



A child looking at the rubbles of a house in the Gaza Strip



State of Palestine
Flash update – The situation in the Gaza Strip

Situation overview and humanitarian needs

A ceasefire came into effect in the Gaza Strip on 7 Aug at 23:30, halting 3 days of intense hostilities between Palestinian militant factions (led by Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)), and Israel¹. Sixteen children were killed and 151 reportedly injured in the Gaza strip², as well as 14 children reportedly injured in Israel.

This happens 14 months after the May 2021 escalation that left thousands of children traumatized and in need of support. Before the current conflict, about 515,450 children in the Gaza Strip were already in need of Mental Health and Psychological Services (MHPSS).³ The recent 3 days of hostilities have further exacerbated the risks of psychological distress and mental disorders among children and their caregivers.

The Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) reported mild damage to sections of the water and wastewater network in Rafah Governorate, with no major impact on the network. Delay in delivering fuel to the Gaza Strip induced a power supply shortage that affected the water and sanitation sector. Water production and distribution decreased by more than 50 per cent, impact on the UNICEF-supported desalination plant alone affected not less than 300,000 persons. Wastewater treatment plants' operation capacity have also been affected; more than 130,000 CM of raw/poorly treated wastewater have been discharged to the sea daily. In light of the fragility of the ceasefire, replenishment of water treatment chemicals is a priority. According to CMWU, the available quantities of chemicals to cover the desalination plants' needs will last for less than one week.

Primary and secondary schools will open on 28 August, after the summer vacation, for approximately 600,000 children, meanwhile, MoE will resume the grade twelve examinations (Tawjihi) on Wednesday 10 August. The education cluster is working with partners and service providers to identify damages to education facilities, if any, and prepare for the return to schools. All summer activities implemented by education cluster partners will resume in the coming few days. Scaling up those activities and MHPSS is a priority to support the children affected by the recent conflict.

Eighteen housing units were destroyed and 68 severely damaged, leaving 84 families (450 individuals) internally displaced to the host community. In addition, an estimated 1,675 housing units sustained

¹ [Escalation in the Gaza Strip and Israel | OCHA Flash update #2 as of 18:00, 8 Aug 2022](#)

² [Ibid](#)

³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), oPt: 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan, OCHA, December 2021

moderate to minor damage, affecting 8,500 individuals.⁴ Markets in Gaza remained operational and accessible despite a noted slight increase in prices.

After 3 days of disruption of services, primary healthcare clinics are reopening. To date, one hospital and one ambulance sustained damage during the conflict. Prior to the recent conflict, the MoH's needs for medication, disposables, medical equipment, spare parts, and laboratory kits were high. UNICEF and the Health cluster continue to assess the needs and look forward to supporting the MoH with its revised list of needs.

Response, and coordination of actions

UNICEF is an active Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) member and is closely coordinating with other UN agencies and nongovernmental organizations to ensure a timely and smooth response to the immediate humanitarian needs. UNICEF continues to lead the WASH cluster and Child Protection Area of Responsibility and co-lead the Education Cluster with Save the Children.

Regarding Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, the PSEA Network has strengthened its partnership with the PSEA Network's 121 Helpline to increase the number of counselors in response to an increase in the number of calls. The helpline is operational 24 hours and is able to provide first aid counseling and follow-up, referrals to in-person services for medical care, legal assistance, MHPSS, SGBV, and addressing the special needs of people with disabilities. The helpline work also informs the Interagency efforts on PSEA. Messaging to communities on the availability of confidential channels has been reinforced and stressed in interagency meetings.

UNICEF's partner has sent out 5,000 text messages to people in the Gaza Strip informing them of the available services including the free psychosocial support services and raising their awareness on how to deal with traumatized and distressed children.

UNICEF made available 22,500 liters of fuel – prepositioned earlier at the desalination plant – for the operation of standby generators. This translates into the operation capacity of the plant for 8-10 days at 8 hours per day. UNICEF is allocating additional resources for the provision of fuel, chemicals, and chlorine for the operation of critical WASH facilities. UNICEF has also released, from the prepositioned stocks, water, and wastewater networks spare parts to undertake urgent repairs of damaged sections of the networks. The WASH Cluster is coordinating with relevant partners to be on standby to provide any required operation and maintenance support for the sector when needed.

In Education, UNICEF is supporting summer activities STEMS and Fun Days which are planned to start next week in the Gaza Strip. A total of 4,000 Adolescents from the Gaza Strip will participate in STEM clubs in 50 schools as well as 5,000 children will participate in the Fun Days (50 per cent girls). UNICEF is working closely with partners to ensure the safe and timely start of the new schooling year.

About 350 children (170 girls and 180 boys), as well as 47 caregivers (20 women), benefited from online psychosocial First Aid (PFA). Follow-up of critical open cases is ongoing. Furthermore, a local partner conducted 19 sessions with 309 children (221 boys and 88 girls) on prevention of psychological distress, physical health, prevention of physical violence, and conflict-related violence. Explosive remnants of war prevention messages have been disseminated to Clusters for further distribution.

⁴ [Escalation in the Gaza Strip and Israel | OCHA Flash update #2 as of 18:00, 8 Aug 2022](#)

The fifth Humanitarian Cash Transfer (HCT) payment for 1,160 households affected by the previous escalation in May 2021 will start by September 2022 and will continue for a period of five months. Through the Ministry of Social Development, UNICEF will assess and verify the actual number of affected children and families during the recent conflict to make sure they are included in the current or coming rounds of HCT.

On 8 August, a few hours after the ceasefire, UNICEF delivered two trucks with some 191 pallets of medical supplies (medication and medical solutions) to the Gaza Strip. These supplies will serve some 50,000 people for around 3 months. Procurement of additional quantities of supplies (more than 60 different medical disposables) is underway. In continuation of existing plans, UNICEF accelerated the award of two contracts to provide rehabilitation work in seven health facilities serving around 1,070,000 people in the Gaza Strip. The work will commence in ten days.

Key asks:

- Continues advocacy to ensure humanitarian access and realization of children’s rights.
- Funding remains a challenge. The 2022 HRP has a funding gap of 75% so the UNICEF Humanitarian Appeal for Children, is 74% underfunded. On top of that, UNICEF will also require additional resources to respond to the new needs of children created by the recent conflict and to replenish its prepositioning stock for preparedness purposes. UNICEF is working closely with partners and the HCT to quantify the needs. The provision of additional resources to UNICEF will allow scaling up response to address the unmet needs from before the recent conflict and start addressing the increased vulnerabilities.

Advocacy and External Media

On 09 August: [UNICEF Special Representative visit to Gaza Strip after the ceasefire](#)

On 08 August: [UNICEF delivers the first shipment of medical supplies and life-saving drugs](#)

On 08 August: [UNICEF Regional Director issues a statement welcoming the ceasefire:](#)

On 05 August: [UNICEF Regional Director issues a statement on the situation in the Gaza Strip](#)

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