

INGOs working in Jordan alarmed over aid funding cuts to Palestinian refugees

Amman – 14 March 2018- As political leaders gather in Rome for an Extraordinary Ministerial Conference in support of UNRWA, 13 International NGOs members of the Jordan INGO Forum (JIF) are alarmed by the recent decision of the US administration to reduce its scheduled humanitarian aid to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). This abrupt decision will have considerable consequences on the living conditions and dignity of the five million and more registered Palestinians in the occupied Palestine territory, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

“We are particularly concerned by the situation of Palestine refugees who face high levels of vulnerability here in Jordan and for whom humanitarian aid is a lifeline” Nancy Momani Country Director of IM Swedish Development Partner in Jordan explains. *“It is not acceptable that the education, health and basic needs of thousands of children, women and men are being held hostage of a political decision”*.

According to UNRWA, Jordan hosts the largest number of Palestine refugees, with 2.3 million registered and over 17,000 Palestine refugees who fled Syria at the beginning of the crisis. The majority lives in host communities, and more than 400,000 are registered in the ten recognized Palestinian refugee camps throughout the country. Among them, Palestine refugees from Syria have seen their living conditions deteriorating in Jordan, with little resources left, limited work opportunities and persisting documentation issues.

“In Jordan the unforeseen and substantial funding reduction to UNRWA will drastically affect the lives of over 17,000¹ Palestinian refugees from Syria as well as 2.3 million Palestine Refugees (in particular the 634,182 non-citizen Palestinians, mostly from Gaza) in regards to health, education, livelihoods and other critical services,” continues Momani. *“Not only will this jeopardize and destabilize lives of children, women and men, but it will reinforce and prolong the cycle of poverty.”*

“It is essential that aid to vulnerable Palestinians across the region is sustained, for 2018 and beyond. We must uphold humanitarian principles and ensure human suffering is addressed, regardless of status and nationality” Momani concluded.

On behalf of: Alianza, HelpAge International, Humanity and Inclusion, IM Swedish Development Partner, International Rescue Committee, Islamic Relief Jordan, Kvinna till Kvinna, Lutheran World Federation, Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam, Plan International, Right to Play, Vision Hope International.

¹ <https://www.unrwa.org/prs-jordan>