



## UNRWA Situation Report #55 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

Information is valid as of 19-20 December 2023 at 22:30 (local time)

Day 73-74 of Hostilities

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IDPs at an UNRWA school turned shelter, central Gaza Strip, on 18 December 2023. © 2023 UNRWA Photo by Ashraf Amra

### 1. Key points

#### The Gaza Strip

- On 20 December, the main telecommunication provider in the Gaza Strip stated that all telecommunications services were down due to cuts in the main fibre routes in Khan Younis. This followed the longest shutdown (across the Gaza Strip between 14 and 18 December, and a partial resumption at about ten per cent capacity in southern Gaza. Telecommunications blackouts make an already difficult operating environment even worse. As a result, this update provides only partial information about the humanitarian situation in Gaza over the past 48 hours.
- This telecommunications cut is the sixth documented since the war began on 7 October.
- As of 20 December, the total number of UNRWA colleagues killed since the beginning of hostilities is 136.

- 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.
- As of 19 December, UNRWA estimated that approximately 1.77 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are sheltering or accessing services in UNRWA shelters. **Nearly 1.4 million IDPs are sheltering in 156 UNRWA facilities, across all five governorates of the Gaza Strip, including in the north and in Gaza City and approximately 400,000 are in close vicinity of these installations and receiving assistance from UNRWA.** UNRWA shelter information is updated daily to the extent possible. The information for north Gaza and Gaza City was last updated on 12 October due to access constraints and security situation.
- In the period between 21 October and 20 December, **UNRWA distributed 11,977 metric tons (MT) of flour.**
- **In the same period, UNRWA delivered across the Gaza Strip:**
  - **453.3 MT of medicines and medical supplies** with a total value of more than US\$ 2.7 million.
  - Over **13.8 million litres of water.**
  - **2.5 million units of high energy biscuits.**
  - **Nearly 1.5 million cans of protein-based food**, including beans, chicken, beef and canned meat.
  - **Over 4.8 million units of dairy food items** (mainly cheese).
  - **Other food items** including dates, cake and juice.
  - Non-food items (NFI) including 60,050 **mattresses**; 103,631 **family hygiene kits**; over 1.5 million **diapers for children and older persons**; 103,755 **blankets**; and 635,169 **cleaning supply items.**

### The West Bank, including East Jerusalem

- On 20 December, one Palestinian child was shot dead by Israeli Security Forces (ISF) and ten others including a child were injured due to armed tensions in Husan, in the southern West Bank.
- On 20 December, the ISF shot and killed one Palestinian man in his vehicle at a checkpoint in Beit 'Einum, southern West Bank.
- ISF search and arrest operations took place in several areas in the West Bank.

## 2. Overall situation

### The Gaza Strip

- On 20 December the Ministry of Health in Gaza did not update its casualty figures, likely due to internet disruption. Between 7 October and the afternoon of **19 December** the Ministry of Health in Gaza has reported that **19,667 Palestinians** have been killed in the Gaza Strip, about 70 per cent of them are reported to be women and children; over **52,586** have reportedly been injured.

## The West Bank, including East Jerusalem

- According to OCHA, between 7 October – 18 December 291 Palestinians, including 75 children, have been killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Of those killed, 281 Palestinians were killed by ISF, eight have been killed by Israeli settlers and another two killed either by ISF or settlers.
- 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 reports of incidents affecting UNRWA premises between 19 and 20 December. More information will be provided once it becomes available. **Due to poor internet connectivity, reporting on incidents has been disrupted.**
- Different incidents have been reported impacting UNRWA installations and IDPs sheltering there. While verification of details and casualty figures are ongoing, initial reports indicate the following:
  - On 19 December three IDPs sheltering in a school in Khan Younis (south of the Gaza Strip) were injured, during the same incident one UNRWA staff was injured; one IDP sheltering in the Khan Younis Training Centre was injured as a result of shrapnel landing in a tent inside the installation.
- **184** incidents impacting UNRWA facilities and people inside them have been reported since the beginning of hostilities (some with multiple incidents impacting the same location) **56** different UNRWA installations were directly hit and **63** different installations sustained collateral damage.
- UNRWA estimates that in total at least **299** IDPs sheltering in UNRWA shelters have been killed and at least another **1,042** 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 400,000 registered and accessing services.
- The average number of IDPs in UNRWA shelters located in middle and southern areas is over **12,000, more than four times their capacity.**

## Health

*Seven out of 22 health centres are operational, however due to internet outages and what has been the sixth cut in telecommunications since the war began, we are not able to present the full results across the seven health centres.*

- Seven (out of 22) UNRWA health centres are still operational in the Middle and Southern areas, recording **19,720 patient visits between 19-20** December including Palestine Refugees and non-refugees.
- Midwives are providing care for post-natal and high-risk pregnant women at the seven operational health centres. There are an estimated 50,000 pregnant women in the Gaza Strip, with more than 180 giving birth every day. Between Dec 19 – 20 **a total of 509 post-natal and high-risk pregnancy cases were attended to at health centres.**
- **UNRWA continued to provide health care to IDPs at shelters through 97 medical teams.** Each team is composed of one - two doctors and a nurse. **Throughout this period at least 539 health workers in health centres and shelters provided support to 42,411 patients.**

## Psychosocial support (PSS)

*Due to internet cuts we are unable to provide any updates beyond 12 December.*

- **UNRWA teams, including 284 social workers in the shelters, continue to provide psychosocial first aid and other specialized protection services to IDPs. Due to internet outages we are unable to provide updated figures on the full spectrum of PSS support provided.**
- **Since 7 October, over 1,008 Gender Based Violence survivors and Child Protection cases among the IDPs have received PSS support and internal referral services of medication, food and non-food items. Most of these cases were suffering from physical and psychological violence.**
- **Since 7 October, 2,817 persons with disabilities and injured persons received assistive devices, and rehabilitation services of physiotherapy and occupational therapy carried out by Humanity & Inclusion organization (HI) specialists in coordination with UNRWA social workers.**

## Food security

- **UNRWA continued to distribute flour outside of shelters in the southern governorates. A total of 125,798 families have been reached so far.**

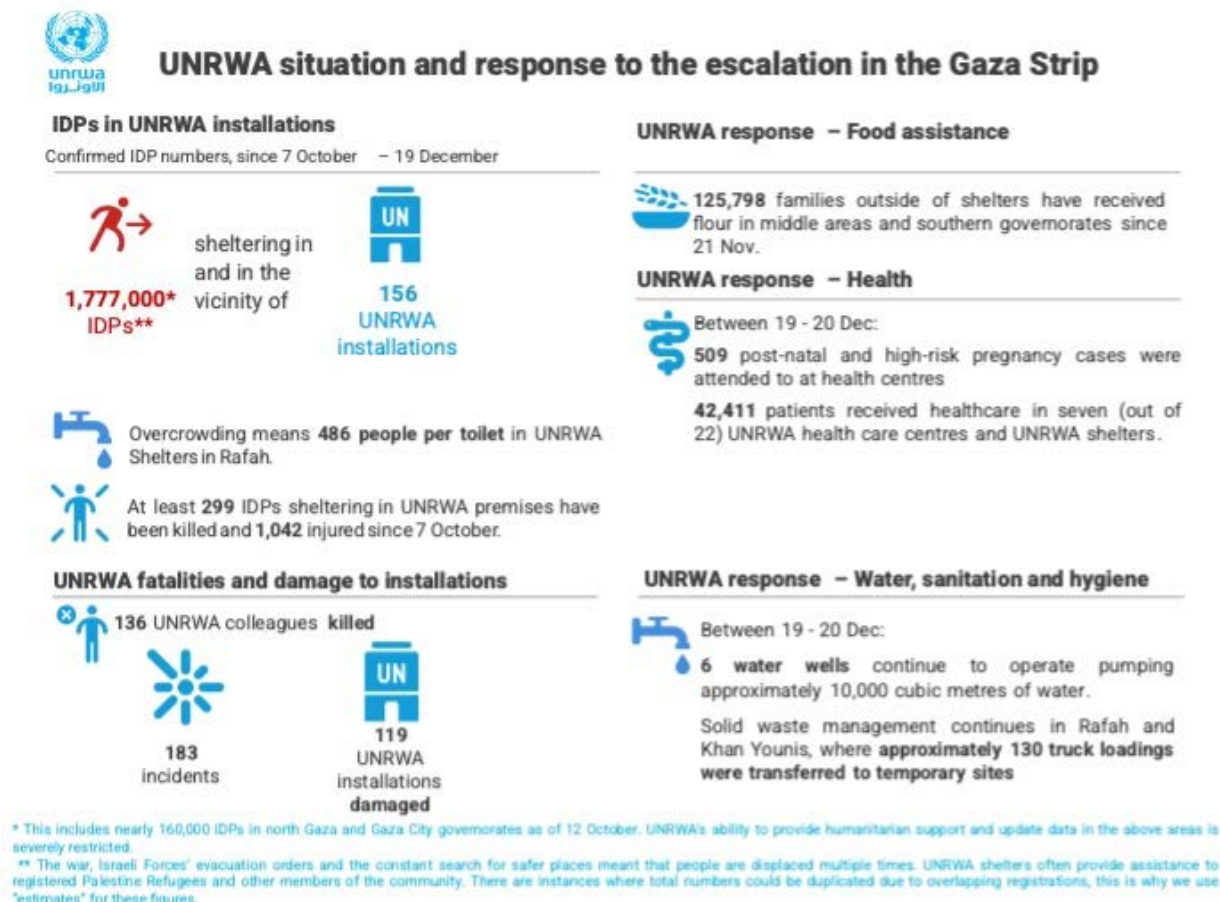
## Water and Sanitation Services (WASH)

- **Between 19-20 December, UNRWA operated six water wells pumping about 10,000 cubic metres of water to provide potable and domestic water.**
- **Between 19–20 December solid waste management has continued in Rafah and Khan Younis, where approximately 130 loadings were transferred to temporary dumping sites. There remains a clear shortage of sanitation trucks.**
- **Shelters in Rafah and the Middle area continued to receive potable water through tankers from the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility.**

## Quote from Layan, first-grade student from Gaza currently displaced in a shelter in Nuseirat (the middle areas)

“Even though I’m away from home and not feeling well, my toys makes me feel better. I want kindness and love.”

### ENDs -



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