

## OCHA Weekly Humanitarian Update Occupied Palestinian Territories 03 – 11 Aug 2002

- 24 Palestinians were killed during the reporting period and another 123 injured. 15 Israelis were killed and another 85 injured in the same period.
- UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has appointed Ms. Catherine Bertini, the former head of WFP, as his Personal Humanitarian Envoy. Ms. Catherine Bertini arrived in the region on Monday 12 August.
- In Nablus the curfew has not been lifted since 1 August. The city with its 115.000 inhabitants has been under continuous curfew since 21 June; the curfew in Nablus has been lifted for a total of 46 hours in 50 days
- Health authorities reported an outbreak of shigellosis (bloody diarrhea) caused by contaminated water in several localities in Nablus area;
- Work permits issued to laborers in Gaza were on the rise during the reporting period: up to 3,800 Palestinian workers were granted permits to work in the Gaza Industrial zone.



### OVERVIEW:

The newly appointed Personal Humanitarian Envoy is traveling to the region to assess the nature and scale of the humanitarian crisis facing the population of the West Bank and Gaza, and review the humanitarian needs in light of recent developments. Ms. Catherine Bertini will report to the UN General Secretary and through him to The Quartet, on responses needed to prevent the humanitarian situation from deteriorating further.

The earlier announced Israeli plans of easing the movement restrictions in the West Bank and Gaza were put on hold last week following the latest suicide attacks in Israel. The IDF issued a ban on all vehicular traffic in the northern West Bank areas and cut off the southern part of Gaza. The closure is now total. Palestinians are not allowed to leave or enter the major population centres in the North of the West Bank and the Rafah area in Gaza. The closure is posing a serious obstacle to transportation of goods and persons. The major towns and areas affected are Nablus, Jenin, Qalqilya, and Ramallah.

The curfew regime in the West Bank has now been enforced for a total of seven weeks paralyzing the civilian population and severely disrupting humanitarian service

providers, both local and international. In the period between 3 July and 11 July, 52 localities in the West Bank were placed under curfew, while some 33 localities were under curfew during the whole period. Compared with the previous week the number of localities under curfew has declined from 61 to 52. At the same time number of localities under uninterrupted curfew increased from 21 to 33.

The situation in Gaza was marked by daily IDF incursions. Residents of northern Gaza experienced continuous land levelling and demolition of buildings - both public and private. Curfews are imposed from 7 AM to 7 PM in all areas close to settlements and bypass roads. Besides these closures, additional curfews are imposed every time Israeli settlers move between Israel and the Netzarim settlement. In addition to the officially enforced curfews the Palestinian population restricts its movements after dark due to the prevailing insecurity and frequent shooting incidents.

This week UNRWA Field Office in Jerusalem received 100 permits allowing its local staff members with West Bank ID to report to their duties in Jerusalem. The permits are valid for one month. The Field Office remains, however, short of staff due to shortage of valid permits. UNRWA reports that several of its West Bank area offices face serious staffing problems due to curfews and mobility restrictions.

Distribution of humanitarian aid and implementation of development projects, such as infrastructure repairs, continue to be hampered due to closures and curfews. Both international and local Non Governmental Organisations (NGO) report that despite the easing of travel restrictions they still experience unnecessary delays at checkpoints and difficulties while accessing the civilian population in need. In Gaza the Abu Houli checkpoint was open daily, but continued to be troubled by sporadic closures of varied duration.

***West Bank localities currently under curfew see [www.reliefweb.int/hic-opt/mapcentre](http://www.reliefweb.int/hic-opt/mapcentre)***

## **SECTORAL UPDATES:**

### **FOOD:**

World Food Program (WFP) has delivered 264 tons of wheat flour and 36 tons of oil to Gaza. WFP is currently distributing food to 293.500 beneficiaries in Gaza: WFP's main implementing partners in Gaza are Ministry of Social Affairs and Co-operation Housing Foundation (CHF), Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees (PARC) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

Reports received from WFP's price monitoring program shows no significant change in food prices in Gaza during July.

The UNRWA operations in the West Bank continue to be disrupted due to curfew, closures, checkpoints and lack of entry permits for Palestinian staff. UNRWA Field Office in Jerusalem delivered 9 tons of commodities to Jalazone camp, 38 tons of commodities to Aida camp, 31 tons of commodities to Inata, Jaba and Beer-Nabala.

UNWRA delivered 1370 parcels of basic commodities to Balata camp, 827 parcels to Aida camp, 423 parcels to Beit Jibrin camp and 860 parcels to Idna and Tarqumia.

ICRC delivered 2985 food and hygiene parcels and 2985 bags of 25 kg wheat flour to 2985 families in the West Bank covering 17910 beneficiaries in 35 villages.

## **HEALTH**

Preliminary findings from Nutritional Assessment survey released by Care International this week indicate an increase in the number of malnourished children under five with 22.5 % suffering from acute (9.3 %) or chronic (13.2 %) malnutrition. According the report more than 50 % of the sampled households reported a decrease in food consumption, 65 % cited shortage of money and 33 % curfew as the main reason for the decrease, only 2 % cited shortage of food at the local market as the reason for decrease of consumption. Households are reported to be financially exhausted, and a rising number of households are forced to borrow money and /or sell assets to sustain the family's food consumption. At the same time other preliminary reports indicate that household coping mechanisms, such as credit networks allowing people to buy water and food, are no longer sustainable.

WFP has this week been using their international truck fleet to assist Ministry of Health (MoH) in moving medical supplies from the MoH central store in Ramallah. In total WFP moved 50 tons of medical supplies to Nablus (6 trucks), Jenin (3 trucks) and Hebron (2 trucks).

Concerning the vaccination program MoH reports that obstacles to access the population are still severe. The Italian Cooperation will assist MoH with transportation for two weeks from mid-August. MoH will train 120 health workers to ensure vaccination in remote areas of the West Bank.

Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) expresses concern at current situation in Nablus. As of 7 August a PRCS Emergency Medical Team had treated some 150 patients on site, many of whom have been rendered homeless as a result of the recent IDF campaign in Nablus. PRCS has distributed food rations and medicines to the most affected families. PRCS is alarmed by the health and environmental situation including problems of water/sanitation and food contamination due to damaged water pipes and the lack of electrical power in some parts of the Old City of Nablus.

Health authorities reported an outbreak of shigellosis (bloody diarrhea) caused by contaminated water in several localities in Nablus area. Some 600 cases were reported in Balata and Askar camps. Experts believe that the outbreak of shigellosis was caused by the poor state of the basic infrastructure that had been damaged or totally destroyed during recent hostilities.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

In Jenin the works of clearing the camp of rubble after the destruction during Operation Defensive Shield are severely delayed due to curfews and search campaigns in the camp. The clearing is, however, progressing as the three contractors working in the camp are currently removing approximately 130 truckloads of rubble a day. The camp cleaning works are scheduled to last 90 days.

## CURFEW TRACKING

*(Curfew regimes observed in the West Bank from 3 to 11 August 2002)*

Locality/ Curfew Status	Sat. 3	Sun. 4	Mon. 5	Tues. 6	Wed. 7	Thurs. 8	Fri. 9	Sat. 10	Sun. 11
Jenin	Lifted*	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted
Nablus									
Tulkarm	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted						
Qalqilya	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	
Ramallah	Lifted	Lifted			Lifted	Lifted		Lifted	Lifted
Bethlehem	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted		Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted
Hebron	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted		Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted

\* NB – curfews are lifted for a varied duration: between 3 and 12 hours a day.

OCHA, Jerusalem 11 August 2002.