



UNRWA Situation Report #36 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

Information is valid as of 21 November 2023 at 22:30 (local time)

Day 46 of Hostilities

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A displaced Palestinian child walking through rubble in Nuseirat Refugee Camp, 17 November 2023. © 2023 UNRWA Photo by Ashraf Amra

1. Key points

The Gaza Strip

- 108 UNRWA colleagues have been killed since the beginning of hostilities. This is the highest number of United Nations aid workers killed in a conflict in the history of the United Nations. **At least the 40 per cent have been killed south of Wadi Gaza.**
- Almost 1.7 million people (or nearly 80 per cent of the population) have been displaced across the Gaza Strip since 7 October.
- **As of 21 November, nearly 1,037,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) are now sheltering in 156 UNRWA installations across all five governorates of the Gaza Strip, including in the north.**
- **Nearly 877,000 IDPs are sheltering in 99 facilities in the Middle, Khan Younis and Rafah areas.** Nearly 160,000 IDPs were sheltering in 57 UNRWA schools in the north and Gaza areas as of 12 October 2023, before evacuation orders were issued by the Israeli Authorities. UNRWA is not able to access these shelters to assist or protect IDPs and does not have information on their needs and conditions.
- **On average, around 220 people sheltering in UNRWA schools share a single toilet.**
- On average, there is one shower unit for every **4,500 people in UNRWA shelters**. The increase in the number of IDPs per shower compared to previous reports is **in line with the increase of IDPs in UNRWA**

shelters and is due to the lack of shower units in UNRWA installations not designated as shelters but currently hosting IDPs. UNRWA was not able to bring any additional mobile shower units to its shelters due to a lack of space and/or the lack of fuel for transportation.

The West Bank, including East Jerusalem

- On 21 November, Israeli Security Forces (ISF) operations were reported **in a number of refugee camps across the West Bank**, including Jalazone (Ramallah) and Dheisheh camp (Bethlehem).
- In the early morning, an ISF operation was conducted in Balata refugee camp (Nablus), for the third day in a row. An exchange of fire was reported between Palestinians and ISF, and there were a number of Palestinian injuries and detentions. Further damage to camp infrastructure by an ISF bulldozer was recorded.
- Later in the morning, the ISF entered Balata refugee camp for a second time, and another exchange of fire reportedly took place between Palestinians and ISF during clashes, after ISF surrounded a house in the camp. Five Palestinians, including three minors, were injured with live ammunition and several cases of tear gas inhalation were reported.
- UNRWA operations were running in the camp at the time of the ISF operations, with UNRWA social workers visiting families to undertake an assessment of the impact of recent operations, and over 2,000 students from four UNRWA schools in the camp sheltered in place. Later during the day, a Palestinian refugee from the camp died from injuries sustained during the operation.
- On the same day, the ISF conducted a search and arrest operation in several locations in Jericho, reportedly firing live ammunition in an area of the city. An exchange of fire between Palestinians and ISF was reported at the entrance of the nearby Aqbat Jabr refugee camp; UNRWA operations were not impacted.

2. Overall situation

The Gaza Strip

- According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), **as of 22 November over 14,128 people have been killed in the Gaza Strip since 7 October**; 74 per cent of them are reportedly children and women.
- Overall, around 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals have been killed in Israel, according to Israeli Authorities, the vast majority on 7 October (OCHA).

The West Bank, including East Jerusalem

- According to OCHA, **since 7 October, 201 Palestinians, including 52 children, have been killed by the ISF. In addition, eight people, including one child have been killed by Israeli settlers.**

3. Humanitarian access & protection of civilians

The Gaza Strip

- As of 21 November, **108 UNRWA colleagues have been killed since the beginning of the hostilities.**
- As of 21 November, UNRWA was able to verify that 89 incidents¹ have occurred at 69 UNRWA installations since the beginning of the hostilities. **Over 50 per cent of the impacted installations are south of Wadi Gaza.**
- **Among the installations impacted, 23 have sustained direct hits.** In addition, UNRWA received reports of unauthorized entry and military use of its facilities on at least five occasions including entry of Israeli Forces' tanks onto the premises, use by snipers, and interrogations and arrests within the facilities.

- Since the beginning of the conflict, **at least 798 internally displaced people sheltering in UNRWA schools have been injured and at least 191 were reportedly killed.** The number of killed and injured IDPs is an estimate as UNRWA is still trying to verify casualties from incidents impacting its installations.

4. UNRWA response

The Gaza Strip

UNRWA Shelters

- **The number of displaced people continues to increase.** UNRWA shelters in the Middle and South areas are severely overcrowded and are unable to accommodate new arrivals.
- **The installations accommodate far more people than their intended capacity.** They are not designed to host such a large number of people and do not have adequate facilities to provide safe and dignified living conditions. **The over-crowding is leading to significant spread of disease, including acute respiratory illness and diarrhea, raises environmental and health issues, and limits the Agency's ability to provide services.**
- People in shelters do not have enough **food and basic survival items. Hygiene levels are poor and mental health issues are prevalent.**
- On average, there is one shower unit for every **4,500 people in UNRWA shelters.**
- The number of toilets differs from one shelter to another. In general, there are 30 to 50 toilets per school (including those for persons with disabilities). **On average, around 220 people sheltering in UNRWA schools share a single toilet.**
- Due to the poor sanitary conditions, **data indicates significant increases in some communicable diseases and conditions such as diarrhea, acute respiratory infections, skin infections and hygiene-related conditions like lice.** In the past weeks, diarrhea increased by 45 times, and bloody diarrhea by 14 times in comparison to the same periods in 2022.
- As part of its humanitarian operations, **UNRWA distributes food and non-food items to IDPs at the shelters.** These include flour, canned food, cheese, dates, and tarpaulins, nylon sheets, mats, mattresses and other humanitarian supplies.

Health

- Since the beginning of the war, **UNRWA staff in Gaza have treated over half a million patients.**
- On 21 November, nine (out of 22) UNRWA health centres were still operational in the middle and south areas, recording **9,601 patient visits**, including Palestine Refugees and non-refugees.
- Most of these health centres are unable to use online registration systems for patients due to network breakdown. Patient information is therefore mostly registered on paper, making data collection and reporting more challenging.
- Midwives are providing care for post-natal and high-risk pregnant women at the nine operational health centres. There are an estimated 50,000 pregnant women in Gaza, with more than 180 giving birth every day. **A total of 283 post-natal and high-risk pregnancy cases were attended to at health centres on 21 November.**
- On 21 November, 770 children were vaccinated at seven health centres according to the national vaccination programme bringing the total number to 10,926 since 4 November.

- On the same day, emergency dental services (bleeding, swellings, trauma and extraction) were provided to 317 cases at seven health centres.
- **UNRWA continued to provide health care to IDPs at shelters through 124 medical teams. 351 health workers attended a total of 11,003 on 21 November. Each team is composed of 1 to 2 doctors and a nurse.**
- **Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) initiatives were resumed** in the Middle and Khan Younis areas with a team of two psychiatrists and 16 counsellors and supervisor to assist special cases referred from health centres and shelters. The team responded to **664 cases through individual consultations, awareness sessions, and support to GBV cases.**
- **Overall, 20,604** patients received health care from UNRWA on 21 November at shelters and the nine operational Agency health centres. This compares to 17,513 on 5 October, the last day of services before the start of the hostilities.

Psychosocial support (PSS)

- UNRWA teams, including 196 social workers in the shelters, provide psychosocial first aid and other specialized protection services to IDPs. **Since 7 October, 59,775 individuals (over 61 per cent of whom are females) have been reached.**
- **In addition, 110 school counsellors and 152 assistant counsellors continue to provide psychosocial support reaching 180,068 IDPs in UNRWA shelters in the Middle and South governorates through individual consultations and awareness sessions since the beginning of the hostilities.**
- **Recreational activities were also organized in UNRWA shelters reaching 159,870 children.** UNRWA counsellors have also provided staff care and support to 812 UNRWA staff since the beginning of the hostilities.
- In coordination with the organization “Humanity & Inclusion”, UNRWA provided specialized support, including dignity kits and assistive devices, to 4,106 persons with disabilities, injured, children and elderly.
- As much as possible and available, UNRWA distributes food and non-food items to IDPs at the shelters. These include flour, canned food, cheese, dates, and tarpaulin, nylon sheets, mats, mattresses, etc.

Food security

- UNRWA distribution of flour to families started on 21 November in Rafah area. Around 1,000 families composed of at least 11 family members received flour, with a total of 100 metric tons distributed. The Agency has prioritized large families first.

Water and Sanitation Services (WASH)

- **UNRWA continues to operate water wells to provide potable and domestic water supply.** Potable water trucking operations to the shelters in Rafah and Khan Younis areas also continue. Due to the reduced availability of fuel, daily water production of water wells decreased from an average of 10,000 cubic metres to 8,000.
- The distribution of potable water stopped in Rafah due to a lack of fuel for the water tankers but continued in Khan Younis and Middle Areas thanks to the desalination plant which remained operational. Distribution of domestic water to the shelters continued at a minimum level.
- Solid waste collection from the camps and from emergency shelters and transfer to landfills continues in the Middle, Khan Younis and Rafah areas.

- UNRWA teams continued to handle maintenance works at tens of shelters. This includes electrical works to fix breakdowns (connecting spots with solar system energy, changing burned wires etc.), repair of solar systems, plumbing works to repair water networks and desalination plants (repair of water connections, wastewater leakage, water pump, repair clogged sewage line, etc.), security repairs (replacing damaged locks, switches, repair of security screens, etc.), metal works, tiling etc.

Quote from an UNRWA staff member who asked that their name not be shared:

“Thousands of people are sleeping in the streets and on the sidewalks. Hundreds of these people come every day to our operating room [...] in their great affliction, they ask for simple things –shelter, or a tent. There is little food and I have no choice but to say that all the shelter centers are full to capacity.”

#HearTheirVoices

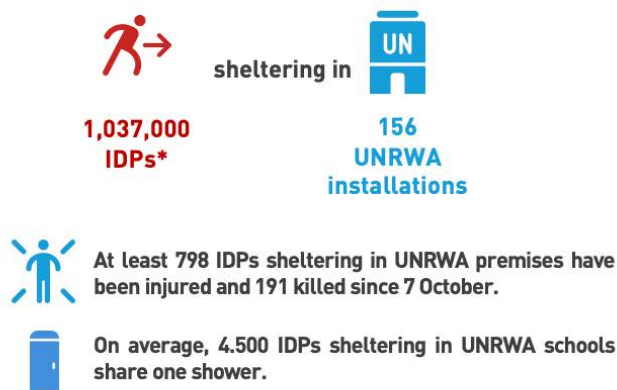
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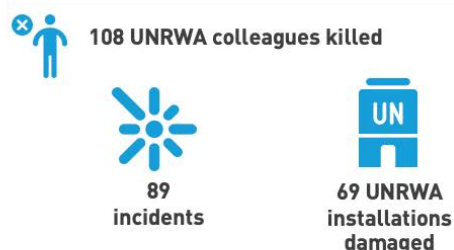
UNRWA situation and response to the escalation in the Gaza Strip

IDPs in UNRWA installations


Confirmed numbers, since 7 October




UNRWA fatalities and damage to installations



UNRWA response – Psychosocial support

 59,775 people (61 per cent women) were provided with psychosocial support and social work services since the beginning of the crisis.

UNRWA response – Health

 11,003 IDPs in shelters received healthcare through 124 mobile medical points on 21 November.

9,601 patients received healthcare in nine (out of 22) UNRWA health centres still operational in the Middle and South areas on 21 November.


283 post-natal and high-risk pregnancy cases were attended to at the health centres on 21 November.

770 children were vaccinated at seven health centres on 21 November.

UNRWA response – Food security

 ~1,000 families composed of at least 11 family members received flour in Rafah area, with a total of 100 metric tons distributed on 21 November.

UNRWA response – WASH

 Solid waste collection from camps and emergency shelters and transfer to landfills continues in the Middle, Khan Younis and Rafah areas.

* IDPs in the North and Gaza areas as of 12 October. UNRWA's ability to provide humanitarian support in the North and Gaza City has since been compromised and access to information including updates on IDPs numbers has since been hindered.

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