence, international law, and human rights. To give youth the lead in making a change in their communities and put what they learnt into practice, the participants implemented an open day for children in Sharm Park, an entertainment center in Gaza. The recreational activities held on 10 August included face painting, mural drawing and games. The success of the event speaks to the critical role of youth as agents of change in the society.
- On 8 August 2017, UNRWA inaugurated the newly reconstructed Maán Health Centre in Khan Younis, South Gaza. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Deputy Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza, Mr. David de Bold, UNRWA Senior External Relations and Projects Officer Mr. Munir Mannah, UNRWA senior staff, and representatives of the local community. The ceremony included speeches by

Deputy Director Mr. David de Bold, Chief Field Health Programme Dr. Ghada Al Jadba, Chief Infrastructure and Camp Improvement Programme Engineer Rafiq Abed and UNRWA Senior External Relations and Projects Officer Mr. Munir Manneh. The health centre will provide comprehensive health services, such as out-patient services, maternal and child health services, services for patients with non-communicable diseases, and dental services, along with laboratory and dispensary services. The reconstruction of the Maán Health Centre will enhance and improve the provision of quality services provided to the more than 72,000 Palestine refugees living in Khan Younis

OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

- On 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18 and 19 August, Israeli patrol boats opened fire towards Palestinian boats off the coast of the Gaza Strip, forcing them ashore, reasons unknown. Two Palestinians were arrested and their boat was confiscated. No injuries were reported.

On 11, 18 and 17 August, civilians, mostly youth, staged protests against the blockade near the perimeter fence in different areas of Gaza. When some of them approached the fence and threw stones towards Israeli observation posts, Israeli forces responded with gunfire and teargas. Three injuries were reported.

Other protests were held during the week, in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and to demand additional support services from UNRWA and other UN agencies.

On 20 and 10 August, Israeli forces positioned at the fence opened fire towards Palestinian areas. No injuries were reported.

A Palestinian man attempted to commit suicide by burning himself in Rafah area.

Palestinian militants fired one test rocket from Khan Younis area towards the sea. No injuries were reported.

Israeli forces fired four missiles targeting military sites. Three injuries were reported.

UNRWA'S RESPONSE

YOUTH HAVE THE ENERGY TO BE CHANGE MAKERS



(https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/img_9239-2.jpg)

On 12 August every year, the world celebrates International Youth Day (<https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/international-youth-day-2017.html>). Since the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2250 in 2015, there is growing recognition that young people are critical actors in conflict prevention and sustaining peace. This year's theme, "youth building peace", was dedicated to celebrating young people's contributions to conflict prevention, as well as to inclusion, social justice and sustainable peace. The theme also emphasized the Sustainable Development Goals, especially goal number four which calls for ensuring inclusive and quality education for all and promoting lifelong learning. (<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>)

As part of its commitment to youth empowerment and to celebrate the International Youth Day 2017, UNRWA Gaza Field Office Gender Initiative, in partnership with Youth Vision Society, launched a youth training on debate and negotiation skills. These skills are not only useful for building self-confidence and improving one's ability to advocate for oneself, but also for navigating social life and seeking economic opportunities. The training was concluded with a public debate on youth involvement in promoting gender equality.

The debate's opening speech was delivered by UNRWA Deputy Director of Operations in Gaza, Ms. Melinda Young, to approximately 100 young women and men, as well as UNRWA staff and representatives from local non-government organizations.

"This training added to my knowledge of debating skills. I learned how to use statistics and information to support my opinion. I believe we, youth, have the energy and the motivation to make a change in our communities," said Raja'a Al-Shaer, a 23-year-old participant in the debate and negotiation skills training.

The debate included a discussion between two youth teams, composed of three persons each. The teams debated whether the existing work in Gaza is sufficient for youth involvement in promoting gender equality. Each group provided evidence-based arguments, followed by questions from the audience.

"My team and I believe that still more needs to be done to reinforce gender equality. We supported our argument with figures and examples from the community," said Mustafa Dohan, 22 years old, who took part in the training and the debate.

This international occasion is a unique opportunity to shed light on UNRWA's ongoing commitment to empower Palestine refugee youth amid all hardships they encounter. The blockade on Gaza, which entered its eleventh year in June 2017, as well as the repeated conflicts have crippled the enclave's economic sector and pushed a large part of the population into unemployment and poverty. This, however, has not stopped Palestine refugee youth from making a lasting impact on their societies. Empowered with education and experience, they continue to set an example of innovation, persistence and courage.

FUNDING NEEDS

UNRWA is confronted with an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, their higher level of vulnerability, and their deepening poverty. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions, and financial support has been outpaced by the growth in needs. UNRWA encourages all Member States to work collectively to exert all possible efforts to fully fund the Agency's Programme Budget in 2017. UNRWA emergency programmes and key projects, also operating with large shortfalls, are funded through separate funding portals.

Following the 2014 conflict, US\$ 295 million has been pledged in support of UNRWA's emergency shelter programme, for which an estimated US\$ 720 million is required. This leaves a current shortfall of US\$ 425 million. UNRWA urgently appeals to donors

Rafah

Closed.

Closed.

Closed.

Closed.

Closed.

Closed.

Open in
one

direction
Open
in for
for
Palestinian
pilgrims
to leave
Open
pilgrims
to

Closed.
leave

Gaza

Closed.

Closed.