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13 JAN. 2011

**Antwoord van  
Minister Jean-Luc VANRAES  
op de schriftelijke vraag nr. 90  
van de  
Heer Volksvertegenwoordiger  
Emmanuel DE BOCK  
over  
“ de subsidie aan UNICEF  
voor de financiering  
van het project ten gunste  
van de kinderen in Gaza ”**

**1232**  
**Réponse du  
Ministre Jean-Luc VANRAES  
à la question écrite n° 90  
de Monsieur le Député  
Emmanuel DE BOCK  
concernant  
“ le subside à l'UNICEF  
finançant un projet  
en faveur  
des enfants de Gaza ”**

Begin 2009 onderging de reeds kwetsbare Gazastrook een gewapend offensief. Het aantal slachtoffers was hoog. Men dient voor ogen te houden dat kinderen meer dan de helft van de bevolking van deze regio uitmaken. Door het conflict en bij gebrek aan schuilplaatsen, waar ze bescherming tegen het geweld hadden kunnen vinden, zijn de kinderen op psychologisch vlak ernstig gekwetst. Hun noden en het feit dat de hulpmechanismen door het conflict aanzienlijk verstoord werden, verklaren waarom de bescherming van de kinderen één van de prioriteiten is in Gaza. Het is de reden waarom UNICEF sinds vele jaren in de Palestijnse gebieden actief is op het vlak van gezondheid, watervoorziening, onderwijs en bescherming van kinderen. De subsidie van de Brusselse Regering maakte het mogelijk bij te dragen aan de financiering van het UNICEF-project "Heropbouwen van levens, heropbouwen van hoop in familiale centra en in beveiligde zones in de Gazastrook".

Au début de l'année 2009, la bande de Gaza, déjà très vulnérable, a subi une offensive armée. Le nombre de victimes fut élevé. Il faut savoir que les enfants constituent plus de la moitié de la population de cette région. Privés d'abris où ils auraient pu trouver refuge contre la violence, les enfants ont été gravement affectés par le conflit sur le plan psychologique. Leur détresse et les profondes perturbations des mécanismes de soutien provoquées par le conflit expliquent que la protection des enfants soit une des priorités à Gaza. C'est pourquoi UNICEF intervient depuis de nombreuses années dans les territoires palestiniens notamment dans les domaines de la santé, de l'eau, de l'éducation et de la protection. Le subside du Gouvernement bruxellois à permis de participer au financement du projet UNICEF "Reconstruire des vies, reconstruire l'espoir dans des centres familiaux et des espaces sécurisés dans la bande Gaza".

Het project heeft betrekking op 20 familiale centra, maar meer in het bijzonder maakte de door de Brusselse Regering verleende subsidie het mogelijk om het familiaal centrum "Ajyal Al Mustoqbal", gelegen in Rafah, te ondersteunen.

De door de Brusselse Regering verleende subsidie liet toe:

- om dit familiaal centrum in te richten in de schoot van een in Rafah bestaande communautaire organisatie, geselecteerd door UNICEF;
- diensten voor verzorging van zuigelingen en voor overleving van het kind te ontwikkelen, voor zwangere vrouwen en moeders met kinderen van 0 tot 5 jaar;
- psychosociale steun te bieden aan de kinderen van 6 tot 13 jaar dankzij individuele begeleiding en groepssessies en door creatieve bezigheden;
- adolescenten (13-18 jaar) te betrekken en te mobiliseren, door middel van een psychosociale ondersteuning, in opleidingen, aangepaste recreatieve activiteiten en deelname aan communautaire projecten;
- psychosociale steun te verlenen aan hulpverleners en hun opleidingen verder te zetten;
- te sensibiliseren over het gevaar van mijnen;
- sociale diensten uit te bouwen die zich enten op bestaande netwerken;
- te pleiten ten voordele van kinderbeschermingsmaatregelen.

Le projet concerne 20 centres familiaux mais le subside octroyé par le Gouvernement bruxellois a permis de soutenir en particulier le "Centre familial Ajyal Al Mustoqbal" situé à Rafah.

Le financement octroyé par le Gouvernement bruxellois à permis de:

- mettre en place le centre familial au sein d'une organisation communautaire existante à Rafah et sélectionnée par UNICEF;
- développer les services de la petite enfance et de la survie de l'enfant pour les femmes enceintes et les mères avec des enfants de 0 à 5 ans;
- apporter un soutien psychosocial aux enfants âgés de 6 à 13 ans grâce à des séances de travail en groupe et individuelles, et à travers des activités créatives;
- implication et mobilisation des adolescents (13-18 ans) par le biais d'un soutien psychosocial, dans des formations, des activités récréatives adaptées et dans la participation à des projets communautaires;
- apporter un soutien psychosocial aux dispensateurs de soins et poursuivre leurs formations;
- sensibiliser aux dangers des mines;
- développer les services sociaux en s'appuyant sur les réseaux existants;
- plaider en faveur des mesures de protection de l'enfant.

Al deze acties werden uitgewerkt om bij de kinderen van Gaza weer een gevoel van normaliteit te doen ontstaan.

Voor zover ik weet, werd er geen enkel gelijkaardig project ten voordele van de Palestijnen gefinancierd door de Brusselse Hoofdstedelijke Regering;

Voor meer informatie in verband met de door de Brusselse Regering toegekende subsidie aan UNICEF ten voordele van de kinderen in Gaza, kan u het eindrapport van UNICEF België over de bezette Palestijnse gebieden raadplegen waarvan kopie in bijlage.

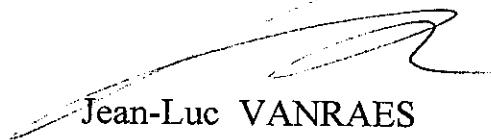
*De bijlage zal niet gepubliceerd worden maar blijft ter beschikking q de Griffie voor raadpleging.*

Toutes ces actions ont été développées en vue de rétablir chez les enfants de Gaza un sentiment de normalité.

A ma connaissance, aucun autre projet similaire en faveur des Palestiniens n'a été financé par le Gouvernement de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale.

Pour plus d'informations relatives au subside octroyé par le Gouvernement bruxellois à l'UNICEF en faveur des enfants de Gaza, je vous invite à consulter le rapport final d'UNICEF Belgique sur les territoires palestiniens occupés dont une copie est jointe en annexe.

*L'annexe ne sera pas publie mais restera disponible au Greffe pour consultation.*



Jean-Luc VANRAES

# **Rebuilding Lives, Rebuilding Hope in Family Centers and Safe Spaces in Gaza**



**FINAL REPORT - Summary  
Brussels Region  
2009 - 2010**

**UNICEF Belgium**

Through the generous contribution received from the Brussels Region, UNICEF has been able to provide these multi-disciplinary holistic child protection services inside the family center "Ajyal Al Mustoqbal Family Centre" in Rafah (one of 20) in conducting the following activities:

- α. Setting up the family center in a Community Based Organisation in Rafah;
- β. Psychosocial support for children between 6-13 years through group counselling sessions, individual counselling, remedial and recreational activities;
- γ. Psychosocial support for caregivers and training to enhance their skills in providing support to affected children;
- δ. Mine risk education for all visitors to protect them from unexploded ordinances, particularly for children;
- ε. Engaging and mobilizing adolescents (13-18 years) through peer-to-peer psychosocial support, training, recreational activities and remedial sessions, participation in community rehabilitation projects, messaging and community mobilization;
- φ. Early childhood development and child survival services for pregnant women and mothers with children 0-5 years
- γ. Social services building on existing networks
- η. Advocating for child protection measures

## **Financial summary**

Activities	Costs in USD	Costs in EUR
1 Daily after-school activities for adolescents in family center (remedial, recreational and life-skills based education)	30.476 \$	22.400 €
2 Psychosocial support to children including training of caregivers in family center	176.626 \$	129.820 €
3 Technical and operational support	35.857 \$	26.355 €
4 Recovery costs UNICEF NY and Belgium	29.155 \$	21.429 €
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29.155 \$</b>	<b>21.429 €</b>
Amount payed by Brussels Region		190.000 €
<b>Saldo to receive</b>		<b>10.000 €</b>

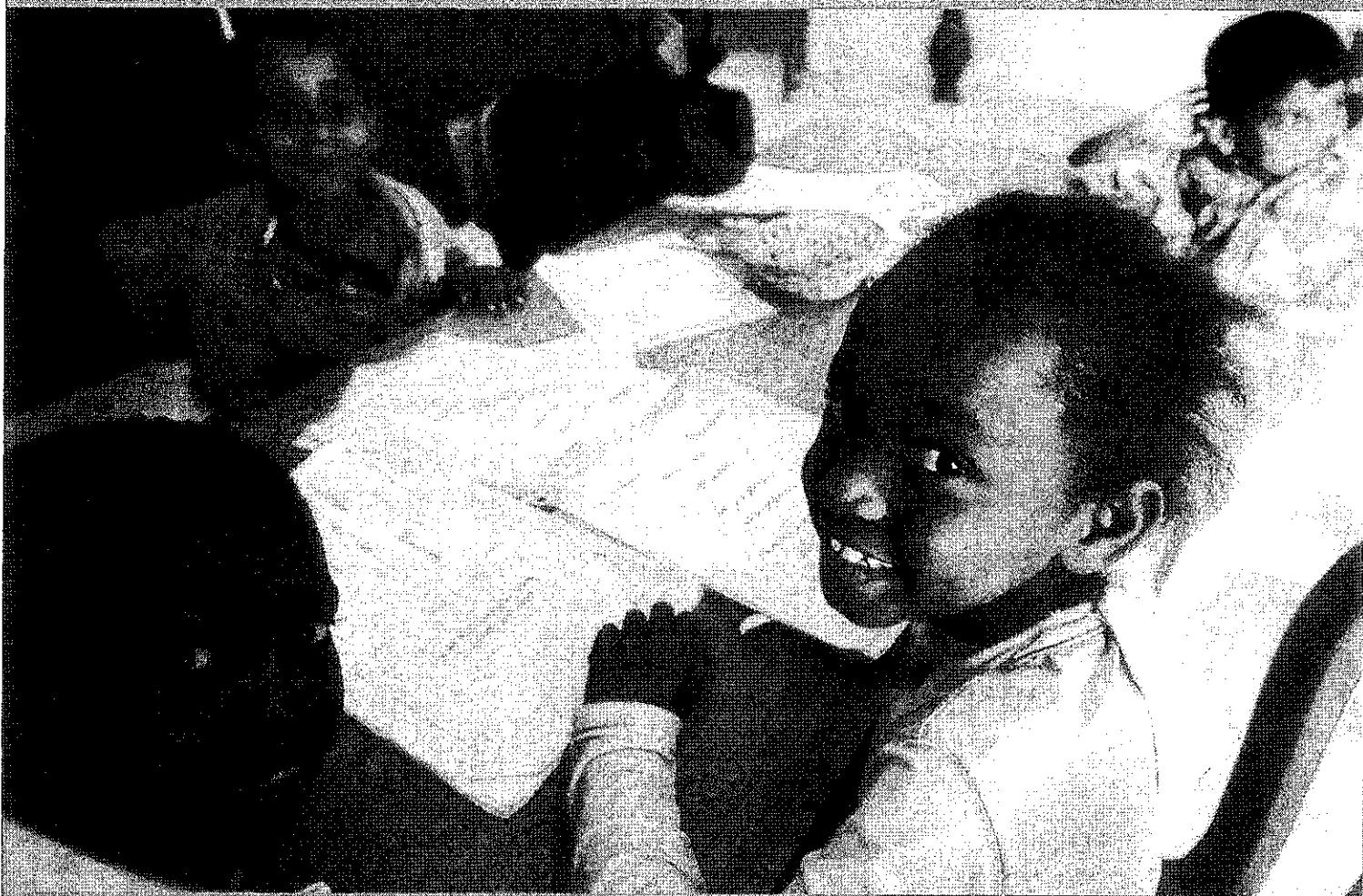
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**Rebuilding Lives, Rebuilding Hope in  
Family Centers and Safe Spaces in Gaza**



**FINAL REPORT  
Belgian Committee SM/2009/0174  
2009 - 2010**

**UNICEF  
occupied Palestinian territory**

**unite for  
children**

**unicef** 

## **List of Acronyms**

CBO	Community Based Organization
CMT	Case Management Team
CRC	Convention of the rights of the child
CTCCM	Community Training Center and Crisis Management
H1N1	swine flu
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
LMC	Local Management Committee
MHPTS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Technical Support
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
MoYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
MRE	Mine risk education
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
oPt	occupied Palestinian territory
PCDCR	Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Conflict Resolution
PRCS	Palestinian Red Crescent Society
TV	Television
UN	United Nations
UN M AS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UXO	Unexploded ordnance
WHO	World Health Organization

### **III. PURPOSE**

#### **Objectives**

The overall goal of the project is to strengthen resilience and coping mechanisms of children and caregivers in affected areas and thereby ensure children are better able to deal with the effects of violence and the disturbing and unstable environment in which they live; and parents and caregivers are better equipped to support and care for their children.

The specific objectives of this project are to:

- To provide a space for children, adolescents, mothers and other caregivers to begin recovering emotionally and physically from the recent incursion and have access to much needed support and follow-up.
- To provide a way for adolescents to engage in healthy and restorative recreational activities; a highly effective way to encourage communication and psycho-social healing.

To meet these objectives, it was proposed to establish 30 family centers across Gaza that offer multi-disciplinary interagency services and support to children, adolescents, mothers and infants. These objectives stem from UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in emergencies specifically the commitment to the protection of children and women from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. This is reflected in UNICEF's support to the establishment of safe environments for children and women, including child-friendly spaces, and the integration of psychosocial support in education and protection responses; setting up learning spaces; organizing recreational activities; as well as the coordination of mine risk education to affected children.

The above goals are in line with the goals and objectives outlined in the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (2008-2011) and the sector plans of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the Ministry of Youth & Sports (MoYS); all of which seek to provide a protective and enabling environment for children and adolescents, a need that becomes most acute under an ongoing emergency situation. The objectives contribute to the goals of the Millennium Declaration with respect to protection of children.

#### **Implementing Partners**

A coalition of partners work together at implementing the Family Centers including a number of key local NGOs including Save The Children, The Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Conflict Resolution (PCDCR), Community Training Center and Crisis Management (CTCCM), Ma'an Development Center, and Tamer Institute for Community Education. Strategic partnership is maintained with both Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Youth & Sports. A UNICEF international child protection officer supports and oversees the entire project.

#### **Coordination mechanisms**

UNICEF maintains a key role as lead of the Child Protection sub-cluster, which also includes the chairing of the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (with WHO), child protection and 1612 MRM working groups. In addition, as the coordinator of Mine Risk Education (MRE), UNICEF has been working with UNDP, UN MAS and various local and international government and NGOs to increase and improve MRE activities in Gaza.

### **III. RESULTS**

The main results from this project are the following:

- Improved access for children and adolescents to a wide range of psychosocial support based on need including group sessions, in-depth counselling, home and hospital visits, and a toll-free help-line.

Trained social workers use creative approaches and structured activities to help children express themselves and explore their feelings.

- In depth group counseling was provided to 5,232 children (6-17 yrs old) identified as needing further support to the initial counseling sessions.
- Individual counseling was provided to 4,635 children who have been identified to require more focused support. Of these children 3,668 cases received counseling in the CBOs while 967 cases received counseling through the toll-free line. The toll-free line allows children and families in remote areas to call for support, advice and referral on psychosocial issues or cases of abuse.
- Remedial and recreational activities were linked to psychosocial support and reached 700 children aged 6-13 (50% girls) in family centers over a period of two months. The remedial sessions included Arabic and math tutorials which were very popular among children. Recreational activities included music classes, game sessions, theater and drawing. Moreover, around 3,000 children aged 6-15 participated in "Fun Days".
- Psychosocial services for caregivers including parenting skills in times of conflict
  - Psychosocial awareness sessions were provided to 10,170 caregivers to help them support their children.
- Mine risk education for all visitors (to combat the high risk of unexploded ordinances, particularly for children)
  - Training of trainers on mine risk education (MRE) was conducted to 18 trainees (one from each family center). The training including topics focusing on protection from all types of UXOs and suspected ordnances. Sessions with children and adolescents will be followed up during 2010.
- Engaging and mobilizing adolescents (13–18 years) including:
  - *Peer to peer psychosocial support and health referral and,*
  - *Psychosocial training through a buddy system with professional community workers*

738 peer-to-peer psychosocial workshops were conducted reaching a total of 2,549 (1280 boys and 1269 girls). The workshops included ice-breaking techniques, confidence-building measures and debriefing mechanisms. The workshops focused on alleviating adolescents psychological problems, uplifting their morals, giving them hope for the future, brainstorming major problems they were suffering from and providing them with the necessary tools on how to deal with such problems.

The psychosocial workshops were followed up with 6-day self-expression workshops using photography and creative writing.

- *Recreational activities and remedial sessions*

Sports, drama and music activities continued in the 83 adolescent-friendly learning centers, eleven of which were developed into family centers. Additionally, remedial Arabic and math sessions were provided. Around 16,500 adolescents (50% girls) engaged in daily after-school programs that included sports (soccer, basketball, table-tennis), music, dabka as well as writing, reading and math. The target group included low achievers, as well as adolescents whose skills in writing, reading and math were two-three grades below their level.

- Map existing MHPSS actors and the different levels of support which are in place in order to ensure that Gazans receive appropriate support ranging from community based to psychiatric
  - Awareness raising among the community regarding where to go for help and de-stigmatisation of mental health problems
  - Roll out and adaptation of the IASC Guidelines on Mental health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency settings
- Distribution of non-food items
  - The distribution of non-food items as an inherent component of psychosocial stabilization took place right after the crisis in Gaza. The items distributed included 400 first aid kits and 4,000 blankets. In addition, tents were used for psychosocial sessions in the areas where infrastructure was completely destroyed during the war on Gaza namely, Zaitoun, Khzaia and Beit Lahia.
- Carry out minor repairs of existing centers and equip the centers with furniture, and recreational and education materials
  - Rehabilitation of CBOs hosting family centers was completed and centers were provided with supplies as per needs assessment. The supplies provided included furniture (office desks, shelves, chairs, etc), art supplies (paper, colors, etc.) and children's games.

#### **Constraints and lessons learned**

The Gaza crisis resulted in operational difficulties for most implementing partners which caused delays in implementation schedules. At the height of the military activity, the focus of resources and activities was on supporting children and families directly affected by the war, which meant that certain activities had to be delayed for later in the year.

The number of CBOs in Gaza that fit the agreed-upon selection criteria for family centers proved to be limited. Twenty centers were selected instead of the thirty initially planned. The selection process was lengthy. Moreover, most CBOs selected did not have the capacity to start activities immediately after the war. Rehabilitation of infrastructure was required as well as recruitment and training of facilitators, social workers, volunteers and other family center staff.

A coalition of NGO partners was necessary to implement this holistic and comprehensive initiative. Selection of implementing partners and agreement on the preferred implementation and contractual arrangements required numerous coordination meetings both centrally in Ramallah and in the Gaza Strip. Roles and responsibilities of the various key players were defined to allow smooth monitoring and coordination at the field levels.

Among the successes is the increase in number of fathers attending the caregiver counseling sessions. Traditionally, it has been difficult to attract male caregivers to what is perceived as a female domain. A variety of methods to attract male caregivers, including holding sessions in places of work, in mosques, and at times which suit fathers during the evening.

Increasing the number of adolescent-led initiatives to enable the youth to respond to the needs in their communities proved to be very significant, especially in times of crisis. Ways to promote adolescent participation in community initiatives need to be systematized to ensure full civic engagement of young people and their involvement in the relief of their communities.

#### **Monitoring & Evaluation**

UNICEF project officers in Gaza and Jerusalem monitored the implementation of the various activities through joint field visits, video conference meetings and regular meetings with the implementing partners. This allowed periodic review of programme challenges and identifying solutions.

## VII. PHOTOS

