Each year, Sida conducts a humanitarian allocation exercise in which a large part of its humanitarian budget is allocated to emergencies worldwide. This allocation takes place in the beginning of the year as to ensure predictability for humanitarian organizations and to allow for best possible operational planning. In an effort to truly adhere to the humanitarian principles, Sida bases its allocation decisions on a number of objective indicators and parameters of which the most important are related to the number of affected people, vulnerability of affected people and level of funding in previous years. One of the indicators is also related to forgotten crises in order to ensure sufficient funding to low profile crises. Besides this initial allocation, another part of the humanitarian budget is set aside as an emergency reserve for sudden onset emergencies and deteriorating humanitarian situations. This reserve allows Sida to quickly allocate funding to any humanitarian situation throughout the year, including additional funding to Palestine.

For 2017, Palestine is allocated an initial 70 MSEK in January 2017. Close monitoring of the situation in Palestine will continue throughout the year for potential additional funds.

### 1. CRISIS OVERVIEW

The humanitarian context of Palestine is unique among today’s humanitarian crises and remains directly tied to the Israeli Occupation, now in its 50th year. Palestine remains a protracted protection crisis with humanitarian consequences caused by prolonged occupation and recurrent violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL), and the contextual lack of accountability for these violations. In spite of international and national efforts to advance prospects for peace between Israel and Palestine (in particular, the Middle East Quartet and the French Government Initiatives1), the current political environment has not been conducive to a tangible progress in the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP). The stalemate in the peace process and the lack of progress on national Palestinian reconciliation further contribute to the deterioration of the situation in Palestine.

Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem are a population under occupation, facing many challenges. The first challenge is the continuing need for protection measures for at least 1.8 million Palestinians experiencing, or at risk of, conflict and violence, displacement and denial of access to livelihoods, among other threats. Secondly, there is a need to ensure delivery of essential services such as water and health care for the most acutely vulnerable households, currently restricted in or denied access. Thirdly, there is also a need to support vulnerable households to better cope with the prolonged nature of the humanitarian crisis and the recurrent cycle of shocks, both natural and manmade. These dynamics are significantly magnified in the Gaza context, given that the ten-year long Israeli blockade and three major escalations of hostilities in six years have devastated public infrastructure, disrupted the delivery of basic services and undermined already vulnerable living conditions. Across the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), one in two Palestinians, or roughly two million people, will need some form of humanitarian assistance in 2017.

In the West Bank, the protracted crisis mainly stems from occupation policies in the form of continued seizure of Palestinian land for the purpose of Israeli settlement construction and expansion2, considered illegal by the European Union3 under International Law, an increase in settler violence, and restrictions on movement and access, the sum of which creates a coercive environment leading to the forced displacement of the Palestinian population. The access to basic services is increasingly limited, resulting in precarious living conditions for Palestinians. Such a coercive environment has undermined security as well as livelihoods, and has increased socio-economic vulnerabilities and the risk of forced displacement. The trend over the past two years with demolitions of entire villages rather than single dwellings, and the change in legal modalities imposed by the Israeli government that speed up the rate of demolitions, have raised concerns among the

---

1 The Quartet issued a report reflecting the situation on the ground. The report was issued in July 2016 focusing on major threats to achieving a negotiated peace and offered recommendations to advance the two-state solution. Complementary to the Quartet activities, France will hold an international conference, towards the end of 2016, aiming at re-initiating a negotiation process between Israel and Palestine.
2 Since December 2010 the settler population in Area C has increased by 24% - Population registry of the Israeli Interior Ministry – December 31, 2015 figures.
3 Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions on MEPP (July 2015)
humanitarian and international community regarding the imminent threat of large scale displacement of already vulnerable communities and the erosion of their protection.

Israeli relocation plans, so called “administrative” mechanisms designating occupied land as “State land” and expropriating land for “military needs” or “public needs”, are other types of coercive mechanisms causing forcible transfer. The coercive environment can also be attributed to a policy shift on the part of the Government of Israel in which the Israeli Civil Administration has been under growing political pressure from both right-wing Israeli politicians and Israeli pro-settlers’ NGOs to push ahead with demolitions. Another worrying trend is Israel’s intent to make progress on the de facto annexation of Area C by extending the application of Israeli domestic law, extra-territorially, to Area C.

The Gaza Strip has suffered three wars in eight years. The Israeli blockade combined with Egyptian restrictions, has continued to undermine the living conditions of roughly 1.88 million residents in the Gaza Strip which is a violation under IHL. Since March 2016, almost half of the Gaza business people who held Israeli-issued permits have had them cancelled or not renewed. This year has also witnessed a decline in the approval rate for medical patients and their companions seeking permits to leave Gaza, while rejections for staff who hold Gaza ID cards working with international organizations increased from three per cent in January to 41 per cent in September. Access restrictions have been exacerbated by the almost continuous closure of the Rafah passenger crossing by Egypt since October 2014. The provision of basic services remains severely hampered by the longstanding electricity deficit. Talks to resolve the intra-Palestinian divide have achieved no progress, with the lack of a resolution to the longstanding salary crisis affecting tens of thousands of public employees in Gaza and further impairing basic service delivery.

The impact of the conflict on particular groups of the population intersects with a range of gender based vulnerabilities. The intra-Palestinian divide and the limited authority exercised by the Palestinian authority in Gaza, Area C, and East Jerusalem also compounds gaps in legal protection for women living in those areas. The 2017 HNO identifies certain gender concerns and associated needs based on the differentiated impact of the humanitarian context on men, women, boys and girls, their differentiated access, and differentiated coping mechanisms. Gender concerns range from safety, denial of rights, access to services, psychosocial wellbeing, sexual abuse and early marriage in communities impacted by conflict, fragmentation and displacement. Higher food insecurity amongst female headed households, and restricted access to basic health and education services. Since October 2015, a new and desperate reaction of young Palestinians to the burden of the occupation has begun, in the form of individual acts of violence against Israeli military, police and civilians, a deeply worrying expression of hopelessness, often met by what the OHCHR has found to be suspected cases of extrajudicial killings.

1.1 Geographical areas and affected population

The affected population amounts to 4.8 million Palestinians, among them 2 million in need for humanitarian assistance, of which 1.2 million are refugees. A further breakdown of the affected population as identified by the 2017 HRP follows:

- 300 000 Palestinians living in the Area C of the West Bank, specifically communities having difficulty accessing their land because of settler violence and the expansion of settlements; communities affected by (or at risk of) demolition and confiscation of private property and whose livelihoods are at risk; this includes the communities at risk of forcible transfer including the Palestinian population affected by 11 000 outstanding demolition orders in Area C, the 7 000 Palestinian Bedouins in the Jerusalem Periphery, the E1 block, as well as the residents in Southern Hebron, and the 6 200 Palestinians residing in areas designated as “firing zones” (closed military zones for training).

- 11 000 Palestinians living in Seam Zone (land area in the West Bank between Israel's separation barrier and the 1967 Green Line) which are cut off from public services and are impeded in accessing land and property.

---

1 Area C of the West Bank: key humanitarian concerns, OCHA – Update August 2014
5 UNOCHA, the Humanitarian Impact of the Barrier, Fact Sheet July 2013
- 298,000 Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, notably the 93,100 at risk of house demolition and evictions, and families at risk of forcible transfer who could also lose their livelihoods.

- 11,700 Palestinian families (about 60,000 individuals) are internally displaced following the 2014 conflict in the Gaza strip out of which 7,400 displaced families haven’t received any support up until July 2016. In 2017, the majority of the remaining vulnerable households still displaced in Gaza will have experienced multiple displacements in the last two years and will have increased vulnerabilities and exhausted coping strategies often living in inadequate makeshift shelters.

- Pockets of the most underserved host communities of the Gaza strip struggling in accessing basic income, livelihoods and services including food, water, sanitation and electricity in rural and peri-urban areas including Access Restricted Areas (ARA). They have often resorted to negative coping mechanisms such as buying on credit, and are depleting their assets.

- Individuals and households from Gaza directly affected by IHL and IHRL violations including airstrikes, excessive use of force, shootings, incursions, EXO-UXOs, arrests and detentions, confiscation or destruction of their livelihood assets, forced displacement and other protection concerns including gender-based violence.

1.2 Risks and threats

The current political situation in Israel/Palestine remains deadlocked with little cause for optimism. The Palestinian divide between Fatah and Hamas remains despite different efforts to reconcile. Tensions escalated in East Jerusalem in October 2015 and continued into 2016, with protests, clashes and violence spreading to the remaining oPt, including to the ARA in Gaza, the Hebron Governorate and in Israel. Concerns remain over possible excessive use of force and extra-judicial executions by Israeli Security Forces (ISF) in their response to such incidents, as well as the lack of sufficient accountability regarding these cases.

The Palestinian people remain affected by Human Rights and IHL violations and lack of protection. Although all parties to the conflict are bound by international law, violations of IHL include the complete blockade on the Gaza Strip for the tenth consecutive year, restrictions on movement, and exploitation of natural resources. These violations contribute to a coercive environment and progressive isolation and the forcible transfer of the Palestinian population, in breach of the Geneva Conventions.

Implementation of humanitarian programmes in Gaza, Area C, the Seam Zone and East Jerusalem continues to be hindered by restrictive access policies. High levels of food insecurity are expected to prevail in Gaza and the West Bank and the continued Israeli restrictions will create more dependency on international assistance. The situation will remain as such for the foreseeable future due to lack of effective political will by third states to ensure the implementation of international law by Israel in Palestine.

1.3 Strategic objectives identified in the Humanitarian Response Plan

The goal of humanitarian assistance in Palestine is to protect the rights of vulnerable Palestinians, provide access to basic services for those who are acutely vulnerable and support the ability of households to cope with prolonged stress to prevent a further deterioration of their situation, until more sustainable solutions are made possible. Three strategic objectives and four cross cutting themes have been identified: 1) Protect the rights of Palestinians under occupation in accordance with IHL and IHRL; 2) Ensure acutely-vulnerable Palestinians under occupation in Gaza and the West Bank have access to essential services, and 3) Strengthen the ability of acutely-vulnerable Palestinian households to cope with protracted threats and shocks.

Under strategic objective 1, interventions will, for example, monitor and document violations and advocate for respect for IHL and IHRL; provide legal assistance to affected communities; mitigate the impact of violations, including through psychosocial support; provide services to those affected by Gender-Based Violence (GBV); Explosive Remnants of War (ERW); and seek to prevent forcible transfers of populations in occupied territories. Interventions under objective 2 will ensure services are provided to the most vulnerable, while continuing to advocate for the need for the occupying power to meet its responsibilities in accordance with IHL. In Gaza, those targeted will include those most affected by the 2014 conflict, and communities that

---

9 UNOCHA Key humanitarian concerns, Update August 2014
10 Shelter Cluster Fact Sheet, August 2016.
the Vulnerability Profile and other assessments have identified as having the least access to services. In the West Bank, those targeted include people living in Area C and East Jerusalem, including people affected or at risk of demolitions and settler violence, and refugees living outside camps. Across the oPt, clusters have identified particular groups such as people with disabilities, the elderly, widows, children, and female-headed households as high priorities under this objective. Interventions under objective 3 include food and cash assistance to prevent a further deterioration in food security (most acute in Gaza); promoting basic livelihoods, resilience, and safety nets; measures that seek to reduce the risk of displacement in Area C and East Jerusalem; and transitional solutions to conflict-displaced IDPs in Gaza.

In addition to the three strategic objectives that guide the response in 2017, there are four key cross-cutting areas of work which are mainstreamed throughout the three objectives. The four cross-cutting areas are Gender, Community engagement, Disaster risk management, and Transition.

2. IN COUNTRY HUMANITARIAN CAPACITIES

2.1 National and local capacities and constraints

The Palestinian Government has made significant progress in regard to institution building and the development of a sustainable Palestinian economy and has articulated a National Policy Agenda for 2017 to 2022. Due to restrictions imposed by Israel, the Palestinian Government is still unable to exert full administrative control (including programming) over Gaza, Area C, the seam zone, and East Jerusalem, which all together represent the major part of the oPt and majority of the population.

Nevertheless, and despite the Palestinian Authorities (PA) inability to access Area C and East Jerusalem, the PA has stepped up its engagement in Area C in the course of the past few years. The PA has adopted a National Strategic Framework for Development Policies and interventions in Area C (2014-2016), National Policy Agenda (2017-2022) that will guide Palestine's development strategy for the next six years. An inter-ministerial committee for Area C has been established in 2015 which meets both at ministerial and technical levels. It is composed of five ministries; the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Finance and Planning, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs. The committee is responsible for establishing the policies and priorities as well as overall coordination and monitoring of the work progress in Area C. At the same time a coordination office for Area C was established in June 2016 under the leadership of the Prime Minister's Office with support from Sweden, Austria and Norway.

Israel's security policy towards Gaza remains the main driver of humanitarian vulnerability of its population. The continuous restrictions imposed on movement through physical and administrative means directly impede movement and access of civilians, goods and services including access to humanitarian aid. While the Rafah crossing point to Egypt remained closed with few exceptions, 2016 witnessed a sharp restriction of the exit permits via Erez delivered by the Israeli authorities to medical patients, businessmen and aid workers. Moreover, the stalled reconciliation process between Fatah and Hamas is hindering the ability of central and municipal authorities in Gaza to exercise basic governance in most of the public sectors such as in reconstruction, electricity, water, health or education. Hamas has also been facing increasing financial challenges as a result of its regional political isolation and internal divisions.

In 2016, a noticeable reduction of the humanitarian space in Gaza has been witnessed, with an increased number of financial audits by the Hamas authorities, requests for specific information, attempts to suspend humanitarian operations, and attempts to close down offices and multiplication of taxes towards the humanitarian community. At the same time Israel has made arrests of Palestinian staff of international agencies based on very unclear grounds, while the issuing of permits for their staff to enter or exit Gaza has been much reduced.

The national civil society’s humanitarian community has the capacity to respond to humanitarian needs in addition to Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS). Unfortunately, it was reported that less financial resources went straight to the implementation of Palestinian NGO’s and the rest went to UN agencies and International NGO’s. Members of the Advisory board of the Humanitarian Pooled Fund (HPF) locally made good progress to encourage more local NGOs to apply. In 2016, the oPt HPF approved 28 projects for 18
partners, targeting nearly half a million beneficiaries in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, at a total value of US $8 million. Seventyfive per cent (75%) of the projects approved are implemented by National NGOs or in partnership between National NGOs, International NGOs and UN agencies.

2.2 International operational capacities and constraints

There are roughly 100 active INGOs and 19 UN agencies responding to humanitarian needs. The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), established in the oPt in 2008 and coordination arrangements were formalized in March 2009, following a decision between the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC). OCHA facilitates the work of the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICG) that consists of six clusters/sectors, as follows: Protection Cluster, Food Security Sector, Education Cluster, WASH Cluster, Health & Nutrition Sector and Shelter & NFI’s Cluster (the Gaza Strip and the West Bank). OCHA has been preparing the Humanitarian Programme Cycle on behalf of the HCT (since 2003), mobilizing humanitarian funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and acting as the manager of the local Humanitarian Pooled Fund (HPF) on behalf of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC). Both the CERF and HPF, under the RC/HC’s leadership, have track records of supporting recurrent emergencies linked to hostilities and extreme weather events.

A good coordination structure exists in oPt among donors, PA, UN, INGOs and LNGOs. Sida’s assessment is that the cluster coordination needs to be strengthened in oPt, especially in Gaza. ECHO and Sweden as chair and co-chair of the local Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) group, have approached OCHA to see if they participate as observers in HCT or cluster meetings and has finally succeeded. Sweden have taken part in different HTC plus meetings and workshops and recently was asked by the HC to make a presentation on multi-year planning and funding.

The humanitarian leadership changed in 2015, with the new RC/HC, Robert Piper, who together with the new head of OCHA, David Cardey, has demonstrated a good leadership so far. The OCHA office which serves as a secretariat for the HC will face like the other OCHA offices certain financial challenges starting 2017. Sida has different partners who are present in the country, like the WE EFFECT (former Swedish Cooperative Centre), Diakonia, Islamic Relief-Gaza, and the Christian Council of Sweden through local national coordinator in Jerusalem. Sida/Hum’s framework partners like NRC, Swedish Red Cross, MSB either have some presence or are very much engaged from HQ. Support to the Diakonia IHL Resource Center 2017 onwards will become integrated as part of a global application (with thematic Sida support).

2.3 International and Regional assistance

The UN 2016 Humanitarian Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) amounted to $571 million (compared to $704 million in 2015), where $267 million has been funded, representing 47 per cent of the Appeal. This continues to be a low level of funding compared to previous years for oPt. In a recent HCT plus meeting, the HC and OCHA raised the issue of funding inside and outside the HRP. More discussion will follow between the HC and donors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Funding USD</th>
<th>% of Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>259,705,863</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>85,791,407</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>65,000,199</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>55,533,561</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Commission</td>
<td>31,923,319</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>24,187,797</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>22,257,264</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>19,871,183</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Humanitarian Response Plan 2017 presents a strategy budgeted at $547 million to implement 243 projects, divided as follows: 65 (27%) United Nations, 101 (41%) INGOs, and 77 (32%) LNGOs.

As for as the planned donor support for 2017, information is not available at the moment.

11 This includes Swedish MFA support to UNRWA which is outside HRP.
3. Sidas HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN

3.1 Sida’s role

Sida is the co-chair of the locally established GHD group with ECHO. Sweden is an active member of the Review/Advisory board of both Community Resilience & Development Program (CRDP) transition facility as well as the Humanitarian Pooled Fund (HPF). Sida’s aim is to influence the strategic discussions with the HCT team as well as Palestinian Government, especially on resilience and transition. Through CRDP, Sida is promoting synergies to longer term development by actively supporting a strategic shift towards more long term interventions that are clustered geographically and thematically and where local government units play an increasingly active ownership role. A Resilience conference organized by UNDP was held recently with Swedish participation but concrete recommendation and conclusions are still being developed by UNDP and the PA. Recent evaluations of individual Sida supported programs motivate continued support to humanitarian interventions as long as the political situation is not changed on the ground. The Consulate General has decided to support the international NGO platform AIDA, gathering both humanitarian and development actors, from the development cooperation strategy. Much of the achievements and lessons learned in the HPC 2016 refer to inputs, indicators, targets and number of activities as it is difficult to report on proper results especially when the main objectives of the HRP are protection and food security. Still, several of Sida’s partners showed good results.

3.2 Response Priorities 2016

Sida’s strategy in Palestine will continue to focus on IHL/protection of the most vulnerable population groups, emergency preparedness and service delivery, and humanitarian advocacy. Strategic partnerships with Swedish NGOs and the UN is essential to mainstream protection in the programmes.

Stronger linkages between humanitarian, recovery and development will continue to be a priority for Sida’s work in the oPt. Linkages between humanitarian to development is being put to the test with the Sida support to the CRDP facility. Also, after the war in Gaza 2014, Sweden has supported transitional shelter through a cash assistance programme for non-refugees through UNDP. The total amount thus far has reached over 80 MSEK (25,900,000 SEK in 2014 and 55,000,000 SEK in 2015 & 2016). Sida has demonstrated flexibility in their development funding to pay for transitional shelter with the aim to link up with other donors who prioritised interventions contributing to the return of IDPs through repair and rehabilitation of damaged homes. Sweden continues to assist OCHA in recruiting new donors to the HPF, while trying to retain present ones. Currently being the co-chair, Sweden will continue to be active in GHD meetings.

3.3 Partners

Sida’s humanitarian support to oPt in 2017 amounts to a total of 70 MSEK, with four multilateral partners and five NGOs being chosen for funding:

The biggest partner to Sida in terms of funding in oPt is the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), where 30 MSEK is proposed for UNRWA’s oPt Emergency Appeal for 2017. UNRWA is working multi-sectoral in oPt, and the funding to UNRWA will be earmarked to only cover activities within the 2017 HRP.

For 2017, 2 MSEK will be allocated to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UN OCHA, for their unique role in humanitarian coordination.

The Country Based Pooled Fund (CBPF) for oPt will in 2017 receive 5 MSEK. The CBPF allows for flexible as well as localized funding of humanitarian operations.

The International Committee of the Red Cross, ICRC, will remain an important partner in 2017 considering their unique mandate and role, and has for 2017 been allocated 8 MSEK. The ICRC is primarily working with protection in the oPt.

For their activities within the health cluster, it is proposed that the Swedish Red Cross (SRC), will be allocated 3 MSEK for 2017.
Diakonia has been running the IHL Resource Center (IHLRC) since 2004. Working with protection, the Diakonia IHLRC aims at improving adherence of IHL. The Diakonia IHLRC will be part of Sida’s Humanitarian thematic portfolio, and is proposed to receive 5 MSEK for 2017.

Islamic Relief’s project in Gaza aims at improving food security of food-insecure communities in the Gaza strip through temporary employment opportunities. For 2017, 10 MSEK is proposed to be allocated for Islamic Relief’s activities in Palestine.

The Swedish Mission Council (SMC) is proposed 6 MSEK for their Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). EAPPI is a protection programme, intended to reduce the level of violence between Israelis and Palestinians. The programme is implemented in partnership with the Christian Council of Sweden.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended support</th>
<th>partner for Sida</th>
<th>Sector/focus of work (incl. integrated or multi sectorial programming)</th>
<th>Proposed amount (MSEK)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNRWA</td>
<td>Emergency Appeal/Multi Sector</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCHA</td>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCHA/CBPF</td>
<td>Multi Sector</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICRC</td>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish Red Cross</td>
<td>Health/increase resilience to disasters</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diakonia</td>
<td>Protection/IHL Palestine &amp; Israel(^\text{12})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Relief Sweden/IR Gaza</td>
<td>Emergency JCP-Gaza for young graduates, farmers and fishermen IDP’s</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish Mission Council (SEAPPI)</td>
<td>Protection oPt/Israel</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRC</td>
<td>Protection/Counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>70 MSEK</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:

\(^\text{12}\) This support of 5MSEK will be part of Sida’s thematic support for 2017.