



UNRWA Situation Report #37 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

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

Day 46 of Hostilities

Published 23 November 2023



Child sheltering in Deir el-Balah area struggling with rain and cold weather, 19 November 2023. © 2023 UNRWA Photo by Ashraf Amra

1. Key points

The Gaza Strip

- Over 1.7 million people (or nearly 80 per cent of the population) have been displaced across the Gaza Strip since 7 October.
- As of 22 November, more than one million internally displaced persons (IDPs) are now sheltering in 156 UNRWA installations across all five governorates of the Gaza Strip, including in the north.
- Nearly 896,000 IDPs are sheltering in 99 facilities in the Middle, Khan Younis and Rafah areas. This is an increase of around 19,000 individuals over the past 24 hours.
- 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.
- The average number of IDPs per shelter has surpassed 9,000, indicating a significant level of overcrowding considering that the standard shelter capacity is up to 2,000 people. On average UNRWA shelters are hosting four and a half times more IDPs than their intended capacity.

- Notably, one of the schools in Maghazi, Middle Governorate, has reported an overcrowding rate reaching 18.95 times its capacity, with 37,900 IDPs accommodated in a facility intended for 2,000 individuals.
- 108 UNRWA colleagues have been killed since the beginning of the hostilities. This is the highest number of United Nations aid workers killed in a conflict in the history of the United Nations. At least 40 per cent of them have been killed south of Wadi Gaza.

The West Bank, including East Jerusalem

- On 22 November, a large-scale Israeli Security Forces' (ISF) operation was conducted in Tulkarem refugee camp, lasting around 10 hours. Six Palestinians were killed. The road networks in the camp sustained substantial damages, including locations directly adjacent to the UNRWA Health Centre. UNRWA operations were impacted, particularly education, as around 1,200 students from four UNRWA schools could not attend school.
- In the early morning of the same day, the ISF conducted a search and arrest operation in Dheisheh refugee camp, Bethlehem. ISF reportedly opened fire in clashes with Palestinians, and three Palestinians were reportedly injured with live ammunition. Twenty-six Palestinians, including a female, were detained. Student attendance at UNRWA schools in the camp was recorded at 55 per cent, due to the security situation.
- UNRWA schools in Jenin refugee camp resumed in person learning today, after some days in which remote education was used. About 35 per cent of students attended, and several recreational and psychosocial activities were organized.



Children attending recreational and psychosocial support activities at an UNRWA school in Jenin refugee camp, West Bank, 22 November 2023.
© 2023 UNRWA Photos

2. Overall situation

The Gaza Strip

- According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), as of 23 November over 14,532 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, 209 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 22 November, 108 UNRWA colleagues have been killed since the beginning of the hostilities.
- As of 22 November, UNRWA was able to verify that 89 incidents 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 ISF 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.

4. UNRWA response

The Gaza Strip

UNRWA Shelters

- The number of displaced people continues to increase.
- UNRWA installations that are serving as shelters are accommodating over four times more than their intended capacity. The overcrowding 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Since 7 October, UNRWA has distributed the following non-food items:
 - over 66,000 mats and mattresses;
 - nearly 500,000 blankets;
 - around 20,000 baby, family and dignity kits;

- almost 275,000 baby diapers and over 70,000 adult diapers.

Health

- Since the beginning of the war, UNRWA staff in Gaza have treated over half a million patients.
- On 22 November, nine (out of 22) UNRWA health centres were still operational in the middle and south areas, recording 9,786 patient visits, including Palestine Refugees and non-refugees.
- 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 281 post-natal and high-risk pregnancy cases were attended to at health centres on 21 November.
- On 21 November, 696 children were vaccinated at seven health centres according to the national vaccination programme, bringing the total number to 11,622 since 4 November.
- On the same day, emergency dental services (bleeding, swellings, trauma and extraction) were provided to 262 cases at seven health centres.
- UNRWA continued to provide health care to IDPs at shelters through 124 medical teams. 351 health workers attended to a total of 11,667 patients on 22 November. Each team is composed of one to two doctors and a nurse.

Psychosocial support (PSS)

- UNRWA teams, including 196 social workers in the shelters, provided psychosocial first aid and other specialized protection services to IDPs. Since 7 October, 60,776 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. They have reached 227,969 IDPs in UNRWA shelters in the Middle and South governorates through individual consultations and awareness sessions since the beginning of the hostilities.
- Recreational activities have also been organized in UNRWA shelters reaching 205,025 children since the beginning of the hostilities.

Food security

- UNRWA distribution of flour continued on 22 November in southern governorates, where over 2,000 families received flour. The Agency has prioritized large families first, and has reached more than 3,100 families so far.

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 7,000.
- 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 minimal 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 of clogged sewage lines etc.), security repairs (replacing damaged locks, switches, repair of security screens etc.), metal works, tiling etc.

Quote from UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini during his trip to Gaza, the second since the start of hostilities:

"South of Gaza: At an overcrowded UNRWA shelter, it's cold, sewage is flooding. A father burst into tears. He wore the same clothes for 45 days. Sleeps on the floor, asked for food. Stripped of dignity."

#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, there are 9,000+ IDPs per shelter designed for up to 2,000 people..

UNRWA fatalities and damage to installations



UNRWA response – Psychosocial support

60,776 people (61% women) were provided with psychosocial support and social work services since the beginning of the crisis. 205,025 children in shelters UNRWA participated in recreational activities

UNRWA response – Health

11,667 IDPs in shelters received healthcare through 124 mobile medical points on 22 Nov. 9,786 patients received healthcare in nine (out of 22) UNRWA health centres still operational in the Middle and South areas on 22 Nov.

UNRWA response – Food security

3,100 families benefitted from flour distribution since 7 Oct.

UNRWA response – NFIs

Since 7 Oct. UNRWA distributed:
~66,000 mats and mattresses
~500,000 blankets
~20,000 baby, family and dignity kits
~275,000 baby diapers and 70,000 adult diapers

* 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.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Laurane March

Global Media Requests

Mobile: + +962-7-9130-0567 (WhatsApp preferred)

On Twitter: @UNRWA

Email: L.march@unrwa.org

Estefania Diaz

[English / French / Spanish language]

European Media Requests

Mobile: +32-473-82-2006

On Twitter: [@UNRWA](https://twitter.com/UNRWA)

Email: e.diaz@unrwa.org

Lily Esposito

[English / French language]

European Media Requests

Mobile: +972-54-240-2680 (what's app)

On Twitter: [@UNRWA](https://twitter.com/UNRWA)

Email: l.esposito@unrwa.org

Asako Nitta

[Japanese language]

Japanese Media Requests

Mobile: +972-54-240-2727 (what's app)

On Twitter: [@UNRWA](https://twitter.com/UNRWA)

Email: a.nitta@unrwa.org