

Cluster Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
Lead agency UNICEF
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Water trucking by Oxfam, photo credit Iyad AlBaba/Oxfam



Key issues

The number of IDPs hosted in UNRWA shelters has reached the number of **200,337 IDPs in 85 shelters** as of 29th of July, others are located in public schools, hospitals, churches, mosques and open areas. All of these people require water and sanitation services. Personal experience of WASH Cluster members regarding their own social fabric of families and friends indicate that the number of persons staying with host families may be much bigger than assumed.

Today, on 29th of July, the Gaza Power Plant was hit and is up in flames; this has a devastating effect on all WASH facilities in the Gaza Strip. It has to be stressed that while IDPs are the most vulnerable group and require full attention, the entirety of the population of the Gaza Strip faces severe shortages of electricity, water and sanitation services. ***If there is no power in Gaza, there is no water in Gaza.***

WASH Cluster members PWA, CMWU, UN agencies, NGOs and ICRC warn in strongest possible terms against the **lack of energy and the lack of access, hindering water service providers to operate and maintain critical water and sanitation facilities and to conduct repairs**. CMWU on 27th of July reports the loss of an additional technical employee, who was killed on duty and the injury of his colleague. The entire population and the people staying in shelters are **exposed to severe public health risks with unforeseeable consequences**.

Humanitarian needs

North Gaza (SC)

The humanitarian pause last Saturday was an opportunity for the municipal engineers to perform first very initial damage assessments. The municipal engineers conducted field visits to develop a more informed analysis of damages of the water and sanitation system. Heaps of garbage are piled in streets and in the 15 temporary stations located very close to residential areas.

Beit Lahiya municipality repaired 5 water pipelines, which had been affected. The repair increased the quantities of water supply for households and prepared the water network to be potentially ready for serving the population in the western neighborhood.

In Jabalia, the municipality repaired the damaged water pipeline in the eastern part of the city, which can restore water supply for the remaining 2'000 residents there.

Middle Area (GVC)

Many wells supplying water to town centres are located in the 3km no-go zone and are inaccessible to service providers except with prior coordination from CLA.

Deir AIBalah Desalination Plant. Unable to pump water into the network, due to lack of fuel to run the pumps, 250lt/day of fuel needed. They are filling trucks with treated water and try to distribute it.

Rafah

Rafah Municipality informed the Rafah Area Focal Point IRPAL that epidemics started to spread such as lice and scabies in shelters and that the municipality asked for appropriate measures such as insecticides or other as recommended. WASH cluster is alerting to water-related diseases and will coordinate with Health authorities.

Humanitarian response

Water tankering

- Water tankering for IDPs residing in UNRWA schools is provided by UNRWA, supported by municipalities for municipal water
- Water Trucking through OGB as per attached table

Date	Day	Shelters	Number of shelters targeted	Trucked water per day (m ³)	NGO
27-Jul	Sunday	UNRWA schools	17	62	Oxfam GB, PEF and YEC
27-Jul	Sunday	Governmental public schools	9	22	
27-Jul	Sunday	Other shelters	9	35	
28-Jul	Monday	UNRWA schools	21	74	
28-Jul	Monday	Governmental public schools	10	27	
28-Jul	Monday	Other shelters	10	26	

- PEF, OGB public health partner provides water tankering to 9 UNRWA IDP schools in Rafah, and to Khan Yunis, Sagia filling point (serving 3,000 people). OGB was informed by PEF that an informal social solidarity group supports water shortages. PEF faces challenges to reach Absan filling point due to security reasons.
- YEC, OGB public health partner provides water tankering to 31,000 people in 20 places in Gaza City, 10 public schools, 11 UNRWA schools and 9 informal shelters, Orthodox Church, Shifa Hospital, Omary Mosque, Holy Land family and 5 informal displaced people according to the collated Oxfam map.

Storage capacity

- On 28th of July, OGB distributed 4 tanks with capacity 1.5 cubic meters to informal shelters in Gaza City. PHG, Oxfam Italia partner distributed 18 tanks with capacity 0.5 cubic meter according to Oxfam mapping to informal shelters.

Gaza Municipality:

- Water network repair in Gaza city according to security situation.
- Tankering of municipal water to schools, (MoU with ICRC in preparation similar to agreement in the case of UNRWA schools)
- Vacuuming sewage flooding from schools and streets
- Garbage is being transferred internally to the internal transfer stations as they can't reach the land fill in Juhor Ad Diek. Municipality tried during the ceasefire to retrieve

- solid waster trucks, however heavy shooting in the area prevented the attempt
- Radio public health messages are on-going. A plan to message people via mobile for hygiene promotion is under design.

Planned response

Fuel Delivery

WASH Cluster requested and was granted an increase of monthly fuel delivery from 121'500 to 243'000 litres. The first delivery was to take place this week. It had been assumed that this would cover most urgent needs. However, with the total shut down of the Gaza Power Plant, it is uncertain how many WASH services can still be operated, service providers are only starting to oversee the grave consequences of this event.

WASH Cluster partners and UN agencies are mapping water tankering needs for communities cut off from water supply. Oxfam is supporting mapping and planning to upscale water tankering in these areas.

Gaps and constraints

WASH Cluster members PWA, CMWU, UN agencies, NGOs and ICRC underline the lack of access as the main constraint hindering water service providers to operate and maintain water and sanitation facilities and to conduct repairs to facilities. The entire population and the people staying in shelters are exposed to severe public health risks. Water related diseases such as lice and scabies have been reported.

WASH Cluster URGENTLY calls upon stakeholders to use all their available channels to ask for humanitarian space, permitting the provision of water and sanitation services to the population and the prevention of an outbreak of communicable diseases.

Coordination

The WASH Cluster upholds communication and coordination with CMWU and Municipalities. Key WASH stakeholders including the Area Focal Points (AFP) are doing their best to provide daily updates to the WASH Cluster. Lack of electricity and internet connections lead to bottlenecks in communication. Movement restrictions due to security concerns hamper field assessments.

The WASH Cluster is meeting with OCHA and other Clusters in the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Gaza on a daily basis.

WASH Cluster Gaza is planning to hold a meeting on 30th of July in UNICEF Gaza offices.