



Joint UN delegation visit to Shifa Hospital, Gaza, November 20, 2012. (Photo credit: Mustafa Haabi- OCHA.)

Latest casualty figures (MoH Gaza):

(November 20, 2012: 12:00 pm)
113 killed
900 injured

Background:

oPt health statistics

Total population in thousands	4169
Total health expenditure (% GDP)	16.0
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100 000 live births)	28.0
Primary health care units and centres (per 10 000 population)	1.8
Total life expectancy at birth (years)	72.5

Source: [Country statistical profiles \(2011\)](#)

Key Points

The latest casualty figures according to the MoH in Gaza are (as of November 20, 2012; 2:00 am):

- 100 persons killed; 25% are children. (aged 0-17: 25; aged 18-59: 11 female, 50 male; aged 60+: 11)
- 866 persons injured; 32% are children. (aged 0-17: 277; aged 18-59: 162 female, 465 men; aged 60+: 62)
- 11% of injured children are less than 5 years old. Injuries include severe burns, injuries from collapsing buildings and head injuries, with some of the injured in critical condition.

Hospitals operated by the Ministry of Health in Gaza are coping with the large number of injuries with severely depleted medical supplies. WHO is working with the MoH, UNRWA and ICRC to ensure that essential medicines and medical consumables are delivered to health facilities where they are most needed. WHO has appealed to the international community for support in providing essential medical supplies by coordinating donations according to the specific needs of the MoH in Gaza. All offers and enquiries about donations should be directed to Mahmoud Daher at WHO mda@who-health.org.

As of Saturday, 6 ambulances have been damaged, 3 of the EMS, 2 of MoH and 1 of the Palestinian Red Crescent by nearby airstrikes. Four health staff were injured.

Health situation

The Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza was facing critical shortages of drugs and disposables before the hostilities began. 192 drugs (40% of the essential list), and 586 medical disposables (65% of the essential list) were at zero stock. The MoH has postponed all elective surgeries because of the shortages of anesthesia, transferred non-urgent cases to NGO hospitals, and asked health staff to report to the nearest health facility and for extended shifts.

Impact on health services

Hospitals operated by the Ministry of Health in Gaza are functioning but are struggling to cope with the large number of injuries with severely depleted medical supplies. Referrals of critical patients out of Gaza are taking place: 13 patients were transferred out of Gaza on Sunday through Erez checkpoint and 16 patients were transferred by ambulance through Rafah to Egypt in the last 3 days; 5 patients were transferred on Nov. 17, 6 on Nov. 18 and 5 on Nov. 19.

Ten of 54 PHCCs operated by the MoH have been closed due to airstrikes in nearby areas. Residents served by these centers were advised to report to alternative clinics. All other PHC center are maintaining their services, including vaccination and chronic disease management, but with limited staff capacity. One PHCC sustained damage to its wall and lab as a result of an airstrike to an adjacent open area.

All but one of UNRWA PHCCs are functioning but with limited staff capacity; one clinic located in a dangerous area has been closed. One UNRWA clinic (Khan Younis) sustained collateral damage (broken windows) when an adjacent area was targeted by an Israeli air strike.

Two PRCS ambulance centers, one in Jabalya and one in Gaza, sustained damage to windows and doors following Israeli air strikes targeting adjacent areas. Al-Quds hospital also sustained minor damage following the destruction of the adjacent MOI civil registry offices; two staff members had minor injuries. One PRCS ambulance was hit by shrapnel while evacuating injured in North Gaza, the two EMS team members were wounded.

Health response

WHO is working with partners to provide essential medical supplies needed by the MoH. The MoH in Ramallah sent 205 pallets of disposables, drugs and IV fluids identified as urgently needed items. The shipment covers 92 essential medical disposables, though not in the quantities requested, and 50 drug items. WHO and ICRC coordinated with the Israelis for permits for delivering the drugs to Gaza, and ICRC assisted in transportation.

UNRWA has sufficient drug stocks at its primary health care facilities for two weeks and is also donating some critical supplies to the MoH. WHO is working to procure additional surgical kits as required.

MAP –UK mobilized prepositioned supplies to the MoH hospitals in Gaza including 14 drug items, 23 medical disposable items and 16 items of disposables for blood banks.

PRCS has activated its emergency response plan. PRCS ambulances (101) are evacuating casualties from the field. Al-Quds PRCS hospital received and managed cases and provided back up support to the MoH hospitals. The PRCS provided 3 Norwegian surgical kits (each for 150-200 surgical operations) to the MoH.

Challenges

The transfer of referral patients and delivery of drugs and disposables to Gaza through Israeli-controlled checkpoints requires prior Israeli authorization.

Access and mobility of health staff in Gaza city and north Gaza is limited due to the magnitude of air strikes; availability of fuel to ambulances and back up generators is limited.

Coordination

WHO is leading the coordination with the MoH and among health partners in Jerusalem, Ramallah and Gaza to ensure that reliable information about health needs and the response is available.

Donors and funding

WHO appeals to the international and regional community for urgent financial support to provide essential medicines to cover pre-existing shortages, as well as emergency supplies for treating casualties and the chronically ill. WHO will be pleased to collaborate with donors to ensure that any donations are consistent with the needs in Gaza and conform to the drug donation guidelines endorsed by WHO and a number of international partners. See WHO's guidelines for drug donations at: http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/1999/WHO_EDM_PAR_99.4.pdf [pdf 72kb] All offers and enquiries about donations should be directed to Mahmoud Daher at WHO mda@who-health.org.

For more information, contact:

WHO oPt Office

Mr Anthony Laurance, WHO Head of Office

info@who-health.org

Website: <http://www.emro.who.int/palestine>

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shoc@emro.who.int

Telephone: +20-2-2276-5644