

Lack of water in Gaza ‘a health crisis on the brink of explosion’, says charity

Lack of access to water is one of the biggest challenges in Gaza, according to the international charity Action Against Hunger, which is warning of “a health crisis on the brink of explosion”.


Staff at the charity say overcrowded displacement shelters are close to breaking point. They add that one shelter in Gaza is currently supporting more than 24,000 people and that 60% of the children there are affected by diarrhoea. Some people are also resorting to open defecation.



📷 Palestinians fetch water in the southern Gaza Strip city of Khan Younis. Photograph: Xinhua/Shutterstock

The UN estimates that there are fewer than 3 litres of water per person each day for the 2.3 million people living in Gaza, half of whom are children who are most at risk from water shortages and diarrhoeal infections – the leading cause of child mortality globally. And that amount is likely to decrease by the day as supplies and fuel used to make water drinkable in the desalination plants are reduced.

Chiara Saccardi, officer for the Middle East at Action Against Hunger, said:



Faced with this impossible situation, many Gazan families are resorting to non-drinking water sources, such as agricultural wells. This puts them at imminent risk of dehydration and even an outbreak of infectious diseases such as cholera. Such an epidemic, if it happens, would make this serious crisis an even bigger problem.

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