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GAZA EDUCATION SYSTEM DEVASTATED BY RECENT CONFLICT, SATELLITE ASSESSMENT REVEALS

2 May 2024. Geneva, Switzerland - In the wake of the ongoing hostilities in the Gaza Strip, the Education Cluster, in collaboration with UNOSAT, has released a comprehensive report detailing the devastating impact of the conflict on the education infrastructure.

SATELLITE IMAGERY-BASED ASSESSMENT CONFIRMS EXTENSIVE DAMAGE

For 17 years, the Gaza Strip has endured a stifling blockade and recurrent conflicts, resulting in the weakening of its education system.

The recent surge in hostilities has witnessed a distressing trend of attacks on school facilities, exacerbating the dire humanitarian situation for children and educators alike.

Since October 7th, the Education Cluster and UNOSAT have diligently monitored and reported damage to schools, leveraging initial reports from Cluster partners, UNOCHA, and UNRWA. Additionally, the Education Cluster Assessment Team (ECAT) has been deployed to verify damages whenever the situation allows.

KEY FINDINGS

Field assessment was impossible due to obvious security reasons and increased access limitations. Hence, the Education Cluster conducted a satellite-derived damage assessment to update and better understand the extent of the damage to school buildings, relying on UNOSAT data. The methodology classified the probability of damage based on proximity to damaged sites, revealing alarming statistics:

- 85.8% of schools sustained some level of damage, including Direct hits, Damaged, and Likely damaged.
- At least 72.5% of schools will require full reconstruction or major rehabilitation.
- Nearly 29% of directly hit or damaged schools are UN-run schools under UNRWA's jurisdiction.
- 65.3% of school buildings used by internally displaced persons (IDPs) as shelters have suffered direct hits or damages.

Furthermore, the report sheds light on the distressing revelation that schools are being utilized for military purposes by Israeli Security Forces (ISF), including detention, interrogation centers, and military bases.

The Education Cluster calls for urgent action to protect educational institutions and uphold the rights of children to access safe and quality education, as guaranteed by international law.

This report underscores the critical need for an immediate ceasefire and sustainable solutions to rebuild Gaza's education infrastructure and safeguard the future of its children.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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ABOUT UNOSAT

The United Nations Satellite Centre (UNOSAT) is part of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), with a mandate to provide United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies with satellite analysis, training and capacity development, at their request, as well as to support Member States with satellite imagery analysis over their respective territories and to provide training and capacity development in the use of geospatial information technologies, on the basis of voluntary contributions. By leveraging advanced technology, UNOSAT contributes to informed decision-making and facilitates the delivery of aid in crisis situations.

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