

PRESS RELEASE

Canada provides support to Palestinian refugees

October 12, 2018 - Ottawa, Ontario - Global Affairs Canada

Canada is committed to providing humanitarian assistance and responding to the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable. Palestinian refugees endure high levels of poverty, unemployment and food insecurity. By helping to meet their humanitarian needs, Canada also contributes to stability in the region.

The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development, today announced Canada's support of up to \$50 million over two years for Palestinian refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Canada will also provide up to \$12.5 million for Right to Play International.

Of the support announced today, up to \$40 million will contribute to meeting the basic education, health and livelihood needs of millions of Palestinian refugees, especially women and children. The funding will also contribute to stability in the region by providing basic services to people whose needs would otherwise be unmet.

Furthermore, up to \$10 million of Canada's support will provide emergency life-saving assistance to more than 460,000 Palestinian refugees in Syria and Lebanon, through UNRWA's Emergency Appeal for the Syria regional crisis.

Canada's funding will also assist UNRWA with its ongoing efforts to improve neutrality within the agency and its operations. This assistance demonstrates how Canada and UNRWA are working together to ensure respect for the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, operational independence and impartiality. This is essential to the effective delivery of its work and to Canada's continued support.

With support from the Government of Canada, Right to Play International will collaborate with UNRWA to help create a more inclusive environment for Palestinian refugee children and to respond to existing educational gaps and needs in the West Bank and Gaza.

Quotes

"Canada's new funding will contribute to improving the lives and protecting the human dignity of millions of Palestinian refugees. This support will help to send hundreds of thousands of children to school, train teachers and support over a hundred health clinics. This new funding to UNRWA is urgently needed, and it will bring some predictability to the agency as the needs on the ground are increasing."

- Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development

Quick facts

- Since 2016, Canada has committed \$110 million in support for UNRWA.
- UNRWA is mandated to provide services to millions of Palestinian refugees.

PRESS RELEASE

- Canada's two-year funding commitment will contribute to addressing UNRWA's funding short-fall and improve the predictability of the agency's revenues, allowing it to plan how to meet current and expected needs.
- In Syria, 95% of Palestinian refugees are in need of sustained humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs. In Lebanon, 95% of Palestinian refugees from Syria are food insecure.

Related products

- [Backgrounder - Canada's support for Palestinian refugees](#)

Associated links

- [Canadian international assistance in the West Bank and Gaza](#)
- [Canada's response to the conflict in Syria](#)
- [Framework for Cooperation between Global Affairs Canada and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East](#)
- [United Nations Relief and Works Agency](#)
- [Right to Play](#)

Contacts

Justine Lesage
Press Secretary
Office of the Minister of International Development
343-203-5977
justine.lesage@international.gc.ca

Media Relations Office
Global Affairs Canada
343-203-7700
media@international.gc.ca

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PRESS RELEASE

Backgrounder - Canada's support for Palestinian refugees

Canada has announced funding of up to \$50 million for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and up to \$12.5 million over five years for Right to Play International.

In the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, UNRWA's core programs provide basic education, health and social services and livelihoods opportunities, and help to protect the rights of Palestinian refugees, in line with the agency's mandate.

In response to the Syria regional crisis, UNRWA focuses on preserving the resilience of vulnerable individuals by providing humanitarian assistance and a protective framework for Palestinian refugees through basic services, such as education, health, water, sanitation and hygiene or livelihood activities.

Providing basic education, health and social services to Palestinian refugees - up to \$40 million over two years

This funding will help over 500,000 Palestinian girls and boys receive quality basic education. It will help to operate more than 140 primary health-care clinics and support outreach teams in delivering access to health-care services, medications and immunizations. It will also provide basic shelter and food for the poorest Palestinian refugees.

Through this funding, Canada is also continuing its support for UNRWA's ongoing efforts to promote neutrality in its operations and among its staff, the majority of whom are also Palestinian refugees. Neutrality is a core obligation and value of UN staff, as well as part of UNRWA's regulatory framework. The funding will contribute to UNRWA's neutrality activities, including:

- regular inspections of the agency's facilities by specially trained UNRWA officers who can identify, report and take action on violations of neutrality;
- training for UNRWA staff on neutrality, including in social media, and for senior staff on how to carry out effective installation inspections;
- promotion of students' knowledge and skills reflecting UN values, including human rights, conflict resolution, gender equality and tolerance, through educational activities and materials; and
- UNRWA's development, distribution and use of additional educational materials, part of the agency's approach to enable teachers to promote neutrality.

This also builds on funding Canada provided from 2017 to 2019 to hire a neutrality coordinator to monitor activities and respond promptly to allegations of neutrality violations.

Emergency appeal for the Syria regional crisis - up to \$10 million over two years

Canada's support will provide humanitarian assistance to address the urgent needs of Palestinian refugees affected by the Syria regional crisis. Canadian assistance will provide food, cash and non-food items, as well as emergency health assistance, psychosocial and protection services, and high-quality

PRESS RELEASE

and inclusive education for girls and boys. For Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Canadian assistance will also help to provide opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.

Partnership with Right to Play International to support Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and Gaza - up to \$12.5 million over five years

The objectives of this partnership will be to support Right to Play International's collaboration with UNRWA in the creation of safe, inclusive, gender-responsive classrooms, by training existing teachers to integrate child-centred play-based methodologies into their teaching practice.

Oversight

Canada exercises enhanced due diligence for all humanitarian and development assistance funding for Palestinians. This includes ongoing oversight, regular site visits, a systematic screening process, and strong anti-terrorism provisions in funding agreements.