



Vaccinating a child in Gaza against polio. Photo by WHO

Humanitarian Situation Update #267 | Gaza Strip

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The Humanitarian Situation Update is issued by OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory twice a week. The Gaza Strip is covered on Tuesdays and the West Bank on Thursdays. The Gaza Humanitarian Response Update is issued every other Tuesday. The next Humanitarian Situation Update for the West Bank will be issued on 27 February.

Key Highlights

- Over 586,000 children under the age of 10 have been vaccinated for poliovirus across Gaza, reaching 99 per cent of the target population since the campaign began on 22 February.
- Six newborns reportedly died from the cold weather in Gaza city and Khan Younis, health officials cited in the media report.
- Since the ceasefire began, the UN and its humanitarian partners have coordinated the distribution of over 100,000 tents. These figures only refer to humanitarian assistance coordinated by the UN.
- The average daily volume of water produced by groundwater wells has more than doubled since the ceasefire, due to increased fuel availability and basic emergency repairs.

Humanitarian Developments

- On 20 and 21 February, Palestinian armed groups returned to Israel, through the International Committee of the Red Cross ([ICRC](#)), the remains of four Israeli hostages, including an elderly man, a woman and her two children. Initially, an unidentified body was sent instead of the killed Israeli mother, whose real remains were then returned separately, as confirmed by Israeli forensic officials. On 22 February, the ICRC facilitated the release of six living Israeli hostages from Gaza to Israel. The scheduled release of 620 Palestinian detainees from Israeli detention centres on the same day—reportedly including 445 people who were detained from the Gaza Strip after 7 October, 151 other detainees, one woman and 23 children (boys)—has been postponed by Israeli authorities, reportedly until Palestinian armed groups cease to carry out release ceremonies. In total, since 19 January, 25 Israeli and five Thai hostages, the bodies of four Israeli hostages, and 1,135 Palestinian detainees have been released.
- As of 25 February, it is estimated that 63 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including hostages who have been declared dead and whose bodies are being withheld in Gaza.
- As of February 2025, according to [data](#) provided by the Israel Prison Service (IPS) to Hamoked, an Israeli human rights NGO, there are 9,846 Palestinians in Israeli custody, including 1,734 sentenced prisoners, 2,941 remand detainees, 3,369 administrative detainees held without trial, and 1,802 people held as “unlawful combatants.” These figures do not include Palestinians from Gaza who have been detained by the Israeli military since 7 October 2023.
- Between the afternoons of 18 and 25 February, the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza reported the killing of 57 Palestinians and the injury of 39 others; this includes 47 newly retrieved bodies. Since the ceasefire came into effect on 19 January, and as of 25 February, a total of 722 bodies were retrieved from areas that were previously inaccessible, MoH reported. As of 25 February 2025, MoH in Gaza reported the killing of at least 48,348 Palestinians and the injury of 111,761 others, since 7 October 2023.

- Between 17 and 25 February, several incidents resulting in fatalities were reported across the Gaza Strip. On 17 February, two Palestinians, a boy and a man, were reportedly killed near Al Awada Roundabout in central Rafah. On 19 February, one Palestinian was reportedly killed, and others injured, when a group of people were hit in Ash Shokat area in south-eastern Rafah. On 23 February, a Palestinian man was reportedly killed, and four others were injured, when a vehicle reportedly securing humanitarian aid overturned following shots fired towards it near Rafah Crossing.
- Between 7 October 2023 and 25 February 2025, according to Israeli forces and official Israeli sources cited in the media, more than 1,607 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed, the majority on 7 October 2023 and its immediate aftermath. This includes 407 soldiers killed, in addition to 2,581 soldiers injured, in Gaza or along the border in Israel since the beginning of the ground operation in October 2023.
- Between 24 and 25 February, six newborns reportedly [died](#) from severe cold weather in Gaza city and Khan Younis, according to health officials cited in the media. Five of the six newborn deaths were reported by the director of the Patient's Friends Hospital in Al Rimal, in Gaza city, and were among infant patients recently admitted due to "cold injury," including hypothermia. On 25 February, local media reported that a two-month-old girl died due to cold weather while staying in a tent in Al Mawasi, in Khan Younis, and her body was received at Nasser Hospital, according to the head of the hospital's paediatric department as cited in the [media](#).
- The increased inflow of assistance since the ceasefire has enabled Cluster partners to reach tens of thousands with urgently needed tents and shelter materials. According to the Shelter Cluster, since the ceasefire, its partners have coordinated the distribution of over 100,000 tents across the Gaza Strip to internally displaced persons (IDPs) returning to plots of destroyed homes or to IDP shelter sites. These figures only refer to humanitarian assistance coordinated by the UN. In addition, partners have provided 113,260 families with tarpaulins and reached about 10,500 people with blankets, mattresses, pillows, clothing and other non-food items (NFIs). Based on vulnerability criteria set by the cluster, partners undertake thorough assessments and verifications to inform distributions.
- On 20 February, the UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), Muhannad Hadi, [visited](#) the Gaza Strip, alongside the Director-General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Amy Pope. They visited several makeshift sites and spoke with residents, who emphasized the urgent need for shelter support as a key priority. Mr. Hadi and Mrs. Pope also met with key partners, staff and the Shelter and Site Management clusters. During discussions with the clusters, the need to enhance support for site planning to ensure minimum standards was stressed. Identifying safe and accessible site locations remains a major constraint due to widespread damage, rubble and the need for clearance of explosive remnants of war, and inadequate access to essential services, further complicating site selection and preparation. Partners reiterated that while technical capacity is available, severe funding shortages remain a key challenge. Additionally, facilitating the entry of construction materials, particularly cement, is critical for preparing the foundations of mobile shelters and enabling light repairs to homes.
- On 22 February, in the third such campaign in six months, a three-day mass polio vaccination campaign, with two additional mop-up days, was [launched](#) at 418 sites across the Gaza Strip, aiming to cover more than 591,000 children under 10 years of age. The campaign is led by the MoH and implemented with support from the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNRWA, the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and other health partners. UNRWA through its health teams comprise about a third of the overall polio vaccination response. On the first three days of the campaign, the Health Cluster [reported](#) that a total of 547,748 children were vaccinated, constituting 92.6 per cent of the target population. These comprise about 89,000 children in North Gaza governorate, 186,000 in Gaza governorate, 93,000 in Deir al Balah governorate, 135,000 in Khan Younis governorate, and 44,000 in Rafah governorate. On 25 February, WHO [reported](#) that the polio vaccination campaign achieved 99 per cent of its target, reaching over 586,000 children under the age of 10, with efforts underway to reach the remaining children. While there have been no polio cases reported since a 10-month-old unvaccinated child was reported with poliovirus in August 2024, wastewater samples collected in December 2024 and January 2025 confirmed poliovirus transmission, according to [WHO](#). Moreover, WHO and UNICEF have [warned](#) that current conditions in Gaza, including extensive population movements, overcrowded shelters and damaged water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure, are ideal for the further spread of poliovirus, in addition to heightening the risks of communicable disease outbreaks.
- On 24 February, [WHO](#) reported that, since 1 February, it has supported the medical evacuation of 851 patients, including 320 children, from Gaza to receive specialized care in Egypt and other countries. About 12,000 to 14,000 people, including more than 4,500 children, remain in urgent need of medical evacuation, WHO added, urging "scaled-up approvals via all possible routes, including the restoration of medical referrals to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem."
- Health Cluster partners continue to scale up support to health facilities across Gaza to restore essential services and boost capacity. Since the ceasefire, 17 new primary healthcare centres (PHCs) have been established, increasing the number of fully or partially functional PHCs to 62, while 83 PHCs remain non-functional. Of these, one PHC is now functional in North Gaza, 13 in Gaza, 26 in Deir al Balah, 19 in Khan Younis and three in Rafah. In addition, 11 medical points and seven mobile clinics have been newly established. On 21 February, the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) began operating its [field hospital](#) in Gaza city. The facility has 64 beds, including eight intensive care unit beds and six neonatal incubators and includes two operating rooms, one medical laboratory and one X-ray unit. Overall, in the past 30 days, WHO supported 17 hospitals, three field hospitals and up to 50 health cluster partners through the distribution of life-saving medical supplies sufficient for about 1.8 million people. These comprise kits for trauma and emergency care, primary health care, non-communicable diseases, sexual and reproductive health, maternal care and childcare, as well as dignity kits and nutrition supplements. Furthermore, on 17 February, in collaboration with the MoH, WHO [supported](#) the deployment of a second national emergency medical team (EMT) of 52 Palestinian doctors and surgeons to enhance surgical capacity at Al Aqsa Hospital in Deir al Balah and the European Gaza and Nasser hospitals in Khan Younis. The areas of focus of the team, which is mentored by the Norwegian Aid Committee (NORWAC), are orthopaedics,

gynaecology and obstetrics, general surgery, and anaesthesiology. This is the second national EMT deployed in Gaza, with the first operating at Al Shifa Hospital.

- UNRWA continues to scale up services across Gaza. Since the start of the ceasefire, UNRWA teams have delivered critical food assistance to an estimated two million people – nearly everyone in Gaza. They also distributed tents to over 12,800 families (or about 64,000 people), provided over 364,000 health consultations at nine health centres and through more than 120 mobile teams working at about 50 medical points, and reached more than half a million people across the five governorates with blankets, mattresses, floor mats, clothes, kitchen items, tarpaulins for rain protection and other NFIs. There are also 120 shelters across Gaza run by UNRWA, hosting about 120,000 people. Between 17 and 23 February, at least 8,100 IDPs accessed UNRWA psychosocial support (PSS) sessions and activities and, as part of UNRWA's "Back to Learning" programme, over 6,600 children participated in basic literacy and numeracy activities, PSS sessions and recreational activities, such as arts, music and sports. Moreover, to date, nearly 260,000 children have enrolled in the UNRWA-run distance learning programme and received basic learning activities delivered by over 7,600 teachers covering Arabic, English, mathematics, and science.
- The average daily volume of water produced by groundwater wells has more than doubled since the ceasefire due to increased fuel availability and basic emergency repairs; functional and accessible groundwater wells are now collectively producing a daily average of 83,234 cubic metres of water, compared with a daily average of about 35,659 cubic metres produced by groundwater wells in the month prior to the ceasefire. At the same time, one of three Mekorot water supply lines from Israel, the Bani Saeed line in Deir al Balah governorate, has been out of service for over a month after sustaining damage due to military activities in the "buffer zone." Since then, WASH Cluster partners have had requests to access and repair the water line rejected by Israeli authorities, according to the cluster. The continued non-operation of the Bani Saeed line has reduced overall potential water supply by 14,400 cubic metres per day, significantly affecting water accessibility for residents in Al Bureij, Al Maghazi, Deir al Balah and Kuza'a municipalities. Overall, while the total volume of water produced and supplied has increased by 42 per cent since the ceasefire began on 19 January, it stands at about a third of water supply prior to October 2023. Between 8 and 21 February 2025, the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) and Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) reported that an average of 135,590 cubic metres of water was produced daily across the Gaza Strip, including 52,356 cubic metres of drinking water produced from the two operational seawater desalination plants or supplied through the two operational Mekorot lines from Israel, and 83,234 cubic metres produced by municipal ground water wells.
- WASH Cluster partners continue to scale up response efforts to enhance water accessibility and mitigate public health risks. With a high leakage rate in water distribution networks of over 70 per cent associated with extensive damage during 15 months of escalated hostilities, compared with a 50 per cent loss rate prior to October 2023, cluster partners have been gradually increasing water distribution through water trucking since the ceasefire began. At present, partners are trucking about 16,473 cubic metres of water per day to 1,698 collection points across the Gaza Strip, reaching over 1.1 million people. Partners have also completed this week the rehabilitation and maintenance of three brackish water desalination plants in the Deir al Balah and Khan Younis governorates, which collectively produce about 589 cubic metres of water per day and benefit 76,000 people. Yet, repair efforts continue to be limited due to shortages in materials on the local market to sustain water distribution efforts, including plastic pipes, generators, rigid plastic tanks, membranes, and spare parts for desalination units.
- The lack of sufficient repairs to water infrastructure, coupled with limited storage capacity, continues to undermine water quality, increasing the risk of contamination and associated public health concerns. To improve access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene services, WASH Cluster partners have distributed nearly 8,000 hygiene kits, benefiting 8,000 households over the past week, starting from 16 February, along with 3,500 water containers (jerrycans). Since the beginning of the ceasefire, they have distributed a total of 82,500 hygiene kits and more than 27,500 jerrycans, in addition to approximately 102,000 cleaning kits so far in 2025. Furthermore, partners have constructed 940 household latrines and 469 communal latrines since the ceasefire, and decommissioned 763 pit latrines in Khan Younis and Deir al Balah, in locations where IDPs had left. Within this context and to enhance testing capacity of basic water parameters, including microbiological contamination, UNICEF has brought in five water quality field laboratories, with a total of 10 such laboratories now available in the Gaza Strip, and WHO is leading water quality surveillance efforts to ensure the optimized use of limited testing capacity.
- Efforts continue to address the solid waste crisis in Gaza, despite the lack of a sufficient number of solid waste removal trucks and hindered access to landfills in the "buffer zone," the WASH Cluster reports. According to the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), over 260,000 tons of solid waste have been removed across the Gaza Strip over the first four weeks of the ceasefire, benefitting about 624,000 people. More than 1,200 cubic metres of waste per day have been collected in Gaza and North Gaza governorates to reduce accumulated waste, with efforts underway to scale up collection to 2,500 cubic metres of waste per day for the next two months to cope with the accumulated amount of waste. Additionally, in Deir al Balah, the Municipality has contracted a private company to rehabilitate "Barak 2" landfill and improve solid waste management, with support from UNDP. Notwithstanding these efforts, the inability to transfer solid waste from about 30 temporary dump sites, about half of which are already full, to the Sufa landfill in southern Gaza and the Juhor al Dik landfill in northern Gaza—both of which are located in the "buffer zone" and remain inaccessible—continues to pose significant challenges to solid waste management efforts, aggravating public health risks. On 24 February, the Gaza Municipality [warned](#) of a health and environmental disaster due to the presence of thousands of tons of waste in the streets and temporary landfills, reporting that 80 per cent of the municipality's machinery, including equipment used for waste management, has been destroyed.
- On 18 February, the World Bank, European Union, and UN [issued](#) findings of the latest Gaza and West Bank Interim Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (IRDNA), which analyzes damages and losses as well as recovery and reconstruction needs across almost all sectors of the Palestinian economy, based on data collected between October 2023 and October 2024. According to the IRDNA, total recovery and reconstruction needs in Gaza require US\$53 billion over the next decade. The housing sector in Gaza, which sustained the most damage, accounts for about 53 per cent of the total damage, followed by commerce and industry (20 per cent), transport (eight per cent), and WASH (five per cent). In a [statement](#), the UN Resident Coordinator, Muhannad Hadi,

emphasized that with immense recovery and reconstruction challenges ahead, the “UN stands ready to support the Palestinian people both on humanitarian assistance and a future recovery and reconstruction process.”

Funding

- As of 25 February 2025, Member States have disbursed approximately US\$149.7 million out of the \$4.07 billion (3.7 per cent) requested to meet the most critical humanitarian needs of three million out of 3.3 million people identified as requiring assistance in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in 2025, under the 2025 [Flash Appeal](#) for the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). Nearly 90 per cent of the requested funds are for humanitarian response in Gaza, with just over 10 per cent for the West Bank. Moreover, during January 2025, the [oPt Humanitarian Fund](#) (oPt HF) managed 101 ongoing projects, totalling \$72.4 million, to address urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (86 per cent) and the West Bank (14 per cent). Of these projects, 55 are being implemented by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), 33 by national NGOs and 13 by UN agencies. Notably, 41 out of the 68 projects implemented by INGOs or the UN are being implemented in collaboration with national NGOs. For more information, please see OCHA’s Financial Tracking Service [webpage](#) and the oPt HF [webpage](#).

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