



2009

ECHO



European Commission Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO)

Supporting the most vulnerable Palestinians



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Helping Gazan neighbours

Nissren Taiabab runs a small food distribution centre for her neighbours in Zawayda in central Gaza, providing 100 families with emergency food aid as part of an ECHO-funded project run by CARE. This food-aid project delivers fresh locally grown vegetables to the most vulnerable families, provides an income for farmers unable to export their crops due to the economic blockade, and jobs at packing warehouses and distribution centres. CARE continued distributing fresh food to over 60,000 people during the Gaza conflict in December 2008 and January 2009 through community organisations run by dedicated people like Nissren.

www.carewbg.org

The European Commission Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) provides emergency assistance and relief to victims of natural disasters or armed conflicts in more than 60 countries outside the European Union.

ECHO works with a large number of implementing partners in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), including United Nation agencies, the Red Cross/Crescent movement and international non-governmental organisations to help alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable populations. ECHO also finances humanitarian programmes that benefit Palestinian refugees living in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

From 2000 to 2009, ECHO allocated

€476 million for humanitarian programmes targeting Palestinian refugees in the Middle East.

Feeding the poorest

Access to food is a critical issue for many Palestinians, with 25 per cent of the West Bank population and 56 per cent of the Gaza Strip population food insecure.

In 2008, ECHO-funded programmes provided food aid to around 500,000 refugees in the Gaza Strip and 188,000 non-refugees in the oPt and supplied 70,000 vulnerable individuals with fresh vegetables. ECHO also allocated over €6.1 million for food security projects that benefited a further 100,000 Palestinians



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Healthcare for the most vulnerable

The Israeli separation barrier, the continuing occupation and the numerous internal barriers to movement in the West Bank make it difficult for 2.4 million Palestinians to access basic healthcare. The Israeli blockade in the Gaza Strip and conflict of late 2008 and early 2009 have meant that many specialised and life-saving medical treatments are no longer available and hospitals cannot obtain spare parts for essential medical equipment. ECHO-funded programmes provide emergency healthcare to vulnerable populations during crisis periods. ECHO supports the operation of clinics in the West Bank and Gaza and provides essential medicines so that 630,000 Palestinians can access primary healthcare. ECHO also finances ophthalmic care services, programmes that assist the disabled and training programmes for medical staff.

Providing clean water

Access to water is one of the most difficult issues faced by Palestinians. ECHO-financed water and sanitation programmes provide 180,000 Palestinians with clean water through water trucking operations and the construction of cisterns. ECHO funds the delivery of emergency drinking water to the Gaza Strip.

Helping children overcome trauma

The difficult political and socio-economic situation has led to significant levels of violence in Palestinian society. Children experience violence at home, at school and on the streets and there

are large numbers of child-detainees in Israeli prisons. ECHO implementing partners provide psychosocial support to 74,000 pre-school and school-age children to help them overcome the stress and anxiety of their violent and insecure environment.

Protection of the vulnerable

ECHO supports the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in its mandate of monitoring the humanitarian law situation in the oPt. ECHO partners assist families forced to abandon their homes due to house demolitions, eviction orders and economic difficulties and work to empower these individuals about their legal rights.

Creating jobs

ECHO's cash-for-work programmes provide vulnerable individuals with short-term employment and a temporary income. Rapid labour force growth in the oPt means that nearly 35,000 jobs need to be created and sustained annually to maintain current employment levels. In 2009, ECHO allocated €11.5 million for cash-for-work programmes that benefit over 43,000 individuals and their families.

Providing shelter for Bedouin

Bedouin are among the poorest and most marginalised populations in Palestinian society. Most live in precarious conditions in makeshift shelters. A €2.5 million ECHO-funded programme is providing the Bedouin with some relief in the form of shelter, water and fodder for livestock.

Shelter in the desert

Jamil Alnajadah's four children play inside a newly built Bedouin-style tent that has been their home for just three weeks. It's bitterly cold outside, but the tent is warm and unlike a traditional tent has a concrete floor which keeps dust and sand to a minimum. Bedouin traditionally lived a nomadic life, but this lifestyle is no longer possible and Bedouin families are now adapting to living in more permanent settlements in and around the Negev desert. Jamil's family is one of over 200 households to have benefitted from a series of ECHO-funded programmes. Jamil's new tent has changed his life, "In the past, I was spending around 3,000 shekels (€1,350) a year repairing my tent when it got damaged by the wind and rain. Now I have more money for clothes and food for my family."



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