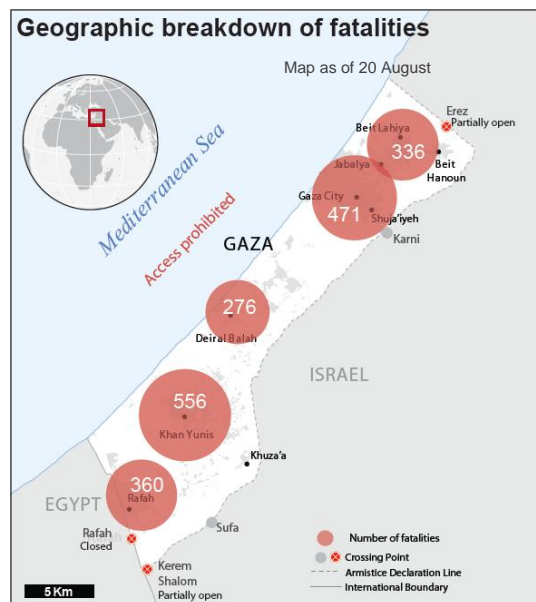




This report is produced by OCHA oPt in collaboration with humanitarian partners. This report covers the period from 22 August (08:00 hrs) to 25 August (08:00 hrs). The next report will be issued on 26 August.

Highlights

- The emergency is now in its 49th day. The Palestinian fatality toll is now 2,076 of whom 1,454 have been identified as civilians, according to preliminary assessments.
- The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has risen to 475,000, more than a quarter of the entire Palestinian population of Gaza. Over 280,000 are taking shelter in UNRWA schools.
- The number of displaced in southern Israel is also rising, following the killing of a boy by a mortar shell on Friday.
- Nearly half a million children in Gaza were unable to return to primary and secondary schools yesterday, the scheduled start to the new academic year.
- Both Erez and Rafah are currently closed following attacks on the crossing points.



2,076

Palestinians killed, including 1,454 civilians, of whom 491 are children and 253 are women.¹

67

Israelis killed, including 64 soldiers and three civilians. One foreign national also killed in Israel.

140

Families in Gaza have lost at least three or more members in the same incident, totalling 735 fatalities.

475,000

People hosted at UNRWA (approx. 280,000), government shelters and with host families.

500,000

Children in Gaza unable to start the new school year.

Situation Overview

Hostilities have continued for the 49th day in Gaza and southern Israel, resulting in mounting casualties, the continuing destruction of infrastructure and a rise in internally displaced persons (IDPs). The Israeli military has intensified the sending of messages through leaflets, phone calls and mobile phone texts warning civilians to stay away from “terrorists and terror infrastructure”, causing panic among the population in Gaza. Although the bombing of residential structures has been characteristic of the military offensive to date, with over 17,000 buildings destroyed or severely damaged, the weekend witnessed the destruction of a number of entire multi-storey buildings.

On 23 August, the Israeli air force levelled the 13-storey building (Al-Zafer Tower 4), southwest of Gaza city, alleging that Hamas was running an operations centre from one of the floors. The 49-apartment tower had housed at least 40 families, all of whom are now displaced. Israeli forces provided a number of warnings, including small rockets and phone calls to some of the

¹ 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

families living in the tower, ordering them to evacuate. At least 18 people from the neighbourhood were reportedly injured. Also destroyed over the weekend were the seven-storey Zourab office block in Rafah, believed to house an office used by the Hamas-run interior ministry, and a two-storey shopping mall, also in Rafah.

Hostilities and casualties

Since the last situation update, at least 46 persons, many of whose status still need to be verified, have reportedly been killed, including three who died from injuries sustained earlier. The figures consist of 26 civilians including 14 children and 6 women, and 10 members of armed groups. This brings the cumulative death toll among Palestinians since 7 July to at least 2,076, according to preliminary data collected by the Protection Cluster from various sources, including 369 persons who could not be yet identified or their status established. Of the initially verified cases, 1,454 are believed to be civilians, including 491 children and 253 women, and 253 members of armed groups.

Approximately 25 Palestinians accused of collaborating with Israel have reportedly been killed in Gaza since 21 August. These have not been included in the fatality toll above.

The Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) is following up with concern reports of extra-judicial executions carried out in the Gaza Strip ... These executions have targeted persons suspected of collaboration with Israeli occupation forces. The latest of such executions took place at approximately 09:00 (local time) on Friday, 22 August 2014, when at least 9 persons, including 2 women, were executed by firing squad in al-Katiba yard in the west of Gaza City. Identities of those persons are still unknown to PCHR, as the executions were carried out under strict security measures. PCHR calls upon the Palestinian National Authority and resistance groups to intervene to stop such extra-judicial executions whatever their reasons or motives are.

PCHR Calls for Stopping Extra-Judicial Executions in Gaza, 22 August 2014

According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, as of 20 August, 10,224 Palestinians, including 3,106 children and 1,970 women and 368 elderly, have been injured. Preliminary estimates indicate that up to 1,000 of the children injured will have a permanent disability.

During the reporting period, at least 56 houses were totally destroyed in Israeli air strikes. Since the launch of the Israeli military operation, over a thousand homes have reportedly been directly targeted by Israeli airstrikes, and it is estimated that at least 17,200 housing units have been totally destroyed or severely damaged during Israeli air strikes and shelling from 7 July to 20 August. Human rights organizations have expressed serious concerns regarding incidents where civilians or civilian objects have been directly hit by Israeli airstrikes, in circumstances where there was allegedly no rocket fire or armed group activity in the close vicinity. Such cases raise concerns about the targeting of civilians, in violation of the principle of distinction.

Among the most serious incidents recorded during the reporting period:

- At around 20:30 on 22 August, the Israeli air force struck a five-storey residential building belonging to Abu Aqleen family south of Gaza city, reportedly injuring at least 40 people, including 15 children. Although, the Israeli military fired a warning strike that hit the roof, families were still fleeing the building when the main attack took place.
- At around 23:50 on 24 August, an IDF airstrike hit an open field next to Isleem factory in Al Yarmouk neighbourhood in central Gaza City. Two children, aged one-and-a-half and 16, living in a neighbouring house were killed inside their homes. A number of neighbouring houses were also severely damaged.
- On 23 August 2014, two Israeli missiles struck a house belonging to Abdul Jawad Mheesin, located behind the Yafa Hospital in Deir Al Balah. The first, a warning missile, had led people to evacuate the building. However, the second missile seven minutes later destroyed the house and killed a woman who had returned to pick up personal belongings. This strike also destroyed a neighbouring house, killing another woman and her eight-year old son.

Of continuing concern is the number of incidents since the onset of the emergency in which multiple members of the same family have been killed. As of 20 August, at least 140 families have lost three or more family members in the same incident, for a total of 735 civilian fatalities. Two additional incidents occurred in the reporting period.

- At around 00:15 on 23 August, an Israeli plane launched two missiles at a four-storey house belonging to the Abu Dahrouj family in al-Zawaida village. The second one destroyed the house and killed five members of the family, including Hayel Shihda Abu Dahrouj, his wife, two children, and his aunt.
- At approximately 16:20 on 24 August, an Israeli strike hit a house belonging to the Joudah family in Tal El Za'atar neighbourhood in Jabalia, reportedly killing five people, including a mother and her four children.

Indiscriminate firing by Palestinian armed groups in Gaza into southern and central Israel continued. Most of the rockets fell in open areas or were intercepted by the Iron Dome system but a four-year-old Israeli boy was killed by a mortar on 22 August. Since 8 July, four civilians in Israel have been killed, including one foreign national, and dozens directly injured by rockets or shrapnel. At least six Israeli children have reportedly been injured due to rocket fire from Gaza. The total number of Israeli military fatalities remains at 64.

Displacement

The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) continues to rise, with at least 475,000 persons – more than a quarter of the entire Palestinian population of Gaza – now displaced. As of yesterday evening, there were 283,220 IDPs hosted in 85 designated UNRWA schools. Another 36,136 IDPs were hosted in seven government shelters supported by UNRWA and 13,729 IDPs in 17 government schools managed by MoSA. 140,895 IDPs residing with host families have been registered and reached by various partners. In addition, an estimated several thousand IDPs are taking shelter in public buildings and informal shelters.

Before the conflict, UNRWA, based on previous hostilities, had anticipated some 35,000 to 50,000 displaced people in its installations for a period of days in the event of a military escalation. The current number of IDPs represents six times the maximum number of displaced foreseen in its contingency plan and is unprecedented in the Agency's 64 years history in Gaza.

Despite substantive improvements over the past week, the ever growing numbers of IDPs in shelters presents a massive challenge to UNRWA. Currently, all of its designated emergency shelters are connected to water wells or the municipality network, or both, and 495 water tanks have been installed to improve storage capacity and water supply, as municipal water is supplied only for a few hours per week. UNRWA's hygiene and water campaign continues in the designated shelters, with 137 IDP committees (including at minimum two women, two men and four youths, comprising two girls and two boys) established with 1,314 members. Hygiene focal points and facilitators have organized 697 awareness sessions among 36,291 IDPs focusing on cleanliness, usage of cleaning materials, best practices in water use, how to keep food from being contaminated and how to treat lice and scabies. The campaign is supported by posters in all shelters. With prolonged displacement, posters made of durable material are being put up on the walls in all shelters, including in toilets and water points, informing residents about water conservation, appropriate hygiene practices and the treatment of scabies and lice. The deteriorating security situation, however, largely prevents the movement of staff working on the campaign.

Hygiene awareness, health monitoring and training to shelter management committees is also being provided in the government schools. Management committees include the IDPs themselves. However, the government schools lack paid staff to ensure data registration, cleaning and additional security. Hygiene concerns, for example lice, are being addressed by the relevant cluster partners.

There are also reports of significant displacement in southern Israel, particularly among communities which are in range of mortar fire from Gaza, which the Iron Dome system is unable to intercept. Many families had evacuated at the beginning of the conflict in July, relocating to family and friends in more northerly locations. However, many returned during the extended ceasefire period, but have evacuated their homes again since the resumption of hostilities last week. This movement has reportedly intensified after the killing of a four-year-old boy in one of the affected communities by a mortar shell fragment on Friday. The number of people affected is unknown, as residents have been making informal arrangements, but Israeli media report that 400 families have requested official assistance from the Israeli authorities in relocating.

Update on Education

Nearly half a million children in Gaza were unable to return to primary and secondary schools yesterday, the scheduled start to the new academic year. To mark the occasion school bells were rung at 07:00 in all 85 UNRWA emergency shelters, as a reminder that, despite the hostilities, every child in Gaza has the right to education.

According to current estimates, the school term will not resume until at least two or three weeks into a durable ceasefire. Schools currently used as shelters will require varying degrees of rehabilitation in order to be ready for normal schooling. Initial repairs must also be carried out in war-damaged schools, and unexploded ordnance will need to be cleared to restore safety. With nearly half of Gaza's children suffering mental distress, psychosocial support will have to be included in the school curriculum to heal children's psychological scars. This will only be possible once students are able to resume classes and their lives.

According to the most recent estimates, at least 244 schools in Gaza, including 141 government schools, 75 UNRWA schools, four private schools, 25 kindergartens, six universities and five colleges have been affected by shelling. In southern Israel, two schools have been damaged by rocket fire from Gaza.

Education is the foundation of any society. To invest in education is to invest in peace and stability. For this, the humanitarian community needs the ability to quickly bring in materials and equipment required for the repair, reconstruction and building of schools in Gaza on a large scale.

Ms. June Kunugi, UNICEF Special Representative in the State of Palestine, 24 August 2014.

Key humanitarian priorities:

Protection of civilians: an immediate ceasefire is needed to protect civilians. While hostilities persist, all sides must respect international human rights law and international humanitarian law, in particular the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack.

Humanitarian space: access for humanitarian workers to carry out life-saving activities should be ensured, among other reasons, to complete search and rescue operations in several areas, and repair critical water and electricity infrastructure. Removal of the threat of numerous UXO in built up areas is vital.

Joint needs assessments: the first phase initial rapid needs assessment, covering the governorate level, was launched on 13 August to inform responses by humanitarian organizations. The second phase, covering the municipal level, took place on 18 and 19 August. Information collected is being analysed to determine the overall level of humanitarian needs.

Additional fuel supply: fuel is needed to operate backup generators at essential facilities, including water, sanitation and health, for longer hours.

Strengthen response to IDPs: improving priority response to IDPs across facilities and with host families; ensuring common standards of response to IDPs throughout the Gaza Strip, including comprehensive and common registration.

Erez: Initially open for movement on 24 and 25 August, but closed both days due to mortar fire on the crossing. The GoI reports that there have been 4,124 crossings into Israel and 2,933 crossings into Gaza through Erez since the beginning of the conflict.

Beit Hanoun (Arba-Arba): Operational.

Kerem Shalom: Open today as per its regular operating hours (08:00-16:00). Fuel: Since the beginning of the conflict it is reported that 9.6 million litres of fuel and 4.20 million litres of benzene for transportation has been imported into the Gaza Strip.

Rafah: The Rafah crossing is closed following a strike in the early hours of this morning by an Israeli plane which damaged the building and reportedly killed a security guard.

Humanitarian needs and response



Needs

- At least 373,000 children require direct and specialized psychosocial support (PSS). Children are showing symptoms of increasing distress, including bed wetting, clinging to parents and nightmares. Every child in the Gaza Strip is affected by the crisis and will require some level of psychosocial support.
- There is an urgent need to strengthen preventative measures to protect women and children against different forms of violence while they are displaced in overcrowded shelters and host families.
- Thousands of explosive remnants of war (ERW) are left in civilian areas affected by conflict, causing a major threat, especially to children, farmers, humanitarian workers and IDPs returning home. UN premises have also been contaminated by ERW.

Response

- Protection Cluster members are monitoring and investigating incidents to identify possible violations of international law, as well as consolidating information on civilian fatalities.
- CPWG partners are providing PSS interventions in shelters and in host families.
- PRCS continues to provide PSS interventions through UNWRA and governmental schools/shelters.
- UNICEF has reached 710,000 people in Gaza with life-saving and child protection SMS text messages, targeting the most vulnerable communities in Gaza.
- The Sawa Child Protection Helpline has thus far provided counselling to a total of 2,587 callers.

- Since 8 July, UNRWA Community Mental Health Programme (CMHP) has conducted 16,084 PSS sessions for 134,819 parents and recreational activities for 151,665 children. CMHP also coordinated and supervised the implementation of sessions by other partners covering 27,780 adult IDPs and 110,292 children.
- CTCCM (Community Training Centre and Crisis Management) has been providing PSS support to other IDP sites, including in two government schools, the Orthodox Church in Gaza and al Amal Institute, reaching 221 children and 20 women.
- UNICEF, in partnership with Ma'an Development Center, is providing daily PSS and extracurricular activities to 2,000 children in 13 shelters managed by MoSA in Gaza city and north Gaza Strip. Ma'an has also organized one open day in Khan Yunis and delivered 9 workshops on child protection minimum standards to 9 shelter's management committees.
- Overall, fifty UNICEF psychologists are providing counselling to 3,000 children. Also, to date, there are 90 counsellors covering all UNRWA shelters.
- PEDCOM is providing awareness sessions for parents, recreational activities for children, individual counseling and group sessions and capacity building of pre-school teachers on identifying and responding to PSS distress in young children.
- IMC are working in 25 locations, targeting 4,500 children through Child Friendly Spaces; child care workers with training on classroom-based interventions and psychosocial first aid; mothers through support sessions; and are providing case management.
- CFTA organizes open days in the Khan Yunis community over several days delivering art and recreational activities for children.
- CMBM provided psychosocial support activities for children in shelters in Rafah government. A total of 5,122 children have been reached through these activities to date.
- El Wedad has been providing psychosocial, first aid and relaxation techniques to 121 children in southern Remal.
- Tamer Association is providing psychosocial support to the communities of Ad Darraj, northern Remal, Jabalia Al Balad, Deir Al Balah, and Khan Yunis, as well as to IDPs in shelters in southern Remal, and Al Darraj, reaching 2,995 children.
- ERW awareness campaign for families in UNRWA shelters continues. Radio and TV ERW awareness messages are broadcasted several times a day to spread awareness about the danger posed by unexploded ordnance.
- UNMAS is undertaking risk assessments in 5 governorates, and mainly for UNRWA installations. Clearance operations are being conducted by EOD police.
- UNMAS and child protection partners are also conducting Risk awareness/education, including to humanitarian workers and UNRWA staff.
- On 20 and 21 of August, UNMAS, in coordination with UNRWA, UNDSS and CLA, conducted an emergency response at Rafah crossing after an aircraft bomb landed in the custom office. The humanitarian corridor between Israel and Gaza is cleared.

Gaps and Constraints

- UNMAS is limited to conducting emergency responses;
- GBV needs assessment cannot be undertaken until the security situation improves.
- Local organizations are in great need of fuel and electricity to be able to continue conducting their interventions.
- Children and families are in desperate need of core child protection support and information, including psychosocial support; however the ongoing hostilities continue to impede movement of child protection staff and emergency psychosocial teams.
- Major electricity outages continue to hamper communication with staff and partners on the ground. Most child protection services remain closed.
- Children and families hosted in the community and in private schools remain largely unreached by child protection interventions.



Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI)

Needs

- It is estimated that 17,200 families (consisting of approximately 103,200 individuals) whose homes were totally destroyed or heavily damaged are in need of emergency NFI kits. In the medium term, they will require cash assistance to cover rental fees and basic household items.
- Emergency shelter repair items are needed for about 5,635 families (33,800 individuals), whose homes were damaged but are still inhabitable. Another 32,400 families (an estimated 194,400 individuals), whose homes sustained minor damage need basic NFI assistance such as nylon and plastic sheets.

Response

- 283,220 people are being provided with shelter in 85 designated UNRWA schools across the Gaza Strip and 36,136 individuals are sheltered in seven government shelters supported by UNRWA. In addition, 13,729 people are being provided with shelter in another 17 government schools and 140,895 IDPs registered with MoSA are hosted with relatives and reached by various shelter partners.
- Shelter and WASH partners have provided household NFIs to 54,520 families and hygiene NFIs to 86,165 families since the beginning of the emergency. Standard household NFI kits include two mattresses and four blankets. Sometimes kitchen sets are also included; IDPs residing in shelter do not normally receive kitchen sets since there is no available capacity to cook. Such items are normally distributed to either IDPs with hosting families or those residing in damaged, but still inhabitable houses. Standard hygiene NFI kits usually include soap, shampoos, toothpaste, tooth brushes, towels, tissues paper and basic cleaning supplies.

Gaps and Constraints

- Cash assistance of more than US\$ 70 million is needed for 17,200 families to cover rental fees and urgent expenses.
- Emergency shelter kits are needed for 24,477 displaced families.
- Shelter NFIs such as plastic sheets and tarpaulin are needed for 32,400 families (approximately 194,400 individuals) whose homes sustained minor damage.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Needs

- Drinking water has to be supplied separately from the municipal network, as the latter is not potable.
- IDPs at host families lack sufficient sanitary facilities, affecting mostly women.
- Some of the water network was damaged in the fighting and needs to be repaired.
- There is a need to assess WASH facilities requirements in the newly opened government school as a temporary shelter in Gaza city.
- The population across the Gaza Strip uses potable water for domestic purposes, which places an unsustainable pressure on the capacity for production and distribution of portable, desalinated water. WASH Cluster will consult with municipalities, CMWU and PWA on how to satisfy this need.
- An additional government school opened in Gaza City (Fahmi al Jerjawi) with 679 IDPs. WASH implementing partners are assessing and coordinating the need for WASH response.

Response

- On 23 August, the municipality of Gaza distributed 200 m³ of water in 13 government and seven UNRWA schools used as temporary shelters; opened streets that were bombed in Az Zaytoun neighborhood; removed rubble from a well; and managed to collect 500 tons of solid waste off the streets.
- Ongoing operation and maintenance works in water wells and sewage pumping stations in addition to water and sewage system repairs.
- CMWU continues to provide for all possible repairs and refurbishment of repairable facilities.
- Support to network and facilities repair provided to CMWU/service providers through ICRC, UNRWA, UNICEF, Oxfam GB and Ma'an Development Center to address urgent damage to the system; Save the Children also plans to provide support to repairs in North Gaza.

- Tankering of drinking water to different areas and shelters across Gaza Strip continues through a number of partners including UNRWA, Oxfam GB, UNICEF with GVC and PHG, ANERA, PU and PARC.
- WASH partners, including GVC, PHG and Oxfam, installed water tanks in several location in Central Gaza Strip.
- MoLG has continued to spray a number of sites with pesticides as a vector control measure.
- 10,000 families have been reached by UNICEF through the WFP e-voucher system and have received basic hygiene items.

Gaps and Constraints

- The resumption of hostilities has stalled repairs and assessments as lack of security restricts movement and access.
- Lack of electricity and fuel is also a restricting factor.
- There are shortages in financial resources, water trucks, generators, storage, pumps and management capacity.



Health and Nutrition

Needs

- Health facilities damaged and/or closed due to insecurity, as well as continuing problems of access of staff to clinics, have hindered the delivery of health services. Four Ministry of Health primary health clinics which were totally destroyed in the past month are located in areas of great need and alternatives are urgently required for residents (Ash Shuja'iyeh, Juhor al Dik, Khuza'a and Khan Yunis).
- The presence of thousands of UXOs in urban areas represents a public health hazard, especially for children.
- The health situation in shelters varies depending on the location of shelter, crowdedness and management. Disease surveillance systems are active in UNRWA-operated shelters and medical teams have been designated to all, providing medicines and referrals.
- The pediatric hospital Al Nasser reports 180 per cent bed occupancy rate because of the closure of the damaged Al Durra Pediatric Hospital which has raised Ministry of Health concerns about possible communicable disease outbreak due to the crowded conditions.
- A number of hospital generators have broken down or need spare parts and maintenance due to overload caused by electricity shortages and prolonged use.
- Continuity of care, quality follow up of casualty cases that have been discharged and rehabilitation of patients, especially of amputees, at the community level needs active follow-up.

Response

- 19 Health Cluster partners have detailed more than 150 activities which are ongoing or fully implemented since July 7. in response to the humanitarian emergency in the Gaza Strip.
- A total of US\$10.8 million in drugs, medical disposables, fuel and other items have been donated for the health sector in Gaza since July 7, with the majority of donations destined for the Ministry of Health. Drug donations have maintained drug stocks without further deterioration (at 28 per cent zero stock) but without allowing real gains to chronically low drug levels.
- The reactivation of the Health Cluster has been endorsed by the Interagency Standing Committee in light of the ongoing emergency in Gaza and need for higher visibility of the health situation and coordinated health strategies through the UN cluster system and with other partners.
- The Government. of Israel reports that it has facilitated 264 ambulance transfers since the beginning of the conflict.

Gaps and Constraints

- Health assessments have been delayed due to the continuing lack of security for data collectors as well as health staff in outlying clinics and mobile clinics.



Food Security

Needs

- IDPs are in need of food and other immediate assistance.
- The entire population of Gaza has been affected by the conflict and almost all need food and other assistance to recover.
- An estimated 100,000 people whose homes were destroyed or damaged beyond repair will need food and other assistance for a longer term.
- Families relying on agricultural-related livelihoods need food, other immediate assistance and support in re-establishing their sources of income. An early recovery to re-establish their livelihoods and production capacity is required.
- Restock with animal vaccination against FMD, Brucellosis, Chlamydia and Sheep pox are needed for 64,000 head of small ruminants and 20,000 head of cattle.
- The poultry sub sector needs immediate assistance to reactivate the production capacity.
- Humanitarian access to allow for provision of food and other emergency assistance to the civilian population should be consistently assured.

Response

- Despite ongoing hostilities, the regular food assistance to more than one million UNRWA and WFP core beneficiaries is ongoing.
- In addition, 506,000 out of around 730,000 people have been reached by the one-time exceptional food distribution to affected families who are not receiving regular food assistance implemented by UNRWA, WFP and the Ministry of Social Affairs.
- WFP, in cooperation with UNRWA, is providing ready-to-eat emergency food rations to IDPs in UNRWA and government shelters on a daily basis.
- WFP continues to provide food assistance to IDPs hosted with relatives and to patients and hospital staff.
- Food Security Sector (FSS) partners are delivering complementary food distributions to IDPs at UNRWA and government shelters.

Gaps and Constraints

- The ongoing military activity is putting food distribution and other humanitarian activities at risk.
- There is a lack of a proper mechanism to identify the most vulnerable groups relying on agricultural-related livelihoods and being heavily affected by the conflict.
- A lack of successful coordination at crossings complicates food delivery.
- Electricity shortages are affecting the storage capacity of fresh food for both shops and households.
- The price of some food items has gone up, including fresh fruit, vegetables and eggs, due to the large damage sustained to farms and agricultural lands, among other reasons.
- Immediate emergency funds to cover massively increasing food needs of IDPs and returnees are required.



Education

Needs

- During the reporting period, another two schools were extensively damaged by shelling, bringing to 220 the number of schools affected (141 government, 75 UNRWA schools and four private schools) that are in need of repair; this includes 22 schools completely destroyed.
- UNRWA and government schools will not be ready for the new school year which was scheduled to start this coming Sunday.
- A lasting ceasefire is urgently needed to undertake unexploded ordnance clearance, damage assessments and repair work to damaged educational facilities, as well as preparation for the new school year.

Response

- UNRWA, in coordination with MoEHE and partners, planned to implement a three-phase back-to-school plan in war torn Gaza this week, to help students and teachers start to transition into a new school year. The plan includes psychosocial interventions, and implementing a new technology, UNRWA's satellite TV education programs and self-learning material for all children.
- The Education Cluster is also working with service providers to coordinate a special package for returning school students, with a focus on PSS support and recreational activities.

Gaps & Constraints

- Inadequate funding for cluster activities.
- The need for longer-term shelter for tens of thousands of IDPs will present significant challenges to the operation of schools currently being used as shelters.



Logistics

Needs

- Safe and secure transportation inside the Gaza Strip is urgently required to ensure the delivery of much needed relief supplies and to guarantee transporters are able to continue working.
- There is an urgent need to ensure coordination with relevant authorities and organisations operating in the Gaza Strip and coordinate proper humanitarian space to ensure safe passage, delivery and distribution of aid cargo.

Response

- On 24 August, the Logistics Cluster facilitated the transportation of 436 pallets of food, shelter and WASH supplies into the Gaza Strip on behalf of humanitarian organizations, including UNICEF and Handicap International.
- On the 24 August, the Logistics Cluster facilitated the transportation of over 160 pallets of humanitarian relief items on behalf of the Palestinian Authorities and 110 for the Ministry of Health for distribution within the Gaza Strip.
- Five trucks transported over 120 pallets of privately donated clothes, food, bedding and diapers from Hebron to the Ministry of Social Affairs in Gaza; facilitated by the Logistics Cluster.
- Since activation, the Logistics Cluster has supported 24 humanitarian organisations including OXFAM and CHF International, and facilitated the transportation of over 3,070 pallets of humanitarian relief via 118 trucks on behalf of 28 humanitarian organizations for distribution within the Gaza Strip.
- The Logistics Cluster is requesting a list of sector cargo priorities for the Gaza humanitarian response in case all cargo requests cannot be delivered in a timely manner due to the security crossing process.
- The Logistics Cluster is negotiating with the Egyptian authorities regarding humanitarian access through the Rafah crossing from Egypt to the Gaza Strip. It is also looking into a possible coordination with the Egyptian Red Crescent Society to send shipments from Egypt into the Gaza Strip starting from next week.

Gaps and Constraints

- Safe and secure transportation inside the Gaza Strip remains an ongoing constraint limiting the ability of the delivery of urgently required relief supplies.
- The increasing needs and deteriorating situation is forcing the humanitarian community to augment its pipelines, increasing pressure on Kerem Shalom, the only goods crossing into the Gaza Strip. The Logistics Cluster is liaising with relevant authorities to ease the cargo bottlenecks and improve cargo prioritization procedures causing delays at the border crossing points of Beituniya and Tarqumiya from the West Bank into Israel.

General Coordination

The first phase of the joint rapid needs assessment, led by the EOC started on 13 August, and data analysis is ongoing. The second phase of the joint rapid needs assessment started on 18 August, covering 19 municipalities (some 80 assessment staff were involved and at least 250 key informants interviewed, including youth, persons with disabilities and elderly). The remaining six municipalities were covered on 19 August and the eight refugee camps will be covered as soon as the situation

allows. Data collected will be entered on tablets and linked directly to a database. The information will be subsequently validated and analyzed, before it is disseminated. Protection and gender concerns have been integrated throughout the process as have questions on the information needs of affected communities. Clusters and sectors are currently engaged in ongoing analysis of the data generated from the two level needs assessments.

Today, UNDP and OCHA met with the Minister of Public Works and Housing and the Minister of Social Affairs, as well as a representative of the Palestinian Energy Authority and the Manager of the Gaza Power Plant to discuss the energy situation in Gaza and possible ways forward. OCHA provided information on the impact of the lack of electricity on the humanitarian situation and emergency fuel distributions as coordinated by OCHA and delivered by UNRWA. One of the outcomes of the meeting was that a task force of key actors would be established to work in a more concerted way on energy issues; it was proposed that the task force would be chaired by the Palestinian Energy Authority.

Also today, the Gaza EOC and representatives of the ministries of health and education linked into a discussion organized by MOPAD on the establishment of a 100-day plan for Gaza.

Funding

Based on available information, funding to the Gaza Crisis Appeal stands at US \$177 million out of a total request of US \$367 million (48%), however, of this around US \$148 million is for UNRWA, US \$20 million for WFP and only US \$9 million for others, leaving large gaps to respond in other critical sectors such as Health, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Education and Shelter and Non Food Items. Many key UN and NGOs partners identified for the Gaza response have received little to no funding to date for their projects in the Crisis Appeal. The Crisis Appeal is available online at www.ochaopt.org.

Donors and recipient agencies are kindly requested to report funding received to fts@un.org.

The Emergency Response Fund (ERF) is an additional mechanism available to fund interventions in Gaza through rapid and flexible support to affected civilian populations. The ERF has begun processing project applications in regards to the Gaza emergency. To date, thirteen project proposals were approved for a total of US \$3.1 million. Further funding for the ERF is still being sought.

UN humanitarian agencies, in cooperation with NGO partners have applied to the CERF Rapid Response window to cover urgent needs in food assistance, psychosocial support, WASH, rubble removal and critical drugs, and the request is under processing by CERF.

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 in early June, characterized by an intensification of Israeli airstrikes and rockets launched from Gaza at southern Israel. Tensions further increased following the abduction and killing of three Israeli youths in the southern West Bank, on 12 June, which the Israeli government attributed to Hamas. Overall, in the period leading up 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 fire.

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 Israeli blockade in place since June 2007. 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 to an ongoing energy crisis, involving power outages of 12 hours per day.

For further information, please contact:

Ms. Katleen Maes, Head of the humanitarian Emergency Operations Center in Gaza, maes@un.org, +972 592 911 047
Mr. Ray Dolphin, Analysis, Communications and Protection Unit, OCHA oPt, dolphin@un.org, +972 54 331 1827

For media enquiries, please contact:

Ms. Hayat Abu-Saleh, Communications and Information Analyst, OCHA oPt, abusaleh@un.org, +972 (0) 54 3311816

For more information, please visit www.ochaopt.org