



Girls carrying winter assistance items provided to them in Gaza city, 13 March 2025. Photo by OCHA/Olga Cherevko

Gaza Humanitarian Response Update | 2 - 15 March 2025

18 Mar 2025

Period: 2 - 15 March 2025

The information below is provided on a bi-weekly basis by Clusters and select Technical Working Groups operating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). For an overview of priority needs and activities by cluster, please see the [Flash Appeal](#).



Food Security Sector (FSS)



Response

- After more than two weeks without aid entering Gaza, most flour distributions have been suspended to prioritize supplies for bakeries and fresh produce distributions have been paused. This has reduced the number of people receiving food assistance each week. Meanwhile, some flour and food parcel distributions are ongoing, prioritizing larger families and the most vulnerable groups with reduced rations, aiming to stretch the limited supplies and assist a greater number of people. The FSS estimates that more than 50,000 metric tons (MT) of food supplies are required monthly to assist 2.1 million people with full rations. In addition, over 9,700 MT of flour are needed per month to keep the subsidized bakeries running without interruption and ensure that people have access to affordable bread.
- On 10 March, a new community kitchen opened in Beit Lahiya, in North Gaza, serving 10,000 meals daily. As of 7 March, approximately 840,000 cooked meals were being prepared across 170 kitchens and distributed daily to families throughout the Gaza Strip.
- As of 16 March, 19 out of 25 subsidized bakeries supported by the World Food Programme (WFP) remain operational, including one in Rafah, five in Deir al Balah, four in Khan Younis, eight in Gaza city and one in North Gaza. Despite the closure of six bakeries (five in Khan Younis and one in Deir al Balah on 7 and 8 March), overall bread production has been maintained at 160,000 bread bundles (2 Kg per bundle) per day, as the still operational bakeries have so far been able to scale up production to mitigate gaps.
- To improve access to bread, FSS partners are collaborating with 24 retail shops selling subsidized bread at 17 points in Deir al Balah and seven in Khan Younis. Efforts are underway to establish similar points in northern Gaza to increase bread coverage and reduce overcrowding. In parallel, partners continue to deliver free bread to selected shelters and community kitchens, where it is distributed alongside cooked meals across the Gaza Strip.
- Between late February and early March, around 10,000 vegetable seed kits that had entered the Gaza Strip during the ceasefire were distributed to support home gardening at both household or community levels in Rafah, Khan Younis and Deir al Balah. This initiative aims to contribute to dietary diversity and improve nutrition intake.
- During the reporting period, more than 10 FSS partners have carried out a joint quantitative assessment to better understand the needs and challenges of farmers, breeders and fishers and an analysis of findings is underway.



Challenges

- The closure of all border crossing points since 2 March has prevented the entry of aid, including food supplies, jeopardizing recent improvements in dietary diversity and food availability and threatening to reverse food security gains made since the ceasefire. At least 80 community kitchens are at risk of running out of stock in one to two weeks, as they also struggle in affording the rising prices of dwindling food items on the local market. In response, partners are adapting their strategies to sustain operations—some are adjusting meal content, while some are reducing the number of meals.
- According to the latest WFP market monitoring analysis for the first half of March, the halt in the entry of supplies has led to an immediate surge in the prices of essential goods on the market, particularly for some key food items such as potatoes and eggs. Some fruits and vegetables experienced a 200 per cent increase against prices prior to the closure of the crossings. Fearing prolonged restrictions, some traders reported withholding basic goods. While some price volatility has since stabilized, a gradual increase in prices continues.
- Cash liquidity shortages remain a major challenge for families wishing to purchase essential goods and for shop owners who need to replenish their stocks. Insufficient access to financial services is also hampering daily operations of FSS partners, including the scale-up of cash and voucher assistance.
- Delivery of cooked meals and bread to North Gaza, where there is only one kitchen and one subsidized bakery, remains challenging due to poor road conditions and infrastructure.
- The closure of crossings has sparked a severe energy crisis in Gaza, with diesel prices rising by up to 105 per cent and cooking gas prices soaring by up to 200 per cent compared to February. Access to energy remains limited, with cooking gas unavailable through official gas distribution channels and only available in very limited quantities. This is severely affecting the ability of families to prepare food as well as the functionality of bakeries and community kitchens.
- Safe access of farmers, breeders, and fishers to their lands, livestock and the sea is critical for resuming agricultural activities and restoring the food supply chain. The FSS emphasizes that the import of agricultural and fish production inputs and tools needs to resume, the removal of hazardous materials, including unexploded ordnance, should continue, and fishers must be granted safe access to fishing waters without fear of harm.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)



Response

- Between 2 and 15 March, the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) and Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) reported that a daily average of 127,022 cubic metres of water was produced across the Gaza Strip. About 33 per cent (41,811 cubic metres) of drinking water was produced from the two operational seawater desalination plants and supplied through two out of three Mekorot supply lines from Israel, while about 67 per cent (85,211 cubic metres) was produced by municipal ground water wells.
- As of 16 March, WASH Cluster partners reported that over 1,340 water points are operational across the Gaza Strip, with more than 95 per cent supporting water trucking activities.
- A medical waste service, which was activated through the Joint Service Council in southern Gaza, continues to operate as a contingency measure to ensure that infectious waste is securely stored in a dedicated location until it can be appropriately treated and disposed. Efforts are underway by partners to establish a similar operation in northern Gaza.
- During the reporting period, UNICEF conducted a series of training sessions on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), targeting frontline contractor staff engaged in water trucking.
- During the reporting period, WASH Cluster partners continued essential WASH interventions across the Gaza Strip, including water trucking, distribution of hygiene items, waste collection and installation of latrines. Where access and availability of material allowed, partners also carried out ad-hoc repairs of water and sewage networks. Governorate-level response includes:
 - In Rafah governorate, CMWU and three WASH partners reported trucking a total of 670 cubic metres of drinking water to returning internally displaced persons (IDPs) across 89 locations. Currently, one municipal water desalination plant is operational to help address critical shortages caused by extensive damage to water facilities and the inaccessibility of infrastructure located in the buffer and no-go zones.
 - In Khan Younis governorate, 15 partners reported trucking 1,672 cubic metres of drinking water and 4,276 cubic metres of domestic water to 307 locations, including displacement sites, schools-turned shelters, and humanitarian service delivery points. During the same period, partners also distributed 1,600 hygiene items.
 - In Deir al Balah governorate, 18 partners reported trucking 1,094 cubic metres of drinking water and 2,531 cubic metres of domestic water to 236 locations, including displacement sites, schools-turned shelters, healthcare facilities and humanitarian service delivery points. Two partners distributed 1,800 hygiene supplies. The Al Amal temporary waste site is nearly full.
 - In Gaza governorate, 20 partners reported trucking 2,172 cubic metres of drinking water and 2,069 cubic metres of domestic water to 434 locations, including displacement sites, schools-turned shelters, and humanitarian service delivery points. Additionally, partners distributed 3,200 hygiene supplies.
 - In North Gaza governorate, nine partners reported trucking 1,129 cubic metres of drinking water and 4,610 cubic metres of domestic water to 285 locations, including displacement sites. Two UNRWA wells are operational in Jabalya and work is underway to repair two additional wells.



Challenges

- During the reporting period, two key challenges significantly hampered drinking water production, particularly in Deir al Balah. Firstly, the damaged Mekerot Bani Said waterline, located in the buffer and no-go zones, remains inaccessible due to the lack of approval to conduct repair works. Secondly, the electric feeder line to the Southern Gaza Desalination Plant—the only facility that received electricity since November 2024, which was repaired between 3 and 6 of March, was disconnected by the Israeli authorities on 9 March. As a result, water production by the plant was reduced from 17-18,000 to 2,500 cubic metres per day. To compensate for the shortfall, the CMWU is maintaining a relatively high production of domestic water from groundwater wells.
- Restrictions on the entry of core humanitarian items critical for the production, treatment and distribution of water, as well as the safe disposal of excreta and solid waste, continue to limit the ability of WASH partners to maintain public health response activities. These restrictions affect essential items such as generators, generator and vehicle spare parts, water chemicals, laboratory equipment and construction materials.
- The lack of fuel to maintain WASH sector facilities and related service delivery in the absence of electricity since October 2023 remains a significant challenge. To mitigate the risks, partners continually prioritize the usage of limited fuel supplies based on population movements and the extent of damage of water and sewage lines in a particular area.
- The temporary solid waste dump sites are reaching full capacity, while the landfill sites at Sofa and Johr al Dik remain inaccessible. Identifying alternative locations remains a significant challenge due to access restrictions and the pressing need for debris management.



Health



Response

- Between 2 and 15 March, 543 patients, including 164 children, and 803 companions have been medically evacuated outside Gaza.
- During the reporting period, Health Cluster partners continued to restore and support health services across Gaza. On 3 March, the Indonesian Hospital in North Gaza governorate resumed its operations with a capacity of approximately 120 beds and a round-the-clock emergency room. Surgical services have also resumed, providing orthopedic, general, vascular, neurosurgical, and pediatric procedures. To further support the hospital, a Health Cluster partner has established a department within the hospital facility, providing 20 hospital beds, an intensive care unit (ICU) for children and adults, and two dialysis machines. On 7 March, the Al Rantisi Hospital in Gaza governorate resumed operations, including its emergency outpatient and inpatient departments, with a capacity of 35 beds. The hospital also recently launched a pediatric kidney dialysis centre equipped with six machines. Additionally, during the reporting period, the cardiac catheterization machine at the Public Aid Hospital in Gaza governorate has become functional again following vital repairs.



Challenges

- The closure of border crossings has negatively affected the availability of medical supplies and medications, particularly essential medicines for the management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), surgical interventions, and oncology cases. Additionally, there is a shortage of crucial medical equipment, including laboratory tools, X-ray machines, oxygen plants, generators for energy supply to health facilities, along with spare parts needed for urgent repairs of generators.
- At present, 22 out of 35 hospitals in Gaza are partially functional, including three in North Gaza, 12 in Gaza, three in Deir al Balah, and four in Khan Younis. Moreover, 10 field hospitals are partially functional, including four fully and six partially, and 76 out of 153 (50 per cent) of health care centres are partially functional.



Nutrition



Response

- During the reporting period, two partners screened more than 4,600 children for acute malnutrition. Among those screened, 198 children were diagnosed with acute malnutrition.
- In total in February, Nutrition Cluster partners screened over 67,500 children under five years of age, identifying 1,929 cases with acute malnutrition, including 221 with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM). Since the ceasefire took effect on 19 January, and as of 15 March, a total of 4,646 children have enrolled in treatment programmes, 672 of whom were diagnosed with SAM. The Nutrition Cluster notes that monthly enrollments have decreased from about 5,000 prior to the ceasefire to an average of 2,500 afterwards. This decline is attributed to improved food accessibility but also challenges in screening and detection due to massive population movements and the time required for partners to re-established services in new locations. The cluster warns that the current closure of crossings may derail some of the achieved

progress unless urgent action is taken to improve the availability of food, dietary diversity, and access to water, sanitation and hygiene services.

- In recent months, Nutrition Cluster partners observed a rising number of pregnant and breastfeeding women (PBW) with mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) measurements below 23 cm, which indicates acute malnutrition. The most recent comprehensive analysis using Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) methodology, with data covering nearly 4,500 PBW, show that between 10 and 20 per cent of PBW were malnourished. In response, the Nutrition Cluster has taken the following actions:
 - Collaborated with WFP to start up TSFP, in addition to the Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme (BSFP) covering all PBWs and children under five months. WFP will provide specialized nutritious food called Large Quantity Lipid Based Nutrient Supplements (LQ-LNS) as part of the intervention. Proper nutrition for PBW is crucial for the health of both the fetus and the infant. The programme has been launched in mid-March 2025, with results anticipated by the first week of April. These results will contribute to the upcoming Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) exercise.
 - Organized a one-day orientation on Targeted Supplementary Feeding for PBW (TSFP) for 24 participants from Nutrition Cluster partner organizations. The TSFP programme aims to address the nutritional needs of PBW diagnosed with acute malnutrition.
- In preparation for a nutrition survey that will be conducted starting from mid-March using the SMART methodology, a six-day training was conducted between 9 and 16 March for 31 enumerators.

Challenges

- The number of children screened for acute malnutrition has decreased compared with the last months of 2024, mainly due to large population movements, the time partners required to reestablish services in new locations, and the limited availability of warm spaces to conduct screening in the winter season.
- The Nutrition Cluster warns that the malnutrition levels may worsen if critical aid stocks continue to dwindle, following more than two weeks of no supplies coming into Gaza.



Protection



Response

- During the reporting period, Child Protection (CP) actors:
 - Adjusted their service delivery locations in response to the latest population movements. The [Child Protection Service Mapping](#) was updated accordingly to facilitate essential referrals.
 - The final stock of children's winter clothes was distributed ahead of spring, reaching an estimated total of around 170,000 children since December.
 - As part of UNRWA's integrated response to unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), 400 newly identified UASC received support through case management. Additionally, more than 1,000 families are being monitored to assess the impact of assistance and identify new risks among UASC.
 - Further response data can be found on the [CP AoR 5Ws response dashboard](#).
- During the reporting period, Gender Based Violence (GBV) actors:
 - Established a new Women and Girl's Safe space (WGSS) in north Rafah. Another WGSS is currently being prepared in Al-Mawasi, with focus on underserved areas to improve access for GBV survivors. Furthermore, the GBV Area of Responsibility (AoR) initiated coordination efforts with the Health Cluster to integrate health service points into WGSS across Gaza.
 - Distributed among partners the GBV Case Management in Emergencies Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), along with an updated GBV survivor's referral pathway.
- Between 19 January when the ceasefire took effect, and as of 18 March, the Mine Action AoR group recorded 18 explosive incidents, resulting in four fatalities and 46 injuries, including deaths of two children and the injury of 18 others. To mitigate these risks, Mine Action AoR is:
 - Providing Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) to vulnerable communities returning to high-risk areas and ensuring that EORE teams are integrated at distribution and monitoring points. Since the ceasefire, MA actors delivered 5,128 EORE sessions targeting 32,185 women, 42,963 men, 17,687 girls and 14,251 boys.
 - Conducting Explosive Hazard Assessments (EHAs) to identify and mark UXOs, and EORE messages are being provided to people in the surrounding area. Since the ceasefire, the Mine Action AoR has received 348 EHA requests and responded to 138 EHAs. EHA priority is given to sites highlighted as critical for the scale-up of humanitarian aid delivery and designated as low, medium or high risk following the EHA.
 - Facilitating inter-agency missions along critical access routes to support the safe delivery of life-saving humanitarian aid to affected communities. Since the ceasefire, 58 inter-agency missions have been conducted safely.
- Under the Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Technical Working Group (TWG), a [guidance note](#) for practitioners on mainstreaming HLP rights in the management of debris removal was finalized and shared with partners. The HLP TWG continues to coordinate with local municipalities to follow up on the status of digital land records land is currently finalizing a guidance note on negotiations with landlords to support improved land access arrangements. The Gaza HLP

Landscape Mapping Survey is underway to assess ongoing HLP interventions. As a reference, please see: [Gaza HLP Landscape Mapping Survey - December 2024](#).

- Between 2 and 15 March, UNRWA protection teams continued to assess and address the protection risks and needs of displaced people across the Gaza Strip, focusing on identifying vulnerable people and facilitating their referral to specialized services. During the reporting period, protection monitoring was conducted at 19 shelters and IDP sites. Awareness-raising sessions on EORE, GBV and PSEA were also carried out. As part of the awareness raising efforts, UNRWA has provided 20,000 child-friendly EORE colouring books and pencils, 500 EORE posters, and over 5,000 PSEA information materials. Additionally, UNRWA teams coordinated the provision of assistance to 135 former detainees who were released.

Challenges

- The suspension of aid supplies into Gaza has severely affected partners' capacity to address protection risks and needs of vulnerable populations across the Gaza strip.
- Child protection actors continue to face challenges in establishing new Child Friendly Spaces due to limited space and the limited availability of large winter tents. At the same time, existing services are severely overstretched.
- The US aid freeze and constrained funding environment is severely impacting the delivery of child protection services, including providing cash assistance, case management and mental health and psychosocial support services for children. The lack of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) devices available on the local market, combined with restrictions on entering ICT equipment, including tablets, is preventing the rollout of the child protection information management system, essential to support case workers managing sensitive data.
- MA actors remain unable to conduct clearance and disposal of EO due to the lack of necessary resources and lack of permission from the relevant authorities.



Education



Response

- The Education Cluster continues to mobilize partners to scale up and establish additional Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS), particularly in underserved areas. As of 15 March, approximately 500 operational TLSs across the Gaza Strip are providing around 166,000 students with opportunities to access some form of learning. In addition to education, these spaces offer structured recreational activities and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to around 26,000 students since the ceasefire.
- While at least 88 per cent of school buildings require either full reconstruction or major rehabilitation to be functional again, the ceasefire has allowed internally displaced persons (IDPs) to vacate some school buildings and prepare them to welcome children to school again. As of 13 March, according to the Ministry of Education (MoE), approximately 115,000 students have enrolled in 186 government schools across Gaza, with many already attending classes with support of 3,700 teachers. Of the total, 58 schools are in Gaza governorate, 38 in Deir al Balah, 63 in Khan Younis, and 27 in Rafah. For the majority of the children, this marks their first return to some form of in-person learning since the escalation of hostilities in October 2023. For others, this also marks their first experience of structured learning, having previously been unable to access e-schooling due to factors such as internet shortages and a lack of electronic devices.
- Although educational spaces remain limited, the MoE and Education Cluster partners, including UNRWA, continue to implement rotational and shift-based learning models to ensure every school-aged child in Gaza has access to some form of education, with the aim of transitioning all children back to formal education. Formal learning is still not available anywhere in Gaza.



Challenges

- The poor school infrastructure, severe shortage of educational supplies and teaching materials pose critical barriers to enabling children's in-person education and learning. At the same time, ongoing restrictions on the entry of aid, including education supplies, such as large tents as well as recreational, student and psycho-social support kits, continue to hamper the education response. Moreover, the ongoing shortage of construction materials is preventing critical repairs in schools that sustained damage during hostilities and/or had been used as IDP shelters and have become worn down. This includes damage to WASH facilities, as well as the loss and destruction of furniture and teaching materials.
- Delays in the entry of tablets for high-school examinations, the need for prior orientation on tablet use, lack of internet access and limited charging stations are some of the challenges facing Tawjihi students in taking in their high-school matriculation exams, the exact timing of which remains uncertain. Additionally, while the MoE has identified at least 85 schools as hubs to host the exams, these locations lack basic furniture and many have WASH facilities that require urgent repairs.
- Funding remains insufficient to meet the massive levels of education needs, hampering the ability of education partners to expand access to education and mitigate the long-term impact of this crisis.



Response

- Following the closure of the crossings on 2 March, Shelter Cluster partners have continued to deliver shelter and non-food items (NFIs) from available stocks to the most vulnerable households across the Gaza strip. Between 2 and 15 March, the UN and its partners distributed about 11,800 blankets, 34,000 clothing kits, 3,000 bedding kits, about 2,300 mattresses, about 26,700 kitchen-sets, and about 26,200 torches (searchlights) to increase safety and accessibility.
- Additionally, during the reporting period, Shelter Cluster partners reached more than 43,000 people with tarpaulins and distributed 8,027 tents across the Gaza Strip. Between 19 January, when the ceasefire took effect, and 15 March, a total of 120,000 tents were distributed. These figures only relate to shelter materials provided or facilitated through UN Coordination. As of 15 March, about 59,000 tents are in the pipeline, ready to enter Gaza when crossings reopen.

Challenges

- Shelter needs remain critically high, while shelter stocks are rapidly dwindling. Should the closure of crossings persist, vulnerable households will remain without essential assistance. With needs far surpassing available resources, many families have not yet been reached with assistance, including those living in damaged and structurally unsafe buildings or near collapsed structures.
- Rubble and debris are obstructing access, further complicating the delivery of aid to those most in need. This has resulted in some communities becoming physically isolated, preventing partners from reaching them to conduct needs assessments or deliver necessary assistance.



Response

- On 2 March, a direct convoy comprising 25 trucks delivered 209 MT of food and shelter items to three humanitarian partners. Later on the same day, Israeli authorities suspended the entry of all goods into Gaza.
- During the first phase of the ceasefire, between 19 January and 2 March, the Logistics Cluster facilitated 32 Government-to-Government and five Back-to-Back (B2B) convoys comprising a total of 863 trucks from Amman to Erez West, Erez, and Kerem Shalom crossings on behalf of 16 partners, carrying 7,319 MT of food, health, logistics, shelter, and WASH items.
- As of 16 March, the Logistics Cluster has consolidated 47,089 cubic metres of humanitarian cargo at its warehouse in Amman and received 69,492 cubic metres for common storage in Gaza. This consolidation and storage of humanitarian cargo have enabled the efficient coordination and delivery of humanitarian aid by ensuring strategic prepositioning, scalability, enhanced distribution, and facilitated supply chain continuity.

Challenges

- Since the closure of all crossings into Gaza on 2 March, cargo cannot be collected from any crossing platforms due to restrictions by the Israeli authorities. While Zikim and Erez are cleared of all cargo, some cargo remains uncollected at Kerem Shalom-Karem Abu Salem crossing. The Logistics Cluster has requested access to the crossing to conduct an inventory.



Response

- During the reporting period, the ETC distributed seven satellite-based tracking devices to the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) to facilitate the monitoring of mission movements in Gaza, thereby contributing to staff safety and security. These devices were part of the final batch of 15 devices delivered to Gaza on 13 January.
- For more information on ETC activities, please visit: [Palestine: Conflict | Emergency Telecommunications Cluster \(ETC\) \(etcluster.org\)](https://etcluster.org).

Challenges

- A significant amount of equipment has been damaged or destroyed due to hostilities, and the import of telecommunications equipment remains restricted and challenging, including after the ceasefire. This continues to limit

the delivery of planned ETC services and improvements in the accessibility of telecommunications and internet services across Gaza.

- Insufficient funding has limited the Cluster's capacity to address immediate critical communications needs for humanitarian responders in Gaza. The Cluster continues to appeal to potential donors for funding.

Protection against sexual abuse and exploitation (PSEA) remains a cross-cutting priority for all clusters. Aid distribution must be delivered with dignity and respect. Any wrongdoing can be reported through SAWA toll-free number 164. SAWA will assist and provide services free of charge and with the utmost confidentiality.

* Asterisks indicate that a figure, sentence, or section has been rectified, added, or retracted after the initial publication of this update.