



2670

Number of
Palestinians killed in
Gaza

9600

Number of
Palestinians injured
in Gaza

56

Number of
Palestinians killed in
the West Bank

1200

Number of
Palestinians injured
in the West Bank

111*

Attacks on Health
Care since 7 October
2023

Ministry of Health figures

* From WHO SSA

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Gaza:

- In the early morning hours of October 7, Hamas fired thousands of rockets into southern and central Israel. A senior Hamas military commander later announced the launch of Operation “Al Aqsa Storm”, which was joined by other armed Palestinian groups and is still ongoing.
- Israel has declared a state of war and a large-scale military operation is ongoing in Gaza.
- Fighting continues between Israeli forces and the armed Palestinian groups that infiltrated Israeli towns, cities, and military facilities near the Gaza Strip. According to Israeli official sources, **1300 Israelis, including foreign nationals have been killed** and more than **3,436 injured**. The media reports that up to 150 members of the Israeli armed forces and civilians have been captured and taken to Gaza.
- The Israeli military ordered about **1.1 million** people on Thursday around midnight in the northern part of the Gaza Strip to evacuate southwards within 24 hours, ahead of military operations. This comes at a time when the ongoing air, sea and land strikes on Gaza continue, demolishing densely populated areas - including homes, schools, medical facilities, and other public health infrastructure - rapidly increasing the number of casualties and fatalities, and acutely displacing huge numbers of people.
- **More than 423,000 people have already been displaced**, of whom over two thirds, almost double of the estimated number (150,000) of IDPs the shelters were planned to host, are sheltering in UNRWA schools causing overcrowding.

There are severe shortages of services inside the shelters and mainly due to lack of human resources and medical staff.

- The complete siege of the Gaza Strip announced by Israel remains in effect. Israeli authorities have stopped their electricity and water supply to the Gaza Strip and no movements of food, fuel, health, other humanitarian supplies, or humanitarian personnel and patients are allowed – worsening the already dire situation.

West Bank, including east Jerusalem:

- The situation remains tense in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, with an increase in confrontations between settlers, Israeli forces, and Palestinians.

HEALTH NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Gaza:

- **Hospitals in the Gaza Strip have been issued orders to evacuate** - Evacuation orders are currently applicable to 21 hospitals (20 hospitals in Gaza City and North Gaza and 1 hospital in Rafah), affecting over 2000 patients. There is no capacity for hospitals in the south to receive such vast numbers of patients. Such movement would pose an immediate threat to the lives of patients.
- **Acute shortage of medical supplies** –The number of casualties continues to grow. Emergency, trauma, and surgical supplies are rapidly running out at hospitals and health partners' warehouses, with entry of humanitarian supplies still not possible. There is a shortage of blood at hospital blood banks in the Gaza Strip. Medicines for the treatment of communicable and more than **350,000 non communicable patients** are in short supply. Restrictions on movement and lack of a humanitarian corridor severely obstruct WHO and partners' ability to replenish dwindling stocks.
- **Surveillance capacities are reduced due to the mass disruption of the health system**, while public health threats rise in the setting of mass displacement, overcrowding of shelters, damage to the water and sanitation infrastructure.
- **Hospitals have reduced functioning to ration remaining fuel** – Hospitals are relying on generators to maintain critical health services.
- **The scale of bombardment is having a grave toll on mental health for all** – health workers and other first responders have further been working long hours in difficult conditions.

West Bank, including east Jerusalem:

- **Increased violence, including settler attacks, has led to a high number of injuries** – On October 13 alone, there were 19 fatalities and 380 injuries in need for hospital treatment. There is a high demand for emergency medical supplies at hospitals. Less than two weeks' worth of blood is available at blood banks. Checkpoint closures, insecurity, movement restrictions, and attacks on health are making movement of ambulances difficult, amidst the rising number of calls for help.
- 650 Palestinians from the Gaza Strip who had been working in Israel on 7 October were expelled and are sheltering in the West Bank, where they require primary health care support and provision of medications for chronic conditions.

HEALTH ATTACKS

WHO has documented 111 attacks on health care in the occupied Palestinian territory since 7 October:

Gaza:

- 48 attacks in the Gaza Strip have resulted in 12 fatalities of health care workers on duty, 20 injuries, 22 ambulances damaged, and 24 health facilities affected including 16 hospitals and 6 other health facilities damaged. At least 3 further fatalities of health workers have been reported by the Ministry of Health; full verification is pending for reporting on these incidents.

- Three hospitals sustained heavy damages to the point that they are no longer functioning; one further hospital was evacuated following reported targeting, while coordination and communications have been affected following damage to the Gaza Emergency Operation Centre.

West Bank, including east Jerusalem:

- 63 attacks on health care in the West Bank affecting 58 ambulances and including 40 attacks involving obstruction to delivery of health care; 31 involving physical violence towards health teams; 15 involving detention of health staff and ambulances; and nine involving militarised search of health assets.

HEALTH ACCESS

Gaza

- Beit Hanoun (Erez) checkpoint remains inaccessible due to the security situation and no entry of medical supplies to Gaza is permitted through the Karam Abu Salem/Kerem Shalom checkpoint.
- Following airstrikes by Israel, the Rafah crossing with Egypt remains closed.
- Access to essential health services is disrupted across the Gaza Strip. Normally there are close to 20,000 primary health care consultations per day, and nearly 8,500 daily secondary health care consultations, including 184 deliveries per day.
- The massive damage to infrastructure and insecurity is making it difficult for ambulances to reach those in need and for the injured and sick to get to health facilities. Because of limited ambulance capacities, private vehicles have had to assist the evacuation of injured persons, without the protection of medical emblems.

West Bank, including east Jerusalem:

- In the West Bank, increased restrictions on movement put in place by Israeli authorities continue. Many checkpoints within the West Bank and into east Jerusalem and Israel remain closed. Cement blocks have been reported to be put at the entrances of Sur Baher, Al Isawiyeh and Shufat. As of the 14 of October, King Hussein (Allenby) Bridge Crossing between the West Bank and Jordan is closed for Palestinians.

WHO RESPONSE

Gaza

- WHO prepared medical supplies from its logistics hub in Dubai have arrived at Al Arish, Egypt—just 20 minutes from Rafah. The supplies would be enough to care for more than 300,000 patients with a range of injuries and diseases, and to support in maintaining essential health services. WHO will continue to coordinate with Egypt and the Palestine Red Crescent partners to ensure these could reach under pressure health facilities.
- Plans for the delivery of additional resources are in progress as part of the overall UN Flash Appeal.
- WHO has secured \$3 million from the WHO Contingency Fund for Emergencies for the immediate procurement of essential medications and supplies. Additionally, it is reprogramming \$1 million to procure urgently needed medical supplies from the local market to ensure the continuity of essential health services, including emergency obstetric care, management of chronic diseases, and infectious disease control.
- WHO is also working with the Ministry of Health to ensure access to mental health and psychosocial services for the most vulnerable among the population.
- WHO is collaborating with MOH and partners, including UNRWA, to ensure that disease surveillance and control measures are reinforced, especially in over-crowded schools and other collective centers where displaced persons are congregating.
- WHO-supported mass casualty response plans and protocols were activated in seven Gaza hospitals at the beginning of the hostilities in Gaza. WHO has previously provided extensive mass casualty management training to health workers at all seven hospitals.
- WHO continues to systematically monitor health attacks within the Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care, as well as to document and report on health needs and restrictions on health access.

HEALTH RESPONSE AND COORDINATION

Gaza

- Surge staff deployed by Health Cluster partners are continuing to support case management at Gaza hospitals. Two Gaza National Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) have been deployed to support Shifa, Aqsa, and Abu Yousuf Al Najjar hospitals in expanding their emergency departments' capacity and open new Green Zones (for walking patients to receive treatment) within the hospitals. WHO-provided emergency tents and equipment are being used for this purpose.
- Health Cluster partners continue making efforts to procure medical supplies from the local market to support critical hospital operations, however, the market is now severely depleted.
- Whilst UNRWA managed to have medical points in 53 out of the 108 shelters, the Health Cluster is in the process of identifying other partners who can support in the remaining shelters.
- Currently only 8 of the 22 UNRWA primary health care centers are functional.
- The Health Cluster will be meeting with partners to discuss their capacities in mobilizing supplies in Egypt in case negotiations for the humanitarian corridor are successful.

West Bank, including east Jerusalem:

- The Health Cluster partners have deployed mobile health clinics to treat the injured in far-flung locations in Nablus and Ramallah. Volunteers are also providing first aid to the injured, in their respective areas in the West Bank.
- Between 7 -14 of October, the Palestinian Medical Relief Services (PMRS) provided medical care to 1116 cases, including 12% resulting from live round ammunition. Palestine Red Crescent Society treated 563 injuries until October 13, including 172 resulting from live round ammunition (31%).

WHO RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a humanitarian corridor to facilitate the immediate entry of urgently needed humanitarian and health supplies into the Gaza Strip and unimpeded access for patients for outside referrals.
- Immediate end to hostilities.
- Ensure the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure against attacks, including acts of retaliation.
- Ensure respect and the protection of health care at all times.
- Ensure the injured have immediate and unhindered access to health care.
- Ensure continuity of essential health services.
- Rapidly reinforce infectious disease surveillance and control measures.

FUNDING

Before the recent escalation of hostilities, the health sector needs were US\$ 46.2 million (only 30% funded). WHO's Global Health Emergency Appeal for oPt 2023, called for US\$ 24.6 million, and was only 50% funded. The Inter-Agency Flash Appeal, released on 13 October estimated that \$ 23.1 million were needed for the immediate response, however this figure will only continue to rise as the situation unfolds. Without funding that is readily available, thousands of people will not have access to life saving trauma care and essential health services, psychosocial support, and emergency medicines and supplies.

Further information:

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