



A Palestinian family trying to dig out what remains of their possessions after their house was destroyed in Bani Suheila, Khan Younis. Photo Themba Linden OCHA

Humanitarian Situation Update #199 | Gaza Strip

02 Aug 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 5 August.

Key Highlights

- Two journalists were killed in an Israeli airstrike, the UN Human Rights Office reports.
- There is a high risk of a further spread of infectious diseases across Gaza amid chronic water scarcity and the total inability to manage waste and sewage, warn UN agencies and local authorities.
- UNRWA has recorded 40,000 cases of Hepatitis A since October 2023 and the Health Cluster is preparing for the worst-case scenario of a polio outbreak.
- Eighty-five sick and severely injured patients were medically evacuated from Gaza, in the largest medical evacuation since October 2023 and the second since early May.

Humanitarian Developments

- 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.
- Between the afternoons of 29 July and 1 August, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 117 Palestinians were killed and 205 were injured. Between 7 October 2023 and 1 August 2024, at least 39,480 Palestinians were killed and 91,128 were injured, according to MoH in Gaza. Casualty breakdowns covering until the afternoon of 2 August are not available as of the time of reporting.
- The following are among the deadliest incidents reported between 28 July and 1 August:
 - On 28 July, at about 12:50, five Palestinians, including a four-month-old infant and two women, were reportedly killed and several others injured when a tent for internally displaced people (IDPs) was hit in Al Mawasi area, in Khan Younis.
 - On 28 July, at about 16:20, ten Palestinians were reportedly killed and tens of others injured when a house was hit in Khan Younis city.
 - On 29 July, at about 12:00, five Palestinians, including a journalist, were reportedly killed when a location was hit near Abu Hmaid Roundabout in central Khan Younis.
 - On 29 July, at about 13:30, five Palestinians were reportedly killed when a group of people was hit in the vicinity of Al Fardus School near Rafah coast, in western Rafah.
 - On 30 July, at about 13:45, at least nine Palestinian males were reportedly killed when a group of Palestinians was hit at the entrance of An Nuseirat Refugee Camp, in northern Deir al Balah.

- On 31 July, at 13:10, ten Palestinian men were reportedly killed and several others injured when a car was hit in northern Az Zawayda, in the vicinity of the Shomar factory on Salah ad Din Road, in central Deir al Balah.
 - On 31 July, two Al Jazeera journalists, a correspondent and a photographer, were killed in an Israeli Air Force drone attack on their car on Aydia Street near Al Shifa Medical Complex, which also killed a Palestinian boy on his bicycle, according to the UN Human Rights Office ([OHCHR](#)). According to the Government Media Office (GMO), the killing of the two journalists has increased the number of journalists killed since 7 October to 165 journalists.
 - On 31 July, at about 23:20, six Palestinian men were reportedly killed and several others injured when a car was hit at the entrance to Al Maghazi Refugee Camp, in central Deir al Balah.
 - On 1 August, at about 17:10, 15 Palestinians were reportedly killed and about 29 others injured when Dalal Al Mughrabi public school was hit in Ash-Shuja'iyeh area, east of Gaza city, according to the Palestinian Civil Defense (PCD). PCD reported that the school was hosting thousands of IDPs and was destroyed.
- Between the afternoons of 29 July and 2 August, no Israeli soldiers were reported killed in Gaza, according to the Israeli military. Between 7 October 2023 and 2 August 2024, according to the Israeli military and official Israeli sources cited in the media, over 1,529 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed, the majority on 7 October and its immediate aftermath and including 329 soldiers killed in Gaza or along the border in Israel since the beginning of the ground operation. In addition, 2,176 soldiers were reported injured since the beginning of the ground operation. As of 2 August, it is estimated that 115 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including hostages who have been declared dead.
 - On 30 July, PCD [reported](#) that 42 bodies were recovered from the area of eastern Khan Younis following the withdrawal of the Israeli military, but the lack of resources and severity of infrastructure damage are hindering the ability of its teams to reach all areas impacted by the operation. During the military operation, PCD noted that denial of access by Israeli forces resulted in them not being able to respond to the tens of calls they received from stranded and injured people in the area.
 - “Nowhere in Gaza is safe, and conditions remain volatile... This has severely limited humanitarian operations and forced food distribution points to close and evacuate,” [stated](#) the UN World Food Program (WFP) on 30 July. Limited fuel deliveries and ongoing hostilities have severely constrained the ability to operate critical facilities, including bakeries. As of 1 August, only 12 out of 18 bakeries supported by humanitarian partners remain operational across Gaza. The volume of distributed food assistance, through food parcel distribution, bakeries and community kitchens, is currently insufficient to meet the enormous needs and lacks dietary diversity. This is further exacerbated by the scarcity of commercial commodities and high prices, particularly in northern Gaza. Despite these challenges, WFP said it assisted over 1.1 million people in Gaza in July, including with general food assistance and multi-purpose cash assistance.
 - In an additional major setback for WASH infrastructure in Gaza, the Israeli military allegedly destroyed with explosives on 27 July a key water production and distribution facility, in Tal as Sultan area of Rafah governorate. The facility includes a 3,000-cubic-metre blending and distribution reservoir and three water pumping stations. The WASH Cluster reported that the destruction appears to have been targeted and would severely impact water treatment and distribution both now and during the recovery phase. Prior to the war, the reservoir served a population of 150,000 and many more during the mass displacement period in Rafah.
 - The impact of ongoing power outages and fuel shortages on WASH services in the Gaza Strip remains severe. Between 22 and 28 July, no fuel was delivered to WASH facilities in northern Gaza, threatening the shutdown of water wells, water trucking and wastewater pumping and affecting hundreds of thousands of people, according to the WASH Cluster. During the same period, the water and wastewater facilities in southern Gaza received 142,575 litres of fuel, averaging approximately 20,368 litres per day. Coupled with access constraints and infrastructural damage, water supply throughout Gaza thus remained critically low during this period at an average of 98,272 cubic metres of water per day, or about one-fourth of the potential capacity of 378,500 cubic metres per day, the Cluster reported.
 - On 31 July, the Palestinian Water authority (PWA) [announced](#) that it successfully delivered about 50,000 litres of fuel to water facilities in northern Gaza. With this delivery, the largest to WASH facilities in northern Gaza since the start of the war, up to 40 water facilities, including 15 water wells in Gaza city, 13 in Jabalya, six in Beit Lahia and two in Beit Hanoun, received the fuel needed to produce approximately 30,000 cubic metres of water per day. Nonetheless, existing fuel deliveries continue to fall short of the daily essential requirement of 70,000 litres to operate WASH facilities, leading to chronic water scarcity. Field observations and site visits by WASH partners suggest that the range of water availability and consumption in the Gaza Strip is between two and nine litres per capita per day. According to humanitarian standards, the minimum amount of water needed in an emergency is 15 litres per capita per day.
 - On 29 July, Khan Younis Municipality [reported](#) that 50 per cent of its machinery (14 out of 26) have been destroyed and rendered out of service, negatively impacting its ability to collect and transfer solid waste, open roads and remove rubble. Furthermore, Gaza Municipality [stated](#) on 28 July that about 80 per cent of its machinery have been destroyed while the rest are in bad condition. Both municipalities indicated that the lack of machinery, spare parts and fuel are driving an increase in the accumulation of solid waste, water shortage and sewage overflow, thereby aggravating public health and environmental conditions. On 1 August, the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) [noted](#) that a further spread in infectious diseases and respiratory illnesses is anticipated due to continued sewage overflow. The CMWU urgently appealed for international support to repair sewage facilities and infrastructure and provide the required equipment and spare parts.
 - Hospitals in Gaza are struggling to cope as they have become inundated with wounded patients due to successive mass casualty incidents, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) [stressed](#). With medical teams at Nasser and Al Aqsa hospitals, MSF noted, for

example, that the 27 July attack on Khadija School dealt a major blow to Al Aqsa Hospital in Deir al Balah, which prior to the war had 220 beds and is now providing care to 550-600 patients. Citing the MoH, MSF added that Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis has critically low levels of blood units. On ten occasions in July, MSF teams responded to the influx of mass casualties but struggled to save lives; in the words of Alice Worsley, MSF nurse activity manager at Al Aqsa Hospital: "Even the most dedicated response can't always save lives without enough supplies, beds, and medical staff."

- Public health conditions in Gaza continue to deteriorate as recurrent evacuation orders and mass displacement have further shrunk people's access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, according to the [Health Cluster](#). Moreover, the overflow of untreated wastewater and sewage in the streets and the mounting accumulation of solid waste continue to fuel water and vector-borne diseases, while access to emergency medical services is increasingly compromised, particularly for pregnant women, persons with disabilities and the elderly. There are also growing concerns that displaced households, who are repeatedly forced to relocate, might seek shelter in the few still partially functional and already overwhelmed hospitals, which would further jeopardize health service delivery, underscored the Cluster.
- Amidst a rapidly worsening situation, the Health Cluster is [preparing](#) for the worst-case scenario of a polio outbreak. Briefing the press in Geneva, the World Health Organization (WHO) spokesperson Christian Lindmeier [emphasized](#) that, while efforts are ongoing to acquire vaccines, as in the case of food and medical supplies, "it is not enough to just get [them] across the border." The WHO spokesperson called for a ceasefire or, at the very least, clear roads and safe access to allow partners to reach each and every person in Gaza with the necessary vaccinations. "Otherwise, the vaccines would be sitting, as many other trucks are, across the border, either on the Rafah side or at the other checkpoints either inside...or outside Gaza," he warned.
- Meanwhile, Hepatitis A [continues](#) to rage across Gaza, with 800 to 1,000 new cases of acute jaundice syndrome reported weekly at UNRWA health centres and shelters. Since October 2023, UNRWA has recorded nearly 40,000 cases in its shelters and clinics, against only 85 during the same period prior to the war. "This is a frightening increase," [underscored](#) UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini. According to [WHO data](#), a total of 107,000 cases of acute jaundice syndrome have been identified through the disease surveillance network since last October.
- On 31 July, 85 sick and severely injured patients - 50 adults and 35 children - were medically [evacuated](#) from Gaza, accompanied by 63 family members and caregivers, with the support of WHO, the Government of the UAE and other partners. This is the largest medical evacuation from Gaza since October 2023 and only the second evacuation since the closure of Rafah Crossing in early May. The patients were first transferred from Gaza via the Kerem Shalom Crossing to Ramon Airport in Israel, and then flown to the UAE to receive the necessary treatment. Fifty-three patients have cancer, including four children, 20 have trauma injuries, while the other 12 suffer from chronic conditions, including thalassemia, fanconi anaemia, and cardiac, liver and kidney diseases. In another operation jointly coordinated by WHO, Belgium, the European Commission and the Palestine Children's Relief Fund, four children suffering from cancer, hearing impairment and respiratory disorders, who had already been evacuated to Egypt prior to the closure of Rafah Crossing, were [transferred](#) to Belgium on 30 July, accompanied by 12 family members, to receive specialized care. Welcoming the successful medical evacuation to the UAE, the WHO Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, [highlighted](#) that thousands of sick patients in the Strip continue to "suffer needlessly" and reiterated WHO's appeal for "the establishment of evacuation corridors via all possible routes, including the Kerem Shalom and Rafah crossings to Egypt and Jordan, and from there to other countries," and for "evacuations to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, to be restored."
- According to the Protection Cluster, protection teams continue to track the release of Palestinians who were arbitrarily detained from Gaza and provide them with emergency assistance, including medical care and support to reunite with their families. At least 53 Palestinian detainees from Gaza and the West Bank have died in Israeli detention since 7 October 2023, according to a new [report](#) by OHCHR. As of the end of June 2024, the Israel Prison Service (IPS) reported that there were 9,440 detainees described as "security detainees," almost double the 5,088 held at the end of September 2023. The number of detainees from Gaza is unknown. Furthermore, the report lists the capturing of Israeli and foreign nationals on 7 and 8 October 2023 by Palestinian armed groups, with over 250 persons initially taken, including 36 children, and refers to the many testimonies of mistreatment and abuse by those released. The report finds that at least 310 Palestinian medical staff, as well as patients, companions and IDPs have been detained during raids on schools, hospitals and IDP shelters, with many of the detainees being unaware of the basis for their detention. Through interviews with released detainees and based on reports by NGOs, the report states that Israeli forces have allegedly committed acts of sexual and gender-based violence and that "many of those detained and subsequently released have reported being subject to forms of torture or other ill-treatment including severe beatings, electrocution, being forced to remain in stress positions for prolonged periods, or waterboarding." According to the report, Israeli authorities have also suspended the access of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in both Gaza and the West Bank, further limiting access to the most vulnerable. On 7 October, more than 10,000 workers and medical patients from Gaza were legally present in Israel and were also taken into custody; it is estimated that 3,200 detainees were released into Gaza, 6,441 were transferred to the occupied West Bank and around 1,000 of them remain unaccounted for.
- Impediments to humanitarian access are ongoing, including restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities on the entry of certain humanitarian supplies (e.g. mine action supplies, recreational and psychosocial support kits), the closure of Rafah Crossing, continued hostilities, damaged and impassable roads, the risk of unexploded ordnance, attacks on aid convoys, and the breakdown in public order and safety. These continue to limit the entry of aid into Gaza and significantly hinder the delivery of aid and basic services to hundreds of thousands of people across Gaza. Between 1 and 29 July, an average of 77 truckloads of aid supplies entered Gaza daily, representing a decline of about 42 per cent compared with the daily average of 132 trucks between January and April 2024. These numbers represent humanitarian cargo that was picked up from any of the entry points into Gaza. Within Gaza, in July, out of 157 humanitarian assistance missions coordinated with the Israeli authorities to northern Gaza, 67 missions were facilitated by the Israeli authorities, 42 were impeded, 30 were denied, and 18 were cancelled due to logistical, operational, or security reasons. Moreover, out of 386 aid mission requests to reach areas south of Wadi Gaza that require coordination, 250 missions were facilitated by the Israeli authorities, 46 were impeded, 53 were denied, and 37 were cancelled.

Facilitated missions involved food distributions, movement of emergency medical teams, fuel distributions, assessments, delivery of supplies to hospitals, and support for WASH activities.

Funding

- As of 2 August, Member States have disbursed about US\$1.6 billion out of \$3.42 billion (47 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. On 10 July, DSC/RC/HC Hadi stated that, “more funding is urgently needed – as is a safe, enabling environment inside Gaza. Increased funding now will enable the humanitarian community to scale up operations as soon as conditions permit. For funding analysis, please see the Flash Appeal Financial Tracking [dashboard](#). (*2.3 million reflects the projected population of the Gaza Strip upon issuance of the Flash Appeal in April 2024. As of July 2024, the UN estimates that about 2.1 million people remain in the Gaza Strip, and this updated number is now used for programmatic purposes.)
- The [occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund](#) (oPt HF) has 111 ongoing projects, for a total of \$88 million, addressing urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (89 per cent) and the West Bank (11 per cent). Of the total, 63 projects are being implemented by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), 34 by national NGOs and 14 by UN agencies. Since 7 October, the oPt HF has mobilized over \$112 million from Member States and private donors to support urgent humanitarian and life-saving programmes across the OPT. Of total funding, 89 per cent has been allocated to projects in Gaza. A summary of the oPt HF activities and challenges in June 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 [oPt HF](#).