

UNICEF says northern Gazans returning home shocked by scale of destruction



Displaced Palestinian people make their way back to the northern parts of the Gaza Strip.

(Photo by NurPhoto)

Gaza City, February 10 (RHC)-- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) says displaced Palestinian families who returned to northern Gaza after the ceasefire deal have been "shocked" by the "complete scale of destruction" of their homes and neighborhoods in Israeli strikes.

"The families that I've spoken to this week here in the north of Gaza have been shocked by what they have returned to," Tess Ingram, a spokesperson for UNICEF, said in a post on X on Sunday.

"They've been shocked by the complete scale of this destruction. Even after seeing photos and videos from the south, they hoped that their homes, their neighborhoods, their communities, maybe had been spared."

Ingram noted that children in particular have been traumatized by the Israeli war on Gaza.

"And as they come back here and realize that's not the case the hope that they've been holding on to for 15 months crashes into a deep heaviness, and this is particularly traumatic for children, children who have endured so much already and are now coming back to communities without water and without health care, without the basics that they need to survive."

During the 15 months of the Israeli regime's genocidal war on Gaza that began in October 2023, at least 48,189 were killed, and 111,640 others were injured, most of them children and women.

According to UN figures, nine in 10 homes in the territory have been destroyed or damaged. Schools, hospitals, mosques, cemeteries, shops and offices have also been repeatedly hit. At the start of the war, about 700,000 people were displaced from the north of Gaza and fled to the south, when the Israeli military issued mass evacuation orders.

On January 15, the Israeli regime, having failed to achieve any of its war objectives including the "elimination" of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas or the release of captives, was forced to agree to a ceasefire deal with Hamas.

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