World Health Organization

SITUATION REPORT
occupied Palestinian territory, Gaza
01 – 28 February 2019

HEALTH CLUSTER
OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

5 KILLED | **1188 INJURED** | **8 TRAUMA STABILISATION POINTS** | **233 ESSENTIAL DRUGS IMMEDIATELY NEEDED** | **12 HOURS OF ELECTRICITY AVAILABLE EVERY 24 HOURS**

Highlights

- From 01 to 28 February 2019, **five Palestinians were killed and 1,188 injured[1].** Of them, 630 were referred to hospitals.
- Since the start of the mass demonstrations in Gaza on 30 March 2018, **266 people have been killed and 29,130 injured.** Of them, 13,732 were treated and discharged from the Trauma Stabilization Points (TSPs) and 15,398 transferred to the Ministry of Health (MoH) and NGO hospitals. 6,557 people had live ammunition gunshot wounds, of which 5,937 (91%) presented limb wounds[2].



Injured patient receives pre-hospital care in the TSP. Credit: PRCS

- As the current fuel reserve for hospitals declines, mitigation measures such as reduced sterilization, diagnostic imaging, cleaning, laundry and catering services continue to affect the health system. However, the Electricity Distributing Company has connected most of the hospitals with extra grid lines, which has decreased the dependency on fuel to run backup generators. In addition, ad-hoc donations from various charities have prevented the closure of hospitals. Meanwhile, the MoH continues to highlight the potential threat facing the health sector, if the remaining fuel gets completely depleted.
- In order to respond to the growing cohort of injured people every week as well as to provide support to those seriously injured that need specialised treatment over a period of time, the Health Cluster requires a total of $ 28.2 million. Out of this, $ 9.7 million has been received, leaving a funding gap of $ 18.5 million. An additional $1.5 million is required to ensure the **minimum needed resources are available to prepare for and respond to the first 96 hours of potential escalation.**

[1] Ministry of Health (MoH)
[2] Ministry of Health (MoH)

Trauma Analysis 01 - 28 February

- **Casualties:**
  - Five Palestinians were killed, and 1,188 were injured by Israeli forces.
  - According to the available data, WHO found that the ambulance services transported a total of 647 patients. From this total, 593 patients were transported from the field to the TSP's, 368 patients were subsequently transferred to the hospitals and 54 patients were transported directly from the field to the hospitals (15% TSP bypass). This brings the total number of patients transported by the ambulances to the hospitals to 422.
  - 45% of all patients received at the MoH TSPs were transferred to hospitals, otherwise known as transfer rate. The Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) transfer rate was 73%.
  - During this period, the hospitals reported 630 emergency consultations for patients injured during the mass demonstrations. 422 arrived by ambulance and the transport mode of the remaining patients remains unknown due to limited data at the hospital level. Out of those, 171 were for injured by live ammunition. See figure 1 below for type of emergency consultations.
  - From the cohort of casualties referred to hospitals during this reporting period, 165 were children (26%), 45 (7%) were female and 585 (93%) were male. *See figure 2 below.*

Figure 1: Type of emergency consultations at hospitals 01 to 28 February 2019

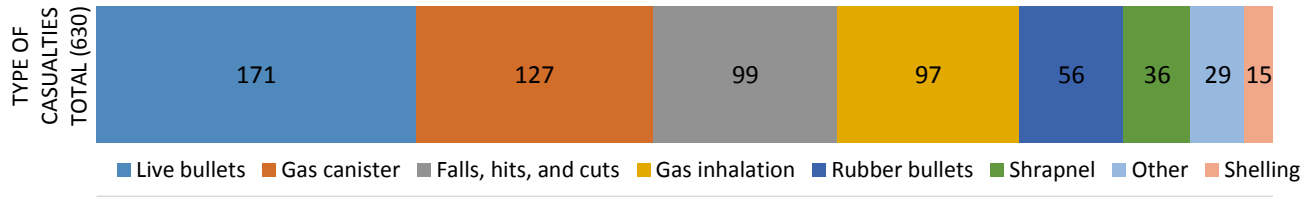


Figure 2: Emergency consultations at hospitals disaggregated by gender and age

Total	By gender		By age	
	Male	Female	Children	Adults
630	585	45	165	465

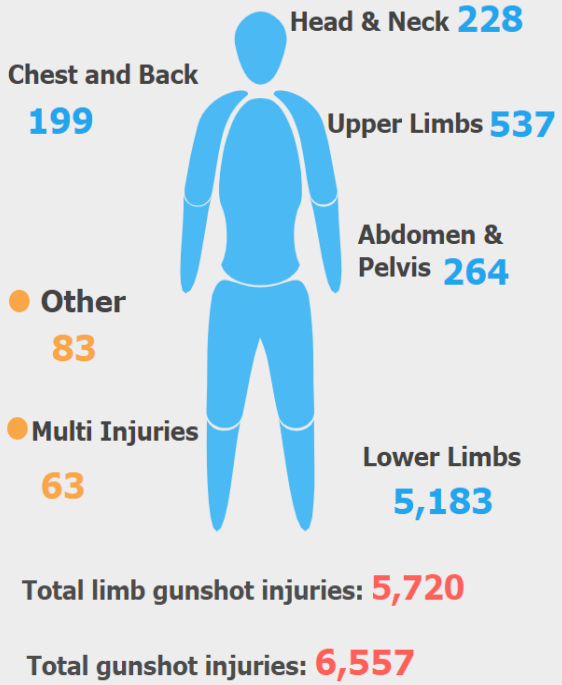
Cumulative Trauma Analysis since 30 March 2018

- **Deaths:** From 30 March until 31 January 2019, 266 people have been killed[3].
- **Injuries:** The total figure of people injured stands at 29,130.

[3] 10 bodies have been reported to be held by Israeli authorities, according to OCHA.

- **Trauma Stabilisation Points:** Out of 29,130 people injured, 13,732 were treated at the TSPs and discharged. This has reduced the burden of casualties arriving at the hospitals by an average of 47%.
- **Hospital caseload:** The remaining 15,398 casualties were stabilized and transferred for treatment at the emergency departments (ED) of MoH and NGO hospitals.
- **Live ammunition gunshot injuries:** Out of the total 15,398 referred to emergency departments (ED) at hospitals, 6,557 cases were live ammunition gunshot injuries; these account for 43% of the total casualties arriving at the hospitals. From the 6,557 live ammunition gunshot injuries, 87% are limb gunshot injuries. Refer to figure 3 for a breakdown of gunshot wounds by affected body part.
- **Permanent disability:**
    - **Amputations**: **124 amputations** have taken place as a result of injuries during the mass demonstrations, including 21 in children. 109 were lower limb amputations and 15 upper limb amputations[4].
    - **Paralysis:** 22 patients are currently paralyzed due to spinal cord injuries.
    - **Eye injuries**: Nine people suffered permanent loss of vision as a result of injuries caused during the mass demonstrations.

Figure 3. Live ammunition gunshot injuries by affected body part



Electricity in Gaza

- As the current fuel reserves for hospitals decline, mitigation measures such as reduced sterilization, diagnostic imaging, cleaning, laundry and catering services continue to affect the health system. However, the Electricity Distributing Company has connected most of the hospitals with extra grid lines, which has decreased the dependency on fuel to run backup generators.
- So far, ad-hoc donations from various charities have prevented the closure of hospitals. Meanwhile, the MoH continues to highlight the potential threat facing the health sector, if the remaining fuel gets completely depleted.

Payment of Healthcare Staff

- The MoH in Gaza is running services through a network of 49 primary health care centres (PHCs) and 13 hospitals across the Gaza Strip. Currently, the MoH has 10,492 employees.

[4] According to Assalama Society

- The health authorities in Gaza report that additional 261 health employees had their salary payments suspended as of January 2019. 213 of these continue reporting to duty, including 72 doctors, 37 nurses, 16-pharmacists, 18 lab technicians and X-ray technicians. Out of the total 213 who continue working, 129 are in hospitals, 49 in primary care, and the majority of the remainder are in senior administrative positions.

Impact of Great March of Return on other services

- The persistent shortages of essential drugs and disposables for noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) (60%) and maternal and child health (69%), reported by the Gaza Central Drug Store[5], negatively impact the ability of PHC centres and hospitals to provide life-saving health services such as safe delivery and emergency obstetric and neonatal care and management of NCDs. Moreover, the current electricity shortages might affect functioning of critical medical equipment needed to treat at least 900 patients in need of dialysis and to support low birth weight neonates.

Nutrition Update

In October 2018, the Nutrition sub-Cluster Working Group led by UNICEF, jointly with the World Food Programme and Save the Children conducted a nutrition needs-assessment to determine the nutritional status and the practices of pregnant and lactating women and children 0-59 months in nine most vulnerable localities across the five governorates of the Gaza Strip. Key findings of the assessment are summarized below:

- A large proportion of the population has a suboptimal Food Consumption Score, which is related to diet variety and frequency;
- The nutritional status of pregnant and lactating women is deteriorating with 18% of pregnant women and 14% of lactating mothers found to be malnourished;
- Only 14% of children have a minimum acceptable diet;
- Bottle-feeding among the assessed population is wide-spread (41%) and the use of infant formula is more than 30% among infants less than 6 months;
- More than 40% of children under-five experienced Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI) and diarrhoea, significantly increasing the risk of malnutrition and associated mortality. The non-exclusively breastfed children were two times more affected by diarrhoea and ARI, compared with those who were exclusively breastfed;
- Caring practices are critical in the development and growth of children, especially in the first two years of life. Findings show that only 50% of children less than 2 years eat on their own without the support and stimulation of caregivers;
- Assessment of WASH practices shows that majority of the respondents washes their hands after using the bathroom and before cooking but 25% have no soaps for hand washing.

The recommendations of the assessment call for scaling up interventions to support maternal and child nutrition, including around Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies, as well as addressing other immediate and underlying causes of malnutrition.

[5] MoH Central Drug Store report, Gaza, December 2018 as reported in January 2019.

Access for patients referred out of Gaza

- **WHO** continues to monitor the access of patients from Gaza and attacks against healthcare across the oPt. For additional information on access barriers for Palestinian patients, see WHO's latest monthly access report.
- As of 28 February 2019, according to Gaza's Coordination and Liaison Office, there had been 499 applications to Israeli authorities by those injured in demonstrations to exit Gaza via Erez crossing to access health care. Of those applications, 18% were approved, 28% were denied and 54% were delayed.

Attacks against health

- According to data reported to WHO by the MoH, Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS), PRCS, Unions of Workers Committee (UHWC) and other health providers for the period 1 to 28 February 2019, at least 5 health workers were injured and 2 ambulances were damaged in 7 incidents of attacks on healthcare in the Gaza Strip. Of the health workers, 3 were hit by gas canisters, 1 sustained a physical injury and 1 had a combined injury of severe gas inhalation and physical injury.
- Cumulative figures on attacks against health: From 30 March 2018 to 28 February 2019, 3 health workers have been killed and 633 injured in 420 recorded incidents against health staff and facilities. 98 ambulances were damaged, as well as 5 other forms of health transport and 3 health facilities.

Emergency Response

Partners' response:

- **WHO** procured and delivered 2 drug items, with a total value of approximately €30,250, estimated to benefit around 2,000 patients for one month.



Health Cluster meeting in Gaza, held at the PMRS premises. Credit: WHO

- **Humanity and Inclusion (HI)** in a partnership with four local organizations (Baitona for community development in North Gaza, Palestinian Avenir for Childhood foundation in Gaza, National Society for Rehabilitation In both Middle Area and Khan Younis, EL-Amal Rehabilitation Society in Rafah) has mobilized 10 multidisciplinary outreach teams. A total of 45 professionals were involved, including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, nurses and social workers from all five governorates. HI and partners assessed 2,048 persons with injuries, out of whom 1,984 (1,941 males and 43 females) have received multidisciplinary rehabilitative services. 248 persons with injuries (244 males and 4 females) have been readmitted again to receive other cycles of rehabilitation intervention as per their wounds conditions. Those injured benefitted from 37,250 multidisciplinary sessions. HI has also distributed 725 assistive devices including wheelchairs, elbow and axillary crutches, and anti-bed sore mattresses.

- **United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)** provided 59 injured persons with surgical dressings, 42 with medications and 31 with both surgical dressing and medication bringing the total to 5,358 people.
- **Islamic Relief (IR)** delivered 3 drug items worth 26,000 USD to the MoH, estimated to benefit 16,000 patients.
- **Union of Health Work Committees (UHWC)** teams provided first aid to 80 cases, including 48 cases at Al Awda hospital emergency department, and 32 cases at the medical point in Rafah, out of the total, 13 cases were gunshot injuries, 32 gas inhalations, 22 bruises, 2 rubber, and 11 shrapnel.
- **Palestine Children's Relief Fund (PCRF)** deployed 6 missions that screened 214 and treated 44 cases with surgeries that normally are not available in Gaza.
- **Doctors Worldwide – Turkey** conducted 1680 treatment sessions for 255 beneficiaries including 835 treatment sessions for nursing, 385 medical examinations, 383 physical therapy sessions and 77 psychosocial support interventions.



Surgeons deployed to Gaza. Credit: PRCF

- **Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS)** provided first aid to a total of 161 during the demonstrations. Out of those 24 were shot with live bullets. Since the start of demonstrations, PMRS has provided first aid to a total of 5,574 victims including 4,443 males, 403 females, 605 boys and 123 girls. PMRS has also added 71 new patients to postoperative care services, raising the total of beneficiaries to 1,094.
- **Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP – UK)** continued its support to the limb reconstruction units at Shifa Hospital and European Gaza Hospital (EGH). Total number of cases assessed at the local outpatient clinics at both hospitals was 41. In addition, the total number of surgeries conducted by the local team was 4. Through the period 24-28 February 2019 MAP deployed a UK team of ortho-plastic specialists to Gaza. During their visit 76 patients were assessed at the OPC (46 Shifa – 30 EGH) out of which 17 surgeries were conducted (10 Shifa – 7 EGH), one case was a female. Overall the number of patients assessed during the reporting period was 117 of which 21 received surgeries. MAP delivered tow medical disposable items to the MoH stores. The items are expected to benefit 2776 patients.
- **Caritas Jerusalem** gave treatment for 290 injured cases (57 North, 84 Gaza, 30 Al. Burij, 30 Rafah, and 89 Khan Yunis).
- **Medicos del Mundo (MdM) - Spain** deployed an emergency medical team (EMT) consisting of one trauma surgeon, one plastic surgeon, one anaesthesiologist doctor and an operation theatre nurse, during the week of February 24, 2019 at Al-Aqsa Hospital. The EMT carried out a mission of 5 days. During the mission they screened 45 patients and carried out 22 orthopaedic surgical interventions. Also, donated to Al-Aqsa Hospital various surgical disposables, equipment and material, as well as an anaesthesia machine and 100 first aid kits to the 4 MoH TSPs.

Coordination and Information:

- A Gaza Health Cluster meeting took place on 12 February, attended by 42 people representing 28 organizations.
- An emergency partners Cluster meeting took place on the 26 February to agree the trauma needs and priority activities for 2019.
- The Health Cluster organized a donor field visit and briefed on the health status and needs in light of the GRM weekly mass demonstrations.
- On Thursday 14th March, the Health Cluster partners will meet in Gaza to discuss the updated preparedness and contingency plans.

Urgent Funding Needs

- In order to respond to the growing cohort of injured people every week as well as to provide support to those seriously injured that need specialised treatment over a period of time, the Health Cluster requires a total of $ 28.2 million. Out of this, $ 9.7 million has been received, leaving a funding gap of $ 18.5 million. An additional $1.5 million is required to ensure the **minimum needed resources are available to prepare for and respond to the first 96 hours of a potential escalation.**

- The Health Cluster partners also require **$ 32 million USD** to address acute health needs of the most vulnerable communities in the occupied Palestinian territory for 2019, targeting 900,000 people out of the 1.2 million Palestinians are in need of humanitarian health assistance. See the Humanitarian Response Plan 2019.

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