



CEASEFIRE

The ceasefire that took effect on June created a sense of optimism that after more than a year of heavy restrictions on movement and economic activity, goods and fuel might be able to enter Gaza more freely. By the end of June, there was a small but irregular change in access restrictions.

Many farmers have returned to their fields close to the border fence. At least two were shot but many others were able to harvest crops. Other dangers included landmines and unexploded ordinance which put children at particular risk. The police unit responsible for de-activating explosives reported dealing with two cases per day before June 19 and eight per day after that date.

No Palestinians or Israelis have been killed in or around Gaza as a result of the conflict since before June 19.

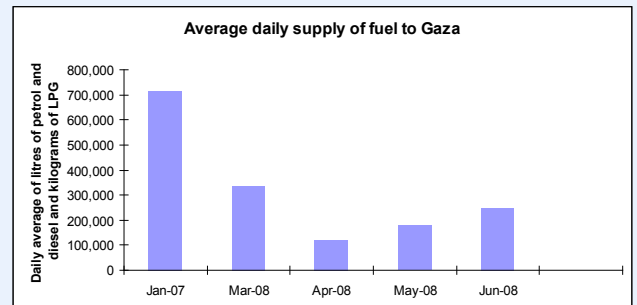
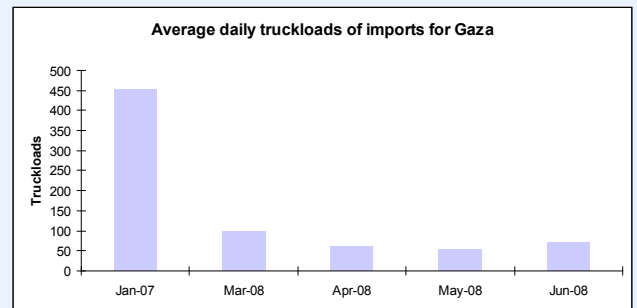
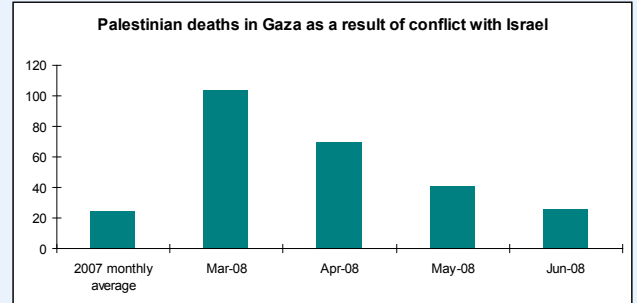
ACCESS

A comparison of the ten days before June 19 and the ten days after showed that more goods and fuel entered Gaza after the ceasefire. More goods were allowed to pass through Sufa crossing and the Karni conveyor belt which is used for grain and animal feed. The daily average of truckloads passing through Sufa was 47 before the ceasefire and 67 after, while at Karni the daily averages were 52 and 81. However, the amount of imports falls far short of the daily average of 450 truckloads in January 2007. There was no change in the composition of the imports which remained around 90 percent food.

SEWAGE

While the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) reported improved supplies of fuel and spare parts, raw and partially treated sewage continues to pour into the Mediterranean Sea from Gaza. The worst affected places are the Swedish Village, near Rafah in the South, the area north of Wadi Gaza, South of Gaza City, where raw sewage blackens the sea for at least a mile inshore, and all the beaches around Gaza City.

AT A GLANCE



For more information, please refer to the OCHA Protection of Civilians Weekly Briefing Note and Humanitarian Monitor at www.ochaopt.org

The CMWU estimate that 40 million litres of partially treated sewage enters the sea from the Gaza City sewage treatment plant, 15 million litres of raw sewage from three other Gaza City outlets and a further 15 million litres of raw sewage from Rafah and Wadi Gaza. While these figures are approximate, the effect on the sea is clear; most of the coastal water of the Gaza Strip is discoloured, ranging from black to murky green. The only areas where the sea water

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES: United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA); World Health Organization (WHO); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); World Food Programme (WFP)

is clean and clear are the north of Gaza, by Beit Lahiya and beaches near Deir al Balah and Khan Yunis.

Following, a series of sea water tests undertaken by WHO in conjunction with the Ministry of Health, which showed that long stretches of the coast were polluted with bacteria found in animals and humans, WHO formed a committee to investigate ways of protecting Gazans from the effects of sea pollution. The committee found that the most important steps needed to prevent pollution included regular fuel supply, entry of spare parts and materials for repair, improvement of existing facilities and the long term creation of a modern sewage infrastructure for Gaza.

In the meantime, the committee recommended that the worst affected areas should be signposted up to 1100 metres north of an outflow and up to 300 metres south as many people continue to swim and fish in polluted areas.



Proposed signpost to warn of polluted beaches (WHO), June 2008

While sewage remains a serious problem, the CMWU reported progress in getting vital spare parts and materials for the maintenance and improvement of its water and sewage infrastructure in Gaza. In June, the CMWU received six truckloads of materials, which they estimate is 10 to 20 percent of what is waiting for Israeli approval to enter Gaza. Nevertheless, the CMWU has responded positively to the recent supplies as for the first time in more than a year, they can carry out delayed work.

The CMWU also reported an improvement in the amount of fuel it received. In June the CMWU received 60,000 litres from the Hamas authorities under their new fuel distribution regime, meeting about 40 per cent of its needs. The increase in fuel supplies has meant that the Gaza City sewage treatment plant is treating sewage more effectively before it goes into the sea.

SUMMER GAMES

UNRWA began its summer games which offer recreational activities to 250,000 children in the Gaza Strip. Despite efforts by Israeli Army liaison officers, the agency was not yet able to import all required items for summer games prior to their start, but continues to try to coordinate the entry of the remaining materials for the children.



Children playing at UNRWA Summer Games in Nusseirat, Gaza. June 2008 Photo by UNRWA

JOB CREATION

The Summer Games create an additional temporary 3500 jobs via UNRWA's Job Creation Programme, in addition to the 6,500 already employed. UNRWA has identified a further 12,500 jobs they could fill if donors were willing to provide additional funding of around \$30 million. The jobs last from three to 2 months and workers earn from \$9 to 19 per day.

EDUCATION

UNRWA has started the process of organizing coordination to ensure prompt supply of paper for text books and notebooks in time for the start of the school year in September. Last year, lack of paper on the local market and delays in importing paper resulted in text books being distributed up to four months after the start of the school year.

ELECTRICITY

The Gaza Power Plant is supplied with around 2.2 million litres of industrial diesel per week which allows an average output of 55 megawatts. If the plant was supplied with 3.15 million litres of fuel it could produce 80 megawatts.

Currently, the electricity supply of 120 megawatts from Israel, 17 megawatts from Egypt and 55 megawatts only allows for 19 to 20 hours of supply in all areas of Gaza except Rafah, which benefits exclusively from supply from Egypt.