

## WASH Cluster oPt bi-weekly situation report

Number 10

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### Summary overview

- Assessment of restrictions on the Palestinian water sector development presented by the World Bank
- DWR has conducted a needs assessment on solid waste in Gaza
- 5 WASH Cluster working groups are functioning in Gaza
- Emergency water tankering in Gaza is being phased out

### General situation

#### *Gaza*

The number of people being without access to water from the public network has gone down by 3,000 to 32,000 due to the installation of an electrical transformer for Johr El Diek area by Oxfam. There are still approximately 100,000 people receiving water only every 2-3 days.

The damaged temporary sewage lagoon in Beit Lahiya has been completely repaired and the pumping from the Beit Lahiya sewage plant is back to normal again.

### Assessments

The World Bank has published an assessment of restrictions on the Palestinian water sector development. The assessment covers both Gaza and the West Bank and some of the main findings are:

- Palestinian per capita access to water resources in the West Bank is 25% of Israeli access
- Actual domestic consumption averages 50 liters/person/day in the West Bank, with some network services providing as little as 10-15 liters/person/day
- A third of Palestinian West Bank communities are still not connected to networks
- 25 million cubic metres of sewage is discharged per year, which is damaging the environment and groundwater in the West Bank
- Only 5-10% of the portion of the aquifer underlying Gaza is drinkable, with more than 90% of all 150 municipal wells having salt and nitrate levels above WHO standards
- Most sewage in Gaza is returned raw or partially treated to lagoons, wadis and the sea
- Water-related health impacts on the Gaza population, including the potentially fatal blue baby syndrome, are severe

The full report can be found at

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWESTBANKGAZA/Resources/WaterRestrictionsReport18Apr2009.pdf>

An assessment on Gaza six weeks after the war, conducted by FAFO, was presented at a press conference on the 8th of April. In the assessment more than 2,000 households were interviewed between March 3 and 12 March 2009. Some of the findings concerning water and sanitation were:

- 25% of Gaza's households rely solely on delivery through the network. Another 62 % are connected to the water network, but combine this with additional sources of water.
- 72 % of all households reported a sufficient water supply.
- The sewage system was working appropriately in 87 % of the dwellings.
- Domestic waste was collected from 88 % of the households the week preceding the interview.

The full report can be found at <http://www.fafno.no/ais/middeast/opt/gazasrv09/>

The WASH Cluster (funded by Oxfam) has contracted a consultant to conduct an assessment concerning water tankering in Gaza and some of the preliminary recommendations were that quality standards for desalinated water should be developed, as well as standards for determining number of beneficiaries. Also, the emergency water tankering should be discontinued and a framework for more sustainable solutions should be developed. The final report will be published on the WASH web site.

### ***West Bank***

The rainfall for the West bank until the end of March represents 78% of the average annual rainfall, but in the worst affected areas only a bit over 50% has been received.

The agencies involved in the drought response have had a meeting to discuss the response. Currently, there is a lack of funding and ECHO has expressed an interest in funding a large part of the response. ACF, PHG, Unicef and CISP are planning on conducting emergency water distribution in the worst affected areas.

### **WASH Cluster humanitarian response - Gaza**

#### ***Drinking and domestic water***

All water tankering distribution, except for the distribution carried out by Islamic Relief to 70 schools in the Gaza strip, will be phased out by mid-May. ACF, Relief



Desalination plant, picture provided by GVC

International, PHG and Oxfam (having distributed approximately 7,6 litres/person/day of drinking water to 63,708 daily beneficiaries for 89 days) have already ended their distribution. CARE has finished distribution of domestic water (in total 1800 m<sup>3</sup>), but is continuing the distribution of drinking water in Beit Lahiya and Jabalia until mid May.

A desalination plant project (funded by GVC in partnership with PHG and CMWU) is nearly completed for Al Buriej camp. The

plant will improve the water quality for about 22,000 persons. The plant is expected to be in use from May 5th with a capacity of producing 90-100 cubic meters of water/hour.

### ***Solid waste***

COOPI continues to work with solid waste collection in Gaza City. CARE has finished their work with rubble removal in Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahiya. UNICEF and Oxfam have conducted a cleaning and environmental awareness campaign. The campaign aimed at raising the level of awareness in regards to public health issues, in addition to clearing a five square kilometer area in Gaza City from debris and rubbish.

UNRWA has removed 1206 tonnes of domestic solid waste in western Khan Yunis area.

DWR (hosted by ACF-Spain) has conducted a rapid assessment of the solid waste situation and will come back in the beginning of May to hold a workshop on how to move forward.

### ***Wastewater***

ACF continue working on cleaning the Beit Lahia Wastewater Treatment Plant and cleaning and repairing sewage pumping stations. Oxfam has conducted rehabilitation of sewage collector networks in Alburajj and Rafah.

### ***Hygiene and NFIs***

Oxfam has trained 78 people to conduct health promotion. ACF and CMWU have continued health promotion activities in the South of Gaza.

### **WASH cluster activities**

The WASH Cluster in Gaza has set up a monitoring and surveillance working group, chaired by WHO, which is currently working on collecting/analysing data from the UNRWA clinics and consolidating



Beit Lahia Wastewater Treatment Plant, picture provided by Graham Henderson

information from relevant Al-Quads University master thesis's concerning water quality, water related diseases, and health promotion. The working group visited Rafah, Khan Unis, and Nuseirat UNRWA PHC Clinics in the south and middle area, and Al-Nassr Paediatric Hospital in Gaza City. The working group is looking for funding for a comprehensive monitoring and surveillance program across the Gaza Strip.

The health promotion working group in Gaza has initiated a workshop hosted by the Institute of Water and Environment and PHG at the Al Azhar University in Gaza on Wednesday next week. The workshop will focus on water quality and health promotion across the Gaza strip.

The WASH advocacy task force in Jerusalem/Ramallah is working on finalizing the advocacy proposal after WASH cluster comments and continues to look for funds for implementation. In Gaza, the task force is writing a paper concerning the chronic

issues with sewage disposal and sanitation in Khan Younis as well as translating documents from Al Demeer association for human rights.

### **Constraints**

The main constraint remains access of material into Gaza. Currently CMWU and the WASH Cluster continues to work on the consolidation of the different agency's needs for material to enter Gaza into one list, as well as coordinating this list with the Logistics Cluster information.

### **Highlights for next weeks**

- Report from the water tankering assessment in Gaza
- Workshop in Gaza concerning water quality, health promotion, and service delivery
- Report from Oxfam GB Gaza Baseline Survey
- Next Gaza WASH Cluster meeting, Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April
- Next Ramallah/Jerusalem WASH Cluster meeting, Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May

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