

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

People in need
2.1 million

People targeted
1.6 million

Requirements
US\$ 23.59 million

Context

More than 1.5 million Palestinians will need health-related humanitarian assistance in 2022, according to estimates from the Health Cluster. Two-thirds of these people live in the Gaza Strip and one-third in the West Bank. The situation remains especially vulnerable in the Gaza Strip, where more than 15 years of blockade, coupled with the intra-Palestinian political divide continue to degrade the infrastructure and deteriorate the living conditions of the Gazan population. Chronic shortages of medicines and supplies continue to hinder access to critical health care. Recurrent bouts of conflict in both Gaza and the West Bank including the recent escalation in May 2021 required prioritization of trauma-related interventions at the expense of other vulnerable groups.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak in the occupied Palestinian territory, the Ministry of Health reported more than 600 000 confirmed COVID-19 cases and more than 5 200 deaths. COVID-19 further strained the already challenged health system with scarce resources being reallocated to respond to the outbreak.

Response strategy

WHO aims to support the rights of all Palestinians to accessible, quality health services through three objectives:

- Support the Palestinian Ministry of Health in responding to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Strengthen the International Health Regulations' core capacities.
- Support for maintaining the availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality of essential lifesaving health services, including services for noncommunicable diseases, maternal and child health, mental health, and trauma for vulnerable communities across the occupied Palestinian territory. The planned response is fully aligned with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Humanitarian Response Plan for 2022.

In order to support the ongoing response to the COVID-19 outbreak and enhance the response to potential future outbreaks, WHO will strengthen the International Health Regulations' core capacities in the occupied Palestinian territory and continue its interventions focused on the ten COVID-19 response pillars. This includes strengthening coordination, laboratory capacity and epidemiological surveillance, including introducing event-based surveillance and supporting surveillance at points of entry in addition to improving infection prevention and control measures. Strengthening the health information system is also vital for accurate and reliable reporting on communicable diseases, allowing for a timelier response.

WHO also plans to strengthen emergency preparedness and response to provide emergency health services (including all levels of the trauma pathway [pre-hospital level, hospital level, and postoperative and rehabilitative care]) by developing a national triage system and national emergency medicine protocols. Upgrading will take place in emergency rooms and departments in key public hospitals and emergency primary health care centres in Gaza and the West Bank. Support will continue to the Limb Reconstruction Centre in Gaza and capacity building of health care workers to enhance the quality of services. WHO will likewise ensure access to primary health services for vulnerable groups, including reproductive, maternal, and neonatal health, mental health and psychosocial support, and gender-based violence.

Cross-cutting issues will be addressed and mainstreamed as part of WHO's work. Gender equity, accountability to affected people, protection of civilians, and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse will be integrated in all work.

Occupied Palestinian territory received its first delivery of COVID-19 vaccines on 22 March 2021 via COVAX. © WHO / Tanya Habjouqa



Country priorities

Support the Palestinian Ministry of Health in responding to the COVID-19 outbreak.

- 500 000 suspected and confirmed cases will have access to COVID-19 testing through the provision of COVID-19 laboratory testing kits, supplies, and equipment.
- 10 000 people will benefit from essential COVID-19 medical supplies, including medicines and medical equipment.
- 500 health care workers will be trained on laboratory testing and case management.
- 800 000 people will have access to COVID-19 vaccines across the occupied Palestinian territory.
- 1 million people will benefit from risk communication and community engagement activities, including printed materials, social media posts, and other media outlets.

Strengthen the International Health Regulations' core capacities in the occupied Palestinian territory.

- Two medical points will be established at Gaza points of entry (Erez and Rafah).
- Two public health emergency operation centres will be operationalized in Ramallah and Gaza.
- Two satellite public health emergency operation centres will be operationalized in the North and South Districts of the Gaza Strip.
- Event-based surveillance will continue and be strengthened.
- At least 200 health care workers will be trained on emergency preparedness, surveillance, infection prevention and control, early detection of communicable diseases, and laboratory biosafety and biosecurity.

Maintain access to essential health services.

- A national triage system will be developed and disseminated.
- National emergency medicine protocols will be established and disseminated.
- Two Emergency Medical Services operation cells will be supported and functioning.
- Emergency departments, surgical wards, and operating theatres at seven public hospitals across the Gaza Strip will be upgraded through the procurement of critical equipment and supplies.
- Emergency departments at two hospitals in the West Bank and one hospital in East Jerusalem will be upgraded through the procurement of critical equipment and supplies.
- 250 health workers will be trained on emergency and trauma-related care.
- 100 000 patients will benefit from procured medical supplies and equipment at the different levels of the trauma pathway.
- 150 000 people living in Area C will receive emergency health services through mobile health teams.
- 200 000 people will benefit from prepositioned essential medical supplies.
- 30 000 noncommunicable disease patients will benefit from access to essential drugs and supplies.
- 100 health care workers will be trained on noncommunicable disease management.
- 12 agencies will contribute to the documentation of attacks on health care, using WHO's Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care.
- 100 partners will benefit from the implementation of the Health Resources and Services Availability Monitoring System.

COVID-19 response

WHO estimates that more than 1 million Palestinians, including 50 000 persons with disabilities and 490 000 females, will benefit from the following planned interventions:

- Provision of COVID-19 testing kits and supplies, including antigen detection rapid diagnostic tests, real-time polymerase chain reaction tests, swabs, and testing equipment.
- Provision of essential medical supplies, lab reagents, and medical equipment for COVID-19 case management and vaccination.
- Provision of critical medical equipment, including regular hospital beds, to Ministry of Health hospitals that deal with emergency cases, including trauma and COVID-19.
- Improved e-health information systems in hospitals and primary health centres through the provision of hardware, software, and capacity-building.
- Strengthened surveillance for communicable diseases, including for COVID-19, and introduce event-based surveillance.
- Capacity building of health workers in communicable disease management, infection prevention and control, surveillance, and laboratory biosafety and biosecurity.
- Support for risk communication and community engagement activities to promote vaccine uptake and raise awareness about COVID-19 prevention and management of suspected cases.
- Scaled up vaccine uptake through provision of needed equipment and supplies, training personnel, and generating vaccine demand.

Overall country funding requirements for emergency response, including COVID-19, by pillar (US\$ million)

Pillars	Emergency response	COVID-19/ACT-A	Total
P1. Leadership, coordination, planning, and monitoring	1.48	0.97	2.45
P2. Risk communication and community engagement	0.12	0.33	0.45
P3. Surveillance, case investigation, and contact tracing	0.25	0.46	0.71
P4. Travel, trade, points of entry and mass gatherings	0.05	0.18	0.24
P5. Diagnostics and testing	0.86	6.32	7.18
P6. Infection prevention and control	0.59	2.46	3.05
P7. Case management and therapeutics	0.57	1.77	2.34
P8. Operational support and logistics	0.56	0.32	0.88
P9. Essential health systems and services	3.33	1.18	4.50
P10. Vaccination	-	1.79	1.79
Total	7.80	15.78	23.59

For more information

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WHO staff delivered lab testing supplies
 and personal protective equipment to
 local health authorities in the Gaza Strip.
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