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RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

**Interview with Professor Michel Guillot following
his publication in the Lancet**

***“Life expectancy losses in the Gaza Strip during the
period October, 2023, to September, 2024”***



Michel Guillot is a senior researcher at the French Institute for Demographic Studies (Ined). He is also a professor in the Department of Sociology and research associate in the Population Study Center in the School of Arts & Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania.

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Michel Guillot answers three of our questions following their recent publication in The Lancet on the life expectancy losses in Gaza during the first year of the conflict. Their study showed that the ongoing war in the Gaza Strip generated a life expectancy loss of more than 30 years during the first 12 months of the conflict.

- Which data sources did you use in your analysis?

Michel Guillot: We used three main data sources in our study: (1) aggregate counts of casualties published by the Gaza Health Ministry (GHM); (2) a nominative list of killed individuals also published by the GHM; (3) a refugee register maintained by the UNRWA.

- Could you explain why performing a case-by-case evaluation was important?

Michel Guillot: It was important to cross-check the nominative list of killed individuals maintained by the GHM against the refugee register because the quality of the GHM list has been questioned. Based on this case-by-case evaluation, we concluded that there was no evidence for intentional inflation in the GHM list.

- You mention that your results are conservative. Accounting for the indirect effects of war on mortality must be very difficult, isn't it?

Michel Guillot: Our results are indeed conservative because they do not account for the indirect effects of the war. At the moment there is no primary data on such indirect effects, though some analysts have produced estimates based on direct/indirect mortality ratios observed in other conflicts. However, ratios observed in other conflicts may not apply to the situation in Gaza. To account for indirect effects, other data sources will be necessary, like a mortality survey in which sampled individuals are asked about the survivorship status of their immediate family members.

Link to the publication:

www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0140673624028101