

**Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs  
(OCHA)****Situation Report on the Humanitarian Situation in the Gaza Strip – No. 14  
19 January 2009**

The following information is based on reports from member states, the UN Country Team for the occupied Palestinian territory, humanitarian partners and authorities involved in the humanitarian response.

**1. General Overview**

1. As per the 18 January cease-fire, the Israeli Army began to withdraw from Gaza on the evening of 18 January, though ground troops remain in some areas. The coastal road was reopened and movement is now possible between the northern and southern parts of Gaza for the first time since the start of the Israeli ground offensive on 3 January.

2. The UN Secretary General will travel to Gaza on 20 January. On 21 January, the Emergency Relief Coordinator will initiate an assessment of humanitarian needs in Gaza. This will be followed by sector-specific assessments, as the security situation permits. The Emergency Relief Coordinator said on 19 January that he hopes to have a full report on the recovery and reconstruction needs in Gaza in three weeks.

3. On 18 January, the ICRC reported that, "a number of areas, including parts of Beit Lahiya, looked like the aftermath of a strong earthquake – entire neighbourhoods were beyond recognition. Some houses had been completely levelled; others were still standing but were so badly damaged by shelling that it would be too dangerous to move back in. Roads were completely destroyed, making it almost impossible for vehicles to move through them."

4. Casualty figures:

The cease-fires declared by Israel and Hamas have allowed for the recovery of some of the dead from under the rubble, which is likely to result in a continued increase in the number of recorded casualties over the coming days; between 18-19 January, 114 bodies were recovered from the rubble.

	<b>Total # since 27 December</b>	<b># / percent of total that are children since 27 December</b>	<b># / percent of total that are women since 27 December</b>
<b>Palestinian Fatalities*</b>	1,314	412 / 32 percent	100 / 8 percent
<b>Palestinians Injured*</b>	5,300	1,855 / 35 percent	795 / 15 percent
<b>Israeli Fatalities**</b>	13	Unknown	Unknown
<b>Israelis Injured***</b>	84	Unknown	Unknown

\* According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health (MoH), as of 1600 hrs (1400 hrs GMT) 19 January, not including those treated for shock.

\*\*According to Israeli Police Spokesman and Magen David Adom. Total includes nine Israeli soldiers and four civilians.

\*\*\*According to Magen David Adom, four were critically injured, 11 moderately injured and 167 lightly injured, not including those treated for shock.

<b>UN Casualties in Gaza since 27 December</b>	<b>Fatalities</b>	<b>Injured</b>
UNRWA Staff	5	5
UNRWA Contractors	3	4
WFP Contractors	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>

Humanitarian Installations/Convoys	# hit in Gaza since 27 December
UN Buildings	50
UN Compounds	1
NGO Installations	1
NGO Compounds	To be confirmed
Convoys	4

## 2.1 Coordination and Humanitarian Response

### Gaza Crossings

Crossing	Total crossings on 18 January	No. of total with humanitarian goods	Type of humanitarian goods	Total crossings on 19 January	No. of total with humanitarian goods	Type of humanitarian goods
Kerem Shalom	97.5 truckloads (in)	69.5 truckloads	Food items Medical supplies NFIs Spare parts 70,000 litres of industrial gas	125 trucks (in)* 10 ambulances*	105*	
Rafah	11 truckloads (in) 23 doctors (in) 11 ambulances (in) 71 journalists (in)	11 truckloads	Medical supplies	Open		Medical supplies
Karni conveyor belt	38 truckloads (in)	-	wheat	42 trucks (in)*		Flour, grain and wheat
Nahal Oz pipeline	90,000 litres of fuel (in)	-	-	40,000 litres diesel (in)* 185 tonnes gas (in)*		
Erez				8 injured children and their parents (out)* One doctor (out)*		

\*Based on reports of the Israeli Joint Humanitarian Coordination Cell (JHCC).

### 2.1. Food

5. Access to food in Gaza continues to deteriorate due to shortages of food in the markets, lack of currency to purchase what food is available, and marked increases in food prices. On 17 January, WFP described the food situation as, "an almost complete breakdown of [the] food supply and distribution system with an estimated 88 percent of the people in Gaza dependent on food assistance". Immediate needs include the supply of cash so that people can purchase food, ready-to-eat meals and wheat flour for bakeries.

### 2.2. Health

6. The delivery of primary health care is resuming, though the capacity of the health system has been significantly reduced due to the damage of at least 21 clinics. UNICEF reported the cold chain vaccine storage facility in Gaza is now functional and routine vaccines are available. WHO reported that staff attendance at work has improved but remains low in Gaza City due to continued uncertainty about the security situation.

7. Ten primary health care clinics are functioning as emergency clinics. Hospitals and intensive care units are still dealing with the mass casualties from the fighting and it is estimated that up to 50 percent of people injured during the fighting sustained severe injuries. The intensive care unit at Shifa Hospital is functioning at almost full capacity due to the low evacuation rate of patients through the Rafah Crossing. Since 27 December, 422 patients had been transferred through Rafah for medical assistance.

- 8. UNICEF is working with local partners to provide nutritional care and support services to children and women. Plans are being developed to conduct a Rapid Nutrition survey and to scale-up the response as needed.
- 9. WHO is undertaking a health needs and facilities assessment, coordinated through Rafah and Jerusalem, to help ensure that health needs are met most effectively, including the provision of medical supplies,.

**2.3. Essential Infrastructure**

- 10. The supply of electricity and water continues to improve. Since the evening of 17 January, most Gazans have been receiving intermittent electricity. As of 18 January, an additional 100,000 people also obtained access to running water due to the partial resumption of electricity; 400,000 people still remain without running water.
- 11. The sanitation situation continues to be of serious concern. As of 18 January, every hour, 30 cubic metres of sewage was flowing into the streets in Beit Hanoun and sewage was flowing in the streets of Beit Lahia. Underscoring the risks associated with exposure to raw sewage, WHO has re-emphasized the potential of an outbreak in disease.

**2.5. Shelter and Non-Food Items**

12. In light of the cease-fires, some are beginning to return to their homes; however, it remains unclear whether those remaining in the UNRWA emergency shelters will be able to return to their homes. In the meantime, providing adequate assistance for the displaced population remains a challenge. There is an insufficient quantity of non-food items (NFIs) for the displaced and there is an urgent need to resume schooling while 44 of the shelters are located at schools.

No. in UNRWA Emergency Shelters*	No. UNRWA Emergency Shelters	Decrease in no. people from 16 January
<b>50,896</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>4,662</b>
<b>46,234</b>		

- 13. The cease-fires have allowed for an initial assessment of the level of destruction sustained during the fighting. Reports suggest a near total destruction of houses, infrastructure, roads, green houses, cemeteries, mosques, farms and schools in Zaitoun, Tufah, Sha’af, Jabalia, Tal Al Hawwa, Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahia areas in northern Gaza Strip.
- 14. There is an urgent need for construction materials in Gaza for repairs and reconstruction of homes and essential public infrastructure. Construction materials have not been permitted entry into Gaza since June 2007.

**2.6. Education**

15. A rapid assessment of damaged schools is planned for the week of 19 January, using the education under emergency assessment tool. Recognizing the importance of restoring normalcy for children, the education sector’s goal is to have 40,000 children in schools by early February.

**3.0 International Assistance and Priority needs**

**3.1. Funding**

16. On 13 January, as part of the United Nations efforts to meet the rapidly growing humanitarian needs of civilians caught in the fighting, the Emergency Relief Coordinator allocated some seven (7) million USD in funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to help jump-start life-saving humanitarian programmes in Gaza. The funding will be used to support UNICEF, UNRWA, and WFP, respectively, to provide: safe drinking water to as many as 200,000 people, including displaced civilians; fuel for the generators that power water pumping stations, hospitals and other municipal services in Gaza, and cash assistance to help civilians to rent alternative shelters, defray the costs of necessary services and purchase essentials such as food and basic household materials; and provide ready-made meals to 16,000 IDPs staying in UNRWA shelters.

17. The Humanitarian Country Team has re-visited projects proposed for the 2009 CAP (which appealed for over USD 462 million) to ensure that the projects, activities and priorities remain relevant to the ongoing emergency and increased the budget to USD 529 million.

18. To respond to the current urgent needs in Gaza, priority projects were identified in the following sectors: protection; shelter; food aid and food security; water and sanitation; agriculture; cash for work/assistance; education; health; and coordination and support services. Funding needs for the priority projects amounted to USD 117 million, of which USD 63 million has been committed or pledged as of 19 January. For the initial response plan and list of immediate funding needs, see:

[http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha\\_opt\\_gaza\\_crisis\\_cap\\_funding\\_2009\\_english.pdf](http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_gaza_crisis_cap_funding_2009_english.pdf)

19. Concerning the Consolidated Appeal for the occupied Palestinian territories, as of 19 January donors have already committed or pledged over USD 88 million (in funding or in-kind contributions) for projects in the Appeal and over USD 80 million to projects outside of the Appeal (<http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/pagelader.aspx?page=emergencyDetails&appealID=834>). This information was compiled by OCHA, based on the information provided by donors and appealing organisations. All humanitarian partners including donors and recipient agencies are encouraged to inform FTS of cash and in-kind contributions to: [fts@reliefweb.int](mailto:fts@reliefweb.int).

### 3.2. Priority Needs

20. **Protection:** Compliance with international humanitarian law is essential to enhance security for civilians within Gaza, allow civilians freedom of movement to reach lifesaving services, and for humanitarian actors to distribute assistance.

21. **Access:** A sustained re-opening of all crossings into Gaza is required to meet assistance needs. Improved humanitarian access into Gaza is also required for humanitarian staff, particularly for NGO staff as well as humanitarian goods. Increased security and improved access within Gaza is essential for civilians to reach lifesaving services, and for humanitarian actors to distribute assistance.

22. **Electricity & Fuel:** Hospitals require fuel to run generators on which they rely; water and sanitation facilities require fuel to operate; and households and bakeries require cooking gas.

23. **Wheat grain:** Wheat grain is urgently needed for local bakeries and for humanitarian food distributions.

24. This situation report, together with further information on ongoing emergencies, is also available on the OCHA Internet website at <http://reliefweb.int>. A copy of the Field Update from the Humanitarian Coordinator for the oPt can be found at:

[http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha\\_opt\\_gaza\\_humanitarian\\_situation\\_report\\_2009\\_01\\_08\\_english.pdf](http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_gaza_humanitarian_situation_report_2009_01_08_english.pdf)

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