



Increased airstrikes in Rafah have heightened concerns of an escalation in the most southerly city in Gaza, where hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have sought refuge. Buildings on fire in Rafah following an overnight attack. Photo by the Civil Defence, 12 February 2024.

Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #116

12 Feb 2024

Key points

- Intense Israeli bombardment from air, land and sea continues to be reported across much of the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of civilian infrastructure. Ground operations and heavy fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups also continue to be reported, particularly in Khan Younis and Rafah, with reports of Israeli military withdrawal from Gaza city. Increased airstrikes in Rafah have heightened concerns of an escalation in the most southerly city in Gaza, where hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have sought refuge. On 12 February, [Médecins Sans Frontières](#) warned that "Israel's declared ground offensive on Rafah would be catastrophic and must not proceed."
- Between the afternoon of 9 January and 11:00 on 12 February, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 393 Palestinians were killed and 525 Palestinians were injured, including 164 killed and 200 injured in the last 24 hours. Between 7 October 2023 and 11:00 on 12 February 2024, at least 28,340 Palestinians were killed in Gaza and 67,984 Palestinians were injured, including at least 12,300 children, according to MoH in Gaza.
- Between the afternoons of 9 and 12 February, two Israeli soldiers were reported killed in Gaza, both on 11 February. As of 12 February, 227 soldiers were killed and 1,326 soldiers were injured in Gaza since the beginning of the ground operation, according to the Israeli military. In addition, over 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals have been killed in Israel, including 36 children, according to the Israeli authorities, the vast majority on 7 October and in the immediate aftermath.
- On 12 February, two Israeli hostages, aged 60 and 70, were rescued from a building in Rafah in a predawn Israeli forces operation and evacuated to a hospital in Israel, according to the Israeli military. As of 12 February 2024, the Israeli authorities estimate that about 134 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza; these reportedly include fatalities whose bodies are being withheld. During the humanitarian pause (24-30 November), 86 Israeli and 24 foreign national hostages were released.
- On 10 February, the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) [announced](#) that the bodies of two members of an ambulance crew had been discovered in their destroyed vehicle, which they attributed to Israeli shelling. According to PRCS, 14 PRCS crew members have been killed since the start of the hostilities in the Gaza Strip. The crew had been dispatched on 29 January to rescue a six-year-old girl in Gaza city, the survivor of a strike on her vehicle which killed her five family members. The vehicle with the bodies of the family, including the child, was discovered following the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the area.
- Intense fighting in Khan Younis, particularly near Nasser and Al Amal hospitals, continues to jeopardize the safety of medical staff, the wounded and the sick as well as internally displaced persons (IDPs). On 11 February, PRCS [reported](#) that Israeli forces had raided Al Amal Hospital, detained 18 people, including nine medical and volunteer staff, four wounded persons and five companions, and caused significant damage to medical and logistical equipment. PRCS further alleges that money was taken from the hospital safe as well as from patients and IDPs, and that the operation entailed physical abuse and denial of access to sanitation facilities. Al Amal Hospital continues to contend with acute shortages of fuel and medical supplies and currently has only one operating room functional. Separately on 11 February, PRCS [reported](#) that structural damage had been caused to the main gate of the hospital due to Israeli strikes and that the hospital's remaining vehicle had been rendered out of service. On 12 February, PRCS released [video footage](#) reportedly showing damage inflicted on its ambulance fleet due to Israeli fire.

- IDPs across Gaza continue to face deteriorating humanitarian conditions amid acute shortages of shelter, clean water, food and medicine. As of 5 February, UNRWA estimates that some 75 per cent of Gaza's population (1.7 million out of 2.3 million people) are displaced, the majority situated in Rafah governorate where humanitarian operations are now based. On 10 February, the Israeli military reportedly destroyed the western perimeter wall of a school in Khan Younis hosting some 700 IDPs and forced them to evacuate, according to [UNRWA](#). On 10 February, four displaced people in Nasser Hospital were allegedly shot and killed in the hospital's courtyard. On 11 February, two Palestinians were reportedly shot and killed in front of the gate of Nasser Hospital. Meanwhile, reports indicate that several fatalities have been lying on the ground around the hospital, for several days, and have been unreachable due to continued attacks in the hospital's vicinity.
- Between 1 January and 12 February, humanitarian partners planned 77 missions to deliver aid and undertake assessments to areas to the north of Wadi Gaza. Of these, 12 were facilitated by the Israeli authorities, three were partially facilitated, 14 were impeded, 39 were denied access, and nine were postponed by the agencies themselves. Facilitated missions primarily involved food distribution, while the access of missions to support critical hospitals and facilities providing water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) services remained among those overwhelmingly denied. During the same period, there were 189 planned missions to areas assessed as necessitating coordination to the south of Wadi Gaza. Of these, 107 were facilitated, two were partially facilitated, 18 were initially facilitated but then impeded, 48 were denied access, and 14 were postponed internally. Missions to areas not requiring coordination south of Wadi Gaza are not included in these statistics.

Hostilities and casualties (Gaza Strip)

- On 10 February, at about 8:00, one Palestinian fisherman was reportedly killed off the coast of Deir al Balah. This reportedly marks at least the third incident of fishers being shot in Gaza over the past week, and the first reported such incident in Deir al Balah.
- The following are among the deadliest incidents reported between 8 and 11 February:
 - On 8 February, at about midnight, five Palestinians, including two women, two children and one man, were reportedly killed, when a nursery was hit in a strike on a residential square in Deir al Balah governorate.
 - On 9 February, at about 23:00, six Palestinians, including two women and three children, were reportedly killed, when a residential building near the Awad towers in eastern Rafah, was struck.
 - On 10 February, at about midnight, at least 11 Palestinians were reportedly killed, when a residential building in An Naser neighbourhood in northern Rafah, was struck.
 - On 10 February, at about 2:00, four Palestinians, including a university professor, her husband and their two children, were reportedly killed, when a residential building in northern Rafah, was struck.
 - On 10 February, at about 5:00, seven Palestinians were reportedly killed, and others were injured, when a residential building in An Naser neighbourhood, in northern Rafah, was struck.
 - On 10 February, at about 15:00, 12 Palestinians, including children, were reportedly killed, and tens of others injured, when a residential building in Ash Shoka Town in eastern Rafah, was struck.
 - On 10 February, at about 16:00, at least four Palestinians were reportedly killed, and several others injured, when a residential building in Deir al Balah was struck.
 - On 10 February, at about 15:30, three police officers were reportedly killed, and several others injured, when a police vehicle in the Brazilian neighbourhood of Rafah was struck.

West Bank Updates

- On 10 February 2024, a 17-year-old Palestinian child was shot and killed by Israeli soldiers while driving between Qattana and Biddu villages northwest of Jerusalem. According to local sources and eyewitnesses, the incident occurred as two Palestinians from Biddu village were on their way back from a picnic when an Israeli military jeep, stationed at the security road adjacent to the Barrier, reportedly opened fire on the moving car. The second passenger sustained injuries.
- On 11 February 2024, a 16-year-old Palestinian child was shot and injured by Israeli forces after allegedly attempting to stab an Israeli Border Police officer in Al Wad Street in the Old City of Jerusalem. The Israeli forces subsequently deployed heavy forces and reportedly blocked entrances to the Old City of Jerusalem. According to the lawyer of the injured child's family, the child was arrested and transferred to an Israeli hospital.
- On 7 February, during an Israeli military operation in Nur Shams refugee camp, two residential buildings sustained severe damage and were rendered uninhabitable, resulting in the displacement of five families comprising 30 people, including eight children. Initial field information indicates that about 30 additional houses sustained minor to moderate damage during the operation.

Funding

- As of 12 February, Member States have disbursed [\\$886.8 million](#) against the [updated Flash Appeal](#) launched by the UN and its partners to implement its response plan in support of 2.2 million people in the Gaza Strip and 500,000 people in the West Bank. This constitutes 72 per cent of the \$1.2 billion requested to cover humanitarian needs through the end of March 2023.

- Private donations are collected through the [Humanitarian Fund](#). A private foundation in Australia has donated \$2.2 million. Since 7 October, the Humanitarian Fund has disbursed about \$55 million.

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AND RESPONSES: 5-12 February

Health

Needs:

- High need for primary health services in informal shelters hosting IDPs.
- The high number of surgeries and procedures has led to increased demand for anaesthetic and analgesic medications which are in short supply.
- There is a need to increase routine immunization coverage and conduct catch-up campaign.
- Provision of medication for non-communicable diseases and psychotropics is needed.
- There is a need to reduce overcrowding in maternity hospitals.
- The continued siege around some hospitals is greatly affecting their case management capacity.
- Laboratory equipment and reagents are needed to support diagnostics.
- Blood and blood products in hospitals are needed for emergencies and medical procedures to ensure that patients receive timely and necessary transfusions.

Response:

- On average, partners are reaching about 450,000 people in need of various health services.
- Ongoing disease surveillance at all health facilities to ensure early diagnosis and treatment of cases as well as early detection of any potential outbreak.
- Planning to open stabilization centres for acute malnutrition cases with medical complications. One will be at Tal as Sultan and another likely in one of the field hospitals.
- 12 Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) were deployed, assisting more than 16,000 patients.
- A weekly average of nearly 300,000 primary health care consultations was reported by partners.

Challenges and Gaps:

- Increased insecurity in Rafah is greatly affecting response activities.
- There is a need to strengthen referral mechanisms between hospitals.
- The influx of IDPs migrating to Rafah has overwhelmed the available bed capacities in hospitals, leading to insufficient capacity to meet the healthcare needs of the population.
- The high insecurity and limited access to health facilities in the northern and middle governorates continue to present major challenges to partners' response activities.
- Persisting siege of hospitals remains a major challenge.
- Referring patients outside of Gaza remains a challenge, as the waiting list continues to grow.
- Partner operations continue to be negatively affected by the displacement of staff, social stresses and telecommunication challenges.
- Limited access to proper WASH facilities is hindering prevention.

Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI)

Needs:

- Some 1.7 million people are in need of shelter and NFI assistance, including 900,000 people reached with partial shelter and NFI assistance.
- Urgent needs are tents, sealing-off kits (SOKs) and NFIs, including bedding, kitchen sets, and winter clothing.
- Technical assistance is required to improve self-built shelters and spontaneous/informal sites. Also see [Shelter Cluster snapshot](#), as of 7 February.

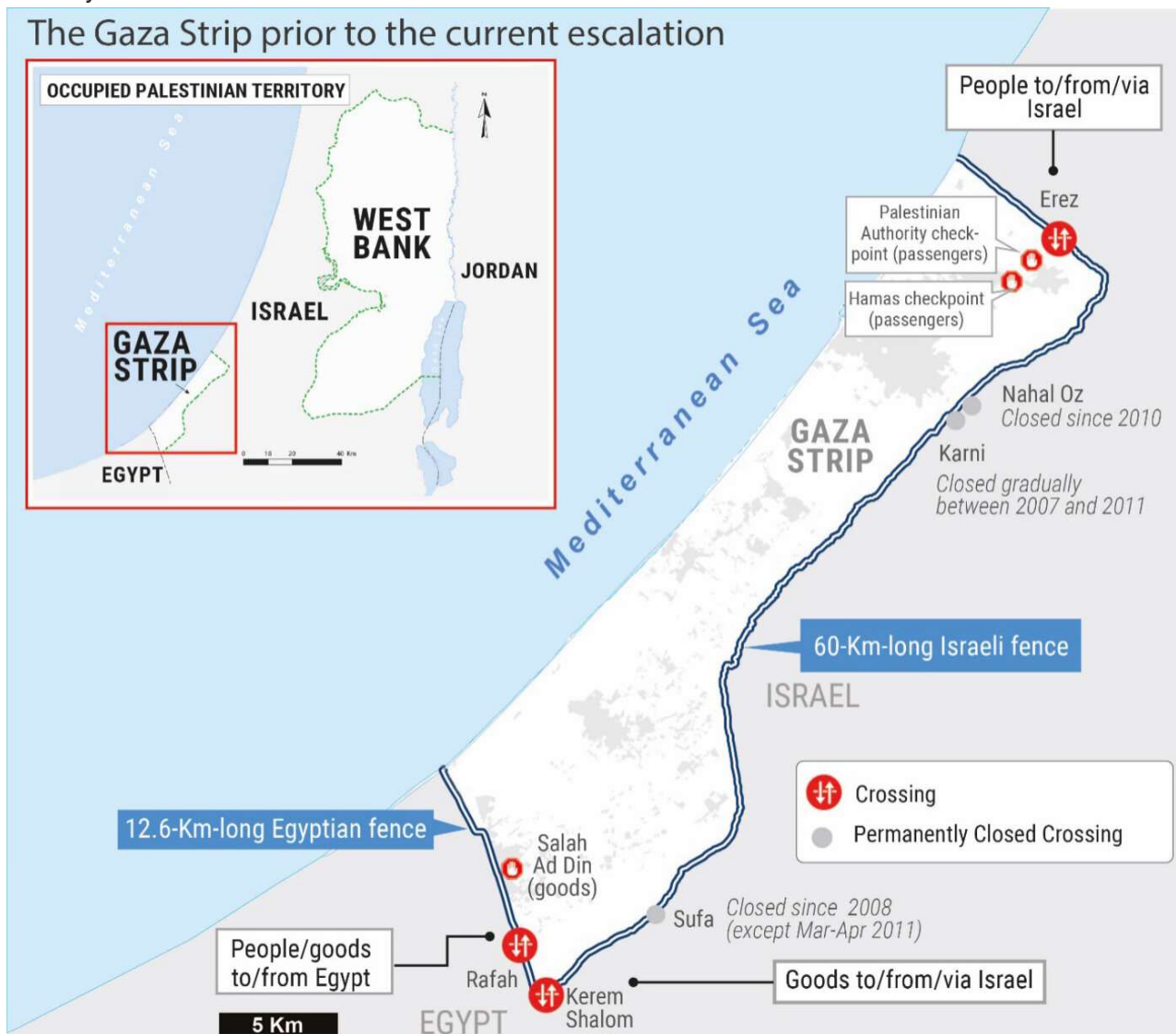
Response:

- A total of 26 partners are actively providing assistance. Partial assistance means that although a household has received some shelter and NFI items, not all their needs have been met. SOKs can be used to consolidate makeshift shelters or to protect damaged housing to facilitate return where possible.
- Some 28,000 tents, 7,600 SOKs, and 35,000 NFI kits are currently in the pipeline.
- The vast majority of assistance is currently provided in-kind; cash will be pursued further when market conditions allow.
- Further details in the [Cluster response strategy](#) and website dashboard.

Challenges and Gaps:

- Slow entry of items into Gaza due to limited aid trucks and bureaucratic processes complicating procurement.
- Rising prices of shelter materials in surrounding markets, including high freight rates and shipping costs.
- Need to restore commercial imports and re-establish local markets to relieve pressure on in-kind provision.
- Restrictions/denial of key shelter items including timber, hand tools, and cooking stoves.
- Lack of security and access to IDP locations, including logistical challenges such as lack of fuel and rising social tensions because of the limited quantity of aid available in comparison to the huge outstanding needs.
- Unplanned sites and lack of adequate tools leading to water damage to makeshift shelters and tents, and recurrent displacement resulting in loss and need for re-distribution of assistance.

Protection against sexual abuse and exploitation (PSEA) remains a cross-cutting priority for all clusters. The SAWA helpline, reachable at 121 and through WhatsApp at +972 59-4040121 (East Jerusalem at 1-800-500-121), operates 24/7. This toll-free number is widely disseminated across all areas of intervention to report cases of SEA and to facilitate emergency counselling and referrals for affected communities to access life-saving services. The PSEA Network monitors calls daily and will increase the number of counsellors if necessary.



* Asterisks indicate that a figure, sentence, or section has been rectified, added, or retracted after the initial publication of this update.

