



Press Release

# In Gaza, a generation maimed by a year of bombing and shelling

Montreal, October 7, 2024 - One year of relentless bombing and shelling in Gaza will leave a generation of people injured, maimed and with permanent disabilities. 25% of all those injured in Gaza between 10 January and 16 May 2024, or 22,500 people out of 90,000, are in urgent need of rehabilitation services ([World Health Organization report](#)).

According to the WHO report, between January and May 2024 approximately 15,000 people sustained major extremity injuries, with an additional 3,000 to 4,000 expected amputations, more than 2,000 people suffered from major head and spine injuries and over 2000 people received severe burn injuries.

## Rehabilitation and health services severely disrupted

Many have acute rehabilitation needs but rehabilitation services in Gaza have been severely disrupted by the ongoing conflict, leaving the healthcare system unable to meet the surge in demand: [70% of in-patient hospitals are now non-functional due to fuel shortages](#).

The destruction and disruption of primary healthcare and community-level services, frequently paused or inaccessible due to the conflict, have further compounded the crisis. Much of the rehabilitation workforce has been displaced, and reports indicate that, as of 10 May 2024, 39 physical therapists had been killed.

## HI rehabilitation in Gaza

Humanity & Inclusion (HI) rehabilitation teams comprise 232 professionals who are working tirelessly in these extreme conditions to assist those in need of rehabilitation services. Between October 2023 and August 2024, HI organised 157,191 nursing care sessions (wound dressing), 169,761 physical therapy sessions, 57,692 occupational therapy sessions, and 48,190 psychological first aid



sessions. We also supplied 2,500 mobility aids, such as crutches and wheelchairs, and 8,076 non-food items, including wound dressing, first aid, hygiene and dignity kits.

The supply of mobility aids is falling drastically short of demand. The number of people in need of them far exceeds what is currently available or in the pipeline. WHO indicates that only 13% of needs for assistive products have been met.

## Quotes

*“There will be a significant increase in the number of people with disabilities in Gaza. Even a seemingly minor injury or fracture, if it is not treated properly or becomes infected, which is very likely given the terrible hygiene conditions, could lead to complications and lifelong disabilities. Rehabilitation is vital to preventing complications and ensuring the best possible recovery for survivors, yet the system is collapsing under pressure. Despite all the challenges, HI’s teams are managing to provide essential care even with the very basic equipment available to us.”* - **Noor Bimbashi, HI Advocacy Officer for Palestine**

*“We remain alarmed by the very high number of civilian victims, the lack of safe humanitarian access and the very limited number of trucks able to enter the Gaza strip each day. Along with more than 800 other organisations, HI is calling for an immediate ceasefire to put an end to the massacre and ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the affected population.”* - **Anne Delorme, HI Canada Executive Director**

## About HI:

Humanity & Inclusion (formely Handicap International) is an independent and impartial international aid organisation that has been working for over 40 years to ensure that people with disabilities and vulnerable groups are never left behind. The organization is present in nearly 60 countries, where it runs projects focused on the inclusive development of people with disabilities, provides humanitarian aid to populations in crisis, and helps to reduce armed violence through awareness-raising, mine clearance and explosive ordnance education.

Recognized for its advocacy work, HI is one of the founding organizations of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW), co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997 and



winner of the Conrad N. Hilton Award in 2011. In Canada, HI has been based in Montreal and Ottawa for 20 years.

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