



## SITUATION UPDATE

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After 470 days of relentless conflict, a temporary ceasefire was established in Gaza at 11:15 on January 19, 2025. This extended war has destroyed homes, hospitals, and critical infrastructure. According to reports from the United Nations, approximately 1.9 million individuals, representing about 90% of the Gaza Strip's population, have been displaced.

From October 7, 2023, to January 18, 2025, OCHA reported at least 47,161 fatalities, 111,166 injuries and more than 10,000 missing under the rubble. The Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza also indicated that 35,055 children have been orphaned, having lost one or both parents during the past year. Furthermore, there are 12,000 patients in urgent need of medical evacuation.

Recent satellite imagery indicates that the Gaza Strip has experienced extensive damage, with 60% of buildings, 92% of homes, 88% of schools, and 68% of agricultural land affected.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported the impact of attacks on healthcare facilities, revealing that only 50% (18 out of 36) of hospitals are partially operational, 39% (55 out of 141) of primary healthcare centers are functional, and 27% (7 out of 26) of UNRWA health centers are operational. Additionally, as of January 11, there are 11 field hospitals in operation, with six fully functional and five partially operational (UNRWA, 2025). This situation highlights the serious consequences of military operations conducted by the IDF around hospitals, which have not only caused physical destruction but have also severely restricted access to essential medical services, safe environments, and ongoing care for those with chronic health conditions.

While this ceasefire offers a glimmer of hope, it is merely the first step in addressing the population's significant humanitarian, psychological, and medical needs.

As the ceasefire remains in place, it is expected that about half a million internally displaced persons will seek to return to their homes, or what is left of them.

SAMS Foundation remains dedicated to providing crucial support to the most vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, during this critical time.

## SAMS INTERVENTIONS IN GAZA STRIP

In October 2023, SAMS launched an Immediate Gaza Relief Response Team, comprising representatives from its U.S. headquarters, the Regional Office in Istanbul, board members, and volunteers. This initiative focused on fundraising for immediate and long-term humanitarian interventions in Gaza, seeking legal registration in Palestine and Egypt, and leveraging SAMS legal presence in Jordan to facilitate aid through various channels.

By April 2024, SAMS had established a new Program Office in the Gaza Strip, laying the groundwork for its transition into the SAMS OPT Country Office, further solidifying its commitment to healthcare and humanitarian support in the region.

## INTERVENTIONS IMPLEMENTED SO FAR

To date SAMS Foundation has implemented several key interventions in response to the ongoing crisis. Since the crisis began, we have provided financial donations to local partners to support immediate relief efforts. This includes collaborating with partners to deliver food and non-food items (NFI) within Gaza and procuring and distributing essential medications and medical supplies to various healthcare facilities. Additionally, we participated in two medical missions with SAMS volunteers, comprising medical professionals and assistants, facilitated through the Egyptian corridor. We are also proud to assist Palestinian medical students financially in Turkey and Egypt. Furthermore, we have engaged in two global conferences aimed at bolstering the Gaza Health Initiative (GHI). Through these efforts, we remain committed to addressing the urgent needs of those affected by the crisis.





## MEDICAL EDUCATION INITIATIVES SUPPORTING MEDICAL STUDENTS

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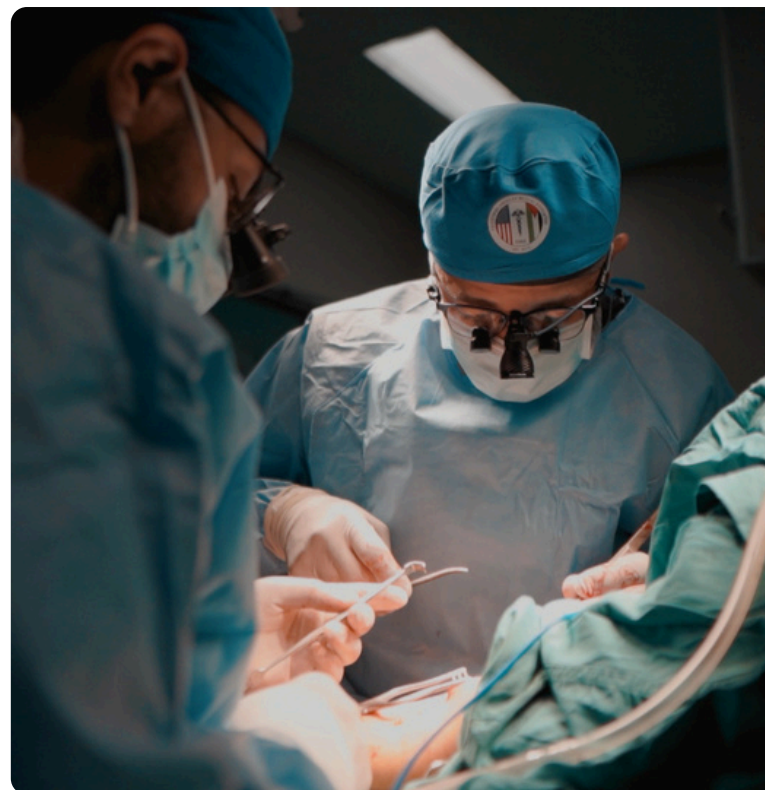
SAMS is dedicated to advancing medical education for healthcare professionals affected by conflict, with the goal of improving overall health and wellness. Our mission is to rebuild healthcare infrastructure and enhance patient care by providing high-quality medical education.

Through specialized training and education, we empower local talent to become agents of change, ensuring sustainable healthcare development. SAMS remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting high-quality post-graduate medical education.

SAMS proudly supported 43 medical graduates from Gaza studying at Zagazig University in Egypt as part of our Gaza response initiative. This effort reflects our unwavering dedication to addressing educational needs and strengthening healthcare capacity in the region during these challenging times.

### Ongoing Interventions:

- Supporting two Maternity Child Health MMUs (Mobile Medical Units) in Gaza.
- Provision of IPC materials and PPE to Health Facilities in Gaza with assessments and training.
- Supporting a comprehensive advanced dental clinic in Gaza South.



## RECENT UPDATES ONGOING SAMS ACTIVITIES IN GAZA

In January 2025, SAMS Foundation achieved significant milestones in its commitment to supporting healthcare in Gaza. The organization received formal approval for complete registration as a branch office of the SAMS global International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) from the Ministry of Interior in Ramallah, Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). Additionally, SAMS started the process of registration in Egypt, further strengthening its regional presence.

The newly established and fully registered country office, SAMS OPT, is now overseeing the implementation of several critical projects in the Gaza Strip. These initiatives are designed to address urgent healthcare needs and enhance the overall well-being of the Gazan population.

## HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS

In November 2024, the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), in partnership with the Palestine Medical Relief Society (PMRS), launched a critical program to provide essential health services to internally displaced individuals residing in shelters. This initiative addresses the pressing healthcare needs of beneficiaries living under challenging conditions. By December 31, 2024, 17,361 individuals had received comprehensive health services, including treatment and management of various acute and chronic illnesses, follow-up care, and sexual and reproductive health services. Additionally, 2,599 individuals benefited from vital psychosocial support through personalized individual and group sessions led by PMRS dedicated psychosocial workers, addressing the emotional impact of stress and trauma. The collaborative efforts of PMRS and SAMS have ensured that these essential services are accessible to individuals across all demographics. Strategic expansion into three key locations has been instrumental in addressing the mental health challenges faced by vulnerable populations, ensuring that necessary care is available to all in need during these difficult times.





## DENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

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The ongoing conflict in Gaza has precipitated a severe shortage of medical services, particularly in dentistry. Clinics and health centers face significant challenges, including frequent power outages and a scarcity of essential medical supplies. As the demand for dental care escalates, there is an urgent imperative to bolster the region's healthcare infrastructure.

In response to this pressing need, SAMS Foundation, collaborating with the Healthcare and Development Association, has established a fully equipped dental unit at the Palestinian Medical Center in Nuseirat, inaugurated on January 18, 2025. This initiative aims to enhance the health of the most affected populations by providing advanced dental services, including treatments for gum and oral diseases and preventive dentistry.

Moreover, this program seeks to alleviate the burden on existing dental clinics, mitigating the strain caused by service shortages. It is also designed to overcome logistical challenges, ensuring continuity of care despite power interruptions and equipment shortages. The initiative guarantees that impoverished and marginalized populations have access to essential healthcare during these challenging times by offering low-cost dental services.

## DELIVERY FROM EGYPT

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SAMS Foundation, in partnership with Mersal, has successfully transported a vital shipment of medications and medical supplies from Cairo to Rafah, heading to Gaza. After months of delays because of Rafah closure in May 2024, this is a significant step in SAMS' commitment to support those in need.

## IPC CENTRAL PROGRAM

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SAMS Foundation has initiated a program to provide Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) materials and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to health facilities in Gaza. A baseline assessment revealed a critical shortage of these essential supplies in most healthcare settings. To address this, SAMS offers both online and on-the-job training in collaboration with local health authorities and IPC supervisors, ensuring the proper utilization of IPC materials and PPE. The shipment of these supplies from the West Bank to Gaza is being managed with the Anera.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

In partnership with the United Palestinian Appeal (UPA), the SAMS Foundation has funded the procurement and distribution of fresh food parcels and non-food clothing packages. This initiative reached 9,177 internally displaced persons (IDPs), assisting 1,610 households from December 14, 2023, to February 15, 2024.

SAMS Foundation, in collaboration with the United Palestinian Appeal (UPA), completed the Gaza Emergency Response - Ramadan Food Project in Rafah and Khan Younis from March 11, 2024, to April 8, 2024. This initiative provided supplemental fresh food distribution to 15,506 direct beneficiaries. Specifically, assisting 1,615 families with fresh food baskets and provided family-sized hot meals to 1,050 displaced families.

SAMS Foundation and Direct Relief, Dr. Ammar Ghamen led a team of 19 dedicated volunteers to provide urgent and ICU-level care for displaced refugees in Gaza, specifically at the European Gaza Hospital from May 1- 17th, 2024.

SAMS Foundation funded the distribution of pediatric medications to several partners in Gaza. With Anera facilitating the logistics, SAMS ensured that the medications were efficiently picked up and delivered to vital partners, including Ahli Arab Hospital, Al Sahabah Medical Complex, Shifa Hospital, Palestinian Medical Relief, Caritas Medical Center - Gaza, and the Near East Council of Churches (NECC).





## IMPACT SO FAR



### Immediate Response (Since Oct 2023)

- Launched **Gaza Relief Response Team** across multiple regions
- Fundraising for short- and long-term aid
- Legal registration in **Palestine & Egypt** for aid facilitation
- Established **Gaza Program Office**, transitioning to **SAMS OPT Country Office**

## Key Interventions Implemented



### Humanitarian Aid

- Financial support to local partners
- Food & non-food item (NFI) distributions
- Medical supplies procurement & delivery
- Two medical missions via Egypt
- Support for Palestinian medical students (Turkey & Egypt)
- Participation in global Gaza Health Initiative (GHI) conferences



### Medical Education and Support

- Supported 43 medical graduates from Gaza at Zagazig University, Egypt
- Commitment to postgraduate medical training
- Two Maternity & Child Health (MCH) Mobile Units operational
- Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) materials & PPE provided with training
- Advanced dental clinic in Gaza South



## Specialized Health & Mental Health Interventions



### Healthcare for Displaced (Nov-Dec 2024)

- **17,361** individuals received medical care
- **2,599** received psychosocial support
- Expanded mental health services to **3 locations**



### Dental Health Program

- **New dental unit** in Nuseirat (Jan 18, 2025)
- Treats gum/oral diseases, strengthens infrastructure, and ensures affordable care



### Medical Aid from Egypt & IPC Program

- Medical supplies were successfully transported from **Cairo** to **Gaza** via Rafah
- Identified shortages, initiated training for **IPC supervisors**
- **Supply logistics** managed via Anera
  - Pediatric medication distribution to key hospitals & medical centers



### Additional Assistance

#### Food & Clothing Assistance:

- **9,177** displaced individuals (1,610 households) received aid (Dec 2023 - Feb 2024)

#### Ramadan Food Project (Mar-Apr 2024):

- **15,506 beneficiaries**
- **1,615 families** received fresh food baskets
- **1,050 families** received hot meals

#### Medical Aid:

- Emergency medical team (May 1-17, 2024) provided ICU care at European Gaza Hospital





## LOOKING AHEAD

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Looking ahead, SAMS will continue to address the essential healthcare needs of vulnerable populations in Gaza. After the ceasefire, SAMS OPT office has developed a comprehensive Recovery Response Plan for 2025, focusing on addressing the essential healthcare needs of vulnerable populations in Gaza. The plan includes the following key initiatives:

- **Support for Primary Health Care Centers (PHCCs):** SAMS will support three static PHCCs, each linked with a Maternal and Child Health Mobile Medical Unit (MCH MMU), to enhance access to essential healthcare services for women and children in underserved areas.
- **Integration of Advanced Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS):** Advanced MHPSS services will be integrated with both static and mobile medical units to provide comprehensive mental health care, addressing the psychological impact of prolonged conflict on the population.
- **Promotion of the Central Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Program:** Efforts will be intensified to promote the central IPC program, ensuring that healthcare facilities adhere to stringent infection prevention protocols to safeguard both patients and healthcare workers.
- **Expansion of the Dental Health Program:** The dental health program will be expanded to provide broader access to dental care, addressing the critical shortage of dental services in the region.
- **Deployment of Medical Missions:** SAMS plans to deploy additional medical missions through the Egyptian and Jordanian corridors, leveraging regional partnerships to enhance healthcare delivery in Gaza.
- **Receipt of Gifts-In-Kind (GIK) Shipments:** The organization will facilitate GIK shipments from abroad under the health sector, ensuring a steady supply of medical equipment and supplies to support healthcare operations.
- **Support for Medical Education:** SAMS is committed to supporting medical education within Gaza, aiming to build local capacity and ensure the sustainability of healthcare services.
- **Rehabilitation of Healthcare Facilities:** Based on Damage Needs Assessments, SAMS will undertake structural and physical rehabilitation of healthcare facilities to restore and enhance healthcare infrastructure.
- **Activation of Public-Private Partnerships (3Ps):** Through contributions and reimbursement of costs across different levels of Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Healthcare (PHC, SHC, and THC), SAMS will activate Public-Private Partnerships to strengthen the healthcare system.





# SAMS

## GAZA

### FLASH UPDATE #1

## CONTACT

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