



UNRWA Situation Report #35 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

Information is valid as of 20 November 2023 at 22:30 (local time)

Day 45 of Hostilities

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Displaced Palestinians taking shelter in an UNRWA school in Deir al-Balah, 20 November 2023. © 2023 UNRWA Photo by Ashraf Amra

1. Key points

The Gaza Strip

- Four UNRWA colleagues were killed due to strikes in the North, Gaza and Khan Younis areas. In total, 108 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 half have been killed south of Wadi Gaza.**
- Two schools in the Middle Area were directly hit by strikes and sustained severe damages. In one school, 15 internally displaced persons were killed, of whom nine were children and four were women. 20 people were injured. The school was hosting about 1,000 internally displaced people who were subsequently evacuated.
- 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.
- UNRWA received confirmed reports that **two schools, one in the North and one in the Middle Area, were completely demolished by explosions.**
- As of 20 November, UNRWA was able to verify that 89 incidents¹ have impacted 69 UNRWA installations since the beginning of the hostilities.

- **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 tanks onto the premises, use by snipers, and interrogations and arrests within the facilities.
- 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 20 November, nearly 945,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) are now sheltering in 156 UNRWA installations across all five governorates of the Gaza Strip, including in the north.**
- **Nearly 785,000 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 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.
- UNRWA has been informed that 120,000 litres of fuel will be delivered every two days. This amount of fuel **only covers half of the daily critical needs.** On 20 November, UNRWA received two trucks of fuel (around 64,000 liters).

The West Bank, including East Jerusalem

- On 20 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), Fara'a (north-east of Nablus) and Aqbat Jabr (Jericho) refugee camps, where an exchange of fire took place between Palestinian and ISF.
- ISF opened fire on a Palestinian vehicle near the entrance of Arroub refugee camp (between Bethlehem and Hebron), and one Palestinian from a nearby village was killed.
- In the early morning, an ISF operation took place in Balata refugee camp (Nablus), on the third day in a row. An exchange of fire was reported between Palestinians and ISF, and Palestinian injuries and detentions were recorded. Infrastructure in the camp sustained further damage.
- UNRWA continues to provide services in the West Bank, with health clinics and schools open, except for the Hebron Boys' School that has remained closed since the beginning of the escalation on 7 October. Four UNRWA schools in Jenin are still running in remote learning modality.
- About 470 UNRWA staff with West Bank Identity Cards working in UNRWA East Jerusalem installations and at the UNRWA West Bank Field Office are still unable to reach their duty stations, due to Israeli access restrictions from the West Bank into East Jerusalem and Israel.

2. Overall situation

The Gaza Strip

- According to Palestinian Bureau Center for Statistics (PBCS), as of 22 November over 14,128 people have been killed in the Gaza Strip since 7 October; two thirds 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 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 20 November, UNRWA was able to verify that 89 incidents¹ have impacted 69 UNRWA installations since the beginning of the hostilities.
- In addition, UNRWA received reports of unauthorized entry and military use of its facilities on at least five occasions including entry of tanks onto the premises, use by snipers, and interrogations and arrests within the facilities.
- Over 50 per cent of the impacted installations are south of Wadi Gaza.
- As of 19 November, **108 UNRWA colleagues have been killed since the beginning of the hostilities.**

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 diseases, 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 **700 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, 160 people sheltering in UNRWA schools share a single toilet.**
- In the Rafah Logistics Base where more than 8,000 people have sought shelter, 400 people are sharing one 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 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

- On 20 November, nine (out of 22) UNRWA health centres were still operational in the middle and south areas, recording **7,522 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 231 post-natal and high-risk pregnancy cases were attended to at the health centres on 20 November.**
- On 20 November, 435 children were vaccinated at seven health centres according to the national vaccination programme.
- On the same day, emergency dental services (bleeding, swellings, trauma and extraction) were provided to 257 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 9,748 on 20 November.**
- Only through further rationing of fuel reserves and through solar energy has UNRWA been able to operate the health centres.
- Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) initiatives resumed in the Middle and Khan Younis areas with a team of psychiatrists and counsellors to assist special cases referred from health centres and shelters.

Psychosocial support (PSS)

- UNRWA has counsellors and social workers in the shelters to provide psychosocial first aid and other specialized protection services. **Since 7 October, over 57,898 individuals (over 61 per cent of whom are females) received psychosocial support including family support and recreational activities.**

Food security

- UNRWA is preparing for a distribution of flour to people Middle and Southern governorates with quantities based on family size. The distribution will start on 21 November in Rafah area for the largest families.

Water and Sanitation Services (WASH)

- UNRWA continues to operate water wells for the provision of 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.
- A number of public water wells in the south of Wadi Gaza stopped working. However, UNRWA is unable to confirm precise figures due to communications breakdowns.
- 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 including electrical works to fix breakdowns and repair solar systems, plumbing works to repair water networks and desalination plants, security repairs, etc.

Quote from Inas, UNRWA staff member in southern Gaza

"My children cannot take it anymore – bombardments are getting closer by day. Yesterday an air strike was so close that my ten-year-old kept shivering and panicking."

#HearTheirVoices

ENDs –



UNRWA situation and response to the escalation in the Gaza Strip

IDPs in UNRWA installations

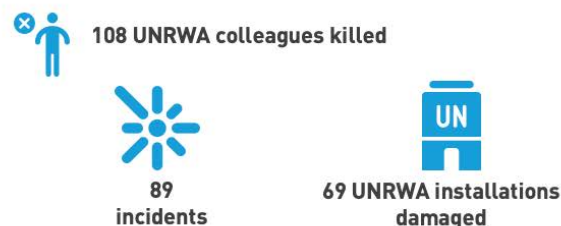
Confirmed numbers, since 7 October



At least 798 IDPs sheltering in UNRWA premises have been injured and 191 killed since 7 October.

On average, 160 people sheltering in UNRWA schools share a single toilet.

UNRWA fatalities and damage to installations



UNRWA response – Psychosocial support

57,898 people (61 per cent women) were provided with psychosocial support and social work services since the beginning of the crisis.

UNRWA response – Health

9,748 IDPs in shelters received healthcare through 124 mobile medical points on 20 November.

7,522 patients received healthcare in nine (out of 22) UNRWA health centres still operational in the Middle and South areas on 20 November.

231 post-natal and high-risk pregnancy cases were attended to at the health centres on 20 November.

435 children were vaccinated at seven health centres on 20 November.

UNRWA response – WASH

UNRWA continues to operate water wells for the provision of potable and domestic water supply.

UNRWA response – WASH

64,000 liters of fuel were received on 20 November.

• 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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