



EMPHNET Emergency Bulletin

The Health Status in Gaza and Sudan

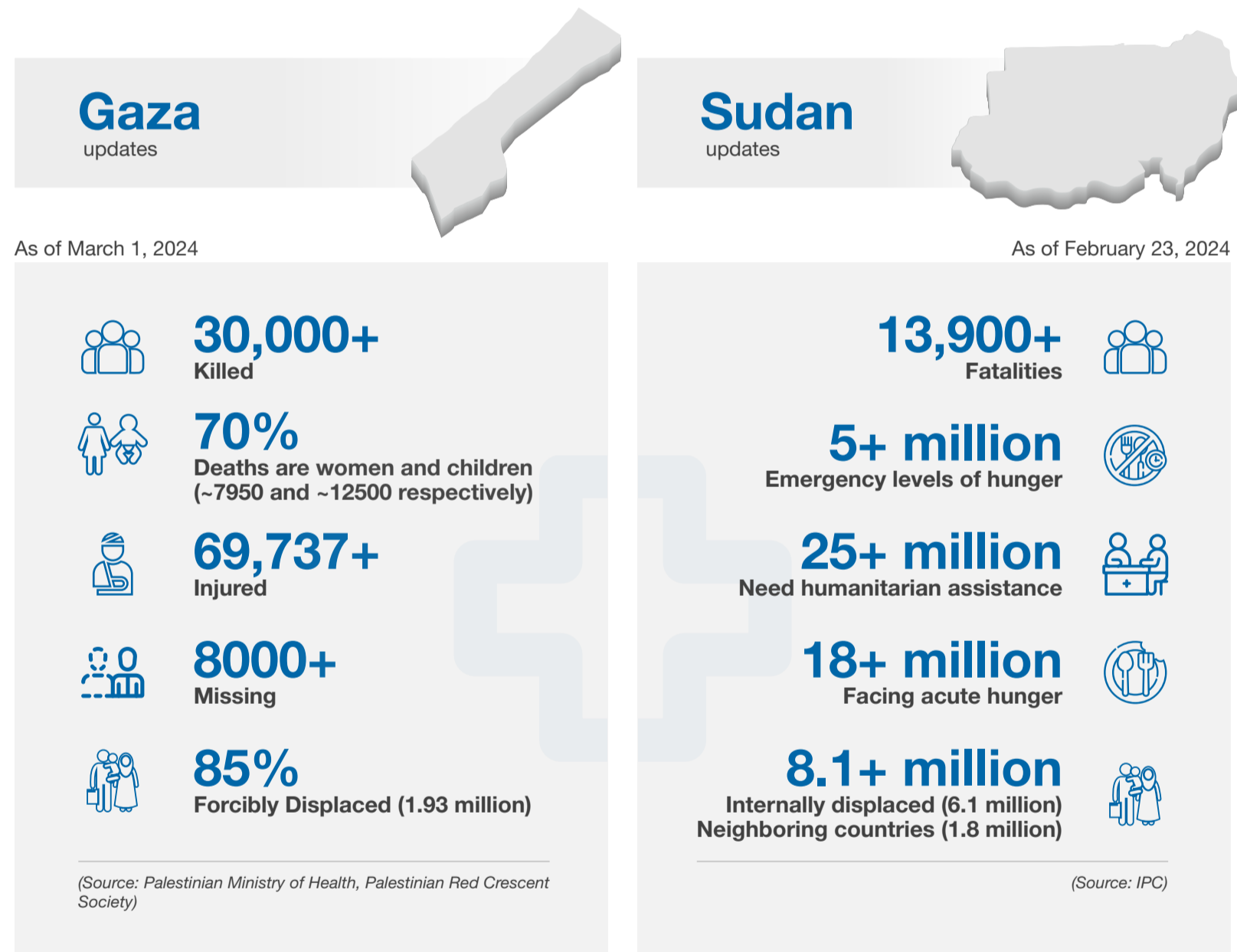


March 3, 2024

Situation Overview

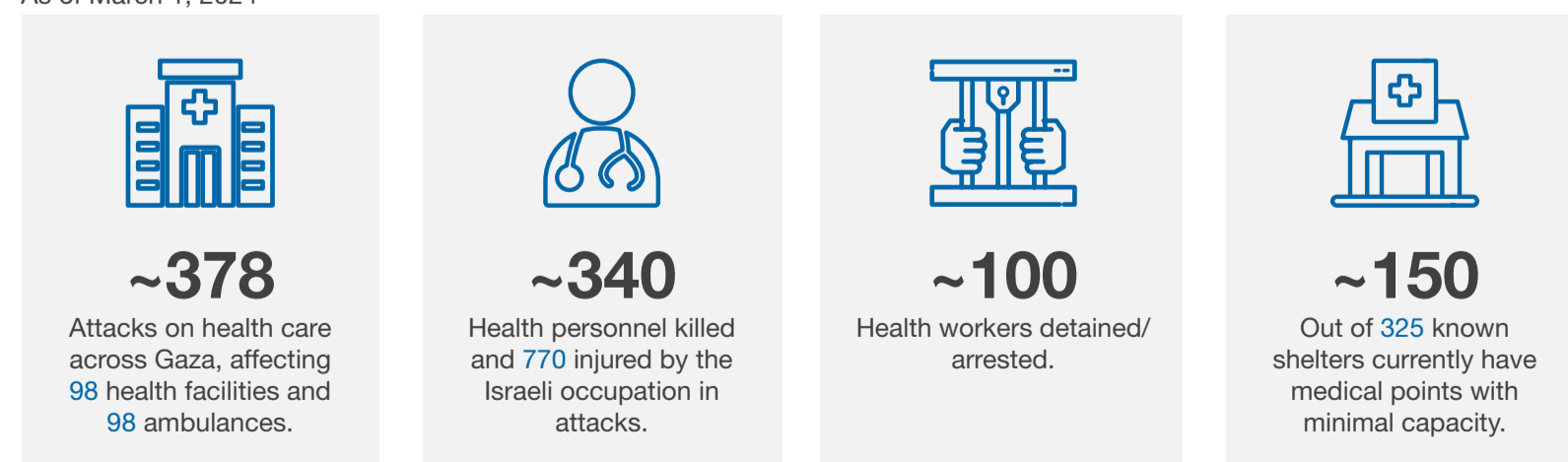
The Eastern Mediterranean region is currently facing two of the most severe humanitarian crises in recent history. After almost five months of war on Gaza and ten months of armed conflict in Sudan, new displacements have led to increased vulnerabilities. Humanitarian needs are constantly arising, especially with the delivery of health and protection services being hindered. Such conditions lead to a vicious cycle of deteriorating economic situations, heightened domestic and international tensions, an increased number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), as well as rising levels of poverty.

Mortalities and Number of Injuries



Healthcare in Gaza

As of March 1, 2024



The impact of attacks made by the Israeli army on healthcare facilities in Gaza is devastating. The above statistics underscore the urgent need for international attention and action to safeguard the healthcare infrastructure and personnel in Gaza and to ensure access to essential medical services for its population.

The Mental and Psychosocial Impact of War: A Need for Immediate Support

"It was terrifying. They killed my childhood and dreams. I don't have anything that makes me happy anymore."

- Said a displaced 16-year-old Haneen from Gaza

"I'm worried about him; I'm scared he will be damaged in the long run. I try to distract him by talking to him constantly, but he can only hear the bombs and missiles."

- Said Ahlam about her 10-year-old son.

(According to UNICEF)

- **17,000 children in Gaza were unaccompanied or have been separated from their families during the war.**
- **500,000 children were already in need of mental and psychosocial support in Gaza before the war. Now, the estimation is that almost all children accounting for more than one million need that support.**

The mental and psychosocial impact of war can be very deep and far-reaching. It can affect individuals, families, and entire communities for generations to come. The trauma caused by witnessing violence, displacement, and the loss of loved ones certainly can lead to a wide range of psychological disorders. These include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression. The uncertainty, fear, and loss that people in Gaza continue to experience leave them feeling isolated, hopeless, and overwhelmed. It strains their ability to cope with the challenges of daily life. **So, in such a chaotic and devastating war, how can mental health and psychosocial needs be addressed, especially with the massive destruction of infrastructure and collapsed health systems?**

Addressing mental and psychosocial health needs is exponentially difficult in such extreme situations, especially when the immediate response is focused towards physical safety, food

security, water, shelter, and critical medical care. The mental and psychosocial impact of war is profound, and it requires urgent attention within highly challenging circumstances. **Emergency Psychosocial Interventions** need to be implemented. This requires emergency teams, and trained volunteers to offer **Psychological First Aid (PFA)** in order to help people in distress. Since most of the hospitals and health facilities are out of service in Gaza, one of the interventions can be to deploy **mobile units** that can offer basic counseling and mental health support and identify individuals in need of more specialized care.

Utilizing **community-based approaches** can also be beneficial. This entails using existing community structures, such as religious institutions and local NGOs as places for offering psychosocial support and disseminating information about coping mechanisms. **Integrating mental health and psychosocial support** within other humanitarian efforts such as food distribution, shelter programs, or medical aid can ensure that these services reach those in need, even in chaotic and devastated zones. However, we need to keep in mind that the exceptionally challenging situation in Gaza make the implementation of those interventions very difficult and they put the safety of health/aid workers at risk. Moreover, gaining access to affected populations can be very complicated in such extreme contexts.

Therefore, collaboration between governments and international organizations becomes crucial to secure a ceasefire, which serves not only as a critical step in mitigating further harm and loss of life but also enables the urgent delivery of humanitarian aid and mental health services to those most in need. A ceasefire would prevent the further escalation of a mental health crises in the aftermath of war. Collaboration to develop innovative and flexible approaches will make a significant difference in the lives of those affected by this devastating war.



Gaza, 2023

References

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