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Press Release
With Funds from the Government of Japan
UNDP Responds to Immediate Needs for Traumatized Children in Gaza Through Recreational Activities

Gaza Strip, 24 July 2019 - The United Nations Development Programme and the Government of Japan, in partnership with Al Anqaa' Dabkeh group celebrated the closing of the rehabilitation and recreational programme for 100 children who have been psychologically traumatized as a result of escalations in Gaza.

With support from the Government of Japan, worth US\$ 99,000, children have been provided with a safe environment to express themselves through recreational activities, such as sports, while at the same time be provided with psychosocial support. The project targeted children who are members of Al Anqaa Palestinian Folklore Performance Group. In order to cope with the trauma, feel safe and reintegrate in social and cultural activities, trainings in Dabka (folklore dance) and performing arts were provided through a three months rehabilitation programme.

H.E. Takeshi Okubo, Ambassador for Palestinian Affairs and Representative of Japan to Palestine, expressed his gratitude to all partners for making the project successful, including UNDP and the Palestinian counterpart. He said: "We are gathered here today to celebrate the success of this project which stemmed from our belief that the creation of safe environment for Palestinian youth, especially to ease the suffering and frustration facing them under the unpredictable circumstances, is urgently needed to maintain the cohesion of the society in Gaza".

While taking an inclusive approach, and focus on ensuring participation of children with disabilities, the project have paved the way for a quick assessment on capacities and needs of youth with disabilities. Based on the assessment, and Gazan's existing ICT capacities, UNDP will convene a social innovation challenge to explore innovative technological solutions for youth with disabilities.

"According to recent research conducted by the Norwegian Refugee Council in Gaza, more than two-thirds of children surveyed are experiencing psychosocial distress. This highlights the importance of conducting a responding initiative that supports these children and protects them from developing more serious syndromes," said UNDP Head of Office in Gaza, Chitose Noguchi. "Japan and UNDP have been partnering to support youth and children in many activities. We have been conducting sports leagues for three years, in addition to summer camps and winter camp for persons with disabilities. And today, we celebrate the closing of one of our best interactions with children to make them feel happy and joyful," she added.

The ceremony took place on 24 July 2019 in Gaza, and was attended by H.E. Takeshi Okubo, Ambassador for Palestinian Affairs and Representative of Japan to Palestine, Mr Eid Msabeh, Al Anqaa Dabkeh group, and Ms Chitose Noguchi, Head of UNDP office in Gaza, children and their families.

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From the People of Japan



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