



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)

December 2007

Israel responded to the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip on 15 June 2007 by closing Gaza's borders to export and severely limiting imports. This isolation of the Gaza Strip, along with a lack of effective coordination between the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah and the Hamas authorities in Gaza has resulted in shortages of food, medical and relief items, spare parts for critical health and water sanitation installations, materials for humanitarian projects and raw materials for Gaza's commerce and industry. This inter-agency fact sheet highlights the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip as of December 2007¹.

PROTECTION (UNRWA/OCHA)

- In December 2007, 155 Qassam rockets and 342 mortars were fired towards Israel.
- Number of IDF incursions: 21
- Number of IDF searches and arrests: 7 searches and 126 arrests

	From Direct Conflict with Israel				Other (including internal violence)			
	Injuries	Deaths	Children deaths	Women deaths	Injuries	Deaths	Children deaths	Women deaths
Palestinian	82	58	-	1	121	15	2	-
Israeli	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

HEALTH (WHO)

- Of the 1,041 patients that applied for permits to cross Erez crossing for treatment in December, 156 (15%) had their applications denied and 216 (20.7%) were delayed².
- As reported by the Palestinian liaison officer, 6 out of the 602 patients with permits who attempted to cross Erez in December were denied access after being questioned by Israeli authorities³.
- As a result of the complicated referral process, 7 patients died in December before reaching the needed medical facilities outside of Gaza.
- Availability of medical supplies at Ministry of Health (MoH) facilities: 105 of the 416 essential drugs (25.2%) and 203 of the 596 essential medical supplies (34%) were at zero availability⁴ in December due to the lack of financial resources. These drugs include 6 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 (including Pancuronium, a key drug for general anesthesia, dinoprostone used to induce labor and Glyvic for oncology patients).
- Approximately 1,000 different spare parts for medical and non medical equipment remain unavailable in MoH stocks and on the local market and cannot be imported into Gaza due to the current import restrictions. This includes spare parts for water and waste water systems, air-conditioning and heating systems, biomedical and diagnostic equipment (including laboratory, dialysis, monitors, defibrillators, electrograms and x-rays⁵), and parts for computers, printers and other electrical devices.



FOOD (WFP/UNRWA/FAO)

- The UN currently provides food assistance to 80% of the population in Gaza. Although critical UN humanitarian food supplies are being allowed in, only 43.5% of basic commercial food import needs were met during the period between 3 and 30 December 2007. Most UN food assistance only makes up a portion of the daily caloric needs; therefore, these commercial imports are critical to avoiding malnutrition and other health problems.
- Due to the ongoing closure and resulting lack of agricultural raw materials (including nylon, plastic sheets, pesticides, fertilizers, irrigation networks, raw materials for preparing irrigation networks and spare parts for fishing equipment), the next agricultural season for vegetables (February-March) will not start as planned.
- The import of agricultural products was 36.6% less from June to December 2007 compared to the same period in 2006. The export of agricultural products was 89.6% less from June to December 2007 compared to the same period in 2006.
- A total of 109 tonnes of strawberries were allowed out of Gaza in December 2007 compared to 672 tonnes in December 2006 and 1,030 tonnes in December 2005.
- 275 dunums of agricultural land were destroyed in the month of December as a result of IDF ground operations in the eastern parts of the Gaza Strip.

WATER AND SANITATION (UNICEF)

- In December 2007, Gaza's water authority (the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility, CMWU) received 50% of its fuel needs (70,000 liters), an increase from 18.6% in November.
- There is an absence of spare parts and supplies required to carry out regular maintenance of Gaza's water networks. Projects, including those funded by the World Bank and UNICEF, have been on hold since mid-June due to the inability to import the required parts and equipment such as pipes, valves, water and waste water pumps and electromechanical spare parts
- The lack of spare parts meant that three wells in Gaza City were unable to operate at their full potential, leaving 140,000 people with access to water for only 4-6 hours per day.
- Status of waste water treatment projects (Beit Lahia, Southern Gaza City, Khan Younis): At the beginning of January 2008, projects remained on hold due to lack of materials, except for the Beit Lahia treatment plant where work on two of the infiltration basins and the pumping station is progressing due to the entrance of some of the materials required. Work on the transmission line and the remainder of the infiltration basins is still on hold until the needed materials are allowed into Gaza by the IDF.
- Due to the import restrictions of equipment and spare parts, 40% of Gaza's municipality vehicles and 600 containers need urgent replacement.

End Notes

1. For a comprehensive overview of the humanitarian situation in Gaza, please consult Gaza Strip Fact Sheets of previous months.
2. Normal processing time for a medical permit is 10-14 days. A case is considered delayed after 14 days. Delays occur for reasons including: pending security clearances, renewal of a file or changing the companion.
3. Patients have to register their names and ID numbers at the Palestinian liaison officer at Erez crossing before entering the Israeli part of Erez crossing. Usually not all the patients re-register their names at the Palestinian side after denial of access through Erez crossing.
4. Zero availability means the amount of drugs in the Essential Drug List (EDL) are enough for 0-1 month.
5. The only x-ray machine in the MoH PHC facilities in Khan Younis is not functioning and one out of the two X-ray machines in the PHC facilities in the Middle Area is not functioning.