

December 13, 2023

Urgent Need for Oversight and Vetting of New “Confidential” Aid for Gaza

On October 12, 2023, UN OCHA-oPt launched an “[OPT Flash Appeal](#),” seeking \$294 million “to address the most urgent needs of 1,260,000 people in the Gaza Strip (Gaza) and the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, for three months.” On November 3, the target amount was raised to \$1.2 billion.

On October 18, the White House [announced \\$100 million](#) in humanitarian assistance for Gaza and the West Bank: “clean water, food, hygiene support, medical care, and other essential needs.” This aid will be distributed “through **trusted partners** including **UN agencies and international NGOs**” (emphasis added). On December 5, USAID announced “[more than \\$21 million](#) in additional humanitarian assistance.”

According to the UN’s Financial Tracking Service database, and as part of the OCHA-oPt appeal, the USG is providing **\$34 million** in grants earmarked for “**Confidential**” NGOs and UN agencies.

- [\\$9 million](#) to “**UN agencies and NGOs (Confidential)**” for “Health and Nutrition” in 2023.
- [\\$9 million](#) to “**International NGOs (Confidential)**” for use in 2024. The “Description” indicates that this will involve “Cash Assistance” to unknown groups/individuals.
- [\\$2 million](#) to “**International NGOs (Confidential)**” for use in 2024. Both the “Description” and “Modality” indicate that this will involve cash transfers to unknown groups/individuals.
- [\\$5 million](#) to “**International NGOs (Confidential)**” for “Food Security” in 2024.
- [\\$9 million](#) to “**International NGOs (Confidential)**” for “Health and Nutrition” in 2024.

This lack of transparency prevents Congressional oversight and independent assessment of the ultimate recipients of US government funding. The potential for abuse in the Palestinian context is acute and indisputable. Previous aid diversion – enabled by weak to non-existent counterterror policies among international NGOs and UN agencies, and in some cases, direct cooperation – contributed significantly to Hamas’ terror capacity in Gaza. (Notably, the UN does not consider Hamas to be a terror organization, subject to sanctions and restrictive measures.)

NGO Monitor also notes that, due to insufficient vetting procedures, State Department and USAID programs have provided funding to NGOs that [support “resistance”](#), partner with US-designated terror groups, and otherwise run contrary to US values and policy goals.