

UN releases \$2.5 million from pooled fund to tackle energy crisis in Gaza

24 August 2017 – With Gaza entering its fourth month of a serious energy crisis, the United Nations today released a further \$2.5 million from a pooled humanitarian fund to cover urgent needs in the Palestinian enclave.

The [serious decline in living conditions in Gaza](#) continues, said UN Coordinator for Humanitarian Aid and Development Activities for the occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt), Robert Piper, in a press release.

The disbursement from the Humanitarian Fund for the oPt will bolster the UN's emergency fuel operation which primarily supplies fuel to generators to maintain operations in around 190 critical health, water and sanitation installations. Virtually all the two million Palestinians living in Gaza benefit from this fuel operation.

The funding will also provide essential life-saving medical equipment and supplies. Solar panels, cash assistance and agricultural supplies that are also included to improve food security and reduce food production costs for 2,200 small-scale farmers who irrigate by pumping from small wells.

Gaza has been experiencing a severe electricity crisis since mid-April, when the Gaza Power Plant went offline due to a factional dispute between the Palestinian Authority and the rival Hamas group in Gaza over tax rates for the fuel needed at the plant.

Power supply to households and services has barely covered 25 per cent of needs over the last six weeks.

Hospitals and other facilities are operating almost 24/7 on generators that are not designed for continuous use in this way.

The last bulk shipment of essential drugs from the West Bank was in March 2017; an estimated 40 per cent of essential drugs are unavailable already, or will be totally depleted within four weeks. There is a large backlog of patients requiring urgent medical referral to hospitals outside the strip.

The Fund is operated from donations currently from the Governments of Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey.

In early July, humanitarian partners in the Occupied Palestinian Territory identified an urgent set of top-priority interventions to respond to the current crisis and appealed for \$25 million. To date, this urgent funding appeal is only 30 per cent funded.

The humanitarian plight and the human rights of Gaza's civilian population – over half of them children – appear to have disappeared from view, Mr. Piper said.