



Palestine Situation Report

June 21, 2022

Background

Information about the current period of COVID-19, food security, and sporadic violence is summarized in Anera's last [Situation Report \(May 2022\)](#).

Overview

One year after a ceasefire concluded the 11-day escalation of violence between Israel and Palestine on May 21, 2021, reconstruction efforts of destroyed and damaged houses in Gaza are still ongoing. According to the Ministry of Public Works in Gaza, only 200 of the 1,700 houses destroyed by the violence have been fully rebuilt. An additional 15,000 buildings sustained at least partial damage during the confrontation, including hospitals and a COVID-19 testing facility. Although humanitarian organizations are working to repair damaged properties, inadequate international financing for reconstruction and other challenges have slowed progress.¹

On May 11, the Palestinian-American Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Aqla was shot dead by Israeli military forces during a raid in the Jenin Refugee Camp located north in the West Bank. Another journalist, Ali al-Samoudi, was also hospitalized after being shot in the back while reporting on the same event.² Abu Aqla's death prompted widespread protests across Palestine, while also sparking condemnation across the international community. The media network announced on May 26 it plans to refer the investigation of her death over to the International Criminal Court.³

Water

A water well in the village Ras Atiyeh in the West Bank was shut off and destroyed on May 30. Approximately 400 farmers relied on this water well for their agricultural lands and for clean drinking water, in addition to 4,000 dunums of cultivated lands.⁴ The residents of the Ras Atiyeh community did not receive any warning prior to the demolition of the well. According to Military Order 158, Palestinians are not allowed to

¹ [A year on from war, Gaza frustrated at slow reconstruction | Israel-Palestine conflict News | Al Jazeera](#)

² [Shireen Abu Akleh: Al Jazeera reporter killed by Israeli forces | Al-Jazeera](#)

³ [Shireen Abu Aqleh: killing of reporter referred to international criminal court | Israel | The Guardian](#)

⁴ [Protection of Civilians Report | 10-30 May 2022 | UNOCHA](#)

build any new water wells without obtaining permission from the Israeli authorities, a task widely deemed nearly impossible.⁵

Economy

Palestinians have been facing the negative impacts of an increasing rate of inflation since the end of 2021. Inflation jumped from 1.3% in December 2021 to 3.78% in April of this year. Most notably, food inflation increased from 1.6% to 9.66%, with significant changes in the price of chicken, dried vegetables, and eggs.⁶ The consumer price index also saw an increase of nearly four points during this period. The average unemployment rate in Palestine in March 2022 reached 25.4%, with a large disparity between the West Bank and Gaza.⁷ At a time when Palestinians are already struggling to earn a livable wage, the increase in prices for necessary goods exacerbates their ongoing economic hardships.

COVID-19

Palestinians have seen a general decrease in COVID-19 related deaths and cases the past month, with Reuters reporting that cases are at less than 1% of their peak. As of May 15, a total of 3,721,894 vaccines have been administered in Palestine, enough for 39.7% of the population.⁸ However, at this rate, it would take another 5,364 days in order to vaccinate an additional 10% of the population against COVID-19, allowing half of the Palestinian population to be vaccinated against the virus.⁹

Despite the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, Palestinians are still struggling to overcome the negative effects of the pandemic on their well-being, including food insecurity and the increase in poverty. Furthermore, the fiscal deficit resulting from the pandemic is expected to remain at 5.1% for the duration of 2022.¹⁰

Livelihoods

Israeli authorities reopened the Erez Crossing, the only border crossing for Gazans with Israel, on May 15 after two weeks of closure following rocket fire from Gaza and political tensions stirred by Israeli nationalist demonstrations. This was the longest closure of the crossing since the violence in May 2021.¹¹

⁵ [Israel soldiers demolish water well in West Bank | Middle East Monitor](#)

⁶ [Palestine Consumer Price Index Cpi - May 2022 Data - 2007-2021 Historical | Trading Economics](#)

⁷ [Palestinian Territory Unemployment Rate | CEIC Data](#)

⁸ [Occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem | WHO](#)

⁹ [Palestinian territories: the latest coronavirus counts, charts and maps | Reuters](#)

¹⁰ [The Palestinian Economy Will Continue to Operate Below Potential Without Concrete Policy Actions | The World Bank](#)

¹¹ [Protection of Civilians Report | 19 April - 9 May 2022 | UNOCHA](#)

Approximately 12,000 residents of Gaza with Israeli work permits rely on the Erez Crossing for work opportunities across the border, none of whom were able to go to their jobs for the duration of the closure. The closure hurt the already suffering economy in Gaza, which faces an unemployment rate hovering around 50.2%. In reality, however, this figure is higher because it does not include the number of Palestinians not currently seeking job opportunities.¹²

Violence and Escalations

On May 13, UNOCHA released the Protections of Civilians Report for April 19 - May 9, which details violence faced by Palestinian civilians from Israeli military forces. Throughout this period, 688 Palestinians were injured, including 24 children, across the West Bank. Ninety-nine of them were injured in the Old City of Jerusalem on six different occasions during Ramadan, when Israeli forces evacuated Palestinians from the Temple Mount area for Israeli worshippers. The status quo typically prohibits Israelis from entering Al Aqsa compound.¹³

Anera's Response

Food Security

In order to combat food insecurity for vulnerable families in Gaza during the forthcoming Eid Al-Adha holiday, Anera is providing 2kg of fresh beef to 17,000 families, totaling 93,500 individuals. Anera partnered with community-based organizations to identify vulnerable families living in poverty, persons with disabilities, women-headed households, and other vulnerable groups to distribute qurbani, an annual animal sacrifice in Islam during the holiday. Anera will use local and trusted vendors for the slaughterhouse sites to increase the economic vitality of the local livestock market in Gaza.

During Ramadan in April, Anera partnered with Helping Hand for Relief and Development to provide 562 vulnerable families with food parcels during the month, reaching 3,091 individuals in five different governorates. The aid helped alleviate food insecurity for vulnerable individuals in Gaza during the holidays. Ramadan is the holiest month in Islam and a time of celebration when families break their fast together during their iftar meal every night. However, 68.5% of residents in Gaza experience food insecurity. Some of the items in the food parcels included cooking oil, rice, beans, corned beef, and dates traditionally used to break the fast. Anera also provided food assistance e-vouchers to 6,800 families in Gaza valued at 80 USD and 1,800 families in the West Bank valued at 100 USD. 47,300 individuals directly benefited from the food vouchers during Ramadan, and 50% of them were women. These e-vouchers could be used to buy fresh produce and groceries from more than 50 local supermarkets.

¹² [Protection of Civilians Report | 19 April - 9 May 2022 | UNOCHA](#)

¹³ [Protection of Civilians Report | 19 April - 9 May 2022 | UNOCHA](#)

Livelihoods

Beginning in October 2021, Anera's Food Security and Livelihood Assistance program increases the access to food security and basic needs for vulnerable Gazans. With funding from Islamic Relief USA, Anera restored agricultural activity for 240 families and rehabilitated 100 dunums belonging to 156 farmers. In addition, Anera distributed \$70 food vouchers to 2,500 vulnerable families, which provided food item needs for 20 days including oil, rice, pasta, and hygiene items, among others. The targeted families redeemed their food vouchers at local supermarkets to meet the families' food and nutrition needs. Overall, the program has served 15,882 Gazans vulnerable to food insecurity.

Anera also has an ongoing livelihood program, Women Can, which provides vulnerable Palestinian women heads-of-households with economic and livelihood opportunities. Women Can 2.0 began in September 2020 with funding from IRUSA. It has since empowered 113 women in the West Bank to run small businesses by training them on COVID-19 awareness, social empowerment, and starting and running a business during a pandemic. Anera provided the materials and equipment needed for the women beneficiaries to start or grow a business. Since the beginning of the first Women Can program in September 2019, Anera has provided 222 women livelihood opportunities. Women Can 2.0 allows Anera to target a total of 122 additional women, 30 of whom reside in Gaza.

With funding from Humanity First UK, Anera launched a rooftop gardens project to support the food security of vulnerable families in Gaza and enable them to sell their surplus produce to earn additional income. Anera provided seven families with hydroponic gardens, which require no soil. Because they do not need soil to grow, hydroponic gardens can be built on rooftops and can thrive without the use of Gaza's heavily-polluted soil. Two trainers benefited from short term employment by conducting the technical training and coaching for the households. The families planted a variety of crops based on their needs, including: bell peppers, peppers, tomatoes, eggplants, cucumbers, cabbage, strawberries, lettuce, and other foliar vegetables.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

In addition to the installation of RO units, Anera conducts a long-term WASH program, funded by Islamic Relief USA. Through the WASH IV program, Anera is rehabilitating water and sewage networks, repairing wells, and installing stormwater drainage systems that direct water to Gaza aquifer. Anera is also conducting health awareness sessions to teach best practices to prevent water-borne illnesses despite the difficult circumstances. Currently, Anera has three ongoing projects under the WASH program that will benefit more than 20,000 Gazans upon their completion in August 2022. Through the WASH

emergency response, Anera is serving 89 families at the household level by installing solar hot water units and rehabilitating kitchens and toilets. By the end of the program in August 2022, WASH IV will directly benefit more than 70,000 Gazans.

Medical Donations

Due to a financial crisis leaving healthcare workers without a salary in the West Bank, many nurses and physicians have gone on strike, with only emergency services provided. In order to ease the ramifications of the strike, the medical donations team at Anera sent four shipments of medicine to various healthcare facilities. Anera sent 115,000 treatments of essential medicine for diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, urinary tract infections, upper respiratory tract infections, and many other chronic and acute illnesses. The donation is enough medication to treat patients for a period of at least six months.

Health facilities in Gaza suffer from the lack of financial resources and their inability to procure medicine and medical supplies to serve patients. These facilities depend primarily on donations, including paying their employees' salaries. The increased shortages in vital medications leave many of Gaza's patients on waiting lists for months or years for the arrival of their treatments, which sometimes forces doctors to shift patients to less potent medicine during shortages. To alleviate this situation, Anera donated a shipment of vital cold chain medicines, including 2,814 injections of Humira (adalimumab), 388 vials of anti-hemophilic factor, and 1,730 long-acting penicillin antibiotics, providing more than 1,850 treatments by the end of May. At the time of the donation, about 250 patients in Gaza were on the waiting list for more than 12 months for Humira medication to arrive. The donation by Anera of this vital medicine will serve around 160 of those patients for about five months, reducing the suffering of 64% percent of patients on the waiting list and transferring those patients to the dispensing list. The medicine will serve patients with Crohn's disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and other autoimmune diseases.