

DONOR BRIEF : WORLD VISION CANADA AND ALLEGATIONS OF HAMAS FUNDING

World Vision Canada has no sponsored communities in the Gaza area. Charity Intelligence provides context on Israeli security's recent allegations of World Vision funds diverted to Hamas.

Background: The international press extensively reported on allegations that World Vision donations for Gaza projects financed Hamas. Israeli security arrested Mohammed El Halabi on June 15, 2016 and charged him on August 4, 2016 for diverting "tens of millions" to Hamas terrorist group. This is difficult to reconcile given World Vision International's entire operating spending in Gaza over the last 10 years is US\$22.5 million. Israel's Shin Bet internal security service alleges Halabi used World Vision donations to care for injured children in Hamas families, paid salaries to Hamas militants falsely registered as World Vision staff, inflated project costs in Gaza with the extra money going to fund Hamas, and using fictitious names with \$1.5 million in donations given out to Hamas members. Shin Bet alleges Halabi transferred to Hamas materials such as steel, digging equipment and pipes that were meant for World Vision's farming projects. In addition, Shin Bet alleges Halabi diverted \$800,000 in British donations to build a Hamas military base in 2015. Halabi has been World Vision's Gaza manager since only October 2014.

This is not the first time Israel has accused humanitarian charities working in the West Bank and Gaza of collaborating with terrorists. Israel has made similar allegations about Red Cross/Red Crescent, the UN's Relief and Work Agency for Palestinian Refugees (the Canadian government stopped funding in 2010), Doctors Without Borders, Islamic Relief and now World Vision. These charities vehemently deny these allegations and maintain their actions are neutral.

Without fair legal process, it is sad to see the knee jerk reaction of countries and donors stopping funds. World Vision Germany and the Australian government have suspended aid to World Vision's projects in the Palestinian territories. World Vision programs in Gaza recently underwent an extensive independent evaluation that found its humanitarian work excellent.

The political conflict of the Middle East raises the classic Humanitarian Dilemma. The UNRWA for Palestinian Refugees with humanitarian charities provide a basic social safety net to, some say, keep the suffering at an acceptable level. While helping those caught in a war zone, does international aid subsidize the costs and tactics of conflict? Humanitarian charities struggle with the dilemma; it's an impossible balance between work that is complicit with Israel's occupation and meeting the humanitarian needs of Palestinians trapped in this endless war.

"no evidence whatsoever of [UNRWA]" financing terrorism. "This is a false allegation which we reject. We take efforts to safeguard our neutrality which we do."

Chris Gunness,
spokesman for UNRWA

"The situation in Gaza today lays bare the excruciating limits of humanitarian action in the face of occupation."

Jason Cone, The Humanitarian's
Dilemma, Foreign Policy

Reading through on-line comments, these facts may help inform Canadian donors:

- **World Vision Canada funds 6 Palestinian communities all in the West Bank and none in Gaza.** World Vision Canada's 6 West Bank sponsorships communities are in Nablus (3), Hebron (2), and West Jenin – see map. These Palestinian development projects are all on-going. World Vision Canada typically spends 15 years in each community. Sponsored communities is the largest program. That said, World Vision Canada may have some “untied” Canadian one-time cash donations funding projects in Gaza that may be implicated in this investigation.
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- **Charity Intelligence rates World Vision Canada a 4-star charity** with excellent donor accountability, full financial disclosure, a need for funding and overhead costs within a reasonable range. [Charity Intelligence report on World Vision Canada](#) updated July 29, 2016
- **World Vision Canada's fundraising costs are 23.2% of donations and administrative costs are 5.9% of total revenues.** For every dollar Canadians donate, 70.9 cents goes to World Vision Canada's programs. This is within Charity Intelligence's reasonable range for overhead costs.
- World Vision Canada is Canada's largest donor-funded charity with F2015 donations of \$262.7 million. In addition, World Vision Canada received \$37.4 million in federal government funding. World Vision Canada spent \$345.7 million on its international programs in F2015.
- World Vision adopts a community sponsorship approach. While donors give \$39 a month to “sponsor a child”, these donations go to fund the community in which the child lives. World Vision Canada funds 255 communities in 48 developing countries.
- World Vision International has operated in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza since 1975. It has 5 offices and 150 staff on the ground in this region. Last year, World Vision benefitted 92,000 children in this region with an estimated 40,000 in Gaza (43%). Primary activities were helping children's psychologically, and also providing medical supplies to hospitals, food relief, and agricultural support.

¹World Vision Canada's Sponsored Communities in the West Bank



The information in this report was prepared by Charity Intelligence Canada and its independent analysts. Factual material information is obtained from the charity and reliable sources. Information may be available to Charity Intelligence Canada or its analysts that is not reflected in this report. Charity Intelligence Canada and its analysts have made endeavours to ensure that this data in this report is accurate and complete but accepts no liability.

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