



Girls sitting at a field hospital run by International Medical Corps after receiving medical treatment for injuries sustained in a 26 May strike on a site for displaced people in Rafah. Photo by OCHA/Yasmina Guerda, 27 May 2024

Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #171

27 May 2024

The OCHA oPt Flash Update is published every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with a comprehensive update on the West Bank included every Wednesday. The next update will be issued on 29 May.

Key Highlights

- Reports of mass casualties, including women and children, in a strike on a site for internally displaced people in northwestern Rafah.
- Health facilities continue to face dire shortages of fuel and medical supplies while having to cope with a rising influx of casualties. The Nasser Medical Complex appealed for citizens to donate blood to address the urgent need for blood units.
- Most of the 15 monitored protection risks are at the highest levels of severity in Gaza, warns the Protection Cluster.

Gaza Strip Updates

- Israeli bombardment from the air, land, and sea continues to be reported across much of the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of houses and other civilian infrastructure. Ground incursions and heavy fighting also continue to be reported, including in Jabaliya, south of Gaza city, northern An Nuseirat, eastern Deir al Balah, and eastern and central Rafah. Following the intensification of hostilities and issuance of evacuation orders in Rafah and northern Gaza, between 6 and 26 May, more than 945,000 people have been displaced from Rafah and 100,000 in northern Gaza.
- On 24 May, Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Martin Griffiths, [stated](#): “There has been nothing limited about the suffering and misery that Israel’s military operation in Rafah has brought to the people of Gaza... [it] has cut off the flow of aid into southern Gaza and crippled a humanitarian operation already stretched beyond its breaking point. It has halted food distributions in the south and slowed the supply of fuel for Gaza’s lifelines – bakeries, hospitals and water wells – to a mere trickle...[at] a time when the people of Gaza are staring down famine; when hospitals are attacked and invaded; when aid organizations are blocked from reaching people in need; when civilians are under bombardment from north to south; it is more critical than ever to heed the calls made over the last seven months: Release the hostages. Agree a ceasefire. End this nightmare.”
- Between the afternoons of 23 and 27 May, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 250 Palestinians were killed and 829 were injured, including 66 killed and 383 injured in the past 24 hours. Between 7 October 2023 and 27 May 2024, at least 36,050 Palestinians were killed and 81,026 were injured in Gaza, according to MoH in Gaza.
- The following are among the deadliest incidents reported between 23 and 26 May:
 - On 23 May, at about 18:20 and again at 21:00, 16 Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when the warehouse of the Ministry of Social Development, reportedly sheltering internally displaced persons (IDPs), was hit near Abu Sultan Street in eastern Deir al Balah.
 - On 24 May, at about 19:00, at least eight Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when a residential building was hit on Yafa Street in Ad Daraj area, in Gaza city.

- On 25 May, at about 12:00, ten Palestinians were reportedly killed and 17 injured when Al Nazla School, reportedly sheltering IDPs, was hit in Al Saftawi area, in North Gaza.
- On 25 May, at about 13:00, seven Palestinians, including five children, were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in Beit Hanoun, in North Gaza.
- On 25 May, at about 23:00, six Palestinians, including two girls and three women, were reportedly killed when a house was hit in Khirbet Al Adass area in central Rafah.
- On the evening of 26 May, mass casualties were reported in an airstrike on an IDP site in northwestern Rafah, north of the UNRWA Log-Base in western Rafah. On the same evening, the Palestine Red Crescent Society ([PRCS](#)) reported that many casualties were transported to “Tal Al-Sultan clinic and the field hospitals near the sea in Rafah,” while others were “trapped under the flames” and in destroyed tents. The Israeli army [reported](#) that an IDF aircraft struck two senior Hamas officials in Rafah. On 27 May, MoH in Gaza reported that 45 Palestinians, including 23 women, children and elderly, were killed and 249 injured in the incident.
- Between the afternoons of 23 and 27 May, one Israeli soldier was reported killed in Gaza and one succumbed to wounds sustained on 22 May. As of 27 May, 287 soldiers have been killed and 1,801 soldiers have been injured in Gaza or along the border in Israel since the beginning of the ground operation, according to the Israeli military. In addition, according to the Israeli media citing official Israeli sources, over 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals, including 33 children, have been killed in Israel, the vast majority on 7 October. As of 27 May, it is estimated that 125 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including fatalities whose bodies are withheld.
- The Health Cluster reports that 16 of Gaza’s 36 hospitals are currently partially functioning, after Al Shifa Hospital resumed the provision of some services, including dialysis treatment for kidney patients. On 26 May, the PRCS [announced](#) that the surgical department and operating room at Al Amal Hospital in Khan Younis had also resumed operations. Meanwhile, intensified military activities continue to result in high casualty figures. On 27 May, the ICRC [reported](#) that its field hospital in Rafah had been dealing with an influx of casualties due to injuries and burns, as other hospitals were already overwhelmed. On 25 May, the Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis [organized](#) a blood donation campaign, appealing to citizens to urgently donate blood to address a deficit at the facility. On 15 May, Médecins Sans Frontières [opened](#) a new Trauma Stabilization Point in Rafah’s Tall As Sultan area, which is acting as a frontline responder for casualties, stabilizing them and then referring them to MoH and field hospitals for further treatment. As of 21 May, the facility had already received over 200 casualties, including a father, a mother and their child, all killed in a nearby bombing.
- On 24 May, UNRWA [reported](#) that, due to the closure of Rafah Crossing and disruption of aid flow via Kerem Shalom Crossing, its health centres had not received any medical supplies for the past 12 days, affecting medicine stocks especially antibiotics for children and anti-epileptic drugs and rendering certain laboratory and dental items and vaccines completely out of stock. Growing insecurity has forced the agency to close four medical points in northern Gaza on 11 May. Two medical points in Gaza city and Al Mawasi were successfully opened on 16 and 21 May, respectively. Through seven of their 24 primary healthcare centres and over 100 medical points currently operational across the Strip, UNRWA’s healthcare staff continue to provide an average of 160,000 people a week with primary health care services, including outpatient services, treatment of non-communicable diseases, medications, vaccinations, antenatal and postnatal health care, dressing for injured patients, and mental health and psychological support.
- More than eight months of hostilities in Gaza have resulted in an unprecedented scale of destruction and loss of civilian life and rendered most of the 15 monitored protection risks at the highest levels of severity, [reported](#) the Protection Cluster in an analysis issued on 24 May. The contamination of agricultural land with Explosive Ordnance (EO) will have long-standing negative consequences, further shrinking people’s capacity to sustain themselves and generate livelihoods and creating a protracted risk of physical injury, the Cluster noted. Other key highlights of the analysis include:
 - Over five per cent of Gaza’s population has been either killed, injured, or is missing. At least 3,000 women are estimated to be widowed, 10,000 children orphaned, 17,000 children left unaccompanied or separated, and more than one million people have lost their homes.
 - Children are adopting increasingly dangerous or negative coping mechanisms when searching for food, water, wood and essential supplies.
 - Risks associated with gender-based violence (GBV) have increased, with limited opportunities for GBV survivors to access life-saving support services and rising GBV risks for children, particularly girls with disabilities.
 - There are multiple indications of “an extremely worrying increase of mass and arbitrary detentions,” with “serious concerns of incommunicado detention and enforced disappearances.”
 - The destruction of offices, displacement of staff, fuel shortages and restrictions on the import of critical risk mitigation and protection supplies have prevented Cluster partners from returning to a fully operational mode, allowing them to maintain only minimum programming.
- Access constraints continue to severely hamper the delivery of life-saving humanitarian aid, exacerbating the suffering of hundreds of thousands of people throughout Gaza. Between 1 and 26 May, 30 coordinated humanitarian aid missions to northern Gaza were facilitated by Israeli authorities, 5 were denied access, 23 were impeded, and 10 were cancelled. Moreover, 107 aid missions to areas in southern Gaza that require coordination were facilitated by Israeli authorities, 29 were denied, 29 were

impeded, and 33 were cancelled. Most missions classified as “impeded” experienced delays of up to nine hours. In one incident on 25 May, a UN inter-agency mission to deliver fuel and supplies and assess a humanitarian hub in Gaza city was aborted after a five-hour waiting time at the checkpoint, during which soldiers demanded physical and vehicular searches as well as biometric checks, procedures that violate UN privileges and immunities. Another UN mission on the same day that intended to deliver fuel and ambulances to two hospitals was similarly aborted.

- On 26 May, the passage of life-saving humanitarian assistance and fuel from Egypt into Gaza through Kerem Shalom Crossing was [welcomed](#) by the UN Secretary-General (SG) in a statement attributable to the SG Spokesperson. The UN Chief also underscored “the need for all crossing points to be open in line with Security Council resolution 2720 (2023) and for humanitarian organizations to have full, safe and unhindered access to reach all civilians in need across Gaza.” He further expressed dismay at “the lack of implementation of the recent orders of the International Court of Justice [ICJ] regarding the situation Gaza,” reminding the parties that the court orders are binding. On 24 May, the ICJ decision [indicated](#) additional provisional measures in the case of South Africa against Israel, including inter alia ordering Israel to “immediately halt its military offensive, and any other action in the Rafah Governorate,” “maintain open the Rafah crossing for unhindered provision at scale of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance,” and “take effective measures to ensure the unimpeded access to the Gaza Strip of any commission of inquiry, fact-finding mission or other investigative body mandated by competent organs of the United Nations to investigate allegations of genocide.”
- Despite the ongoing liquidity shortage driven by the inability of banks to move cash between branches in Gaza, around 15,739 families received Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) across Gaza between 15 April and 26 May, the Cash Working Group (CWG) reports. The CWG has also been working with partner organizations and financial service providers to explore the use of digital payment solutions (e.g. e-wallets) recently developed by the Palestinian Monetary Authority (PMA) and local fintech companies. Digital payment solutions would enhance the ability of people to benefit from MPCA by allowing them to directly purchase essential supplies available on the market, make transfers, or redeem assistance via existing procedures without the need for a bank account or (for most operations) internet access. UNICEF and PayPal are currently piloting the e-wallet programme to serve some 3,600 people in Deir al Balah, where thousands of displaced people have moved from Rafah since the beginning of May. Assisted people can cash out their assistance through 30 agents, make e-payments for supplies from about 300 merchants, or make transfers between e-wallets and bank accounts. Cash actors and financial service providers in Gaza are also working to include street vendors in digital transactions. Since 7 October, 130,763 people have received MPCA across Gaza.

Funding

- As of 27 May, Member States have disbursed about US\$930 million out of \$3.4 billion (27 per cent) requested to meet the most critical needs of 2.3 million people in Gaza and 800,000 people in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, between January and December 2024. This includes about \$623 million out of \$600 million (104 per cent) requested for January-March 2024 and about \$307 million out of \$2.8 billion (11 per cent) requested for the [Flash Appeal](#) launched on 17 April to cover the period between April and December 2024. For funding analysis, please see the Flash Appeal Financial Tracking [dashboard](#).
- The [oPt HF](#) has 118 ongoing projects, for a total of \$72.5 million, addressing urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (85 per cent) and West Bank (15 per cent). The HF has allocated an additional \$22 million to bolster prioritized HF-funded projects in Gaza. Recently, 14 projects for a total of \$5 million have been approved under the Third Reserve Allocation titled “Critical Humanitarian Aid for Gaza Amidst Escalating Conflict and Displacement (Phase 3).” Following a steep rise in displacement from Rafah to Khan Younis and Deir al Balah and to capitalize on the operational presence of national partners, these projects will be implemented by national NGOs (12 projects) or through a partnership between international and national NGOs (2 projects). Since 7 October, the oPt HF has mobilized over \$100 million from Member States and private donors, designated for programmes throughout Gaza. A summary of the oPt HF activities and challenges in April 2024 is available through this [link](#) and the 2023 Annual Report of the oPt HF can be accessed [here](#). Private donations are collected directly through the [Humanitarian Fund](#).

For the Gaza Humanitarian Response Update for the period between 20 and 26 May, please visit: [Gaza Humanitarian Response Update | 20–26 May 2024](#). It is updated throughout the week to reflect new content.

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