



MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES
無國界醫生

BORDERLINE

無疆

JUNE 2024

The background of the cover is a composite image. The upper portion shows a close-up of a woman's head, which is wrapped in white medical gauze. Her eyes are closed, and there is a visible injury on her forehead. The lower portion of the image shows a scene of total devastation, likely a hospital in Gaza, with rubble, debris, and overturned hospital beds. The overall color palette is dominated by reds, blacks, and whites, with a bright, glowing light source in the top left and bottom right corners.

Gaza:
When Hospitals Collapse

The role of hospitals

“Hospitals are not targets and must remain safe spaces.”

Hospitals and other medical facilities are meant to be places of emergency assistance and healing for the injured and sick. However, is this the case in practice?

On 7th October, 2023, a new wave of conflict erupted between Israel and Palestine in the Gaza Strip, resulting in countless civilian casualties and displacement. Hospitals were supposed to be a safe haven for the sick and injured, but as soon as the conflict erupted, Al-Awda Hospital and Indonesian Hospital in the north were among the first targets, setting the tone that even medical facilities are no longer safe in this fight.

As the conflict escalated, Israel imposed a blockade on Gaza and civilians have been collectively punished. Other hospitals in Gaza faced the same fate of aerial bombardment and destruction. Al-Shifa Hospital, the biggest hospital in the Strip, was hit multiple times in one day, destroying the maternity ward and outpatient clinics. In 2024, Nasser Hospital and multiple other hospitals have also been targeted, leaving some of them in ruins.

With the number of patients skyrocketing due to the conflict, the already fragile healthcare system in Gaza has been pushed to its limits; and because of the destruction of medical facilities, people in Gaza can hardly access the most basic of emergency services. Even wars have rules - fighting and attacks should stop at the hospital gates. Attacks on healthcare facilities are a gross violation of International Humanitarian Law, and those who turn a blind eye to them are complicit. The international community need to urgently step up, stop further attacks and hold the relevant authorities accountable.





Al Shifa medical complex is in ruins after 14 days of siege by the Israeli forces. © MSF

“When we fled Al-Aqsa hospital, I was on a cart. I felt the pain as my leg moved with every hole in the road.”



— Hala Ismael Al-Talla, 21, patient at the MSF-supported Rafah Indonesian field hospital

Hala Ismael Al-Talla was forced to leave her home in the Nuseirat refugee camp in Gaza’s Middle Area after the house she lived in with her family was shelled. Her right leg was broken and she was taken to Al-Aqsa Hospital, but then the Israeli military jeopardised the safety of medical staff and patients with threats of attacking the hospital. Hala had to flee to Rafah. She endured enormous pain to reach Rafah Indonesian Hospital. Unfortunately, two of her toes suffered necrosis and required amputation.

Hala is just one of the countless people affected by the attacks on medical facilities by the Israeli military. Drone strikes, tank shellings, sniper fire and soldier shooting all contributed to the varying degrees of destruction of hospitals in Gaza. These attacks exacerbated the chaos in overcrowded hospitals and worsened an already-dire situation.

We have been forced to evacuate nine different health facilities. We witnessed the unimaginable suffering of the people of Gaza. We have done everything we can to enact a meaningful humanitarian response.



— Christopher Lockyear, MSF Secretary General (said in February 2024)

The conflict has caused a sharp increase in medical demand, and attacks on hospitals by the Israeli military have not only prevented proper treatment

for the injured but also abruptly interrupted other medical care.

Mahra (alias) was pregnant and went into labor in January. She searched for an obstetrician at the Emirati hospital to help her give birth, but the delivery rooms were full. Sadly, Mahra had to return to the cold weather outside the hospital and gave birth in a makeshift tent. Her new-born baby didn’t make it.

With the collapse of Gaza’s healthcare system, the majority of hospitals have completely shut down, only a small number of patients and medical staff who could not be evacuated or voluntarily chose to stay remains. For example at Nasser Hospital, according to the United Nations, as of the end of February there were 130 patients and at least 15 medical staff grounded at this facility still, having already ran out of water and electricity, and with only very little food available.

There are a lot of patients already operated on and they cannot walk. They cannot evacuate. If I am not here or the other surgeon, who will take care of the patients?



— Dr Mohammed Obeid



Damaged walls at the entrance of MSF office in Gaza city. © MSF

*Figures from WHO as at 13th May

Only 15 of 36 hospitals in the Gaza strip are partially functioning



Bed occupancy rate in Gaza functioning hospitals is up to

439%

Gaza hospitals and the attacks they sustained

*Until Late-May

Al-Awda Hospital

- MSF has been providing surgical and trauma surgery support here since 2018.
- On 21st November, 2023, Al-Awda was bombed by the Israeli military, MSF doctors Dr Mahmoud Abu Nujaila and Dr Ahmad Al Sahar were killed.
- In early December, Israeli forces besieged and took over the hospital, medical staff including MSF workers were detained.
- Several former MSF-supported staff have voluntarily stayed behind to continue providing care.

Al-Shifa Hospital

- The largest hospital in Gaza Strip with 700 beds providing emergency and surgical care, it received and treated 5000 patients during the early stages of the conflict.
- Several family members of MSF staff were killed in a vehicle near the hospital during an attack in December.
- The hospital was evacuated as requested in January, its grounds then became a temporary shelter for nearly 50,000 displaced people.
- Al-Shifa ceased to function completely on 2nd April, the entire MSF team had to evacuate.

Al-Aqsa Hospital

- The only hospital in Central Gaza, MSF team started providing wound care here since last November.
- MSF team held art therapy sessions for children survivors going through trauma.
- On 6th January, the MSF team working in Al-Aqsa was forced to evacuate the hospital.
- We managed to return in early February and provided wound care for nearly 5,800 patients as of April.

Tal al Sultan Trauma Stabilization Point

El-Emirati Maternity Hospital

Al-Shaboura Clinic

only showing some of hospitals and medical facilities supported by MSF in Gaza



Fully evacuated – No MSF staff working



MSF conducting medical activities alongside non-MSF medical workers



The facility is shut down or cannot operate

MSF Clinic

Indonesian Hospital

- Stopped operating after the attack in November, but managed to reopen in May

Rafah Indonesian Hospital

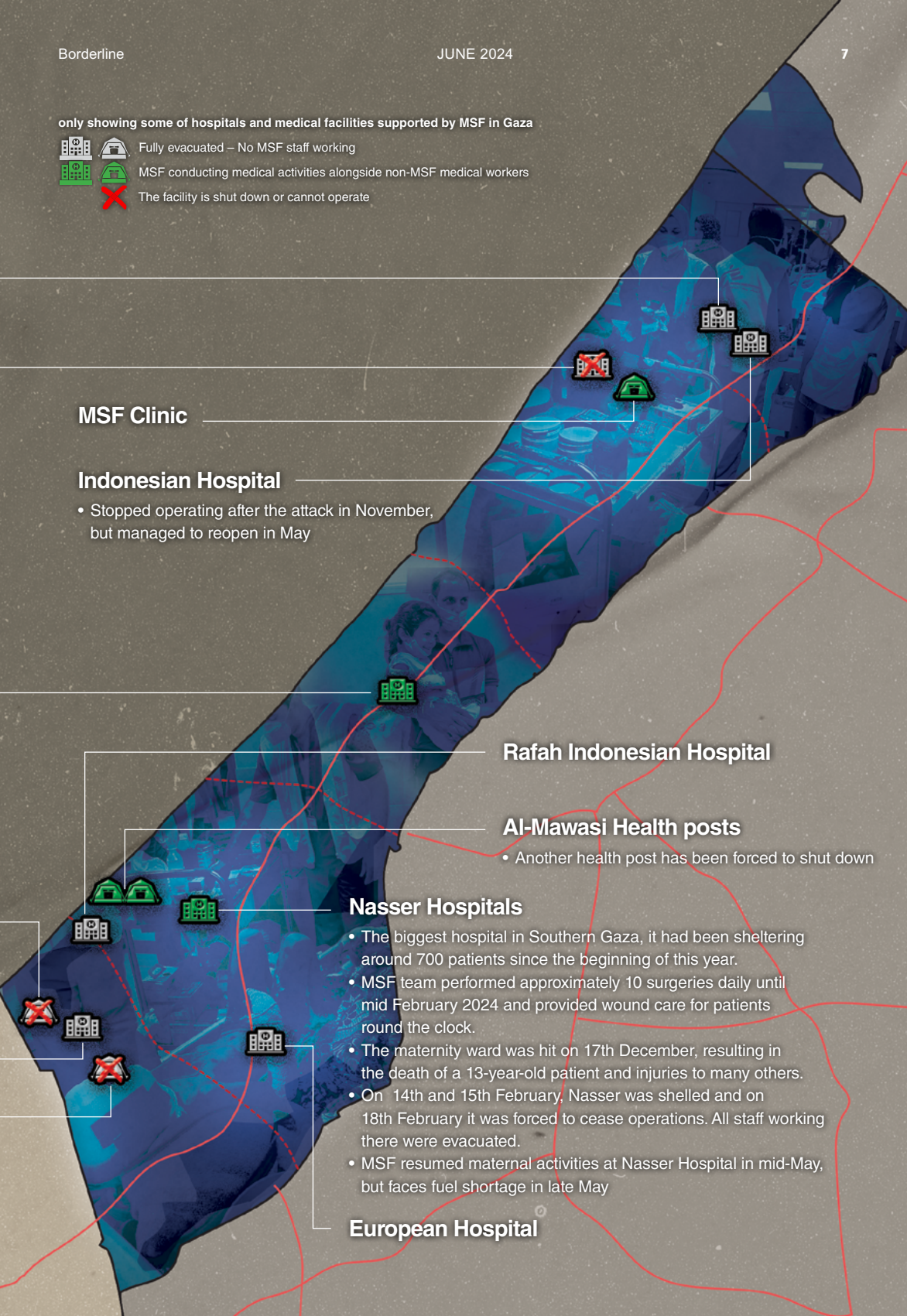
Al-Mawasi Health posts

- Another health post has been forced to shut down

Nasser Hospitals

- The biggest hospital in Southern Gaza, it had been sheltering around 700 patients since the beginning of this year.
- MSF team performed approximately 10 surgeries daily until mid February 2024 and provided wound care for patients round the clock.
- The maternity ward was hit on 17th December, resulting in the death of a 13-year-old patient and injuries to many others.
- On 14th and 15th February, Nasser was shelled and on 18th February it was forced to cease operations. All staff working there were evacuated.
- MSF resumed maternal activities at Nasser Hospital in mid-May, but faces fuel shortage in late May

European Hospital



MSF's support to medical facilities in the south (as of late May)

Civilians and frontline aid workers in Gaza had no choice but to evacuate to the southern city of Rafah as the Israeli military continued with their indiscriminate bombing and destruction of medical facilities. With the Israeli army started intensifying its offensive in Rafah in May, MSF's support work in various local medical facilities has been hugely affected.

Medical facilities	MSF support activities	Situation in May
Rafah Indonesian Field hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported post-operative care for trauma and burn patients since December Outpatient and inpatient care, conducting around 130 consultations a day 	Forced to suspend support
El-Emirati Maternity Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postpartum care, managing complications of pregnancy, and expanding the Obstetrics and Gynaecology department The hospital has admitted 6,053 patients since January 	Handed over to the Ministry of Health
Al- Shaboura clinic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outpatient services, including general consultations, vaccination, wound dressing, mental health services Systematic malnutrition screening of children under 5 and pregnant women More than 36,000 medical consultations had been conducted since January 	Forced to close
Al-Mawasi Health posts(3 locations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outpatients services, including general consultations, vaccination, wound dressing, mental health services Conducted over 43,000 consultations since January, treating patients with upper respiratory infections, diarrhea, hypertension and skin diseases 	Two of them still operating; One forced to close
Tal al Sultan Trauma Stabilization Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received over 500 cases within half a month since operating in May 	Forced to close

The war in Gaza is still ongoing. Scan this QR code for the latest developments:



Article 19 of the Geneva Convention (I):

Fixed establishments and mobile medical units of the Medical Service may in no circumstances be attacked, but shall at all times be respected and protected by the Parties to the conflict. Should they fall into the hands of the adverse Party, their personnel shall be free to pursue their duties, as long as the capturing Power has not itself ensured the necessary care of the wounded and sick found in such establishments and units.



The responsible authorities shall ensure that the said medical establishments and units are, as far as possible, situated in such a manner that attacks against military objectives cannot imperil their safety.

The devastating impact of Gaza's “silent killings”

In a report released in April this year, MSF drew on medical data and patient testimonies to demonstrate that the decimation of the healthcare system in Gaza had led to the silent killing of many.

Aside from the myriads of war-wounded across the Strip, diabetes patients are also unable to receive essential treatment as hospitals shut down dialysis departments; similarly, pregnant women and patients suffering from malnutrition and chronic diseases such as hypertension have all seen their conditions deteriorate, or even lost their lives, when access to the special care they need is almost non-existent.

“Destroying hospitals is equivalent to killing patients. There is no difference at all between them.”



— Pong Chiu, vice president of MSF Hong Kong Board

In the midst of the intense offensive on Rafah by the Israeli forces, Chiu once again called for an immediate and sustained ceasefire in Gaza.*

* Scan this QR code for the full version of Chiu's call for ceasefire (in Cantonese only).



As the hospitals collapse, the healthcare efforts of countless medical staff to the patients over the years also shatter like the rubble of these health structures, in the blink of an eye. It is impossible for any of us to recuperate and fill the hollow of health needs there in just a few weeks or even months.

“I'm sorry, but you could add 1,000 field hospitals, you're not going to be able to replace the hospital system. The healthcare system that was in Gaza before the war.”



— Dr Amber Alayyan,
MSF Deputy Programme Manager for the Middle East





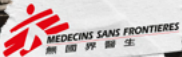
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不一定

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至少援手
一定還有

烏克蘭 Ukraine



MEDICINS SANS FRONTIERES
無國界醫生

7.7 無國界醫生日
MSF DAY

DONATE TO MSF TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY CARE WHEN HOSPITALS STRUGGLE OR EVEN COLLAPSE.
立即捐款，為求醫無門的人提供緊急護理。



On Track to Save 2024 Highlights

Coinciding with the 30th year of MSF Hong Kong, our signature event “On Track to Save” was reintroduced in a new format — as a running race for the first time! Set against a backdrop resembling the flood-prone regions of South Sudan, this change allowed participants to feel the challenge faced by medical teams who save lives in the country. The event featured races of various lengths — 10km, 3km, and a 1km fun run — catering to all ages and individuals.

This event, held on 17 March at the Main Dam of Tai Mei Tuk Plover Cove Reservoir, successfully united over a 1,000 participants in solidarity with MSF’s works. We are grateful to everyone who contributed to the success of this impactful occasion.

When hospitals struggle or even collapse What's NEXT?

Let there be aid

Support MSF's medical humanitarian work!

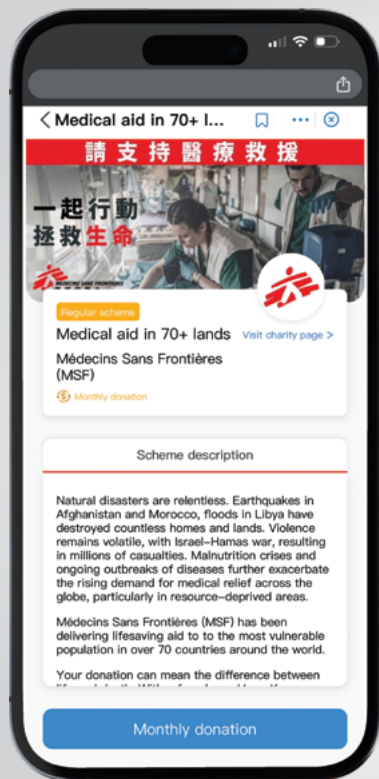
Summer is coming, get ready for “7.7 MSF Day”! This year, we put the spotlight on neglected people in distress, living on the verge of life and death due to all kinds of crises. Be part of us by making a donation to show you support! Every donation will be rewarded with a special action bracelet that symbolises the impact you made in making a difference to the lives of vulnerable people. Stay tuned for all the event details coming on the MSF Day website in June.

Just a Click Away to Save Lives— Make A Donation To Help People In Crisis

Do you have an AlipayHK digital wallet? If so, you are just a few clicks away from reading updates about our lifesaving missions and supporting our cause with a donation! Scan the QR code below to see how simple it is to make a difference to vulnerable people's lives!

Official receipts can be issued with a donation of HK\$100 or above, with basic information required.

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 - HK\$500 can help MSF to buy enough emergency health kits include basic supplies such as oral and topical medicines to treat 30 patients.
 - HK\$1,300 can help MSF to send doctors to provide medical care for people in urgent need, and to train local medical staffs.
 - Other amount HK\$ _____

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