

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) issues a press release highlighting that the children and women of Gaza Strip face an unprecedented humanitarian disaster

Ramallah, 24/10/2023 @ 13:00 PM/Palestine Time

About 1.10 million women lived in Gaza Strip prior to the aggression of the Israeli occupation on October 7th, 2023. They constitute 49.3% of the total population in Gaza Strip, of whom 590 thousand live in the northern governorates of Gaza Strip (Northern Gaza Governorate and Gaza Governorate) with a percentage of 53.5% of females in Gaza Strip. Also, round 1.05 million children under the age of 18 years live in Gaza Strip prior to the aggression of the Israeli occupation; 47.1% of total population in Gaza Strip, of whom about 32% are under the age of five (340 thousand children).

Israeli occupation kills an average of 3 females and 5 children every single hour in Gaza Strip

The Israeli aggression continues to target civilians in Gaza Strip, where Gaza Strip faced 597 massacresⁱ since the beginning of the Israeli aggression that started on October 7th until this date (an average of 35 massacres per day). The number of Palestinian martyrs as of the seventeenth day of the Israeli aggression on Gaza Strip reached more than 5,087, of whom more than 1,119 were females (3 female martyrs per hour) and more than 2,055 childrenⁱⁱ (5 child martyrs every hour), where about 65% of martyrs are children and women. Within the same context, 96 martyrs in the West Bank since October 7th, 2023 and until this day, including 30 children and one woman. The number of martyrs of children under 18 years old who were killed during the period 2014-2022 has reached 864, in addition to 170 children detained in Israeli prisons.

6 persons out of every 10 in Gaza Strip are displacedⁱⁱⁱ

1.4 Million persons in Gaza Strip were forcibly displaced (493 thousand women and young girls)^{iv}, and 98 Palestinian households lost ten of their family members and even more. In addition, 95 Palestinian households lost 6-9 members of their family, while 357 Palestinian households lost two – five members of their family. In the same context, there are more than 830 children in Gaza Strip reported to be missing.

Women's and children's health is in danger

There are about 546 thousand women of childbearing age (15-49 years) in Gaza Strip, 58% are married. Moreover, health reports in Gaza Strip indicate that there are about 50 thousand pregnant women in Gaza Strip, 5,500 women of them are due in the next week, an average of 183 newborns per day in Gaza Strip^v. This means that there is a high probability of an increase in births that will be delivered in unsafe health conditions. Accordingly, this is a serious violation of women's rights and may endanger their lives and the lives of their infants. However, access to safe and basic childbirth services is one of the major challenges facing women in Gaza Strip due to the unsafe movement in addition to the fact that health centers are exposed to be bombed at any moment. Furthermore, there are 10 hospitals suspended their health services^{vi}. Consequently, daily delivery rates at Gaza's main hospital "Al- Shifa Hospital" dropped from 30 - 40 cases, in normal situations, to 21 births per day, where they are discharged two or three hours after delivery so that the hospital can provide space for other patients. Also, pregnant women in Gaza need 300 ml of fluids to support their unborn children, but Israeli siege on Gaza restricts their access to clean water and healthy nutrition^{vii}. The availability rate of water decreased to 3 liters per day per person, where 3 desalination plants stopped operating completely^{viii}, affecting their health and increasing risks during childbirth. It is worth mentioning that 96% of households rely on unsafe drinking water in normal situations (an improved source of drinking water within the housing unit is free of E.coli bacteria and available at any time).

Psychological health of Gaza citizens is worsening even before the Israeli aggression on Gaza Strip

A study prepared by the World Bank in collaboration with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) on psychological health in terms of the impact of the Israeli occupation war on Gaza Strip in 2021, where data of this study were collected in the first quarter of 2022, indicated that 71% of the population in Gaza Strip (18 years and above) suffer from depression as a result of the Israeli aggression against Gaza Strip. Accordingly, levels of depression were similar among women and men. Additionally, the psychological health stress among individuals in Gaza Strip worsens during the times of Israeli aggression, as there is nowhere safe left to go for the people of Gaza Strip. Also, common psychological health disorders worsen too, where there is a positive correlation between extreme poverty and mental health disorders. Consequently, all children and women in Gaza Strip have been exposed to all kinds of psychological disorders because of the Israeli aggression against

Gaza. These people suffer adverse effects on their psychosocial health as a result of the difficult conditions they live in, including deteriorating psychological health, high rates of anxiety and depression, poor social relationships and the difficulty to adjust to the new situation. This means that these individuals have not yet recovered from the trauma they experienced in 2021, and they are now, living another Israeli aggression against Gaza Strip, about to worsen their psychological health situation where other people will be dragged to the same sufferings and suffer from psychological disorders, depression...etc.

A deterioration in food security

During the first half of 2023, poverty among female-headed households in Gaza Strip increased (52.2%) compared to those in the West Bank (10.2%), which further complicates the situation for these households in light of the prevailing conditions that often worsen the adaptation to economic and social burdens, especially with high unemployment rates (66%) among female participants in the labour force (15 years and above) in Gaza Strip during the second quarter of 2023. Knowingly, 41% of the households in Gaza Strip suffer severely from food insecurity during 2020. There is a gap of 11.1 percent points for female-headed households with a percentage of 30.6% compared to 41.7% for male-headed households. Notably, there has been an increase of about 1000 in the number of widows who are the breadwinners for their households in Gaza Strip, after their husbands were martyred during the ongoing war on Gaza Strip^{ix}.

ⁱA massacre is the act of brutally killing a number of helpless or surrendered humans, and involves the use of lethal force in various ways (such as terrorist attacks against civilian localities, deliberate air force or artillery bombardment of civilians) that did not result from military necessity or as in a response to a threat imposed by the victims. This definition includes the following two elements:

1. Killing by a military regime forces or paramilitary forces (e.g. Zionist organizations prior to the establishment of the occupation "Israel").
2. The victims are either civilians, including women, the elderly, unarmed men and children, or fighters who surrendered and became under the control of the invading force and pose no threat to it.

ⁱⁱ <https://www.facebook.com/REFORM.Association/posts> as of 19 October 2023

ⁱⁱⁱ www.gazaishere.com

^{iv} <https://m.facebook.com/story.php>

^v <https://www.unfpa.org/ar/الأزمةفي-غزة> As of 16 October 2023

^{vi} www.gazaishere.com

^{vii} <https://www.unfpa.org/ar/الأزمةفي-غزة> As of 16 October 2023,

^{viii} WASH CLUSTER PALESTINE - MAP SOURCE: OCHA OPT, GAZA STRIP: CRITICAL WATER AND WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE WASH Cluster

^{ix} www.gazaishere.com