

UNITED NATIONS
RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR
PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST



NATIONS UNIES
OFFICE DE SECOURS ET DE TRAVAUX POUR LES
REFUGIES DE PALESTINE DANS LE PROCHE-ORIENT

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لإغاثة وتشغيل اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في الشرق الأدنى

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Lebanon *Flash Appeal* – Progress Report

1st June – 10th August 2007

Background

On 20 May 2007 fierce clashes erupted between the radical group Fatah al Islam (FAI) and the Lebanese Army (LAF) in Tripoli (northern Lebanon) and quickly spread to nearby Nahr el-Bared camp (NBC). The vast majority of NBC Palestine refugees fled their homes, most taking refuge in nearby Beddawi camp. It was not until three months later on 2nd September that FAI gave up their resistance and LAF finally gained control of the camp.

Humanitarian Consequences

NBC facilities and infrastructure have been badly damaged by the fighting and shelling. It is estimated that 90 percent of the camp infrastructure has been destroyed or badly damaged. Water services in the camp are almost certainly no longer functioning and most of the water reservoirs that serve the camp have been severely damaged.

As a consequence of the displacement from NBC, the population of Beddawi camp has increased from 16,000 to more than 30,000 persons, seriously stretching the already congested living conditions of the residents and overburdening the existing infrastructure. Water services in Beddawi camp are currently able to meet the needs of the displaced, though water shortages will appear in the near future. UNRWA's Water and Sanitation Team is monitoring the private households' facilities and repairing them as necessary to avoid putting these households under further strain.

On average 2,800 of the displaced are living in improvised shelters, such as UNRWA and Government schools in and around the Beddawi area, and have scarce resources to purchase food and essential supplies.

UNRWA's Response

On 4 June 2007 UNRWA launched a *Flash Appeal* for US \$12.7 million to address the urgent needs of thousands of displaced Palestine refugees and their host families. So far the response of the international community has been very generous and some US \$17,000,000 has been pledged.¹ UNRWA is the lead agency in coordinating and implementing the activities related to the present crisis in northern Lebanon.

The current conflict has imposed upon UNRWA an emergency situation requiring urgent action while UNRWA continues regular operations to serve hundreds of thousands of Palestine refugees. This has caused an added strain on UNRWA resources and staff, therefore the Agency is in the process of augmenting its human resources to assist with the emergency operations.

The *Flash Appeal* enabled the Agency to cater to the immediate needs of the displaced Palestine refugees, in close cooperation with other UN Agencies and with the support of the Lebanese Government. The *Flash Appeal* represented an assessment of the cost of delivering assistance to the displaced over a three month period (June-August 2007). It included plans for immediate food and non-food assistance and to ensure suitable temporary shelters and safeguard minimum living standards for the displaced.

The Nahr el-Bared Emergency Return Plan

The *Nahr el-Bared Emergency Return Plan* is linked to the UNRWA *Flash Appeal* of June 2007. The plan was developed by UNRWA, representatives from the Palestinian community, the Lebanese Government, national and international NGOs, and other UN Agencies. The aim of the plan is to coordinate the assistance required to meet the immediate humanitarian needs and to provide essential assistance to the refugees in a return situation. The *Nahr el-Bared Emergency Return* plan will later be followed by a comprehensive reconstruction plan. UNRWA intends to set up a permanent management team in north Lebanon to manage and coordinate the overall relief, recovery and reconstruction program.

UNRWA Emergency Programs for NBC crisis

As part of the follow-up of the financial support of the *Flash-Appeal*, UNRWA Lebanon, in cooperation with other UN Agencies (including UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, OHCHR, UNHCR, ILO, and FAO) and local and international NGO's, is coordinating the implementation of several programs to respond to the immediate needs of the humanitarian emergency in north Lebanon.

Food and Non-food assistance

General aim: To ensure Palestine refugees affected by the crisis have adequate access to food in order to avoid malnutrition and other illnesses and to ensure that displaced refugees have basic non-food items for the period of their displacement.

Objectives: The objective was to supply food to the displaced and their host families as well as humanitarian aid items and shelter supplies and to ensure that vulnerable groups including women, disabled, and youth had access to appropriate support services such as counseling, rehabilitation, tutoring and skills training.

Implemented Activities:

¹Please refer to Annex A on Pledges towards *Flash Appeal* 2007

- Provided 5,200 displaced families from NBC plus 3,200 host families with three rounds of food assistance and distributed special food parcels for children age 0-3;
- In coordination with other UN Agencies, local and international NGOs, community groups and the Lebanese Government, distributed mattresses, monthly hygiene kits, kitchen kits, rechargeable emergency lights, diapers, cooking stoves for the displaced and host families;
- Provided cash assistance to meet some specific needs for vulnerable groups and provided rental subsidy to relieve the congestion of Beddawi Camp.
- Assisted Community based organizations in providing direct support services to women, disabled and youth.

Results achieved: Food security was strengthened and overall vulnerability of the displaced refugees was ameliorated.

Shelter

General aim: To provide Palestinians refugees affected by the crisis with shelter and basic services.

Objectives: To provide direct shelter to displaced families in urgent need and deliver an immediate response for upgrading and preparation of shelters and displacement centers housing displaced refugees.

Implemented activities:

- Identified and adapted public and semi-public locations such as schools, UNRWA installations and youth centers as temporary shelters for the displaced;
- Developed an immediate response activities plan for temporary shelters in NBC; and
- Established and coordinated shelter activities via a shelter cluster group headed by UNRWA and consisting of a number of partners.

Results achieved: Displaced refugees were afforded minimum shelter requirements in temporary public and semipublic locations.

Water and Sanitation:

General aim: To ensure the displaced and their host families have access to free and clean drinking water and basic sanitation services.

Objectives: To provide water and sanitation services, maintain and repair water networks, and to provide garbage and waste removal services for the displaced refugees and their host families.

Implemented Activities:

- Strengthened the supply line and built-up an emergency water supply system for Beddawi camp;
- Upgraded the water supply systems to provide drinking water in public and semi-public shelters housing the displaced;
- Upgraded necessary sanitary facilities such as showers and toilets, and provided, installed and connected them in all public and semi-public facilities as required;
- Continually monitored shelters of host families to enable them to continue to host the displaced;

- Ensured proper waste management disposal, UNRWA staff in cooperation with Palestinian and International NGO's, provided garbage and waste removal services, and a disinfection program in and around Beddawi camp;
- Developed a detailed water and sanitation plan to ensure water supply for families when they return to NBC; and
- Deployed a water and sanitation emergency team consisting of UNRWA, UNICEF and other specialists to north Lebanon to intervene in case of an outbreak of water and sanitation-related diseases.

Results achieved: Free and clean drinking water was made accessible for displaced persons, and their health was better protected through the provision of basic sanitation services.

Health:

General aim: To guarantee continued access to health services for refugees displaced from NBC and respond to increased demand for services in Beddawi camp.

Objectives: To ensure continued access of the displaced to health facilities and partnering health care providers and to assist in the provision of special medication for those without financial means.

Implemented Activities:

- Increased operating hours for UNRWA's Beddawi Health Clinic and worked two shifts, seven days a week.
- Operated a mobile health clinic to provide services to the displaced in localities other than Beddawi camp;
- Dispatched significant amounts of additional medical supplies to Beddawi Health Clinic at the beginning of the crisis and continued to send supplies as required;
- Established contracts with five health facilities to perform needed radiology and laboratory services, as well as specialists' consultation.
- Established contracts with private pharmacies to provide life-saving medications to address chronic diseases, when such not available at UNRWA health clinics;
- Distributed powdered milk to infants 0-3 years of age;
- Distributed health education materials and conducted health education sessions;
- Arranged regular visits by two health teams to the displacement centers in north Lebanon.
- Conducted vaccination campaigns against poliomyelitis and measles;
- Established additional hospitalization contracts with three hospitals in the North to supplement the current hospitalization contracts for refugees.
- Provided health coverage to all displaced patients at UNRWA-contracted hospitals throughout Lebanon.

Results achieved: Health services were made available to all displaced, thereby countering the risk of an outbreak of communicable diseases.

Education:

General aim: To minimize disruption to schooling for NBC and Beddawi camp pupils in UNRWA schools.

Objectives: Ensuring that provisions are made to compensate lost school days for refugee pupils from NBC and Beddawi camp.

Implemented activities:

- Prepared and implemented successfully a remedial plan for 1,087 UNRWA pupils from the north Lebanon area (NLA) due to sit for official Brevet and Bacca-laureate (BAC) II examinations.
- Prepared another remedial plan for 8,655 affected refugee pupils from grades 5 to 11 and implemented it using six Government Schools;
- Provided psychosocial and recreational activities for traumatized children while at school. Recreational activities were implemented in cooperation with UNICEF and national and international NGOs; and
- UNRWA arranged to transport 300 Vocational Education Students to the Sibilin Training Centre to allow them to complete the training year. These students were provided with clothing, room and board as the majority of them lost all their belongings.

Results achieved: Displaced students were afforded additional learning opportunities to compensate for lost school days and assisted through psychosocial activities. The results of the BAC students were surprisingly high. NLA students scored a general pass rate of 87.68%;

Protection:

General aim: To meet the immediate protection of the refugees affected by the crisis in NBC with a special focus on children and women.

Objectives: To promote the protection of affected refugees, particularly women and children through awareness campaigns and psychosocial activities.

Implemented activities:

- In cooperation with UNICEF and local and international NGO's, UNRWA staff organized recreational activities such as sport tournaments, art exhibitions and summer camps;
- Organized and implemented psychosocial and recreational activities focused on education on non-violent conflict resolution.
- Implemented mine awareness campaigns in cooperation with UNICEF and local and international NGO's.

Results achieved: Human rights and the safety of the displaced from NBC were protected through an Interagency Protection Strategy.

Security and Coordination

General aim: To support the emergency activities in northern Lebanon.

Objectives: To establish and maintain an Emergency Coordination Unit to monitor and coordinate the emergency operations in the North and to provide security to UNRWA and staff of other UN Agencies.

Implemented activities:

- Monitored and coordinated emergency response activities such as food distribution, housing of displaced persons, and distribution of medical supplies;
- Liaised with other UN Agencies, local and international NGOs, the Lebanese Army, community representatives and the Lebanese Government to ensure security and coordination of operations.

Results achieved: Emergency services were provided and efficiently coordinated.

Challenges for the Organization

At the start of the conflict, it was thought the fighting would last only a few days or weeks and that the displaced would soon return to their homes. Any needed repairs or reconstruction would have started immediately after. However, three months later, the fighting continues. This volatile situation and protracted crisis have challenged UNRWA to constantly adapt its planning assumptions.

The main challenge at present is to ensure that an immediate remedial plan for temporary accommodation is put into place in order to avoid a possible escalation of tension with the displaced currently housed by host families and in displacement centers. Moreover, the school year is due to begin and occupied schools must be vacated soon. Until now UNRWA has been successful in maintaining calm and avoiding an outbreak of violence within Beddawi Camp in spite of overcrowded facilities and tension among the displaced who are eager to return to NBC.

Second Appeal (Emergency Appeal)

An *Emergency Appeal* was launched on 10th September to address the humanitarian needs of the displaced for a 12 month period from 1st September 2007. This includes temporary provision of services such as accommodation, food and non-food items, healthcare and education. This appeal will also include a provision for comprehensive damage assessment, planning process for the relief, recovery and reconstruction of NBC, in addition to rubble removal.

**PLEDGES TOWARD LEBANON FLASH APPEAL, JUNE 2007
(June - August 2007)**

| DONOR | CONFIRMED |
|---|-------------------|
| | CASH |
| | US Dollar |
| AUSTRALIA | 867,100 |
| CANADA | 560,748 |
| CZECH REPUBLIC | 141,000 |
| ECHO | 2,538,059 |
| FINLAND | 410,397 |
| GERMANY | 675,676 |
| GREECE | 683,995 |
| JAPAN | 699,600 |
| NETHERLANDS | 500,000 |
| SPAIN | 410,397 |
| SWEDEN | 744,048 |
| TURKEY | 249,965 |
| USA | 3,500,000 |
| CERF | 5,063,031 |
| UNHCR | 20,000 |
| COUNCIL OF HUELVA, SPAIN (via FAMSI) | 13,514 |
| <i>UNRWA SPANISH COMMITTEE/Basque</i> | <i>177,839*</i> |
| JUFFALI FOUNDATION | 10,000 |
| | |
| TOTAL | 17,265,369 |

*UNRWA Spanish Committee/Basque pledges have not been confirmed

Pictures from northern Lebanon



UNRWA convoy heading to Nahr el-Bared



UNRWA Mobile Clinic



Distribution of UNRWA food rations



Water tank damaged in Nahr el-Bared