



EMPHNET Emergency Bulletin

The Health Status in Gaza and Sudan

March 31, 2024

Situation Overview

As the humanitarian crises intensify amidst ongoing war on Gaza and armed conflict in Sudan, the toll on human life is immeasurable. The lack of access to essential medications and healthcare services is exacerbating the suffering of populations and putting the health of the survivors in peril. This complicated situation is inflicting not only immediate harm but also long-term consequences, maintaining a vicious cycle of deteriorating health conditions among the affected populations.

Updates on Gaza Caused by the Israeli army Attacks

Mortality rate and number of injuries As of 21 March 2024

31,988
Palestinians killed

8000
missing under
the rubble

85%
forcibly displaced
(1.93 million people)

70%
deaths are women
and children

74,188
injured

(Source: Palestinian Ministry of Health)

Healthcare

As of 19 March 2024

410
attacks on healthcare facilities
(affecting 155 facilities)

685
health personnel killed

126
attacks on
ambulances

902
health personnel injured

Nutrition

31
people, including
27 children, died
of malnutrition &
dehydration

31%
of children under the
age of two in northern
Gaza suffer from
acute malnutrition

10%
of children under
the age of two in
Rafah suffer from
acute malnutrition

(Source: Palestinian Ministry of Health)

Sudan Highlights

As of 21 March 2024

15,208
reported fatalities
across Sudan

8.4 million
people displaced,
making Sudan home to
the largest displacement
crisis globally

6.5 million
have been
internally displaced

1.9 million
are displaced in
neighboring countries

25 million
people need
humanitarian
assistance

18 million
are facing
acute hunger

5 million
are enduring
emergency
levels of hunger

Medication Shortages amid the Devastating War on Gaza

The scarcity of medications during times of war is a pressing issue that exacerbates the humanitarian crises. The war on Gaza, which is soon to be going into its sixth month, is made even more devastating by the Israeli army limiting entry of medications into the Strip. Such realities have created a humanitarian catastrophe that is resulting in an unprecedented rate of patients suffering. With a severe lack of medications including intravenous fluids, insulin, and anesthesia supplies, hospitals in Gaza are struggling to stay operational. This insufficient supply of medication in Gaza is consequently leading to increased mortality rates caused by untreated injuries, infections, and preventable diseases.

According to medical specialists, there is a severe shortage of most medications, painkillers, and other crucial supplies needed for emergency care. Hence, those who have survived Israel's ongoing air, land, and sea attacks, are facing an imminent risk of

death, as the Strip is running out of medications. This shortage is expected to increase the potential spread of epidemics while further straining the overwhelmed healthcare facilities. It limits the capacity and intensifies the burden of healthcare professionals to provide lifesaving care. In these extreme situations, treatable conditions become life-threatening in the absence of proper medical intervention.

The lack of medications is also leading to prolonged suffering and worsened health outcomes for those with chronic conditions, as the limited medical assistance that reaches Gaza lacks any medications meant to treat chronic illnesses and other medical conditions. Consequently, the health of tens of thousands of patients is rapidly worsening, as conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure or cholesterol, excessive lipids, pulmonary diseases, and respiratory illnesses remain untreated.

According to the Palestinian Health Ministry, there are currently:

2000
cancer
patients

1,100
kidney failure
patients

50,000
cardiac
patients

60,000
diabetes
patient

"Khawla, a 45-year-old displaced woman with type 1 diabetes whose body is unable to produce enough insulin to control blood sugar levels, recently experienced a decline in her health after failing to obtain enough insulin."

"I have been searching for suitable treatment for my 26-year-old daughter, who has lung cancer, for three weeks. Since October 7, 2023, she has not received any chemotherapy doses, resulting in a serious decline in her health, said 51-year-old Shaaban.

Medication Shortages Amid the Armed Conflicts in Sudan

Similarly, the conflict in Sudan has created resulted in a critical shortage of essential medical supplies, including life-saving medications and vaccines. This supply challenge puts thousands of patients with communicable and non-communicable diseases at risk of death, while placing the country at a higher risk of outbreaks.

The conflict in Khartoum state has resulted in the loss of the national stock of medication stored at the National Medical Supply Fund. This has also been the case in other affected states. These supplies included essential medications for TB, malaria, and HIV, as well as medications for non-communicable diseases.

Despite the efforts made by the Ministry of Health and its partners to bridge this gap, challenges persist. The ongoing conflict has also

resulted in the loss of vital medical supplies for patients with renal failure. By December 2023, the country managed to secure a three-month stock of dialysis supplies for 8,000 renal failure patients. This was unfortunately trapped at Aljazeera state following the expansion of the conflict to the AlMadani locality in mid-December 2023.

Furthermore, the disruption of the central cold chain for vaccines in Khartoum has necessitated the establishment of alternative supply routes, utilizing state cold chain facilities. However, these pathways are extremely costly and often face security threats, particularly in conflict-affected areas in Darfur and Kordofan zones. The conflict's expansion and attacks on healthcare facilities are major threats to any efforts to restore medical supply, highlighting the urgent need for safe pathways for medical distribution within and across states.

Addressing this alarming issue requires international collaborative efforts towards immediate public health emergency interventions. In Gaza, the blockade must urgently be lifted to allow humanitarian aid and medical supplies to reach the affected population. For both Gaza and Sudan, the coordination between international organizations and neighboring countries is essential, where a comprehensive plan for an emergency operation can be developed to facilitate the safe passage for medical supplies, including essential medications. This plays a crucial role in ensuring access to essential medical care and alleviating human suffering of both populations.

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