

## Alert note

### *Palestine (Gaza and West Bank) Crisis* *23 June 2022*

The **alert note** is intended to alert all ACT Alliance members to an emerging emergency situation. It provides basic information to inform decision making within the Alliance regarding possible response options and it also forms the 'immediate assessment' of the situation and needs in the affected areas. An alert note should be completed **as soon as it becomes obvious there is a humanitarian emergency**.

The information in the alert note should be kept **short and concise**. Where you do not have information to address a question identified below simply state that the information is not currently available. You will not be expected to have all the information detailed below in the early stages of an emergency.

The alert note should be completed by the forum and sent to the Regional Humanitarian Programme Officer for review and circulation, with a copy to the Regional Representative.

**Completed by:** George Stephan DSPR / ACT Palestine Forum Coordinator

**Date completed:** 23 June 2022

**Forum:** ACT Palestine Forum

**Type of emergency:** Protracted

**Date of emergency (if rapid onset):**

#### 1. The nature of the emergency

The situation in the Palestinian Territories can be best described as a protracted protection crisis. The humanitarian conditions continued to deteriorate in 2021 as hostilities, heightened tensions and violence exacerbated an already dire situation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had damaging and devastating effects on Palestinians<sup>1</sup>, and the May 2021's escalation has destabilized the lives of individuals and communities across the oPt. According to the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), the economic and fiscal situation in the oPt remains dire: "A sharp decline in GDP per capita in 2020 followed years of economic stagnation in the West Bank<sup>2</sup>. In the Gaza Strip, the economy continues its multi-decade decline and there is persistently high unemployment, particularly among women."

The Gaza Strip continues to face critical conditions. The entire population has endured for the last 15 years a blockade of land, air, and sea blockade. The already severe strain on the population of having to live through four conflicts in the last 14 years have had devastating consequences for mental health with many across the Gaza Strip struggling to cope with complex trauma.

During the May 2021 hostilities, 260 Palestinians were killed, including 66 children, and 2,200 were wounded, "some of whom may suffer a long-term disability requiring rehabilitation". According to Shelter Cluster Palestine, 2,600 housing units were made uninhabitable (destroyed or severely damaged) and over 59,000 units had different levels of damage; 7,250 people remained internally displaced as of May 2022<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/03/1088262>

<sup>2</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/11/1105602>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/SHELCLUS\\_160522.pdf](https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/SHELCLUS_160522.pdf)

The Gaza economy requires considerable support if the negative effects of the pandemic and recent hostilities are to be mitigated. With high unemployment of 50.2% in the third quarter of 2021 – the people of Gaza are increasingly susceptible to deteriorating socio-economic conditions.

According to a UN organization, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, has experienced a disturbing increase in armed incursions in the past twelve months. These incursion into refugee camps, use of live ammunition against civilians and settler violence, while displacement and demolition remain constant threats. Israeli settlers killed five Palestinians, wounded 137, and caused property damage in 287 incidents. The number of incidents of settler violence against Palestinians in the first half of 2021 was more than double the figure for the first half of 2020 and more than all of 2019, according to government data.

At the peak of the lockdown and economic restrictions, around 110,000 additional Palestinians entered poverty. The new poor were concentrated in rural areas of the West Bank and were more likely to be living in female-headed households. With 20% of previously employed main income earners losing their jobs, income fell in more than 60% of Palestinian households during the height of the pandemic.<sup>4</sup>

Women in Palestine constitute about 49 percent of the total population and hence a significant proportion of production capacity in local economies is non-performing. Moreover, women are most vulnerable to poverty and discrimination due to their reduced level of income, social exclusion, their lack of professional skills and their limited access to and/or control over productive assets. This impact is most pronounced on female-headed households, who tend to suffer from poverty and food insecurity at a disproportionately high level.

## 2. The impact and scale of the emergency

Per the initial assessments conducted by the different interested organization, the intended emergency is considered medium scale emergency. The primary geographical focus of the interventions is centralized around target areas where the interested ACT members already have presence and working. According to a UN organization, more than 80% of Palestinians in Gaza needed humanitarian aid; however, DSPR Gaza will target the areas in which it works covering a population of more than 200,000 people.; for example, DSPR Gaza works in Gaza City in the north, Khan Younis in the center and Rafah in the south mainly through its clinics in Al-Shijaeya, Al-Daraj, and Khirbet Al-Adas; Vulnerable households are the most affected by unemployment and need emergency jobs and unconditional cash handout. As for the needed MHPSS and health services, they are mostly needed by women and children.

The Palestinian population in the West Bank is estimated by UN agencies at around 3 million people. However, the vulnerable population in area C is approximately 300,000 people. DSPR West Bank focuses its work in Qalqilya and Tulkarem especially among vulnerable households in Area C; Vulnerable households in area C are the most affected by poverty due to the current situation and post-COVID 19 especially the women headed households.

DSPR Jerusalem & West Bank will focus upon women’s active engagement and participation in local economies, who are unemployed, with traditional skills and participation in the agriculture sector. We aim at promoting gender equality among Palestinians by increasing the agriculture opportunities available to women and at the same time enhance the well-being and economic growth enabling beneficiaries to secure additional income and improve food security for their families. These women will

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/05/09/the-palestinian-economy-will-continue-to-operate-below-potential-without-concrete-policy-actions>

receive appropriate training in basic management, basic accounting, branding and marketing for their ventures.

As for the EJ YMCA, the organization has community centres across the West Bank (Nablus in the North of West Bank all the way to Hebron in the South). The EJ-YMCA targets the most marginalized community members across 6 geographic areas in the West Bank. The project targets low income and poor families, female headed families, women at risk and/or survivors of GBV, and people with disabilities in the governorates of (Jericho, Nablus, Hebron, Bethlehem, Ramallah & Bireh and the village of Taybeh). The total target number of families is 1230 with an average 4.7 household members. It's also estimated that the project will target 49% women and 51% men. DSPR West Bank and EJ YMCA are expected to coordinate all beneficiary's selection to avoid any double selection in case some areas are targeted by both organizations).

### 3. Local and national capacity

The need in oPt continues to be high, however, the already structures, governmental bodies and NGOs and INGO working in the country continue to function despite challenges and funding gaps continue in the Territories. Affected populations in Gaza strip and West Bank rely on UN organizations and INGOs to address humanitarian and recovery needs resulting from several contextual challenges. One of the biggest funding mechanisms is the UNOCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory Emergency Appeal 2022 that covers several sectors and areas of work. Many large INGOs and UN organizations are eligible to this funding but not so much the ACT members. Each of these members is planning to implement the appeal components by the local staff and coordinate with other forums such as UN clusters, PNGO, AIDA and all represented members in Gaza to coordinate interventions. When possible, ACT members will also liaise with the Palestinian Authority entity in coordinating through its ministries in the West Bank in the different initiatives implemented as part of the appeal.

### 4. Key needs and gaps

Based on its initial assessment DSPR Gaza plans on intervening in multipurpose cash, a more sustainable support through support livelihoods through emergency job creation schemes for unskilled laborers. Additional needs emerged in the field of health support services (including medication); MHPSS interventions for women and children.

In the West Bank, both DSPR West Bank and EJ YMCA have identified multi-purpose cash in several governorates as well as Area C in the West Bank based on its initial assessment.

DSPR Jerusalem & West Bank will target 20 women initiatives in rural communities and refugee camps.

Please indicate whether you are considering:

	Indicate your intention with an X below
Rapid Response Fund ( <i>intended for small and medium scale emergencies</i> )	
Appeal ( <i>intended for large scale emergencies</i> )	X

Capacity details of forum members with the intention to respond are given below.

ACT Member	Geographical focus	Sectors of expertise	Support required	Estimated Budget range
DSPR	Gaza Strip	Health services,	Health services, MHPSS, cash,	USD 700 K

		MHPSS, cash, emergency job creation	emergency job creation	
	West Bank Area C	Multi-purpose cash, WASH, Food packages and food security	livelihood	
EJ YMCA	West Bank	Multi-purpose cash, WASH packages, food security	Multi-purpose cash,	USD 212 K

## 5. Potential responses

Interested forum members DSPR Gaza (NECC) and DSPR West Bank (ICC) and EJ YMCA all work in the different affected areas of the West Bank and Gaza.

1. DSPR Gaza intervened last year in several sectors including multi-purpose cash (small cash amounts to households to ensure coverage of the most urgent needs); health Support: medications, medical follow up of medical cases affected by the conflict; Home / premises renovations affected: providing small amounts of cash to families to be able to make their household liveable again; Psychosocial components include support and professional counselling to traumatize individuals to family members and friends injured and /or killed in the escalation; Emergency job creation schemes for unskilled laborers; COVID19 Relief supplies to allow staff to provide needed and timely services while protecting themselves of the pandemic.

2. Based on its initial assessment DSPR Gaza plans on intervening in multi-purpose cash, health support services (including medication); MHPSS interventions for women and children and emergency job creation schemes for unskilled laborers. The scope of the intervention is to target the areas where DSPR Gaza works (Gaza City in the north, Khan Younis in the center and Rafah in the south mainly through its clinics in Al-Shijaeya, Al-Daraj, and Khirbet Al-Adas.)

The number of beneficiaries across the different interventions in Gaza is expected to be thousands of households (500 HH Hygiene Kits, 190 Person Job Creation, 500 PSS, 750 HH Cash, 5,000 health); the estimated budget for these interventions is expected to be in the range of USD 600K USD

3. In the West Bank, DSPR West Bank has intervened through multi-purpose cash and aims to contribute further to enhancing coping and recovery mechanisms in this protracted misery, by enhancing economic well-being of women to contribute to their own families' well-being. Based on its initial assessment, DSPR West Bank plans on intervening in enhancing economic well-being of women initiatives in rural communities and refugee camps. The number of beneficiaries across the different interventions is expected to be 100 households; the estimated budget for these interventions is expected to be in the range of 100K USD

4. As for the East Jerusalem YMCA, in 2021, the organization intervened through its different programming and centres i.e. the Rehabilitation Program, the Women Development Program, the Vocational Training Centre, the Career Advancement Centre, the Joint Advocacy Initiative and the Community Centres in several sectors including mental health, vocational training, women empowerment, economic empowerment, sports and culture, advocacy and awareness raising.

Based on its initial assessment, EJ YMCA plans on working in only intervening in multi-purpose cash throughout the West Bank (Jericho, Nablus, Hebron, Bethlehem, Ramallah & Bireh Governorates and Al Taybeh Village). The number of beneficiaries across the different interventions of the EJ YMCA is

expected to be 1230 households reaching an approximate 5781 households' members an average of 4.7 members per household; the estimated budget for these interventions is expected to be in the range of \$ 212,120.