



Palestine Situation Report

August 20, 2021

Background

The immediate background to the current period of social unrest and political and economic instability is summarized in Anera's last [Situation Report \(July 1\)](#). The background to food insecurity in Gaza is available in Anera's blog post, [Combating Food Insecurity in Gaza and Lebanon](#). Ongoing updates may be found on our [Updates on the Crisis in Palestine blog](#).

Overview

Palestinians face instability as a result of compounding crises, including COVID-19 and the destruction caused by the May 2021 hostilities. Some 8,200 persons remain displaced in Gaza, increasing their vulnerability to food insecurity, poverty, and COVID-19. Sporadic conflict between Palestinian armed groups and Israeli forces continues to occur, putting Gazans at risk of further hostilities.¹

Education

Schools in Gaza closed on April 8, due to COVID-19, and the school year ended early on June 3 and June 10 for state and UNRWA schools, respectively. The Ministry of Education and UNRWA ended the school year early due to challenges caused by the May hostilities, including electricity and internet outages, and damage to school and public infrastructure. In total, 149 schools sustained damage during the 11 days of bombings, according to a July report by the Education Cluster in Palestine. Sixty-three UNRWA schools became designated emergency shelters for internally displaced persons. The shelter schools sustained some damage and are in need of minor rehabilitation.²

Infrastructure Needs in Gaza

Between May 25 and June 25, the World Bank, the European Union, and the UN jointly conducted a rapid damage and needs assessment of Gaza following the May hostilities. The three organizations cooperated closely with the Palestinian Authority and worked in consultation with the civil society and private sector to conduct the assessment.³ The findings indicate that the conflict resulted in damage or total destruction of a wide range

¹ [Response to the escalation in the oPt | Situation Report No. 8 | UNOCHA](#)

² [Education Cluster Report on Damage in Educational Facilities, Gaza Strip | oPt Education Cluster](#)

³ [The Rebuilding of Gaza Amid Dire Conditions | The World Bank](#)

of water infrastructure. The immediate and short-term WASH sector rehabilitation needs require \$15 million to \$25 million, which would enable rehabilitation, service delivery restoration, and capacity building for the WASH sector. The rapid needs assessment estimates damage sustained by WASH infrastructure to total between \$290 million and \$380 million.⁴ According to the WASH cluster in Palestine, 290 facilities were damaged or destroyed during the hostilities. The damaged facilities include distribution networks, water wells, and water pumping stations.⁵

A damage assessment conducted by local Gazan authorities revealed that the attacks on Gaza also caused the destruction of 1,225 houses and damaged 918 housing units to the point where they are uninhabitable. Approximately 50,000 additional houses sustained minor damage during the military escalation. Three hundred and thirty-one schools and kindergartens and 33 health facilities also sustained damage. The Gaza Ministry of Public Works and Housing removed most of the rubble in July.

Livelihood and Material Restrictions

Following the 11-day conflict in May, Israel increased restrictions of raw material imports, halted exports, and limited access to fishing waters in Gaza. Israel's imposition of extensive restrictions on crucial construction materials severely limits reconstruction efforts.

At the end of June, Israel allowed Gaza to resume limited exports, and officials announced that Israel would expand the fishing zone and approve raw materials imports for essential civilian factories.⁶ But then, in July, Israel reduced the fishing zone from 12 to six nautical miles, in response to incendiary balloons launched from Gaza.⁷ Fishing zone restrictions affect ~50,000 people who either rely on or work in the fishing sector. Israel also responded to the incendiary balloons with air force attacks on military targets.⁸

Forced Evictions

The threat of imminent eviction of Palestinian families in East Jerusalem provided a major impetus for the conflict that erupted across Palestine and Israel in May. Between May and August 2021, dozens of Palestinians faced expulsion from their homes in the Sheikh Jarrah area of East Jerusalem. In total, the Jerusalem District Court ruled that 58 Palestinians, including 17 children, must vacate their homes for Israeli settlers.⁹ The Israeli Supreme Court heard an appeal for four Palestinian families after lower courts

⁴ [State of Palestine Humanitarian Situation Report No. 7 \(June 29-July 15, 2021\) | UNICEF](#)

⁵ [Response to the escalation in the oPt | Situation Report No. 8 | UNOCHA](#)

⁶ [Israel to ease more Gaza restrictions as truce holds | Reuters](#)

⁷ [Israel halves Gaza fishing zone over incendiary balloon fires | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

⁸ [Response to the escalation in the oPt | Situation Report No. 8 | UNOCHA](#)

⁹ [What is happening in occupied East Jerusalem's Sheikh Jarrah? | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

ruled that Jewish people occupied the land on which they built their homes before the creation of the Israeli state in 1948. The Supreme Court suggested a deal in which the Palestinian families would receive “protected tenant” status in exchange for recognition of Israeli ownership and annual rent payments. The Palestinian families rejected this proposal, and court adjourned on August 2.

On July 14, authorities confiscated 49 structures from Ras al Tin, a Palestinian herding community. The structures included homes, solar power systems, and animal shelters. The confiscations displaced 84 people, including 53 children. The displaced residents currently live in borrowed tents, and community members claim that officials told the community to relocate from [Area C to Area B](#).¹⁰

Civilian Casualties in the West Bank

Between July 8 and 28, four Palestinians died after being shot by Israeli forces. One thousand and ninety other Palestinians sustained injuries, including 141 children. Since the beginning of 2021, Israeli forces have killed 39 adults and 11 children in the West Bank. At least 11,231 Palestinians sustained injuries from clashes with Israeli forces, including 584 children.¹¹

During a protest against Israeli settlements in early August, Israeli forces killed one Palestinian man and injured at least 21 others. Some 700 Palestinians gathered south of Nablus and protested by burning tires and throwing rocks and petrol bombs at border police and troops, according to the Israeli military. Forces responded with rubber bullets and tear gas.

Protests occur almost daily in Beita to oppose a nearby settler outpost. On July 23, protests in Beita resulted in 320 Palestinians sustaining injuries or suffering from tear gas inhalation. One teenager eventually died after being shot by forces.¹² On July 27, another Palestinian man, Shadi Omar Lotfi Salim was killed by gunfire near Beita. According to the deputy mayor, Salim was killed on his return from work, despite there being no protests that took place in the area that night. Security sources claim the army set up an ambush for him at the village junction. Salim was responsible for the village municipality’s water engineering.¹³

On July 28, 12 year-old Mohammed al-Alami died after being shot by soldiers while travelling with his father. According to an Israeli military statement, soldiers fired at the car, after firing warning shots, because it failed to stop at a checkpoint. A protest

¹⁰ [Response to the escalation in the oPt | Situation Report No. 8 | UNOCHA](#)

¹¹ [Response to the escalation in the oPt | Situation Report No. 8 | UNOCHA](#)

¹² [Israeli troops shoot dead Palestinian in occupied West Bank | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

¹³ [Israeli forces kill Palestinian man in occupied West Bank | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

erupted at the funeral of Alami, and forces fired rubber bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at funeral attendees in response. A 20 year-old man died from gunshot wounds to the head and stomach after being shot by troops.¹⁴

COVID-19

As of August 20, there are 5,576 confirmed, active cases of COVID-19 in Palestine.¹⁵ The number of active cases in Palestine increased by 81 percent from the of August 1 to the week of August 8. Cases of the delta and delta-plus variants are emerging in the West Bank, and many fear that the fourth wave of COVID-19 is beginning.¹⁶

Official figures indicate 626,279 Palestinians are now vaccinated as of August 12, with 512,416 vaccinated individuals in the West Bank and 113,863 in Gaza. Around 22 percent of the Palestinian population is at least partially vaccinated. Of those who are vaccinated, 426,973 received their second dose. On August 12, the Minister of Health announced the arrival of 150,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine, which is part of the PA's deal to purchase 4 million doses from the Pfizer company.¹⁷

Anera's Response

Medical Aid

In response to the shortages of critical medicines and medical supplies caused by the May 2021 bombardment of Gaza, Anera initially sent three shipments of medical aid into the territory. The first shipment was mere hours after the ceasefire. Anera has since delivered eight [medical aid](#) shipments, with more slated for delivery in the next two months. The shipments include over-the-counter medications, insulin, IV solutions, PPE, antibiotics, hand sanitizer, hygiene supplies, and inhalers. In June and July, Anera received \$4.2 million in funding to provide additional medicines and supplies to Gaza.

The May 2021 conflict also increased the need for blood donations due to injuries. The Central Blood Bank Society (CBBS), the only nonprofit blood bank in Gaza, reported having zero stock of blood testing kits. The lack of kits prevented CBBS from being able to ensure that donated blood was free of HIV and hepatitis B and C. In order to assist CBBS, Anera, with the support of institutional donors such as Americares and Penny Appeal USA, provided blood testing kits, blood donation bags, and other vital supplies for a year of operation for CBBS. In addition, Anera is installing solar panels to provide CBBS reliable, renewable energy. The intervention will save the blood bank \$3,000 in generator funds each month, which can be used to purchase essential supplies and upgrade facilities.

¹⁴ [Israeli forces kill Palestinians during West Bank funeral protest | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

¹⁵ [COVID-19 in the oPt | WHO](#)

¹⁶ [oPt COVID-19 Update | WHO](#)

¹⁷ [oPt COVID-19 Update | WHO](#)

WASH Infrastructure

In order to address the water crisis in Gaza, Anera is installing reverse osmosis desalination units at healthcare facilities and community meeting points. Anera recently installed six reverse osmosis systems in three different Gaza governorates. In the next few months, Anera will install two additional systems in healthcare facilities with funding from Humanity First UK. Anera is also stepping in to conduct a critical overhaul of existing structures and pumps in a damaged well in Moghraqa, as well as installing a chlorination system, a central electrical power grid, a reverse osmosis system, and a drinking fountain.

Through the WASH IV program, funded by Islamic Relief USA (IRUSA), Anera is rehabilitating water and sewage networks, repairing wells, putting in stormwater drainage systems, and collection to refill Gaza's aquifer. In addition, Anera is conducting health awareness sessions to teach best practices to prevent water-borne illnesses. The WASH IV program will directly benefit more than 70,000 Gazans.

Education

In order to support children in their return to kindergarten, Anera is beginning the Gaza back-to-school program. Through the program, Anera will make modest alterations and upgrades to classrooms for 10 kindergartens in vulnerable areas of Gaza. Anera will also provide needed materials and supplies for the kindergartens, as well as reading and literacy packs for 1,000 children. The goal of these activities is to enable children to overcome social, emotional, and cognitive difficulties resulting from the conflict in Gaza, to build resilience, and to develop coping mechanisms.

Empowerment and Livelihoods

With funding from IRUSA, Anera is able to provide economic and livelihood opportunities to vulnerable women heads of households. Anera's Women Can 2 program began in September 2020 and has helped to empower 113 women in the West Bank. Anera trained the women on COVID-19 awareness, social empowerment, and starting a business while running it during a pandemic. Anera provided the assets and equipment the women needed to start their businesses. Since the beginning of Women Can in September 2019, Anera has provided 222 women livelihood opportunities. The Women Can 2 extension will allow Anera to target a total of 122 additional women, 30 of whom reside in Gaza.