



Israel-Gaza Conflict

Situation Report #2

October 24, 2023

Staff at Al Kuwaiti Hospital in Rafah, Gaza, take care of patients in the backyard of the hospital with limited medicines, medical supplies, electricity, and water. *Photo by Motaz Al Aaraj for Project HOPE, October 2023.*

Situation Update

In the weeks since the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel, violence has rocked both Israel and the Palestinian Territories. More than 1,400 people in Israel have been killed and more than 200 hostages were taken into Gaza by Hamas militants. Very few hostages have been released. Israel has released the names of nearly 800 victims, including civilians, soldiers, and police officers.

The ensuing war on Hamas in Gaza has killed more than 5,000 Palestinians, with some reports as high as 5,700. The majority of casualties are civilians, with women and children making up as many as 62% of deaths. UNRWA, the Palestinian refugee relief agency run by the United Nations (UN), has reported that 35 members of their staff, all humanitarian aid workers, have been killed.

Hamas has continued to attack Israel, despite the ongoing air offensive into Gaza and the looming threat of a ground invasion, with more than 7,400 rockets launched into Israel over the past 18 days.

Quick Facts

- Since the October 7 Hamas attacks, more than 6,400 people have died in the conflict, the majority of whom are civilians.
- Nearly 200,000 Israelis and roughly 1.4 million Palestinians in Gaza have been displaced as a result of the conflict.
- With only a few dozen trucks crossing the border between Egypt and Gaza since October 21, people in Gaza are in desperate need of humanitarian supplies, including food, water, medical supplies, and fuel, to prevent further loss of civilian life.
- In Gaza, the conflict has destroyed nearly 6,000 buildings, including homes, shelters, schools, hospitals, and vital pieces of civilian infrastructure.

Since October 7, more than 200,000 Israelis have been displaced and several dozen towns evacuated near Israel's borders with Gaza and Lebanon.

Gunfire has been exchanged along Israel's border with Lebanon, where Hezbollah has an estimated 150,000 rockets and missiles aimed at Israel, increasing concerns over the conflict spreading across the region. In the West Bank, Israeli forces carried out widespread arrests and killed two Palestinian refugees on October 23. Since the conflict erupted earlier this month, 95 people have been killed in the West Bank, including 28 children, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

As of October 24, the conflict appears to be ramping up. In the past 24 hours, the Israeli Defense Forces have reported that they've hit more than 400 targets in Gaza, after hitting 320 targets the previous day, and the Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry has reported the highest death toll in a single day, with over 700 Palestinians killed within a 24-hour period. As the conflict continues and more buildings are damaged or destroyed in Gaza, further displacement and lack of shelter will increase the likelihood and severity of various health threats, including infectious diseases. Already, outbreaks of chickenpox, scabies, and diarrhea have been reported. According to OCHA, over 1.4 million people have been displaced in Gaza and displaced Palestinians are sheltering in UNRWA schools, churches, hospitals, public buildings, and non-UNRWA schools.

The UN Health Cluster reported in a meeting in Cairo on October 24 that hospitals are overwhelmed and reportedly moving generators from hospitals damaged by airstrikes to other hospitals in an effort to continue providing care without reliable fuel sources. Without power, hospitals will be unable to provide many forms of care, including premature babies who require incubators to survive. Hospitals are filled with displaced families sheltering in corridors and between departments, further increasing the risk of more infectious disease outbreaks.

The UN Health Cluster also reports that cancer patients have not received treatment in 17 days and that dialysis patients are receiving less time for treatment. It is expected that health facilities and diabetes patients will run out of insulin within the next few days. Doctors have been performing surgeries without anesthesia and basic supplies. Due to limited amounts of fuel and the lack of electricity, six hospitals have been shut down. The UNRWA, which has been providing limited health services, announced that they will have to stop all support in Gaza by Wednesday evening if they do not receive an emergency supply of fuel.

The Rafah Crossing, the only entry from Egypt into Gaza, has been closed since October 7, with only a few dozen trucks allowed to cross into Gaza with aid supplies since then, which is far from



Last week, Project HOPE delivered much-needed hygiene supplies to displaced families around Jerusalem. Additional items, including clothing and hygiene items, are also being procured to deliver. *Photo by Project HOPE, October 2023.*

sufficient to address the widespread and urgent needs. Fuel has not been allowed to enter as Israeli officials fear it may be used for the Hamas offensive against Israel. The distribution of the aid that has been allowed to enter has been limited due to the ongoing violence and the lack of fuel, both of which prevent access to much of northern Gaza.

In Israel, our team on the ground has reported that evacuated communities, and those affected by the October 7 Hamas ground offensive, need mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), hygiene supplies, and other services for displaced families. Project HOPE staff have been working with several hospitals in southern Israel, including Barzilai Medical Center and Shamir Medical Center, which have expressed an urgent need for critical medical supplies and equipment. Barzilai Medical Center sustained significant damage from the Hamas attacks, including the destruction of the OB/GYN wing and an operating room.

Project HOPE's Response

As the Israel-Gaza conflict enters its third week and the number of civilian deaths continues to rise, Project HOPE has deployed staff to the region to address urgent needs and has emergency response personnel in Israel and Egypt working with local authorities, UN agencies, and civil society to coordinate the delivery of aid for both Israel and Gaza.

In Israel, Project HOPE delivered an initial procurement of hygiene supplies to displaced people now located in and around Jerusalem and our team is working to procure additional non-food items for several thousand more. Displaced families are in need of underwear, socks, clothing, shampoo, deodorant, bedsheets, towels, and other essential items. Security remains an issue in Israel as attacks from both Hamas and Hezbollah continue from both Gaza and Lebanon.

Project HOPE is working to support hospitals near the southern border by providing urgently needed medical equipment and supplies and repairing damaged medical structures. The Project HOPE team is procuring defibrillators for Barzilai Health Center, which was damaged in the Hamas attacks. Additionally, Project HOPE is working with Hadassa Hospital in Jerusalem to support the needs of its physical rehabilitation department as health workers treat survivors of the Hamas attacks. Project HOPE is also working with hospital authorities to support MHPSS activities for those impacted by the conflict.

Project HOPE's staff continues to work with local health facilities to determine the highest-priority needs, including medical supplies, equipment, and rehabilitation needs. Our team is coordinating with local NGOs to identify gaps and prioritize needs in primary and mental health across affected areas, including for communities displaced by the ongoing violence. Project HOPE is also coordinating with local government officials to identify further needs across the health and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sectors.

In Cairo, Egypt, Project HOPE staff have been working closely with UN agencies, the Egyptian Red Crescent, and several partners operating in Gaza to provide medical and relief supplies as hopes for a steady humanitarian access through the Rafah Crossing continue. Project HOPE is prepositioning multiple shipments, including six World Health Organization Interagency Emergency Health Kits (IEHKs), Trauma and Emergency Surgery Kits (TESKs), and hygiene kits. The

Project HOPE team is also working on a local procurement of WASH supplies, including additional hygiene kits, water purification tablets, and bottled water.

Project HOPE's partner in Jordan, the Jordanian Health Aid Society (JHASi), is on standby to deploy Mobile Medical Units (MMUs) into Gaza, if access permits. Project HOPE's long-time partner SAMU, a Spain-based NGO with an affiliate in Morocco, is also on standby to deploy MMUs.

Project HOPE continues to act in coordination with partners in Israel, Gaza, Egypt, the West Bank, Jordan, and Lebanon to assess how and when we can best support the health and humanitarian needs of impacted communities, while remaining committed to the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence.

For further information, contact media@projecthope.org.

