



Al Awda hospital. Photo by OCHA

Humanitarian Situation Update #181 | Gaza Strip

21 Jun 2024

The Humanitarian Situation Update is issued by OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory three times per week. The Gaza Strip is covered on Mondays and Fridays, and the West Bank is covered on Wednesdays. The next update will be issued on 24 June.

Key Highlights

- The health system in Gaza has lost 70 per cent of its bed capacity, the Ministry of Health reports, as efforts continue to rehabilitate vital medical services in northern Gaza.
- The volume of medical supplies entering Gaza is insufficient to sustain the health response and all medical evacuations outside Gaza remain halted, warns the World Health Organization.
- About 39,000 high-school students in Gaza are unable to sit for their General Secondary Examinations this year, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Education.
- Women-led organizations are facing immense operational, security and funding challenges, UN Women reports.

Humanitarian Developments

- Israeli bombardment from the air, land, and sea, as well as ground incursions and heavy fighting, continue to be reported across much of the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of houses and other civilian infrastructure.
- Between the afternoons of 19 and 20 June, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 35 Palestinians were killed and 130 were injured. Between 7 October 2023 and 20 June 2024, at least 37,431 Palestinians were killed and 85,653 were injured in Gaza, according to MoH in Gaza. Casualty figures covering the period until the afternoon of 21 June are not available as of the time of reporting.
- The following are among the deadly incidents reported between 18 and 21 June:
 - On 18 June, in the afternoon, three Palestinian men were reportedly killed, purportedly while collecting wood, when an agricultural area was hit in northwestern An Nuseirat Refugee Camp, in Deir al Balah.
 - On 19 June, at about midnight, seven Palestinians were reportedly killed when tents for internally displaced persons (IDPs) were hit in Ash Shakoush area in western Khan Younis.
 - On 19 June, at about midnight, six Palestinians, including children, were reportedly killed, and others were injured when a residential building was hit in Ash Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood, north of Gaza city.
 - On 19 June, at about 1:00, at least eight Palestinians, including a pregnant woman and a child, were reportedly killed and others injured when a barracks, purportedly used for storing humanitarian aid, was hit in Al Mawasi area, northwest of Rafah.
 - On 19 June, at about 19:00, 12 Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when a group of people was hit on Salah Ad Din Road, east of Rafah.

- On 21 June, at about 10:40, five Gaza Municipality workers were reportedly killed while attempting to operate water wells inside a municipality facility in Gaza city, according to a press [statement](#) by the Municipality of Gaza.
- Between the afternoons of 19 and 21 June, two Israeli soldiers were killed in Gaza, according to the Israeli military. Between 7 October and 21 June, according to the Israeli military and official Israeli sources cited in the media, over 1,512 Israelis were killed, the majority on 7 October and including 312 soldiers killed in Gaza or along the border in Israel since the beginning of the ground operation. In addition, 1,957 soldiers were reported injured since the beginning of the ground operation. As of 21 June, it is estimated that 120 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including fatalities whose bodies are withheld.
- On 21 June, the Palestinian Ministry of Education (MoE) [reported](#) that about 39,000 high-school students in Gaza have been deprived of the opportunity to take their General Secondary Examinations (also known as Tawjihi) that are scheduled to begin on 22 June. For students who are currently overseas, MoE is supporting [1,320](#) students from Gaza in taking their Tawjihi exams in 29 Arab countries, the majority (1,090) in Egypt. Overall, some 625,000 students have been out of school in Gaza since October 2023 due to the escalation of hostilities and, as of 11 June, more than 7,000 students and 378 educational staff have been killed in Gaza according to the MoE. Within this context, and given large-scale damage to education infrastructure, Education Cluster partners continue to establish and expand Temporary Learning Sites (TLSs) for school-aged children in and around IDP shelters, which currently serve over 17,000 children in Khan Younis and Deir al Balah; according to the Cluster, these spaces are critical for offering children non-formal learning as well as opportunities to benefit from recreational and mental health and psychosocial support interventions.
- On 18 June, the Commission for Prisoners and Ex-Prisoners Affairs and the Palestinian Prisoners' Club issued a joint statement to express concern about the enforced disappearance of Palestinians detained from Gaza and the lack of information about the circumstances of death of Palestinians who have reportedly died in Israeli custody. The two institutions noted that they have not received any confirmation of the death of Dr. Iyad Al Rantisi, the head of the Maternity Department at Kamal Adwan Hospital, following his detention at an Israeli checkpoint in Gaza on 10 November 2023. The statement came in response to an Israeli [media](#) report that Dr. Iyad Al Rantisi died at Shikma Prison in Israel, six days after he was detained by Israeli forces. According to the same media source, "the Israeli military is investigating 36 deaths at its Sde Teiman detention facility, two deaths at the Anatot detention center and the deaths of two people who died en route to a detention center," adding that "these figures do not include Palestinians from Gaza who died in prisons operated by the Israel Prison Service." Dr. Al Rantisi is the second physician from Gaza to have reportedly died in Israeli custody, following the announced death of Dr. Adnan Al Bursh, the head of the Orthopaedic Department at Shifa Medical Complex. According to MoH in Gaza, at least 310 medical personnel have been detained by Israeli forces. As of June 2024, according to [data](#) provided by the Israel Prison Service (IPS) to Hamoked, an Israeli human rights NGO, there are 9,112 Palestinians in Israeli custody, including 3,410 administrative detainees (37 per cent) held without trial and 899 people (10 per cent) held as "unlawful combatants." These figures do not include Palestinians from Gaza who have been detained by the Israeli military since 7 October 2023 and their number remains unknown.
- Relentless efforts are ongoing to restore key services at health facilities in northern Gaza as the health system struggles to address soaring needs amid a lack of any field hospitals in the area. According to the Health Cluster, rehabilitation works have been completed at the Patients' Friendly Hospital, which now receives an average of 70 patients per day at its emergency department, has a 40-bed capacity dedicated for maternal services, and includes a six-bed stabilization centre for the treatment of severe acute malnutrition cases. Moreover, while Al Shifa and the Indonesian hospitals remain under rehabilitation, the re-opened kidney dialysis department at Al Shifa is now serving 35 patients a week and the Indonesian Hospital is already serving an average of 100 patients a day. Overall, the health sector in Gaza has [lost](#) 70 per cent of its bed capacity, according to the MoH, and faces a range of challenges. For example, Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza governorate in the north has a 100-bed capacity but is struggling to maintain operations, according to the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)), due to an exhausted workforce, unpaid since October 2023, scarce fuel and medical supplies, and lack of orthopaedic, plastic, maxillofacial and neurosurgery specialists. To facilitate the provision of improved medical care to critical cases, WHO and its partners have supported the transfer of some patients from this and other hospitals in northern Gaza to hospitals in southern Gaza; on 17 June, WHO and its partners transferred two patients – a 16-year-old girl with upper limb injury and a 32-year-old woman with spinal fracture, both with congenital hearing loss – from Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza governorate to the European Gaza Hospital in Khan Younis governorate.
- In central and southern Gaza, where over a million people have been displaced from Rafah since 7 May and live in dire conditions, only seven hospitals remain functional, all partially, including three in Deir al Balah and four in Khan Younis, alongside eight field hospitals with a cumulative capacity of 630 beds. Moreover, the volume of medical supplies entering Gaza remains insufficient to sustain the health response. During the second week of June, WHO [delivered](#) its first cargo through Ashdod port for shipment to Gaza via Kerem Shalom Crossing. Although these two containers of antibiotics are estimated to cover the needs of 35,000 people, they "are barely a fraction of what's needed to sustain the massive health response," stressed WHO. Meanwhile, all medical evacuations outside Gaza remain halted since the closure of Rafah Crossing on 7 May, with an estimated 2,150 critical patients unable to leave the Strip as of 20 June, reports WHO.
- Women-Led Organizations (WLOs) in the Occupied Palestinian Territory are facing immense operational, security and funding challenges, [reveals](#) UN Women's latest Gender Alert, based on a rapid assessment carried out in March 2024 of the work of 25 WLOs including 18 headquartered or having a presence in Gaza and seven in the West Bank. The Gaza offices of 89 per cent of surveyed organizations sustained some level of damage, including 35 per cent that were destroyed. More than half of the organizations (56 per cent), including those that had their offices damaged, have been able to operate at full capacity in terms of personnel by relying on their extensive network of volunteers, while 40 per cent have been facing shortages in personnel and, as a result, are working at partial capacity. In addition, financial struggles have been acute since the escalation of hostilities in October 2023, with 56 per cent of WLOs reporting decreased funding that they attributed to suspended instalments or cancelled commitments by donors. The majority also remain seriously concerned about the physical safety and mental health of their staff. Notwithstanding the myriad challenges, UN Women highlighted that surveyed WLOs have maintained high levels of engagement in

various areas of the humanitarian response, except funding decisions, including coordination meetings, the development and implementation of needs assessments and flash appeals, and participation in emergency response efforts. UN Women presented several recommendations that can help humanitarians and donors further strengthen the engagement of WLOs in emergency response, early recovery efforts, and coordination structures, such as prioritizing flexible funding for WLOs and promoting their participation in funding review committees and strategic advisory groups.

- Access constraints continue to severely hamper the delivery of essential humanitarian assistance and services across Gaza, including the provision of critical food and nutrition aid, medical care, protection and shelter support, as well as water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services to hundreds of thousands of people. Between 1 and 20 June, out of 71 humanitarian assistance missions coordinated with the Israeli authorities to northern Gaza, 36 (51 per cent) were facilitated by Israeli forces, eight (11 per cent) were denied access, 18 (25 per cent) were impeded, and nine (13 per cent) were cancelled due to logistical, operational or security reasons. Moreover, out of 210 coordinated humanitarian assistance missions to areas in southern Gaza, 146 (70 per cent) were facilitated by Israeli authorities, 13 (six per cent) were denied access, 27 (13 per cent) were impeded, and 24 (11 per cent) were cancelled. Insecurity along the Salah Ad Din Road remains a major concern due ongoing fighting, criminal activities, and the risk of looting. For instance, a shooting incident on 15 June that resulted in the killing of two Palestinians while an aid convoy was on the road prompted the cancellation of convoys to Kerem Shalom Crossing between 16 and 18 June to mitigate risks. Attempts to use the fence road as an alternative have had limited success. Combined with the lack of public order and safety, these factors have hampered the ability of aid actors to consistently transport relief and fuel supplies that arrive through Kerem Shalom Crossing.

Funding

- As of 21 June, Member States have disbursed about \$1.06 billion out of \$3.42 billion (31 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. For funding analysis, please see the Flash Appeal Financial Tracking [dashboard](#).
- The [oPt HF](#) has 109 ongoing projects, for a total of \$78.9 million, addressing urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (86 per cent) and West Bank (14 per cent). Of these projects, 69 projects are being implemented by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), 26 by national NGOs and 14 by UN agencies. A summary of the oPt HF activities and challenges in May 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](#).