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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance to the United Nations, including special economic assistance

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Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [76/126](#), contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people and proposals for responding to unmet needs. It provides a description of the efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Government of Palestine, donors and civil society, to support Palestinian people and institutions.

The reporting period (1 April 2021–31 March 2022) was characterized by continued tensions and violence and the persistence of negative trends, further impeding the resumption of meaningful negotiations and the achievement of a viable two-State solution and adversely affecting prospects for peace. Most notable was the escalation of conflict between Israel and Palestinian armed groups in the Gaza Strip that occurred in May 2021, in which 259 Palestinians, 9 Israeli citizens and 3 residents of Israel were killed. The conflict generated damage in Gaza estimated at between \$290 and \$380 million, while economic losses reached up to \$200 million, according to United Nations and partner assessments conducted in the immediate aftermath of the escalation. In addition, throughout the reporting period, the dire fiscal condition of the Palestinian Authority had a negative impact on its ability to deliver basic services.

During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Despite the challenges, the United Nations system raised a total of \$370 million for the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Authority and \$61.1 million for the flash appeal following the escalation of hostilities

* [A/77/50](#).



and unrest in May 2021. Overall, \$431.1 million was delivered in humanitarian assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territory by the United Nations. Some of that assistance was targeted at Palestinian individuals and communities in areas not under the direct administration of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C, in the occupied West Bank, and Gaza. In addition to delivering humanitarian assistance, the United Nations continued to implement its \$140 million coronavirus disease (COVID-19) socioeconomic response plan, reaching over 2.4 million Palestinians in 2021.

Under the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, \$510 million is sought to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.6 million Palestinians who have been identified as those most in need of humanitarian interventions across the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 76/126, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its seventy-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people, an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. The reporting period is from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.
2. Information on the political and socioeconomic situation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory is provided in several periodic reports prepared by United Nations entities and submitted to various United Nations bodies, including the monthly Security Council briefings by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016); the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan; the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); and the biannual reports of the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians.
3. During the reporting period, the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continued to have a negative socioeconomic impact in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Nevertheless, given the decline in the daily number of new cases and the roll-out of the vaccination campaign supported by the United Nations, COVID-19-related measures were progressively eased, and the Palestinian economy started its recovery.
4. The United Nations continued to implement its COVID-19 socioeconomic response plan, which included activities to strengthen the protection of health services and systems, reaching over 2.4 million Palestinians. The plan also supported the strengthening of social protection systems, benefiting over 2.8 million Palestinians. More than 15,000 Palestinians received support for economic growth and social cohesion.
5. In Gaza, the most significant conflict escalation since 2014 occurred between 10 and 21 May 2021. It resulted in significant loss of life, injuries and damage to civilian infrastructure, such as residential and commercial buildings, in particular hospitals and health centres, water and sanitation facilities and transport, energy and communications networks. The conflict also resulted in explosive remnants of war contamination that hinders reconstruction and safety efforts as well as future infrastructure projects.
6. On 6 July, the World Bank, the United Nations and the European Union released the Gaza rapid damage and needs assessment, according to which damage in Gaza was estimated at between \$290 and \$380 million, while economic losses reached up to \$200 million. The social sector was hit the hardest, significantly weakening the safety net for the most vulnerable. Immediate and short-term recovery and reconstruction needs were estimated at between \$345 and \$485 million.
7. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary strategic and resource mobilization documents. For the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian

Territory, the United Nations system raised a total of \$374 million, representing 89.6 per cent of the total requested (\$417.6 million). Overall, \$436 million was delivered in humanitarian assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which included \$62 million raised following the escalation in May 2021. Under the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, \$510 million is sought to provide basic food, protection, health care, shelter, water and sanitation to 1.6 million Palestinians who have been identified as those most in need of support. That is significantly more than the \$417 million sought in 2021. The elevated amount reflects the severity of the health and economic crisis facing the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the impact of the escalation in May 2021.

8. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2018–2022 contains the collective vision and response of the United Nations to the national development plan of the Government of Palestine contained in the Palestinian National Policy Agenda for the period 2017–2022. In the reporting period, the United Nations started the preparatory work for the next programmatic framework, the first United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework since the Secretary-General’s reform of the United Nations development system.

9. Throughout the reporting period, the Office of the Special Coordinator continued its efforts to support conflict prevention and a return to peace negotiations, and to promote coordination among the Government of Palestine, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel.

II. Overview of the current situation

A. Political context

10. The reporting period was marked by the continuation of the negative overall trajectory of the conflict, characterized by the continued military occupation by Israel of Palestinian territory, the absence of a political process to end the occupation and the wider Israeli-Palestinian conflict, ongoing settlement activities, including a notable acceleration of settlement advancements in occupied East Jerusalem, demolitions of Palestinian structures, violence and the persistence of the Palestinian Authority’s financial crisis. In Gaza, the situation remained extremely fragile, with the most serious escalation since 2014 deepening the humanitarian crisis amid the continued Israeli closures.

11. Despite these challenges, the COVID-19 caseload declined, as did public health-related movement restrictions, though the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic will be felt for years to come. High-level dialogue between the parties was resumed and some progress was made on a range of civil and economic issues, but implementation was slow.

12. Violence increased during the reporting period. In April and early May, rising tensions in occupied East Jerusalem, exacerbated by the planned eviction by Israeli authorities of four Palestinian families in the Shaykh Jarrah neighbourhood and by clashes between Israeli security forces and Palestinians in and around the Old City and holy sites in Jerusalem, coinciding with the holy month of Ramadan, led to the worst escalation of armed hostilities since 2014 ([S/2021/584](#), paras. 12–19).

13. During the escalation, Palestinian militants fired more than 4,000 rockets indiscriminately from Gaza, including from highly populated civilian neighbourhoods, towards cities and towns across southern and central Israel; and Israeli forces fired more than 1,500 missiles and 2,455 shells into Gaza. The armed hostilities took a severe toll on the civilian population. Between 10 and 21 May, 259

Palestinians were killed in Gaza, including 66 children and 41 women (4 of whom were pregnant), with 248 of them, including 63 children, killed in air strikes and by falling rockets. Nine Israelis, including two children, four women and one soldier, and three foreign nationals were killed, and hundreds of Israelis were injured during the hostilities.

14. Against the backdrop of ongoing settlement activity and pressure on Palestinian communities in the occupied West Bank, incidents of violence, vandalism and damage to property by Israeli extremists, including settlers, against Palestinians increased. There was also an increase in the number of attacks by Palestinians against Israeli civilians in the occupied West Bank, mostly the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails at vehicles.

15. The Civil Administration High Planning Committee, which discusses plans for new construction in settlements in Area C of the occupied West Bank, convened once during the reporting period and advanced plans for some 3,100 housing units. This was half the number advanced during the previous period (6,200). However, the advancement of plans in occupied East Jerusalem settlements spiked at 2,600 housing units, up from 600 in the previous period, further eroding the possibility of establishing a contiguous Palestinian State. The threat of eviction of Palestinian families in the occupied East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Shaykh Jarrah continued. One family was evicted during the reporting period following lengthy legal proceedings. In another high-profile case, the Supreme Court of Israel ruled that four families in the neighbourhood would not be evicted and would be recognized as “protected tenants”, paying a nominal rent, until a determination could be made on their claims to ownership. A civil case over ownership is ongoing.

16. On 30 April, the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, said that he was indefinitely postponing the Palestinian Legislative Council, presidential and Palestinian National Council elections scheduled for 2021 until the participation of Palestinians in occupied East Jerusalem was guaranteed by Israel. Local council elections were held in the West Bank in two phases, on 11 December 2021 and 26 March 2022, but none were held in the Gaza Strip. A spokesperson for Hamas, Hazim Qasem, said that the demands of Hamas matched national aspirations and must be discussed within the framework of a “serious national dialogue to discuss the elections at all levels, setting specific timetables, with written guarantees that they will be respected”.

17. On 24 June, the Palestinian activist and former legislative candidate Nizar Banat died during a Palestinian security forces arrest operation during which he was severely beaten. His death, which came in the context of increased arrests by Palestinian security forces targeting political and social media activists, drew widespread condemnation. Thousands of Palestinians demonstrated throughout the occupied West Bank, and at times were forcibly dispersed with violence by uniformed Palestinian security forces and plainclothes officers. On 6 September, a military court charged 14 officers from the Palestinian security forces with Mr. Banat’s death. His family has not accepted the results of the Palestinian Authority’s investigation. A series of hearings were held against 14 members of the Preventive Security Forces accused of involvement in Mr. Banat’s death.

18. On 22 October, the Ministry of Defence of Israel announced the designation of six Palestinian non-governmental organizations as terrorist organizations. It subsequently accused them of constituting “an inseparable arm” of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and extended the applicability of the designations to the occupied West Bank through military orders on 7 November. In accordance with Israeli legislation, members of a designated terror organization or any individual who provides material or other support could be criminally prosecuted and imprisoned.

19. Throughout the reporting period, the United Nations and its regional and international partners continued to urge Israelis and Palestinians to take concrete action to restore a political horizon to end the occupation and achieve a viable two-State solution. The envoys of the Middle East Quartet met regularly to discuss the situation on the ground and the latest political developments, as well as to chart a way forward.

B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context

Economic and fiscal developments

20. In the reporting period, the economic and fiscal situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained dire. The economic recovery from the 2020 crisis, when the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita contracted by 13.4 per cent overall (12.9 per cent in the West Bank and 15 per cent in Gaza), has been partial and slow: in 2021, GDP per capita growth was estimated to reach 4.3 per cent (5 per cent in the West Bank and 0.4 per cent in Gaza). The World Bank estimated that real GDP growth is expected to reach 3.7 per cent in 2022. Economic productivity has not returned to pre-pandemic levels and the fiscal condition of the Palestinian Authority remained precarious. While the Palestinian Authority's revenues have recently improved, expenditure continues to grow and adequate budget support from donors has not been forthcoming, hindering the Palestinian Authority's ability to address Palestinian development challenges.

21. The overall unemployment rate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was 26.4 per cent in 2021 (16.9 per cent in the West Bank and 44.7 per cent in Gaza). The participation of women in the labour force remains among the lowest in the world, at 16.1 per cent. Youth unemployment remains high, with stark regional differences (78.8 per cent in the Gaza Strip and 35.6 per cent in the West Bank).

22. Challenges related to the protracted Israeli occupation, including restrictions on the movement of goods and people, constraints on foreign trade and the lack of Palestinian access to key productive resources, continued to have a detrimental impact on the capacity of the Palestinian economy to absorb new labour market entrants, which drives the high unemployment rates.

23. During the reporting period, Israel eased some access and movement restrictions on Palestinians. This contributed to a rise in economic activity in the West Bank and Gaza and increased integration between the two economies. As at 27 March 2022, Israel had approved the issuance of some 20,000 permits for Palestinians in Gaza to enter Israel, mostly to work in construction and agriculture. About 11,500 permits have been issued so far. In total, the number of Palestinians working in Israel and the settlements, including workers from the West Bank, increased significantly, reaching about 153,000 workers in the fourth quarter of 2021, of whom 22,400 worked in the settlements.

Humanitarian developments

24. According to the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan, the number of food-insecure people is estimated at 1.75 million. A multisectoral needs assessment is being undertaken to provide updated figures on food insecurity and the impact of multilayered protracted crises, including the escalation in May 2021 and the COVID-19 pandemic. The World Food Programme (WFP) estimated that several groups became vulnerable and food-insecure as a result of the escalation, including 2,000 internally displaced families, 20,000 labourers who lost their income, many owners of economic facilities and farming communities.

25. In the reporting period, a total of 342 Palestinians, including 82 children and 43 women, were killed by Israeli forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory – a marked increase from the previous reporting period, when 19 deaths and 1,662 injuries were reported. The vast majority were killed during the escalation in Gaza in May 2021, including at least 130 civilians. A total of 20,772 Palestinians were injured, including 1,208 by live ammunition, 4,245 by rubber bullets and 12,316 by tear gas inhalation. All injuries required medical treatment. On at least 580 occasions, assailants believed or known to be Israeli settlers either killed or injured Palestinians (3 fatalities and 192 injuries in 133 incidents) or damaged or stole their property (447 incidents), the highest numbers recorded in five years. In the reporting period, there were 16 Israelis killed: 9 during the escalation of hostilities in May 2021 by rockets fired from Gaza into Israel (an additional 3 foreigners were also killed during the hostilities); 1 Israeli soldier was killed during a demonstration near the perimeter fence with Gaza; 3 Israelis (and 2 additional foreigners) were killed in a shooting attack carried out by a Palestinian on 29 March 2022; and 3 Israelis (1 soldier and 2 civilians) were killed by Palestinians in the West Bank. There were 179 Israelis injured, including 16 women and 9 children.

26. The demolition of Palestinian residential, livelihood and service infrastructure in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continued during the reporting period. The Israeli authorities demolished, seized or forced the demolition of 813 Palestinian structures across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, including 145 donor-funded structures, citing the absence of Israeli-issued building permits, which are almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain. The number is approximately 20 per cent lower than in the previous reporting period.

Movement, humanitarian access and operational space

27. Humanitarian operations in the West Bank continued to be hampered by the imposition by Israel of physical obstacles (such as the barrier, checkpoints, roadblocks and gates) and administrative barriers (such as the building permit regime). These restrictions affect access to East Jerusalem and other areas between the barrier and the Green Line. Restrictions on Palestinian access to land and resources, in particular in Area C, continued to be a concern.

28. In the reporting period, 169,721 people departed from Gaza through the Erez crossing, a considerable increase from the previous reporting period (10,801), when the crossing was largely closed owing to COVID-19 restrictions. Similarly, the Rafah crossing recorded about 115,602 exits during the reporting period, which was also much higher than in the previous reporting period (25,400).

29. Kerem Shalom remained the primary crossing for the movement of commodities to and from Gaza. On average, 6,517 truckloads of goods entered Gaza per month during the reporting period, less than the monthly average in the previous reporting period (8,016). An average of 413 trucks per month exited Gaza, mostly to West Bank markets, which is significantly higher than the monthly average in the previous reporting period (291).

30. The fishing zone off the Gaza coast largely remained at 15 nautical miles in the south and 6 in the north, but was occasionally expanded and restricted, and sometimes completely closed, during 2021, including during the escalation in May. These and other restrictions were imposed by Israel, citing security concerns.

Barrier

31. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [ES-10/17](#), continued its outreach and claim intake activities to “serve as a

record, in documentary form, of the damage caused to all natural and legal persons concerned as a result of the construction of the wall by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem". Since the establishment of the Register in December 2007, more than 73,200 claims and over 1.5 million supporting documents have been collected in all nine governorates and in 269 of the 271 Palestinian communities affected by the constructed section of the wall. In the reporting period, Palestinian farmers continued to face difficulties in obtaining Israeli authorization to access their land in restricted areas behind the barrier in the "seam zone".

III. United Nations response

A. Human and social development

32. The United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Some of that assistance was targeted at Palestinian individuals and communities in areas beyond the reach of the Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and Area C, in the occupied West Bank, and Gaza. The United Nations focused its efforts on the most vulnerable segments of the population.

Education

33. UNRWA provided free primary education to 291,100 students in 278 elementary and preparatory schools in Gaza (140,492 girls and 150,608 boys) and to 46,066 students in 96 elementary and preparatory schools in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem (27,657 girls and 18,408 boys).

34. Technical and vocational education and training was provided to over 1,800 students in Gaza and 969 students in the West Bank through two vocational training centres. In addition, 696 students enrolled in the UNRWA Education Science Faculty for teacher training in the West Bank.

35. In Gaza, UNRWA constructed 2 new schools and rehabilitated another 110 as part of routine maintenance.

36. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported the Ministry of Education in improving access to quality, safe and inclusive learning opportunities.

37. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported improved access to education for over 53,836 students at 58 schools in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, including installing renewable energy in 3 schools in Gaza. Some 8,000 higher education students benefited from improved learning environments because of the rehabilitation of Al-Quds University. In Gaza, 234 young people completed their academic studies with Al Fakhoora scholarships and 244 alumni received internships and training in the private sector.

38. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) conducted training on educational material to be broadcast on the Palestinian channel Educational TV. UNESCO educational activities on artificial intelligence and coding reached 500 students in the West Bank and Gaza.

39. In Gaza, the Mine Action Service provided training to over 36,000 persons at risk of being harmed by explosive remnants of war. The Service continues to provide support regarding the explosive ordnance disposal requirements of all United Nations school facilities in Gaza. Following the escalation in May 2021, it declared 9 out of 16 deep buried bomb sites clear in Gaza.

Health

40. The World Health Organization (WHO) continued to promote universal health coverage and the right to health through the strengthening of the health-care system, the monitoring of barriers to health-care access and attacks against health-care facilities, and advocacy to address policies and practices affecting the health rights of Palestinians. The organization continued its work to enhance information systems, build capacities through the implementation of a regional framework for action and undertook assessments of the management and performance of the primary health-care system.

41. WHO supported the implementation of a system-strengthening approach to reduce neonatal mortality. Early essential newborn care has been put in place in five government hospitals and four non-governmental maternity hospitals in Gaza. WHO worked with the Ministry of Health to develop and implement standard operating procedures for the prevention and control of infections for pregnant women and newborns.

42. WHO and UNICEF supported the Government of Palestine national vaccination campaign by facilitating the provision of nine consignments of COVID-19 vaccine doses through the global COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility Advance Market Commitment. In total, over 1.7 million people have been fully vaccinated, and 2 million people have received at least one dose of vaccine in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

43. In Gaza, UNRWA conducted approximately 2.7 million face-to-face primary health-care patient consultations at its 22 health-care facilities and over 860,000 telemedicine consultations. In the West Bank, 895,000 consultations were provided at its 43 health-care facilities.

44. UNRWA provided 14,065 Palestine refugees in Gaza with secondary and tertiary health-care subsidies and continued to prioritize care for the 102,993 patients in Gaza with non-communicable diseases.

45. With support from UNICEF, WHO and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), nearly 8,000 newborns benefited from upgraded maternal and neonatal health-care services, while 14 maternity and neonatal units were equipped with essential drugs and equipment. Some 15,500 mothers and newborns continued to access improved maternity and neonatal health-care services in Gaza.

46. UNICEF supported the provision of early interventions for high-risk pregnant and lactating women and children with developmental delays and disabilities, with over 630 children benefiting from specialized services.

47. UNFPA provided capacity development for health-care providers on essential sexual and reproductive health services. Over 94,500 women, men, young people, boys and girls were provided with available life-saving services, screening and mental health and psychosocial support through mobile clinics, subsidies, nurse navigators, midwifery-led counselling home visits and referrals.

48. UNFPA supported a total of 11,970 beneficiaries with mental health and psychosocial support, case management and legal consultation services.

49. UNDP enhanced the provision of essential health services to vulnerable communities across the West Bank, establishing local hospital boards and installing vital equipment and health-care units, including a blood bank, a comprehensive microbiological unit, incubators and a digital radiography device.

50. In Gaza, UNDP contributed to the provision of essential medical supplies and consumables as well as fuel for the operation of Ministry of Health facilities and local municipalities.

51. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) supported the procurement and delivery of medical equipment and supplies required for enhancing laboratory testing capacity at Al Makassed hospital in East Jerusalem and health facilities in Gaza.

Water and sanitation

52. UNICEF continued with the construction of the second phase of the desalination plant in Gaza to provide additional access to safely managed water for 175,000 people. The first phase remained operational throughout the year, maintaining uninterrupted water production for 76,000 people.

53. In the West Bank, UNICEF initiated the upgrade and operation of the water network, aimed at reaching 76,200 people with safe access to water.

54. UNICEF rehabilitated and upgraded water and sanitation facilities in 20 schools, benefiting nearly 50,000 children.

55. UNDP supported the Palestinian Water Authority in developing a water supply system to meet current water demands at the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park. It also strengthened solid waste and wastewater management and promoted the transition to renewable energy systems in Gaza and the Jordan Valley.

56. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported the installation of an electromagnetic water desalination system in Jericho to enable the desalination and reuse of around 800 m³ of high-salinity groundwater daily to irrigate agricultural land.

57. The Mine Action Service conducted explosive remnants of war risk assessments for water projects implemented by UNICEF and the Office of the Quartet, with risk assessments for 72,640 m² of land, which benefited vital infrastructure projects.

Employment

58. UNDP generated 3,968 employment opportunities for workers through investments in 34 social infrastructure projects. In addition, 132 permanent jobs were created.

59. UNDP provided technical support for the establishment of a national help desk, which reached around 3,000 micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, UNDP provided financial support to 126 micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises. It also strengthened the resilience of 612 small-scale farmers and 13 cooperatives in the Jordan Valley by providing necessary agricultural inputs.

60. The International Labour Organization (ILO) supported the launch and implementation of the first national employment strategy, which is aimed at addressing labour market challenges and promoting policy coherence.

61. ILO supported the National Wages Committee deliberations for adjustments to the minimum wage, which led to an increase in the national minimum wage from 1,450 to 1,880 Israeli shekels per month as from January 2022 (equivalent to approximately \$432 and \$561, respectively).

62. ILO supported the development of an occupational safety and health national profile. It also supported the Ministry of Labour in developing occupational safety and health and national labour inspection policies and strategies and the national reporting mechanism for occupational injuries and diseases.

63. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) strengthened the capacity of 24 stakeholders in the economic sector to provide gender and women's economic empowerment services to women workers, business owners and entrepreneurs.

64. FAO provided co-investment support to 205 initiatives totalling \$5.2 million. In addition, it supported 250 young people in pursuing internship opportunities in the agrifood sector.

65. UNESCO supported the Ministry of Labour and other stakeholders in carrying out a comprehensive needs assessment and gap analysis to evaluate the existing labour management information system and other related subsystems.

Targeted social protection

66. In Gaza, UNRWA continued to provide quarterly food baskets to more than 1 million refugees, including 100,000 social safety net recipients. Another 36,129 beneficiaries in the West Bank were assisted through cash-based transfers.

67. UN-Women and UNFPA supported the Ministry of Social Development in reviewing the national referral system for women victims and survivors of gender-based violence and those at risk of violence.

68. WFP continued to support the Palestinian Authority's social safety net programme through cash-based transfers and in-kind food distribution for around 350,000 people and injected approximately \$16 million each month into the local economy.

69. Through its cash-based transfers platforms, WFP supported 5,300 vulnerable women in purchasing food, personal and household hygiene products from its 300 contracted shops across Gaza and the West Bank.

70. UNFPA provided 2,347 vulnerable women with vouchers and cash assistance to respond to the urgent needs of vulnerable families and women at risk of gender-based violence in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

71. UNOPS supported the procurement and delivery of 300 walkers and 160 wheelchairs to vulnerable elderly people and people with disabilities.

Culture

72. UNESCO inaugurated the Old Hebron Museum and launched the first Palestinian Virtual Museum of Archaeological Objects, while continuing to supervise the renovation works in the Riwaya Museum in Bethlehem.

73. UNESCO also conducted a comprehensive study on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on culture, exploring the possibility of investing in digital technologies as an alternate way to foster Palestinian culture in times of emergency.

Food security and agriculture

74. FAO supported 13 farmers' and women's cooperatives with post-harvest and food processing machines and equipment, reaching 1,339 members of cooperatives. In addition, it supported the establishment of two post-harvest cold storage facilities in the West Bank.

75. FAO supported the establishment of one farmers market in the West Bank in support of 116 cooperatives and their members.

76. FAO continued the installation of an offshore marine cage in Gaza waters that will be owned by the local community, as part of efforts to strengthen the resilience

of fishing communities. Fingerlings and fish feed were procured to launch the first production cycle.

77. WFP supported 6,000 vulnerable people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory with 650 climate-resilient agricultural assets to improve their immediate food security and nutritional needs.

Human rights, women, children and youth

78. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) continued to promote the implementation of United Nations international human rights standards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and advocated for their integration into the national legal system. OHCHR developed the capacity of the national human rights institution and civil society organizations to engage with United Nations treaty body mechanisms in order to strengthen their monitoring, parallel reporting and follow-up of the implementation of treaty body recommendations by the Government of Palestine.

79. OHCHR, in cooperation with the Central Elections Commission, organized activities on the participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in elections from a human rights perspective.

80. UNICEF continued to support the strengthening of comprehensive child protection systems, including the launch of the national intersectoral strategy on violence against children.

81. UNICEF supported 30,500 children with child protection, mental health and psychosocial services. Of those reached, over 3,000 children accessed case management services. Structured psychosocial services reached over 30,000 caregivers.

82. UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women provided access to legal aid services for 15,328 people. A total of 609 beneficiaries attended legal literacy awareness sessions in marginalized areas in the Gaza Strip. A total of 80 female inmates in the West Bank and Gaza accessed psychosocial support.

83. UN-Women supported the Ministry of Women's Affairs in strengthening the national action plan against gender-based violence, which included the provision of health and counselling services to women and girls, enhancing national capacity to combat gender-based violence and strengthening the national referral system.

84. UN-Women supported the development of a hotline to provide support to women, children and family members in need, including counselling and legal assistance. In addition, it supported the establishment of the first e-service for the automation of alimony payments.

85. UNFPA continued to support youth-friendly health services in Palestinian universities, benefiting 42,379 young people. The first Arabic language application for young people on sexual and reproductive health topics was launched and a helpline was established to provide mental health and psychosocial support for young people.

86. In the West Bank, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) supported media campaigns to raise awareness of the services available to women victims of violence, reaching 600,000 views.

87. UNODC raised awareness of crime prevention through sports for 2,800 adolescents and young people. In addition, it trained 39 sports instructors on promoting sports as a means to prevent crime, violence and drug use, and provided 30 schools with sports equipment.

88. In Gaza, the Mine Action Service implemented a community-based resilience training initiative focusing on the empowerment of women, which reached 4,424 individuals, of whom 3,514 were women.

89. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided counselling and case management services for 239 people, 42 of whom were survivors of gender-based violence. An additional 118 cases were referred to external services. Furthermore, 662 individuals were provided with counselling sessions.

90. In Gaza, UNRWA provided mental health and psychosocial support services to 9,144 Palestine refugees and referred 1,300 Palestine refugee women to legal counsellors. School counsellors provided group counselling to 3,135 children and individual counselling to 11,900 students.

91. UNESCO conducted training sessions for journalists on election coverage, fact-checking and professional reporting. UNESCO and UN-Women released radio episodes on the role of women in the media.

92. ILO supported the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions in forming a coalition with members of civil society and sectoral unions to advocate for improved working conditions and equal labour rights among men and women.

Environment, housing and urban development

93. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) inaugurated the rehabilitated Dar Al-Consul complex in the Old City of Jerusalem. The rehabilitation included 36 residential units, five community courtyards and a ground floor area of more than 1,200 m².

94. In Gaza, UN-Habitat inaugurated a safe and inclusive public space for women, young people, children and persons with disabilities, equipping it with accessible facilities. Innovative tools, including a computer game, were applied to engage the local community.

95. UN-Habitat, in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government and the Land and Water Settlement Commission, supported spatial planning and the mapping of land rights for Palestinian communities in the West Bank.

96. In Gaza, UNDP initiated the development of a solar energy system at the Khan Younis wastewater treatment plant. Within this intervention, 408 women and schoolgirls participated in awareness-raising workshops on the best practices of hygiene and water-related issues.

97. UNDP continued to support the master plan for Wadi Gaza by providing technical assistance in the formulation of the joint service council of Wadi Gaza, including its functional and operational structure.

B. United Nations system emergency assistance

98. An estimated 2.1 million Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory needed humanitarian assistance. Given remaining funding gaps, humanitarian agencies continued to streamline and prioritize activities to target the maximum number of vulnerable people in a highly constrained context. To that end, they had three priorities during the reporting period: protecting civilians; providing basic services and better access to resources to enhance livelihoods; and supporting vulnerable Palestinians in coping with the protracted crisis. Humanitarian agencies continued to implement measures to mitigate the negative impact of the ongoing pandemic, with a continued emphasis on supporting the most vulnerable people.

Emergency agriculture support

99. FAO supported 948 fishers and crop farmers in Gaza with solar energy systems to maintain fishery production and irrigate crops, ensuring the continuous production of food. In the West Bank, FAO installed solar energy systems at post-harvest and food processing facilities and nurseries, benefiting 2,338 people, and supported the distribution of livestock inputs to 900 households.

100. In response to the escalation of hostilities in May 2021, FAO provided 4,452 herders and poultry farmers in Gaza with fodder to sustain their livelihoods.

101. UN-Habitat supported the creation of urban agricultural plots in the West Bank to strengthen livelihoods and food security for vulnerable communities affected by the pandemic, with a focus on the elderly.

Emergency food support

102. UNRWA supported 1,140,793 beneficiaries with in-kind emergency food assistance in Gaza. It introduced a unified food basket in 2021 for all eligible beneficiaries, covering 50 per cent of their daily caloric needs.

103. In the West Bank, UNRWA, in partnership with WFP, provided in-kind emergency food assistance to over 38,000 members of Bedouin communities. A further 23,903 food-insecure individuals received cash assistance from UNRWA. In addition, it ensured critical support for families in quarantine and isolated communities by providing food parcels to 22,456 individuals.

104. WFP provided food assistance to 478,431 people through electronic vouchers, multi-purpose cash assistance and in-kind food parcels to improve the nutrition and well-being of severely food-insecure and vulnerable Palestinians. This also included the scaling-up of temporary emergency electronic food voucher assistance following the escalation in May 2021.

105. In response to the escalation, WFP provided ready-to-eat food items to 318 internally displaced people residing at two UNRWA-designated emergency shelters. It also provided emergency multi-purpose cash assistance for 24,000 people.

Emergency education support

106. In Gaza, UNICEF facilitated safe access to school for 46,200 children with the rehabilitation of 20 schools. The rehabilitation of an additional 26 schools is ongoing. Over 74,000 vulnerable children received school materials.

107. UNICEF reached 4,300 children in 1,160 households with a child-sensitive cash transfer component, to ensure that the most vulnerable conflict-affected children are able to continue their studies and access essential services.

108. In response to the pandemic, UNRWA adopted a hybrid learning modality in its schools, employing a combination of face-to-face classroom teaching and online instruction. In the West Bank, approximately 32,200 students accessed remote learning during periods of school closures. In Gaza, face-to-face learning was resumed in August 2021.

109. Following the escalation of May 2021, 104 UNRWA schools were rehabilitated in Gaza.

Emergency health support

110. WHO provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Health to strengthen the health system response to the pandemic. Activities included the establishment of

respiratory triage centres and quarantine, isolation and treatment facilities; and the implementation of good practices for disease surveillance, contact tracing, laboratory diagnosis, infection prevention and control, clinical management of critical cases, and respiratory triage through the training of front-line workers and the provision of the latest evidence-based guidance.

111. WHO responded to the escalation in May 2021 by providing immediate trauma and first aid supplies to address the urgent need for essential medical supplies.

112. WHO continued to support pre-hospital response services, emergency departments, acute surgical capacities and the provision of limb-saving and limb reconstruction surgery and treatment, responding to long-term needs from injuries sustained during demonstrations of the Great March of Return in Gaza in 2018–2019 and the escalation in May 2021.

113. WHO and UNICEF provided support to the Ministry of Health on supplementary immunization activities when cases of polio were detected in neighbouring Israel.

114. UNICEF provided over 55,000 children and adolescents with recreational activities to support mental health and well-being. Around 56,000 people in Gaza and the West Bank, including the most vulnerable pregnant and lactating women and children under five, benefited from essential life-saving services.

115. In Gaza, UNRWA provided secondary or tertiary care to 9,684 patients, and an additional 4,700 patients were provided with life-saving medicines.

116. In the West Bank, UNRWA resumed all in-person services at its health centres and expanded its mobile health services to five additional remote communities in Area C, providing health access to 54,253 individuals.

117. UNFPA provided access to essential primary health-care services through mobile clinics to an estimated 24,165 people living in Area C of the West Bank.

118. UNFPA, in cooperation with UNICEF and WHO, continued to enhance the skills of 1,366 governmental, non-governmental and UNRWA health professionals in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on life-saving sexual and reproductive health services.

119. UNDP upgraded the medical waste management system in Gaza by constructing a new medical waste management facility, supplied six hospitals and health facilities with essential equipment, conducted training for 5,136 health workers and deployed 1,388 health workers in 121 hospitals.

120. UN-Women strengthened access for vulnerable groups of women to quality multisectoral protection services, including legal aid, psychosocial counselling, health and reproductive health services, awareness-raising on COVID-19 protective measures and gender-based violence services.

Emergency housing support

121. UNOPS continued its support for the reconstruction and repair of houses in Gaza. A total of 1,199 houses were repaired in 2021.

122. In 2021, UNRWA rehabilitated nine substandard shelters in Gaza. Following the escalation in May 2021, 1,292 houses were categorized as totally demolished and in need of reconstruction. The reconstruction was planned to start in April 2022 upon completion of the verification of the caseload and damage assessment.

123. UNRWA provided cash assistance for shelter repair to 6,970 families whose shelters were partially damaged during the escalation in May 2021.

124. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided cash assistance to 259 individuals following the demolition of their homes by the Israeli authorities. Furthermore, 2,785 individuals received cash assistance and referrals to meet their humanitarian needs caused by search and arrest operations by Israeli security forces in Palestine refugee camps.

125. In Gaza, following the escalation of May 2021, UNDP supported rubble removal and reconstruction activities, which led to the rehabilitation of 223 damaged housing units, allowing 1,269 internally displaced people to return home. In addition, 1,998 internally displaced people received transitional shelter cash assistance.

Emergency income generation

126. From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, UNRWA provided short-term job opportunities to 17,366 Palestine refugees in Gaza through cash-for-work interventions generating approximately 1,113,235 workdays.

127. In Gaza, UNDP provided short-term employment opportunities to 4,145 beneficiaries, including 2,205 women, and generated around 499,884 workdays.

Emergency water and sanitation support

128. UNICEF supported 800,000 affected people with improved water and sanitation services through the repair of damaged water and wastewater networks across Gaza.

129. UNRWA continued to provide basic water and sanitation services in all 8 refugee camps in Gaza and 19 refugee camps in the West Bank. In response to the pandemic, it enhanced hygiene and sanitation measures, including the hiring of about 300 cash-for-work sanitation workers in Gaza and around 90 additional workers in the West Bank.

130. UN-Habitat supported solid waste management efforts in Bethlehem Governorate to ensure continuity of the provision of these basic services amid the pandemic, reaching over 60,000 Palestinians.

C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions

131. UNDP partnered with civil society organizations to train and deploy local observers in 371 localities during the municipal elections in the West Bank. It introduced nationally broadcast candidate debates in partnership with media organizations.

132. UNDP handed over the newly constructed Hebron courthouse to the High Judicial Council, as well as the Public Prosecutors Building, which will serve over 359,000 citizens in Hebron Governorate.

133. WFP continued to support the Ministry of Social Development in reforming the national social protection system.

134. WFP, ILO and UNICEF continued to support the capacity strengthening of national systems to include persons with disabilities and older persons.

135. FAO continued to provide technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture to set up a governance system for the national food and nutrition security policy and the national investment plan for food.

136. UNODC continued to support the forensic science laboratory of the Palestinian police and improved the capacity for examining biological evidence in cases of sexual and gender-based violence. In addition, it supported the Anti-Narcotics Administration and correction and rehabilitation centres.

137. UNODC continued to provide technical assistance to the national programme on drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice and supported the revision of a draft law to combat human trafficking in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

138. UNFPA supported the establishment of a new Adolescent Health Unit at the Palestinian Ministry of Health and the update of the national adolescent and youth health strategy to include mental health and psychosocial support and nutrition. UNFPA undertook life-skills and sexual and reproductive health and rights training for teachers, counsellors and 23 out-of-school young people, including some living with disabilities.

139. ILO supported the Ministry of Labour and partners in holding the first tripartite social dialogue conference to address the implications of the pandemic on the labour market and reinforce social dialogue mechanisms.

140. OHCHR worked on promoting the human rights-based approach in planning, programming and data collection through training sessions for the Government of Palestine.

D. Private sector development

141. In 2021, UNRWA provided 3,851 microfinance loans worth \$4.16 million to Palestine clients in Gaza. In the West Bank, it delivered 7,016 loans, valued at \$11 million.

142. ILO supported the strengthening of the Cooperative Work Agency, facilitating the revision of the cooperative legal framework, which resulted in the submission of a new draft law and key by-laws. It also supported capacity-building workshops for Agency staff.

143. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization supported the first acceleration programme to promote clean technology industry innovation. Some 30 start-ups completed the programme and 385 beneficiaries were trained in energy efficiency optimization.

E. Coordination of United Nations assistance

144. Collaboration and coordination between donors and United Nations entities continued under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The humanitarian country team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. The United Nations country team continued to coordinate its development programming with the priorities outlined in the Palestinian National Policy Agenda for the period 2017–2022.

IV. Donor response to the crisis

Budgetary and fiscal support

145. The fiscal condition of the Palestinian Authority remained extremely precarious. Its clearance revenues were transferred routinely throughout the reporting period, which was not the case during the previous two reporting periods. Revenue collections also improved compared with the initial pandemic-related economic downturn. Nonetheless, revenues were insufficient to cover expenditure, which continued to grow. Adequate direct budget support from donors was not forthcoming.

These factors together made it increasingly difficult for the Palestinian Authority to cover its minimum recurrent expenditure and make critical investments in the economy and for the Palestinian people.

146. Apart from direct budget support to the Palestinian Authority, overall donor support to Palestinians has improved since the previous reporting period, due in part to the resumption of support for UNRWA by the United States of America. Nevertheless, donor support to Palestinians remains far below historical averages.

Donor coordination

147. The local aid coordination structure continued as the main forum for government-led coordination of donor-funded development interventions in around 15 sectors.

148. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians held one meeting during the reporting period, in November 2021, and convened a virtual technical expert meeting at the senior official level in July 2021, in the aftermath of the escalation of the conflict in May 2021. The Committee maintained its strong support for urgent humanitarian and economic interventions and for the pandemic response. Donor support contributed to reconstruction in Gaza after the escalation and to the impetus for larger scale development projects. Fuel supplies funded by Qatar for the power plant in Gaza stabilized the electricity supply to Gaza at an average of 12 hours per day in 2021, and cash assistance was provided for around 95,000 vulnerable families in Gaza. Important progress was also made in the construction of critical water and sanitation facilities.

V. Unmet needs

149. The severity of the humanitarian crisis facing the Occupied Palestinian Territory is reflected in the funding requested in the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan and in the number of people targeted. Humanitarian partners are appealing for \$510 million, significantly more than the \$417 million sought in 2021. By March 2022, 89 per cent of the funds requested for the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan had been raised. As at 31 March 2022, approximately 16 per cent of the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan was funded.

150. Following the escalation in May 2021, international contributions to post-conflict reconstruction and recovery in Gaza have been occurring in an ad hoc manner. One year after the end of the conflict, the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan still identifies \$33 million in unmet early recovery needs out of a total of \$95 million.

151. Severe financial challenges continued to constrain UNRWA operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In 2021, the Agency's financial shortfall significantly worsened with the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation as well as the escalation in May. Owing to the funding crisis, critical operations could only be maintained through advances from the UNRWA programme budget, which continues to be chronically underfunded. The Agency's 2022 emergency appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory is currently only 15 per cent funded. There are insufficient financial resources for UNRWA to maintain its job creation programme and food aid until the end of 2022, the food basket accounting for nearly 60 per cent of the food supply in Gaza. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the Agency's financial resources are insufficient to continue to meet the critical health, education and water, sanitation and hygiene needs of Palestine refugees.

VI. Challenges

152. The continued absence of a political process to end the occupation and achieve a viable two-State solution continues to be the largest impediment to Palestinian development. Israeli settlement expansion, demolitions, evictions, closures, access and movement restrictions and other aspects of the protracted military occupation continue to have a severe impact on the humanitarian, social and political life of Palestinians and their ability to exercise their fundamental human rights. Violence and incitement continue to perpetuate mutual fear and suspicion. The internal Palestinian political division also places formidable obstacles to addressing humanitarian needs and restoring a political horizon.

153. The economic recovery from the 2020 crisis has been incomplete and partial: economic productivity has not returned to pre-pandemic levels, and unemployment and poverty are unacceptably high, in particular in the Gaza Strip. With respect to the fiscal situation, the Palestinian Authority's revenues have improved in recent months and expenditure has continued to grow, but adequate budget support from donors has not been forthcoming and most key fiscal reforms remain pending. These factors, together with decreasing funding to the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to the United Nations, pose a further challenge to the provision of development and humanitarian assistance.

VII. Conclusions

154. The operational context for the work of the United Nations during the reporting period was increasingly difficult because of the challenges outlined in the present report. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#), [1860 \(2009\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of an independent, sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace within secure and recognized borders.

155. It is only by realizing the vision of two States living side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition, with Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the State of Palestine, and all final status issues resolved permanently through negotiations, that the legitimate aspirations of both peoples will be achieved.