



## Unaccompanied Children in Gaza Strip

As of 08 November 2023

### SITUATION IN NUMBERS



**2.2 Million**  
Total Population



**Over 1.5 Million**  
Internally Displaced



**1 Million**  
Children Affected



**4,324\***  
Children Reported Killed



**8,663\***  
Children Reported Injured



**1,350**  
Children Reported Missing



**108\***  
Attacks on Health



**267**  
Attacks on Schools



**100s**  
Unaccompanied children  
Prior to 07 October, 260  
girls & 278 boys were in  
orphanages and state  
institutions

Over 2.2 million people – half of whom are children - in the Gaza Strip no longer have safe and reliable access to critical basic services. Prior to this most recent crisis, more than 543,000 children were identified in need of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) following six rounds of armed conflict and escalation since 2008 and the closure of Gaza Strip since 2007, resulting in daily uncertainty and protection concerns. At least 625,000 children no longer have access to school.

Some 54% of internally displaced persons (IDPs) are sheltering in UNRWA and government shelters, while 46% are sheltering with host families and in public shelters (e.g., hospitals and public buildings). Many have had to relocate several times. The average number of IDPs per UNRWA shelter is nearly four times their intended capacity.

- Source: OCHA / UNICEF

**“World, we need a truce.”**

*11 year old boy whose brother was seriously injured in an airstrike*

\* As reported by the Ministry of Health as of 08 November 2023. Additional children are missing, with unknown status or whereabouts.

## HOW ARE CHILD PROTECTION ACTORS & COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS RESPONDING



- Urgently **identifying, registering and tracing** the families of children who are alone or searching for their parents, while attempting to identify urgent, safe temporary care arrangements.
- Informing families on **available hotline services** to report cases of unaccompanied children.
- Disseminating **risk mitigation messages** against physical hazards, violence and abuse and messages to prevent family separation during movement.
- Offering **mental health and psychosocial support** (MHPSS) activities through art and other activities at hospitals and shelters.

## CHALLENGES



- Lack of fuel and damaged roads inhibit identification and support of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and family reunification. Staff & volunteers use bicycles as possible.
- While some partners are providing remote MHPSS, this is inadequate for the severe trauma, grief, and anxiety affecting children and their families.
- Difficulties to provide urgent, safe temporary alternative care arrangements for unaccompanied children due to physically- and resource-exhausted families & communities.
- Communication blackouts are obstructing the response and overall ability to cope among staff.
- Health personnel are exhausted, facing difficulties to register un-accompanied children.
- With little aid allowed through, few child protection supplies that meet children's specific needs are being prioritized.

**“Any means of life  
you can think of,  
we are without it.”**

*Child Protection Staff in Gaza*

## WHAT WE URGENTLY NEED



- Immediate Humanitarian Ceasefire
- End to attacks on schools and hospitals. These must be safe spaces for injured children and temporary shelters for unaccompanied and other affected children.
- Keep communication networks open and active.
- Increased, sustained and safe humanitarian access to deliver food, non-food items and fuel. Children and families are struggling to survive and urgently need food stocks to increase.
- Health facilities require fuel to keep operating, child protection staff need transportation and power is needed to ensure light at night.

