



# Palestine Situation Report

January 12, 2024

## Background

Information about ongoing violence in the West Bank and Gaza is summarized in Anera's last [Palestine Situation Report \(September 2023\)](#).

## Overview

On October 7, a war broke out between Israel and Palestine. Militants from Gaza launched an early morning surprise attack inside Israel, including rockets and air, naval, and ground incursions. Militants attacked and seized control of several military bases and civilian towns, killing hundreds, including a massacre at a music festival and the taking of many hostages. The depth of the assault inside Israel, and the extent of the bloodshed (approximately 1,400 killed in Israel), marked a dramatic departure from any precedent in the decades-old conflict.

The response from the Israeli state began the same day, with a bombardment of Gaza more intense than any previous campaign including the 51-day war in 2014, which included a ground invasion. The death toll in Gaza is immense and difficult to estimate due to telecommunications cuts. UNOCHA reports that, as of January 11, at least 23,469 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza and 59,604 injured.<sup>1</sup> And some 1.9 million people, nearly 85% of Gaza's population, are internally displaced.<sup>2</sup>

Israel officially declared war on October 8, and Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant placed Gaza under a total blockade (tighter than the status quo blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt over the past 16+ years) on Monday morning.<sup>3</sup> Two weeks later, some trucks with humanitarian aid were slowly being allowed to enter Gaza through the Rafah crossing with Egypt on October 21. While aid deliveries increased temporarily during the humanitarian pause from November 24-30, they have consistently been well below the 500 trucks per day that entered Gaza before the war.

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<sup>1</sup> [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #90 | UNOCHA](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #86 | UNOCHA](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Israel Fights to Recapture Towns as Hostage Fears Grow: Live Updates Gaza War | New York Times](#)

## Hostilities Update

### Violence and Attacks in Gaza

Israel's bombardment of Gaza continues into its 97th day, as rocket, air, and naval strikes continue to displace communities and destroy residential buildings and hospitals, including those in Gaza's refugee camps. Israel began a ground operation in northern Gaza on the evening of October 27, which increased in scale in subsequent days and is ongoing.<sup>4</sup> Ground operations and fighting are now reported across all five governorates, as well as particularly intense Israeli airstrikes hitting Deir Al Balah, Khan Younis, and Rafah.<sup>5</sup> All three governorates are south of Wadi Gaza, where evacuation orders initially told Palestinian civilians to move for safety.

Attacks on civilian areas, residential buildings, healthcare facilities, and other infrastructure protected under international humanitarian law are ongoing and difficult to count.<sup>6</sup> The most recent and deadliest strikes killed women and children in their homes and cars in Nuseirat refugee camp in Deir Al Balah, with at least 50 fatalities in the camp in the past 72 hours.<sup>7</sup> Air strikes on the densely populated Nuseirat, Maghazi, and Bureij refugee camps have continued.

UNRWA reports 230 incidents affecting its staff, structures, and internally displaced people sheltering in their facilities. This includes 63 direct hits and 69 incidents of collateral damage sustained on UNRWA installations, killing at least 330 displaced Palestinians who were using the buildings as shelters.<sup>8</sup>

On January 2, a strike on Al Amal Hospital in Khan Younis killed five Palestinians, including a five-month-old baby. On December 30 and 31, 103 Palestinians were killed in multiple strikes on the Gaza City neighborhoods of Az Zaitoun and As Sabra.

### West Bank

As of January 10, 331 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The vast majority were killed by Israeli forces, as well as at least eight killed in Israeli settler attacks.<sup>9</sup> On January 7, Israel carried out an air strike on Jenin, killing

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<sup>4</sup> [Israel-Hamas War Enters 'Second Stage,' Netanyahu Says | New York Times](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #86 | UNOCHA](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #89 | UNOCHA](#); [What is International Humanitarian Law? | ICRC](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #86 | UNOCHA](#); [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #88 | UNOCHA](#)

<sup>8</sup> [UNRWA Situation Report #62 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #89 | UNOCHA](#)

at least seven Palestinians. This strike follows months of repeated [raids on the city of Jenin and its nearby refugee camp](#).<sup>10</sup>

## Conditions in Gaza

### Displacement and Shelters

Over 85% of Gaza's population is displaced. Israel's initial evacuation order of October 13, which it reiterated on November 5, ordered residents living north of Wadi Gaza to move south.<sup>11</sup> In the following weeks, subsequent orders and an increase of the severity of fighting in Deir Al Balah and Khan Younis areas have pushed over **one million** of the 1.9 million displaced into Rafah, the most southern and smallest of Gaza's five governorates, covering only 65 square kilometers.<sup>12</sup> Before the war, Rafah's population was around 275,000 – a quarter of the number of its current occupants.<sup>13</sup>

Of the 1.9 million displaced, 1.4 million people are sheltering in and around 155 UNRWA shelters in all five governorates. Especially in Rafah, displaced families are sleeping in tents, self-built shelters, UNRWA shelter courtyards, or simply on the streets.<sup>14</sup> Over 69,000 housing units are now totally destroyed and another 290,000 units are significantly damaged, with satellite imagery showing 80% of all buildings damaged or destroyed in the two northernmost governorates.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, rental unit prices have increased by 800% due to scarcity. These figures demonstrate the long-term and large-scale reconstruction efforts that will be required for those displaced to return to their homes or home governorates.<sup>16</sup>

### Blockade and Humanitarian Aid

As of January 9, a total of 6,459 trucks have entered since October 21, including fuel.<sup>17</sup> Rafah crossing was the only open crossing point for goods until December 15, when Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu declared a “temporary” opening of Kerem Shalom crossing under increased pressure from the United States.<sup>18</sup> Al Jazeera indicated that this additional opening could put Israel closer to its promised allowance of 200 trucks per day into Gaza, though as of January 12, this number has not yet been reached.<sup>19</sup> An

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<sup>10</sup> [Human remains scattered as Israeli drone targets West Bank city of Jenin | Al Jazeera](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Fear, confusion as Israel issues evacuation order for northern Gaza | Al Jazeera](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #82 | UNOCHA](#) ; [GAZA CRISIS RESPONSE 2023 SHELTER UPDATE 7 JAN | UN Shelter Cluster](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Israel-Gaza war in maps and charts: Live tracker | Al Jazeera](#)

<sup>14</sup> [UN Shelter Cluster Meeting Gaza Escalation January 10 | Shelter Cluster](#)

<sup>15</sup> [GAZA CRISIS RESPONSE 2023 SHELTER UPDATE 7 JAN | UN Shelter Cluster](#)

<sup>16</sup> [UN Shelter Cluster Meeting Gaza Escalation January 10 | Shelter Cluster](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Iraq donates 10m litres of fuel to Gaza | Middle East Monitor](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Israel to reopen Karem Abu Salem to allow humanitarian aid into Gaza | Al Jazeera](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Ibid; Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #89 | UNOCHA](#)

average of 129 trucks have entered per day since Kerem Shalom opened, reaching its highest number on January 10 with 193 trucks.<sup>20</sup>

Anera staff in Gaza report that movement at the Rafah border is extremely slow because of multiple checkpoints, slow movement of trucks in Egypt, as well as Israeli military inspections (that sometimes result in some trucks arriving half-empty). The communications blackouts make coordination of trucks and supplies extremely difficult for humanitarian staff. Even with the additional opening of Kerem Shalom, truck logistics are immensely difficult.

### Hospitals, Healthcare, & Electricity

The healthcare system in Gaza is failing. The WHO stated that as of January 10, only 15 of Gaza's 36 hospitals were partially functioning – nine in the south and six in the north. The Director-General of WHO stated in a briefing, also on January 10, that it has canceled six of its medical missions to the north due to lack of safe passage or denied requests by the Israeli army.<sup>21</sup> These missions were intended to deliver urgent medical supplies to Gaza City's Central Drug Store.<sup>22</sup>

Hostilities have intensified near the still-operational Al Aqsa, European Gaza, and Nasser Hospitals in Deir Al Balah and Khan Younis, and all three are at risk of complete closure. Nearly 70% of Al Aqsa's staff have deserted their posts in recent days, and on January 10, the Israeli army killed 13 Palestinians in strikes that hit a residential building and a Palestinian Red Crescent Society ambulance in close proximity to the hospital.<sup>23</sup> Patients are fleeing south, increasing the burden on the few functioning hospitals in Rafah. Southern hospitals are already facing an average of 250% occupancy in intensive care units, and 206% total hospital occupancy.<sup>24</sup>

Movement of medical shipments to hospitals is slow and, like food and water delivery, requires communication networks for efficient and effective coordination. This is increasingly difficult during the long and unpredictable periods of total communications blackouts and the electricity outage that has been constant since October 11. Most recently, all four of the Electricity Generation Company's generators were struck and set ablaze north of Nuseirat.<sup>25</sup> This and previous generator failures as well as the ongoing fuel shortage are extremely detrimental to essential hospital functions. Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis reported on January 11 that its neonatal unit will be out of fuel in 48

<sup>20</sup> [Inspections, Bottlenecks and Safety Concerns Hinder Gaza Aid | New York Times](#)

<sup>21</sup> [WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing – 10 January 2024](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #89 | UNOCHA](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Medics, patients flee Gaza's remaining hospitals as fighting intensifies | WHO | Reuters; Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #89 | UNOCHA](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #89 | UNOCHA](#)

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

hours. Across Gaza, more than 130 premature babies rely on CPAP and oxygen machines and will die without fuel and electricity to power these machines.<sup>26</sup>

### Food, Water & Sanitation

A December 21st report by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Famine Review Committee categorizes at least 25% of all Palestinians in the southern Gaza governorates as level 5, “catastrophe” – the highest classification level of acute food insecurity.<sup>27</sup> At least 96% of IDP families are adopting extreme consumption strategies to cope with hunger including a significant decrease in calories and little or no protein-rich foods like meat and dairy, eating unconventional foods like wild or raw vegetables, and burning wood, rubble, and waste in place of cooking gas, creating a high risk for respiratory illness. A December UNICEF study reported that 90% of children under two years of age are only consuming one or two food groups, leading to both immediate and long-term health risks and severe malnourishment.<sup>28</sup>

Consumption of water that is not desalinated or is otherwise contaminated has increased the levels of water-borne illnesses. WHO reported over 100,000 cases of diarrhea from the start of the war through December, as well as many cases of cholera and other gastrointestinal diseases.<sup>29</sup> At the end of December, diarrhea cases in children under five increased from 48,000 to 71,000 in just one week.<sup>30</sup> Prolonged stays in overcrowded living spaces significantly increase the number of acute respiratory infections, skin infections, and other hygiene-related conditions such as lice. Shelters are also reporting increased cases of hepatitis.<sup>31</sup> Minimally functional and equally overcrowded healthcare facilities are unable to keep up with increased hygiene and sanitation-related illness and infections.

### Anera's Response

Anera's 12-person Gaza staff, along with a team of some 450 humanitarian responders on the ground, have been working tirelessly at procuring and distributing essential relief supplies and services within Gaza to displaced families. Anera is thus far focusing efforts on:

**Food security:** Since the start of the war, Anera has delivered more than 10.6 million meals in the form of food parcels, hot meals and vegetable baskets. Anera sources and

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<sup>26</sup> [Live updates: Latest news on the Israel-Hamas war | AP News](#)

<sup>27</sup> [GAZA STRIP: FAMINE REVIEW OF THE IPC ANALYSIS | Integrated Food Security Phase Classification](#)

<sup>28</sup> [Intensifying conflict, malnutrition and disease in the Gaza Strip creates a deadly cycle that threatens over 1.1 million children | UNICEF](#)

<sup>29</sup> [Lethal combination of hunger and disease to lead to more deaths in Gaza | News | WHO Media centre](#)

<sup>30</sup> [Intensifying conflict, malnutrition and disease in the Gaza Strip creates a deadly cycle that threatens over 1.1 million children | UNICEF](#)

<sup>31</sup> [WHO ERMO News Update Nov. 8; WHO Director-General's opening remarks Nov. 29](#)

organizes the food through trusted local vendors and brings food in through Egypt, all of which we distribute to displaced families sheltering in UN schools.

**Providing some comfort:** With more than 85% of the population displaced and winter upon them, families are struggling to find warmth and any modicum of comfort. Anera has distributed 1,986 mattresses, 11,791 blankets, 8,500 clothing vouchers and soon will be delivering much-needed tents.

**Hygiene:** Anera is employing workers to clean and sanitize UN school shelters to minimize the spread of disease. Anera's cleaners rotate through 10 shelters daily in Khan Younis. The Gaza team has also distributed 23,818 hygiene kits to families, including kits especially designed for women.

**Health:** The team has delivered 2,467,903 treatments of medicines and healthcare supplies to Gaza hospitals. Two trucks of donated medical supplies recently arrived in Gaza. Anera has also hosted, near shelters, five pop-up health clinics staffed by medical professionals and free medicines for dispensing.

**Psychosocial:** Anera has, to date, provided 93 psychosocial sessions for children in partnership with a local psychological and social counseling organization. Thousands of children, 4-13 years old, at IDP shelters are participating in self-expression exercises, art activities and play. Mothers at all of the shelters are participating in their own group sessions as well.

Read [Anera's daily response](#) log for more information.