



UNRWA Situation Report #139 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

All information from 20-23 September 2024, is valid as of 23 September 2024 at 22:30 (local time)

Day 351-354 of Hostilities

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Child running as heavy rain falls in Deir al-Balah, Gaza Strip. September 2024. © 2024 UNRWA Photo by Ashraf Amra

1. Key points

The Gaza Strip

- Ongoing strikes by Israeli Security Forces (ISF) continue, with aerial, land and maritime bombardments across the Gaza Strip, resulting in civilian casualties, displacement and the destruction of residential structures and public infrastructure.
- [UNRWA's Commissioner-General](#) (CG) posted on his official X account that the Israeli Authorities "are phasing out representation from humanitarian organisations or those engaged in reporting on the atrocities of the war in Gaza". The CG stated that as humanitarian needs continue to increase, more humanitarian workers are needed, not less. The opposite is increasingly taking place.
- According to the [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO) and the Health Cluster, the three phases of the first round of the polio vaccination campaign, aimed at reaching children under ten years of age, were concluded on 12 September. Nearly 560,000 children were vaccinated

across the Gaza Strip, including 195,830 in the first phase in Deir Al-Balah, 250,737 in the second phase in Khan Younis and Rafah, and 112,509 children in the third phase in Gaza City and North Gaza. The second round of vaccination is planned to take place in four weeks.

- According to the latest [OCHA](#) Humanitarian Access Snapshot covering August 2024, 46 per cent of humanitarian movements have been either denied or impeded in August, making it the most challenging month for humanitarian access since January 2024. During this period, there have been multiple incidents of shots towards, near, or around humanitarian convoys as they approach Israeli-controlled checkpoints, despite the vehicles being clearly marked and having received prior confirmation from the Israeli Forces
- According to [WHO](#) and the Health Cluster, the health system remains barely functional with 94 hospitals and primary health care centres (PHCCs) not functioning. Fuel shortages continue to threaten humanitarian work, including health care provision, impacting the functionality of hospitals, PHCCs and ambulance services. UNRWA remains a major actor in the health sector, providing health services across ten primary health centres and up to 100 mobile medical points across the Gaza Strip.
- According to the UN, at least 1.9 million people (or nine in ten people) across the Gaza Strip are internally displaced, including people who have been repeatedly displaced (some, up to 10 times or more).
- As of 23 September, the total number of UNRWA team members killed since 7 October is **220**.
- Several challenges continue to stand in the way of collecting much needed humanitarian supplies from the Karem Abu Salem (Kerem Shalom) crossing point in southern Gaza. These include deteriorating law and order, war and insecurity, damaged infrastructure, fuel shortages and access restrictions. According to [OCHA](#), between 1 and 15 September 2024, an average of only 67 humanitarian trucks entered the Gaza Strip per day. This is well below the pre-crisis average of 500 trucks per working day.
- The latest information on supplies entering Gaza can be accessed through the below link:

[Gaza Supplies and Dispatch Tracking | UNRWA](#)

The West Bank, including East Jerusalem

The West Bank, including East Jerusalem update is now once a week.

- According to [OCHA](#), between 7 October 2023 and 16 September 2024, 689 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Separately, UNICEF confirmed that over 150 children have been killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, during the period, 7 October 2023 to July 2024.
- Between 16 and 22 September, Israeli Security Forces (ISF) conducted a number of search and arrest operations in the West Bank. On 18 of September, a large operation took place in Fawwar Camp in Southern West Bank, lasting for more than 12 hours. The operation involved wide-scale house searches and detentions. On September 18, ISF conducted a search and

arrest operation in Shu'fat Camp, in the outskirts of East Jerusalem. One Palestinian child was killed, another child was injured with live ammunition and five Palestinians were detained.

- On 18 and 19 September, ISF conducted search and arrest operations in Qabatiya, northern West Bank. On 19 September, missiles were reportedly fired towards a house and a drone strike hit a vehicle. Throughout the operation, seven Palestinians were killed and at least 20 were injured, the majority with live ammunition. One ISF soldier was injured. Six Palestinians were detained. ISF bulldozers damaged and destroyed civilian infrastructure.

2. Overall situation

The Gaza Strip

- According to the [Ministry of Health](#) in Gaza, and as reported by OCHA, between 7 October 2023 and 22 September 2024, at least 41,431 Palestinians were reported killed and 95,818 injured.

3. Humanitarian access & protection of civilians

- UNRWA is working to verify the details of incidents that reportedly impact UNRWA premises. Further information will be provided once it becomes available.
- During the reporting period, three new incidents impacting UNRWA installations and internally displaced people (IDPs) sheltering there were reported. The verification of details and any casualty figures are ongoing.
 - On 21 September, ISF directly struck an UNRWA school in the Zaitoun neighborhood, in Gaza City. Based on initial information, twenty-two persons have been killed, including fourteen children, and at least thirty others have been injured. Significant damage has been reported, in particular impacting the southwest side of the school.
 - On 22 September, an UNRWA Health Center in Nuseirat was reportedly hit by a tank shell as a result of ISF military activity towards the north of Al-Nuseirat Camp. No injuries were reported.
 - On 22 September, two UNRWA schools in North Gaza were forced to evacuate. Both schools serve as Designated Emergency Shelters. The IDPs were able to later return to the shelters.
- **464*** incidents impacting UNRWA premises and the people inside them have been reported since the beginning of the war (some with multiple incidents impacting the same location), including at least **74*** incidents of military use and/or interference at UNRWA premises. **190*** Agency installations have been impacted by munitions or subjected to armed actor interference through these incidents. UNRWA estimates that, in total, at least **563*** IDPs sheltering in UNRWA installations have been killed and at least **1,790*** injured since the start of the war. UNRWA is verifying the number of casualties caused by these incidents.

**Since the start of the war, the latest figures are continuously under review as UNRWA gains access to locations that were previously inaccessible and as further verifications occur. Total summary figures*

will be published as information becomes known, noting that these numbers are subject to change once verifications are conducted.

UNRWA Response

The Gaza Strip

Health

- As of 19 September, 77 medical points and 10 (out of 27¹) UNRWA health centres were operational. The health facilities provide primary health care, including outpatient services, non-communicable disease care, medications, vaccinations, antenatal and postnatal health care and dressings for the injured. The number of operational health facilities changes constantly based on demand, access and security.
- On 19 September, 1,129 UNRWA health staff continued to work in health centres and medical points across the Gaza Strip, providing 14,624 medical consultations on that day.
- On 19 September, UNRWA provided mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services in the Middle and Khan Younis areas, with teams of psychiatrists and supervisors to assist special cases referred from UNRWA health centres and shelters. UNRWA teams responded to 549 cases in health centres and at medical points through individual consultations, awareness sessions and to address cases of gender-based violence (GBV).
- On 19 September, medical teams provided care for 427 post-natal and pregnant women at high risk.
- According to the Health Cluster, UNRWA remains one of the largest health actors operating in the Gaza Strip, contributing to over half of the people reached with health services since 7 October 2023. Between 7 October 2023 and 15 September 2024, UNRWA provided over 5.54 million medical consultations across the Gaza Strip.

Psychosocial support (PSS)

- UNRWA remains the largest provider of emergency learning and psychosocial support (PSS) across the Gaza Strip. More than 659,000 children continue to be out of school since the beginning of the war. On 1 August 2024, UNRWA began to roll out its first phase response of 'Back to Learning' with a focus on mental health activities. This is taking place in up to 45 UNRWA schools now turned shelters² by expanding ongoing psychosocial support activities, focusing on arts, music and sports and raising awareness on the risks of explosive ordnance, with the support of nearly 750³ school counsellors and up to 500 teachers. UNRWA continues to provide lifesaving psychosocial support services in Gaza, including psychosocial first aid,

¹Pre-conflict, UNRWA had 22 health centres. Following the onset of the conflict, an additional five temporary health centres were established.

²Initially reaching 45 UNRWA schools/shelters, 'back to learning' will gradually expand to 94 schools in future phases.

³ 176 school counsellors and 566 assistant counsellors.

individual and group counselling, fatigue management sessions, recreational activities, Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) and protection cash assistance, reaching children, youth and adults.

- Since the onset of the conflict up to 15 September, around 700,000 IDPs, including over 470,000 children, have benefited from 253,648 PSS sessions/activities. Between 5-11 September, a total of 11,320 IDPs have accessed these services.
- Following the roll out of UNRWA “Back to Learning” programme in UNRWA shelters, more than 8,500 children, 60 per cent of whom are girls, have benefited from this response. Between 5 - 11 September, 8,320 children (3,317 boys, 5,003 girls, including 168 children with disabilities) participated in a variety of “Back to Learning” activities, including basic literacy and numeracy sessions, PSS sessions, and recreational activities such as arts, music, and sports.
- Since the onset of the war, UNRWA’s social work team has provided services to 177,293⁴ IDPs, including psychological first aid, PSS, family and individual activities, as well as case management. These efforts aim to address family issues and strengthen relationships. Protection services were provided to 1,413 GBV survivors and 2,241 children, including 1,261 unaccompanied children, covering reunification, safe sheltering, medication, dignity kits and non-food items through referrals. The team also supported 19,068 persons with disabilities with PSS; 7,748 of these individuals received assistive devices and rehabilitation services. Awareness sessions on GBV, child protection, disability and special needs, as well as managing social and psychological stressors were conducted for 114,440 IDPs.

Food security

- Since 7 October to date, a total of 380,236 families (nearly 1.9 million people) have been reached with two rounds of flour; 358,762 of those families have received three rounds.
- UNRWA continues to distribute food parcels in the southern governorates. These include⁵ flour, rice, chickpeas, lentils, cheese, hummus and canned fish, and are designed to cover approximately 90 per cent of daily calorific needs per quarter. To date, nearly 1.15 million people have been reached, of whom, nearly 215,000 people have received two rounds of food parcels since the war started.
- In addition to the distribution of UNRWA food parcels, the Agency distributes food parcels on behalf of other UN organizations, reaching around 1.4 million people.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- Since October 2023, UNRWA has carried out emergency WASH activities across the Gaza Strip. Main activities include the operation and continued maintenance of water wells, desalination systems and water through water trucking and bottled water. In addition, UNRWA continues

⁴ Results from 7 October 2023 – 22 September 2024.

⁵ Note the composition of the food parcel may change based on food item availability.

to distribute hygiene kits and maintain hygiene in UNRWA shelters and sites through cleaning supplies, community based solid waste management, and pest control.

- UNRWA continues to be one of the largest WASH actors in the Gaza Strip. Since the beginning of the war, the Agency has maintained and rehabilitated eight wells, reaching over 600,000 IDPs with access to water. Between June and August, UNRWA reached 50,000 IDPs with hygiene kits.
- Between 15 August and 9 September, UNRWA distributed over 80 cubic metres of water across 105 emergency shelters, reaching an estimated of 480,000 people. During the first week of September, UNRWA distributed chlorine tablets to over 16 emergency shelters to prevent water contamination and improve water quality. Cleaning campaigns and hygiene promotion awareness sessions were held inside to coincide with the Polio vaccination campaigns. Over 200,000 IDPs have benefited from cleaning campaigns. Outside the emergency shelters, UNRWA continues to provide services, including water well services to over 700,000 people scattered in informal settlements in Mawasi Khan Younis.
- Throughout the Gaza Strip, hundreds of thousands of tons of solid waste are piling up on the streets, between tents of displaced people and next to the rubble in back alleys. The collapse of solid waste management since 7 October 2023, is worsening the public health crisis. Between 23 August and 5 September 2024, UNRWA collected a total of 2,000 tons of solid waste and transferred that to temporary dumping sites, in the middle and southern areas.

Quote from Seleem, a father currently displaced in Gaza:

“Each raindrop reminds me of the harsh winter to come, the biting cold, and the constant fear that I may not be able to protect my children from both the weather and the war.”

ENDs –



UNRWA situation and response to the escalation in the Gaza Strip

IDPs in UNRWA installations

Confirmed IDP numbers, since 7 October 2023



1,900,000*
IDPs**



At least **563** IDPs sheltering in UNRWA premises have been killed and **1,790** injured since 7 October.

UNRWA fatalities and damage to installations



224 UNRWA colleagues **killed**



464
incidents



190
UNRWA
installations
damaged

UNRWA response – Food assistance



c.215,000 families have received an UNRWA food parcel in middle areas and southern governorates at least once since 21 Nov.

UNRWA response – Health



Partial update on 19 September due to security and internet connectivity issues

Only 10 (out of 27) UNRWA health care centres operational.

14,624 patients received healthcare in 10 (out of 27) UNRWA health care centres and UNRWA shelters.

UNRWA response – Psychosocial support



Since the onset of the conflict over 450,000 children have benefited from 246,188 psychosocial and recreational activities.

Between 5 – 11 September a total of 11,320 IDPs benefited from psychosocial and recreational activities.