



# EMPHNET Emergency Bulletin

February 15, 2024

## The Health Status in Gaza and Sudan

### Situation Overview

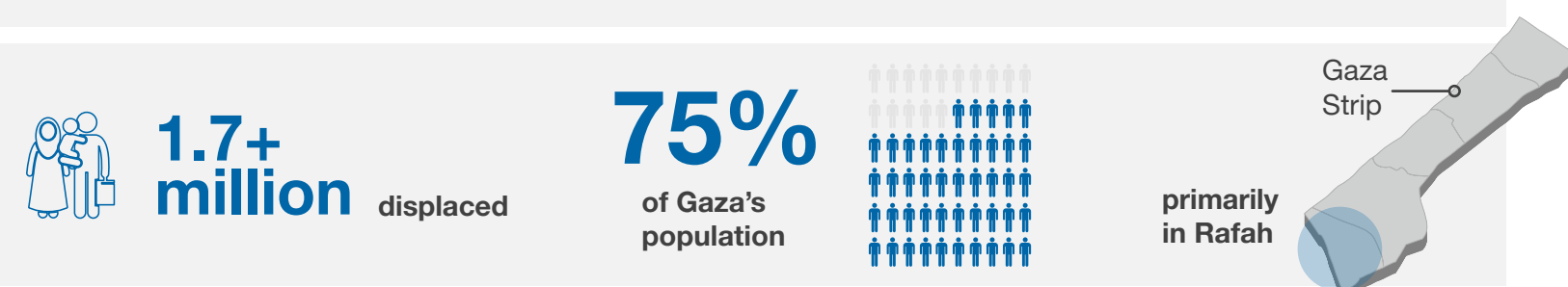
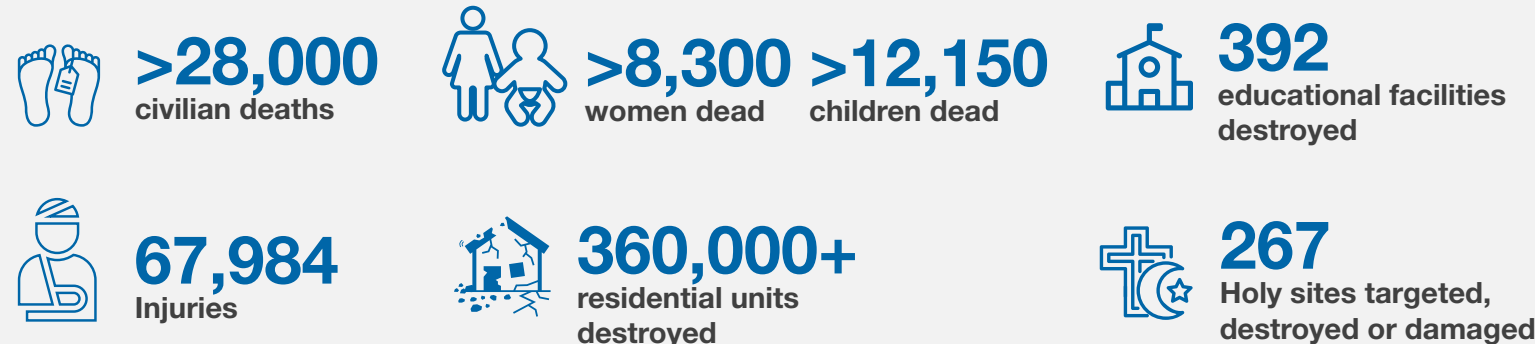
The Eastern Mediterranean region is currently facing two of the most severe humanitarian crises in recent history, rooted in prolonged conflicts that have devastated communities and triggered a cascade of humanitarian emergencies.

In the Gaza Strip, the war has escalated, reaching its 127th day. Intensified strikes have led to a significant escalation in the humanitarian crisis in Rafah, where the displaced population has now reached 1.5 million, with 1.7 million people across Gaza affected. This increase exacerbates the already dire situation, highlighting the urgent need for humanitarian assistance and relief efforts in the area. UNRWA underscores an urgent need for access and aid delivery to those isolated or displaced multiple times.

In Sudan, the crisis has been ongoing since mid-April 2023, displacing 7.76 million people. The situation has caused cross-border displacement, increased food assistance needs, and impacted health facilities.

### Gaza Crisis in Numbers

October 7, 2023 to February 12, 2024



Source: Palestinian Ministry of Health in the occupied West Bank

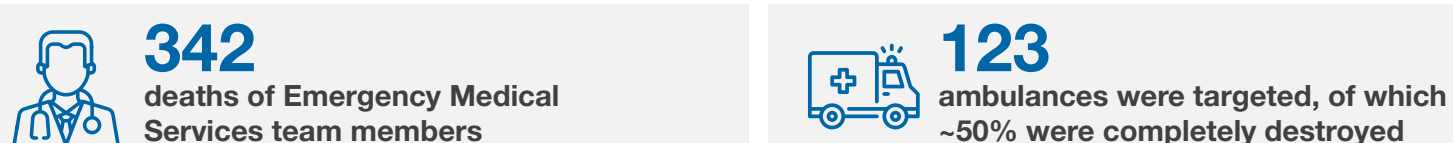
### Attacks on the Healthcare System in Gaza

Continuous attacks on healthcare facilities, ambulances, and medical staff jeopardize the safety of the population and healthcare staff. According to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS), on 11 February 2024,

**the Israeli army invaded Al Amal Hospital in Khan Younis, detaining 18 people, including 9 medical and volunteer staff.**

This has not been the only incident of attacks on healthcare. In the last 4 months:

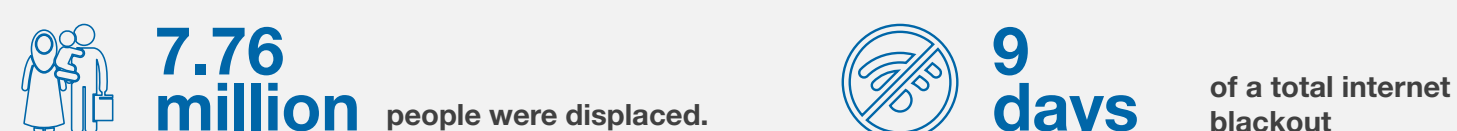
Between October 7, and February 11, 2024



Source: Palestinian Ministry of Health

### Sudan Crisis in Numbers Since Mid-April

There were limited information about the situation in Sudan due to the limited communication during the last 10 days.



Source: OCHA Source: NetBlocks

### Attacks on the Healthcare System in Sudan

From April 15 to December 15, 2023



Source: World Health Organization

### Implications of Attacks on Healthcare and the Health Status of the Population

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) stipulates regulations pertaining to armed conflict. It provides protection to people who are no longer engaged in armed conflict. Accordingly, patients, health staff, and the general population should be protected at all costs. Unfortunately, the IHL is not being followed in Gaza and Sudan or endorsed by relevant parties, and this is severely risking people's well-being.

Direct attacks are prominently made on health personnel, patients, and health facilities in both Gaza and Sudan. However, the IHL dictates that a clear distinction by both parties of the conflict should be made at all times between civilians, civilian infrastructure, and military combatants. The direct attacks on health facilities and hospitals are damaging solar panels, responsible for providing electricity for the operation of health facilities, and resulting in the killing and injuring of patients and healthcare providers. They are having a significant impact on the health status of the population. Attacks on ambulances providing life-saving services or referral services have been documented in both countries.

In order to meet the immense needs of both populations, attacks should immediately be stopped, and a consistent supply of

humanitarian aid should be allowed into both Sudan and Gaza. Attacks on healthcare facilities not only damage the infrastructure, but also impede the delivery of healthcare services. Ambulances, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and rescue teams are finding it extremely difficult to navigate the region without a safe and accessible route. In Gaza, healthcare staff are unable to navigate through hospital wards without the risk of being shot or injured by the Israeli Army. This disruption severely limits access to medical care, further heightening the risk of disease outbreaks, especially among the massively displaced populations living in overcrowded areas with inadequate sanitation. Moreover, the psychological impact on communities is substantial, with increased incidences of stress, anxiety, depression, and PTSD. The destruction of healthcare infrastructure poses significant challenges to health system recovery in the long term, thus delaying the restoration of services and the ability of the health system to meet the population's needs.

International support and interventions are urgently needed to rebuild healthcare facilities, ensure the safety of healthcare workers, and provide essential medical supplies and support to the affected populations.

### Initiatives for Gaza's Healthcare Rebuilding

Efforts to revitalize Gaza's healthcare system are underway, with contributions being made by different agencies to this effort. On February 7, 2024, the First International Conference to Rebuild the Health Sector in Gaza took place in Amman, Jordan, and a delegation from EMPHNET was in attendance.

EMPHNET has been closely monitoring the situation, and it is actively engaging with various agencies to support the affected population in Gaza amid the current humanitarian situation. It has identified several areas of support, including disease surveillance and monitoring, training and capacity building, rapid response, infection prevention and control, Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), and mental health.

However, all these initiatives would not be effective without a commitment to cease-fire and guaranteeing access to humanitarian aid and health services in Gaza and Sudan.



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