



Gaza in transition: Rebuilding essential services for children and families amid the ongoing crisis

In Nuseirat, students return to learning in tents beside the ruins, three years lost, yet not the will to begin again-Gaza, Feb.2026 ©APA

This Flash Update was prepared by WeWorld.

“Today was extremely long and tiring... but it was truly wonderful in every way, filled with positive energy and meaningful work.”

Hygiene Promotion Assistant after the World Water Day open day in Al-Attar Educational Center, Khan Yunis

SITUATION UPDATE

Despite the October 2025 ceasefire, hostilities continue to be reported across the Gaza Strip, including airstrikes, shelling, and gunfire, resulting in ongoing civilian casualties. Up until late March 2026 as reported by OHCHR, **673 Palestinians have been killed since the announcement of the ceasefire in October 2025.**

Since then, Israel has expanded military presence and additional access restrictions along the perimeter areas (commonly referred to as the “Yellow Line”). These military positions are distributed across the northern, central, and southern sections of the perimeter, where access to humanitarian facilities is either restricted or prohibited. Armed confrontations between different groups continue to be reported in various areas across the Gaza Strip, posing significant risks to civilians due to unexpected clashes, particularly in zones west of the Yellow Line.

Displacement is widespread, with about **96% of families forced to leave their homes at least once.**

The vast majority of them are living in overcrowded and unsafe shelters, with limited access to water, sanitation, hygiene, and electricity, driving hunger and disease. Food insecurity remains severe, with a majority of young children experiencing extreme dietary deprivation and rising risks of acute malnutrition.

Following the ceasefire, movement patterns shifted, with significant returns from southern areas toward Gaza City and northern governorates.

According to OCHA, **over 650,000 movements were recorded** between October and early December 2025. Large areas of the north and Gaza City remain heavily destroyed, largely uninhabitable and contaminated by debris and unexploded ordnance. Humanitarian needs remain overwhelming. Nearly the entire population – **over 2 million people** - requires urgent assistance. Access constraints, fuel shortages and widespread damage - with **over 80% of structures reported damaged or destroyed** - continue to undermine service delivery across sectors.



Displaced students return to their lessons inside fragile tents, just steps away from the ruins of what once was a school-Gaza, Feb.2026, Photo by: Hassan al-Jedi ©APA

Education has collapsed at scale, with over **97% of schools largely damaged** and many repurposed as shelters, leaving over 630,000 school-aged children without sustained access to formal education, with learning largely halted across the Gaza Strip. **Over 1 million children are estimated to require protection, mental health and psychosocial support services.** Without sustained child-centered and multi-sectoral assistance, the risk of irreversible harm to an entire generation remains acute.

WASH and sanitation needs remain critical. Over 85% of water and sanitation systems are either damaged or non-functional, severely limiting access to safe water and basic hygiene services; water availability has fallen well below minimum humanitarian standards, with many families accessing less than half the required daily water

levels, wastewater treatment and solid waste facilities are largely non-operational. Fuel shortages and restrictions of movement have left families with severely limited access to safe toilets, washing facilities, and basic hygiene items.

In overcrowded shelters and damaged neighborhoods, the absence of adequate bathrooms forces reliance on unsafe, shared or makeshift solutions, increasing health risks and protection concerns. Children are paying the highest price, as they remain exposed to hunger, disease, injury, disability, disrupted education, psychological distress and unsafe living conditions, with **impacts that extend far beyond the immediate crisis.** These compounded impacts risk causing **lasting and intergenerational harm**, underscoring the urgent need for **sustained, child-centered humanitarian assistance**, to prevent irreversible damage to an entire generation

KEY DATA WEWORLD INTERVENTIONS 01.03.2026 – 31.03.2026

+3,487
of whom +1,640 are children
People provided with water

+3,410
Children currently enrolled in TLSs for remedial education, SEL and PSS during the school year

+2,920
of whom +2,680 are children
People attending hygiene promotion sessions & open days

+730
Children benefitting from Psycho-Social Support activities and open days, PSS kits and nutritional support

+320
+1,950 people
Families supported with hygiene kits and dignity kits

WEWORLD INTERVENTION

Between 1-31 March 2026, WeWorld operated in a transition phase, focusing on re-establishing core services and preparing for scale-up ahead of the spring and hot season. Activities concentrated on essential WASH interventions in priority locations, while operational capacity, supply pipelines, and community structures were reinforced. During this period, **WeWorld supplied safe water to over 15,960 people, including more than 7,500 children.** Over 1,930 families received hygiene and dignity kits, targeting the households in the most vulnerable conditions. Hygiene promotion sessions and open days reached 367 individuals, introducing key messages on safe water handling, hygiene practices, and disease prevention at the household level.



Children celebrate world water day, Metro Jawazat Camp ©WeWorld

These activities focused on immediate risk reduction in overcrowded sites, while laying the groundwork for seasonal scale-up. With rising temperatures, pressure on water systems, and increased exposure to waterborne diseases, WeWorld is prioritizing the expansion of water supply, sanitation services, and hygiene support. Community-based mechanisms are being reactivated to monitor needs, promote safe practices, and support early detection of health risks.

In parallel, WeWorld continues to maintain its education response, with over **3,410 children currently enrolled** in SEL remedial education



Awareness sessions on water safety in IDP camps ©WeWorld

programs, and **735 children engaged in focused PSS activities.** The activities include recreational days, hygiene promotion and Menstrual Hygiene Management sessions, health clubs, and the distribution of PSS kits to ensure the continuity of learning, and structured daily routines in a context of prolonged disruption. Targeted psychosocial support contributes to reducing distress, improving emotional regulation, and strengthening peer interaction.

World Water Day

Between 26 and 31 March 2026, WeWorld and its local partner Teacher Creativity Center TCC organized open day events across Gaza to mark World Water Day, bringing together children, families, and communities at First Step School in Nuseirat, Al-Atare Educational Forum in Khan Yunis, and Al-Nuha Educational Point in Gaza City. Facilitated by Hygiene Promotion Youth Clubs, children aged 11 to 14 led the activities.

Community engagement exceeded expectations, reflecting strong local ownership. At First Step School, 150 participants attended against a target of 100. Activities combined creative and practical elements, including drawings and models on the water cycle and conservation, theatre and musical performances on water scarcity, and demonstrations of simple household water treatment using gravel, chlorine, and Aquatabs. At Al-Nuha, a local artist created an interactive mural depicting the Safe Water Chain in a maze format.

Across locations, children engaged their communities through exhibitions, performances, and public pledges promoting water conservation and safe hygiene practices. In parallel, 8 targeted awareness activities reinforced safe water practices among affected communities.

Delivered under challenging humanitarian conditions, these interventions addressed heightened risks of waterborne and communicable diseases. A total of 240 women and girls participated in sessions on safe water handling, household treatment, proper storage, conservation practices, and maintaining water container hygiene. Overall, the activities strengthened community engagement and improved awareness and adoption of safer water related practices in high risk, resource constrained settings.

PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

Priority will be given to emergency WASH services to reduce **public health risks** in overcrowded displacement sites and damaged neighborhoods. Activities will focus on increasing access to safe water through both water trucking and the rehabilitation of water wells, to help the affected populations cope with the hot season, which typically sees a **rise in waterborne diseases and skin conditions**.

Vector control measures are also critical during this season, as infestations of insects, mites, bugs, and rats are on the rise. As the entry of insecticides into the Gaza Strip remains unauthorized, WeWorld will focus on improving solid waste collection, addressing sanitation issues through the construction of additional safe toilets and the provision of desludging services, and distributing essential hygiene items such as soap, washing powder, anti-lice kits, and water containers.

Community-based structures, including Local Health and Hygiene Committees and community volunteers, will be strengthened to **identify needs, alert potential disease outbreaks**, monitor service gaps, promote safe hygiene practices, and support referrals. They also play a key role in mobilizing their communities and promoting local initiatives.

To address the impact of **prolonged displacement and school disruption**, WeWorld will continue expanding TLSs and child-friendly protection spaces.



Children participating in water awareness activities ©WeWorld

Remedial and catch-up education, SEL and basic PSS will be scaled up for children who have been out of school for extended periods. Education activities will be directly linked with WASH in Education interventions, ensuring learning spaces are supported by functional, gender-responsive latrines, handwashing facilities, and hygiene promotion.

Light rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure, schools and child-focused spaces will support safer access to basic services and act as a first step toward early recovery, while preparing for a broader transition when conditions allow.

Sustained donor support, together with expanded aid channels and a significant increase in aid flow, are essential to enable WeWorld to maintain and scale these life-saving interventions, prevent further deterioration of the humanitarian situation and lay the foundations for early recovery once conditions allow.



World water day activities, Gaza City ©WeWorld

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