

# War on Gaza: weaponizing access to water, energy and food



E/ESCWA/CL1.CCS/2023/Policy brief.5



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## Key messages

The war has diminished the water supply in Gaza by 95 per cent, forcing the population to use unsafe water and sanitation facilities, thus exacerbating public health risks.

The war has also disrupted agriculture and food production in the occupied Palestinian territory, leading to food insecurity and 2.3 million people facing increasing hunger.

### Water supply

diminished by



95%



forcing the population to use **unsafe water** and **sanitation facilities**

Note: The data provided in this policy brief are as to 23 November 2023.

▶ The war has heightened energy vulnerability in the occupied Palestinian territory, and will likely obstruct equitable and inclusive energy transitions and sustainable development.

▶ A long-term humanitarian ceasefire, and safe and unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance and aid workers are essential to avoid further deterioration of livelihoods.

▶ Early recovery must address the water-energy-food nexus for simultaneous improvements in energy and water access, food security and nutrition, livelihoods, health and environmental outcomes in destroyed urban and agricultural areas.

▶ Efforts towards recovery and development in the occupied Palestinian territory must address the root causes of the conflict and restore Palestinian access to their natural resources.

## Preventing civilian access to essential services



is a



**violation of international humanitarian law**



## Humanitarian ceasefire

and



## Safe and unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance

are **essential** to avoid further deterioration



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# ▶ 1. Water, food and energy sectors at a glance

The war that erupted on 7 October 2023 in Gaza has exacerbated the already dire conditions contributing to water scarcity, food insecurity, and energy vulnerability in the occupied Palestinian territory. Damage to infrastructure that was already weakened by recurrent military escalations and a 16-year blockade threatens the right of the Palestinian people to access basic services.

## A. Water

The occupied Palestinian territory has been facing persistent water security challenges for decades as a result of occupation by Israel, and its restrictive and destructive measures, including military escalations against Gaza. Since 1967, Israel has controlled all water resources in the occupied Palestinian territory. In the West Bank, Israel has restricted Palestinian access to groundwater and to the Jordan River, preventing new water infrastructure projects. In Gaza, the only aquifer has been depleted by over-extraction and contamination by sewage and seawater infiltration, leaving 97 per cent of its water unfit for human consumption.<sup>1</sup> Restrictions on the import of construction material as part of the blockade had obstructed the rehabilitation and restoration of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure, especially those that were damaged by recurrent military escalations. Consequently, Palestinians had become increasingly reliant on water purchased from Israeli companies. In March 2023, the daily per capita allocation of consumer water in the occupied Palestinian territory was 89 litres in the West Bank and 82.7 litres in Gaza,<sup>2</sup> which is below the 100 litres per capita per day recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO). Today in Gaza, water is being collected in jerrycans and plastic bottles from standpipes, rooftop water collection tanks, and informal water trucks to meet the most basic of needs.

prior to the current war

80%



of the population in Gaza required food assistance

## B. Food

The persistently low living standards in the occupied Palestinian territory have led to high levels of food insecurity. In 2020, food insecurity rates were 64.4 per cent in Gaza and 37.8 per cent in the West Bank,<sup>3</sup> compared with an average of 33.3 per cent in the Arab region.<sup>4</sup> The prevalence of anaemia in women residing in the occupied Palestinian territory was 31 per cent in 2019,<sup>5</sup> and child stunting was at 7.5 per cent in 2022.<sup>6</sup> One of the main factors behind food insecurity is the limited ability to produce and store food, mainly owing to frequent Israeli destruction of land, water and energy infrastructure, restrictions on rebuilding or rehabilitating them, a lack of storage facilities, and limited access to agricultural land, inputs and water supplies. The situation has contributed to a high dependence on Israeli and international markets, importing 91 per cent of wheat and 95 per cent of vegetable oil consumed in the State of Palestine.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the Israeli-imposed blockade on Gaza restricts access to agricultural lands and fishing areas, and the import of goods, further limiting food availability. As a result, 80 per cent of the population in Gaza required food assistance prior to the current war.<sup>8</sup> Since the war started, basic food commodities have become scarce because of limited humanitarian assistance and disrupted food production.

## C. Energy

In terms of electricity, Gaza has struggled with severe power cuts, affordability challenges, and chronic shortages owing to a persistent fuel shortage at its sole power plant, and its reliance on electricity supplied by Israel. This has been



exacerbated by infrastructure damage due to recurrent military escalations and restrictions on maintenance and repair, leading to significant energy vulnerability.<sup>9</sup> A lack of reliable grid electricity has led to dependence on generators, often placed in residential areas, which increase air pollution by releasing toxic substances that negatively impact human health. Owing to recurrent fuel shortages, high prices requested by Israel, and other energy-related challenges, and despite Israeli restrictions, Palestinians have increasingly adopted renewable energy solutions, such as solar water heaters (used by 56 per cent of households as of 2020) and solar

photovoltaic (PV) systems. With solar accounting for 5 per cent of total energy consumption as of 2022 across the occupied territory, the State of Palestine has demonstrated its commitment to improving its resilience and overcoming energy vulnerability. However, fuel deliveries to Gaza have stopped since the outbreak of the war, and solar panels have been targeted and destroyed along with buildings and health-care facilities (figure 1), thus disrupting access to electricity and to vital services that are dependent on reliable and continuous energy access, such as respirators, medical equipment, telecommunications, water pumping, food storage and lighting.

**Figure 1.** Satellite images of PV systems before and after being destroyed near Al Shati refugee camp in northern Gaza



Source: ESCWA elaboration using Google and Maxar satellite images.

Note: These four PV systems were capable of generating 39.6 MWh of electricity per year.

## ▶ 2. Impact of the war on the water-energy-food nexus

### A. Gaza

Since the onset of the current war, Gaza has suffered unprecedented destruction, internal displacement, and loss of livelihoods, leading to a humanitarian catastrophe. By 28 November 2023, approximately

15,000 Gazans had died, of whom over 6,000 were children.<sup>10</sup> Palestinians are not only facing physical harm due to military attacks, but are also grappling with a loss of access to essential services, including health care, water, food, energy, education, employment and other basic rights and freedoms.<sup>11</sup>

**Security Council resolution 2417 of 24 May 2018 strongly condemns the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare, and the unlawful denial of humanitarian access and depriving civilians of objects indispensable to their survival, including wilfully impeding relief supply and access for responses to conflict-induced food insecurity in situations of armed conflict, which may constitute a violation of international humanitarian law.**

The massive movement of more than 1.7 million Palestinians in Gaza, coupled with wide-scale destruction of housing units and livelihoods, will yield long-term displacement and deprivation of basic needs. Immediate humanitarian needs will become structural challenges, which will increase pressure and demand for assistance in terms of food, water and energy.

The siege imposed by Israel on Gaza on 9 October 2023 prohibits the delivery of essential items, including food, water, medicine and fuel. From 21 October to 23 November 2023, over 1,700 truckloads of humanitarian supplies (excluding fuel) entered Gaza, compared to around 10,000 truckloads of commercial and humanitarian commodities (excluding fuel) entering Gaza each month before 7 October.<sup>12</sup> Stocks of basic commodities are now quickly diminishing, pushing the population to the brink of famine and increasing the risk of disease outbreaks. This dire situation underscores the necessity of upholding international humanitarian law, and of not weaponizing access to essential services.

## 1. Limited water supply

Since the beginning of the 2023 war on Gaza, water and sanitation infrastructure has been severely impacted, creating a situation of extreme water scarcity for the population. In some areas of Gaza, particularly in the north, there are less than 3 litres of water available per person per day,<sup>13</sup> only a fraction of the absolute minimum of 15 litres per person per day recommended by WHO in a humanitarian emergency.<sup>14</sup>

The national water company of Israel has halted water supply to northern Gaza, while the pipelines serving central and southern Gaza have operated intermittently since 20 November 2023.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the three water desalination plants in Gaza had become inoperable or severely limited owing to electricity and fuel shortages. However, operations in two of these plants resumed on 19 November 2023, following the arrival of fuel into Gaza.<sup>16</sup> Groundwater wells have also been operating at diminished capacity due to fuel shortages and damaged solar panels.

**“Israel must stop using water as a weapon of war. Under Article 7 of the Rome Statute, intentionally depriving the civilian population of conditions of life, calculated to bring about their destruction, is an act of extermination and classified as a crime against humanity”.**

*Pedro Arrojo-Agudo, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation*

Source: United Nations, Israel must stop using water as a weapon of war: UN expert, 17 November 2023.



As a result of these actions, Gazans are living in a situation of severe water scarcity. While water production fell to 5 per cent of pre-conflict levels in late October 2023,<sup>17</sup> a limited resumption in fuel deliveries by 21 November 2023 increased water production to 12 per cent of pre-conflict levels, but still far below the daily demand for water.<sup>18</sup> Bottled water is also in very limited supply.

This scenario has forced Gazan communities to turn to unsafe drinking water supplies, including brackish water and polluted water from wells, or to collect water in jerrycans and buckets from rooftops during rain or from standpipes, with children being called upon to fetch water to meet basic needs (figure 2). Furthermore, all wastewater treatment facilities have closed, and sewage systems are damaged, exposing the population to unsafe sanitary conditions that are likely to result in a serious public health crisis. Children and other vulnerable community members are particularly at risk,

as diarrhoeal disease is a leading cause of child death in conflict situations.<sup>19</sup>

By 21 November 2023, nearly 770,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) of 1.7 million were sheltering in 99 UNRWA facilities south of Wadi Gaza in extremely overcrowded conditions. During the first half of November 2023, the agency recorded a 35 per cent increase in skin diseases, and a 40 per cent increase in diarrhoea cases. The poor sanitary conditions, combined with falling temperatures and heavy rains, have exacerbated the risk of epidemics, and are likely to lead to a spike in child pneumonia and other illnesses.<sup>20</sup>

## 2. Diminishing food stocks and disrupted markets

Restrictions on the entry of humanitarian aid to Gaza have led to diminishing food stocks, as

**Figure 2.** Girl in Gaza fills buckets of water as desalination plants operate at minimum capacity



Source: UNICEF.

2.3 million people face escalating hunger. It is estimated that the food currently entering Gaza can cover only about 7 per cent of the population's needs.<sup>21</sup> There is a general shortage of food commodities in markets across Gaza: since 17 November 2023, northern Gaza has had no access to food for over 10 days. In southern Gaza, the only operational flour mill was bombed on 15 November 2023, and few bakeries remain operational on an intermittent basis.<sup>22</sup>

In addition, food prices have surged in an unprecedented manner as a result of the current shortages. By 17 November 2023, the price of wheat flour had increased by 65 per cent, mineral water by 100 per cent, and vegetables by 32 per cent.<sup>23</sup> The anticipated decline in food production in the coming months could lead to persistently high prices and market volatility, increasing dependence on humanitarian aid due to the siege, and exacerbating food insecurity for the most vulnerable.

### 3. Impeded agricultural production

Prior to the current war, and despite the effects of Israeli restrictions, Gaza's food production allowed self-sufficiency in most fruits and vegetables. It also allowed the export of high-value products, including tomatoes, strawberries, cut flowers, eggplants and potatoes. However, as a result of the war, Palestinians are unable to access their lands or harvest their crops owing to the bombardments, tank incursions onto agricultural lands, forced displacement, and the inability to irrigate due to a lack of fuel and water.

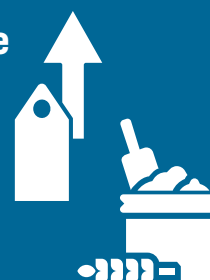
The disruption of seasonal harvesting and planting is expected to reduce food production in the coming months. Loss of income from unharvested and unprocessed olives in October and November 2023 could reach \$45 million.<sup>24</sup> Gazans were anticipating a date harvest of 15,000 tons between October and mid-November 2023.<sup>25</sup> The citrus and strawberry harvests were also scheduled to start between November and December 2023. Moreover, potato planting was due to begin in late October or early November 2023.

# 2.3 million

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**“Every little girl and boy I met in an UNRWA shelter [in Gaza] asked me for bread and water”.**

*Philippe Lazzarini,  
UNRWA Commissioner-General*



**Source:** UNRWA, Statement of Mr. Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General, at the Joint Emergency Summit of the League of Arab States and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, 11 November 2023.

Farmland and agricultural infrastructure have experienced significant damages due to Israeli bombardment. Satellite data shows that by 17 November 2023, 15 per cent of arable land in Gaza had suffered a significant decline in health and density. In North Gaza Governorate, 35 per cent of agricultural land has been impacted.<sup>26</sup> Damage to agricultural infrastructure, including irrigation systems

and storage units, could take years to recover, affecting agricultural production in the medium term. In addition, the destruction of vegetation cover and compacting of soil from strikes and tank movements have increased land degradation and contributed to desertification risks.

Livestock has also been devastated by bombardments impeding grazing and by a lack of feed. Dairy and egg production have been severely disrupted, whereas sheep and cattle are being prematurely slaughtered. The fishing sector has come to a standstill owing to airstrikes on the port of Gaza, and because of fears of being targeted while at sea. The aquaculture sector, which had recorded impressive growth in recent years, is also being affected by a lack of feed. Prior to the current war, the fishery sector was instrumental in Gaza as a source of nutrition and income, as it provided around 3,200 tons of fish per year and employed around 18,000 people, indirectly providing livelihoods for over 100,000 people.<sup>27</sup> October and November are usually peak months in the fishing season.

#### 4. Lack of energy affecting basic services

Prior to the current war, Gaza relied primarily on imported electrical power from Israel (approximately 120 MW). The Gaza power plant generated between 40–100 MW.<sup>28</sup> Given that this does not meet half of the 500 MW demand in Gaza,<sup>29</sup> Gazans resorted to small-scale solar generation and diesel generators (when fuel was available) for electricity. It is estimated that 3 per cent of electricity consumption in Gaza is from solar panels installed across sectors, including for residential, industrial, medical and agricultural needs.<sup>30</sup>

On 7 October 2023, the Israeli Government cut off the direct electricity supply. On 11 October 2023, Gaza's sole power plant shut down owing to a lack of fuel. By 20 November 2023, the power plant was still offline, and electricity supplies from Israel remained suspended. The ban on the entry of fuel and the destruction

7 October 2023

The Israeli Government cut off the direct electricity supply



12 October 2023

The disrupted electricity supply left Gaza in the dark

of solar energy infrastructure further exacerbated the situation. The impact of the war was witnessed almost immediately, with the disrupted electricity supply leaving Gaza in the dark by 12 October 2023 (figure 3). Satellite imagery of a 1 square mile sample area in Gaza City, taken on 11 November 2023, showed that 17 of the 29 largest rooftop solar systems (100 m<sup>2</sup> and larger) had either been completely destroyed or showed external damage.<sup>31</sup>

As part of the siege, Israel has blocked all fuel imports into the occupied territory, disrupting water pumps, cooking, transport, hospital operations, telecommunications and other essential services. On 15 November 2023, Israel committed to allowing the entry of 140,000 litres of fuel every two days, which is just a fraction of the amount normally imported into Gaza.<sup>32</sup> Energy shortages in Gaza have undermined the quality, reliability and availability of essential services, including the following:

- ▶ **Health care:** Intermittent power supply is jeopardizing critical life-support systems, surgical rooms, and refrigeration for medicines and vaccines. Most hospitals and clinics in Gaza had solar power systems with batteries to maintain power to intensive care units and operation rooms, but required other energy sources for the rest of their



operations. At least 180 women give birth daily in Gaza, according to UNICEF, and 15 per cent are likely to experience pregnancy/birth-related complications and require additional medical care. Hospitals are now on the brink of collapse. The Al-Quds Hospital in Gaza, for example, announced on 8 November 2023 that it had shut down most operations after running out of fuel and suffering daily Israeli bombardments around the medical complex.<sup>33</sup>

► **Water and sanitation:** The treatment of wastewater is energy-intensive in Gaza. Given the energy shortages, the release of untreated or partially treated wastewater into the Mediterranean Sea has become common. In addition, energy is unavailable to run pumps needed to push water through distribution networks or extract groundwater from wells.

► **Cooking:** The energy deficit has collateral effects on the environment. Without access to liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) or electricity for cookstoves, other more polluting fuels are used for cooking, thus worsening indoor air quality that disproportionately impacts women and children.

**Energy is unavailable to run pumps needed to push water through distribution networks**

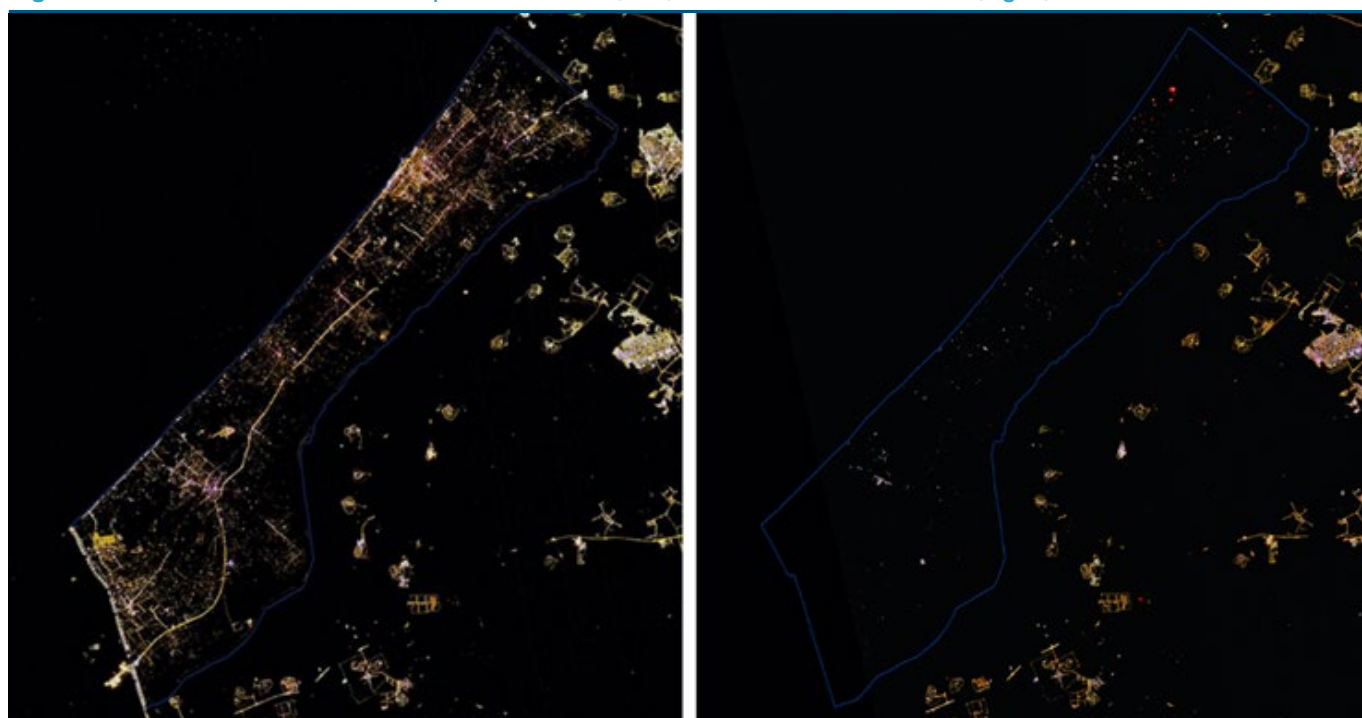
**Without access to liquefied petroleum gas or electricity for cookstoves, polluting fuels are used for cooking**

**worsening indoor air quality**



Air quality has also been affected as Palestinians are forced to rely on unreliable and polluting forms of energy for transport, heating and lighting. Furthermore, the absence of adequate

**Figure 3.** Gaza in the dark: on 14 September 2023 (left) and on 12 October 2023 (right)



**Source:** Global Times, *Exclusive*: Satellite images show Gaza in complete darkness after power supply cutoff, indicating worsening humanitarian crisis, 14 October 2023.

power for operating solid waste management facilities has led to the improper disposal and burning of waste, further deteriorating air quality. The impact on land resources has also been dramatic as destroyed buildings, concrete rubble, twisted metal and personal effects now cover entire city blocks, creating mountains of solid waste that need to be disposed of when fuel becomes available.

## B. West Bank

The current levels of violence against Palestinians in the West Bank are unprecedented. The first eight months of 2023 had already witnessed the highest levels of violence on record since the United Nations began collecting data in 2006.<sup>34</sup> The situation has worsened since the onset of the war. Between 7 October and 20 November 2023, 201 Palestinians, including 52 children, have been killed by Israeli forces; and eight more, including one child, by Israeli settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. In addition, over 143 Palestinian households, comprising more than 1,014 people, have been displaced owing to settler violence, as they are unable to access their home and land. Moreover, 197 Palestinians,

including 100 children, have been displaced since 7 October 2023 due to home demolitions in Area C and East Jerusalem.<sup>35</sup>

### Disrupted agricultural season, restricted access to land and displacement

The olive harvest in the West Bank, a crucial source of income for Palestinian families, has been facing severe disruption owing to Israeli restrictions on access to agricultural lands and settler violence. Since January 2023, over 18,000 olive trees have been confiscated or damaged in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.<sup>36</sup> Since the start of the current war on Gaza, the attacks have become more frequent, resulting in casualties and injuries, and jeopardizing the 2023 harvest season. Farmers have been blocked or attacked by settlers when attempting to pick their olives, their harvest has been destroyed or stolen, and their olive trees burned (figure 4). In addition, Bedouin and herding communities are being targeted and report being denied access to grazing land, which strongly affects their livelihoods and further drives displacement.<sup>37</sup>

**Figure 4.** Damage to olive trees in the West Bank, November 2023



Source: Ministry of Agriculture of the State of Palestine.



## Southern Lebanon: loss of cropland, energy and water infrastructure

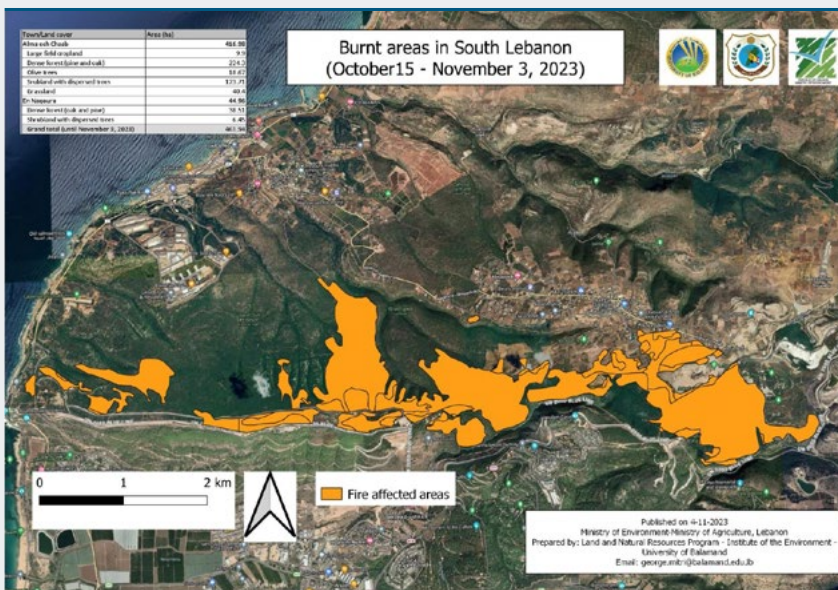
The current war on Gaza has escalated tensions along the Lebanese-Israeli border. As a result, residents of several southern Lebanese villages have been evacuated owing to the ongoing bombings and the presence of unexploded ordinance. According to the Ministry of Agriculture of Lebanon, 52 villages have been targeted by Israel within 5 km of the border. By 14 November 2023, Lebanon had recorded 46,325 IDPs, showing a 76 per cent increase in the number of displaced persons since 7 November 2023.<sup>38</sup>

The use of white phosphorus and bombardments by Israel<sup>39</sup> have caused multiple fires, destroying crops, natural areas and infrastructure, particularly along the southern border. Chemical bombs and resulting wildfires have decimated ecosystems and contaminated water sources and soils, which are expected to have lingering effects for up to seven decades.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, between 6 October and 24 November 2023, more than 53,000 olive trees were destroyed by attacks and fires. In addition, an estimated 700 heads of livestock, 230,000 birds, and 270 beehives have perished.<sup>40</sup>

A total of 438 fires were recorded between 6 October and 24 November 2023, causing 112 hectares of land to be destroyed. Around 60 per cent of the burned area was forest, mostly pine, oak, mallow and laurel. Another 30 per cent was fruit trees, mostly olives and citrus.<sup>41</sup> This has significantly affected farmers in southern Lebanon, who have lost part of their harvest and trees because of the hostilities.

### Burnt areas in southern Lebanon, 15 October–3 November 2023



Source: Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture of Lebanon, with University of Balamand, 3 November 2023.

### Water pumping solar system in Tair Harfa destroyed by Israel on 3 November 2023



Source: 961, Israel just hit a solar energy project in south Lebanon, 3 November 2023.

Note: Israeli airstrikes in southern Lebanon destroyed a solar energy project that supplied electricity to operate the town water well in Tair Harfa, thus disrupting the water supply.

► between 6 October and  
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► 438  
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### ▶ 3. Towards sustainable and just access to water, energy and food



**Security Council resolution 2712 of 15 November 2023 calls for urgent and extended humanitarian pauses and corridors for a sufficient number of days throughout the Gaza Strip to enable, consistent with international humanitarian law, the full, rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access for United Nations humanitarian agencies and their implementing partners.**



The unprecedented scale of death and destruction of the 2023 war on Gaza should be met by a recovery and development approach that matches its scale. The required approach, particularly by international aid actors, must address the following three interlinked dimensions: meet mounting immediate needs; address long-term systemic development challenges; and tackle the root causes of the conflict. The approach should not circumvent the challenges posed by the restrictions and measures employed by Israel, but rather address and resolve them.

#### A. Focus on immediate needs

To avoid further loss of life and human suffering, an extended humanitarian ceasefire and unimpeded access to aid workers and humanitarian aid, including food, water, medicine and fuel, is needed, in addition to ensuring the safety of aid workers. Even during war, international humanitarian law should be respected at all times, particularly provisions regarding the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, including water, food and energy assets. The deliberate withholding of essential services should never be used as a weapon of warfare.

First and foremost, it is essential to ensure the flow of sufficient humanitarian aid into Gaza.<sup>42</sup> In the immediate term, clean water and adequate and nutritious food should be provided to all those in need, with particular attention given to vulnerable populations living in IDP camps and shelters, pregnant women and children. In addition, the entry of fuel and equipment into Gaza

should be facilitated to re-establish vital services provided by water and sanitation infrastructure, hospitals and food distribution facilities. Around 600,000 litres of fuel are needed to operate basic water and wastewater facilities for one month.

The next step should include restoring the local provision of immediate essential services. It is crucial to reinstate local food production in Gaza, particularly flour mills and bakeries, by ensuring sufficient water and energy, and safe access to food processing and storage facilities. In areas where water infrastructure has been severely damaged, water supplies can be provided to decentralized distribution points through water tankers until normality is restored to water networks. The quality of Gaza's water supply will also need to be safeguarded through small technological interventions, including personal water filters and chlorine tablets, so as to curb the spread of water-borne diseases.

#### B. Address systemic development challenges

Long-standing development issues related to food, water and sanitation, and energy should be addressed by integrating the humanitarian dimension into immediate, medium- and long-term recovery plans, thus empowering the Palestinian people and their institutions as agents of change and leaders of the development process. As part of recovery and development efforts, adopting policies that recognize the intricate relationship between water, energy and food can contribute

to simultaneous advancements in food security and nutrition, livelihoods, health, and water and energy access, paving the way for inclusive and sustainable development.

In the first stages of recovery, water, agricultural and energy infrastructure damaged by the war should be repaired as a priority. The spread of pollution and health risks can be curbed by installing mobile wastewater treatment plants and providing households and public institutions with clean cooking solutions with portable LPG cylinders, solar kits, and batteries. Furthermore, social protection mechanisms should be established in the form of additional farmer support and food security programmes, such as targeted food subsidies, cash transfers, school meals for vulnerable children, and nutritional supplements for pregnant women. Lastly, rubble must be cleared, sorted and removed in an environmentally sustainable manner from destroyed urban areas and productive agricultural lands. It is also important to assess and resolve the damage to soils, forests, water bodies and biodiversity as a result of the war.

In the medium to long term, investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency could lead to greater energy independence, thus increasing long-term resilience and overcoming challenges posed by the occupation, including the blockade and other restrictions. Similarly, the adoption of small-scale solar power technologies paired with batteries can be a flexible low-cost and environmentally friendly alternative to unreliable electricity imports. In the agricultural sector, investing in climate-smart agricultural practices can increase agricultural yields and food sovereignty, while ensuring the sustainability of water resources and reducing greenhouse emissions. Lastly, rebuilding storage infrastructure and maintaining sufficient stocks of critical food commodities could reduce the risk of food shortages, thus mitigating the threat of future blockades and enhancing resilience to fluctuations in global food markets.

## C. Tackle the root causes of conflict

The Israeli occupation and practices constitute a key obstacle towards sustainable development in the occupied Palestinian territory. Any meaningful

### Clean water and adequate and nutritious food should be provided to all those in need

particularly to

-  vulnerable populations living in shelters
-  pregnant women
-  children

### The free movement of people and goods between



needs to be re-established

### ending the fragmentation of the Palestinian territory

development effort must begin with Palestinians regaining sovereignty over their natural resources, including water and land, and being able to invest in energy, water and agricultural infrastructure. They must also regain control of borders, and be empowered to conduct foreign trade to increase economic opportunities for domestic producers, reduce the cost of imports, and decrease uncertainty around food, water and energy availability. Furthermore, the free movement of people and goods between Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem needs to be re-established, ending the fragmentation of the Palestinian territory. Ultimately, the solution to the matter lies in the implementation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

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