



## Gaza Strip Humanitarian Fact Sheet

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

### January 2008

*On Friday 18 January, 2008, following a surge in conflict between the IDF and Palestinian militants affecting civilians on both sides, Israel closed all crossings from Israel into Gaza, cutting it off from all supplies of food, medicine and fuel including humanitarian aid. The blockade which lasted until January 22 deprived Gaza's power station of fuel, forcing it to cease operation. The resulting power cuts of around twelve hours per day put immense pressure on civilians and hindered the provision of public services, particularly in health, food aid and water and sanitation. On January 23, militants destroyed large parts of the border wall between Rafah and Egypt, allowing large numbers of Gazans to cross into Egypt.*

#### PROTECTION (UNRWA/OCHA)

- In January 2008, 267 Qassam rockets and 256 mortars were fired towards Israel.
- Number of IDF searches and arrests: 5 searches and 107 arrests

	From Direct Conflict with Israel				Other (including internal violence)			
	Injuries	Deaths	Children deaths	Women deaths	Injuries	Deaths	Children deaths	Women deaths
Palestinian	82	80	4 (all boys)	5	9	29	0	0
Israeli	9*	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

\* All by rockets fired from the Gaza Strip

#### FOOD (WFP/UNRWA/WHO)

- As a result of the closure, WFP was unable to provide any food to 10,000 of its beneficiaries and a further 50,000 received only a part of their monthly allocation. WFP also suspended their Food for Work and Food for Education programmes because of difficulties in importing work and training equipment.
- When Israel re-opened some of the border crossings on January 22 for humanitarian goods, the IDF introduced new security procedures which led to high levels of damage to goods and fears of contamination; wrapping was removed, bags were cut and sniffer dogs were used. WFP temporarily suspended its deliveries to Gaza until the IDF agreed to alter their procedures on 7 February.
- While 1.1 million Gazans are provided with food by WFP and UNRWA, only 84,000 receive 100 per cent of their daily calorific needs. The rest rely on the commercial market to supplement their diet. The lock-down of Gaza led to a further reduction of stocks in the commercial sector. WFP said that fresh and frozen meat, frozen fish and vegetables were rarely available in shops.
- Temporary access to Egypt from 23 January to 2 February did not appear to alleviate the shortages of commercial goods in the Gaza Strip or affect prices which remain high in many cases because of the restrictions on imports.



## HEALTH (WHO)

- Hospitals and clinics all over the Gaza Strip had to severely limit their services because of the power cuts and shortages of fuel for their generators. Gaza European Hospital and Nasser Hospital declared a “state of emergency” and stopped all but emergency activities from January 20-22. 32 out of Gaza’s 56 primary health care clinics suspended various services for the duration of the power cuts.
- Availability of medical supplies at Ministry of Health (MoH) facilities: 80 of the 416 essential drugs (19.2%) and 186 of the 596 essential medical supplies (31.2%) were at zero availability\* in January due to the lack of financial resources. These drugs include first-line pediatric antibiotics and oncology drugs needed by 135 patients.
- Certain drugs which are not on the Essential Drug List (EDL) have run out since the MoH has no budget to procure them; mainly oncology drugs.
- 829 patients have been denied access to specialized treatment in Egyptian hospitals due to the closure of Rafah border crossing since 9 June.
- Of the 776 patients that applied for permits to cross Erez crossing for treatment in January, 57 (7.35%) had their applications denied and 177 (22.8%) were delayed.
- According to WHO, three patients died in January after being denied permits to cross the Erez crossing: a 53 year-old male with lung cancer died on 12 January; a 10 year-old female with cardiac problems died on 15 January; and a 68 year-old female with liver cancer died on 29 January.

## WATER AND SANITATION (UNICEF)

- Gaza’s water authority, the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility, was unable to provide water to 40 per cent of the Gaza Strip from January 20-31.
- Four sewage pumping stations in Gaza City and the north of Gaza flooded when pumps failed because of lack of fuel and/or spare parts.
- Similar problems prevented the treatment of sewage which was released into the sea at the rate of 40 million liters per day starting 18 January.
- The CMWU’s fuel supply problems were further exacerbated by a strike by the gas station owner’s association, who refused to distribute fuel in protest to the lack of fuel allowed into the Gaza Strip.
- Urgent projects to improve sewage treatment in the Gaza Strip continue to be delayed because of import restrictions for building materials.
- The level of the Beit Lahia sewage lagoon, which burst last year killing five people, increased by 18 centimeters because of the failure of pumps.

\* Zero availability means the amount of drugs in the Essential Drug List (EDL) are enough for 0-1 month.