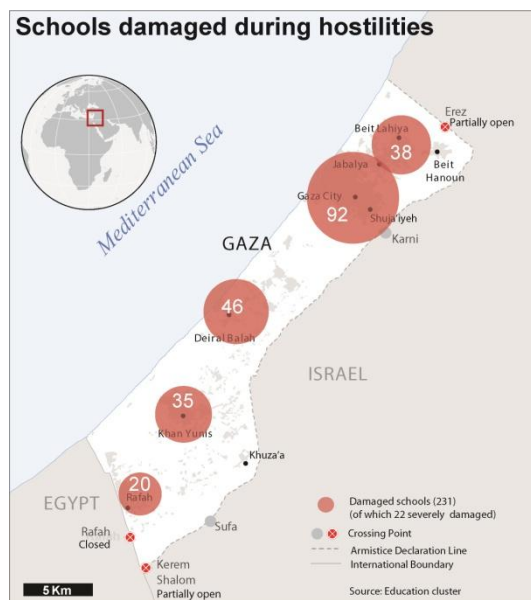




This report is produced by OCHA oPt in collaboration with humanitarian partners. This report covers the period from 18 August (08:00 hrs) to 19 August (08:00 hrs). The next report will be issued on 20 August.

Highlights

- The five-day temporary ceasefire which expired at midnight last night has been extended for another 24-hour period. However, at approximately 15:30 today, rockets fired from Gaza landed in southern Israel and, in response, the Israeli military has struck targets in Gaza.
- Due to the continuing uncertainty, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) remains high, with 238,000 seeking refuge in 81 UNRWA schools designated as emergency shelters.
- Alternative housing will be needed for the approximately 100,000 people whose homes have been destroyed or severely damaged.
- The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) estimates that the fishing sector lost almost ten per cent of its annual catch due to recent hostilities.



1,976

Palestinians killed, including 1,417 civilians, of whom 459 are children and 239 are women.¹

67

Israelis killed, including 64 soldiers, and three civilians including one foreign national.

380,000

People hosted at UNRWA, government shelters and with host families.

10%

Of annual fishing catch lost.

US\$ 34 million

Of losses suffered by the water sector.

Situation Overview

The five-day temporary ceasefire which expired at midnight last night has been extended for another 24-hour period, as negotiations continue in Cairo between the parties to reach a permanent ceasefire or to agree on another temporary extension. However, at approximately 15:30 today, rockets fired from Gaza landed in southern Israel and the Israeli military responded by striking targets in Gaza,

In the absence of a permanent agreement the number of displaced remains high. Even in the event of a lasting ceasefire agreement, an estimated 100,000 people will be long-term displaced due to destruction/severe damage to their homes, estimated to be over 16,000 residences. Another 5,635 housing units have suffered major damage but are still inhabitable in part, while 33,625 have suffered minor damage. Assessments are currently being conducted to understand the needs of those affected. Options include cash subsidies; “self-help” repairs for homes in need of minor repairs; continued stay with host families; rental subsidies; and prefabricated and other housing solutions to replace destroyed and severely damaged homes. However, reconstruction will be the only option for many people, which given the enormous scope of the destruction and current access restrictions on construction materials, will take pose major problems.

¹ Data on fatalities and destruction of property is consolidated by the Protection and Shelter clusters based on preliminary information, and is subject to change based on further verifications.

+ For more information, see “background on the crisis” at the end of the report

Reconstruction is the main priority Construction materials must be allowed into Gaza to this effect – aggregate, bar, and cement. And their access to Gaza must be facilitated in such a way that fulfills Israel's security concerns. The United Nations stands ready to lend its support in this regard.

Robert Serry, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Briefing to the Security Council, 18 August 2014.

The relative calm has allowed for additional needs assessments to take place, including the UN-led joint needs assessment which was completed at the municipality level today. According to the Ministry of Agriculture losses to the farming sector, both direct and indirect, are estimated at US\$ 450 million. The UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) estimate that the recent hostilities has resulted in substantial direct damage to Gaza's 17,000 hectares of croplands as well as much of its agri-infrastructure, including greenhouses, irrigation systems, animal farms, fodder stocks and fishing boats. Although Israel has partially lifted access restrictions to the sea to allow fishermen to move three nautical miles (NM) from the Gaza shore, fishermen were prohibited from fishing during the most recent hostilities; FAO estimates that the fishing sector lost almost ten per cent of its annual catch between 9 July and 10 August.

The Palestinian Water Authority has also carried out an assessment. Among the losses recorded are damage to water wells (11 completely destroyed, 15 partially destroyed); water tanks (five completely destroyed, 11 partially destroyed); desalination units (two completely destroyed, four partially destroyed); in addition to 29 kilometres of the water network completely destroyed and 17 kilometres partially destroyed. The cost of direct damage is estimated at US\$ 34 million.

Hostilities and casualties

The Protection Cluster has not recorded any additional casualties since the last update. The cumulative death toll among Palestinians since 7 July is at least 1,976, according to preliminary data collected by the Protection Cluster from various sources, including 329 persons who could not be yet identified or their status established. Of the initially verified cases, 1,417 are believed to be civilians, including 459 children and 239 women, and 230 members of armed groups. The UXO fatalities recorded on Wednesday have not yet been included in the cumulative figures. According to the World Health Organization, as of 17:00 on 12 August, 10,193 Palestinians, including 3,084 children, 1,970 women and 368 elderly, were injured.

The recent conflict in the Gaza Strip has demonstrated, in the most tragic way, the risks that humanitarian workers take every day. In the last six weeks, at least 30 Palestinian colleagues have been killed, including 11 UNRWA personnel, 11 medical staff and eight firefighters - many in the line of duty. Seven technicians were also killed while trying to repair vital water and sanitation infrastructure. Over 70 aid workers have been injured,

'The spirit of humanity shines bright in Palestine', article by James W. Rawley, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Al-Quds newspaper, on the occasion of World Humanitarian Day, 19 August.

Since 8 July, three civilians in Israel have been killed, including one foreign national, and dozens directly injured by rockets or shrapnel. The total number of Israeli military fatalities stands at 64.

Displacement

The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in emergency shelters has remained about the same, 238,004 hosted in 81 designated UNRWA schools as of yesterday afternoon (up from 237,659 registered the previous day). There were also 25,334 IDPs in seven government shelters supported by UNRWA (down 28,229 from previously). The number of IDPs residing in government schools not assisted by UNRWA is unknown. Nearly 115,000 IDPs residing with host families have been registered and reached by various shelter partners. It is anticipated that with the ceasefire apparently ending, more people will return to designated shelters or to host families.

UNRWA's continues its hygiene and water campaign which involves the dissemination of information on water conservation, appropriate hygiene practices and treatment of scabies and lice. Almost half of the displaced in UNRWA shelters are children below the age of 18. UNRWA has deployed counselors in all UNRWA shelters to promote positive coping mechanisms and enhance the resilience of individuals, families and communities. UNRWA has also continued to provide food, water and non food items to IDPs sheltered in its schools and, with other agencies, to the IDPs taking shelter in government schools.

The EU remains concerned about the disastrous humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip particularly the conditions of the displaced population, water supplies, electricity services, unexploded ordnance as well as destroyed and uninhabitable homes. The EU calls for increased efforts to facilitate, in accordance with international humanitarian law, immediate and unimpeded humanitarian access into the Gaza Strip including for humanitarian personnel and supplies, and for the mobilisation of

humanitarian aid for the population of Gaza.

Council of the European Union: Council conclusions on the Middle East (Gaza) Brussels, 15 August 2014.

Key humanitarian priorities:

Humanitarian space: access for humanitarian workers to carry out life-saving activities should be maintained, among other reasons, to complete search and rescue operations in several areas, and repair critical water and electricity infrastructure. Removal of the threat of numerous UXO in built up areas is vital.

Joint needs assessments: the first phase initial rapid needs assessment, covering the governorate level, was launched on 13 August to inform responses by humanitarian organizations. The second phase, covering the municipal level, began on 18 August and was completed today. Information collected will be collated and analysed to determine the overall level of humanitarian needs.

Additional fuel supply: fuel is needed to operate backup generators at essential facilities, including water, sanitation and health, for longer hours.

Strengthen response to IDPs: improving priority response to IDPs in non-UNRWA facilities and with host families; ensuring common standards of response to IDPs throughout the Gaza strip, including comprehensive and common registration.

Erez: Open for movement during normal working hours on (08:00-16:00).

Beit Hanoun (Arba-Arba): Operational.

Kerem Shalom: Open as per its regular operating hours, (08:00-16:00).

Rafah: Open from 09:00 to 15:00.

Humanitarian needs and response

Field teams and humanitarian partners are in the field carrying out assessments today. Updated information on needs and response will be included tomorrow.

General Coordination

The first phase of the joint rapid needs assessment, led by the EOC started on 13 August, and data analysis is ongoing. The second phase of the joint rapid needs assessment started on 18 August, covering 19 municipalities (some 80 assessment staff were involved and at least 250 key informants interviewed, including youth, persons with disabilities and elderly). The remaining six municipalities were covered on 19 August and the eight refugee camps will be covered as soon as the situation allows. Data collected will be entered on tablets and linked directly to a database. The information will be subsequently validated and analysed, before it is disseminated. Protection and gender concerns have been integrated throughout the process as have questions on the information needs of affected communities.

Since its activation, the Logistics Cluster has facilitated the transportation of over 1,200 pallets of humanitarian relief supplies via 47 trucks from the West Bank on behalf of 17 humanitarian organisations for distribution within the Gaza Strip.

Funding

Based on available information, funding to the Gaza Crisis Appeal stands at US \$124 million out of a total request of \$367 million (34%), of this US \$96 million is for UNRWA, US \$20 million for WFP and US \$8 million for others, leaving large gaps to respond in other critical sectors such as Health, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Education and Shelter and Non Food Items. Many key UN and NGOs partners identified for the Gaza response have received little to no funding to date for their projects in the Crisis Appeal. The Crisis Appeal is available online at www.ochaopt.org.

Donors and recipient agencies are kindly requested to report funding received to fts@un.org.

The Emergency Response Fund (ERF) is an additional mechanism available to fund interventions in Gaza through rapid and flexible support to affected civilian populations. The ERF has begun processing project applications in regards to the Gaza emergency. To date, eleven project proposals were approved for a total of US\$ 2.6 million. Further funding for the ERF is still being sought.

The CERF Secretariat is also currently reviewing a package of proposals from UN humanitarian agencies, in cooperation with NGO partners, covering urgent needs in food assistance, psychosocial support, WASH, rubble removal and critical drugs.

Background to the crisis

On 7 July 2014, the Israeli army launched a large military operation in the Gaza Strip, codenamed “Protective Edge”, with the stated objective of stopping Palestinian rocket firing at southern Israel and destroying the military infrastructure of Hamas and other armed groups.

This development marked the collapse of the Egyptian-brokered ceasefire understanding reached between Israel and Hamas in November 2012, which has been gradually undermined since December 2013. The latest escalation round started in early June, characterized by an intensification of Israeli airstrikes and rockets launched from Gaza at southern Israel. Tensions further increased following the abduction and killing of three Israeli youths in the southern West Bank, on 12 June, which the Israeli government attributed to Hamas. Overall, in the period leading up to the start of the current operation a total of 15 Palestinians, including one civilian, were killed, and another 58 others, mostly civilians, injured, as a result of Israeli airstrikes in the Gaza Strip; seven Israelis, five of whom were civilians, were injured due to rocket fire.

The current crisis comes against a backdrop of heightened vulnerability and instability. Unemployment increased dramatically since mid-2013, following a halt of the illegal tunnel trade, exacerbating the impact of the Israeli blockade in place since June 2007. Additionally, former de facto government employees, including the security forces, have not been paid salaries regularly since August 2013 and no salaries at all since April 2014. Delivery of basic services has been also undermined due to an ongoing energy crisis, involving power outages of 12 hours per day.

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