Situation Overview: Escalation in conflict – Gaza

Key Issues

- At least 53 Palestinian, of these 25 civilians, including 10 children and 5 women, have been reported killed, and over 520 Palestinians, mostly civilians, including at least 140 children and 83 women, have been injured, since the beginning of the hostilities which began on Wednesday, 14th November.
- Three Israelis have been killed and more than 50 have been reported injured.
- At least 2 Palestinian civilian, including one child, are reported killed by rockets fired by Palestinian militants falling short.
- Damage to school infrastructure: 24 Government, 1 private and 5 UNRWA schools are known to have been damaged
- Due to homes being damaged and/or immediate fear, many families in Gaza and southern Israel have reportedly relocated to relatives and friends in areas considered safer.
- There are currently no reports of displaced people that would need emergency humanitarian assistance in public shelters
- There are no reports of shortages of food.
- Total Estimated Funding Requirement for Immediate Response: US$2,970,000

Background

On 14th November, Ahmed Jabari, the head of the Hamas El Qassam Brigade was killed during an IDF airstrike in Gaza. With this killing Israel announced its operation “Pillar of Defense”. The Israeli Air Force then launched air strikes targeting strategic locations including Hamas training bases and offices of the El Qassam Brigade. Since then, air strikes from Israel and rocket launching from Gaza have continued for five consecutive days and nights with very few moments of calm. Most government administration buildings have been directly targeted and severely damaged. It is reported that there have been 55 fatalities including 11 children and 5 women. Injuries of approximately 520 people are reported with approximately 140 children and 83 women injured.

Although every effort is being made to verify data, due to the danger level related to conflict, direct assessments cannot be made and UNICEF cannot verify the numbers beyond what is reported through reliable partners.
Programme:

1. HEATH and NUTRITION:
   - MOH raised the state of emergency to the extreme phase (level c);
   - Since the start of the operation there have been three reported incidents of light damage to medical facilities;
   - There is sufficient power to maintain the cold chain efficiency;
   - Hospitals are running at more than full capacity due to casualty caseload; Shortages of emergency drugs and consumables are reported by MOH Gaza (376 consumables and 105 drugs at low level and 17 drugs at zero stock).

Coordination:
There is no active Health and Nutrition cluster However, coordination with WHO for information and response plans is established norm.

UNICEF Immediate Planned Response
UNICEF office is ordering a list of 14 essential emergency drugs which are available at UNICEF, SD warehouse. These drugs have been selected from the list shared by MOH-Gaza and the quantities will cover the needs for about three months.

Funding Gap:
- In case the crisis will continue, there is an anticipated funding gap of USD 500,000 for medical supplies and consumables.

2. WATER, SANITATION and HYGIENE (WASH):
   - As per the currently accessible information, no major damage has been reported to WASH facilities. WASH Cluster partners and CMWU report that since 14th November, at least two water networks, one water well and two water reservoirs (both out of service) have been damaged/destroyed. There are reports of extended electricity shortages. The closure of Kerem...

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1. Light damage to windows and doors of the Al-Quds hospital and the nearby Palestinian Red Crescent station in the Gaza district. Two Al Quds workers also sustained light injuries.
2. Light damage to windows in the Al-Karma hospital in the Jabaliya District.
3. One government Primary Health Care (PHC) center in Khan Younis was damaged.

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1. One incident was reported by ACF and CMWU in the Emarata neighborhood in Khan Younis (16 Nov.) where a water pipeline servicing 6000 people was damaged. CMWU engineers have been able to repair the network using their own resources. Another incident was reported by IRW and CMWU in Al Naser area in Rafah (17 Nov.). CMWU engineers hope to be able to repair the network in the next day.

2. CMWU reported that in another incident a saline water well was hit in the south of the Rimal area of Gaza city (15 Nov.). The well, one of a cluster of five wells servicing 150,000 people in the area, has been shut down. As a result, the overall water availability in the area has been reduced, though not completely stopped.

3. CMWU and ACF reported that the Khuza’a water reservoir in Khan Younis was hit by two airstrikes (15 & 16 Nov.). These incidents however didn’t have an immediate impact on the water supply to the population in Khan Younis since the reservoir is only used over the summer.
Shalom crossing and of the illegal fuel tunnels indicates that there will be a rapid depletion of fuel resources for all essential services.

- So far it is thought that there is a limited immediate impact on WASH service provision. Monitoring is on-going. As soon as circumstances permit, on site assessments will complete the situation analysis.

**Coordination:**
UNICEF leads the WASH Cluster
- WASH Cluster has mapped the partners in Gaza;
- Gaza contingency plan has been updated along with the available pre-positioned supplies.

**On-going Response:**
Fuel stocks for emergency operation of WASH facilities have been topped up (with 111,000l) by a UNICEF-HRF funded project implemented through UNRWA and CMWU on 5 Nov. 2012. If the current situation remains, these stocks are expected to be depleted at the very latest at end of November 2012. However, in Khan Younis power cuts of over 14 hours have been reported, forcing water and waste water site to operate on backup generators for most of the day. As a result, the fuel stocks for emergency operations at the water wells, booster stations and sewage pumping stations are depleting rapidly and are expected to last for a few more days to one week only.

**UNICEF Immediate Planned Response:**
Target population 12,000 families
- Hygiene kits for families and small babies;
- Urgent repairs of damage water and wastewater networks;
- Water purification through household chlorine tables and chlorine for the network;
- Fuel for generators to operate wells and sewage pumping station.

**Funding Gap:**
- With a deepening of the extent of damage we are estimating a funding gap of US$600,000 for the immediate planned response.

**3. EDUCATION:**
- Government Schools : 24 schools have been damaged (light to heavy)
- Private Schools: 1 private school has been damaged
- UNRWA Schools: 5 schools damaged and 1 teacher killed

**Coordination:**

- CMWU also reported that a 3000 cubic water reservoir under construction in Al Mughraqa has been completely destroyed by an airstrike in the Middle Area (17 Nov.). The reservoir was not yet operational, so there is no immediate impact on the water supply.
UNICEF co-leads the Education Cluster together with Save the Children.

- Coordination and data collection mechanisms active (Education Cluster)
- Gaza contingency plan updated

**Immediate Planned Response:**
Target population 90,000 children

- Distribute learning materials (stationary kits)
- Rehabilitate and repair of schools
- Psychosocial support to children/teachers in schools
- Expand scope of work of Adolescent Friendly Space to provide increased services to adolescents with the provision of recreation kits and ECD kits

**Funding:**
- Subject to confirmation of the extent of school damage, there is an estimated funding gap of US$900,000

4. **Child Protection:**
- There have been 6 children killed (verified) however there are reports of a further 5 children having been killed to date. 137 children are known to have been injured
- It should be noted that due to the dense population of the Gaza Strip, and the inability to seek safe refuge, the impact of the escalation is having a substantial psychological effect on civilians in Gaza - especially children. Children are suffering from acute stress because they are being exposed to an environment of violence from which their parents, educators and caregivers are unable to protect them. Parents are reporting that children are displaying the signs of stress, including excessive crying, bedwetting, and screaming when hearing frequent explosions
- In addition to the constant sound of fighter aircraft and drones overhead, children are terrified by the sound of airstrikes night and day. Many are now living in homes that have neither electricity nor running water. Many homes and buildings have had windows destroyed due to their proximity to airstrikes. Children are less likely to sleep at night and will cling to their parents rather than be left alone. Airstrikes are more terrifying at night. All this leads to high levels of psychosocial distress.

**Coordination:**
- As Convenor of the Child Protection Working Group and the Psychosocial Working Group, UNICEF is facilitating planning for the broader child protection response as part of the overall Protection Cluster, while contributing to the broader response of the Protection Cluster.

**On-going response:**
- In Gaza, UNICEF has built up an extensive psychosocial response system for children and adolescents comprised of 21 Family Centres and 15 Adolescent-friendly Spaces to help children and their parents recover and build resilience. There are also five emergency psychosocial teams which are mobile and do outreach across Gaza, visiting hospitals and families in need.
• Right now most activities are suspended pending an end to the airstrikes. However emergency psychosocial teams are visiting hospitals and families who suffered casualties (ad hoc activities given the security situation)

**Immediate planning response:**
Target population of 100,000 children
• Re-activation of the Family Centres and Adolescent-friendly Spaces, as soon as the security situation allows, to provide safe spaces, immediate psychosocial support and outreach to children and families, and to disburse the family Kits
• The provision of Family Kits to 10,000 families will take place as soon as circumstances permit. With the approach of winter, the kits comprise tarpaulins, blankets and sweaters for children and stock increases will be purchased on-shore.
• Immediate start-up of a hotline where families can request psychosocial support on the phone (e.g. If they cannot leave their homes) should be operational in a few days.
• Mine awareness through awareness campaigns through schools, community leaflet drops and public service announcements. This will entail deploying previously trained awareness teams, and reprinting and distributing education materials.

**Funding gaps (USD)**
There is an estimated funding gap of US $ 970,000

**Operations:**
UNICEF office (located in UNDP building) remains intact with no damage. Currently the UNICEF Gaza office is not operating due to the extreme danger from the conflict. Work is limited to information gathering and coordinating.

An emergency operations centre is located in the home of the UNICEF COFO with OHCHR, OCHA, WFP, UNMAS present. Communication modalities continue to work well.

**Next Situation Report:** Tuesday 21 November 2012

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