



The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics" PCBS" Issues a Press Release on World Health Day, April 7th, 2024

On the occasion of World Health Day on April 7th, 2024, we must emphasize that health is a basic right for every human being, and that the international community and the entire world are obligated to provide the necessary conditions to preserve this right. With the ongoing war of genocide against Gaza Strip and the continuing violation of human rights, including the right to health, and the Israeli occupation quest to erase all aspects of their life, the population of Gaza Strip is facing unprecedented catastrophic situations.

Collapse of the health system

The Israeli aggression and the ongoing siege on Gaza Strip, coupled with the scarcity of medical supplies, food, water, and fuel, as well as continuous attacks and targeting of medical personnel, have severely strained the healthcare system in Gaza. Since October 7th, the World Health Organization has documented over 600 attacks on healthcare facilities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. These assaults have led to the closure of several hospitals and health centers. Out of the 36 operational hospitals in Gaza Strip, only 10 are partially functioning (4 in the north, 6 in the south and central regions). Additionally, 76% of primary healthcare centers have ceased operations¹. In the West Bank, 286 attacks on healthcare have preventing care delivery, including the provision of essential medications and equipment, hospital closures, and obstruction of ambulance access.

Hospitals in Gaza Strip are operating far beyond their capacity, with the remaining hospitals functioning at 359% of their capacity. This significantly hampers the quality and safety of healthcare services provided, due to the high number of the injured, with more than 75,000 injured until March 27th, 2024. The aggression also resulted in the martyrdom of 489 medical staff and specialists, while 600 others have been injured. Additionally, more than 310 medical personnel have been detained, as well as the destruction of more than 126 ambulances and rendered them out of service, according to the report issued by the Ministry of Health in Gaza Strip until April 04th, 2024.

Approximately 350,000 persons in Gaza Strip, who are suffering from chronic diseases, were deprived of accessing necessary healthcare, including 71,000 diabetes patients, 225,000 high blood pressure patients, 45,000 cardiovascular patients, in addition to those suffering from cancer and kidney failure patients, and other diseases². The lack of essential medicines, supplies, and medical equipment, and the closure of

¹ [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel - reported impact | Day 173 | United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - occupied Palestinian territory \(ochaopt.org\)](https://www.ochaopt.org/)

² [Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/)



healthcare facilities directly impede access to health services for survival, as well as the closure of the only specialized cancer hospital for cancer patients and the psychiatric hospital in Gaza Strip.

At least 31 deaths due to malnutrition and dehydration, including 28 children

The spread of malnutrition is alarmingly accelerating and reaching devastating levels in Gaza Strip due to the severe levels of food insecurity and the spread of diseases due to the ongoing Israeli aggression since October 7th, 2023. The Israeli occupation has closed all crossing points into Gaza Strip and prevented aid trucks from entering Gaza Strip, particularly to North Gaza and Gaza governorates.

According to a study conducted by UNICEF and partners in February, approximately 31% of children under the age of two years in northern Gaza Strip suffer from acute malnutrition, and this percentage has doubled within just one month, which was about 16% in January. While malnutrition rates among children under five years increased from 13% to 25% during the January-February period in northern Gaza Strip³. Additionally, about 5% of children under two years suffer from severe wasting in northern Gaza Strip, which is considered the most serious form of malnutrition. It places children at the highest risk of medical consequences and death unless they receive urgent therapeutic nutrition.

As for the governorates of Rafah and Khan Yunis, which have better opportunities for aid access, malnutrition among children under two years of age rates reached about 10% and 28%, respectively.

The “Integrated Food Security Phase Classification” (IPC) report, prepared by UN institutions, showed that approximately 2.13 million people in Gaza Strip faced high levels of acute food insecurity classified as stage 3 or higher (crisis or worse) between February 15th and March 15th, 2024, including nearly 677,000 persons experiencing catastrophic food insecurity (Phase 5). Furthermore, estimates expected that 1.1 million persons in Gaza Strip, roughly half of its population, are at risk of catastrophic food insecurity, and that famine is imminent in northern Gaza Strip, and is expected to occur between now and May.

More than 90% of children under five years have at least one infectious disease

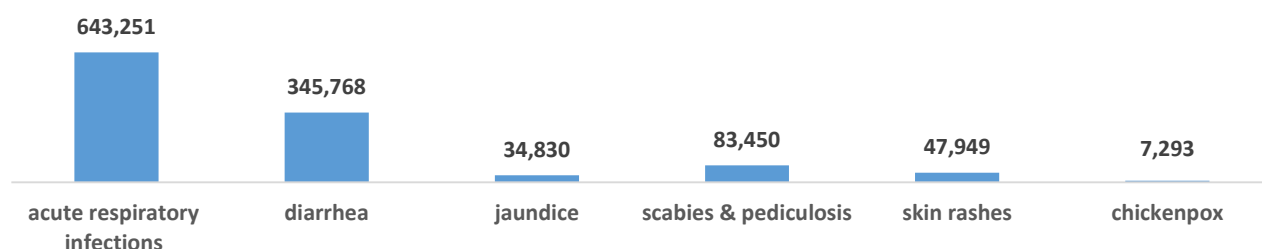
The situation throughout Gaza Strip has deteriorated with the collapse of health systems. The increased prevalence of infectious diseases and epidemics due to overcrowding in places of displacement, limited access to clean water and inadequate water, poor sanitation, reduced food diversity, lack of basic hygiene supplies, disruption of vaccine programs for preventable diseases and disruption of the health-care system due to Israeli aggression.

³ [Acute malnutrition has doubled in one month in the north of Gaza strip: UNICEF](#)



A study conducted by UNICEF in February on the nutritional situation in Gaza Strip under the Israeli aggression, mentioned that more than 90% of children under five years of age were infected with at least one infectious disease during the two weeks before the survey⁴. In the same context, WHO reports indicated that more than 640,000 cases of acute respiratory infections were recorded, and nearly 346,000 cases of diarrhea, of which 105,635 were among children under five years. Also, additional signs of epidemics such as jaundice, chickenpox and skin diseases have been detected. In a previous report issued in March, the Ministry of Health in Gaza Strip indicated that more than 31,348 cases of Hepatitis A infection have been recorded.

Numbers of persons affected by certain infectious diseases in Gaza Strip during 7/10/2023 - 02/04/2024



Source: WHO, Gaza Strip - Emergency Reports, No. 27 [Sitrep - issue 27 \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/emergencies/gaza-strip/emergency-reports)

A rise in miscarriages and premature births

More than 540,000 women of reproductive age reside in Gaza Strip and it is estimated that more than 5,000 births occur monthly. According to the data of the Palestinian Multiple Indicator Survey 2019-2020 (PMICS6), about a quarter of births in Gaza Strip are delivered via caesarean section and in light of the inability to obtain healthcare, including reproductive health services and performing operations without basic medical supplies or anesthesia and without any postnatal care, this puts the lives of pregnant women at risk and increases their chances of exposure to complications during pregnancy or childbirth, which may lead to an increase in maternal mortality. Reports of the Ministry of Health in Gaza Strip also indicated that hundreds of cases of miscarriage and premature births were recorded as a result of panic and displacement. On the other hand, increasing food insecurity and malnutrition among the population of Gaza Strip prevent mothers from being able to eat adequate nutrition and breastfeed their newborns. Access to clean water, sanitation and limited hygiene products also contribute to the vulnerability of women and children to various diseases and threatens their lives.

⁴ [GAZA-Nutrition-vulnerability-and-SitAn-v7.pdf \(nutritioncluster.net\)](https://nutritioncluster.net/gaza-nutrition-vulnerability-and-sitAn-v7.pdf)