



The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), and the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) Issue a joint Press Release on the World Water Day on March 22nd, 2024

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) and the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) issue a joint press release on the World Water Day, on March 22nd, 2024. This year, the World Water Day is celebrated under the theme of "Water for Peace". According to the announcement of the United Nations – Water, when water is scarce or polluted, or when people have unequal, or no access, tensions can rise between communities and countries. In the case of Palestine, the Israeli occupation used water as a weapon against the Palestinian people, especially since the start of the Israeli occupation aggression on October 7th, 2023, when it completely cut off water from Gaza Strip.

Each person in Gaza Strip has access to 3-15 liters of water per day during the Israeli occupation aggression

Gaza Strip is suffering from a severe crisis and needs to obtain water. The period before the Israeli occupation aggression on October 7th, 2023, the average per capita of water consumption is approximately 84.6 liter/capita/day (l/c/d). However and since the beginning of the Israeli occupation aggression, this figure has dropped to only 3-15 (l/c/d).

The quantities of water that reach citizens vary greatly according to the geographical location, water supplied, the destruction of the infrastructure, and the ongoing displacement. The minimum amount of water for survival is estimated at about 15 (l/c/d). The total amount of water currently available is estimated at about 10-20% of the total water available in Gaza Strip before the Israeli occupation aggression, where it is subject to change due to lack of fuel. It is worth mentioning that the Israeli occupation aggression had disastrous effects on water infrastructure, water networks and water supply sources in general, about 40% of the water networks in Gaza Strip were destroyed, and the main pumps broke down due to bombardments or due to running out of fuel.

Access to safe and sustainable water in Gaza is now limited and nearly impossible.

Data showed that only 4% of Gaza population had access to safe and clean water in times before the Israeli occupation aggression on October 7th, 2023. Currently, and with the continuous aggression on Gaza Strip, and the lack of fuel needed to operate water desalination plants and water well pumps, people are suffering to get water, any water at all not only safe water.

Only one water desalination plant located in the South of Gaza is working with an operating capacity reached 5%, while the other two plants are not working due to power outages and lack of fuel.

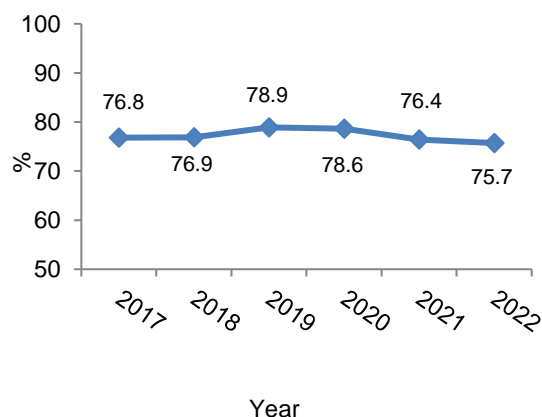
76% of Available Water is from Groundwater

Data showed that the percentage of abstracted surface and groundwater from available water during 2022 was high with an average of 75.7%.

On the other hand, the quantity of water pumped from the Palestinian wells in the West Bank in 2022 was 116.6 MCM from Eastern Aquifer, Western Aquifer and North-Eastern Aquifer.

It should be noted that the Palestinians have been denied, by the Israeli occupation, to access and abstract water from the Jordan River since 1967, which is estimated at about 250 MCM.

Percentage of abstracted surface and groundwater from available water, 2017-2022





22% of the Available Water in Palestine is purchased from the Israeli Water Company "Mekorot"

With scarce water and Israeli occupation restrictions on access to resources, Palestinians are forced to purchase water from the Israeli water company "Mekorot". In 2022, they purchased 98.8 MCM, which represented 22% of the water available in Palestine (445.7 MCM). Additionally, 38.8 MCM of the water were produced from the Palestinian springs while 298.5 MCM are pumped from groundwater wells and 9.6 MCM desalinated drinking water, representing 2.2% of the available water.

As for water available to Palestinians that is unsuitable for human use due to the quantities of polluted water in Gaza Strip, it reached 211 MCM, whereas the quantities of water suitable for domestic use available to the Palestinians are only 234.7 MCM, including purchased and desalinated water.

9.6 MCM desalinated drinking water

The amount of desalinated drinking water in Gaza Strip was only 9.6 million m³ in 2022. Moreover and according to the data of the Palestinian Water Authority, Palestine began producing quantities of desalinated water, where the percentage of which is expected to increase in the coming years; with the start of operating desalination plants in Gaza Strip. Thus, this percentage shall rise significantly with the implementation of the central desalination plant program.

Selected Indicators for Water Statistics in Palestine, 2020-2022

Quantity in Million m³/Year

Indicator	2020	2021	2022
Quantity of Water Available Annually	448.4	438.4	445.7
Quantity Pumped Annually from Groundwater Wells	299.1	297.8	298.5
Quantity of Spring Water Discharged Annually	53.3	37.0	38.8
Quantity of Water Purchased Annually from Israeli Water Company (Mekorot) for Domestic Use	90.3	96.1	98.8
Desalinated Drinking Water	5.7	7.5	9.6
Quantity of Annual Water Supply for Domestic Sector	232.6	250.7	250.8

More than 97% of the water pumped from the Coastal Aquifer does not meet the standards of the World Health Organization

The amount of water abstracted from the coastal aquifer was 189.4 million cubic meters (MCM) in Gaza Strip in 2022. However, this quantity is obtained via unsafe yearly pumping that threatens the sustainability of the source, as the basin sustainable yield should not exceed 50-60 MCM per year, where the groundwater level in the coastal aquifer reached 19 meters below sea level leading to the depletion of groundwater reserves. This led to the fact that 97% of the water pumped from the coastal aquifer in Gaza Strip does not meet the water quality standards of the World Health Organization.

The daily allocation per capita from consumed water in 2022 is less than the internationally recommended rate, and it is decreasing

The daily allocation per capita from consumed water for domestic purposes is 85.7 liter/capita/day in Palestine: 86.4 (l/c/d) in the West Bank, while it is 84.6 (l/c/d) in Gaza Strip in 2022. By taking into account the increase of population, the high percentage of water pollution in Gaza Strip and calculating the quantities of water suitable for human use from the available quantities, the per capita share of fresh water is only 20.5 liters per day in Gaza Strip. When comparing this rate with the Israeli daily allocation per capita, we find that the Israeli daily allocation per capita is more than three times that of the Palestinian individual, about 300 liters per day, and this rate doubles for Israeli settlers to more than 7 times than Palestinian per capita consumption.

Taking into account the discrepancy of the daily allocation of consumed water per capita between the different governorates, achieving justice in the distribution among localities is one of the main challenges facing the State of Palestine due to the political situation it lives in that hinders the development of an integrated water system at the national level. It is worth noting that the average Palestinian water consumption per capita is still less than the minimum recommended level globally according to the standards of the World Health Organization, which is 100 liters per day. This is as a result of the Israeli occupation control over more than 85% of the Palestinian water.



Note: Data mentioned in this press release excludes those parts of Jerusalem, which were annexed by the Israeli occupation in 1967.

For more information, please contact:

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

**P. O. Box 1647, Ramallah
P6028179 – Palestine.**

Tel.: (972/970) 2 2982700

Fax: (972/970) 2 2982710

Toll Free.: 1800300300

Email: diwan@pcbs.gov.ps

Website: <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps>

Palestinian Water Authority

**P.O. Box 2174, Ramallah,
Palestine.**

Tel.: +972 2 2987665

Fax: +972 2 2987336

Email: pwa@pwa.ps

Website: <http://www.pwa.ps>