



**ISLAMIC RELIEF**  
PALESTINE



**PALESTINE CONFLICT**

ONE MONTH ON

# CRISIS AT A GLANCE:



At least **1.8 million** Palestinians face the worst humanitarian crisis in the Palestinian territories since 2008



More than **1,900 people** have been killed - including over 370 children and more than 190 women - and thousands more have been injured



Damage to water and sanitation facilities is estimated to have reached **US\$1.5 million**, leaving over 1.5 million people without reliable access to basic services



At least **10,800 homes** have been destroyed or significantly damaged, leaving families in need of emergency shelter repair items such as tarpaulin as well as blankets and food



Up to a quarter of Gaza's population is thought to have been displaced and is in need of urgent food and water aid



Over **140 schools** as well as medical facilities have been damaged, and the public health system is on the verge of collapse



Critical medical supplies are low and fuel for ambulances and hospital back-up generators is scarce



Over **370,000 children** whose families have experienced death, injury or the loss of their home, require counselling and other support



At least **3,600 fishing families** need help to provide for their families, as they are unable to resume fishing.

# OVERVIEW

More than 1,900 Palestinians, including women and children, have been killed and thousands more injured since conflict broke out in July.

Damage to public infrastructure has left over 1.5 million people without reliable access to basic services, including water and sanitation, and the public health system is close to collapse. Critical medical supplies are low, hospitals and clinics have been damaged, and fuel for ambulances and hospital back-up generators is scarce.

Up to a quarter of the population is thought to have been displaced, with the UN's Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) reporting that around 270,000 people are sheltering in its facilities alone. Women, children and UN staff have died in schools being used as emergency shelters – with more than 140 schools damaged in the fighting so far.

Many homes are reported destroyed or badly damaged. Tens of thousands of families now living in damaged homes need emergency shelter repair items – such as tarpaulin and plastic sheets – as well as food, blankets and hygiene kits.

Over 370,000 traumatised children whose families have experienced death, injury or the loss of their home, require counselling and other forms of support. Thousands of fishing families are unable to earn a living as they are unable to resume fishing for a variety of reasons.

Islamic Relief established its Gaza office in 1998. We are there on the ground delivering vital aid, including food, water, medicines and medical supplies and other essential items.

# THE IMPACT OF CONFLICT AND BLOCKADE

Years of blockade and political conflict have strangled economic development and increased poverty in Gaza. The latest outbreak of conflict has worsened an already deteriorating humanitarian situation.





## UNEMPLOYMENT AND A SHATTERED ECONOMY

In the over-crowded Gaza Strip, one in three working-age people were unemployed. The construction industry has shrunk by 15 per cent. Gazans were once allowed to fish up to 20 nautical miles from the shore but now they can only travel up to three.

Around 80 per cent of people required humanitarian assistance to survive, and food insecurity increased by seven per cent in just one year. Around 540,000 people could not afford to buy the food that they need.

Restrictions and delays at three main crossings have seen goods and humanitarian supplies entering Gaza dwindling to an average of 112 truckloads a day (compared to 583 in 2007). Exports are now totally banned.

# PUBLIC HEALTHCARE ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSE

Thirty per cent of the essential drugs list, and 51 per cent of the essential medical disposables list, was already unavailable in Gaza before the conflict. Surgery was restricted to urgent and acute cases only.

Since the fighting began, Palestinian authorities have run low on critical medical supplies, and fuel for ambulances and hospital back-up generators is scarce.

Additional supplies are needed for all essential drugs and disposables, especially those needed for trauma treatment, including burns, as well as anaesthesia drugs. Ventilators, vital sign monitors, anaesthesia machines and defibrillators are amongst the medical equipment urgently required in Gaza.

At least US\$ 40 million is needed to cover medical supplies and for patients to receive treatment outside of the conflict-torn enclave.





## ACCESS TO SAFE WATER AND SANITATION CRIPPLED

Even before the crisis, Gazans had 35 per cent less electricity than they need, with all-day powercuts increasingly common as the Strip implemented an eight hours on / eight hours off policy. The only power station in the enclave has now been destroyed.

More than 90 per cent of the water extracted from the Gaza aquifer is unsafe for human consumption. Crossing restrictions have led to a very limited fuel supply, with no fuel stock to power standby generators at 288 water and sanitation facilities.

Local authorities report that in Gaza today, raw sewage is seeping onto the streets and rubbish is continuing to build up – posing significant risks to public health. Around 1.5 million people are thought to be without reliable access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities.

# HOMES DESTROYED AND FAMILIES DISPLACED

Tens of thousands of homes are reported destroyed or badly damaged. Families living in damaged homes need emergency shelter repair items, such as tarpaulin and plastic sheets – as well as food, blankets and hygiene kits.

About a quarter of the population is thought to be displaced, with the UNRWA reporting that around 270,000 people are sheltering in its facilities alone. Tens of thousands more are living outside of the shelters, in communities that are suffering acute shortages of food, water and basic services.

Over 370,000 children whose families have experienced death, injury or the loss of their home, require counseling or other forms of support. Thousands of fishing families are unable to earn a living as they are unable to resume fishing for a variety of reasons.

The Palestinian people now face the worst humanitarian crisis since 2008.







# HOW ISLAMIC RELIEF IS HELPING

From its office in Gaza, Islamic Relief has been responding to the crisis since day one. Our rapid assessment – conducted according to international standards including Sphere for internally displaced people – established how we could best deliver assistance to the minimum standards in food, shelter, non-food items, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) as well as health.

We are currently providing humanitarian aid to 19 emergency shelters - which include schools, an orphanage, a mosque and a church – covering over 15,700 displaced people.

Since the crisis began, we have delivered the following aid and assistance:



## ▶ FOOD

- ▶ 15,578 ready-to-eat foodpacks (1,500 packs on a daily basis). The packs include 500g cream cheese, 266g cheese, 800g canned meat, 650g halawa, 280g canned tuna as well as bread and one litre of milk.
- ▶ 2,050 food parcels for displaced people living in the community (1,150 in Gaza City, 500 in North Gaza and 400 in Middle Area).
- ▶ 6,004 meals of chicken and rice (500 hot meals on a daily basis).
- ▶ Ten truckloads of food delivered to hospitals.

## WHAT'S INSIDE AN ISLAMIC RELIEF FOOD PARCEL?

The parcels for people living in the community contained 5kg rice, 1kg pasta, 1kg lentils, 2.8kg canned beans, 800g canned meat, 900g cheese, 1kg cream cheese, 400g hard cheese, 800g tomato paste, three litres of vegetable oil, 1.4kg halawa and 6kg sugar.

## SHELTER / NON-FOOD ITEMS

- ▶ 3,000 clothing kits for children aged up to twelve-years-old. With half of the kits for boys, and half for girls, clothing provided included trousers, a shirt or blouse, a pair of pajamas and a pair of shoes, as well as two sets of underwear.
- ▶ 3,200 Eid gifts provided to children living in emergency shelters.
- ▶ 642 kitchen sets distributed to displaced people.
- ▶ 100 mattresses and 74 blankets provided to Islamic Relief employees who have been affected and displaced by the conflict.

## HEALTH

- ▶ Five truckloads of essential drugs and disposables delivered to hospitals.
- ▶ Delivery of a further 20 truckloads of medical drugs underway.

## WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

- ▶ Providing eight shelters in Rafah with 30 water tanks (1,500 litre each)
- ▶ 290 hygiene kits distributed to displaced people, and a further distribution of 1,000 hygiene kits to displaced people underway.
- ▶ Hygiene messages delivered in sessions at emergency shelters.
- ▶ Providing water disinfections (Chlorine) for municipal wells.

# LIVE FROM GAZA



"I stay awake most of the night, worrying that the next name I hear on the radio will be of a friend or relative that has died. You need to stay awake because you might be instructed to evacuate your building. They tell you to evacuate by knocking on your roof. They knock on your roof with a missile. After the missile hits, you have three minutes to get out.

"I wonder, why do we have to go through this? Why are human beings dying? Why are men, women and children especially, deprived of their right to live safely and in peace?"

Mohammed, Islamic Relief Gaza



"A rocket hit the house where my cousin was sheltering. It left her injured, and cost her son, Abed, his leg. Evacuating during an electricity blackout was very difficult, especially for those that were injured and her disabled nephew. Her brother carried his disabled child, and her brother led his blind father out of the house.

"Abed was carried to hospital, but they could not treat him there as it had been bombed the same day. The family took him to Al Shifa Hospital, where surgeons operated to remove another five inches above his knee."

Maysara, Islamic Relief Gaza



“We were enjoying the summer vacation and Ramadan. When the conflict started, I began to hate our house. I want to stay in the school.”

Mo'taz, 11, explains how this conflict has taken away something that most children take for granted – the belief that their home is a place they are safe.

“The other day, my son asked me, ‘Dad, are we going to die?’ It breaks my heart that a small boy would ask such a question. What has he ever done in his life to even know about death? Around the world, children know nothing but playing and having fun. But not Palestinians in Gaza. I wish with all my heart that the children did not have to go through this.”

Mohammed, Islamic Relief Gaza

“While running from bombing and shelling, her 11-year old son was hit in the head by shrapnel. She stopped running to try to carry him, but she is pregnant and he was too heavy. Other running people swept and dragged her away, and she was forced to leave him behind. She does not know what has happened to him, and she is waiting here at the door to the school waiting and hoping for somebody to bring news of her son.”

A woman at an emergency shelter describes the experiences of one of her companions.

“Food supplies are better here, as Islamic Relief are providing some food. But we still don’t have mattresses or blankets. Children shower in the school yard or inside the classrooms.”

Since fleeing her home, Mrs Samia is living in a school now used as an emergency shelter



# ORPHANED CHILDREN AMONGST THE MOST VULNERABLE

Children in Gaza have witnessed violence, been displaced, had their homes destroyed, and may have lost relatives or friends to the violence.

Amidst the humanitarian crisis in Palestine, orphaned children are amongst the most vulnerable. For years, thousands of children have suffered shortages in food, water, and medical supplies – and now, this latest outbreak of conflict.

Islamic Relief sponsors 5,000 orphaned children in Gaza. Hundreds of these children have been affected by the current crisis. Some have lost their lives or suffered injuries. Some have had their homes destroyed or damaged. Others have lost the mothers or grandparents upon whom they depended.

## WHAT'S NEEDED?

### IMMEDIATE NEEDS

- ▶ Urgent medical supplies – especially for surgery and treating the injured.
- ▶ Medical points for assisting people with chronic diseases, pregnant women and children that need inoculations.
- ▶ Hygiene kits.
- ▶ Clothes (all sizes, all ages, both sexes).
- ▶ Mattresses, bedding sets.
- ▶ Potable water.
- ▶ Hot cooked meals.

## RECOVERY PHASE

Additional efforts should now be started to restore life in Gaza Strip, through:

- ▶ **Immediate Recovery:** Food assistance for severely affected people, and supporting the homeless people with temporary sheltering.
- ▶ Restoring livelihoods and empowering affected people, particularly farmers and fishermen.
- ▶ Restoring basic services of education, health, water and sanitation to affected.



## Humanitarian crisis affecting many sectors

As the humanitarian ceasefire began, Islamic Relief visited the most affected communities to assess their current needs.

All aspects of life and provision for basic needs have been adversely affected, deepening the humanitarian crisis in the enclave. Communities are without electricity, garbage is building up on the streets and people have very limited access to potable water and health services.

The Water Authority has issued a report stating that the water sector is in a catastrophic state.

The areas of Shujaeya and Beit Hanoun are especially affected. Power shortages have seen the amount of water treated reduce to a third of the previous quantity. The main treatment plant for waste water and five pump stations, as well as much of the water treatment network, has been damaged.

Initial reports highlight damage to the water desalination plant of the main aquifer, and also to the pipe infrastructure that supplies water to households. Four groundwater wells, five main water storage points, and many agricultural water wells have been destroyed.

Eighty per cent of primary health care centres have closed, as medics are caught up in dealing with casualties from the conflict. Doctors are reporting skin diseases spreading amongst people living in emergency shelters, as well as stomach ache affecting children.

# ISLAMIC RELIEF IN GAZA

Islamic Relief has been working in Gaza for almost 20 years – providing vital humanitarian assistance including food distribution, medical relief, orphan sponsorship and emergency programmes.

One of the few international agencies working on the ground throughout the 22-day war of 2008, our emergency response delivered life-saving aid to those that needed it most.

In the years that followed, our multi-million pound reconstruction programme included renovating and improving nine hospitals. As part of our emergency response to conflict in 2012, we delivered £1 million worth of medical supplies to hospitals treating casualties.

In 2014, Islamic Relief is once more providing vital humanitarian aid to Palestinian people whose lives have been ripped apart by conflict.



**PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT OUR WORK**  
**DONATE TO OUR PALESTINE EMERGENCY APPEAL TODAY**





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