



Lives of one million children ‘hanging by a thread,’ as child health services almost collapse across the Gaza Strip

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AMMAN, 10 November 2023 – The near total breakdown and attacks on medical and healthcare services across Gaza, in particular the northern areas, threatens the lives of every child in the Strip.

Over the past 24-hours, medical care at Al-Rantisi and Al-Nasr children’s hospitals has reportedly almost ceased, with only a small generator powering the intensive care and neonatal intensive care units. Intense attacks and hostilities are reported near Al-Rantisi hospital, where there are reportedly children on dialysis and in intensive care.

The Al-Nasr Children’s Hospital was damaged again yesterday in an attack, including lifesaving equipment, according to reports. Another children’s hospital in the north has stopped operating due to damage and a lack of fuel, and a specialist maternity hospital is in desperate need of fuel to keep functioning.

“Children’s right to life and health is being denied,” said Adele Khodr, UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Director. “The protection of hospitals and delivery of lifesaving medical supplies is an obligation under the laws of war, and both are needed now.”

Medical facilities in the middle and southern areas of the Gaza Strip, already overwhelmed treating injuries, are now having to also cope with treating the needs of an influx of hundreds of thousands of people into even more densely packed spaces. These existing services must be supported and strengthened to deal with the increasing challenges they face.

Child health services across the Gaza Strip were already seriously overstretched before the current hostilities, with the health sector lacking adequate physical infrastructure, medical equipment, and with services, including water services, frequently interrupted by power cuts.

More than 1.5 million displaced people, including 700,000 children, are now struggling to access safe water and are living in dreadful sanitation conditions. The risk of waterborne

and other diseases is rising by the day and particularly threatens children.

“Children in Gaza are hanging by a thread, particularly in the north,” said Khodr.

“Thousands and thousands of children remain in northern Gaza as hostilities intensify.

These children have nowhere to go and are at extreme risk. We call for the attacks on health care facilities to stop immediately and for the urgent delivery of fuel and medical supplies to hospitals across all Gaza, including the northern parts of the Strip.”

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