



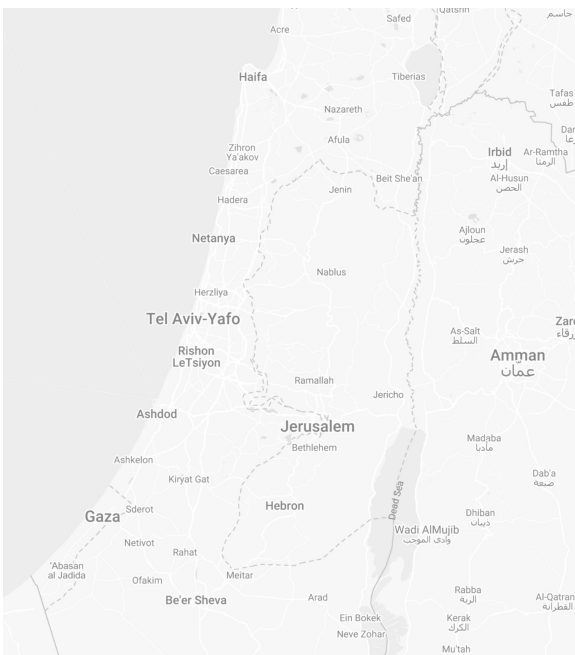
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There Is Not Enough Water in Gaza to Survive

November 3, 2023



GAZA & THE WEST BANK

Population: 5.2 million

People in Need: 2.1 million

OUR IMPACT

People Helped

Last Year:

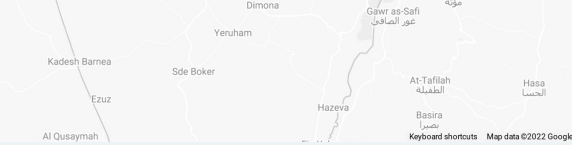
820,049

Our Team: 89

employees

Program Start:

2002



Action Against Hunger, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam, CARE, and WeWorld issue a joint statement warning of the consequences of the lack of access to safe water in Gaza and the measures needed to ensure the safety of the civilian population.

More than 25 days after the start of the war, extreme constraints to safe and sustained access to water in Gaza continue to threaten the lives of thousands of families. Between October 16-24, the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Cluster (WASH) estimated that the population had access to only 1 to 3 liters of water per day to meet all their needs. This shortage raises fears of dehydration, kidney failure and other critical health consequences, especially for already vulnerable people.

In the last week, the WASH Cluster has reported a slight increase in the daily

amount of water available. This fluctuation in daily water availability is based on a number of factors including the ability to safely transport existing water supplies, the functionality of Israeli water pipelines and the emergency fuel reserves available for the two remaining operational seawater desalination plants, which are currently operating at 5-40% of capacity, according to the UN.

Women, especially pregnant or lactating women, along with children, face increased risks due to lack of adequate water and sanitation. Children under five years of age are more susceptible to waterborne diseases due to contaminated water and inadequate hygiene. Lack of water makes it difficult to manage menstruation in a hygienic and dignified manner, leading many women and girls to use menstrual products for longer than intended, increasing the risk of infection.

Entry of Supplies and Fuel into the Gaza Strip

Fuel has still not entered the Strip, even though Gaza's basic water infrastructure require a daily minimum of 30,000 litres of fuel to function. The lack of fuel has led to the total closure of sewage treatment plants, resulting in the daily discharge of more than 130,000 cubic metres of raw sewage into the Mediterranean Sea, a serious environmental hazard. About 80 percent of Gaza's water supply is from wells and underground aquifers, which require fuel for extraction and desalination. Most water tankers are empty of fuel, and residents resort to donkeys to transport the limited water

supply available.

Despite the dire needs facing Gazan families, between October 21 and November 1, only 26 truckloads of lifesaving water and sanitation supplies entered Gaza, according to OCHA, which is nowhere near enough to cover the population's essential survival needs.

While on October 29, the Israeli authorities confirmed their intention to resume water supplies to central Gaza and gave the green light to the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) to repair a critical water pipeline, it remains uncertain whether the PWA has the necessary resources, security conditions, supplies and qualified personnel to carry out these repairs effectively. Once operational, this pipeline could significantly improve the availability of drinking water in the area. In contrast, the water supply from Israel to the western part of Khan Younis, which was reconnected on October 15, was interrupted on October 30 for unclear reasons. The third pipeline from Israel to northern Gaza has remained closed since October 8.

Meanwhile, access to water in the West Bank, especially for remote communities in Area C, is increasingly at risk. The Consortium for the Protection of the West Bank reports that some communities are suffering water shortages due to Israeli checkpoints and road closures. In addition, there is an increase in settler violence against water and sanitation systems. This includes damage to the main water pipeline for residents of Masafer Yatta in the South Hebron Hills, destruction of water storage tanks, and restrictions on movement and access preventing locals from reaching their primary water sources.

Since October 7, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza has deteriorated significantly due to the escalation of hostilities. Exacerbated by 16 years of blockade and multiple previous rounds of devastating escalations of violence, the Gaza Strip now faces catastrophic needs for water, sanitation and hygiene, essential for the survival of its 2.3 million inhabitants, half of whom are children.

The Undersigned Actors Make an Urgent Appeal:

- All parties to the conflict, world leaders and the global humanitarian community to call for an immediate ceasefire to ensure the protection of civilians and the unimpeded supply of essential goods, including water, to and within the Gaza Strip.
- That all parties respect international humanitarian law, which requires the protection of civilians and the protection of infrastructure critical to the survival of the civilian population, including water and sanitation infrastructure, from harm.
- A significant increase in the number of daily truckloads of humanitarian aid entering Gaza. This must include an increase in the supply of water and sanitation resources to address the dire needs of the local population. Humanitarian aid must include personal, household and institutional hygiene items; cleaning products; and the vital influx of spare parts and materials needed for urgent repairs to war-damaged water infrastructure.
- That all parties agree to the immediate supply of fuel to Gaza. This is

essential to revive and reinforce the vital water and sanitation infrastructure necessary for the survival of Gaza's civilian population.

- Unconditional, unrestricted and continuous restoration of all water supplied by Israel to Gaza through the three Mekorot water supply lines.
- The protection of communities in Area C of the West Bank from the risk of forced transfer, and that perpetrators of violence against these communities are held accountable. We call for an end to restrictions on the movement of Palestinian communities in the West Bank to allow access to goods and services for these vulnerable communities.

Signatories

Action Against Hunger

CARE

Norwegian Refugee Council

Oxfam

WeWorld

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Conflict

Gaza & the West Bank

Middle East

Action Against Hunger leads the global movement to end hunger. We innovate solutions, advocate for change, and reach 21 million people every year with proven hunger prevention and treatment programs. As a nonprofit that works across 55 countries, our 8,900 dedicated staff members partner with communities to address the root causes of hunger, including climate change, conflict, inequity, and emergencies. We strive to create a world free from hunger. for everyone. for good.

