



UNRWA Situation Report #68 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

All information from 21-22 January 2024, is valid as of 22 January 2024 at 22:30 (local time)

Day 107-108 of Hostilities

Published 24 January 2024



Families forced to flee Khan Younis to Rafah, southern Gaza Strip, 22 January 2024. © 2024 UNRWA Photo by Ashraf Amra

1. Key points

The Gaza Strip

- Intense fighting in/around Khan Younis over the last 3 days is causing loss of lives and damage to civilian infrastructure, including UNRWA's largest shelter in the southern area, the Khan Younis Training Centre.
- As of 22 January 2024, the total number of UNRWA colleagues killed since the beginning of hostilities has increased by one and is now **152**.
- According to OCHA, telecommunication services in Gaza have been gradually restored in most of the Strip, while internet remains severely disrupted in all areas. This prevents people in Gaza from accessing life-saving information and continues to impede humanitarian response. Due to the security situation and poor internet connectivity we are unable to update the number of people reached since Sitrep 67.
- As of 22 January, up to 1.7 million* people (over 75 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. Following intense Israeli bombardments and fighting in Khan

Younis and the Middle Areas in recent days, a significant number of displaced people have moved again further south.

*This includes 1 million individuals residing in or near emergency shelters or informal shelters. As of October 12, approximately 160,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were recorded in north Gaza and Gaza governorates. The ability of UNRWA to provide humanitarian support and updated data in these areas has been severely restricted. The ongoing hostilities, evacuation orders issued by Israeli Forces, and the constant need for safer locations have resulted in people being displaced multiple times.

**UNRWA has reported in Situation Report 64 that up to 1.9 million IDPs are either residing in 154 UNRWA shelters or near these shelters. Due to the continued escalation of fighting and evacuation orders, some households have moved away from the shelters where they were initially registered.

*** There are instances where the same IDPs are registered in multiple shelters due to the fluid movement of populations; hereafter, estimates are used for these shelters. UNRWA plans to conduct a more accurate count of IDPs in shelters, including informal shelters, as soon as the security situation allows.

The West Bank, including East Jerusalem

West Bank updates cover 18 – 21 January 2024.

Between 18 – 21 January the following Israeli Security Forces (ISF) search and arrest operations occurred:

- Search and arrest operations in Tulkarm city, Tulkarm refugee camp and Nur Shams refugee camp, northern West Bank concluded on the morning of 19 January, after 45 hours. The operations resulted in multiple fatalities, injuries and arrests, as well as unprecedented damage to both refugee camps, including houses and streets.
 1. On 18 January, exchanges of fire between Palestinians and ISF continued in Tulkarm refugee camp, nine Palestinians were reported injured, eight from physical assault and one from live ammunition. ISF reportedly prevented Palestinian Red Crescent Services' ambulances from transferring injured Palestinians and a woman who was giving birth, to the hospital. In the afternoon, ISF reportedly detonated several Palestinian houses and installations with explosives and set a house on fire. Also, ISF reportedly continued destroying property and infrastructure in the camp, physically assaulting people and detaining Palestinians. Two Palestinian children were killed and three Palestinians injured. In Nur Shams camp, ISF reportedly continued bulldozing and destroying camp infrastructure. One house was demolished, one Palestinian killed and one child injured.
- Overnight on 18 January, four Palestinians were detained in a search and arrest operation in Nablus, northern West Bank.
- Overnight on 18 January, six Palestinians were injured with live ammunition when ISF reportedly opened fire at Palestinians during a search and arrest operation in Al Am'ari camp, central West Bank.

- Early in the morning on 18 January, ISF conducted multiple search and arrest operations in different locations in southern West Bank. Twelve Palestinians were detained in Aroub refugee camp and eighteen Palestinians were detained in Harmala, southern West Bank.
- On 19 January, ISF conducted a search and arrest operation in Qalqiliya city, northern West Bank. ISF reportedly opened fired during clashes with Palestinians near the southern entrance of the city, injuring one Palestinian with live ammunition. Another exchange of fire between Palestinians and ISF was reported at the northern entrance of the city. On 22 January, ISF detained two Palestinians and reportedly assaulted and injured a Palestinian elder in his home during a search and arrest operation.
- Early in the morning on 21 January in Al Khalil, southern West Bank ISF conducted punitive demolition of the houses of the two Palestinians who were killed in the security incidents at the Tunnels checkpoint on 16 November 2023. Clashes started during the demolition, and ISF reportedly opened fire at Palestinians, injuring one with live ammunition.
- On 22 January, ISF opened fired in clashes during a search and arrest operation in Al Bireh, central West Bank. One Palestinian was injured in the head with a live ammunition shrapnel and three Palestinians were detained.
- On 22 January, ISF opened fired in clashes during a search and arrest operation in Yatta, southern West Bank. Two Palestinians, including one minor, were injured with a live ammunition.
- On 22 January, ISF conducted a search and arrest operation in Izbat At Tayyah village, east of Tulkarm city, northern West Bank. UNRWA operations were severally impacted.

2. Overall situation

The Gaza Strip

- According to the Ministry of Health in Gaza as of 22 January, at least 25,295 Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip since 7 October. About 70 per cent of those killed are reported to be women and children. Another 63,000 Palestinians have been reportedly injured.

The West Bank, including East Jerusalem

- According to OCHA, between 7 October 2023 – 22 January 2024, 358 Palestinians, including 91 children, have been killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
- Last year (2023), was the deadliest year for Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem since the UN began recording casualties in 2005.

3. Humanitarian access & protection of civilians

The Gaza Strip

Please see below the inputs for the period 21 - 22 January 2024, with some reporting on incidents that had occurred earlier in the month.

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

- On 8 January, classrooms of a school in Maghazi camp, in the Middle area, were directly struck and severely damaged. An unconfirmed number of people were killed inside the school and were subsequently buried in the schoolyard alongside other people killed outside the school in the same incident.
- On 13 January, due to kinetic strikes near a distribution centre and an Relief and Social Services Office in Nuseirat camp, in the Middle area, some shrapnel fell on the roof of the guard rooms causing damage to the buildings. No injuries were reported.
- On 13 January, stray bullets and many pieces of shrapnel fell inside a school in Khan Younis. No damage or injuries were reported. Thousands of IDPs were sheltering in the school at the time of the incident.
- On 15 January, the ISF surrounded an area in Gaza City where a school was sheltering IDPs; heavy shelling caused shrapnel to fall in the school, injuring three IDPs inside. The ISF entered the school using tanks, bulldozers and infantry troops. ISF bulldozers destroyed the perimeter walls. The ISF ordered the IDPs to evacuate the classrooms and separated the men from the women and children. The men were made to strip to their underwear and go through screening and interrogation with their hands tied, whilst the women and children were searched by female ISF soldiers. The ISF forced the evacuation of 700 IDPs including older persons, pregnant women, the sick and the injured. Subsequently, the IDPs moved towards the South of Wadi Gaza through the coastal road.
- On 22 January 2024, six IDPs were killed and 16 were injured because of stray bullets and shrapnel falling in the adjacent area outside the Khan Younis Training Centre (KYTC), where many IDPs had set up their tents. The bodies of the killed persons and the injured were brought inside the KYTC. The bodies were later evacuated by PRCs. All the injured were treated at the medical point inside the KYTC.
- On 22 January 2024, a store in Khan Younis was completely burnt due to shelling. No deaths or injuries were reported.
- **249*** 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 25 incidents of military use and/or interference at UNRWA premises. 70 different UNRWA installations were directly hit, and 71 different installations sustained collateral damage.
- UNRWA estimates that in total at least **341*** internally displaced people (IDPs) sheltering in UNRWA shelters have been killed and at least a further **1,180*** injured since the start of the war. UNRWA is still verifying the number of casualties caused by incidents that impacted its installations, and notes that these figures do not include some reported casualties where the number of injuries could not be determined.

* numbers are subject to change once further verifications have been conducted.

4. UNRWA response

The Gaza Strip

Due to the security situation in combination with internet connectivity we are unable to provide any additional updates since Sitrep 67.

UNRWA Shelters

- As of 19 January, in total, nearly **1.7 million displaced people are now sheltering across emergency shelters (UNRWA and public shelters), informal sites or in close vicinity to UNRWA shelters and distribution sites and within host communities.**

Due to the security situation and ISF evacuation orders between 150-155 UNRWA installations continue to shelter IDPs. Shelters are very congested.

Health

Due to the security situation in combination with internet connectivity we are unable to provide any additional updates since sitrep 67.

Psychosocial support (PSS)

Due to the security situation in combination with internet connectivity we are unable to provide any additional updates since sitrep 67.

Food security

Due to the security situation in combination with internet connectivity we are unable to provide updates.

Water and Sanitation Services (WASH)

Due to the security situation in combination with internet connectivity we are unable to provide any additional updates since sitrep 67.

Quote from Mohammed, UNRWA engineer specialized in communications and networks:

"I have been working with UNRWA since 2004, and I have experienced numerous emergencies, wars and crises, but I have never witnessed a situation as catastrophic as this."

ENDs -



UNRWA situation and response to the escalation in the Gaza Strip

IDPs in UNRWA installations

Confirmed IDP numbers, since 7 October 2023



1,700,000*
IDPs**



At least **335** IDPs sheltering in UNRWA premises have been killed and **1,161** injured since 7 October.

UNRWA fatalities and damage to installations



151 UNRWA colleagues **killed**



241
incidents



141
UNRWA
installations
damaged

* This includes c.1 million individuals residing in or near emergency shelters or informal shelters. Notably, as of October 12, approximately 160,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were recorded in north Gaza and Gaza governorates. However, the ability of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) to provide humanitarian support and updated data in these areas has been severely restricted. The ongoing hostilities, evacuation orders issued by Israeli Forces, and the constant need for safer locations have resulted in people being displaced multiple times.

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** It is important to note that there are instances where the same IDPs are registered in multiple shelters due to the fluid movement of populations; hereafter, estimates are used for these shelters. UNRWA plans to conduct a more accurate count of IDPs in shelters, including informal shelters, as soon as the security situation allows.

UNRWA response – Food assistance



323,482 families outside of shelters have received flour in middle areas and southern governorates since 21 Nov.

UNRWA response – Health



Last updated on 16 Jan due to security and internet connectivity issues

156 post-natal and high-risk pregnancy cases were attended to at health centres

16,294 patients received healthcare in 6 (out of 22) UNRWA health care centres and UNRWA shelters.

UNRWA response – Water, sanitation and hygiene



Updated on 16 Jan:

7 water wells continue to operate pumping approximately 3,000 cubic metres of water.

Solid waste management continues in Rafah and Khan Younis and partially in Middle Areas, where **approximately 45 truck loadings were transferred to temporary sites**

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