



## UNRWA Situation Report #57 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

Information is valid as of 24-27 December 2023 at 22:30 (local time)

Day 78-82 of Hostilities

Published 28 December 2023



Internally displaced people gather their belongings in UNRWA Al-Maghazi School (Gaza middle area), 27 December 2023. © UNRWA Photo by Ashraf Amra

### 1. Key points

#### The Gaza Strip

- Telecommunications and internet services continued to be disrupted from 24– 26 December, with intermittent resumption of services. The frequent disruption in communications poses additional challenges to humanitarian operations.
- As of 27 December, the total number of UNRWA colleagues killed since the beginning of hostilities is **142**.
- Since 7 October, **up to 1.9 million people** (or over 85 per cent of the population) have been displaced across the Gaza Strip, some multiple times. Families are forced to move repeatedly in search of safety. Information on IDP numbers for North Gaza and Gaza City was last updated on 12 October due to access constraints and security situation.
- As of 25 December, nearly 1.37 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) are sheltering in 156 UNRWA facilities across all five governorates of the Gaza Strip, including 160,000 in the North

and Gaza City and approximately 500,000 in close vicinity of these installations and receiving assistance from UNRWA. A total<sup>1</sup> million IDPs are receiving assistance from UNRWA.

### **The West Bank, including East Jerusalem**

- Several Israeli Security Forces (ISF) search and arrest operations leading to confrontations with Palestinians, including exchanges of live fire, were reported across the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem. Tensions have remained high throughout the West Bank and most events related to Christmas were cancelled.
- Overnight on December 23, ISF search and arrest operation took place in Jenin camp, northern West Bank. ISF snipers reportedly occupied the roof tops of Palestinian houses around the camp and electricity was cut off.
- On 25 and 26 December, large-scale ISF search and arrest operations took place in Nur Shams refugee camp and in Tulkarm city, northern West Bank. ISF bulldozed roads and heavily damaged infrastructure in the camp and several Palestinian houses and vehicles. ISF also demolished part of the UNRWA Health Centre in Nur Shams refugee camp.
- Overnight between December 26 and 27, an ISF drone fired missiles killing six Palestinians, including a child, and injuring four others. For over an hour, ISF held the Palestinian Red Crescent Society ambulances that were carrying the injured. On December 27, Palestinian national forces in Tulkarm announced a general strike in the city in mourning of Nur Shams refugee camp fatalities.

## **2. Overall situation**

### **The Gaza Strip**

- According to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, at least 21,100 Palestinians were killed in the Gaza Strip. About 70 per cent of those killed are reported to be women and children. As of then, 53,688 Palestinians have been reportedly injured.

### **The West Bank, including East Jerusalem**

- According to OCHA, Since 7 October, 300 Palestinians, including 79 children, have been killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
- This year (2023) has been the deadliest year for Palestinians in the West Bank since the UN began recording casualties in 2005.

## **3. Humanitarian access & protection of civilians**

### **The Gaza Strip**

- UNRWA is working to verify details of incidents reportedly affecting UNRWA premises. Further information will be provided once it becomes available.

- Different incidents have been reported impacting UNRWA installations and internal displaced people (IDPs) sheltering there. While verification of details and casualty figures are ongoing, initial reports indicate:
  - On 25 December, two **IDPs** sheltering in the Maghazi Prep School were reportedly killed and **1** injured as a result a direct strike.
  - On 26 December, collateral damage to the Bureij Sanitation Office was reported, as a result of a nearby strike.
- **193** incidents impacting UNRWA premises and the people inside them have been reported since the beginning of the war (some with multiple incidents impacting the same location), including at least **18** incidents of military use and/or interference at UNRWA premises. This includes **60** direct hits on UNRWA installations and **65** different UNRWA installations sustained collateral damage.

UNRWA estimates that in total at least **308** IDPs sheltering in UNRWA shelters have been killed and at least another **1,095** were injured since the start of hostilities.

## 4. UNRWA response

### The Gaza Strip

#### UNRWA Shelters

- In total, **nearly 1.4 million displaced people are now sheltering in 156 UNRWA installations**, with another 500,000 registered and accessing services from UNRWA.
- The average number of IDPs in UNRWA shelters located in the middle and southern areas is over **12,000. This is more than four times their capacity.**

#### Health

- Eight (out of 22) UNRWA health centres are still operational in the middle and southern areas, recording **12,005 patient visits.**
- Midwives are providing care for post-natal and high-risk pregnant women at the eight operational health centres. On 23 December, **a total of 239 post-natal and high-risk pregnancy cases were attended to at health centres.**
- **UNRWA continues to provide health care to IDPs at shelters through 97 medical teams.** Each team is composed of between one to two doctors and a nurse. **On 23 December, UNRWA medical teams attended to 26,158 IDPs.**
- On 23 December, mental health, and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services continued to be delivered in the middle and Khan Younis areas with a team of two psychiatrists and 16 counsellors and supervisors to assist special cases referred from health centres and shelters. The team responded to 3,091 cases through individual consultations, awareness sessions, and support for GBV cases.

### Psychosocial support (PSS)

- UNRWA teams, including 284 social workers in the shelters, continue to provide psychosocial first aid and other specialized protection services to IDPs. **As of 25 December, around 77,206 IDPs were reached by this service.**
- Since 7 October, **3,470 persons with disabilities and injured persons received assistive devices, with “Humanity and Inclusion” organization specialists, in coordination with UNRWA social workers, providing rehabilitative physiotherapy and occupational therapy services.**
- Between 24 and 25 December, **school counsellors addressed 1,059 individual and family consultations in Rafah and Khan Younis, alongside 1,034 group PSS sessions.** These efforts benefited 14,298 IDPs, contributing to a cumulative total of 51,986 PSS sessions provided since the beginning of hostilities.
- During the same period, school counselors provided psychological support to 367 UNRWA staff through both in-person and remote consultations. **The total number of UNRWA staff provided with psychological support since the beginning of the hostilities is 4,520.**

### Food security

- UNRWA continued to **distribute flour** outside of shelters in the southern governorates. **A total of 164,440 families have been reached so far.**

### Water and Sanitation Services (WASH)

- Between 24 and 25 December, all water wells in Jabalia, Khan Younis and Rafah were operational. About 10,000 cubic metres have been pumped from six water wells. Khan Younis and Rafah water wells have operated in two shifts (12 hours) to provide potable/domestic water supply service.
- During the same period, the solid waste management service has been continued at Rafah, Khan Younis and middle area camps. About 110 loadings have been transferred to temporary dumping sites between 24 and 25 December.
- UNRWA has installed mobile toilet and shower units to serve IDPs in spontaneous camps in Khan Younis and middle Area.

### Quote from Abdelhadi, 14-years-old, currently displaced in a school in Deir a-Balah (middle area):

"[I was a student in this school and today I live in it.](#) Unfortunately, my friends are not with me. [...] There were seven of us; we went to school together every day, walked the road from home to school, lined up in the morning assembly, and sat in class together. [...] We were a wonderful group of friends, but I lost three of them. May they rest in peace."

Read Abdelhadi's story [here](#).

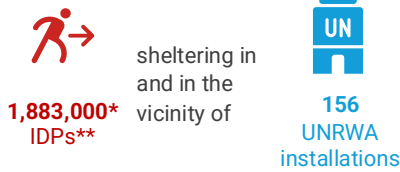
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## UNRWA situation and response to the escalation in the Gaza Strip

### IDPs in UNRWA installations

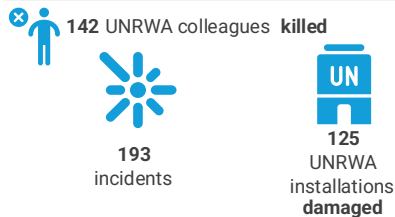
Confirmed IDP numbers, since 7 October – 25 December



Overcrowding means at least **486 people per toilet** in UNRWA Shelters in Rafah.

At least **308** IDPs sheltering in UNRWA premises have been killed and **1,095** injured since 7 October.

### UNRWA fatalities and damage to installations



\* This includes nearly 160,000 IDPs in north Gaza and Gaza City governorates as of 12 October. UNRWA's ability to provide humanitarian support and update data in the above areas is severely restricted.

\*\* The war, Israeli Forces' evacuation orders and the constant search for safer places meant that people are displaced multiple times. UNRWA shelters often provide assistance to registered Palestine Refugees and other members of the community. There are instances where total numbers could be duplicated due to overlapping registrations, this is why we use "estimates" for these figures.

### UNRWA response – Food assistance

**164,440** families outside of shelters have received flour in middle areas and southern governorates since 21 Nov.

### UNRWA response – Health

On 23 Dec  
**239** post-natal and high-risk pregnancy cases were attended to at health centres  
**26,158** patients received healthcare in seven (out of 22) UNRWA health care centres and UNRWA shelters.

### UNRWA response – Water, sanitation and hygiene

Between 24 - 25 Dec:  
**6** water wells continue to operate pumping approximately 10,000 cubic metres of water.  
Solid waste management continues in Rafah and Khan Younis, where **approximately 110 truck loadings** were transferred to temporary sites

## 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](mailto:L.march@unrwa.org)

### Estefania Diaz

[English / French / Spanish language]

#### European Media Requests

Mobile: +32-473-82-2006

On Twitter: @UNRWA

Email: [e.diaz@unrwa.org](mailto:e.diaz@unrwa.org)

### Lily Esposito

[English / French language]

#### European Media Requests

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

On Twitter: @UNRWA

Email: [L.esposito@unrwa.org](mailto:L.esposito@unrwa.org)

### Asako Nitta

[Japanese language]

#### Japanese Media Requests

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

On Twitter: @UNRWA

Email: [a.nitta@unrwa.org](mailto:a.nitta@unrwa.org)