

SOS Children's Villages Gaza



The humanitarian and security situation in Gaza has been volatile throughout the year and continues to be so. The number of violent incidences decreased during the summer months but increased during the end of the year. Firing of rockets and shelling between Israel and Gaza is a regular occurrence and part of people's daily life. Electricity shortages coupled with high cost of living led to demonstrations in December. Electricity shortages have become even more severe with electricity now being available only 2-4 hours per day. Besides making daily life difficult it has a severe impact on the delivery of essential services such health services. The number of violent incidences decreased in December but were high during the rest of the year. In addition to the power crisis, the water situation is also critical as access to clean water is extremely limited. The pipe system is dilapidated and water is contaminated.

The war in 2014 inflicted major damage on infrastructure and services in Gaza. A total of 12,576 houses were destroyed and 6,455 houses severely damaged. 65,000 people still remain internally displaced. The access to construction materials and critical equipment has been extremely limited since 2007. The damage to infrastructure and homes caused by the war and recurrent hostilities coupled with rapid population growth is widespread and there is a desperate need for reconstruction and renovation.

Since the blockade of the Gaza strip in 2007 the flow of goods and services has been under tight control and hence very restricted. This has affected different sectors such as the health sector, in some cases resulting in death when patients that cannot be treated in Gaza and are denied passage over the border to Egypt or Israel for specialized treatment.

Emergency Care Program

The Emergency Care Program in Gaza started in August 2015 with the overall goal to ensure the well-being and continued development of the most vulnerable children in Gaza in the aftermath of the war. By the end of 2016 most activities had been phased out.



Interim Care Centre

Since the start of the emergency program in Gaza, 121 separated and unaccompanied children have been admitted to the Interim Care Centre. The children have been referred to the center by the Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine and other non-governmental organizations. When the children arrive at the center, they receive both a medical and a psychological check-up, new clothes, shoes, and educational materials.

Each child in the Interim Care Centre has a personal development plan. As the center is meant to be temporary, the plan also indicates a long-term solution, taking in to account the best interest of the child. The first option is always to reunite the child with its parents, and if this isn't possible, with the extended family. 89 children have been able to return to their family or relatives after making sure that the home environment is suitable, safe, secure and able to meet the child's specific needs. All children are followed up by the case managers with weekly visits during the first month. After the first month, the visits are reduced to every other week. If everything goes well for both children and their families, the case is closed after six months.

Emergency Family Support

The goal of the Emergency Family Support was to support families by improving their living conditions, in order for them to be able to take care of their children. The program has supported a total of 90 families of which 22 are connected to children in the Interim Alternative Care Centre. Each family has been supported for six months, receiving food packages and other basic items, medical care, assistance to pay rent and medical bills and support in finding an income. The program has also made it possible for children to attend school, by providing them with both clothes and school uniforms. The Emergency Family Support will now be phased out, and the families will continue to get help and support through SOS Children's Villages long-term program in Gaza.

The program supporting internally displaced people has been implemented according to plan, and surpassed its goal with 190% of planned beneficiaries reached (3,826 persons). The program included support improve living conditions as many internally displaced people had been living in tents, caravans or make-shift shelters with leaking roofs.

Outlook

The whole emergency program will be evaluated at the start of 2017 and a decision will be made on how to move forward. However, it is expected that the Interim Alternative Care Centre will continue its activities in 2017 as need for it to continue is there. The target group will not only be internally displaced people but children that are in need of care and protection due to a difficult family situation.

Long-term Care Program, Gaza City

The main goal of SOS Children's Village's long-term program is to develop child care services in the north of the Gaza strip. The program covers a range of interventions to ensure a safe, nurturing and caring environment for children, including SOS families and kinship care as well as strengthening of families to prevent separation. Due to difficulties in receiving authorizations from the government, the set-up of the family based care has been delayed. The team in Gaza is continuing negotiations with the Ministry of Social Affairs.

During the second quarter of 2016 Family Strengthening coordinators, Family Based Care coordinators, a psychologist, two SOS-mothers, one SOS-aunt, three field workers and advocacy coordinators were recruited. The coaching and training of the entire team is now in progress. Key implementation partners have also been identified.

In collaboration with the partners SOS has begun training caregivers on nutrition, health care, education and psychological support. These activities aim to improve the general quality of the life of the children and ensure that their basic needs are met for a healthy development. Additional activities include: literacy courses, educational activities, psychological support, health, and parenting skills training. The team in Gaza will also work to raise awareness on children's rights in the communities.

Financial report

Donated by Akelius Foundation, EUR	Total budget	Actuals until 2016-12-31	Budget 2016	Actuals 2016	2017 Budget
Gaza Emergency Response Program	1 047 514	612 635			434 878
Long-term care			410 873	334 190	310 460 *
Total Donation	1 047 514	612 635	410 873	334 190	745 338
SEK (using exchange rate at the time of payment)	-	5 607 832		3 240 638	7 080 711
Average exchange rate	-	9,15		9,70	9,50
Total budget/actuals, all facilities above, EUR	Total Budget	Actuals until 2016-12-31	Budget 2016	Actuals 2016	2017 Budget
Gaza Emergency Response Program	997 632	624 004			373 628
Long term care	-		391 308	73 750	540 202
Total	997 632	624 004	391 308	73 750	913 830
Share covered by Akelius	100%	94%	100%	100%	78%

* Since there are funds left from 2016 a smaller amount will be requested during 2017.

Comment

The roll out of the long term programs in Gaza has taken longer than initially planned. Certain activities of the family based care program will begin in 2017. Parts of the emergency program will also continue in 2017 and the whole budget will be utilized during that time. The forecasted budget and result calculated for the emergency program covers the entirety of the program while result and budget for the long term program covers the calendar year.