



Left: Gaza city. Photo by Eyad al Baba – WHO.

Right: Shifa Hospital. Photo by Mustafa Haabi – OCHA.

### Background: oPt health statistics

Total population in thousands	4169
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100 000 live births)	16.0
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

Following eight days of violence in Gaza, a cease-fire was declared effective 9:00 pm, November 21, 2012, between Israel and the Hamas authorities in Gaza. The cumulative casualty figures reported by the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza are (as of November 22, 2012; 1:00 pm):

--163 persons killed (139 males; 22 females; 2 not yet identified) of whom 42 (26%) are children; 17 children are less than 5 years old.

--1269 persons injured (911 males; 358 females) of whom 431 (34%) are children; 134 are less than 5 years old.

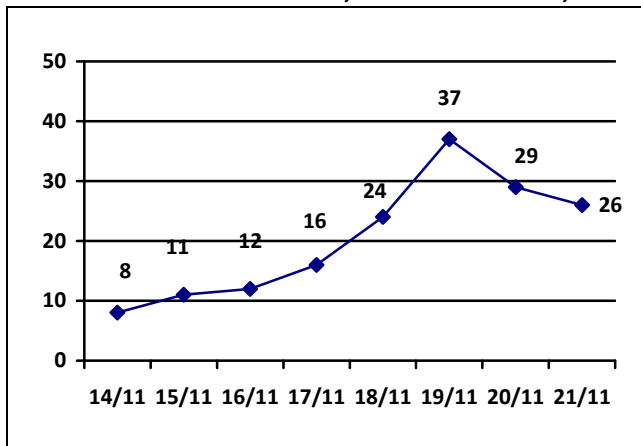
Hospitals operated by the MoH in Gaza are treating the large number of injuries with severely depleted medical supplies. 245 drugs and 180 medical disposable items were urgently needed, as of November 20. Shifa hospital in Gaza city has received 80% of the injured cases. Three hospitals (a Jordanian field hospital in Gaza city, Beit Hanoun operated by the MoH and al Quds operated by the Palestine Red Crescent) were damaged by airstrikes and 6 ambulances suffered collateral damage, injuring four workers.

WHO has appealed to the international community for support in providing \$10 million in needed essential medical supplies by coordinating donations according to specifications of the MoH in Gaza. All offers and enquiries about donations should be directed to WHO [info@who-health.org](mailto:info@who-health.org).

## Health situation

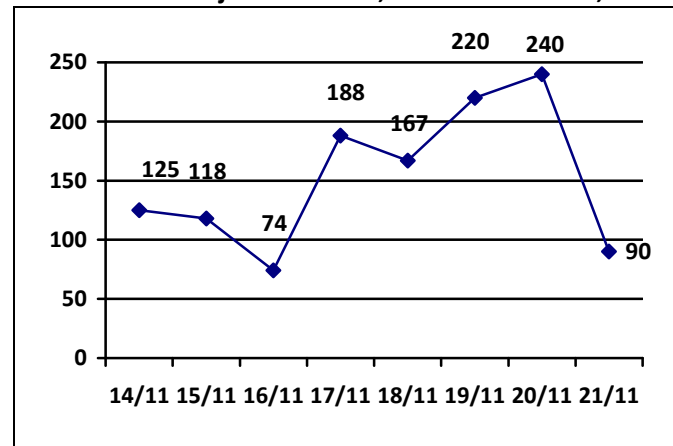
The MoH in Gaza was facing critical shortages of drugs and disposables before the hostilities began on November 14, 2012. 192 drugs (40% of the essential list), and 586 medical disposables (65% of the essential list) were at zero stock at the time and drug and disposable stocks have decreased since that time due to the dramatic increase in the number of casualties (163 killed and 1269 injured). During the crisis, the MoH had 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.

**Palestinians killed in Gaza, November 14-21, 2012.**



Source: MoH Gaza.

**Palestinians injured in Gaza, November 14-21, 2012.**



## Impact on health services

### 3 hospitals, 5 PHCs sustained damages:

--- Two floors of the 40-bed Jordanian field hospital, which has operated in Gaza city since 2009, were severely damaged in an airstrike November 19, including the in-patient department nursing station in the center of the hospital. Patients had been evacuated only 10 minutes earlier. The hospital reopened and is partially functioning.

-- Al-Quds hospital sustained minor damage following the destruction of the adjacent Ministry of Interior civil registry offices; two staff members had minor injuries.

-- Beit Hanoun hospital, a 36-bed MoH facility in the north of Gaza, suffered light damages on November 21.

-- Four MoH primary health clinics suffered damages (Sabha Al Harazeem (Gaza city); Khuza'a (Khanyounis); Surani (Gaza city); Shuhada'a Khanyounis (Khanyounis)).

-- Five UNRWA clinics sustained collateral damage, one of which suffered damage on three separate occasions from Israeli air strikes.

-- The Palestine Red Crescent Society reported damage to 5 PRCS buildings (windows and doors) and 3 PRCS ambulances (window glass, a 4-cm shrapnel hole in the ambulances). 7 PRCS staff sustained minor injuries (contusions, smoke and dust inhalation).

-- The Medical Commission center in Gaza suffered damage.



The Jordanian field hospital damaged on November 19. (photo by Mahmoud Halabi – WHO).

During the eight days, hospitals operated by the Ministry of Health in Gaza were functioning but struggling to cope with the large number of injuries with severely depleted medical supplies. Ten of 54 PHCCs operated by the MoH were closed due to airstrikes in nearby areas. Two community mental health centers (West Gaza and Surani) were partially affected by nearby attacks and were not functioning during the period. The MoH reported 24 psychotropic medications were urgently needed during emergency. All other PHC centers maintained their services, including vaccination and chronic disease management, but with limited staff capacity. 19 of 21 UNRWA PHCCs are functioning but with limited staff capacity; one clinic located in a dangerous area has been closed.

PRCS activated its emergency response plan. PRCS ambulances (101) evacuated casualties from the field. Al-Quds PRCS hospital received and managed cases and provided back up support to the MoH hospitals.

Psychosocial needs were partially addressed through emergency responses:

- 1- MoH established six emergency response, multidisciplinary, teams based in five general hospitals (one each district) in Gaza and provided psychosocial support for injured people and their families around 12 hours every day
- 2- UNRWA provided two psychosocial counselors in every UNRWA shelter in Gaza and north (11 shelters) to provide initial psychosocial assessment/intervention and referral to emergency teams
- 3- Some psychosocial organizations provided psychosocial support for injured people in general hospitals in liaison with emergency teams working there.

**Referral access for patients:** 46 patients were given permits to exit Gaza via Erez during the hostilities and 34 patients crossed Rafah in ambulances:

**Transfers of referral patients out of Gaza via Erez and Rafah, November 15-November 21, 2012**

Date	Total application	Approved	Crossed Erez	Crossed Erez (by ambulance)	Crossed Rafah (by ambulance)
15	24	14	7	0	
16	2	1	1	1 exited	
17	0	0	0	0	5
18	52	21	13	0	6
19	31	14	11	1 returned	5
20	40	18	8	1 exited	12
21	23	15	6	3 (2 sets of twins )	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>5 exited/1 returned</b>	<b>34</b>

## Donors and funding

WHO and ICRC coordinated with the MoH the preparation and delivery of 200 pallets of disposables, drugs and IV fluids (according to the list of urgently needed items from Gaza), to send to Gaza. The shipment covered most of the consumables (92 items, though not in the quantities requested) and some of the drugs (50 drug items).

UNRWA donated \$400,000 worth of drugs and disposables from its stock to WHO to help meet essential needs of the MoH hospitals in Gaza.

The Palestine Red Crescent Society provided 3 Norwegian surgical kits (each for 150-200 surgical operations) to the MoH.

Medecins du Monde-France donated its pre-existing emergency stock of drugs and disposable to the MoH Central Drug Store in Gaza. The donation was to support the needs of emergency items for the PHCs Emergency rooms and Hospitals Emergency department.

Medical Aid for Palestine –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.

Medecins Sans Frontiers provided the MoH with a small supply of narcotics and medical disposables from their own stock for regular surgeries (plastic reconstructive surgeries in Nasser hospital) and dressing and burns kits for Abu Youssef An Najjar hospital.

A 17-member delegation of Palestinian physicians from the West Bank Doctors' Syndicate, both specialists and general physicians, traveled to Gaza through Egypt to assist physicians in the MoH.

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 oPt's Good Practice for Donations of Medications and the MoH list of needed medicines and disposables at: <http://www.emro.who.int/pse/palestine-news/drug-donation-practice.html>

See WHO Guidelines for drug donations at: [http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/1999/WHO\\_EDM\\_PAR\\_99.4.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/1999/WHO_EDM_PAR_99.4.pdf)

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#### For more information, contact:

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