

AICS

Agenzia Italiana per la
Cooperazione allo Sviluppo

Health Cooperation Programme

Italy:

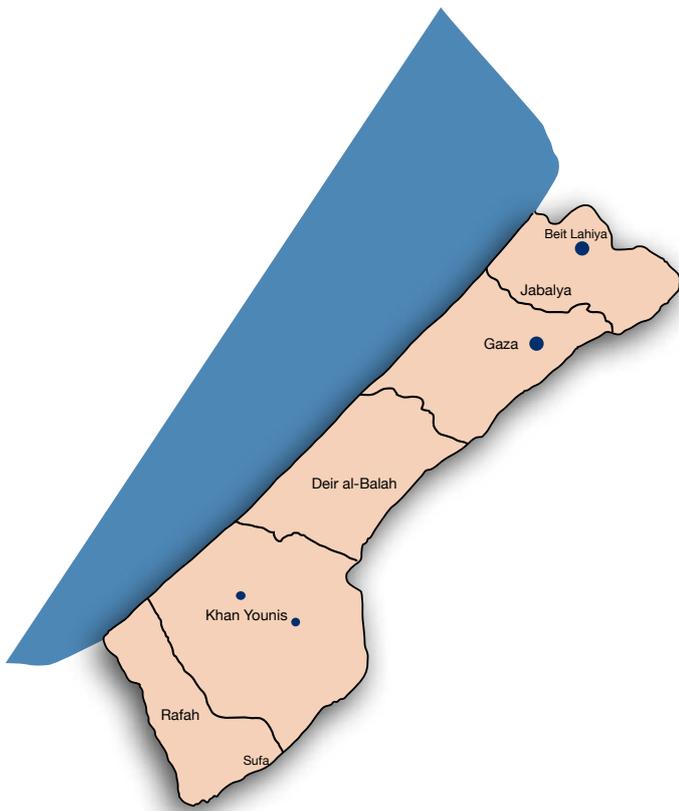
Lead Donor of EU
Member States in
the Health Sector
in Palestine



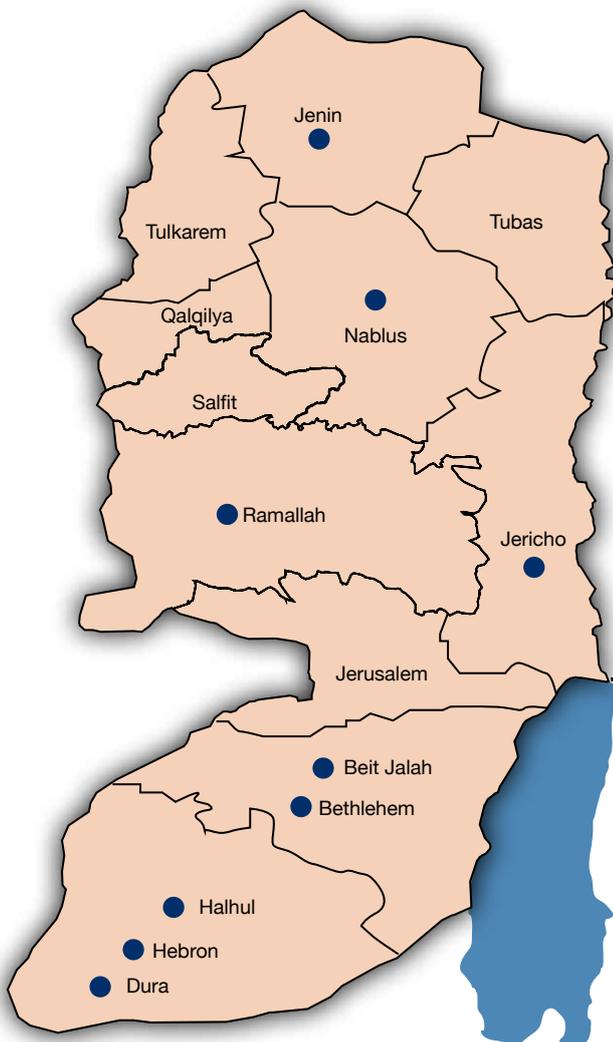
Italian Development Cooperation 2013-2016

■ Euro 10 M as Soft Loan ■ Euro 14.061 M as Grant





Beit Lahiya	Vento di Terra Nutrition program at Um al Nasser pre-primary school Completed (90.000,32 Euro)
Gaza City	AISPO Support to Shifa Hospital Ongoing (179.743,72 Euro)
Khan Younis	Terre des Hommes Support to psychosocial emergency Completed (145.470,00 Euro) COSPE Support to the European Gaza Hospital Ongoing (245.355,00 Euro)



Jenin Jericho Bethlehem Nablus Hebron Beit Jalah Birzeit	Second Univeristy of Naples -AISPO Training of MoH staff in endo-laparoscopic technics Ongoing (747.200,00 Euro)
Ramallah	POSIT Strengthening of the Primary Health-care System Ongoing (Euro 5.450 M)
Bethlehem	Fondazione Giovanni Paolo II Support the rehabilitation of deaf patients Ongoing (476.203,00 Euro)
Hebron	DI-SVI Providing assistance to the Bedouin communities in Area C through mobile clinics Ongoing (478.000,00 Euro) Credit Line Construction of two hospitals in Halhul and Dura Ongoing (Euro 10 M)

Palestine: Health Profile

The Palestinian population is young (50% less than 18 years old) with a yearly growth rate of 2.9% (2.6% in the West Bank and 3.4% in Gaza). It is going through a demographic and epidemiological transition with an increase in life expectancy (74.7 years for women and 71.8 years for men in 2014); decrease in both child mortality (12.6 out of 1,000) and maternal mortality (25 out of 1,000); growth of chronic non-communicable diseases (cardiovascular, cancer, respiratory, and diabetes) which are responsible for more than 70% of general mortality. Vaccination programs (100% coverage) and healthcare services for pregnancy and birth (almost 100% of women give birth with health professionals) have allowed good control of infectious diseases and prenatal conditions.

Behavioural risk factors (smoking, unhealthy diet rich with salt, sugar and animal fats, physical inactivity) social factors (poverty and high unemployment) and psychosocial stress linked to violence and political situation favour the growth of chronic disease. These factors also are linked to mental illnesses with high prevalence of drug addiction and post-traumatic stress disorder, especially in Gaza.

According to the World Food Program, one-third of the Palestinian population is in a state of food insecurity and the agency assists approximately 500,000 people with programs of nutritional support. In Gaza, UNRWA provides food aid to half the population living there.

The fragmentation of the health system from the geographic and political points of view (Gaza and West Bank, in turn subdivided into enclaves) and the distribution of services (Ministry of Health; UNRWA—the United Nations agency which provides health and education services to the refugees who make up half of the population of Gaza and one-third of the West Bank; private for profit and non-profit NGOs; the military) cause the overall inefficiency of the system.

The Ministry of Health is the main provider of treatment services (with more than 470 centres in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip) and hospital services. Nevertheless in 2014 more than 80,000 patients were transferred outside the public system for diagnosis confirmation or treatment, especially in specialized departments in other Palestinian hospitals (the network of hospitals in East Jerusalem and private ones in the West Bank) or abroad (above all in Israel). The cost of these medical referrals amounts to \$148 M (2014) and represents almost one-third of the budget and more than half of the current debt of the Ministry of Health. Part of this debt is periodically paid off by donors (the European Union and Italy through the specific PEGASE mechanism).

The present situation of Gaza and the several humanitarian crisis of recent years cause difficulty in access to treatment, which are dependent on permits issued by the Israeli authorities, and a state of “chronic” emergency due to the lack of essential medicines and health equipment. Even the population of Area C in the West Bank (under complete Israeli control), composed in large part of Bedouin communities,

has great difficulties with access to health services, to date provided by way of mobile clinics.

Palestinian health expenditures in total amount to \$1.3 billion (10.9% of GDP), with a per capita spending of \$304 (2013). 43.3% of total health expenditures are paid for by the government while family expenditures (out-of-pocket) are 37.7%— a high rate which exposes people to the risk of elevated expenditures for medical treatments and impoverishes the most vulnerable groups and compromises the equity of the system.

The government insurance scheme, obligatory for civil servants and their families, covers about half the population of West Bank and all of Gaza for free. The government insurance scheme does not guarantee efficiency (aggravated as it is by a strong imbalance between income and expenditures, which was \$457 M in 2012), nor universal coverage nor the sharing of risk among the different socio-economic groups of the population and between urban and rural areas.

The unsustainable model of the Palestinian economy heavily dependent on international aid (according to the World Bank) and the permanent deficit gap of the Ministry of Health cause frequent lack of essential medicines and consumables in public health facilities. Moreover, the costs of buying medicines are higher than in neighbouring countries because of limits on imports imposed by ongoing agreements with Israel which do not authorize the radiotherapy and diagnostics with radioactive isotopes.

The low overall quality of the healthcare system is a result of not only the difficulty of access to services caused by the limitations on movement and the difficulty in obtaining necessary permissions for medical referrals, but also the insufficiency of equipment and professional competence at various levels of the system (primary healthcare and hospitals), as well as the common dual of government health professionals, which jeopardizes the continuity of care needed for clinical management of chronic illnesses.



The role of the Italian Cooperation in the Health Sector

For many years, the Italian Cooperation has fulfilled a prominent role among donors to the health sector. Italy is presently the Lead Donor in the health sector under the division of labour by EU Member States. This function allows Italy, with the Ministry of Health, to advance the political dialogue relative to the objectives of public health and health policy defined together with European partners.

Italian assistance to the Palestinian health sector for 2012-2015 takes place through various intervention channels (bilateral, loans, multilateral, projects implemented by NGOs and emergency programmes) and has a total value of Euro 22.5 M (12.5 M as grants and 10 M as loans).

Italian health cooperation operates in the sector of primary healthcare with the POSIT project, for Euro 5.45 M over three years, which has the objective of prevention and control of chronic non communicable diseases (NCDs); women's health with particular reference to early diagnosis of breast cancer; the development of community mental health and psychosocial rehabilitation; mainstreaming of disability; and strengthening of emergency services. Besides the activities of training and communication in public health, a plan for development of infrastructure for primary healthcare is being developed.

Also in the hospital sector the Italian Cooperation is active with the SUN-Laparoscopy project, implemented by the Second University of Naples, aiming to develop mini-invasive surgery techniques in public Palestinian hospitals from 2013-2016. It has a total budget of Euro 1 Million, Euro 747.000,00 of which was contributed by the Italian Development Cooperation. With the involvement of Palestinian universities, the project has enabled the insertion of laparoscopic surgery in the training curriculum of the school of specialization in general surgery, guaranteeing the development of local skills and the sustainability of the initiative. To carry out the training activity in laparoscopic surgery the project furnished state of the art instruments, now located in the training centre in Jericho Hospital.

In addition, construction has been approved for 2 new hospitals in the Governorate of Hebron, in Halhoul and Dura, financed with a loan of Euro 10 M. This initiative is intended to empower the hospital network in one of the districts in most need of hospital beds and reduce the overcrowding of the referral hospital of Hebron while reducing the number of medical referral outside the public health system.

Through a bilateral channel (with the WHO) an important strategic initiative worth Euro 280.000,00 is being developed. It aims at the development of an information system based on the hospital discharge form, which once in place will allow the enabling a case - based hospital payment system, to contribute to the accreditation process for hospital facilities and to carry out evaluations of quality and appropriateness of admissions.

Concerning the health sector various projects have been implemented by Italian NGOs and emergency programmes, among which are: Terres des Hommes (improving the responsiveness of basic health services concerning health and psychosocial emergency in the Gaza Strip); DISVI (providing assistance to the Bedouin communities in Area C through mobile clinics); Vento di Terra (for nutrition and child health in the Gaza Strip); COSPE (for rehabilitation of services of the European Gaza Hospital of Khan Yunis in Gaza); and AISPO (support for the health sector in the Gaza Strip).

During the emergency in Gaza in the summer of 2014, Italy directly financed the Palestinian Ministry of Health, UNRWA and the WHO in order to supply primary goods, medicines, medical equipment and emergency shelter units, for a total value of approximately Euro 428.000,00.

In addition, for the period 2013-2016, the Italian Cooperation has approved other initiatives implemented by Italian NGOs in the health sector for an amount of Euro 954.203,00 among which are: DISVI (strengthening emergency services in Area C of the West Bank) and the John Paul II Foundation in Bethlehem (supporting prevention, diagnosis, treatment, instruction and rehabilitation for people with hearing loss in Palestine).



Strengthening the Primary Health Care System: Euro 6.197 M



Strengthening the Primary Health Care System

Country
Palestine

Total funds Euro 5.45 M as follows:

- Euro 2.05 M as local funds
- Euro 3.4 M as “budget support”

Millennium Goals

O3; O4/A; O5/A; O5/B

Duration

36 months

Partners

- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Health

General objective

The project aims at strengthening the primary care system within the family medicine framework, through the construction of new facilities, the provision of medical equipment, the improvement of MoH staff capability by means of a well-structured training programme, and information/advocacy campaigns.

Specific objectives

- Facilitating access to emergency, obstetrics and public health services
- Improving the quality of services provided for reproductive and women’s health, including gender-based violence
- Strengthening the services for prevention, control and clinical management of chronic non-communicable diseases
- Strengthening of community mental health services aimed at psychosocial rehabilitation
- Contributing to the prevention of disabilities, and improving accessibility of health services for people with disabilities
- Supporting the improvement of aid effectiveness, and donor coordination

Direct beneficiaries

The total population of the West Bank (2.650.000) and Gaza (1.600.000) will benefit from the expected improvement of primary healthcare services, with particular emphasis on the poorest and most vulnerable groups.



Sun-Laparoscopy

Country
Palestine

Total funds

Euro 747. 200,00

Millennium Goals

O3; O4; O5

Duration

36 months

Implementing body

- Second University Naples (SUN)

Partners

- Palestinian Ministry of Health (MoH)
- Directorate general of the MoH
- Senior management of “Rafidia” hospital, Nablus
- Senior management of “Alia” hospital, Hebron
- Senior management of Jenin hospital
- Senior management of Jericho hospital
- Senior management of Beit Jalah hospital
- Al Najah University, Nablus
- Faculties of nursing, Hebron University and Birzeit University

General objective

Improving the health status of the Palestinian population of Palestine by strengthening diagnostic and therapeutic capabilities of MoH hospitals

Specific objectives

- Organization of certified training courses aimed at improving diagnostic and curative services through minimally invasive surgery (Laparoscopy).
- Replication and diffusion of laparoscopic surgery and endoscopic techniques in selected MoH hospitals (Jenin, Jericho, Beit Jalah, Nablus, Hebron)

Direct beneficiaries

Patients who will benefit from new diagnostic and therapeutic services, plus about 50 health professionals (medical specialists, residents, technicians and non-medical personnel) who will acquire new skills through theoretical and practical training sessions in Palestine and in Italy, complying with internationally agreed guidelines.



Soft Loan Channel: Euro 10 M



Strengthening of the hospital network in Hebron Governorate

Country

Palestine

Total funds

Euro 10.12 M as follows:

- Euro 10 M as soft loan
- Euro 120.000,00 as grant (technical assistance)

Millennium Goals

O4 / A; O5 / A

Duration

24 months

Partners

- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Finance
- Directorates of Public Health of Hebron Governorate

General objective

The project aims to strengthen the hospital care system in the Hebron Governorate through the construction of two new hospitals in Halhoul and Dura with Emergency Room services, departments of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatrics, General Surgery, Internal Medicine and several specialized OPDs (outpatient departments).

The new facilities will increase the accessibility of the population to hospital care and will reduce the workload of the only public hospital in the city of Hebron, facilitating its development towards higher specialization.

Specific objectives

- Facilitating access in the southern West Bank to a wide range of clinical services: ER, obstetrics and gynaecology, medicine, paediatrics and surgery, improving at the same time the quality of care
- Strengthening the role of Italy as lead donor within the health sector

Direct beneficiaries

The population of the Hebron Governorate (670,000 inhabitants) will be the main beneficiary of this initiative.





Emergency Programme 2013-2014

The programme "Emergency Initiative to support vulnerable Palestinian population living in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank (Area C) and East Jerusalem" began in November 2013 and ended in November 2014 (AID 10042)

The programme, of a total amount of Euro 1.5 M, allocated **Euro 362.000,00** (24%) to the health sector in two areas of Palestine: Gaza Strip and Area C.



Country

Palestine (Area C)

Title

Strengthening primary care services of the Directorate of Health of South Hebron in favour of the Bedouins living in Area C, with particular emphasis on the health of women of reproductive age

Duration

8 months

Total funds

Euro 126.500,00

Partners

- Ministry of Health

General objective

- Increase the access of the Bedouin communities living in the District of South Hebron to basic and specialized health services, through a system of mobile clinics

Specific objectives

- Improve access for women to the reproductive health care system
- Ensure adequate medical care through mobile clinics
- Realised three health clinics for women in An Najaida, In-mezil and An Ramadin
- Renovation of three health clinics in Dkaika, Jinba and Suseya (tensile structure)

Direct beneficiaries

- 650-700 users who will benefit from the services provided by the mobile clinic
- 2% of the female population of reproductive age in Area C who will be covered by dedicated services implemented in the three identified clinics





Country

Palestine (Gaza Strip)

Title

Improving the responsiveness of the population and of basic health services in the Gaza Strip to health and psycho-social emergency

Duration

6 months

Total funds

Euro 145.470,00

Partners

- Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS)

General objective

- Improving the quality of psycho-social and health care offered to the most vulnerable children and their families, under chronic and / or acute emergency situations in North Gaza and Khan Younis

Specific objectives

- Develop competence in Psychological First Aid
- Give assistance to the people in North Gaza and Khan Younis suffering from serious illnesses and identified as social cases

Direct beneficiaries

- About 1,500 children 0-14 years old
- About 120 child patients identified as social cases
- 35-40 staff and 15 volunteers of the PMRS
- 35 to 40 staff members of at least 10 organizations, NGOs, and associations involved in the project area
- About 1,000 members of the communities belonging to the project area



Country

Palestine (Gaza Strip)

Title

Nutrition and health for Bedouin children in the Gaza Strip

Duration

6 months

Total funds

Euro 90.000,32

Partners:

- Municipality of Um al Nasser

General objective

- Create a nutrition service, and advocate for basic social and health practices for children of the Um al Nasser Bedouin community, Gaza Strip

Specific objectives

- Construction of an 80 m² building with bioclimatic architecture, to be used as a kitchen
- Provision of high quality raw materials for the nutrition center "Children of the Earth"

Direct beneficiaries

- 120 boys and girls ages 3-6 in the Bedouin community of Um Al Nasser and their families, involved in nutrition and preventive, social and health actions developed in childcare centres
- 60 mothers of Um al Nasser, involved in raising awareness on nutrition and health-related topics
- 10 Bedouin women of the village of Um al Nasser, trained in proper management of a kitchen service
- At least six Bedouin women, hired for the implementation of nutritional activities 20 Bedouin families of Um al Nasser community, benefiting from support and improvements in agriculture
- 1,000 people from Um al Nasser community, targeted by awareness campaigns on nutrition, health and prevention



NGOs Programme



Emergency Programme 2015

The Emergency initiative "Support to the population of the Gaza Strip affected by the humanitarian crisis" started in September 2014 and will end in June 2016 (AID 10387).

The programme, for a total amount of Euro 2 M, of which Euro 425.098,00 (21%) was dedicated to the health sector, was developed entirely in the Gaza Strip, following the severe humanitarian crisis of July-August 2014.



TOGETHER FOR CHANGE

Country

Palestine (Gaza Strip)

Title

Support to the rehabilitation of facilities and services of the European Gaza Hospital in Khan Yunis - Gaza

Duration

8 months

Total funds

Euro 245.355,00

Partners

Palestine Children's Relief Fund (PCRF)

General objective

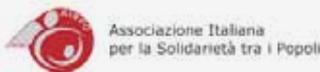
- Contributing to the improvement of services provided by the Palestinian health system, by supporting the European Gaza Hospital

Specific objectives

- Rehabilitation of the European Gaza Hospital in Khan Yunis
- Provision of new medical/non-medical equipments

Direct beneficiaries

All inpatients and outpatients assisted by the European Gaza Hospital. Approximately 50% of the beneficiaries are women and 43% are minors.



Associazione Italiana
per la Solidarietà tra i Popoli

Country

Palestine (Gaza Strip)

Title

Support the health sector in the Gaza Strip

Duration

9 months

Total funds

Euro 179.743,00

Partners

Hospital management of public hospitals

General objective

To contribute to alleviating the impact of the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip

Specific objectives

Provision of essential drugs and consumables

Direct beneficiaries

Patients treated at Shifa public hospital



Country

Palestine (Area C)

Title

Improving the quality of life for the most vulnerable sections of the population in the Southern district of Hebron

Duration

36 months

Total funds

Euro 478.000,00

Partners

Ministry of Health

General objective

- To promote the human development of communities located in the Southern area of Hebron Governorate

Specific objectives

- Improving health and social conditions of the families of the District of South Hebron by improving Service Delivery of Primary Health Care, and health protection of women of reproductive age
- Creating three new first aid centers connected to the "101" emergency service provided by the Red Crescent Society in An Najaida, Al Tuwani and Ar Ramadin
- Strengthening veterinary services for sheep farming, to support income production

Direct beneficiaries

- 1,000 women involved in social and health education
- 1,400 women covered by the three clinics dedicated to the protection of women of reproductive age
- 900 shepherds involved in veterinary education meetings
- 15 shepherds for specific veterinary intervention focused in Dkaika, and their families (400 people)
- 35-40% of the population covered by the health services provided by two mobile clinics
- > 25% of the population, using the three newly opened emergency services

NGOs Promoted Projects

The Italian Cooperation has approved 16 initiatives of Italian NGOs in Palestine for 2013-2016 for a total amount of Euro 16.531.136,36 of which Euro 954.203,00 to be dedicated to the health sector (6%).



Country

Palestine (Bethlehem)

Title

Support to prevention, diagnosis, treatment, education and rehabilitation for people with hearing loss in Palestine

Duration

36 months

Total funds

Euro 476.203,00

Partners

- Ephpheta Paul VI
- Bethlehem Caritas Baby Hospital (CBH)
- Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation
- Birzeit University

General objective

Improvement of the quality of individual and social life of children and young people with severe congenital deafness of Central and Southern West Bank

Specific objectives

Improve quality, quantity and sustainability of services for young people with congenital severe deafness in the central and southern West Bank in the areas of:

- Admission, education and rehabilitation at the Institute Ephpheta
- Diagnosis and treatment at the Caritas Baby Hospital (concerning neuropsychiatric and neonatal audiological screening) and the Arab Society in Beit Jalah Hospital (in the fields of speech therapy and ENT)
- Awareness and information focused on prevention of congenital diseases, with the Ministry of Health

Direct beneficiaries

- 300 students from 4-18 years old with congenital deafness at Ephpheta
- Admission of 50 children and 20 trainees suffering from congenital deafness
- 600 people who will receive hearing aids
- 5,500 patients who will receive more advanced services (estimated number of congenital deaf who will be annually assisted by partner hospitals CBH ASH)

Direct Implementation Projects in the Gaza Strip: Euro 242.895,70



In support to the urgent health emergency activities and in response to the appeal jointly launched by the WHO and the Ministry of Health and UNRWA to the international community requesting urgent provision of drugs and medical equipment for the population in need, Italy intervened in Gaza Strip through direct intervention projects for a total amount of approximately **Euro 242.895,7**.

Moreover, 500 shelter boxes including tents, blankets, ground sheets, kitchen set, dual fuel stove and fuel bottles have been delivered to 500 vulnerable families with the support of ACTED.



Italy is deeply concerned for the humanitarian situation in Gaza and is willing to offer **tangible signs of solidarity to the Palestinian people.**



To those interventions we must add two humanitarian flights:

Humanitarian flight on August 5th, 2014

Provision of 30 tons of emergency supplies including tents, blankets, emergency power generators, drinking water converters and healthcare and hygiene kits valued for an approximate value of **350.000,00 Euro**.

Humanitarian flight on April 16th, 2015

Provision of 3.2 tons of pharmaceuticals. The medicines have been donated by Italian Pharmaceutical Companies through AIFA - Italian National Agency for Drugs - to the Hospitals of Gaza, as a result of an Italian public-private partnership.



Multilateral Channel: Euro 4.76 M

<p>WHO</p> <p>Development of a National Hospital Information System</p> <p>Euro 280.000,00</p>	<p>The project implemented through a soft loan for the construction of two new hospitals in Halhoul and Dura was matched by a multilateral initiative in favour of the WHO, approved on April 21st, 2015 in the amount of Euro 280.000,00. The initiative aims at developing a national hospital information system based on a standardized hospital discharge form, in order to collect key data and provide relevant information on service quality and efficiency. The system represents a cornerstone towards the development of a prospective payment system at hospital level</p>
<p>OCHA</p> <p>Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</p> <p>Euro 300.000,00</p>	<p>Support to multi-donor fund for emergency response, managed by the Agency and called "Emergency Response Fund (ERF)</p>
<p>ICRC</p> <p>International Committee of the Red Cross</p> <p>Euro 200.000,00</p>	<p>Support urgent emergency response implemented by the Committee in collaboration with the Palestinian Red Crescent</p>
<p>UNRWA</p> <p>United Nations Relief and Works Agency</p> <p>Euro 3.98 M</p>	<p>Ensuring food assistance to Palestine refugees in UNRWA' Social Safety Net Programme in Gaza (Euro 2.18 M)</p> <p>Supporting UNRWA Solid Waste Management in Gaza and Improving Water Supply in Jabalia Camp (Euro 1.8 M)</p>



European Union's Mechanism - Pegase Euro 1 M



PEGASE (acronym from Mécanisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l'Aide Socio-Economique) is a mechanism of budget support launched by the European Commission in February 2008 to help the growth of the institutions of the future State of Palestine.

It is aligned with the Palestinian development strategies, and with the national development plans (2011-2013 and 2014-2016).

PEGASE aims at shifting the European contribution from an emergency approach to sustainable development. Activities cover four areas:

- Governance,
- Social development,
- Development and the private sector, and
- Development of public infrastructure.

The main components of PEGASE are:

- Support for the Palestinian Administration - Civil Servants and Pensioners (CSP)
- Support for the Palestinian social protection system - Vulnerable Palestinian Families (VPF)
- Support to East Jerusalem hospitals (EJH) for the payment of MoH's debts related to patients treated in non-MoH hospitals (medical referral)

In June 2015 (Resolution 84 of 05/29/2015), a contribution of Euro 1 M was granted to cover the cost of treatment provided to Palestinian patients in the six hospitals of East Jerusalem (Makased, Augusta Victoria, St. John, St. Joseph, Red Crescent Society - Maternity, Princess Basma Center for Disabled) with the final aim of improving specialized care and reducing the cost of transfers outside Palestine.





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