



Almost all children in Gaza now require mental health and psychosocial support, twice as many compared with pre-war estimates. At least 17,000 children are unaccompanied or separated from their parents. Children at a shelter for displaced people in Gaza. "I want to return home desperately and play with all my toys," one of them said. Photo by UNICEF/El Baba

# Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #109

02 Feb 2024

## Key points

- Intense Israeli bombardment from air, land, and sea continue to be reported across much of the Gaza Strip on 2 February, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of civilian infrastructure. Ground operations and fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups also continue to be reported across much of Gaza.
- Between the afternoons of 1 and 2 February, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 112 Palestinians were killed, and 148 Palestinians were injured. Between 7 October 2023 and 13:30 on 2 February 2024, at least 27,131 Palestinians were killed in Gaza and 66,287 Palestinians were injured, according to the MoH.
- Between 1 and 2 February, there were no Israeli soldiers reported killed in Gaza. As of 2 February, 222 soldiers were killed and 1,296 soldiers were injured in Gaza since the beginning of the ground operation, according to the Israeli military.
- Some 75 per cent of Gaza's population of 2.3 million people, more than half of whom are children, are displaced according to UNRWA's estimates. They face acute shortages of food, water, shelter and medicine. Intense fighting around Khan Younis continues to drive thousands of people into the southern town of Rafah, which is already hosting over half of Gaza's population. Most are living in makeshift structures, tents, or out in the open, according to UNRWA. Expressing deep concern about the prospects facing internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Rafah, [OCHA](#) Spokesperson Jens Laerke stated: "Rafah is now a pressure cooker of despair and we fear for what happens next."
- Since 29 January, there were no new evacuation orders issued by the Israeli military. Since 7 October 2023, 246 square kilometres, which amount to 67 per cent of the Gaza Strip, have been placed under evacuation orders. This area was home to 1.78 million Palestinians before 7 October and, as of late December 2023, it contained 210 shelters hosting over 770,000 IDPs. It includes all areas north of Wadi Gaza, whose residents were ordered to evacuate in late October, as well as specific areas south of Wadi Gaza slated for evacuation by the Israeli military since 1 December. Overlapping orders are accounted for.
- Twice as many children now require mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in the Gaza Strip, compared with pre-war estimates. [UNICEF](#) estimates that almost all of Gaza's 1.2 million children are in need of MHPSS. Moreover, according to UNICEF, "at least 17,000 children in Gaza are unaccompanied or separated" from their parents and "due to the sheer lack of food, water and shelter, extended families are distressed and face challenges to immediately take care of another child as they themselves are struggling to cater for their own children and family."
- Health care in Gaza remains extremely precarious, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). As of 30 January, only 13 out of 36 hospitals (36 per cent) in Gaza are functional, but only partially; seven in the north and six in the south. Moreover, only 17 per cent of primary healthcare centres remain functional, according to [WHO](#). These include four UNRWA health centres out of 22 that were operational prior to the onset of hostilities. On 2 February, the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) [reported](#) that the PRCS Director of the Youth and Volunteers Department was killed by gunfire at its headquarters in Khan Younis. On the same day, according to PRCS, the fate of two staff members in the ambulance team that had been dispatched on 29 January to rescue a six-year-old girl in Gaza city remained unknown.

- Heavy fighting near Nasser and Al Amal hospitals in Khan Younis continued on 2 February, jeopardizing the safety of medical staff, the wounded and the sick, as well as thousands of IDPs seeking refuge at the hospitals. On 1 February, [PRCS](#) reported that they had buried five people in Al-Amal hospital's courtyard, as they were unable to move to the cemetery amid continued fighting and bombardment nearby. On 29 and 30 January, WHO [reported](#) that, despite challenges, the organization and its partners successfully delivered essential medical supplies for 1,000 patients to Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis amid intensive military operations, and UNRWA delivered 24,050 litres of fuel. However, according to WHO, "efforts to provide food were delayed at a military checkpoint," resulting in civilians taking the food from the trucks before it could reach the hospital.

## Hostilities and casualties (Gaza Strip)

- Emergency medical and Civil Defense teams continue to recover bodies from under the rubble across the Gaza Strip. On 1 February, PRCS reportedly recovered six Palestinian corpses from northern Al Bureij area in Deir al Balah and transferred them to Al Aqsa hospital also in Deir al Balah; there were no reports on the date or location of the killing of the six Palestinians. Also, on 2 February, 12 Palestinian corpses belonging to a single extended family were reportedly recovered from under the rubble of their house, which had been hit weeks ago, in As Sikka Street of central Khan Younis.
- The following are among the deadliest incidents reported between 31 January and 2 February:
  - On 31 January, at about 15:10, several Palestinians were reportedly killed, and others were injured, when a residential building in eastern Jabalya city was struck.
  - On 31 January, at about 17:00, three Palestinians were reportedly killed, when a group in An Nuseirat, Deir al Balah governorate, was reportedly shot at in a drone strike.
  - On 31 January, at about 12:30, five Palestinians were reportedly killed, as a group of people was struck in western Khan Younis city.
  - On 31 January, at about 15:50, four Palestinians, including a child, were reportedly killed, and others were injured, when a car and cart were struck in an area between Khan Younis and Rafah.
  - On 31 January, at about 18:55, four Palestinians, including a woman and her son and daughter, were reportedly killed when a residential building west of Rafah crossing was struck.
  - On 1 February, at about 18:15, at least four Palestinians were killed and several others were injured when a house in An Nasser neighbourhood in eastern Rafah was reportedly hit.

## Displacement (Gaza Strip)

- As of 31 January, according to UNRWA, there are an estimated 1.7 million IDPs in the Gaza Strip and 150-155 UNRWA installations that continue to shelter IDPs.
- On 31 January, six IDPs were injured at a school in Khan Younis where they were sheltering, according to UNRWA. On 31 January, two incidents took place where IDPs sheltering in the Gaza Training Centre and UNRWA office, in Gaza city, were killed as a result of drone fire. Overall, as of 31 January, [UNRWA](#) reported that at least 278 incidents have impacted its facilities sheltering displaced families. As a result, at least 376 IDPs taking refuge in UNRWA shelters have been killed and 1,365 injured since 7 October, the Agency reports.

## Humanitarian Access (Gaza Strip)

- In January, ten of the 61 humanitarian aid missions planned for the north of Wadi Gaza (16 per cent) were facilitated by the Israeli authorities, two (3 per cent) were partially facilitated, 34 missions (56 per cent) were denied access, and six (10 per cent) were postponed by aid organizations due to internal operational constraints. In an emerging pattern, the access of an additional nine missions (15 per cent) was initially facilitated, but subsequently impeded as routes designated by the Israeli military proved to be unpassable, or due to the imposition of excessive delays prior to the departure of the missions or at checkpoints en route. Facilitated missions primarily involved food distribution, while the access of missions to support critical hospitals and facilities providing water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) services remained largely denied.
- According to [WHO](#), 1,243 medical cases including wounded people and those suffering from pre-existing medical conditions, along with 1,025 companions, were evacuated from Gaza via Rafah as of 30 January; these include people who are receiving treatment in Egypt as well as those evacuated to other countries.

## Electricity

- Since 11 October 2023, the Gaza Strip has been under an electricity blackout, after the Israeli authorities cut off the electricity supply, and fuel reserves for Gaza's sole power plant were depleted. The communications and industrial fuel shutdown continue to significantly hinder the aid community's efforts to assess and to adequately respond to the deepening humanitarian crisis. For more information on electricity supply to the Gaza Strip, please see this [dashboard](#).

## Hostilities and casualties (Israel)

- Over 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals have been killed in Israel, including 36 children, according to the Israeli authorities, the vast majority on 7 October and the immediate aftermath.

- As of 2 February 2024, the Israeli authorities estimate that about 136 Israelis and foreign nationals remained captive in Gaza; these reportedly include fatalities whose bodies are being withheld. During the humanitarian pause (24-30 November), 86 Israeli and 24 foreign national hostages were released.

## Violence and casualties (West Bank)

- Since 7 October 2023 and as of 2 February 2024, 372 Palestinians have been killed, including 94 children, in conflict-related incidents across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Additionally, two Palestinians from the West Bank were killed while carrying out an attack in Israel on 30 November. Of these 372 fatalities, 360 were killed by Israeli forces, eight by Israeli settlers and two by either Israeli forces or settlers. The other two Palestinians, including a woman holding Israeli citizenship, were killed in an attack by Palestinians on 7 January 2024, reportedly in the belief they were settlers. So far as of 2 February 2024, 63 Palestinians, including at least 13 children, have been killed, the majority by Israeli forces. The Palestinian death toll in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in 2023 (507) marks the highest number of Palestinians killed in the West Bank since OCHA started recording casualties in 2005.
- Since 7 October 2023 and as of 2 February 2024, ten Israelis have been killed in conflict-related incidents in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel. These include five Israelis, including four members of Israeli forces, killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem; four Israelis killed by Palestinians from the West Bank in Israel, and one Israeli killed by Israeli forces who misidentified him during a Palestinian-perpetrated attack in West Jerusalem. The number of Israelis killed in the West Bank and Israel in 2023 (36) in attacks perpetrated by Palestinians from the West Bank was the highest since OCHA started recording casualties in 2005.
- Since 7 October 2023 and as of 2 February 2024, 4,391 Palestinians, including 661 children, have been injured in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Of them, 4,254 have been injured by Israeli forces, 116 by settlers and 21 by either Israeli forces or settlers. Of the total injuries, 54 per cent were reported in the context of search-and-arrest and other operations, 34 per cent in demonstrations and 8 per cent during settler attacks against Palestinians. Some 33 per cent of those injuries have been caused by live ammunition, compared with 9 per cent in the first nine months of 2023.

## Settler Violence

- Since 7 October 2023 and as of 2 February 2024, OCHA has recorded 495 Israeli settler attacks against Palestinians, resulting in Palestinian casualties (49 incidents), damage to Palestinian-owned property (389 incidents), or both casualties and damage to property (57 incidents). In 2023, 1,264 attacks carried out by Israeli settlers in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem (with or without Israeli forces), resulted in Palestinian casualties, property damage or both. Some 945 of these incidents resulted in damage, 165 resulted in casualties and 154 resulted in both. This is the highest number of settler attacks against Palestinians in any given year since OCHA started recording incidents involving settlers in 2006. On 1 February, Israeli settlers, reportedly from Shavei Shomron settlement, vandalized about 450 trees and saplings that include mostly olive, apricot and almond trees belonging to Palestinians from the nearby Deir Sharaf village (Nablus). On 2 February, Israeli settlers, reportedly from Eli settlement, vandalized a car in front of a house in As Sawiya village (Nablus).

## Displacement (West Bank)

- Since 7 October 2023 and as of 2 February 2024, at least 198 Palestinian households comprising 1,208 people, including 586 children, have been displaced amid settler violence and access restrictions. The displaced households are from at least 15 herding/Bedouin communities. More than half of the displacement occurred on 12, 15, and 28 October, affecting seven communities. The displacement toll since 7 October 2023, represents 78 per cent of all displacement reported due to settler violence and access restrictions since 1 January 2023 (1,539 people, including 756 children).
- Since 7 October 2023 and as of 2 February 2024, 503 Palestinians, including 248 children, have been displaced following the demolition of their homes in Area C and East Jerusalem due to lack of Israeli-issued building permits, which are almost impossible to obtain. Overall, in 2023, 892 structures were demolished, sealed off and/or confiscated due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits in Area C and East Jerusalem, resulting in the displacement of 1,148 Palestinians, including 575 children. Some 39 per cent of people displaced occurred between October and December 2023.
- Since 7 October 2023 and as of 2 February 2024, Israeli forces punitively demolished 22 Palestinian-owned homes, displacing 105 Palestinians, including 45 children. The numbers exceed those reported in the first nine months of 2023, during which 16 homes were punitively demolished and 78 people displaced in that context.
- Since 7 October 2023 and as of 2 February 2024, 756 Palestinians, including 313 children, have been displaced, following the destruction of 119 homes during operations carried out by Israeli forces across the West Bank. About 95 per cent of the displacement was reported in the refugee camps of Jenin, Nur Shams and Tulkarm. This represents 83 per cent of all displacement reported due to the destruction of homes during Israeli military operations since January 2023 (908 people).

## Funding

- As of 1 February, Member States have disbursed [\\$700.4 million](#) against the [updated Flash Appeal](#) launched by the UN and its partners to implement its response plan in support of 2.2 million people in the Gaza Strip and 500,000 people in the West Bank. This constitutes 57 per cent of the \$1.2 billion requested.

- Private donations are collected through the [Humanitarian Fund](#). A private foundation in Australia has donated \$2.2 million. Since 7 October, the Humanitarian Fund has disbursed about \$55 million.

## HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AND RESPONSES: 21-28 January

### Health

#### Needs:

- Primary health services are critically needed in informal shelters across the Gaza Strip. In addition, routine immunization, sexual and reproductive care, and medication for non-communicable diseases and psychotropics are essential to address the population's medical needs. Establishing field hospitals in different areas of the Gaza Strip will be a crucial enabler to accommodate the local population's medical needs.
- Some 6,000 patients are still on the waiting list to be evacuated outside of Gaza for tertiary medical care.
- There is an urgent need for laboratory equipment and reagents to enable accurate diagnosis and testing; blood products to support medical procedures and surgeries; and a humanitarian corridor for referral of critical patients from Nasser Hospital to the Jordanian field hospital in Khan Younis.
- Health facilities, including hospitals, urgently need fuel, medical supplies, and food to continue to provide medical services across the Gaza Strip.

#### Response

- Since the start of hostilities, in Gaza, 25 partners have established presence and have provided health services to over 500,000 people.
- Some 12 Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) are currently operational, with two additional teams scheduled to arrive next week. As of end of January 2024, these EMTs have treated some 12,410 patients requiring emergency surgeries and treatment for non-communicable diseases and severe acute malnutrition.
- During the reporting period, 53 patients, including 15 critical cases, were successfully evacuated from UNRWA's Khan Younis Training Centre.
- The International Medical Corps (IMC) Field Hospital has now expanded its health services to include a maternity ward and pediatrics unit.
- In the West Bank, mobile clinics have provided healthcare services to about 83,000 Palestinians in 86 communities. Health partners are planning to provide primary healthcare via mobile clinics to more than 25,000 Palestinians across 36 communities in early February.

#### Challenges and Gaps:

- In Gaza, the escalation of hostilities in Khan Younis has resulted in a significant increase in attacks against the few remaining partially and minimally functional health facilities and an increase in the number of IDPs seeking refuge in Rafah.
- Ongoing fighting in the vicinity of Al Amal and Al Kheir hospitals have severely affected their functionality and accessibility. Al-Kheir hospital, a critical facility for maternal and newborn care, is currently non-operational due to extensive damage.

### WASH

#### Needs

- People in Gaza do not have access to adequate quantity and quality of water and lack hygiene materials, which has consequences on their wellbeing, including physical health.
- The accumulation of solid waste on the streets, around hospitals, IDP shelters, and various sites remains a priority concern, as tens of thousands of tons of uncollected public waste are intensifying public health risks. The Municipality of Gaza city estimates that approximately 50,000 tons of solid waste remain unmanaged, exacerbating environmental and health concerns.

#### Response

- About 23,000 cubic metres of water per day were accessible through water lines, municipal wells, as well as trucking and bottled water (estimated 10,000 cubic metres) between 22 and 28 January.
- Some 6,000 cubic metres of water per day were accessible through the only functional Israeli water pipeline, in contrast to close to 53,000 cubic metres that used to be available through all pipelines prior to the current hostilities.
- Some 3,200 cubic metres were accessible through the short-term desalination plants each day, in contrast to the pre-hostilities period when 22,000 cubic metres were available daily.

- Some 2,500 cubic metres of water is accessible through the municipal wells daily, while the production capacity was up to 255,000 cubic metres each day.
- The UAE's small desalination plant located on the Egyptian side of Rafah continues to operate below capacity, providing 1,140 cubic metres per day out of a possible 2,400. All desalinated water from this plant is distributed via tankers.
- The construction of a 3-kilometre transmission line extending to the Saudi Water Reservoir within the Philadelphia corridor is underway and expected to be completed in early February.

### Challenges and Gaps

- In Gaza, due to access restrictions, humanitarian partners have been unable to assess or resupply fuel to the Jabalya area, where sewage flooding was reported in the refugee camp on 5 January. At least 100,000 IDPs are estimated to reside in the UN and public shelters in this area.
- Markets are not functioning and construction materials for latrines, desludging services and other essential supplies for sanitation are not available for purchase.
- Import restrictions, as well as complex and unpredictable clearance procedures for critical items considered by Israel as dual use, such as generators, pumps, and pipes are preventing a scale up of the WASH response.
- Most partners face resource shortfalls, with no commitment to new funding, particularly in camps and other areas where many IDPs are settled. As of 29 January, only 27 per cent of WASH's requirement (\$148.6M) is funded, according to the FTS.

## Protection

### Needs

- Unaccompanied and separated children require urgent protection, including family tracing and provision of shelter, winter clothing, blankets, water, and food.
- Protection partners report having observed increased risk-taking behaviour during a food distribution in Gaza city, with displaced people hastening towards aid trucks, amid attacks.
- Released detainees urgently need winter clothes and shoes, and tents, in addition to cash assistance. Released detainees asked for assistance in retrieving their personal belongings, that were confiscated while detained by the Israeli military.
- Reports indicated that pregnant women have been unable to reach health facilities or call ambulances to be transferred to health facilities, and thus have been forced to give birth in UNRWA shelters, which are not equipped with the necessary medical and sanitation facilities to ensure safe births. Protection focal points have provided hygiene and dignity kits, amid scarcity of kits; however, women's specific needs after childbirth remain unmet.
- UNRWA reports increased levels of domestic violence, against women, in instances where they were unable to obtain food and NFIs from partners.
- Due to constant hostilities, the scale of explosive contamination will require, at a minimum:
  - Explosive Ordnance Disposal.
  - Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) and Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP) messages among the population affected by shelling and/or explosive contamination, including IDPs, in the event they will return to potentially contaminated areas, after the hostilities.
  - EORE and CPP training for humanitarian actors.
  - Victim Assistance services for survivors of shelling and explosive ordnance related accidents.

### Response

- During the reporting period, UNRWA documented the release of 60 detainees (all males) from Gaza at Kerem Shalom, including an unaccompanied minor and one injured person; the Agency provided non-food items and coordinated with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to support the released detainees with cash assistance and clothing. Some 28 released detainees were released in two UNRWA schools in Rafah and were assisted with medical care and psychological first aid. Six were transferred to a health facility, while the remaining 27 were reconnected with their families.
- The UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) continued providing explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) support to ensure the safe passage of convoys; in particular, UNMAS EOD Operators supported three convoys to the north, including two food convoys and one fuel delivery to Shifa Hospital. Two explosive threat assessments were conducted in Khan Younis, including one at the Khan Younis Training Centre.
- Humanity and Inclusion (HI) coordinated and prepared to mobilize staff for future EORE/CPP sessions – some sessions were already held in Rafah and Dir Elbalah. HI is also working on a mass media EORE/CPP campaign.

## Challenges and Gaps

- The communications blackout and the continued restrictions on access and safe movement directly affected the delivery of planned child protection interventions, and the reporting of ongoing interventions.
- Mine Action partners report challenges in obtaining authorization to deploy personnel, especially EOD specialists, to carry out contamination assessments; further challenges include access restrictions on equipment, movement concerns due to insecurity and communications challenged.

## Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI)

### Needs

- It is estimated that over 650,000 people will have no home to return to, and that many more will be unable to return immediately, due to the level of damage to surrounding infrastructure, as well as the risk posed by explosive remnants of war.
- Partners estimate that the amount of debris generated by the destruction of residential housing units will exceed 8,000,000 metric tons and will take over three years to remove it, given Gaza's current capabilities.
- Displaced people residing in both formal and informal emergency shelters still lack basic NFIs, and hundreds of thousands lack proper and adequate shelter.
- Tents, timber sections, and tarpaulin sheets are highly needed to allow the displaced communities to protect themselves and their children from harsh weather conditions and to minimize overcrowded and unhygienic conditions in the current makeshift shelters.
- The lack of proper informal settlement planning has led to makeshift shelters and tents flooding on rainy days, further exacerbating the suffering of the people displaced.
- Urgent funding is needed to address the key gaps in the supply of shelter and NFIs. As of 29 January, only 24 per cent of the Shelter Cluster funding requirement (209.2M) has been funded.

### Response

- During the reporting period, cluster partners distributed about 1,040 family tents in Mawasi (Khan Younis) and Mawasi (Rafah) for unsheltered IDPs. Some 1,450 bedding items, including blankets, mattresses, and mats, and 1,100 clothing kits were distributed to IDPs in Rafah.
- Shelter partners indicate that the Egyptian Red Crescent (ERC) and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) have established tented camps near Khan Younis, with 600 tents. They intend to increase the size of the camp to some 1,000 tents to accommodate about 5,000 people displaced.

## Challenges and Gaps

- There is a high shortage of all essential NFIs for IDPs inside and outside shelters. This includes 50,000 family winterized tents, 200,000 bedding sets (1,200,000 mattresses and blankets), 200,000 sealing-off kits, 200,000 winter clothes kits, and wooden timber to support IDPs in establishing self-built shelters.
- One of the challenges that displaced people face is the lack of hand tools to prepare the location of their tents and to protect them from rain and floods – as hand tools are currently not permitted to enter Gaza.
- Due to security concerns and limited access, partners had to restrict the delivery of the assistance to Rafah and Khan Younis.
- Cluster partners indicate that pricing for SNFIs has risen in regional markets, including high freight rates and shipping costs. Further, partners face persistent challenges in the supply chain, keeping up with regulations and registration in regional countries.

## Food security

### Needs

- Uninterrupted and secure humanitarian corridors for delivering critical aid across Gaza is critically needed to allow more trucks from the private sector to enter Gaza. Access to the north is imperative to address the catastrophic food insecurity conditions of the population there.
- Immediate provision of fuel and cooking gas is critical to sustain humanitarian efforts and maintaining the operation of essential services, such as mills and bakeries. Without them, communities will be unable to prepare the limited food available to them.
- According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC):
- 2.2 million people are at imminent risk of famine.
- Some 378,000 people are at Phase 5 (catastrophic levels). Phase 5 refers to extreme lack of food, starvation, and exhaustion of coping capacities.
- Some 939,000 people at Phase 4 (emergency levels).

### Response

- Between 22 and 28 January, 12 Food Security Sector (FSS) partners provided food assistance across the Gaza Strip and reached about 1.7 million people with at least one type of food assistance. Rafah Governorate received about 50 per cent of the total food assistance; Deir al Balah received about 25 per cent; Khan Younis about 15 per cent; 10 per cent of the food assistance reached the northern governorates. In particular:
- In north Gaza, 11,832 people sheltering in host families received food parcels. Hot meals were provided to 36,000 people, sheltering in makeshift camps.
- In Deir al Balah, food parcels were distributed to a total of 24,000 people, including 2,000 people non-displaced and 22,000 staying with host families. Ready-To-Eat (RTE) food was provided to 14,272 people, including 563 in host families and 13,709 people sheltering in makeshift camps. Hot meals were also distributed to 78,600 people sheltering in host families. A total of 305,000 people in host families were reached with bread distribution.
- In the south, FSS partners reached 916,576 IDPs, including in public shelters, host families and makeshift camps in Rafah, Khan Younis, and Deir al Balah governorates through food parcels, ready-to-eat (RTE) packages and hot meals.
- Some 362,465 people in host families in Al Bayuk, Al Jneineh and As Salam (Rafah) were reached with bread distribution, between 22 and 28 January.

### Challenges and gaps

- FSS partners' operational space and delivery access are greatly hindered across the Gaza Strip.
- Continued hostilities, disruptions in healthcare services, lack of access to nutritious food, lack of access to clean water and poor sanitation conditions remain major challenges and contribute to the risk of famine in Gaza.
- Despite partners' efforts, food distribution in northern Gaza falls far below needs. The challenges faced in Gaza underscore the importance of continued coordination and support to address the pressing food security needs of the affected people.

## Nutrition

### Needs:

- Provision of nutrition interventions, including lifesaving supplies in Gaza, is critically needed across the Strip.
- Malnutrition among children and pregnant and breastfeeding women (PBW) remains a significant concern, amid lack of functioning health and WASH systems and deterioration of the food security situation.

### Response:

- In response to exceptional circumstances in Gaza, a specific protocol has been developed for the use of Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF). Due to the vulnerability of young children (especially those aged 6-23 months) during crises, the protocol allows for blanket distribution of RUTF beyond its primary intended purpose. Children aged 24 to 59 months will receive high-energy biscuits/LNS-MQ as part of the blanket distribution plan. This expanded use aims to provide both preventive and curative care for acute malnutrition and wasting in this age group.
- On 27 January, UNICEF received 2000 cartons of ready-to-use therapeutic food supplies which will support 10,000 children for 1 month.
- The nutrition sub-cluster in Gaza will prioritize conducting -upper arm circumference (MUAC) screenings for acute malnutrition in children and provide training to partners on this matter.
- The Nutrition Cluster is collaborating with partners to identify their training needs and enhance their capacity to effectively respond to nutrition activities.

### Challenges and gaps:

- Ongoing hostilities in Gaza have led to severe food shortages, inadequate WASH facilities, and a breakdown in health services, placing children under-five and Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women (PBW) in a state of nutritional vulnerability. In the absence of proper anthropometric and mortality data to feed in the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis, an alternative approach is proposed to monitor the nutritional status of children under-five and PBW through an ongoing assessment of nutritional vulnerability. The ongoing analysis is conducted through a Global Nutrition Information in Emergencies Task Force that is co-chaired by UNICEF and WFP, and involves various partners such as Action Against Hunger, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the Global Nutrition Cluster, the IPC, Save the Children and WHO.
- Given stock and funding, nutrition partners can meet only 25 per cent of the nutritional needs of malnourished children and vulnerable mothers in the next two months. Without immediate funding and an expanded response, 375,000 individuals are at risk of severe undernourishment. Urgent action is crucial to prevent this life-threatening situation.

### Education

#### Need:

- More than 625,000 students and close to 23,000 teachers in the Gaza Strip have been affected by school closures and attacks on education since 7 October 2023. The students need to access education safely.

- Some 92 per cent of all school buildings in Gaza are being used as shelters for IDPs and/or have sustained varying levels of damage. 386 schools (78 per cent of the total school buildings in Gaza) sustained damage, including 138 schools that sustained major damage or were fully destroyed. Combined, these schools previously served some 433,000 children and more than 16,200 teachers. The Khan Younis, North and Gaza governorates have the highest proportion (three quarters) of all damaged schools. The schools will need not be rebuilt or repaired and the needs of IDPs met. For more information, visit the [Education Cluster Damaged School Dashboard](#).
- Education partners highlight the need for the protection of schools and education facilities from attacks, and to scale up advocacy, as well as prioritizing education as an essential programme, for the protection and well-being of children.
- Key priorities include the provision of Education in Emergencies (EiE) recreational activities and psychological support, including Social Emotional Learning (SEL) activities to children in shelters and designated emergency shelters (DESS); establishing Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS) in shelters/DESS to start non-formal learning for children; provision of emergency supplies and learning kits. In addition, a key need is the identification and support of children with disabilities and other needs, with assistive devices for continuity of learning.

#### Response:

- UNICEF with three of its partners and Teacher Creativity Centre are working on establishing Temporary Learning Centres (TLS) to start non-formal education activities with displaced children in shelters/DESS. The Cluster's response is guided by a three-phased response plan – supporting conflict-affected children, teachers, and caregivers in shelters and in host communities; preparing a safe learning environment and re-establishing a sense of normalcy as soon as hostilities stop; and preparing to restore the formal education system through the reconstruction of education infrastructure after a reduction in hostilities.
- Since October 2023, eleven partners have reached more than 125,556 students and teachers (more information in the [Education Cluster 5W dashboard](#)) with psychosocial support, emergency learning, recreational supplies and activities, and awareness sessions in the Deir Al Balah, Khan Younis, and Rafah governorates. Most of the cluster responses are delivered by local partners.
- The Education and the Shelter clusters are carrying out advocacy activities to highlight the devastating impacts of the current situation in Gaza on children and the inextricable links between shelter and schooling. On 24 January, on the occasion of World Education Day, the two clusters published a [joint advocacy note](#) and urged all actors to ensure that barriers to education are addressed, especially through the provision of adequate shelter that facilitates recovery and enables the right to learn.

#### Challenges and Gaps:

- No activities have been undertaken in Gaza City and North Gaza governorates due to ongoing hostilities and access challenges.
- As of 29 January, the education response remains significantly underfunded, receiving only 14 per cent of its requirements (\$114.5M). Education actors and donors are urged to mobilize rapid resources to meet immediate response requirements, as well as supporting the long-run reconstruction of education facilities and structures, when hostilities subside.

## Logistics

#### Response:

- The Logistics Cluster has launched convoy coordination services in Jordan for two routes: Amman to Rafah, via King Hussein Bridge, and Amman to Rafah via Aqaba-Nuweiba. Details on the support and services provided by the Logistics Cluster are available in the [Standard Operating Procedures](#). The Logistics Cluster had been engaging with partners in Amman, Jordan regarding discussions on the Jordan Corridor, to further streamline the current processes for the Jordan Corridor, to allow a larger number of convoys per week.
- Partners continue facilitating access to temporary storage, transport, and cargo notification transshipment services. In Gaza, 1,470 metre square of temporary storage is available in Rafah with road transport services from Rafah to the Logistics Cluster warehouses. Additional warehouse capacity can be made available in Khan Yunis and Deir al Balah once access permits. In Egypt, common storage services are available to support partners with cargo consolidation in Port Said.
- On 10 January, Logistics Cluster and WFP conducted a logistics assessment of Al Arish seaport. The port had already received five vessels since the onset of the Gaza response, mostly for government-chartered vessels; the largest one to dock so far had a capacity of about 4,000 MT of space. More information on the assessment can be found [here](#).

#### Challenges and gaps:

- Persisting challenges include storage and transportation across the Gaza Strip, including temperature-controlled storage. The Logistics Cluster is procuring additional Mobile Storage Units (MSUs), which will be available to humanitarian partners to augment their storage capacities. Moreover, the Logistics Cluster plans to send two temperature-controlled units to Gaza to support with cold chain needs.
- Partners are collecting the pipeline for incoming cargo through the Egypt and Jordan corridors for the coming three months; this is a key exercise for operational planning, to understand available resources, and allocate them based on prioritization.

## Emergency Telecommunications

#### Needs



- Recurrent telecommunications shutdown in the Gaza Strip continues to restrict people from accessing life-saving information and is impeding other forms of humanitarian response.

### Response

- Since 9 January, the ETC has supported 10 humanitarian agencies with ICT assessments, technical advice and information, repairs, and guidance on the use of ICT equipment in Gaza.
- Since its establishment on 3 November 2023, the ETC continues to engage with Israeli authorities towards seeking necessary authorisations to import all essential telecommunications equipment into Gaza and provide independent access to communications for humanitarian responders.

### Challenges and Gaps

- Limited access to electricity, fuel, and telecommunications services continues to hamper the humanitarian response in Gaza.
- Import challenges to telecommunications equipment into Gaza is fraught, lengthy, and extremely challenging.

## Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)

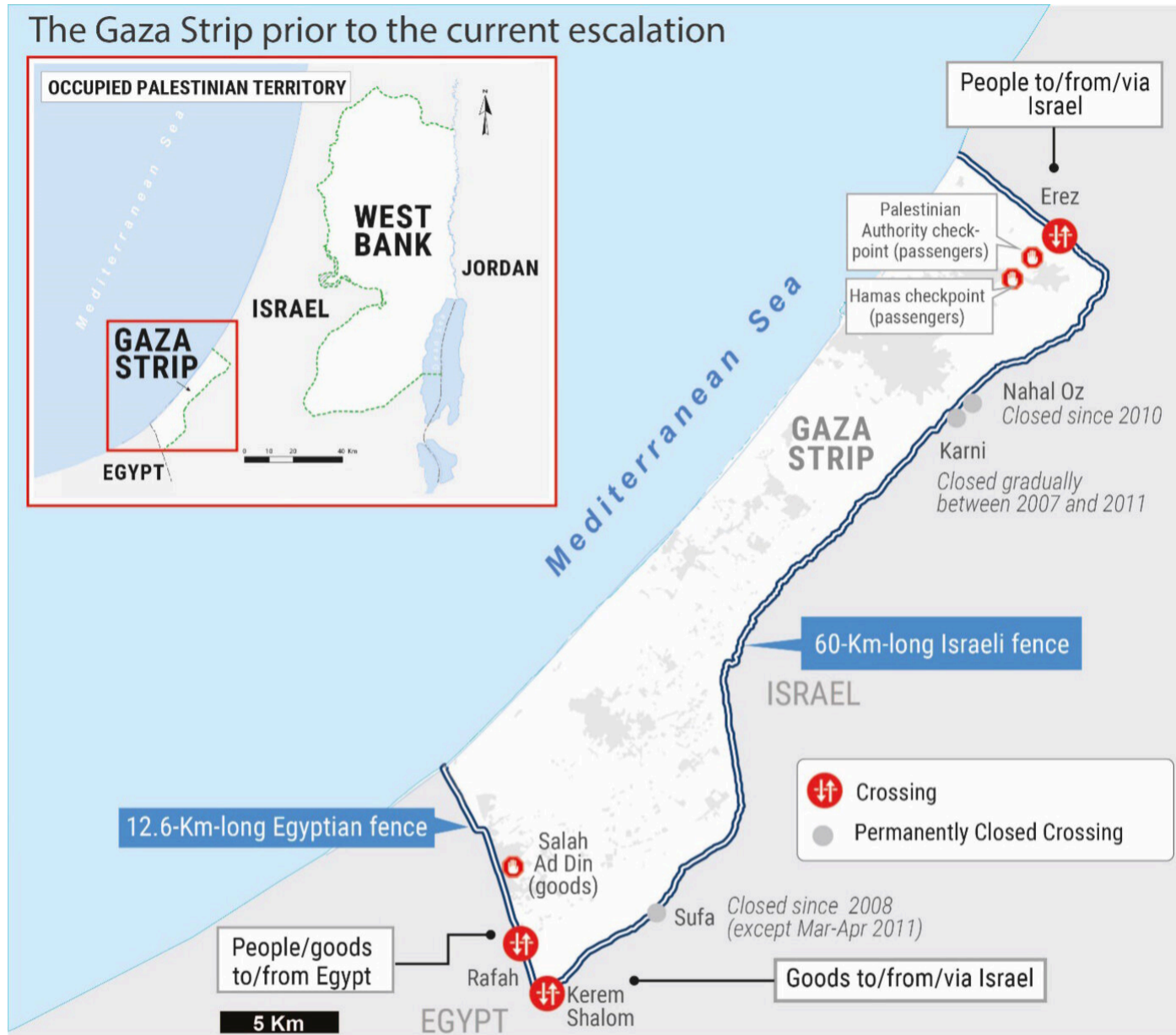
### Response

- Close to 120,000 households are estimated to have received one round of emergency MPCA since the start of the conflict, while another 35,000 people (including people with disabilities and nursing mothers) have received a top-up and close to 1,800 households have received a second round. Even under a normal year where people are expected to have alternative income sources, this package only lasts for a household for up to a month. This also does not consider market collapse and price volatility experienced under the current in-extremis circumstances. Therefore, this assistance falls far below the needs on the ground.
- From the last round of post distribution monitoring data conducted between the third week of December and mid-January, food remains the most purchased with humanitarian cash (98 per cent), followed by medicines (31 per cent), debts repayment (21 per cent), water, hygiene products, and transportation. The percentage of respondents reporting that the assistance helped them accessing needed basic goods and services at that specific time is about 70 per cent.

### Challenges

- Challenges of electricity and connectivity is affecting the Financial Service Providers to make cash accessible, people's ability to retrieve even that one round of MPCA package received remains largely compromised, with nearly 2,600 families having never been able to retrieve the assistance.
- While informal markets are the only source of accessible goods, the scant number of trucks that were sporadically reported to have been entering the city (607 trucks until 19 January 2024) have now stopped, exacerbating the complexity of obtaining essential goods.

Protection against sexual abuse and exploitation (PSEA) remains a cross-cutting priority for all clusters. The SAWA helpline, reachable at 121 and through WhatsApp at +972 59-4040121 (East Jerusalem at 1-800-500-121), operates 24/7. This toll-free number is widely disseminated across all areas of intervention to report cases of SEA and to facilitate emergency counselling and referrals for affected communities to access life-saving services. The PSEA Network monitors calls daily and will increase the number of counsellors if necessary.



\* Asterisks indicate that a figure, sentence, or section has been rectified, added, or retracted after the initial publication of this update.