

# UNRWA Situation Report #72 on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem



All information from 30-31 January 2024, is valid as of 31 January 2024 at 22:30 (local time)

Day 116-117 of Hostilities

Published 2 February 2024



People walk on the street under heavy rains in Deir al-Balah, Middle Areas, the Gaza Strip, January 2024. © 2024 UNRWA Photo by Ashraf Amra

## 1. Key points

### The Gaza Strip

- Intense fighting in/around Khan Younis (southwest of Gaza) over the last ten days is causing loss of life and damage to civilian infrastructure, including UNRWA's largest shelter in the southern area, the Khan Younis Training Centre (KYTC). Continued fighting in Khan Younis is forcing Palestinians fleeing further south towards Rafah, which is severely overcrowded.
- As of 31 January, the total number of UNRWA colleagues killed since the beginning of hostilities is now **152**.
- **On 30 January, according to the Ministry of Health up to 100 bodies were returned by Israeli authorities to the Gaza Strip. Most of the bodies received had been buried in a mass grave in Rafah and were unidentifiable.**
- As of 31 January, up to 1.7 million\* people (over 75 per cent of the population) \*\* have been displaced across the Gaza Strip, some multiple times.\*\*\* Families are forced to move repeatedly in search of safety. Following intense Israeli bombardments and fighting in Khan

Younis and the Middle Areas in recent days, a significant number of displaced people have moved further south.

- According to OCHA, on 29 January, the Israeli military ordered several neighborhoods in Gaza City to evacuate towards the south. This area consisted of around 59 shelters with an estimated 88,000 IDPs who are being forcibly displaced again.
- On 29 January, aid trucks entered Gaza via the Kerem Shalom crossing following days of disruption due to Israeli protesters in the area.

\*This includes one million individuals residing in or near emergency shelters or informal shelters. As of October 12, approximately 160,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were recorded in north Gaza and Gaza governorates. The ability of UNRWA to provide humanitarian support and updated data in these areas has been severely restricted. The ongoing hostilities, evacuation orders issued by Israeli Forces, and the constant need for safer locations have resulted in people being displaced multiple times.

\*\*UNRWA has reported in Situation Report 64 that up to 1.9 million IDPs are either residing in 154 UNRWA shelters or near these shelters. Due to the continued escalation of fighting and evacuation orders, some households have moved away from the shelters where they were initially registered.

\*\*\* There are instances where the same IDPs are registered in multiple shelters due to the fluid movement of populations; hereafter, estimates are used for these shelters. UNRWA plans to conduct a more accurate count of IDPs in shelters, including informal shelters, as soon as the security situation allows.

### **The West Bank, including East Jerusalem**

Several Israeli Security Forces (ISF) search and arrest operations leading to confrontations with Palestinians occurred between 30 – 31 January.

On 30 January, the following ISF search and arrest operations occurred:

- ISF continued the search and arrest operation in Jenin city and Jenin refugee camp, northern West Bank. An ISF undercover unit entered Ibn Sina Hospital in Jenin city in disguise and shot and killed three Palestinians who were receiving medical treatment. An exchange of fire was reported in Jenin city between Palestinians and ISF. Jenin city and Jenin refugee camp observed a general strike for the three Palestinians killed.
- Six Palestinians were detained in Nablus, northern West Bank. Palestinians reportedly fired live ammunition at ISF.
- ISF conducted a search and arrest operation in several locations of Qalqiliya city, northern West Bank. According to reports, ISF physically assaulted a Palestinian and detained two others for a number of hours.
- A Palestinian was reported injured with live ammunition during clashes between Palestinians and ISF in a search and arrest operation that took place in the evening in Qaffin, northern West Bank.

On 31 January, the following ISF search and arrest operations occurred:

- ISF conducted a search and arrest operation in Qalandiya refugee camp, central West Bank. ISF reportedly blocked the entrance of the camp, fired stun grenades and detained a Palestinian.
- ISF conducted a search and arrest operation in Dheisheh refugee camp, southern West Bank. Clashes took place between Palestinians and ISF and a Palestinian woman was detained.
- ISF conducted a search and arrest operation in Ein as Sultan refugee camp, central West Bank. Two Palestinians were detained and ISF reportedly physically assaulted, injured, and detained a child.
- ISF reportedly fired live ammunition at a Palestinian vehicle that was driving on the main road at Tuqu' city centre, southern West Bank. ISF reportedly assaulted the Palestinians inside the car and confiscated the vehicle.

## 2. Overall situation

### The Gaza Strip

- According to the Ministry of Health in Gaza as of 31 January, at least 26,900 Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip since 7 October. About 70 per cent of those killed are reported to be women and children. Another 65,949 Palestinians have been reportedly injured.

### The West Bank, including East Jerusalem

- According to OCHA, between 7 October 2023–26 January 2024, 370 Palestinians, including 94 children, have been killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
  - Last year (2023), was the deadliest year for Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, since the UN began recording casualties in 2005.

## 3. Humanitarian access & protection of civilians

### The Gaza Strip

Please see incidents for the period 30-31 January 2024.

UNRWA is working to verify the details of incidents reportedly affecting UNRWA premises. Further information will be provided once it becomes available. Please note that some incidents occurred earlier in the month but information was shared during the current reporting period.

While verification of details and casualty figures remain ongoing, initial reports indicate:

- On 27 January, 2024, **one IDP** sheltering in a school in Khan Younis was **killed** and **24 injured** as a result of IDF tank directly firing a shell at the guards' room.
- On 29 January, 2024, **two IDPs** sheltering a school in Khan Younis **were killed** as result of IDF tanks firing. The bodies of the killed were buried in the schoolyard.
- On 30 January a school in the Middle Area was indirectly impacted and sustained collateral damage. As a result a number of IDPs **were injured, (number of injured is pending)**; in a separate incident a health centre in the Middle Area sustained collateral damage when a nearby school was impacted. No injuries were reported.

- On 31 January, 2024, **six IDPs** sheltering in school Khan Younis were injured due to a direct impact; on the same day, reportedly 10 IDF soldiers broke into the UNRWA Headquarters Office in Gaza city.
- On 31 Jan 2024, two incidents took place where IDPs sheltering in the Gaza Training Centre and UNRWA office, in Gaza city, were **killed** as a result of drone fire.
- **278** incidents impacting UNRWA premises and the people inside them have been reported since the beginning of the war (some with multiple incidents impacting the same location), including at least **28** incidents of military use and/or interference at UNRWA premises. **147** different UNRWA installations have been impacted.
- UNRWA estimates that in total at least **376\* IDPs** sheltering in UNRWA shelters have been killed and at least a further **1,365\*** injured since the start of the war. UNRWA is still verifying the number of casualties caused by incidents that impacted its installations, and notes that these figures do not include some reported casualties where the number of injuries could not be determined.

\* numbers are subject to change once further verifications have been conducted.

## 4. UNRWA response

### The Gaza Strip

Due to the security situation in combination with interruptions in internet connectivity we are unable to provide any additional updates since Sitrep 67.

#### UNRWA Shelters

- As of 31 January, in total, nearly **1.7 million displaced people are now sheltering across emergency shelters (UNRWA and public shelters), informal sites or in close vicinity to UNRWA shelters and distribution sites and within host communities.**

**Due to the security situation and ISF evacuation orders, between 150-155 UNRWA installations continue to shelter IDPs. Shelters are very congested.**

#### Health

- On 30 January, only four (out of 22) UNRWA health centres were operational following the closure of two health centres in Khan Younis due to the Israel military operations. The remaining health centres are located in Rafah and the Middle Areas.
- 277 health care staff remain working in the four operational health centres and on 30 January provided 8,797 medical consultations.
- The latest update available from health services in 34 shelters is from 27 January, where health teams delivered 7,390 medical consultations.

#### Psychosocial support (PSS)

- Between 29-30 January, staff counselors addressed 966 individual and family PSS consultations in Rafah, alongside 882 group PSS sessions. These efforts benefited 16,821 IDPs contributing to a cumulative total of 84,950 PSS sessions provided since 7 October 2023.

- Additionally, counselors provided psychological support to 455 UNRWA staff through both in-person and remote communication. The total number of staff that have been provided PSS since the beginning of the war is 11,097.

## Food security

- UNRWA continued to **distribute flour** outside of shelters in the southern governorates. **A total of 354,411 families have been reached so far.**

## Water and Sanitation Services (WASH)

Due to the security situation in combination with internet connectivity we are unable to provide any additional updates since Sitrep 67.

**Quote from Thomas White, Director of UNRWA Affairs in Gaza and UN Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator for the occupied Palestinian territory:**

**“It’s difficult to imagine that Gazans will survive this crisis without UNRWA.”**

Read the full press release [“The Gaza Strip: Humanitarian crisis deepens at a time funding suspensions put UNRWA aid operations in peril”](#)

**ENDs -**



## UNRWA situation and response to the escalation in the Gaza Strip

### IDPs in UNRWA installations

Confirmed IDP numbers, since 7 October 2023



**1,700,000\***  
IDPs\*\*



At least **372** IDPs sheltering in UNRWA premises have been killed and **1,335** injured since 7 October.

### UNRWA fatalities and damage to installations



152 UNRWA colleagues **killed**



270 incidents



146 UNRWA installations **damaged**

### UNRWA response – Food assistance



**323,482** families outside of shelters have received flour in middle areas and southern governorates since 21 Nov.

### UNRWA response – Health



*Partial update on 22 Jan due to security and internet connectivity issues*

**Further reduction in health services with now only 4** (out of 22) UNRWA health care centres operational.

### UNRWA response – Water, sanitation and hygiene



*Updated on 16 Jan:*

**7 water wells** continue to operate pumping approximately 3,000 cubic metres of water.

Solid waste management continues in Rafah and Khan Younis and partially in Middle Areas, where **approximately 45 truck loadings were transferred to temporary sites**

\* This includes c.1 million individuals residing in or near emergency shelters or informal shelters. Notably, as of October 12, approximately 160,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were recorded in north Gaza and Gaza governorates. However, the ability of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) to provide humanitarian support and updated data in these areas has been severely restricted. The ongoing hostilities, evacuation orders issued by Israeli Forces, and the constant need for safer locations have resulted in people being displaced multiple times.

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