



UNRWA Situation Report #38 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

Information is valid as of 23 & 24 November 2023 at 22:30 (local time)

Day 47-48 of Hostilities

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Displaced Palestinians at an UNRWA school in Deir al-Balah, 21 November 2023. © 2023 UNRWA Photo by Ashraf Amra

1. Key points

The Gaza Strip

- A humanitarian pause entered into force on 24 November at 7.00 am.
- On the first day of the humanitarian pause, UNRWA received 137 trucks of humanitarian aid at its reception point in Gaza.
- Between 23 and 24 November, UNRWA received 197,000 litres. Fuel is being distributed by UNRWA to support food distribution, and the operation of generators at hospitals, water and sanitation facilities, shelters, and other critical services.
- On the same day, a UN convoy delivered critical humanitarian aid (composed mainly of water, flour and other food items) to two UNRWA shelters in the north. This is the first aid delivery to a shelter in the north in over one month.
- 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 24 November, more than 1 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 920,000 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.
- During the reporting period, UNRWA verified at least seven additional incidents impacting displaced people hosted in UNRWA installations and/or UNRWA installations only.
- **In total, 77 UNRWA installations have been damaged since the beginning of the hostilities as a result of 99 separate incidents.**
- 108 UNRWA colleagues have been killed since the beginning of the war. This is the highest number of United Nations aid workers killed in a conflict in the history of the United Nations.

The West Bank, including East Jerusalem

- In the early morning of 23 November, Israeli Security Forces (ISF) entered Balata refugee camp, Nablus, and conducted a search and arrest operation. An exchange of fire between Palestinians and ISF was reported, and one Palestinian fatality was recorded.
- Damage was sustained once again to roads and infrastructure in the camp. The large-scale operation continued throughout the day, for over 12 hours.
- UNRWA operations were severely impacted in Balata refugee camp, as well as in other refugee camps in Nablus, such as Askar and Camp no. 1, as well as in Nablus city itself.
- **Twelve UNRWA schools in Nablus area - four in Balata Refugee Camp, six in Askar Refugee Camp and two in Nablus city - were closed, affecting some 4,000 students.** Four UNRWA health centres - one in Balata RC, two in Askar RC and one in Camp No. 1 - were also closed, as many staff members could not reach their place of work.
- On the same day, an ISF operation was reported in Arroub refugee camp in the Hebron governorate. Clashes were reported between ISF and Palestinians. Several camp residents were detained. An ISF operation was also reported in Kalandiya refugee camp.

2. Overall situation

The Gaza Strip

- No new fatality figures have been issued in the past 24 hours. According to the Government Media Office (GMO), as of 18:00 on 23 November, **over 14,800 people have been killed in the Gaza Strip since 7 October**; 73 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, 213 Palestinians, including 55 children, have been killed by the ISF in the West Bank. In addition, eight people, including one child, have been killed by Israeli settlers.**

3. Humanitarian access & protection of civilians

The Gaza Strip

- As of 24 November, **108 UNRWA colleagues have been killed since the beginning of the war.**
- During the reporting period, UNRWA received initial reports through the media that one school in Jabalia camp, in the north, was hit by a strike resulting in reports of 27 people killed and 93 injuries among the IDPs sheltering in the school.
- UNRWA also received reports that two schools in Gaza City were directly hit by strikes. However, it has not been possible for UNRWA to verify whether there were any casualties.
- One health centre in the Middle Areas was directly struck resulting in severe damage to the building.
- Three schools located in Rafah (south of the Gaza Strip) were impacted due to strikes on adjacent buildings, and two of them sustained collateral damage. Three displaced women were injured and transferred to the hospital for treatment. The three schools host a total of 30,800 IDPs.
- During the ongoing humanitarian pause, UNRWA conducted assessments in three schools in the Middle area. Munition shrapnel was found inside the schools, and it was confirmed that the buildings had sustained moderate to severe damage.
- **As of 24 November, UNRWA was able to verify that 99 incidents have occurred at 77 UNRWA installations since the beginning of the war.**
- **Among the installations impacted, 27 have sustained direct hits and 50 have sustained collateral damage.**
- 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 218 internally displaced people sheltering in UNRWA schools have reportedly been killed** and at least **894 have been injured.**

4. UNRWA response

The Gaza Strip

UNRWA Shelters

- **The number of displaced people continues to increase.** On 23 and 24 November, at least 24,000 additional IDPs sought refuge in UNRWA shelters in middle and southern areas.
- **In total, more than 1 million displaced people are now sheltering in 156 UNRWA installations.**
- 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 host four and a half times more IDPs 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.

- One of the UNRWA schools in Maghazi, (middle areas), has reported an overcrowding rate reaching almost 20 times its capacity, with 37,900 IDPs accommodated in a facility intended for 2,000 people.
- 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.**

Health

- Since the beginning of the war, **UNRWA staff in Gaza have treated over half a million patients.**
- On 23 November, nine (out of 22) UNRWA health centres were still operational in the middle and southern areas, recording **9,116 patient visits**, including Palestine Refugees and non-refugees. The health centres were closed on Friday 24 November.
- 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 304 post-natal and high-risk pregnancy cases were attended to at health centres on 23 November.**
- On 23 November, **642 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 **293 cases** at seven health centres.
- **UNRWA continued to provide health care to IDPs at shelters through 125 medical teams on 23 and 24 November. 351 health workers attended to a total of 17,975 patients. Each team is composed of one to two doctors and a nurse.**
- Mental health and psychosocial support initiatives were resumed in the Middle and Khan Younis areas (south) with a team of two psychiatrists and 16 counsellors and supervisors to assist special cases referred from health centres and shelters. On 23 November, **the team responded to 806 cases through individual consultations, awareness sessions and support to gender-based violence cases.**

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, 64,006 individuals (over 60 per cent of whom are females) have been reached.**
- **Since the beginning of the war, UNRWA counsellors conducted 591 Explosive Ordinance Risk education sessions benefiting 9,633 individuals and 485 sessions engaging a total of 8,484 children.** These counsellors were trained by UNMAS earlier this year as part of UNRWA-UNMAS collaboration on reducing the risks of Explosive remnants of war (ERW) for children.

Food security

- UNRWA distribution of flour outside of shelters continued on 23 and 24 November in southern governorates. **The Agency has prioritized large families first and has reached more than 15,234 families so far.**
- On 24 November, UNRWA managed to distribute flour to two IDP shelters in the north.

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.
- Water production from UNRWA water wells has been affected by several factors. In the period before the current emergency, the production of water was about 7,000 cubic metres per day. As soon as the crisis began and the number of displaced persons increased significantly, the wells were operated at double capacity to meet the growing needs of the camp refugees and the displaced people.
- However, **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 which is not enough to meet the needs of the growing population of IDPs.**
- 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 as the desalination plant 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 during an UNRWA press conference at UNRWA HQ in East Jerusalem, 24 November 2023:

“Since my first visit two weeks ago, it was evident the humanitarian situation in Gaza has become much, much worse.

People are going to sleep holding their children tight while not knowing if they will wake up alive the following morning”.

“I reiterate my call that this pause becomes a long-standing humanitarian ceasefire. The pause is also an opportunity to reach people in need, including in the north and start repairing civilian infrastructure.”

The video of the press conference is available [here](#).

ENDs –



UNRWA situation and response to the escalation in the Gaza Strip

IDPs in UNRWA installations

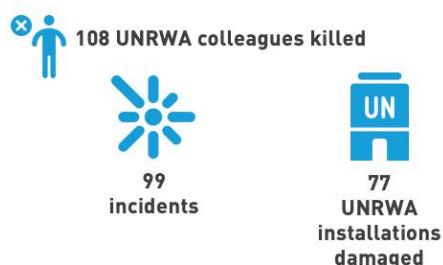
Confirmed numbers, since 7 October



At least 218 IDPs sheltering in UNRWA premises have been killed and 894 injured since 7 October.

On average, ~220 people sheltering in UNRWA schools share a single toilet.

UNRWA fatalities and damage to installations



* 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.

UNRWA response – Psychosocial support

64,006 people (60 per cent women) were provided with psychosocial support and social work services since 7 October.

205,025 children in shelters UNRWA participated in recreational activities.

UNRWA response – Health

17,975 IDPs in shelters received healthcare through 125 mobile medical points on 23-24 November.

9,116 patients received healthcare in nine (out of 22) UNRWA health centres still operational in the Middle and South areas on 23 November.

304 post-natal and high-risk pregnancy cases were attended to at health centres on 23 November.

UNRWA response – Food security

15,234 families benefitted from flour distribution since 7 October.

Humanitarian access

137 trucks of humanitarian aid were received by UNRWA at its reception point in Gaza on 24 November.

197,000 litres of fuel were received by UNRWA on 23-24 November.

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