

EMPHNET Emergency Bulletin

Empowering Community Resilience and Response in the Face of Recent Emergencies

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Situation Overview

The Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) has borne the consequences of multiple natural and man-made disasters since 2023. To name a few, the region saw floods in Libya, Earthquakes in Morocco, Turkey, and Syria, disease outbreaks affecting many countries, as well as the ongoing armed conflicts in Sudan and the war on Gaza. Such disasters have devastating effects on health systems, as they lead to the interruption of service delivery, the underutilization of health services, and an increased demand for health services.

During emergencies, many affected communities tend to rely on internal contribution and external aid, yet intense armed conflicts such as those seen in Sudan, and the war on Gaza have caused a reduction in the availability of aid, accessibility of services, and they have also resulted in the reduction in the number of aid workers providing assistance to people in need. Such a situation highlights the vital role of community resilience and response capacities, recognizing that local communities are the first and last responders in disasters.

Updates from Gaza

Until 07/06/2024

 **36,731**
reported fatalities
in Gaza

 **83,530**
injured

 **1.7 million**
internally Displaced Persons
(IDPs), all of whom are lacking
access to acute humanitarian
needs

Malnutrition in Gaza

 **7,280**
individuals were
diagnosed with
global acute
malnutrition (GAM)

5,604
individuals were
diagnosed with moderate
acute malnutrition (MAM)

1,676
individuals were
diagnosed with severe
acute malnutrition (SAM)

Updates from Sudan

Until 16/5/2024

 **>15,550**
reported fatalities
in Sudan

 **1,400**
violent events
targeting civilians


 **860,000**
people lack humanitarian aid in multiple
areas of Sudan in March and April, 2024


 **>9 million**
internally displaced persons


Major Needs


 3000 children in Gaza suffer from acute malnutrition and are in need of nutrition supplies, UNICEF warns.

 Levels of hunger-related mortality are expected to increase in the coming months in Sudan, aid is needed.


 Functional bakeries are needed in Rafah, as zero bakeries are able to function in such dire situation.


 Increased incidents of robbery, looting, gender-based violence (GBV) and harassment are reported across Sudan, protection services are needed.


 Cases of dengue fever, malaria, and measles are on the rise in Sudan, and treatment is needed.


 Access to healthcare, water, and sanitation services are dire, particularly across the Darfur and Kordofan regions, more access is needed.

Community Aid

 **3000**
Community Service Organizations
(CSOs) are registered in the West
Bank and Gaza, can greatly benefit the
communities if they receive support

 **13**
Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs)
only, are currently deployed in
Gaza while the need is much more

 **36**
UNRWA shelters in Rafah are now
empty, and health and other critical
services have stopped

 **>3000**
humanitarian organizations operating
in Sudan have completely ceased
working since the current civil war

Implications and Reflections

With the increasing number of crises seen in the EMR, community-based organizations and volunteers have taken the role of filling existing gap between the efforts of external humanitarian and governmental agencies and communities. Many international organizations providing external aid have indicated that they have ceased working in Sudan and Gaza due to security concerns and their inability to access high-risk areas. In Gaza, more than 200 humanitarian workers have been killed, which is the highest number of humanitarian casualties recorded in modern history, according to the United Nations. In addition, Sudan's Humanitarian Aid Commission indicated that 85 percent of international aid workers had left Sudan. Thus, there is a need to enforce international humanitarian laws to ensure the safety and access of aid workers.

Ensuring that communities are at the center of emergency response and recovery is the core objective addressed in many international agreements, policies, and frameworks. Such high-level documents include the SDGs, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Sphere Standards, and the Health Emergency and Disaster Risk Management Framework.

"Seeing young people who have witnessed so much suffering and still bouncing back and supporting their neighbors is really quite remarkable." Toby Wicks, Aid worker on the "inspiring" resilience of the Moroccan population after the Earthquake, 2023

Recently, the need to build communities' resilience and response has been emphasized, especially since external humanitarian support continues to decline due to growing risks.

According to the Local to Global Protection (L2GP), Community Resilience is defined:

"The ability of a system, locality or household to resist, absorb, accommodate and recover from the effects of hazards and shocks in a timely and efficient manner through"

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