



Sifting through the rubble

With practically no job opportunities, Palestinians in Gaza are resorting to whatever they can to make some money. Young people, many of them school and university students work under the scorching summer sun in the northern area of Gaza near the perimeter with Israel to collect rubble and scrap material for recycling. This young boy from Beit Hanoun told Oxfam that for every ton of gravel they collect, they get around NIS60, on which they then have to pay taxes to the Hamas government. They risk their lives collecting rubble close to the fence, where Israeli soldiers regularly fire at Palestinians near the 300-metre so-called “buffer zone” declared unilaterally by Israel on Palestinian soil. On Saturday 28 August, two Palestinians were injured by Israeli fire while collecting rubble in the former Erez Industrial Zone.

Photo and text: Karl Schembri/Oxfam

1. Headlines

- **Mortars/rockets/casualties/incursions:** According to reports, 1 rocket and 7 mortar shells were directed by Palestinian armed groups from Gaza at Israel this week, while 5 rockets, 7 mortar shells, and 1 improvised explosive device (IED) were reported last week. There were reports this week of 1 incursion from the Israeli forces, as compared to 3 incursions, 7 shells and 4 air strikes from the Israeli forces reported last week. No firefights were reported this week. Last week, 2 firefights were reported.

There were reports of 2 Palestinian civilians injured this week as a result of IDF fire (please see Palestinians in the buffer zone). Last week, 1 Palestinian militant was reported killed as a result of IDF fire and 3 Israeli soldiers were reported injured as a result of Palestinian militants' fire.

- **Fishermen:** There were 2 incidents of Israeli naval vessels firing at Palestinian fisherman reported this week. There were no reported incidents of Israeli naval vessels firing at Palestinian fishermen last week. Since January 2009, Israeli naval forces have restricted the access of Palestinian fishing boats to three nautical miles from the coast; in practice, access is sometimes restricted to as little as one nautical mile.

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- **Tunnel related fatalities:** A 24 year-old Palestinian man was reported killed when a tunnel under the Gaza-Egypt border collapsed this week. In a separate incident this week, Egyptian Security Forces reportedly discovered and blew up 12 smuggling tunnels beneath the Gaza-Egypt border. No injuries or deaths were reported in this incident. No tunnel related fatalities or injuries were reported the week prior.
- **Palestinians in the “buffer zone”:** There were 3 reports of Israeli military fire in the so-called “buffer zone”, along the perimeter of Gaza this week, resulting in 2 injuries to Palestinian civilians, aged 16 and 17, who were reportedly collecting scrap metal in the former Erez Industrial Zone. In the week before, 2 incidents were reported, resulting in one injury of a civilian.
- **Rafah border crossing:** The Rafah border crossing with Egypt was officially open this week for medical cases, students and those with visas for third countries. During the 7 days Rafah remained open, 3,236 people left Gaza, 1,984 entered, and 98 were refused entry to Egypt.

Last week Rafah was also open for 7 days: 3,469 people left Gaza, 3,513 entered, and 218 were refused entry to Egypt. In recent weeks, there has been a significant rise in the number of people crossing weekly through Rafah: the week before the attack on the Gaza flotilla and the opening of the Rafah border, 45 people left Gaza, 748 entered and 2 were refused entry to Egypt through Rafah.

- **Power plant and electricity supply:** 975,499 litres of industrial fuel were delivered this week for Gaza’s power plant, which is only 27% of the 3.5 million litres of fuel needed weekly at the current maximum capacity of 80Mw. 951,241 litres of industrial fuel were transferred the week prior.
- **Cooking gas:** 566 tons of cooking gas reportedly entered Gaza this week, 32% of the normal weekly level of need of 1,750 tons. 741 tons of cooking gas were reported to have entered Gaza last week. The overall cooking gas shortage has been a main concern for humanitarian agencies since November 2009.
- **Diesel/petrol:** No diesel or petrol was delivered this week to Gaza. Last week, no diesel and no petrol were delivered to the private sector. A near total ban on fuel imports for public sale was put in place by the Government of Israel in October 2008. Around 100,000 litres of diesel and 100,000 litres of petrol are reported to enter Gaza every day through tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border (OCHA, 4 May 2010).
- **Truckloads of supplies:** 1,177.5 truckloads of supplies were permitted entry this week (949.5 through Kerem Shalom crossing and the equivalent of 228 through the Karni conveyor). This is the equivalent of 41% of the pre-blockade weekly average of all trucks entering Gaza*. 1,046 trucks were allowed into Gaza during the previous week.

The Israeli authorities expanded the Kerem Shalom crossing, allowing for the number of truckloads that enter the crossing daily to increase from 100 to 250. Since the Israeli Government announcement that it would ease the blockade on Gaza on 20 June, the number of imported truckloads has steadily increased. The week before the attack on the Gaza flotilla (23 to 29 May 2010), only 631 truckloads were allowed into Gaza (about 125 per day) - 22% of the pre-blockade weekly average.

While imports remain limited, and raw materials severely restricted, exports remain banned entirely. As a result, the scale of economic activity remains heavily dependent on local demand in Gaza, which in turn is constrained by the low purchasing power of the population and the relatively

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small size of the local market. Until crossings are opened for export, the impact of the easing of the blockade on unemployment, poverty and food insecurity rates will remain extremely limited.

Among items entering this week were electrical poles, plastic material, calves, ceramic, mattresses, marble and fencing material.

**Pre-blockade weekly average (2,807 truckloads) is calculated based on the monthly average of all truckloads that entered during the first five months of 2007, before Israel's imposition of the blockade.*

- **Exports:** No exports have left Gaza since 18 April 2010. No change in the policy prohibiting exports implemented since June 2007 has been announced by the Israeli authorities so far.
- **Internal violence:** 3 incidents were reported this week in Gaza. 2 incidents involved separate family disputes, one of which resulted in 1 injury as gunshots were reportedly exchanged. In the third incident, a Palestinian man was found stabbed to death in the former Netzarim settlement

2. Humanitarian trucks (week):

Truck originator	Total for week 22-28 August
UNRWA	26
WFP	7
NGO	5
Commercial	911.5
Karni Crossing (wheat, chickpeas and animal feed)	228
Total trucks for the week	1,177.5
Percentage of weekly average before the blockade (first five months of 2007)	41%

3. Fuel deliveries (week)

		Diesel	Petrol	Cooking Gas
22-28 August		0		566 tons
	Percentage of need *	0		32%
Previous week		0		741 tons
* Fuel association 2006 estimates - ** Imports of diesel and petrol for the general public and public sector in Gaza were exceptionally authorized on 6 occasions since October 2008				

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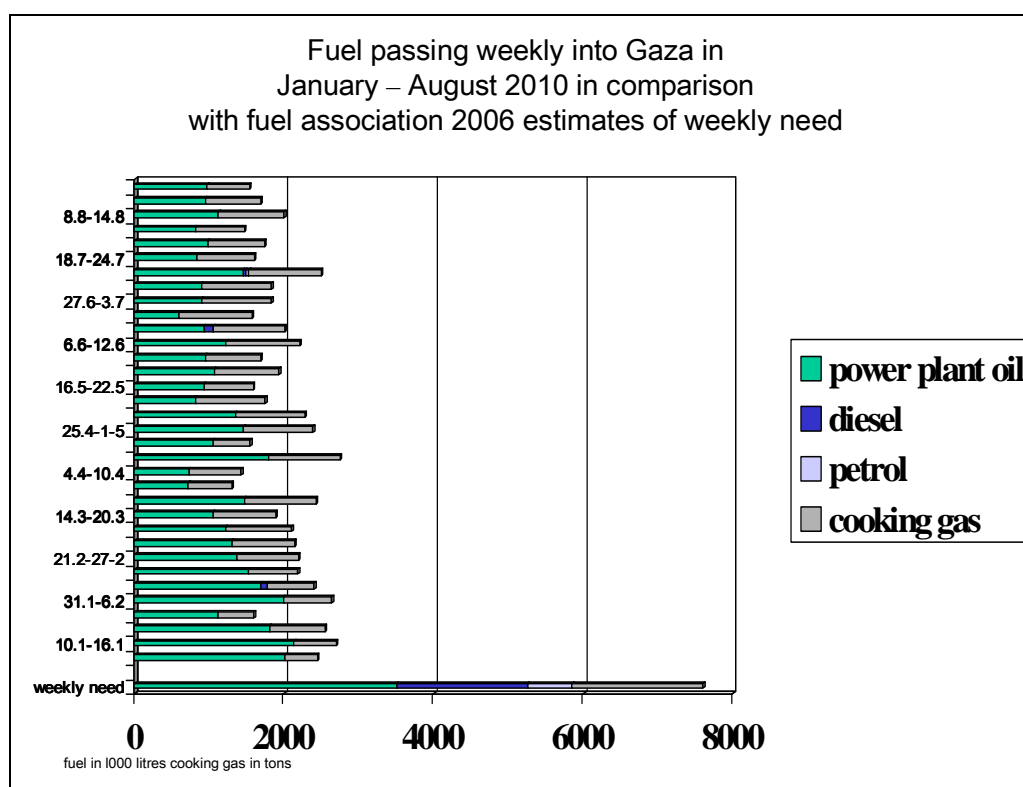
Delivery of Industrial Fuel to the Power Plant (week):

Industrial diesel	Previous week	22-28 August
	951,241 litres	975,499 litres
Percentage of amount required to operate at maximum supply capacity of 80 MW		27%

4. Contact information

Catherine Weibel, Media Lead in Jerusalem: + 972 (0) 54 639 5002 – catherine.weibel@oxfamnovib.nl
Willow Heske, Information Officer in Jerusalem: +972 (0) 57 723 4126 – wheske@oxfam.org.uk

5. Trend Charts



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