

## **Caritas Australia reports blankets, mats and mattresses have reached 600 families in Gaza.**

In the past week Caritas Australia's partners in Gaza have shipped a batch of supplies to provide blankets, mats, and mattresses to families.

A total of 600 families have received a family kit containing six blankets, one mat and four mattresses, with further supplies set to support 3,550 families in the coming weeks. 8,000 tarps are also being procured to provide temporary shelter, with Caritas Australia partners working to source further shelter options and hygiene supplies.

This adds to the incredible work done by partner teams in Gaza in recent weeks to assist over 18,000 households and four churches sheltering over 1,200 people. These families and church shelters have been supported with cash assistance, the procurement of essential supplies, and psychological first aid.

**Sally Thomas, Humanitarian Emergencies Lead at Caritas Australia** said, "Families displaced in times of conflict and violence often flee their homes with nothing, making blankets and mattresses essential supplies. In Gaza there's also a lack of accommodation for displaced people. The Gaza Strip was already one of the most crowded places in the world and now large-scale evacuation to the south has increased the population density, with building damage compounding the situation. This has led to many sleeping on floors and facing an unbearably challenging winter."

According to the [UN](#) 1.7 million people are now displaced in Gaza, with upwards of 46,000 housing units destroyed. To date over 14,000 Palestinians and over 1,200 Israelis have been killed. Starvation, dehydration, and lack of access to medical intervention all remain critical threats to life in Gaza. Reports of diarrhea, acute respiratory infections, skin infections and hygiene-related conditions like lice are also on the rise due to overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions.

"While these supplies are vital and the temporary pause is necessary to provide some relief, it is simply not enough to deliver a real humanitarian response for those inside Gaza. The scale of the need and suffering is simply too great, so we continue to call for a total end to the violence, ensuring human rights and dignity can be restored" concluded Sally Thomas.

Those wanting to support those affected can:

- Sign the Caritas Australia petition for an immediate ceasefire and increased humanitarian assistance in Gaza here: [www.caritas.org.au/act/ceasefire-now/](http://www.caritas.org.au/act/ceasefire-now/)
- Support Caritas Australia's Gaza Appeal, by visiting [www.caritas.org.au/gaza](http://www.caritas.org.au/gaza) or calling 1800 024 413 toll free.

**ENDS**

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