

Press release: UK aid to help provide Gazans with access to clean water and sanitation

UK aid will help provide Palestinians living in Gaza with clean water, the Middle East Minister Alistair Burt announced today (Tuesday 26 June).

Today's support, an allocation of £2 million to UNICEF, will help ensure that the two million Palestinians in Gaza have access to safe water to drink and cook with.

There is a dire shortage of water in Gaza, where just 4 per cent of water in the strip is fit for human consumption and many families rely on buying dirty water from unregulated vendors.

This UK aid package will help:

- install over 1,000 roof water tanks to help families store clean water
- provide over 3,000 communal water drums so that households can collect clean water
- provide chlorine to treat water in 280 wells and 38 water treatment plants.

Minister Burt, who made the announcement in a Westminster Hall debate in Parliament earlier today, said:

With only 4 per cent of the water in Gaza fit for human consumption, people are left with no choice but to drink dirty water and risk falling victim to deadly water borne diseases.

Today's UK aid package will help provide the 2 million Palestinians in Gaza with access to safe, clean water and sanitation so they can feed and wash themselves and their children without fear of falling seriously ill.

But aid alone isn't enough and the rest of the international community must do all it can to help ease the people of Gaza's suffering. The UK is committed to helping achieve a peaceful two-state solution and we call on parties to urgently redouble their efforts to bring this suffering to an end.

In addition to today's package of support, UK aid in Gaza is already helping to repair water and wastewater pipes, provide chlorine for 70 wells and 20 desalination plants. It will also provide 1,300 water storage tanks and give 15,000 of the most vulnerable families essential hygiene items, such as soap, sanitary towels and shampoo as well as water treatment kits.

On a recent visit to Gaza Minister Burt also announced £1.5 million for the International Committee of the Red Cross to keep hospitals open and functioning following the recent surge in violence.

Notes to editors

The UK has allocated £2 million to UNICEF from the DFID OPTs 2018/19 budget.

In November 2017 the UK provided £1.9 million to UNICEF through the 2017 Gaza Crisis Urgent Appeal from the DFID OPTs 2017/18 budget.