

Occupied Palestinian Territory: Gaza Emergency

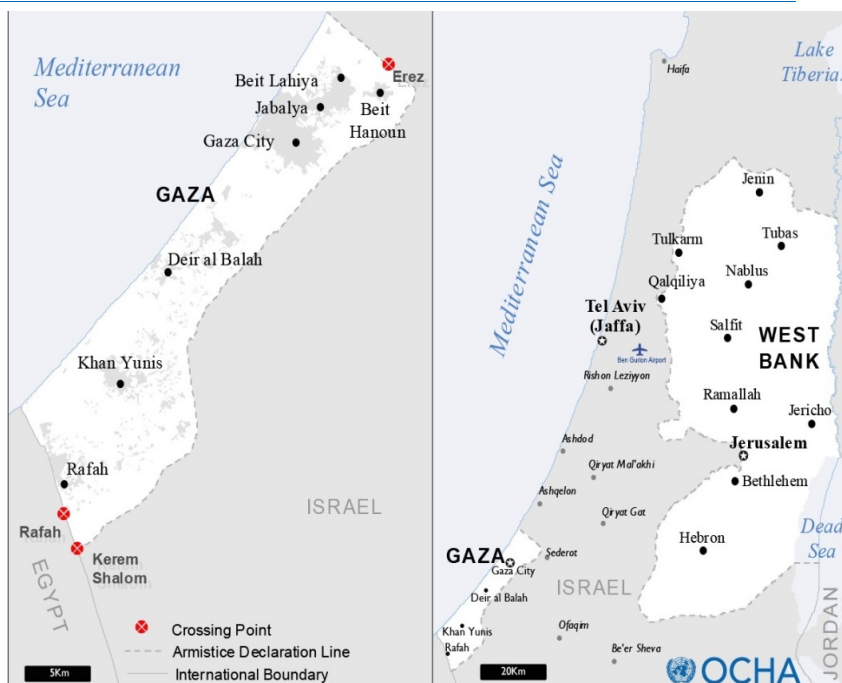
Situation Report (as of 15 July 2014, 1500 hrs)



This report is produced by OCHA oPt in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 14 July (1500 hrs) to 15 July (1500 hrs). The next report will be issued on 16 July.

Highlights

- An Egyptian proposal calling on Israel and all Palestinian armed groups to cease all hostilities in the Gaza Strip was accepted by the Israeli cabinet but not accepted by Hamas.
- According to preliminary information, 75 per cent of Palestinian fatalities since 7 July have been civilians, raising concerns about respect for international humanitarian law.
- UNRWA/WFP are providing shelter, food and other assistance to over 18,000 displaced Palestinians from northern Gaza hosted in UNRWA schools.
- Since the start of the emergency, 79 schools and 23 health facilities in Gaza have sustained damage.
- At least 25,000 children whose families have experienced death, injury or loss of homes are in need of specialized psychosocial (PSS) support.



194

Palestinians killed, including at least 149 civilians, of whom 38 were children

1,390

Palestinians injured, of whom 393 are children and 252 women¹

1,370

Homes destroyed or severely damaged in Gaza directly displacing 8,200 persons.

18,000

Displaced people hosted at UNRWA schools

600,000

People at risk of losing access to water supply

Situation Overview

An Egyptian proposal calling on Israel and Palestinian armed groups to cease all hostilities in the Gaza Strip was accepted by the Israeli security cabinet this morning. The proposal has apparently not been accepted by Hamas who continued to fire rockets at Israel after the time set in the Egyptian proposal for ending hostilities. The Israeli decision was followed by a lull in the bombardment of Gaza, which resumed in the afternoon following the firing of a reported 40 rockets at Israel.

In total, 19 Palestinian were killed in the past 24 hours. Since 7 July, According to preliminary information, at least 194 Palestinians, including 149 civilians (nearly 75 per cent of total fatalities), 35 members of armed groups and 10 persons whose status cannot yet be verified, have been killed by Israeli air, naval and ground strikes in Gaza. At least 38 children and 28 women are among the fatalities.² According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, 1,390 Palestinians including 393 children and 252 women have also been injured as of 1.00 a.m. on 15 July.

¹ Data on injuries is provided by the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza.

² Data on fatalities and destruction of property is consolidated by the Protection and Shelter clusters based on preliminary information, and is subject to change based on further verifications.

+ For more information, see “background on the crisis” at the end of the report

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The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.

Coordination Saves Lives

Since the onset of the emergency, hundreds of homes have reportedly been targeted by Israeli airstrikes many of which were the residences of alleged members of armed groups. An estimated 710 housing units have been totally destroyed and another 660 severely damaged in attacks/bombardments, causing a large number of civilian casualties and directly displacing approximately 8,200 persons who are being hosted by relatives and neighbours. Since the start of the emergency, 79 schools have been damaged due to their proximity to targeted sites. These figures continue to raise concerns about the respect for the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution in attack under international humanitarian law.

On 14 July at 20:45, an Israeli drone fired a missile at a house belonging to 'Omar Ahmed Sheikh al-'Eid, 27, a member of the al-Quds Brigades (the armed wing of Islamic Jihad) in the north of Rafah. The house was partially destroyed, and Sheikh al-'Eid, his four-year-old daughter Sarah, and his brother Jihad, 36, were killed. Another brother, Mahmoud, was wounded.

Indiscriminate rocket firing by armed groups in Gaza at Israeli population centres also continued during the past 24 hours, including during the lull in Israeli bombardment with the majority of rockets continuing to fall in open areas or intercepted by the Iron Dome system. According to Magen David Adom (MDA) Israel, since 7 July until the morning of 15 July, MDA treated at least 24 Israelis injured by shrapnel, glass, building debris, and fires caused by direct rocket strikes. Reports about the launching of rockets from densely populated areas in Gaza have raised increasing concern as it endangers the lives of Palestinian civilians residing in these areas, in addition to the Israeli population targeted.

In addition to direct displacement as a result of home destruction and damage, tens of thousands of Palestinians from northern and central Gaza have fled their homes, following warnings from the Israeli military, with more than 18,000 individuals taking shelter in 21 UNRWA schools. Damage to health, education, water and sanitation facilities, and electricity infrastructure make it increasingly difficult to provide even the most basic services for the civilian population, with hundreds of thousands of Gazans without water. The current crisis is exacerbated by the high degree of pre-existing vulnerability in the Gaza Strip, with high unemployment and the lack of a viable economy as a result of years of Israeli occupation, strict movement and access restrictions, internal division and sporadic conflict, which have exhausted people's coping mechanisms. Of particular concern is the lasting impact on children, with UNICEF staff on the ground warning of the long term impact which the current violence is having on children, who are not sleeping or eating and who are exhibiting harrowing signs of mental distress.

'The violence is taking a shocking toll on children both physically and psychologically, with alarming consequences for future chances of peace, stability and understanding. Too often children who witness such violence, and come to view it as 'normal', are likely to repeat it themselves in later life,' UNICEF Executive Director, Anthony Lake.³

Updates on Gaza Crossings

Erez: Open for internationals and exceptional cases.

Beit Hanoun (Arba Arba): The checkpoint, which leads into Erez crossing and is controlled by the former de facto authorities, was closed on 14 July until further notice, due to Israeli attacks. It is partially functioning to allow for the movement of patients (including approximately 25 patients who crossed this morning) and Gazans returning, but not open for international personnel. This situation clearly limits humanitarian access into and out of Gaza and raises major security issues for all humanitarian/development workers in Gaza.

Kerem Shalom: Partial operation for imports. On 14 July, 73 trucks with humanitarian supplies (mostly food), 780,000 litres of fuel, including 3500,000 for the Power Plant, and 125 tonnes of cooking gas entered.

Rafah: Open for medical evacuations, foreign and dual nationals and Egyptian passport holders; first degree family members of patients allowed to cross. Over the last two days, food supplies and medical supplies from the Egyptian Red Crescent Society also crossed into Gaza via Rafah.

³ UNICEF, 'Children in Gaza and Israel bear brunt of violence', 14 July 2014. <http://www.unmultimedia.org/radio/english/2014/07/children-in-gaza-and-israel-bear-brunt-of-violence-unicef/>

Humanitarian needs and response



Needs

- At least 25,000 children whose families have experienced death, injury or loss of homes are in need of specialized psychosocial (PSS) support.
- Unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of war present a major hazard to the population.

25,000

Children in need of psychosocial support

Response

- Protection Cluster members have been monitoring incidents and are issuing press releases highlighting their findings and calling for the protection of civilians.
- The Protection Cluster continues to monitor and verify information on civilian fatalities.
- On Monday 14 July, the Gaza emergency psychosocial teams conducted 42 visits to injured children in three hospitals and destroyed homes throughout the Gaza Strip. All children visited were tense and showed signs of extreme anxiety, fear and sense of insecurity. Since 7 July, the emergency psychosocial teams have conducted 304 visits, providing initial psychosocial support to 344 children
- On 14 July 2014, radio spots began airing on mobile radio stations to alert children and their families on the dangers posed by Explosive Remnants of War and Unexploded Ordnances.

Gaps and constraints

- Difficulties in verifying information, particularly regarding casualties, due to the security situation and restricted access.
- Ongoing hostilities continue to impede the movement of child protection staff and emergency psychosocial teams.
- Inability of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) police to work on the ground to remove unexploded remnants of war due to ongoing military operations.



Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI)

Needs

- An estimated 710 housing units have been totally destroyed and another 660 severely damaged in air strikes, rendering them uninhabitable. Combined, approximately 1,370 families (8,200 persons) are in need of emergency NFI kits.
- Approximately 1,850 families, (11,100 people), whose homes sustained damage but are still habitable, and another 10,000 families (60,000 people) who are living in less affected houses, need NFI shelter repair items, such as nylon, tarpaulin and plastic sheets.
- Cash assistance for 1,370 families to cover rental fees and urgent expenses (US\$ 6,850,000) is needed.

1,370

Families in need of NFIs and cash assistance

Response

- UNRWA is currently providing shelter and NFIs, including hygiene kits, to 18,000 displaced persons from northern Gaza, seeking refuge in 21 of its schools in Gaza City and the Northern Area.

Gaps and constraints

- Emergency shelter kits and basic NFIs are in stock for the 1,370 families whose homes were totally destroyed or sustained major structural damage but cannot be delivered due to the security situation.
- Inability of members of the Shelter Cluster to deliver urgent shelter and NFI assistance due to security risks and movement restrictions.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Needs

- Two out of three sewage internal pipelines of the Gaza sewage treatment plant in Ash Sheikh Ijleen area were destroyed from air strikes. Seeping wastewater covers more than 20 dunums of agricultural land surrounding the plant.
- Partial destruction of pressure lines draining sewage from Abu Rashed Pumping Station in north Gaza to the wastewater treatment plant as a result of airstrikes. Raw wastewater now flows in an open channel to the plant. Beit Lahiya Municipality decided to close a water pipeline to avoid contamination of supply.
- Water supply was cut or disrupted due to damage sustained by a number of water pipelines and waste water treatment plant and the main feeder line to Ash Shouka in Rafah and another water pipeline in the Middle area (20,000 persons affected).
- Drinking water is still an issue in Bani Suhaila (Rafah), people continue to cope with alternative water sources of questionable quality.
- Electricity line powering groundwater well in the industrial area of Gaza city cutoff, and well does not operate.

150,000

People affected due to damage to WASH infrastructure in eastern Gaza City

Response

- Service providers continue to conduct limited maintenance and operation to restore minimum water and sanitation services.
- Ongoing efforts to coordinate repair of carrier supplying water from Zemmo groundwater well to the eastern part of Gaza City serving more than 150,000 people.
- In recent days, ICRC teams have helped the authorities conduct essential emergency repairs to water and sanitation infrastructure in Gaza, improving the situation for over 90,000 people.
- ACF delivered 500 metres of pipes to Abasan Al-Kabira Municipality to help rectify the damages in the water network caused by airstrikes.
- Oxfam GB is closely coordinating with the WASH Cluster to raise the concerns of protection regarding water delivery by vendors.

Gaps and constraints

- Lack of adequate protection to water and sanitation technicians: a driver of a CMWU water tanker died yesterday evening as a result of injury while delivering water in Rafah a few days ago, which brings to three the total number of workers killed while conducting repairs.



Health and Nutrition

Needs

- Massive shortage in drugs and disposables (28 and 54 per cent respectively) at Gaza Hospitals hinders Ministry of Health's (MoH) ability to deliver health services. Gaza requires US\$ 3.2 million monthly to secure the needed drugs and disposables.
- Urgent need for psycho-tropic drugs, especially emergency drug kits to use for patients with mental illness who have relapses and families in especially severe circumstances of forced displacement, trauma and anxiety.
- Eight anesthesia machines, 10 ventilators, 5 electrosurgical units, 20 vital sign monitors, ECG machines, 5 defibrillator machines urgently needed.
- Al Awda Hospital in Gaza is requesting an urgent support for procuring 38 items of drugs and supplies, estimated value at US\$ 220,000. There is also a need for fuel as the hospital is consuming at least 25L/hour to run the hospital basic operations.

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Medical facilities have sustained damage

Response

- Nineteen of UNRWA 21 health clinics remain operational. On 13 July, 7,852 people visited these clinics in Gaza, including more than 600 children who received their regular check up and/or immunization vaccinations.

- UNRWA distributed on behalf of WHO emergency fuel of 40,765 litres of diesel on 14 July to critical health facilities.
- Five patients were referred to Egypt on 14 and 15 July.
- MoH, in coordination with ICRC, delivered 500 blood units to Al Shifa Hospital in Gaza on 14 July.
- The Italian Cooperation donated medical supplies worth approximately US\$ 2.3 million to the MoH; some of it was delivered on 15 July and the rest is still being processed. Additional medical aid, donated by UNICEF, Welfare, MAP-UK, Indonesia, NORWAC, to MoH's hospitals is being processed.

Gaps and constraints

- Lack of adequate protection of health facilities and personnel: another two clinics sustained damage on 14 July.
- Restricted access to the injured due to ongoing military operations.
- Reduced access for referral cases out of Gaza, due to the difficulty in travel within Gaza, as well as the delay in processing referrals.



Food Assistance

Needs

- 18,000 persons hosted at UNRWA shelters and another 547 families hosted by relatives, are in need of emergency food and other assistance.
- 57 displaced families (approx. 340 persons) in the Middle Area are in need of food assistance.
- 3,600 fishermen are in need of re-establishing their livelihoods and require assistance in the interim.

20,000

Displaced people in need of emergency food assistance

Response

- UNRWA distributed food and water rations to beneficiaries in 21 designated emergency shelters.
- Three trucks of bread and one with 17,589 tins of tuna provided by WFP, delivered to UNRWA shelters.
- UNRWA's regular food distribution on 14 July saw 10,386 beneficiaries receiving food rations through seven distribution centres.

Gaps and constraints

- As movement is increasingly impeded due to the security situation, Food Security Sector members continue to face problems in accessing affected areas, especially agricultural lands and livestock in order to assess damages.
- Immediate emergency funds to cover food assistance to displaced people are required.
- Although immediately needed funds will be advanced by core agencies, these funds will need to be resourced subsequently.
- Information gap in regards to the displaced families sheltered by relatives is needed in order to provide emergency food assistance.



Education

Needs

- In the last 24 hours, seven schools, including two government and five UNRWA schools have sustained damage. Since the start of the emergency, 79 schools, 32 government and 47 UNRWA schools have been damaged due to their proximity to targeted sites and need repairs. Two educational directorate offices have also been damaged.

79

Schools damaged by shelling

Response

- So far, cluster members have not been able to mount any response due to the ongoing military hostilities.

Gaps & Constraints

- Lack of movement to assess impact of hostilities on school infrastructure.
- Still no information available about the condition of the 13 schools located in Access Restricted Area (ARA).
- Insufficient pre-positioned supplies, such as school tents and teaching/learning materials, to respond to likely scale of need.

General Coordination

The Emergency Operations Centre set up by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) upon the start of the emergency has continued centralizing information management and coordinating operational responses among HCT members and clusters, as well as with UNRWA, ICRC, and local emergency bodies.

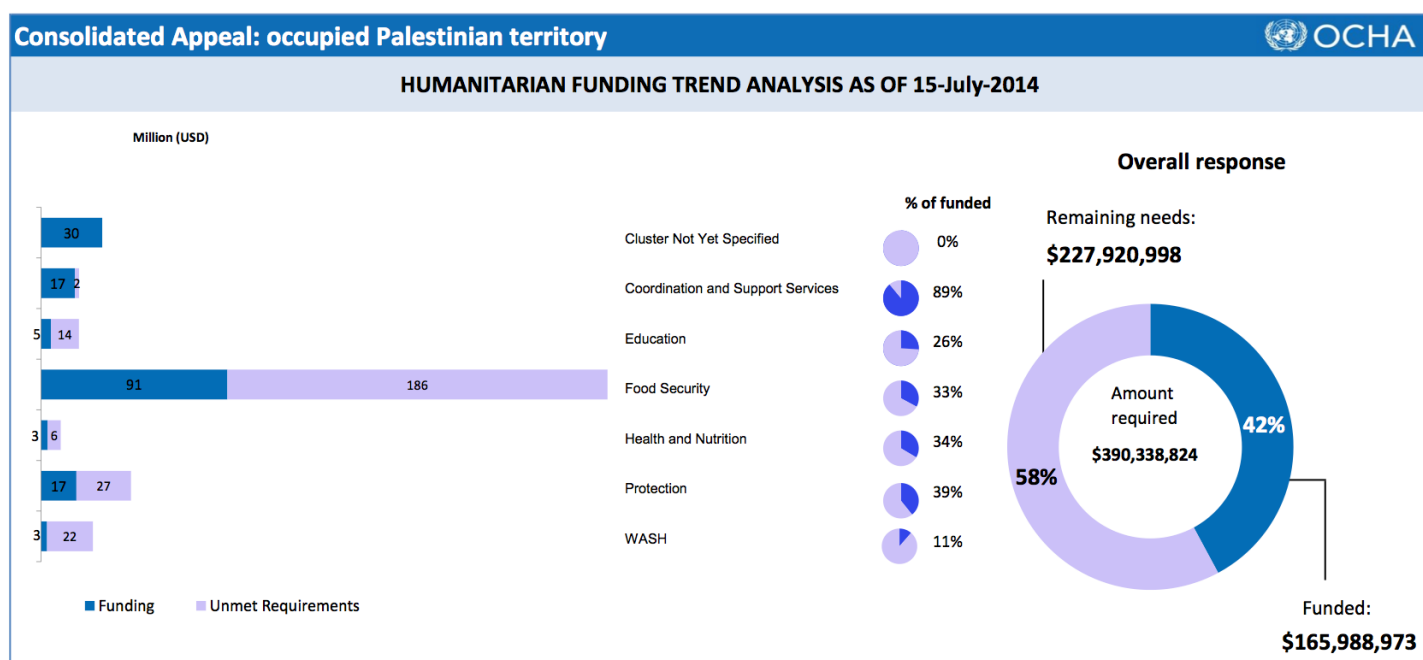
The inter-cluster coordination group (ICCG) met to discuss priority needs based on preliminary information on the humanitarian impact of the Gaza emergency to inform the resource mobilization strategy. The lack of access to priority areas and populations due to the security situation is preventing clusters and partners for now to start a joint needs assessment.

Funding

A number of donors have already started working with clusters and partners to look into providing funding for urgent needs in the most critical sectors. Kuwait announced a contribution of USD 10 million for the health sector; a number of other donors from the Gulf including Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar and the IDB have also come forward with generous contributions in recent days, along with Norway and others.

The 2014 Strategic Response Plan (SRP) for the oPt has received US\$ 166 million (42 per cent) out of a total request of US\$390 million. Nearly 90 per cent of 1.9 million vulnerable people targeted in the SRP are in Gaza. Gaza-specific projects have received just over 30% of their requested funding. The Humanitarian Country Team is currently embarking on an exercise to identify the most urgent SRP projects that if funded would help support the response in Gaza, as well as any new needs to develop an initial cost estimate for the response. This will be further refined as needed once the situation on the ground allows for more detailed assessments.

The Emergency Response Fund (ERF), an additional mechanism available to fund interventions in Gaza, is in urgent need of replenishment to ensure the fund's ability to provide rapid and flexible support to affected civilian populations. Additionally, there is an urgent need for funding to cover the US \$22 million of UNRWA's Emergency Appeal shortfall.



Background to the crisis

On 7 July 2014, the Israeli army launched a large military operation in the Gaza Strip, codenamed “Protective Edge”, with the stated objective of stopping Palestinian rocket firing at southern Israel and destroying the military infrastructure of Hamas and other armed groups.

This development marked the collapse of the Egyptian-brokered ceasefire understanding reached between Israel and Hamas in November 2012, which has been gradually undermined since December 2013. The latest escalation round started on early June, characterized by an intensification of Israeli airstrikes and Palestinian shooting rockets at southern Israel. Tensions further increased following the abduction of three Israeli youths in the southern West Bank, on 12 June, which the Israeli government attributed to Hamas. Overall, in the period leading to the start of the current operation a total of 15 Palestinians, including one civilian, were killed, and another 58 others, mostly civilians, injured, as a result of Israeli airstrikes in the Gaza Strip; seven Israelis, five of whom were civilians, were injured due to rocket firing.

The current crisis comes against a backdrop of heightened vulnerability and instability. Unemployment increased dramatically since mid-2013, following a halt of the illegal tunnel trade, exacerbating the impact of the longstanding access restrictions imposed by Israel. Additionally, former de facto government employees, including the security forces, have not been paid salaries regularly since August 2013 and no salaries at all since April 2014. Delivery of basic services has been also undermined due an ongoing energy crisis, involving power outages of 12 hours per day.

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