

WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP

Health Sector Needs Assessment

The Palestinian population has increased from just over 3 million in 1999 to 3.8 million in 2004. Demand on municipal services, hospitals, and schools has consequently increased, while revenues have fallen. Since 2000, 24,547 Gazans have been made homeless by Israeli demolitions. Palestinians are frequently unable to reach or afford medical care due to insecurity and movement restrictions. Around 70% of the population is food insecure, or in danger of becoming so.



Health services: Demand for blood transfusion services increased 178% between 2000 and 2003. Hospital emergency wards treated 52.6% more injuries in 2003 than in 2000, and major surgical admissions increased by 31%. Infant mortality has increased every year since 2000. The health sector has responded to closure and fragmentation by increasing the number of small clinics and mobile clinics. This has resulted in a decline in the quality of service, as these clinics are focused on primary care and are unable to handle emergency cases. Provision of essential reproductive health services dropped from 82.4% at end 2002 to 71% at the end 2003.

Mental health: Approximately 48% of Palestinian children report personal experience of conflict-related violence or have witnessed violence affecting a family member. The number of mental health patients receiving treatment at community health centres has increased by 38% since 2000.

Disease surveillance and control: Delays at checkpoints have limited the effectiveness of immunization campaigns. Although more than 90% of children aged under five received measles vaccination, less than two-thirds have acquired immunity. The measles vaccine is likely to have been inactivated because of delays at checkpoints. Environmental health conditions are also responsible for deteriorating health conditions. Closures have had a particular negative impact on solid waste collection, and bacterial contamination of piped water has increased by 39% in some areas.

Health Sector Priorities for 2005

- Strengthen capacity of the Palestinian MoH on nutrition-related issues, and monitor the nutritional status of children and mothers to prevent increased malnutrition and micronutrient deficiency
- Organize and initiate mental health care
- Improve medical waste management
- Strengthen the non-communicable disease management and provide supplementary polio and measles immunization
- Address public health and environmental threats through promoting Euro-Mediterranean partnerships and advocacy
- Provide outreach services and upgrade of existing facilities especially for infants and women
- Improve drug supply, management, and policy; strengthen logistic capacity of health services providers
- Strengthen capacity for emergency preparedness, emergency response, and post-emergency relief
- Advocate and negotiate to secure humanitarian access and protection of health workers
- Coordinate health providers and other stakeholders to address more effectively the consequences of conflict
- Strengthen the existing surveillance system, support the development of monitoring and early warning systems for child health and prevent gaps in health care provision due to access limitations and emergencies

WHO Proposed Projects for 2005	Funds Requested	Implementing Partners
Establishing a nutrition surveillance system in oPt [oPt-05/H01]	US\$ 260,000	MoH
Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) [oPt-05/H14]	US\$ 505,000	MoH, UNRWA, local NGOs
Reorganisation of Mental Health Services in order to cope with emergency mental health needs [oPt-05/H15]	US\$ 775,000	MoH, NGOs, other health service providers
Emergency Medical Waste Management [oPt-05/H16]	US\$ 520,000	MoH, NEA, Municipalities
Food Safety Programme [oPt-05/H17]	US\$ 400,000	MoH
Essential drug management [oPt-05/H18]	US\$ 250,000	MoH, NGOs, private sector
Promote health and social partnership between European and Palestinian cities [oPt-05/H19]	US\$ 510,000	MoH, APLA, Palestinian municipalities
Emergency reintegration of psychosocially affected vulnerable groups through empowerment programmes and self-help activities [oPt-05/H20]	US\$ 249,900	MoH, Ministry of Social Affairs, NGOs
Creating local pilot income-generating activities for social integration and coping for psychosocially affected vulnerable groups [oPt-05/H28]	US\$ 256,000	MoH, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Social Affairs, NGOs for income generating activities
Reorganization of the Health Services for local psychosocial emergency preparedness and Networking [oPt-05/H29]	US\$ 261,600	MoH
Strengthening health information [oPt-05/H30]	US\$ 355,000	MoH, Health In forum
Development of a communication and advocacy strategy for health access of the Palestinian Population [oPt-05/CSS04]	US\$ 390,000	MoH, health service providers

Total Funds Requested: US\$ 4,732,500

2004 Health Sector Major Donors: Australia, Canada, European Commission, Japan, Norway, United States