



OCHA

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Partnership for Humanity

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

Situation Report on the Humanitarian Situation in the Gaza Strip – No. 15 20-21 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 As of 21 January, the ceasefires declared by Israel and Hamas continued to hold and Israel had withdrawn all forces from Gaza. On 20 January, a Palestinian farmer was killed by Israeli gunfire east of Jabalia. A number of mortars were also fired from Palestine towards Israel, though no damage was reported. Since 27 December, over 600 rockets were fired into Israel from Gaza. In the wake of the intensive fighting, the current priority in Gaza is to assess needs and damages while continuing to provide urgently needed assistance. On 21 January, the IFRC reported that, "humanitarian needs remain extremely acute," and UNDP warned that there will be long-term consequences of the latest conflict, which affected the livelihoods and assets of tens of thousands of Gazans.
2. During a mission to Gaza on 20 January, the UN Secretary General noted that the fraction of the damage he witnessed was, "shocking and alarming," and that he was sobered by the, "relief and recovery challenges ahead". He also condemned the attacks on civilians by both parties to the conflict and re-emphasized that, "international humanitarian law must be upheld and respected by all". He underscored that he is, "concerned about the potential long-term impact of the recent crisis on the entire society, and particularly [on] young children".
3. The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator arrived in Jerusalem on 21 January for a four-day mission to review humanitarian needs in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). He will initiate an assessment of humanitarian needs in Gaza on 22 January.
4. A Flash Appeal is being developed based on ongoing assessments. The Appeal will include revisions of projects that exist in the 2009 Consolidated Appeal for the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as additional projects to respond to new needs. The document will be launched in early February.
5. According to a rapid assessment of the humanitarian situation in Gaza (based on phone interviews with 525 people), CARE reported that more than half of the respondents (56 percent) were hosting displaced people. Approximately one third of those surveyed indicated that water was their most urgent need and 71 percent reported that they had problems accessing clean water. Half of those surveyed underscored that access to cash was their priority need.

2.1 Coordination and Humanitarian Response

2.1. Protection

6. Two Palestinian children were killed by unexploded ordnance (UXOs) east of Gaza City on 20 January, underscoring the serious protection concerns posed by the proliferation of UXOs and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in Gaza. On 21 January, the ICRC highlighted that UXOs and ERW represent another, "major new danger" in Gaza. ICRC outlined that "the fact that Gaza is one of the most densely populated areas in the world makes the problem of unexploded munitions even more acute" and related security risks could cause delays in carrying out urgently needed humanitarian work.

7. Casualty figures:

	Total # since 27 December	# / percent of total that are children since 27 December
Palestinian Fatalities*	1,314	412 / 32 percent
Palestinians Injured*	5,300	1,855 / 35 percent
Israeli Fatalities**	13	Unknown
Israelis Injured***	84	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 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. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 336 Israeli soldiers were wounded.

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

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

2.2. Gaza Border Crossings

8. The Israeli Joint Humanitarian Coordination Cell (JHCC) was dissolved on 21 January. The Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) plans to hold a meeting during the week of 26 January to brief on the procedures for the entry of goods and staff into Gaza. Authorization is required on a case-by-case basis from the COGAT for the import of all reconstruction materials into Gaza.

Crossing	Crossings on 19 January	No. with aid	Type of goods	Crossings on 20 January	No. with aid	Type of goods	Crossings on 21 January	No. with aid	Type of goods
Kerem Shalom	125 truckloads (in) 10 ambulances (in)	115 truckloads	Food items Medical supplies NFIs	123 trucks (in) (including ten from Egypt)	87		82 trucks* 10 ambulances*		
Rafah				213 tonnes of medical supplies 3 ambulances		Medical supplies	Open**		
Karni conveyor belt	71 truckloads (in)		Wheat, barley, corn, soy, beans, animal feed	80 trucks (in)		Flour, grain and wheat	70 trucks*		Flour, wheat and grain
Nahal Oz pipeline	537,000 litres of industrial fuel (in) 206 tons of cooking gas (in)			443,000 litres industrial fuel (in) 199 tonnes gas (in)			440,000 litres fuel* 200 tonnes gas*		
Erez	Open for medical evacuations and humanitarian staff with clearance*			Open for medical evacuations and humanitarian staff with clearance*			Open for medical evacuations and humanitarian staff with clearance*		

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

2.3. Food

9. WFP will participate in the joint rapid assessment of humanitarian needs in Gaza during the week of 19 January followed by a rapid joint WFP/UNRWA/FAO food security assessment during the week of 26 January. With 80 percent of the population in Gaza in need of food assistance, WFP is planning to scale up operations and is launching a specific emergency operation to provide food assistance to 365,000 of the non-refugee population in Gaza.

10. On 20 January, UNRWA distributed food parcels to 2,914 households and WFP distributed food to over 1,600 households; WFP has increased their ration size for the next three months. A first consignment of ten tonnes of ready-to-eat date bars was delivered to Gaza on 20 January. Since 27 December, WFP reached more than 150,500 beneficiaries from its regular caseload and an additional 40,000 people through emergency bread distribution and the distribution of ready-to-eat foods. WFP now has access to 89 percent of its existing stocks in Gaza.

2.4. Health

11. WHO reported that there has been a generous and rapid response to the needs of the health sector, including substantial donations of drugs and health supplies. WHO encouraged all donors to coordinate the process of health assistance in consultation with the Health Cluster, which is working closely with the Palestinian (MoH).

12. Since 27 December, WHO reported that 34 health facilities (including eight hospitals and 26 primary health care - PHC - clinics) were damaged or destroyed in direct or indirect shelling. Fifty out of 56 PHC clinics are now functioning and UNRWA reported that on 19 January, there were 15,000 patient consultations at their clinics, which is close to rate before the recent conflict. The Palestinian MoH is strengthening surveillance systems to prevent the outbreak of communicable disease.

2.5. Essential Infrastructure

13. Reporting that 14 percent of all structures in Gaza were destroyed or damaged during the fighting, the Palestinian Statistical Authority (PSA) estimates that reconstruction could cost USD 1.9 billion. An ICRC assessment concluded that 250 houses and apartments were badly or completely destroyed in the Al-Atatra and Zaytun neighbourhoods of Gaza city alone.

14. Since 18 January, the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) and the GEDCO (Gaza's electrical utility organization) have been assessing and repairing damage to the electricity, water and wastewater networks. According to GEDCO, 40 percent of the population remain without electricity, and the rest have only intermittent supply.

15. UNICEF disbursed USD 50,000 to the CMWU in support of their rapid repairs of the water network. UNICEF has also delivered, over 7,000 hygiene kits and over 1,300 water purification tablets. Oxfam and Action Contre La Faim are distributing drinking water to over 30,000 people.

Structures Affected (PSA)	#
Homes damaged	17,000
Homes destroyed	4,100
School, university and hospital buildings	25
Mosque	20
Security services bldg	31
Government compound	1
Bridge	2
Petrol Station	4
Factories	1,500
Road	50
	kms
Ambulances	20

2.6. Shelter and Non-Food Items

16. ICRC reported on 20 January that after the cease-fires were agreed, many people who have not returned had, "checked on their homes, but then decided to return to the UNRWA shelters. They had no other choice." The total number of those displaced and living with host families remains unknown.

No. in UNRWA Emergency Shelters*	No. UNRWA Emergency Shelters	Decrease in no. of people from 19 January
18,035	30	28,119

17. On 19 and 20 January, the ICRC, CHF International and Mercy Corps distributed plastic sheeting and tarpaulins to over 800 families. There are continued needs for additional non-food items for those who remain displaced, or for those who are repairing their homes.

2.7. Education

18. The Education Cluster was activated in Gaza on 21 January. Repair of schools damaged during the fighting poses a serious challenge to re-starting classes, which is planned for early February.

3.0 International Assistance and Priority needs

3.1. Funding

19. 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.

Appeal	Amount Requested	Source	Amount pledged and committed as at 21 January
2009 CAP	USD 529 million		
		Other donors	USD 92.5 million* (of which 63 million is for immediate funding needs**)
		CERF	USD 7 million***
Outside of the CAP			USD 85 million*
TOTAL FUNDING			USD 184.5 million

* In funding or in-kind donations.

** As of 19 January. Priority projects were identified as Immediate Funding Needs (from the revised CAP and outside of the CAP) 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. 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

*** Funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) 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.

20. For a funding update see: <http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/pageloader.aspx?page=emerg-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.

3.2. Priority Needs

21. **Access:** The sustained reopening of all crossings into Gaza is necessary to ensure access. The list of goods allowed into Gaza must be expanded greatly, and must include construction materials, which are necessary for rebuilding critical infrastructure and homes. To deliver lifesaving services, humanitarian workers require unimpeded access into Gaza, including NGO staff.

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

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