

occupied Palestinian territory

Health Sector Needs Assessment

The general health situation in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) shows that growing difficulties for the Ministry of Health and its partners in ensuring the provision of and access to quality health services have increased the need for humanitarian assistance in health in the whole of the oPt. There is a need to address the gaps in essential service delivery, specifically in areas with severe access restrictions, as well as to strengthen communities' capacities to deal with health emergencies. Effective information sharing and coordination at all levels need to be maintained and strengthened to ensure that emergency health needs are identified and addressed in an effective and efficient manner. The promotion of health as a human right remains of the utmost importance and calls for advocacy focusing on improvements in access and other essential health issues.

Between 27 December 2008 and 18 January 2009, Israeli forces conducted a major military operation in the Gaza Strip, resulting in extensive casualties and destruction of homes, livelihoods and infrastructures, and further weakening the health system. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, 1326 Palestinians were killed during this period, including an estimated 430 children and 110 women, and 5450 were injured, including 1855 children and 795 women. Sixteen out of 27 hospitals and 38 primary health care clinics in the Strip were damaged during the hostilities. Health personnel were themselves victims of the conflict, with 16 killed and 22 injured while on duty. A Flash Appeal for Gaza was issued on 2 February 2009. It includes detailed information on the health sector situation, the specific needs, the health sector response strategy and planned projects in Gaza.

Health Sector Priorities for 2009

Access to essential health services

Ensure that people living in these areas have access to essential health services:

- The Gaza Strip 's Khan Younis East villages and the eight refugee camps;
- Southern West Bank Area C: communities near settlements and military zones, H2 in Hebron City;



- Central West Bank, East Jerusalem, Biddu area, Al Jib area, An Nabi Samwil, Khalili, Beit Iksa, Area C Jerusalem District;
- Jordan Valley e.g. Jiftlik, Bardala, E.Beidah, Jahaleen;
- West and northwest villages of Ramallah e.g. Ni'lin, Bilin, Rantis, Qibya;
- South East Nablus–B.Furiq, Asirah Qibliyah; South East Nablus–Azmout, Salim, Madama and areas near settlements;
- Qalqilya, Salfi, Jenin and Tulkhareh: communities surrounded by the Barrier and close to the Barrier as well as in proximity to Israeli infrastructure;
- Tukarem: villages close to the Israeli industrial zone.

Specific targets include vulnerable groups such as neonates, children and women, pregnant women at high risk, the elderly, disabled and chronically sick, Bedouin, herders and people with mental health problems. Existing services will be strengthened and mobile clinics made available. Assistance with transportation of patients to secondary and tertiary care will also be provided.

Health as a human right

Advocacy is essential to highlight and address obstacles to access and improved health care. Priority will be given to increasing awareness of the right to health and the most flagrant violations of that right. Access difficulties will be documented. Activities include the formulation of a joint advocacy strategy with the Ministry of Health and other agencies, media campaigns, workshops and dialogue with the Israeli authorities.

Information and coordination

Coordination mechanisms at central and district levels will be strengthened to improve identification of emergency health needs and the delivery of appropriate assistance. A health-facility database (currently being updated by WHO and the Ministry of Health) will be used to review priorities. Data will be consolidated for more effective joint planning. A joint monitoring framework will be developed and implemented by the Ministry of Health.

Community empowerment

There will be greater emphasis on empowering communities to reduce health risks, promoting community risk mapping, healthier life-styles and behaviours, and identifying how basic health needs can be more effectively met.

WHO Proposed Projects in the CAP 2009

Project titles	Requested funds *	Implementing partners
Advocacy for access to health as a fundamental human right (Early Recovery) OPT 09/H/20574	226 305	MOH, UNICEF, UN-RWA, Care, MSF, MAP, HI, Merci, Merlin, SC
Strengthen emergency preparedness and response of the health sector in the oPt (Early Recovery) OPT 09/H/20576	187 000	

Project titles	Requested funds *	Implementing partners
Improved access of patient and staff to East Jerusalem hospitals (Humanitarian) OPT 09/H/20584	502 900	EJH association, PRCS
Procurement of pharmaceuticals for MoH strategic buffer stock in Gaza (Humanitarian) OPT 09/H/20585	2 824 965	MoH, ECHO, Norway, Italy, OCHA
Monitoring health trends in emergency (Early Recovery) OPT 09/H/20586	52 650	MoH
Nutrition surveillance system (Early Recovery) OPT 09/H/20587	204 750	MoH, UNICEF, UNRWA, Care, MSF, MAP, HI, Merci, Merlin, SC
Protection of Palestinian localities in Nablus, Salfit and Qalqiya from environmental health hazards caused by settlements' waste water. (Early Recovery) OPT 09/WS/20577/122	162 640	MoH
Strengthen humanitarian Health Cluster coordination and operational capacities OPT 09/CSS/23973/122	1 500 000	MoH, ERCS, PRCS
Restoring critical hospital services in the Gaza Strip OPT-09/H/23886/122	5 061 100	MoH, IOM, CARE, other cluster partners
Joint nutrition assessment of children under five, adolescents and pregnant women in the Gaza Strip OPT-09/H/24007/122	50 000	MOH, UNRWA, WHO, UNICEF, MAP-UK, SC-US
Identifying and addressing environmental health risks OPT-09/H/24030/122	250 000	MoH, local/international NGOs, water authority
Strengthening disease surveillance, early warning and outbreak response OPT-09/H/24032/122	200 000	MoH, UNICEF, NGOs
Restoring and strengthening quality of PHC services OPT-09/H/24033/122	300 000	MoH, National NGOs (PMRS), other health partners
Strengthening nutrition surveillance in Gaza OPT-09/H/24034	200 000	MoH, local NGOs, UNICEF
Mental health – psychosocial response to Gaza Crisis OPT-09/H/24052	750 000	Palestinian general population, MoH mental health professionals and PHC staff, MoE (supervisors & counselors), local NGOs

* Amounts given in US dollars.

Total funds requested: US\$ 12 472 310