

**Health Situation in Gaza**  
**28 December 2008**  
**16:00 hrs**

This is an update on the situation the health sector since the Israeli air strikes started at 11.15 Saturday 27 December. WHO is working with the Ministry of Health (MoH) and international and local organizations to coordinate assistance to the health sector. A meeting with health partners was held in Jerusalem today and it was agreed that information about donations of drugs and supplies should be shared with WHO so that ongoing needs can be assessed. A meeting of the health coordination group will be held in Gaza tomorrow.

**Casualties**

Hospitals in Gaza Strip received about 900 injured patients, of whom 650 were hospitalized. MoH hospitals reported about 115 critical cases, 25 in intensive care units (ICUs) and 90 were operated and admitted to wards. The MoH reported that there is no possibility to evacuate those in critical condition unless they are stabilized first, since the equipment and teams to keep them stable while being transported are not available. The MoH also reported 280 fatalities. The MoH could not provide exact figures disaggregated by age categories.

**Hospital functioning**

There are 27 hospitals in Gaza;13 are managed by the MoH with a capacity of about 1500 beds. Private and NGO hospitals have about 500 beds. The MoH hospitals were overwhelmed by the initial influx of patients. They switched to emergency mode, discharging non-urgent patients wherever possible (some to NGO hospitals). Emergency and operating rooms are under intense pressure but most have sufficient beds so far.

The fuel situation at all hospitals in Gaza are listed in the below table:

Hospital	Tank capacity	available quantities	average consumption/hour	average daily consumption
Shifa	56 000	49 700	180	4 320
Gaza European	120 000	100 750	191	4 584
Nasser paediatric	10 000	10 000	100	2 400
Dorra paediatric	6 500	6 200	70	1 680
Psychiatric hospital	2 500	2 200	60	1 440
Specialized paediatric hospital	10 100	9 000	50	1 200
Beit Hanoun	8 450	7 000	40	960
Kamal Edwan	1 000	9 500	60	1 440
Aqsa	17 100	12 700	70	1 680
Nasser Khanyounis	22 000	16 848	105	2 520
Abu Yousef Najjar	16 500	15 950	40	960
Tal El-Sultan	7 000	5 800	64	1 536
Total	287 150	245 648		

**PHC functioning**

The MoH manages 56 primary health care (PHC) centres in the Gaza Strip, of which 24 are assigned to work as emergency centres. The MoH deployed many staff members from PHC services to work in hospitals. All PHC centres are functioning with limitations, either because of re-deployment of staff or inability to access some of the centres in dangerous areas.

**Pharmaceutical supplies**

The MoH reported that 105 items from the essential drug list were at zero stock level at the central drug store before the hostilities started. There were also 225 consumable items and 93 laboratory and blood bank items out of stock at the central store. Some of these items are available at facility level but many shortages are reported. The MoH also reported a lack of medical gases needed for operating rooms and laboratories, such as nitrous ethylene oxide and nitrogen. Today, WHO facilitated the entry of these gases to Gaza.

The MoH is working with WHO and other UN and international organizations to meet the most urgent demands :

- The MoH Central Medical Stores in Ramallah loaded three trucks with medical supplies that are expected to enter Gaza tomorrow, containing 90 drugs and 120 consumables.
- WHO is mobilizing 50 surgical supply kits for Gaza, sufficient to treat 5000 wounded for 10 days; 16 were procured through the Humanitarian Emergency Response Fund (HERF) and 36 funded by the Government of Norway. Norway also donated nine Inter-agency Emergency Health Kits. Each kit provides essential drugs and equipment for 10 000 people for three months. WHO aims to deliver all these kits within the next few days.
- Care International provided medical supplies worth US\$ 10 700 to Ahli Arab hospital.
- UNFPA provided consumables worth US\$ 50 000 procured from the local market.
- UNICEF provided the MoH with 300 first aid kits and 22 resuscitation kits.
- Islamic Relief provided the MoH with medical supplies worth US\$ 126 000 from local market.
- MSF provided the MoH hospitals with 7 dressing kits; each is enough for 50 interventions.
- MAP UK provided one surgical kit to Shifa hospital (one kit is enough for 100 interventions). MAP has another kit pre-positioned at Al-Awda hospital in North Gaza.
- ICRC has several kits pre-positioned and has delivered disposables and IV fluids to hospitals.

**Referral abroad**

Since 25 December, the MoH requested approvals from the Israeli authorities for 21 patients to exit Gaza to seek medical care in Israeli or West Bank hospitals. Only six were allowed to exit on Thursday and one on Friday. The Erez crossing has been closed for patient referrals since and no patients have been referred through Rafah.