



MIFTAH Policy Brief | April 29th, 2025

Israel's Reproductive Genocide in the Gaza Strip

Executive Summary

The ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip has compounded several humanitarian and legal violations, particularly in relation to the reproductive rights of Palestinian women. Since the launch of its military offensive in October 2023, Israel has systematically targeted Palestinian women in ways that undermine their ability to survive, give birth, and raise children. More than 12,300 women have been killed, 4,700 women and children are missing, and approximately 800,000 women have been forcibly displaced. An estimated one million women and girls now suffer from acute food insecurity.

Israel's actions constitute a deliberate attempt to impair the reproductive capacities of Palestinian women, aimed at dismantling the future of Palestinian society. Through the bombing of shelters, destruction of hospitals, blockading of medical and hygiene supplies, and attacks on fertility clinics and maternity wards, Israel's policy of erasure is not incidental, it is intentional.

What is reproductive genocide?

Reproductive genocide refers to deliberate actions aimed at impairing a group's ability to reproduce, with the intent of preventing births and ultimately contributing to the eradication of that group. It includes efforts used to create unsafe and unhealthy living conditions, not only for women who are pregnant or of reproductive age, but also for children. In Gaza, Israel's actions, ranging from the deliberate killing of women and the bombing of fertility clinics, to the denial of prenatal and postnatal care, are direct assaults on Palestinian women's right to life and continuity. Reproductive genocide is a core element of the ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip, aimed at eliminating the Palestinian presence in Palestine.

Manifestations of Reproductive Genocide in the Gaza Strip:

Targeted killings and displacement

Throughout Israel's genocide in the Gaza Strip, women and children have constituted around 70% of those killed. As of April 2025, over 12,300 women, and over 17,000 children have been killed by Israel while 4,700 women and children remain missing. UN Women reports confirm the direct targeting of women's lives. They reveal that, "two mothers are killed every hour in the Gaza Strip". In addition, around 800,000 women have been displaced from their homes due to continuous Israeli aggression.

Collapse of Healthcare Infrastructure

As a result of Israel's continued bombardment of the Gaza Strip, at least 85 hospitals and medical centers ceased operation, including neonatal and maternity wards. Caesarean sections and emergency operations have been conducted without any sterilization, anesthesia or painkillers, and mothers were discharged hours after delivery due to overcrowding. Bed occupancy rates exceeded 350%, while intensive care units were operating at 250% capacity.

Targeting Women's Mental Health Services

While targeting women's bodies leads to physical destruction, the targeting of their mental health aims to erase their self-identity. Israel's military campaign in Gaza has deliberately targeted mental health support services. In November 2023, the only psychiatric hospital in Gaza was bombed and rendered inoperable, cutting off essential care for over 40,000 people. This facility had been central to treating trauma, particularly for women and children affected by the war. In addition to the hospital's destruction, 75% of the six existing mental health clinics have been destroyed or are no longer functional. The denial of access to mental health care amid the ongoing genocide, has led to a sharp rise in depression, anxiety, trauma, and post-traumatic stress disorders among women.

Targeting fertility clinics

Israeli airstrikes destroyed "Basma" fertility clinic center, obliterating over 4,000 frozen embryos and 1,000 sperm samples stored at the facility. In addition, Israeli bombardment has rendered Gaza's nine in-vitro fertilization (IVF) clinics inoperable, denying access to fertility services across the territory. This deliberate targeting aligns with broader patterns of reproductive genocide, aiming to eliminate Palestinian generational continuity by extinguishing both the physical and medical means of reproduction.

Blocking of food and medical supplies

Israel restricted the entry of medicines and treatments related to reproductive health, such as drugs for treating reproductive infections, hormone regulation medications, and treatments for pregnancy complications. Entry of medicines, menstrual hygiene products, and prenatal supplements has been severely restricted, impacting over 690,000 menstruating women and increasing infections and reproductive illnesses.

Recommendations:

1. Legal and Diplomatic Accountability

- Recognize reproductive genocide as a form of genocide under international law.
- Submit evidence to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and other legal bodies to hold Israeli officials accountable for crimes, including the crime of genocide
- Form international and regional alliances: Lobby with UN agencies to hold Israel accountable for its crimes, isolate it diplomatically, and impose a ban on arms sales to the Israeli government.
- Activate and implement UN resolutions, especially UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, to ensure the protection of Palestinian women in conflict zones.

2. Humanitarian Support and Advocacy

- Improve access to health services: Apply international pressure on the occupying state to support the healthcare system in Gaza, particularly in reproductive health, including prenatal care, the provision of food supplements, and essential personal hygiene supplies for girls, among other needs
- Fund and implement psychological support programs for Palestinian women and girls affected by trauma and war-related mental health challenges.
- Exert pressure on relevant parties to facilitate the uninterrupted entry of essential medications, medical equipment, and medical teams into Gaza.

3. Awareness and Civil Society Mobilization

- Implement programs and projects aimed at raising international awareness of reproductive genocide and other violations against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip through media campaigns and human rights reports.
- Support Palestinian-led organizations in documenting and responding to the needs of women and girls, including legal aid, mental health support, and reproductive healthcare.

Conclusion

Reproductive genocide has been the lived reality for thousands of Palestinian women in the Gaza Strip who continue to disproportionately face the consequences of Israel's ongoing genocide. The occupation continues to deliberately and systematically target Palestinian women with the aim of eliminating their reproductive role. The international community must take punitive actions to prevent Israel from proceeding with its crime

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