

UNICEF: Situation of children in Gaza remains precarious

More than three months after the cessation of hostilities in Gaza, the Israeli blockade and inter-Palestinian tension are hampering recovery efforts.

“Although the conflict ended 100 days ago, children in Gaza continue to suffer, both physically and psychologically,” said Patricia McPhillips, UNICEF Special Representative to the occupied Palestinian territory. “It is critical that supplies and materials needed for recovery and rehabilitation are allowed in.”

Ten per cent of the population in Gaza remains without electricity and nine per cent with little access to safe water. UNRWA primary health clinics in the south are recording significantly higher prevalence of water and sanitation-related infectious diseases, including acute bloody diarrhea, over the same period last year. For many households, food, fuel and cash are in short supply. According to the latest figures, 65 essential drugs were out of stock at Gaza’s Central Store. Five children have died in unexploded ordnance-related incidents since the end of the 22-day conflict and at least 14

were injured in related violence.

The fighting took a particularly heavy toll on children's psychological wellbeing. A recent United Nations study reaffirmed that mental health, anxiety and stress are the main health problems in Gaza.

Working with partners, UNICEF is ramping up psychosocial support to children and young people, providing mine-risk education in schools and communities, supporting remedial education, and organizing vaccination campaigns.

To improve maternal, newborn and child health, UNICEF is also focusing on improving skills of health care providers and caregivers –particularly in relation to managing severe malnutrition, breastfeeding and early detection of childhood illnesses.

However, lack of access continues to hamper recovery efforts.(...)

The news note:

http://www.unicef.org/media/media_49515.html

