



The delivery of psychotropic medications to people in Gaza, supported by the occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund. Photo by WHO

# Gaza Humanitarian Response Update | 5-18 January 2025

21 Jan 2025

Period: 5-18 January 2025

*The information below is provided every other week by Clusters and select technical working groups operating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). For an overview of priority needs and activities by cluster, please see the [Flash Appeal](#).*

## Food Security Sector (FSS)

### Response

- As of 13 January, approximately 640,000 cooked meals prepared in 170 kitchens were distributed daily to families across the Strip. During this harsh wintertime, many families rely on one cooked meal from community kitchens as their main source of food intake of the day.
- Only about 550 metric tonnes (MT) of flour could be distributed to approximately 110,000 people in the first half of January due to supply shortages, reaching some six per cent of the 1.7 million people estimated to be in central and southern Gaza. Each family, regardless of family size, received one 25-kilogramme bag of flour, as part of the emergency flour distribution. As of mid-January 2025, more than 210,000 MT of food commodities have been procured or are under procurement by FSS partners and need to be urgently brought into the Gaza Strip; this is equivalent to food rations for the whole population for more than six months.
- As of 18 January, only five out of the 20 bakeries supported by WFP were operational across the Strip, all of them in the Gaza governorate. After being forced to operate at 50 per cent capacity due to critical fuel shortages between 11 and 15 January, these bakeries received new fuel on 15 January and have resumed operations at 100 per cent capacity as of 16 January. Bread delivery to selected shelters and community kitchens, which had been suspended, has also resumed. In central and southern Gaza, where all eight WFP-supported bakeries were closed due to flour shortages since 30 November, partners continued to prioritize household-level flour distribution, with each family receiving at least one 25-kg bag of wheat flour. Meanwhile, the seven WFP-supported bakeries in North Gaza and Rafah remained closed due to hostilities.
- FSS partners have put in place measures, including free bread distribution alongside cooked meals at community kitchens and the contracting of retailer shops as bread selling points, to mitigate overcrowding and ensure safe access by families should bread production at WFP-subsidized commercial bakeries in central and southern Gaza resume. Such resumption requires at least 1,000 MT of flour to be available at a time and to be regularly replenished in the warehouses and for the price of flour on the local market to decrease. FSS partners, jointly with the Protection Cluster and the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Network, are also working to put in place measures, such as crowd management and a safe distribution checklist, to strengthen safety and security during distribution processes.
- On 15 January, FSS, in collaboration with the Health Cluster, delivered 150 food parcels to a small number of health workers, patients and their companions at the Indonesian Hospital, in North Gaza.

- As part of preparations to scale up the food response during the ceasefire period, FSS is working to enhance distribution and storage capacities with back-up teams, including by identifying additional partners and distribution points to reach people across Gaza.



### Challenges

- Most parts of the North Gaza governorate have remained largely cut off from any proper assistance for more than three months.
- The sector continues to advocate for the unfettered entry of agricultural supplies such as seed kits, organic fertilizers and nylon sheets for greenhouses, through humanitarian and private sector supply chains. Resuming agricultural activities, including small-scale home, community and school gardening, is key to enhancing diet diversity and reducing food gaps in Gaza.
- Lack of access to sufficient fuel supplies in Gaza governorate continued to hinder response activities. FSS and the Shelter Cluster continue to advocate for the entry of cooking gas into areas north of Wadi Gaza, where there have been no such entries for 15 consecutive months, forcing people to rely on burning waste.



## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)



### Response

- Between 5 and 17 January, the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) and Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) reported that a daily average of 85,325 cubic metres of water was produced across the Gaza Strip; this includes 58,791 cubic metres of drinking water produced from the two operational seawater desalination plants or supplied through the three Mekorot lines and 26,535 cubic metres produced by municipal ground water wells.
- The WASH Cluster has finalized components of the inter-sectoral ceasefire operational plan. This will guide the WASH response once the ceasefire comes into effect.
- During the reporting period, the Hygiene Promotion Working Group, comprised of representatives of 12-15 WASH partners, developed a new technical note that aims to provide comprehensive guidance to WASH partners and response actors on developing, planning, and implementing interventions aimed at enhancing access to hygiene items and WASH Non-Food Items (NFI).
- As of early 2025, the WASH Cluster completed the first round of mapping partners, launched the membership application process for 2025, and finalized the WASH Cluster Partners' Profile that provides detailed information about the area of focus of each WASH partner. In 2024, the Cluster had 77 partner organizations as full members, support members or observers.



### Challenges

- Between 11 and 17 December, WASH Cluster partners received only 12 per cent (an average of 8,685 litres of fuel per day) of the minimum daily requirement of 70,000 litres of fuel to meet critical WASH and public health needs, including water production and distribution, sewage management, repair works and solid waste management; these quantities are exclusive to Deir al Balah and Khan Younis, while governorates north of Wadi Gaza have not received any fuel since early December 2024, rendering almost all WASH facilities in the area inoperable.
- As the ceasefire implementation commences, many people are expected to return to areas of origin and face insufficient access to WASH services, including water supply and distribution, particularly in the North Gaza and Rafah governorates. For instance, initial reports indicate that out of 30 main water wells in Rafah, 15 are fully destroyed and the other 15 require extensive rehabilitation, while the UAE cross-border desalination plant is not operational due to damage to the supply pipeline and proximity to the Philadelphi corridor, leaving returning populations with little or no access to water. Plans are underway to redirect some of the water treated via the Southern Gaza Desalination Plant in Khan Younis to Rafah through a water conveyor and water filling point, as well as to undertake technical assessments and implement immediate actions to restart WASH services to the best extent possible in all critically underserved areas.



## Health



### Response

- On 15 January, WHO and UNMAS led a mission to the non-functional Indonesian Hospital in North Gaza to assess the status of equipment, provide water and food to 30 people who remain at the hospital, including health workers, eight patients and their companions, and evacuate two critical patients and their two companions to Al Shifa Hospital in Gaza city. The hospital has suffered significant damage, especially on the first floor, and cannot be rehabilitated in the medium term. Some equipment, including X-ray and anaesthesia machines, which are either functional or can be repaired, will be relocated to other facilities in a follow-up mission.

- On 15 January, WHO, UNICEF, UNMAS and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) conducted another mission to the Al Awda Hospital in Jabalya, in North Gaza, where 33 patients, 30 companions, 34 doctors and nurses, and 16 administrative staff remained. In addition to evacuating two patients and their companions to Al Shifa Hospital in Gaza city, the mission delivered 5,000 litres of fuel, medical supplies including vaccines, food parcels, as well as water and winter clothes. Debris on the road was cleared by a bulldozer to facilitate access to the hospital.
- On 15 January, 12 critical patients and their 35 companions were evacuated from the Gaza Strip to Romania, France, Norway and Albania to access required medical treatment. In total, since the closure of the Rafah crossing on 7 May 2024, 458 patients including 276 children have been exceptionally evacuated outside Gaza.
- The Health Cluster has finalized its Ceasefire Response Plan, which will guide the response for two months starting on the day the ceasefire begins.



### Challenges

- During the reporting period, intense hostilities around the Indonesian and Al Awda hospitals in North Gaza heavily impeded access to the two facilities. During the 15 January mission to Al Awda, a bullet hit one of the PRCS ambulances, but there were no casualties.
- The detention of health workers remains a major concern, with nearly 200 health workers still in detention according to the Ministry of Health in Gaza.
- Shortages of antibiotics, medications for pain management and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), hemodialysis and orthopedic supplies, pediatric formulations, Intensive Care Unit (ICU) supplies, and laboratory reagents continue to severely jeopardise health service delivery.
- As of 18 January, all still partially functional hospitals exhausted their fuel reserves, relying on piecemeal quantities of fuel delivered daily by partners in an attempt to safeguard the most critical services.



## Nutrition



### Response

- As of 18 January, Nutrition Cluster partners continued to provide services at four in-patient Stabilization Centres for the treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) with medical complications, 120 out-patient Acute Malnutrition Treatment Sites, 151 sites providing nutrient supplementation and another 160 sites providing Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) services.
- The Nutrition Cluster has finalized its Ceasefire Response Plan to guide response priorities once the ceasefire comes into effect, with focus on ensuring service continuity, particularly for children and pregnant and breastfeeding women.



### Challenges

- Privacy for women and girls due to severe overcrowding in shelters remains a challenge, especially for IYCF activities and counselling on breastfeeding. The lack of structures that protect against the cold and rain in the current winter season has also affected the ability to undertake nutrition activities for women and children in safe spaces.
- The limited entry of food and other supplies exacerbates overcrowding and congestion at nutrition sites given the high scale of needs and the rising number of requests for assistance beyond the eligibility criteria.



## Site Management Working Group (SMWG)



### Response

- During the reporting period, SMWG partners completed Phase One of the baseline assessment exercise at 651 out of a total of 1,938 displacement sites. The SMWG has now created an interactive online dashboard that displays collected data and enables stakeholders to better understand service provision levels at the sites, thereby enhancing evidence-based planning for humanitarian operations.
- Between 4 and 18 January, as part of the wider SMWG winterization strategy, one NGO supported households across 20 displacement sites in Deir al Balah that were severely affected by a recent winter storm and assessed storm-related damage across four other displacement sites in Khan Younis. Meanwhile, another NGO focused on constructing small retaining walls and using sandbags to channel stormwater drainage. Currently, most SMWG partners are awaiting the entry into Gaza of additional winterization items to bolster winterization activities.



### Challenges

- Insecurity and access impediments continue to limit access to displacement sites; during the reporting period, only 177 out of 717 displacement sites could be accessed by SMWG partners, preventing assessments and coordination of service

delivery at the remaining 540 sites.

- Moreover, movement restrictions between southern and northern Gaza and fuel shortages continue to hamper SMWG attempts to allocate materials and human resources as needed, with infrastructural damage further hindering timely maintenance activities, thereby resulting in delays and disruptions in service delivery.
- The lack of adequate funding continues to restrict the ability of SMWG partners to extend site management services to all locations where needed.

## Protection

### Response

- Between 5 and 18 January, as part of the roll-out of the Protection Monitoring System [PMS], Protection Cluster partners and emergency protection responders carried out 139 key informant interviews (KIIs) and 42 focus group discussions (FGDs) across 49 neighborhoods in 25 municipalities of the North Gaza, Gaza, Deir al Balah, Khan Younis and Rafah governorates. PMS findings based on engagement with communities reveal that the five major humanitarian concerns driving protection risks are: the lack of food, lack of or destroyed shelters, loss of livelihoods, and lack of water and access to WASH facilities.
- Between 4 and 18 January, UNRWA Protection Teams conducted 42 protection observations in shelters and IDP sites, 25 focus group discussions, 28 key informant interviews, and continued to monitor aid distribution, learning activities in UNRWA shelters, and maintained contact with caregivers of unaccompanied or separated children (UASC) who benefited from cash assistance. The teams also reached 154 children with BBC Lifeline podcast activities and conducted awareness raising sessions on explosive ordnance, gender-based violence (GBV), prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), and child protection, including from the risks associated with winter temperatures, reaching 253, 237, 197 and 202 people respectively, in UNRWA shelters and IDP sites.
- During the reporting period, 39 Palestinian detainees were released at the Kerem Shalom crossing. UNRWA coordinated the provision of assistance to these people, including food parcels and hygiene kits. Eight of the released detainees were also provided with accommodation in an UNRWA shelter in Khan Younis.
- Through protection monitoring and other activities, protection teams identified and referred 447 vulnerable people for assistance to receive specialized services, and facilitated the distribution of assistance, including dignity kits, to 122 people.
- Between 5 and 18 January, Child Protection (CP) actors:
  - Distributed 12,000 winter clothing kits for children across Gaza, prioritizing the most vulnerable groups of children, including newborn babies in hospitals, children in residential care, many of whom have lost their parents, children with disabilities, child survivors of gender-based violence, and children who have been severely affected and displaced by weather conditions. On 18 January, 12,000 additional kits entered Gaza.
  - Provided cash assistance for 594 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and their foster families.
  - Organized 29 CP public audio messages in southern Gaza, reaching 3,167 children (1,242 boys and 1,925 girls, including 10 children with disabilities), and 21 in-person awareness sessions in Al Mawasi area of Khan Younis, reaching 264 people (39 girls, three boys, 147 women and 75 men).
  - Distributed 345 wheelchairs to children with disabilities and injured children through UNICEF and CP partners.
- Between 5 and 18 January, Gender-based violence (GBV) partners:
  - Distributed 55,800 packs of sanitary pads to the most vulnerable groups of women and girls in Gaza city, including those with disabilities.
  - Distributed 2,070 dignity kits and 750 women's winter kits comprising both clothes and NFIs to women in flood-prone areas in Deir al Balah, prioritizing those in the latest stage of pregnancy, new mothers, women with disabilities, injuries and long-term illnesses and other high-risk categories.
  - Carried out an assessment of GBV risks in flood-prone areas and identified vulnerable women, including those in late pregnancy, to prioritize them for support, such as relocation or shelter assistance.
  - Finalized the GBV Flood Preparedness and Response Plan to ensure timely emergency interventions.
  - One Women and Girls Safe Space was established in Rafah, with insecurity largely preventing the GBV partners from providing services in the governorate.
  - Continued to provide a range of services, including MHPSS safe shelter, legal aid, and referrals, reaching over 35,000 persons at risk in December 2024.

### Challenges

- During the reporting period, looting incidents during the transport of supplies from Kerem Shalom Crossing to partners' warehouses resulted in the loss of 5,000 clothing kits, including 2,000 baby kits, while the lack of fuel have prevented national CP partners from accessing hard-to-reach areas to distribute winter clothes and other essential supplies.
- Access to North Gaza remained severely restricted, allowing GBV partners to only deliver remote consultations.
- The needs of displaced people in UNRWA shelters and other IDP sites across Gaza remain high and largely unmet due to critical supply shortages, including food, water containers, NFIs, and hygiene items, and access impediments. For

example, during the reporting period, insecurity prevented access to UNRWA shelters in Deir al Balah, hindering the ability of protection teams to conduct a range of activities and deliver services.

- Lack of access to medications has negatively affected not only the health conditions of people suffering from non-communicable and chronic diseases but also their psychological status, their relationship with family members and their ability to interact with the community, leading to further isolation as well as risks of neglect, violence and exploitation.



## Education



### Response

- Jointly with World Central Kitchen (WCK), a FSS partner, the Education Cluster distributed 1,200 kilogrammes of bananas to children across 17 Community Learning Spaces (CLSs) in Al Zawayda and Deir al Balah areas, benefiting over 6,000 children. The provision of these snacks plays a crucial role in alleviating hunger among children and encourages regular school attendance.
- The Cluster has continued to map and establish criteria for supporting community-led informal learning initiatives, which currently encompass 694 sites benefiting over 170,000 learners. The Cluster has also developed guidance for partners to increase support for these initiatives, instead of establishing news sites, with the view of enhancing sustainability and community acceptance, especially considering the short lifespan of some funded projects.
- As of 18 January, a total of 280,000 students have registered for the distance learning initiative launched by UNRWA on 1 January, of whom 230,000 were enrolled in UNRWA schools and 50,000 in Palestinian Authority and private schools prior to the escalation of hostilities. This initiative (registration accessible at this link) complements existing efforts by Education Cluster partners, including mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS) and recreational activities in shelters and UNRWA-operated spaces as well as non-formal learning activities at over 85 Temporary Learning Spaces (TLSs). The program utilizes self-learning materials (SLMs), which were recently published on the UNRWA website (accessible via this link) and which have been reviewed to ensure conflict sensitivity and relevance to the current situation. Core subjects for the first semester, including English, Mathematics, Science and Arabic, have already been published, and preparations for the second semester's materials are underway. While the process primarily targets UNRWA students, the participation of non-UNRWA learners is encouraged and a system has been put in place to track their attendance. Printed SLMs are planned to be distributed to all learners, prioritizing initially elementary students (Grades 1 to 3), students in the North Gaza and Gaza governorates and students with special needs.



### Challenges

- Students enrolled in distance learning initiatives face challenges in attending classes due to limited internet access, a lack of electronic devices, and insufficient power to charge these devices. These obstacles continue to hinder access to learning opportunities for students who have already lost 15 months of education.
- Continued restrictions by the Israeli authorities on the entry of education supplies into Gaza, from tents to establish new TLSs to textbooks and individual student kits, are hampering the education response. No approvals have been received yet by the Cluster partner that has enough supplies for 465,000 children in Jordan but cannot dispatch them to Gaza due to ongoing restrictions, while another partner aiming to expand TLSs has faced impediments in getting the needed approvals from the Israeli authorities. Supplies currently prepositioned in Egypt for entry into Gaza via the Fence Road face additional constraints due to limited truck access. These barriers leave many children without essential learning opportunities, as existing TLSs are insufficient and ill-equipped for harsh winter conditions.
- During the reporting period, seven attacks affecting schools were recorded, three in Gaza city, two in North Gaza and two in Deir al Balah, affecting two UNRWA and five Palestinian Authority schools. These attacks continue to deplete education infrastructure, causing loss of life and igniting fear among children, parents and teachers. As of 7 January, a total of 12,119 students and 498 teachers had been killed, while 19,483 students and 2,603 education personnel had sustained injuries, many of which are life-altering, according to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE). Intensifying advocacy for the protection of learning spaces and the safety of children and educational personnel remains critical.



## Logistics



### Response

- Between 5 and 18 January, the Logistics Cluster facilitated four direct convoys of 50 trucks from Amman to Erez West on behalf of eight partners, carrying 567 metric tonnes of WASH, food, protection and shelter items. To date, the Logistics Cluster has facilitated 104 humanitarian inter-agency convoys through the Jordan corridor, dispatching 1,324 trucks with 13,212 metric tonnes of aid into Gaza on behalf of 26 partners.
- Between December 2023 and as of 18 January 2025, the Logistics Cluster consolidated 30,417 cubic metres of humanitarian cargo at the warehouse in Amman and received 60,170 cubic metres for common storage inside Gaza.
- As of 16 January, 890 trucks for UN and international NGOs were in line in Al Arish, Egypt, ready to be dispatched into Gaza.



## Challenges

- Access and security restrictions that hinder logistics operations at Gaza's entry points, particularly at the Kerem Shalom and Kissufim crossings.
- The Logistics Cluster continues to experience delays in being granted access by Israeli authorities to the Erez West crossing to collect and transport supplies, leading to mission cancellations in some cases.



## Emergency Telecommunications (ETC)



### Response

- On 13 January, 15 additional satellite-based tracking devices were delivered to Gaza to support operations and enhance staff safety and security. To date, the Israeli authorities have approved the entry of 98 tracking devices into Gaza, which are currently being used by 11 UN agencies.
- For more information on ETC activities, please visit: [Palestine: Conflict | Emergency Telecommunications Cluster \(ETC\) \(etcluster.org\)](https://www.etcluster.org).



### Challenges

- The lack of safe access, recurrent evacuation orders, and the cancellation of scheduled missions hinder the deployment of shared ETC services and technical support to humanitarian partners.
- A significant amount of equipment has been damaged or destroyed due to ongoing hostilities, and importing new equipment is restricted and challenging, limiting the delivery of ETC services.
- The ETC urgently requires US\$2.5 million, as requested under the 2025 Flash Appeal for the OPT, to sustain lifesaving operations in Gaza throughout the year. This funding is essential to enable the ETC to provide coordination and information management activities and deploy shared communications services in key locations across Gaza, in support of the safety and effectiveness of humanitarian efforts.

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Protection against sexual abuse and exploitation (PSEA) remains a cross-cutting priority for all clusters. Aid distribution must be delivered with dignity and respect. Any wrongdoing can be reported through SAWA toll-free number 164. SAWA will assist and provide services free of charge and with the utmost confidentiality.