

Emergency Appeal for 2005 Launched



In late November 2004, UNRWA launched its 9th Emergency Appeal, asking the international community for \$185.8 million in emergency funds to enable it to carry out crucial relief operations for 1.6 million refugees in the West Bank and Gaza during 2005. In the fourth year of the conflict, Palestinians in the occupied territory face ever-increasing casualties, intensive destruction of property and infrastructure and a rapidly deteriorating economy that has left two-thirds of the population under the poverty line. (The report accompanying the Emergency Appeal is available at www.un.org/unrwa/emergency/appeals/2005-appeal.pdf)

This issue includes:

- Emergency Appeal 2005
- Jenin Rebuilt
- UNRWA's Education "Teaching Tolerance & Conflict Resolution"



UNRWA 2005 wall calendar photo by John Tordai

Jenin Rebuilt: new homes handed over

On 20 December 2004, UNRWA handed over new shelters to 435 families in the Jenin Refugee Camp in the West Bank. These were refugees whose homes had been demolished during the incursion into the camp by the Israeli Army in April 2002 at the time of Israel's "Operation Defensive Shield". The hand-over ceremony also marked the memory of H. H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the late President of the United Arab Emirates, who authorised the UAE Red Crescent Society to donate US\$27 million to UNRWA for the reconstruction of Jenin. UNRWA also thanked the British Department of International Development (DFID), which provided the management team for the project, and the Governments of Switzerland and Sweden, who provided teams to clear the camp of ordnance and international drivers to help deliver humanitarian aid and building materials into the camp.

From "Jenin Rising" filmed by Johan Eriksson (UNRWA film 2004)

"It took twenty years to build our house, stone by stone, with all the family helping. We starved one day and ate the next to afford to build the house. Suddenly in a minute I saw it all being destroyed. A house is not only walls. It is all the memories it holds. ... "The outside world might not have understood the magnitude of the tragedy in Jenin. ... The sheer number of destroyed houses and homeless people. The people suffered so much. I cannot think about the possibility of it happening again. I only hope that it is never repeated." (Mrs. Qaqoone, a Jenin camp resident)

Around one quarter of the working days on the project were lost because of military incursions. Delays were also caused by the difficulty of getting building supplies through checkpoints and by the killing of Iain Hook, the project's manager, by an Israeli soldier in November 2002.

News from the Fields

- ◆ In the **Gaza Field**, UNRWA opened a school to provide shelters for 127 families (600 persons) who were forced to flee their homes following an incursion by the Israeli Army into Khan Younis on 17 December 2004. (www.un.org/unrwa/news/releases/pr-2004/hqg41-04.pdf)
- ◆ The UNRWA-run Amman Training Centre (ATC) in the **Jordan Field** introduced a new course of Associate Nursing for the new academic year funded by the Japanese government, which donated \$234,000.
- ◆ In December 2004, UNRWA's Relief and Social Services Department in **Amman** launched a training programme for its 300 social workers in the five fields to upgrade their skills in cooperation with Southern Illinois University (USA). (www.un.org/unrwa/programmes/rss/s_workers.html)
- ◆ On the occasion of the World Volunteer Day (5 December), the Local Administrative Committees of the Women Programme Centres in the **Lebanon Field** distributed prizes to volunteers in recognition of their work and dedication in managing the WPCs.



April 2002



November 2002



February 2004



October 2004



UNRWA Education

Teaching *Tolerance* and *Conflict Resolution*



A Human Rights exhibition prepared by UNRWA school girls in Rafah, Gaza



■ Do you know that UNRWA operates one of the largest school systems in the Middle East teaching around 500,000 pupils? Education is UNRWA's largest programme, accounting for half of its regular budget and 70% of its staff. The Agency has been a provider of free, basic education to Palestine refugee children since 1950.

■ The curriculum in UNRWA's schools is determined by the education authorities wherever it operates. (e.g. Palestine refugee children in Jordan use the same textbooks as Jordanian children.) However UNRWA has a programme to supplement existing curricula where it sees a need. Teaching tolerance and conflict resolution is just one such initiative.



Children's stories on human rights

■ In 1999, UNRWA began a project with donor funding aimed at further strengthening and supporting its efforts to supplement existing curricular materials and to promote concepts and principles of basic human rights, to raise awareness of the importance of tolerance and to train Palestine refugee children and youth in non-violent means of conflict resolution, including the promotion of peer mediation* techniques in the West Bank and Gaza fields.

■ Recently six children's stories addressing human rights issues were distributed to schools in the West Bank and Gaza fields. These stories were distributed all UNRWA-run schools in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The books are aimed at children in the 4th to 9th grades and cover issues such as the right to education and child labor. In 2004, two new stories were produced, entitled "Small King" and "Al'aa in the Little House".

■ In order to increase awareness on human rights issues, tolerance, non-violent communication and conflict resolution, UNRWA has established new teacher subjects in all its vocational education and training centres and Education Science Faculties (ESFs). Taking lectures on this subject has become a compulsory component at ESF, which means anyone who wants to obtain a BA in education has to complete the human rights courses successfully.

■ The Agency's work in this area has been praised by, among others, the Israeli delegation to the United Nations.



UNRWA teachers receiving Human Rights training from a local NGO, the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, Gaza City.

* **Peer Mediation** in UNRWA's conflict resolution programme (7-9th grades): Mediators selected by their classmates help other students to resolve their conflicts by using non-violent ways: active-listening, re-framing disputes, open questioning and using other communication skills.

This process is expected to end with written agreements for parties concerned.

Voices from students participating in the peer mediation in Gaza

El Rahman: "We succeeded in resolving disputes with our friends in a non-violent way without intervention of the school administration."

Sara: "The programme helps make our friends feel healthy mentally."

Field Effort in Education Programme

Syria: School as Focus for Development Programme

Toward a more participatory approach to learning

The Syrian Field Office has been working to pass on new techniques to help students confront obstacles to learning and difficulties in their wider lives. The programme is part of the UK-funded School as a Focus for Development initiative intended to make each school an independent entity. All UNRWA schools in Syria will offer different methods to help develop their staffs' careers and consequently improve the learning passed on to students. (More details of this story will appear in SFO's quarterly newsletter "Hand in Hand" at www.un.org/unrwa/news/newsletter)

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