



Displaced people in the Gaza Strip. Photo by UNRWA

# Humanitarian Situation Update #208 | Gaza Strip

23 Aug 2024

*The Humanitarian Situation Update is issued by OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory three times per week. The Gaza Strip is covered on Mondays and Fridays, and the West Bank is covered on Wednesdays. The next update will be issued on 26 August.*

## Key Highlights

- Three orders issued by the Israeli authorities in just two days affect 146 displacement sites, with those affected by such orders so far in August reaching as many as 250,000.
- The amount of humanitarian food assistance that entered southern Gaza in July was one of the lowest since October 2023, when a full siege was imposed.
- In July, the number of children diagnosed with acute malnutrition in northern Gaza was four times higher than in May, whereas in the south it more than doubled. Only one per cent of children in northern Gaza and six per cent in the south were able to receive the recommended dietary diversity.

## Humanitarian Developments

- Israeli forces bombardment from the air, land, and sea continues to be reported across much of the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of houses and other civilian infrastructure. Ground incursions, particularly in eastern area of Khan Younis and Deir al Balah, and heavy fighting also continue to be reported.
- Between the afternoons of 19 and 22 August, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 126 Palestinians were killed and 401 were injured. Between 7 October 2023 and 22 August 2024, at least 40,265 Palestinians were killed and 93,144 were injured, according to MoH in Gaza. Casualty figures covering until the afternoon of 23 August are not available as of the time of reporting.
- The following are among other deadly incidents reported between 19 and 22 August:
  - On 19 August, at about 18:00, nine Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured in Ash Shati' Refugee Camp, western Gaza city.
  - On 20 August, at about 0:35, five Palestinians, including at least three women and a child, were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in Al Bureij Refugee camp in Deir al Balah.
  - On 20 August, at about 11:30, 12 Palestinians were reportedly killed, and others injured, when the Mostafa Hafez governmental school, sheltering internally displaced people (IDPs), was hit in Al Rimal neighbourhood, western Gaza city.
  - On 20 August, at about 17:15, at least nine Palestinians, including children and women, were reportedly killed and at least 14 others were injured in the central market of Al Baraka area, eastern Deir al Balah.
  - On 21 August, in two separate incidents, five Palestinian fishers were reportedly shot and killed and another one injured when they were on the coast of Deir al Balah and in Ash Shakoush neighbourhood of northwestern Rafah.
  - On 21 August, at about 16:10, seven Palestinians, including five women and two children, were reportedly killed when an IDP tent was hit in Az Zanna area, east of Khan Younis.

- On 22 August, at 3:45, six Palestinians, including a journalist, his wife and their three children, were reportedly killed when a house was hit in Al Battanyah area of Al Maghazi Refugee Camp in Deir al Balah.
- On 22 August, at about 0:15, 11 Palestinians including one baby and other children, were reportedly killed and others injured when a residential building was hit in Beit Lahiya, North Gaza.
- Between the afternoons of 19 and 23 August, three Israeli soldiers were reportedly killed in Gaza, according to the Israeli military. Between 7 October 2023 and 23 August 2024, according to the Israeli military and official Israeli sources cited in the media, more than 1,532 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed, the majority on 7 October and its immediate aftermath and including 332 soldiers killed in Gaza or along the border in Israel since the beginning of the ground operation. In addition, 2,232 Israeli soldiers were reported injured since the beginning of the ground operation. As of 23 August, it is estimated that 109 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including hostages who have been declared dead and whose remains are withheld in Gaza.
- On 21 and 22 August, the Israeli military issued three evacuation orders impacting 15 neighborhoods in Deir al Balah and Khan Younis, bringing the total number of evacuation orders issued in August to 13. Initial mapping shows that over 28,500 people were residing in the areas designated for evacuation on these dates, many of them in 146 IDP sites, including 11 formal collective centers and 135 informal sites. As of 21 August, the evacuation orders issued this month have affected approximately 250,000 people across Gaza. The new orders also forced the displacement of humanitarian staff from several UN agencies, NGOs, and service providers, along with their families, disrupting their ability to provide essential support and services to those in need. The Education Cluster reported that 31 temporary learning spaces in Deir al Balah and Khan Younis have been forced to close due to the orders issued between June and August, resulting in the loss of educational opportunities for 3,979 students. On 22 August, Muhannad Hadi, the Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, issued a statement saying, “Civilians are exhausted and terrified, fleeing from one devastated place to another, with no end in sight. This cannot continue. He further emphasized that, “If evacuation orders are meant to protect civilians, the reality is that they are achieving the exact opposite.”
- The amount of humanitarian food assistance that entered southern Gaza in July was one the lowest recorded since October 2023. The Food Security Sector (FSS) has warned that ongoing intense fighting, damaged roads, a breakdown of law and order, and access challenges along the main humanitarian route between the Kerem Shalom Crossing and Khan Younis and Deir al Balah have led to critical food shortages. As a result, more than one million people in southern and central Gaza may not receive food rations for August. Repeated evacuation orders and population displacement, coupled with dire shortages of cooking gas, have significantly disrupted the operation of kitchens and bakeries. At least 50 kitchens have been forced to either suspend cooked meal provision or relocate due to repeated evacuation orders and since early July only 13 out of 19 bakeries supported by humanitarian partners are presently operational in the Strip – one in Khan Younis (which reopened on 21 August after having been closed since January), six in Deir al Balah, four in Gaza city and two in Jabalya. In northern Gaza, food insecurity and malnutrition are even more alarming as no commercial supplies are known to have reached the area for more than three consecutive months, according to the Food Security Sector. This has resulted in a lack of protein sources on the local market, with only a few types of locally grown vegetables available at exorbitant prices.
- Children are paying the heaviest price, with the combination of a poor diet, decimation of basic healthcare services and abysmal water, sanitation and hygiene conditions continuing to increase their malnourishment and vulnerability to diseases, highlights the Nutrition Cluster. An assessment conducted by UNICEF in July revealed that only one per cent of children in northern Gaza, and six per cent in the south, received the recommended dietary diversity, with meat, fruits and vegetables, dairy products and eggs being among the almost inaccessible foods.
- The number of children diagnosed with acute malnutrition through mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) screenings increased by over 300 per cent in the north in July, compared with May, and by 156 per cent in the south. In total of 14,750 children aged 6-59 months diagnosed with acute malnutrition out of 239,580 children who have been screened since January 2024. According to the Nutrition Cluster, between nine and ten per cent of pregnant and breastfeeding women (PBW) screened in June and July were found to be acutely malnourished; hampering their ability to breastfeed, amid rising numbers of preterm and low birth weight infants. The Nutrition and Food Security clusters warn that if physical road access, health service provision, water, sanitation, hygiene and shelter conditions are further compromised, there is a high risk of food insecurity and malnutrition worsening beyond the already alarming rates currently observed across the Strip.
- According to the WASH Cluster, about half of the core Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) activities have been impeded by import and access restrictions on humanitarian aid. This includes long-standing restrictions on the entry of chlorine needed for disinfecting drinking water and the delayed extension of a dedicated power line to supply electricity to the Southern Gaza seawater desalination plant. Storage and transport challenges, particularly related to fuel, are hindering the distribution of supplies, leading to critical delays that directly affect the health and sanitation of vulnerable populations. Furthermore, a survey conducted by the Cluster reveals that the Gaza market is severely depleted, lacking essential WASH items, suffering from hyperinflation, and burdened by cash liquidity issues. As a result, WASH actors to rely on substandard materials, compromising the quality and effectiveness of their interventions.
- In July, [humanitarian access](#) in Gaza was severely disrupted due to intense military activities, the closure of crossings, and volatile security conditions. These challenges were compounded by unexploded ordnance, robbery, damaged and congested roads, inconsistent movement notification and coordination procedures, and complex inconsistent checkpoint operations. Although the number of humanitarian missions coordinated by Israeli authorities increased from 414 in June to 543 in July, the percentage of movements denied by Israeli authorities doubled from seven per cent to 15 per cent; significantly impacting humanitarian access and the timely execution of life-saving interventions across Gaza.

- The proportion of facilitated movements decreased from 64 per cent in June to 58 per cent in July, with access impediments affecting 12 per cent of movements in the south and over 27 per cent in the north (which include missions that were successfully completed). Humanitarian movements between northern and southern Gaza must pass through a holding point while waiting for Israeli forces' approval to grant access with only one of the two checkpoints operational at a time. Aid convoys often face long delays at these holding points, exposing staff to risks such as active fighting and robbery. In July, two UN humanitarian convoys were struck by live ammunition at the holding points, causing damage to their vehicles.
- Between 1 and 22 August, 147 planned humanitarian assistance missions coordinated with the Israeli authorities to northern Gaza. Of these, 64 (43 per cent) were facilitated, while 28 (19 per cent) were impeded, 46 (31 per cent) were denied access, and 9 (6 per cent) were cancelled due to logistical, operational, or security reasons. In southern Gaza, out of 278 coordinated humanitarian assistance movements, 134 (48 per cent) were facilitated by the Israeli authorities, 37 (13 per cent) were impeded, 79 (28 per cent) were denied, and 28 (10 per cent) were cancelled.

## Funding

- As of 23 August, Member States have disbursed about US\$1.62 billion out of \$3.42 billion (48 per cent) requested to meet the most critical needs of 2.3 million\* people in Gaza and 800,000 people in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, between January and December 2024. For funding analysis, please see the Flash Appeal Financial Tracking [dashboard](#). (\*2.3 million reflects the projected population of the Gaza Strip upon issuance of the Flash Appeal in April 2024. As of July 2024, the UN estimates that about 2.1 million people remain in the Gaza Strip, and this updated number is now used for programmatic purposes.)
- During July 2024, the occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund (oPt HF) managed 98 ongoing projects, totalling \$81.4 million. These projects were aimed at addressing urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (89 per cent) and the West Bank (11 per cent). The projects were strategically focused on sectors such as education, food security, health, protection, emergency shelter and non-food items, water, sanitation, and hygiene, coordination and support services, multi-purpose cash assistance and nutrition. Of these, 55 projects are being implemented by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), 31 by national NGOs and 12 by UN agencies. Notably, 32 out of the 67 projects implemented by INGOs or the UN are being implemented in collaboration with national NGOs. Since 7 October, the oPt HF has mobilized over \$112 million from Member States and private donors to support urgent humanitarian and life-saving programmes across the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Of the total funding, 89 per cent has been allocated to projects in Gaza. A summary of the oPt HF activities and challenges in July 2024 are available through this [link](#) and the 2023 Annual Report of the oPt HF can be accessed [here](#). Private donations are collected directly through the [oPt HF](#). For an overall picture of the OCHA-managed pooled funds response since October 2023, please see [link](#).