



ABOUT UNRWA

background

In 1948, more than 700,000 Palestinians were displaced from or fled their homes as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was established two years later to provide emergency aid to these refugees until a just and durable solution to their plight could be found.

Today, UNRWA is providing essential services to a population of 5.6 million Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and the West Bank. Our mission is to ensure that Palestine refugees achieve their full potential, despite the increasingly difficult and complex circumstances in which they live.

what we do

The critical lifeline provided by UNRWA is required now more than ever. Palestine refugees are now facing extreme insecurity, vulnerability and isolation not seen in generations. The on-going denial of rights, constrained socio-economic conditions, and exposure to multiple crises – often spilling across borders – have severely impacted upon the ability of many refugees to attain basic standards of human development.

The refugee population is growing, food insecurity and poverty levels are high and rising, and youth and unemployment rates are among the highest in the world. The threats of armed conflict, instability, and mass displacement in the region are an everyday reality.

And yet, in spite of this, UNRWA provides access to vital services to all Palestine refugees, ensuring that the most vulnerable groups – including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and those living in abject poverty – have access to the skills and assets they need to live with dignity.

- Our 700 schools provide free primary **education** to over **536,000 refugee children** every day.
- **3.7 million** refugees accessing our basic free healthcare services at **150 clinics**
- Almost **1.6 million** most vulnerable refugees receive **food and cash assistance**
- Microfinance and vocational training programs that are lifting thousands out of poverty each year by giving them skills to access the labour market
- Psychosocial and mental health services to thousands affected by conflicts, occupation and blockade

protecting the rights of refugees

UNRWA is committed to safeguarding the rights of Palestine refugees, especially women, children, and other vulnerable groups. We do this by:

- Respecting and promoting human rights and dignity in our service delivery
- Monitoring, reporting, and advocating for solutions to alleged human rights violations
- Providing holistic assistance, case tracking, and referral of protection cases

where we work

We operate in both stable and **fragile contexts**, providing vital **emergency services** to Palestine refugees, whether they live under occupation, blockade or in war zones.



- In **Syria**, some 450,000 Palestine refugees are affected by protracted conflict, have been displaced multiple times, and are largely dependent on UNRWA for ensuring basic rights, such as food, shelter, education and health care. Over 50,000 have had to flee to neighbouring Lebanon and Jordan, where they face further marginalisation.
- In **Gaza**, over 1.2 million refugees are facing the 12th year of an illegal blockade, leading to the highest unemployment rates in the world, electricity and clean water shortages, and an inability to travel to obtain life-saving medical treatments.
- We cannot be indifferent to what the occupation means in the lives of over 800,000 refugees in the **West Bank**. It means living in a shattered space, boxed into enclaves, often deprived of freedom of movement and economic opportunity.
- The 450,000 Palestine refugees in **Lebanon** live in over-crowded camps where they are shut out from almost all economic and social opportunities outside the camps. Their daily lives are marked by a lack of rights, discrimination, and socio-economic exclusion.
- In **Jordan**, which hosts some 2.1 million Palestine refugees, thousands still live in sub-standard shelters in need of rehabilitation and increasing numbers now live in abject poverty.

some unique facts

- UNRWA is the **only agency mandated to protect and promote the rights of Palestine refugees**. Over the last 70 years, as the needs of Palestine refugees have changed and continue to grow, UNRWA has consistently been there to support this disenfranchised and isolated population.
- UNRWA **provides services directly** to Palestine refugees through a workforce of over 30,000 staff, who are teachers, doctors, nurses and support personnel – **almost all of whom are Palestine refugees themselves**.
- UNRWA relies entirely on **voluntary funding** to run its key operations. More than half of our core budget of over \$700 million USD goes to **running schools for refugee children**.
- With a strong regulatory framework that promotes neutrality and transparency, UNRWA **monitors and tracks contributions** down to the last cent to inform its partners exactly where their money has been spent.

HOW WE ALLOCATE OUR BUDGET

