



A United Nations mission delivering life-saving supplies to Shifa hospital in Gaza city, 1 March 2024. In February, the access of only six of 24 planned aid missions to the north was facilitated by the Israeli authorities. Photo by UNICEF/Sonia Silva, 1 March 2024

# Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #134

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## Key Highlights

- The access of only six of 24 planned aid missions by the UN and its humanitarian partners to areas north of Wadi Gaza was facilitated by the Israeli authorities in February.
- The number of deaths as a result of malnutrition and dehydration has risen to 20, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza.
- Some 700 displaced families at an informal site in Rafah report facing significant challenges across multiple sectors, according to a recent inter-agency assessment.
- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for food in Gaza has risen by nearly 105 per cent since the onset of hostilities, significantly diminishing people's purchasing power.

## Gaza Strip Updates

- Intense Israeli bombardment and ground operations as well as heavy fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups continue to be reported across much of the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of houses and other civilian infrastructure.
- Between the afternoon of 6 March and 12:30 on 7 March, according to the MoH in Gaza, 83 Palestinians were killed, and 142 Palestinians were injured. Between 7 October 2023 and 12:30 on 7 March 2024, at least 30,800 Palestinians were killed in Gaza and 72,298 Palestinians were injured, according to MoH in Gaza.
- Between the afternoons of 6 and 7 March, according to the Israeli military, one Israeli soldier was killed in Gaza. As of 7 March, 245 soldiers have been killed and 1,469 soldiers injured in Gaza since the beginning of the ground operation, according to the Israeli military. In addition, over 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals have been killed in Israel, the vast majority on 7 October. As of 7 March, the Israeli authorities estimate that 134 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including fatalities whose bodies are withheld.
- According to a new [report](#), February witnessed an almost 50 per cent increase in the number of coordinated humanitarian missions that were facilitated by the Israeli authorities across Gaza, rising to 111 compared with 75 in January. However, only six of 24 planned missions to areas north of Wadi Gaza were facilitated in February, primarily due to an operational pause, after a UN-coordinated food convoy was struck by Israeli naval fire on 5 February. The UN attempted two food convoys to the north on 18 and 19 February, but the lack of law and order, and the aggressive stance by the Israeli military towards approaching crowds, led to a renewal of the pause. By contrast, 105 out of 200 planned missions requiring coordination to areas south of Wadi Gaza were facilitated, a significant increase compared with January (65). This occurred despite a 48-hour pause in coordinated missions in the south on 26 February, after two medical workers were detained from a UN-coordinated medical evacuation the day before. Other incidents which highlight the degraded humanitarian space and increasing risks to aid workers include a direct strike on ambulances conducting a coordinated medical evacuation on 7 February and a strike on a deconflicted compound on 20 February, reportedly by an Israeli tank, killing two Médecins Sans Frontières family members. The UN attempted to reach Al Amal Hospital

eight times, but movement was denied or impeded, except for a fueling mission on 20 February. Of the 27 UN attempts to reach Nasser Hospital, only six of 12 missions that were initially coordinated by the Israeli military were facilitated: the Israeli military alleged that both hospitals were used by combatants for military purposes. The degrading security situation is compounded by cases of violence against humanitarian workers and from people attempting to seize humanitarian supplies. On at least five separate occasions in February, the Israeli military attacked Palestinian police elements, resulting in their decreased presence at the border crossings and along the main supply routes through Gaza, and a further deterioration in security. The frequent and prolonged closures and blockages at Kerem Shalom and Nitzana crossings have also significantly hampered the entry of humanitarian aid. The report concludes that “the cumulative effect of these disruptions had a tangible decrease in the efficiency and predictability of aid delivery into Gaza, with no evidence to suggest an imminent improvement in the situation.”

- On 5 March, the bodies of 25 Palestinians reportedly killed in several areas in Khan Younis, southern Gaza, were recovered. In addition, the following are among the deadly incidents reported between 5 and 6 March, all in Deir al Balah:
  - On 5 March, at about 19:15, six Palestinians were reportedly killed, and others injured, when a house was hit.
  - On 6 March, at about 0:50, three Palestinians were reportedly killed, and others injured, when a house was hit.
  - On 6 March, at about 6:15, three Palestinians were reportedly killed, and others injured, when a house in Al Bureij camp was hit.
- Some 700 families displaced from northern Gaza to an informal site managed by a local committee in Rafah report facing significant challenges across multiple sectors, according to a joint assessment mission carried out by the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) on 28 February to inform emergency response efforts. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) have reported that food distributions are sporadic and inadequate, mainly comprising canned food, which offers limited nutritional variety. There is also a critical need for milk products for babies and children. At the site, there are no health services currently available, poor hygiene conditions, insufficient shelter materials, and a lack of medications for people suffering from chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and Hepatitis A. Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) conditions are dire at the IDP site; there are no latrines, essential hygiene items, or sufficient clean water, forcing many IDPs to use brackish water discharged from a nearby desalination plant. Solid waste disposal is also a significant problem, contributing to unsanitary living conditions and attracting rats and insects.
- The malnutrition crisis in northern Gaza continues to deteriorate significantly, and hunger has reached “[catastrophic levels](#)” according to the Humanitarian Coordinator Jamie McGoldrick. On 6 March, MoH in Gaza reported that a 15-year-old child and a 72-year-old elderly man died as a result of malnutrition and dehydration in northern Gaza, bringing the number of such deaths to 20. Furthermore, in addition to some 14 incidents [documented](#) by the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) involving shooting and shelling of people desperately gathered to receive lifesaving aid at two entrances of Gaza city between mid-January and the end of February, at least five additional incidents have been reported since 1 March. These include two incidents on 6 March when at least nine people were reportedly killed, and more than a dozen injured, by gunfire as people gathered at the Nabulsi roundabout southwest of Gaza city. On 5 March, a 14-truck convoy of World Food Programme (WFP) food deliveries to northern Gaza, the first since it paused deliveries to the north on 20 February, was turned back by Israeli forces at the Wadi Gaza checkpoint after a three-hour wait. The trucks, which were carrying some 200 tons of food aid, were subsequently ransacked by a large crowd of desperate people. Despite challenges, WFP [emphasized](#) that “road routes are the only option to transport the large quantities of food needed to avert famine in northern Gaza,” reiterating its call for a ceasefire to create enabling conditions for the humanitarian operation.
- Markets in the Gaza Strip are facing a range of challenges, including critical food shortages, reliance on informal supply channels, and the re-selling of humanitarian assistance, according to WFP’s Gaza Market Monitoring report issued on 1 March. Due to the insufficient flow of goods, more than half of shops surveyed between 7 and 15 February in Deir al Balah and Rafah reported a decrease in food stocks, and a notable portion indicated a complete depletion of their stocks. The shortages include food staples, such as eggs, dairy products, vegetable oil, vegetables, rice, and pulses. These developments, combined with the displacement of owners and employees have compelled many shop owners to transition into informal street vendors. The re-selling of humanitarian aid, particularly among informal street vendors, is also rising, according to the report. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the annual rate of food inflation in Gaza has reached 118 per cent in January 2024. In addition, the CPI for food has risen by nearly 105 per cent since the onset of hostilities, significantly diminishing people’s purchasing power.

## West Bank Updates

- On 6 March, a Palestinian man died of wounds sustained on 4 March when he was shot by Israeli forces in Burin village, in Nablus governorate, while trying to help an injured child who was shot and killed. Also on 6 March, a 14-year-old boy was arrested in Beit Hanina in East Jerusalem after stabbing and injuring an elderly Israeli settler in the nearby Israeli settlement of Neve Yaakov.
- Since 7 October, 416 Palestinians have been killed and 4,658 Palestinians have been injured, including 718 children, in conflict-related incidents across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Israel. Since the beginning of the year, a total of 101 Palestinians have been killed, compared to 71 in the same period in 2023, the majority by Israeli forces. Since 7 October, 15 Israelis, including four members of Israeli forces, have been killed and 90 injured in conflict-related incidents in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Israel.
- On 5 March, the Israeli authorities demolished a house in Nablus city, due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits. As a result, family of eight people, including four children, were displaced. Since 7 October 2023, a total of 1,620 Palestinians, including 710 children, have been displaced across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, because of the demolition of their homes. More than half of them were displaced during military operations, mainly in the refugee camps in Tulkarm and Jenin; 38 per cent were

displaced following the demolition of their homes due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits; and nine per cent on punitive grounds.

- Since 7 October 2023, OCHA has recorded 623 Israeli settler attacks against Palestinians that resulted in Palestinian casualties (55 incidents), damage to Palestinian-owned property (497 incidents), or both casualties and damage to property (71 incidents).

## Funding

- The [Flash Appeal](#) for the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), which requests US\$1.2 billion to meet critical needs of 2.7 million people across the oPt (2.2 million in the Gaza Strip and 500,000 in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem), was extended through the end of March 2024. As of 7 March, member states disbursed nearly \$971 million against the updated Flash Appeal (79 per cent); this includes about \$616 million out of \$629 million (98 per cent) requested for October-December 2023 and \$355 million out of \$600 million (59 per cent) requested for January-March 2024. For funding analysis, please see the Flash Appeal Financial Tracking [dashboard](#).
- During February 2024, the oPt Humanitarian Fund ([oPt HF](#)) had a total of 122 ongoing projects, for a total of US\$ 74.5 million, addressing urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (83 per cent) and West Bank (17 per cent). Projects focus on the areas of Education, Food Security, Health, Protection, Emergency Shelter & NFI, WASH, Coordination and Support Services, Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance and Nutrition. Of these, 77 projects are being implemented by international NGOs (INGOs), 29 projects by national NGOs (NNGOs), and 16 projects by UN agencies. Of the 93 projects implemented by INGOs or the UN, 52 are being implemented in partnership with NNGOs. The oPt HF has also recently finalized its critical and time sensitive First Reserve Allocation of 2024, titled "Emergency Fleet Augmentation for Enhanced Gaza Aid Delivery", amounting to US\$3.5 million. The allocation aims at increasing the aid transport capacity in order to enable humanitarian partners to increase their capacity to deliver vital aid and services to people across the Gaza Strip. For a summary of the oPt HF activities in February 2024, please follow this [link](#). Since 7 October, the oPt HF has received a total of \$88 million in contributions from member states and private donors. Private donations are collected directly through the [Humanitarian Fund](#).

For the Humanitarian Needs and Cluster Response Updates for the period between 27 February and 4 March, please visit: [Humanitarian needs and response update | 27 February – 4 March 2024](#).



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