



# Neglected women's health needs in conflict zones

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Recently, surgeons in Gaza performed an emergency Caesarean section on a deceased pregnant lady to preserve her unborn child [1], a tragic development that has drawn attention from all around the world.

Maternity healthcare access presents additional hurdles for women, who are already vulnerable as a result of conflict-related issues. The recent event in which a woman in Gaza underwent a post-mortem Caesarean section serves as a vivid example of the exceptional measures that local medical personnel must take to preserve life under trying circumstances. It also emphasizes the terrible condition of women's health in the area, despite the doctors' commitments to preserving the baby.

The ongoing situation in Gaza has severely harmed its healthcare system, limiting surgical capacity. Israel's relentless attacks on hospitals, schools, and healthcare facilities have exacerbated an already dire situation [2]. Despite these difficulties, Gaza's healthcare workers are determined to protect their right to provide surgical care [3].

Dr. Ahmed and his team faced an unimaginable dilemma. They performed an emergency Caesarean section on a woman who had passed away, to try and save her unborn baby. Dr. Ahmed later shared, "We felt the weight of that decision, but we knew we had to try." This unfortunate event brings to light the dire state of women's health in areas affected by conflict, where there is a severe lack of access to high-quality treatment. The continuous fighting is placing tremendous strain on Gaza's healthcare sector, resulting in a shortage of medical supplies, damage to infrastructure, and restricted access to essential services [4].

Women's health issues in conflict situations are generally neglected [5]. Conflict should not overshadow the significance of women's health who, regardless of their circumstances, should have access to essential

healthcare. In conflict-affected areas, the international community must prioritize and support initiatives that address the health needs of women. Healthcare workers in Gaza and other conflict-affected areas need more resources, training, and support. Funding for women's health programs should be given top priority by governments, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations to ensure that all women receive the assistance they need [6]. Finally, the circumstances in Gaza underscore how critical it is to address women's health issues in combat zones. The international community must speak out, recognize the gravity of the situation, and take concrete action.

Conflicts of interest: None declared.

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