

Today marks the 100th day of the war on Gaza; the area has been witnessing the continuation of an Israeli ground operations, in northern, middle, and southern Gaza.

DSPR has been following the situation with grave concern and has been intervening through its field staff and steering emergency committee to relief, when possible and reachable, the most vulnerable and those who are most in need through lifesaving activities.

According to the WHO, “a public health catastrophe is rapidly evolving in Gaza with high levels of violent deaths and injuries, mass displacement, overcrowding, major disruption and dysfunction of the health system, and damage to water and sanitation infrastructure”. According to the UN, the reported fatality toll since the start of the hostilities reached 23,968 of whom about two-thirds are children and women; injuries have reached more than 60,582 people. 7,780 reported missing or under the rubble.

Most of the population 2.2 million people eminent at the risk of famine.

We pray that the international community is able to implement the security council’s new adopted resolution, among others that demands immediate, safe, and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance at scale directly to the Palestinian civilian population throughout the Gaza Strip.

DSPR’s humanitarian response update in the last few weeks:

**A. Primary and dental health services:** We have continued receiving people in DSPR-NECC Rafah Clinic for primary health care services, including offering some medicine and health supplies. According to the UN, only 13 out of the 72 primary health care facilities are functional. In the middle and south Gaza DSPR-NECC clinic is one of four centers that continue to serve the needy population. In Rafah the population has be growing daily to reach around 1.3 million in a place that used to be inhabited by 250,000. The need is huge and the clinic is overcrowded, and our 30 staff have been working around the clock to serve the growing needs. We were obliged to extend the space of the clinic by moving the management to another building and use the offices as a clinic space to expand our capacity to offer the services needed. Since it was re-opened in December 2023, we have been able to reach more than 400 patients every day.

(DSPR NECC clinic included services such as dental, mother and childcare, psychosocial support, offering medicine and distributing hygiene kits, primary health care); DSPR NECC have been closely liaising and coordinating with the UN health cluster and the WHO in Gaza.



**B. Health awareness:** Timely and targeted Health awareness workshops were conducted in the Gaza communities considering continued spread of communicable diseases including serious hygiene-related problems. Therefore, the health awareness team prepared materials to conduct some health awareness sessions in the different Rafah refugee locations and neighborhoods. Additionally, while at the beginning of its work in health awareness the focus of the work on UNRWA schools liaise with their health department, DSPR continued to do it there but also conducting its awareness sessions in the Rafah

Clinic. As part of these awareness sessions, the team continued to distribute dignity/ hygiene kit to the participants in these sessions (as available in the local market) including soap, shampoo, lice shampoo, women’s pads etc.

Many of the patients who visited the clinics were invited to attend these awareness sessions.

Considering the worsening health situation where 15 of Gaza’s 36 hospital are partially functional (9 in the south and 6 in the north) and critical shortages of drugs, blood products and supplies, DSPR Gaza / NECC plans on continuing with these interventions for the next 2-3 months).



**C. Mental Health Psychosocial Support Interventions:** in November and December DSPR Gaza organized MHPSS interventions with the forcibly displaced people in the south of the Gaza Strip in small groups of mothers and children (and big gatherings for children); DSPR-

NECC are targeting children and mothers for the Psychosocial interventions. More than 5,000 children (aged 5-9 years) were reached through open days, fun days, and venting activities. DSPR NECC's mental health staff and volunteers have been able to coordinate these activities in more than 5 different UNRWA shelters and schools. Additionally, a healthy snack composed of mineral water and a nutritious palm date was provided to each participant. DSPR-NECC is continuing the psychosocial support activities, targeting new 4000 children and women, and offering psychological first aid to those in need.



**D. Unconditional cash distribution:** More than 620 families have received transfer of 190 USD through allowing heads of households to receive amounts through their mobile numbers. According to many of the recipients of this distribution, the amount was primarily used to cover their basic needs such as purchasing water, food, and some other important needs for their families.

In light of the continued dire need for food continues to be acute across the Gaza Strip (according to the UN) where the entire population of Gaza – almost 2.2M people – are in crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity, DSPR is planning to continue to do unconditional cash distribution for additional 500 households across the Gaza strip.

**E. Distribution of milk for children:** Eleven pallets of single serve milk boxes have been brought from ANERA last week. Our staff are offering the milk boxes primarily to children in need and those who are visiting with their care giver to Rafah Clinic. This was not in DSPR's original plan, however as the needs are constantly changing we found that offering such service presents a big help for the children, especially those with limited food availability.

**F. Christmas packages:** Around eight hundred members of the Christian Community members continue take refuge in the 2 Churches in Gaza (Holy family Catholic Church and the St Porphyrios Orthodox Church); during the holiday season, DSPR was able to coordinate with the Jordanian Hashemite Charitable Organization (JHCO) to deliver food parcels to relieve the internally displaced people who have been refuging in the church

since the beginning of the war. These packages were airdropped by the Jordanian air force.

Special thanks to DSPR's chairperson Dr. Audeh Quawas and Mr. Fares Sweiss, executive director of DSPR Jordan have both tirelessly worked on this matter.



G. **Humanitarian Response Management:** The joint emergency committee continued to frequently meet throughout the last few weeks. Since the DSPR-NECC board was not able to meet or the staff to move, DSPR started the emergency committee in October 2023, Led by the Central Office. Meetings are taking place through WhatsApp group to share ideas and ways to support and respond to emergency.

The needs are beyond belief, the resources are limited and hard to find, the teams on the ground are exhausted working in extremely unsafe and hard conditions but determined to serving this noble mission.

The decision made by the staff in Rafah Clinic was to extend the working hours to be able to meet the growing demand in the very crowded clinic *“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few”* Matthew 9:35-37



The Leading Team on the Ground

DSPR -MECC Central Office