



More Palestinian families fleeing west towards Deir al Balah following another Israeli evacuation order on 16 August. Photo: OCHA

# Humanitarian Situation Update #205 | Gaza Strip

16 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 19 August.*

## Key Highlights

- At least 40,000 Palestinians have been killed in 10 months, including at least 10,627 children of whom 663 were under one year of age, the Gaza Ministry of Health reports.
- Over 170,000 people are estimated to be sheltering at 122 IDP sites, makeshift shelters and collective centres affected by the 16 August evacuation order issued by the Israeli military, according to the Site Management Working Group.
- Stock reserves necessary for disinfecting drinking and domestic water are only sufficient for one month, the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster warns.
- The entry of commercial food cargo into Gaza increased in July compared with June, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network reports.

## Humanitarian Developments

- Israeli 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 and heavy fighting also continue to be reported. Rocket fire by Palestinian armed groups toward Israel was also reported.
- On 12 August, Secretary-General António Guterres [condemned](#) the “continued loss of life in Gaza.” He reiterated the “urgent appeal for an immediate ceasefire and the unconditional release of all hostages...the need to ensure the protection of civilians and for unimpeded and safe humanitarian access into and across Gaza.” The UN Chief further emphasized that “international humanitarian law, including the principles of distinction, proportionality, and precautions in attack, must be upheld at all times.” On 15 August, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, similarly mourned the loss of life in Gaza and [stated](#): “Most of the dead are women and children. This unimaginable situation is overwhelmingly due to recurring failures by the Israeli Defense Forces to comply with the rules of war...The scale of the Israeli military’s destruction of homes, hospitals, schools and places of worship is deeply shocking.” He further noted: “Our Office has documented serious violations of IHL by both the Israeli military and Palestinian armed groups, including the armed wing of Hamas.”
- Between the afternoons of 12 and 15 August, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 108 Palestinians were killed and 249 were injured. Between 7 October 2023 and 15 August 2024, at least 40,005 Palestinians were killed and 92,401 were injured, according to MoH in Gaza. Casualty figures covering until the afternoon of 16 August are not available as of the time of reporting.
- As of 13 August, [115 infants](#) eight months old and younger were reportedly killed since 7 October 2023, according to the MoH in Gaza. These include 48 (42 per cent) who were less than one month old at the time of their death. The MoH announcement followed the reported tragic killing of two newborn twins in an Israeli airstrike on 13 August that targeted an apartment in southeastern Deir al Balah. Commenting on the incident, UNICEF Executive Director, Catherine Russell, [denounced](#) the “indescribable suffering” children are enduring in Gaza. According to the Gaza MoH, as of 1 August, 10,627 children were among the 32,280 fatalities for whom MoH has documented full identification details, including 663 children under one year of age.

- The following are among other deadly incidents reported between 12 and 14 August:
  - On 12 August, at about 15:40, six Palestinians, including three females, were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit near Al Tahlia area, in eastern Khan Younis.
  - On 12 August, at about 20:40, 10 Palestinians, including women and children, were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in Abasan Al Kabira, in eastern Khan Younis.
  - On 13 August, at about 6:00, seven Palestinians, including one child, were reportedly killed and others injured when three houses were hit near Ash Shuhada roundabout in Al Bureij Refugee Camp, in Deir al Balah.
  - On 13 August, at about 22:45, eight Palestinians including five females, one baby and two children were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in southern An Nuseirat Refugee Camp, in Deir al Balah.
  - On 14 August, at about 14:10, five Palestinians including three children were reportedly killed and others injured when a street vendor stall selling water and groceries was hit in Al Sha'er neighbourhood in Batn As Sameen area, in western Khan Younis.
  - On 14 August, at about 15:40, 13 Palestinians were reportedly killed and 31 others injured in several airstrikes that reportedly struck a house and affected two other houses in its vicinity in the area between Ash Sheikh Nasser and Maan, in eastern Khan Younis city. Some people reportedly remained under rubble.
  - On 14 August, at about 17:30, 12 Palestinians, including a child, were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in Az Zaytoun neighbourhood, in eastern Gaza city.
- Between the afternoons of 12 and 16 August, no Israeli soldiers were reported killed in Gaza, according to the Israeli military. Between 7 October 2023 and 16 August 2024, according to the Israeli military and official Israeli sources cited in the media, more than 1,530 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed, the majority on 7 October and its immediate aftermath and including 330 soldiers killed in Gaza or along the border in Israel since the beginning of the ground operation. In addition, 2,208 Israeli soldiers were reported injured since the beginning of the ground operation. As of 16 August, it is estimated that 115 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including hostages who have been declared dead.
- The Israeli military issued an order on 16 August that affects six blocs in Deir al Balah and Khan Younis, including two within the Israeli-designated zone in Al Mawasi in western Khan Younis. This is one of the largest evacuation orders affecting the zone to date and it shrinks the size of the so-called "humanitarian area" to about 41 square kilometres, or 11 per cent of the total area of the Gaza Strip. Initial mapping indicates that this order affects 122 IDP sites, makeshift shelters, and collective centres (UNRWA and non-UNRWA) that are collectively hosting over 170,000 people, according to the Site Management Working Group (SMWG). Earlier on 13 and 15 August, the Israeli military issued two other evacuation orders, primarily targeting areas had already been under evacuation orders in eastern and central Khan Younis. The first order affected 1.82 square kilometres in Bani Suheila and Al Mahattah, with an estimated population of about 5,200 people and the second order affected 3.6 square kilometres in Al Qarara and As Sater neighbourhoods in central Khan Younis.
- So far in August, eight evacuation orders were issued by the Israeli military, affecting tens of thousands of people in Khan Younis and, to a lesser extent, in northern Gaza. Combined, the ongoing shortage of shelter supplies, including tents and NFIs, hygiene supplies such as jerrycans and shampoo, and limited access to basic services at arrival sites are exacerbating conditions facing displaced families, rendering them increasingly vulnerable as they struggle to meet their most basic needs. On 16 August, UNRWA [stated](#) that with the issuance of new evacuation orders, fear has once again spread among families who have nowhere to go and "people remain trapped in an endless nightmare of death and destruction on a staggering scale."
- There is an urgent need for increased hot meal capacity in Gaza due to recurrent waves of displacement, the World Food Programme (WFP) [reported](#) on 12 August. Many community kitchens in central and southern Gaza struggle due to unstable supplies of humanitarian cargo and the lack of food and fuel. The situation has worsened since 22 July following the issuance of multiple evacuation orders in Deir al Balah and Khan Younis, which forced the relocation of four kitchens and the closure of 19 food delivery points. Moreover, in Deir al Balah, about 1,400 metric tons of food stocks in one of the warehouses became inaccessible and only one WFP warehouse with about 3,000 metric tons of commodities is currently accessible but is insufficient to meet the August cycle requirements. In July, 70 community kitchens in Gaza supported by WFP provided around 11.5 million hot meals to more than 200,000 people, the majority in central Gaza.
- For the first time in ten months, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was able to [deliver](#) more than 2,400 veterinary kits across the Gaza Strip. This follows the successful delivery of 500 tons of fodder. The kits aim to safeguard and improve livestock health, thereby sustaining livelihoods and preventing the spread of disease from animals to humans. The delivery includes iodine wound spray, salt blocks, multivitamins and disinfectants. FAO estimates that about 70 per cent of meat and dairy-producing livestock in Gaza have been slaughtered, consumed or lost due to the ongoing hostilities, contributing to severe food insecurity in Gaza.
- The entry of commercial food cargo into Gaza increased in July compared with June, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) [reported](#), citing data from Israel's Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT). This has resulted in an overall increase in the volume of food that entered Gaza, mostly through Kerem Shalom Crossing, from an estimated 47,443-61,530 metric tons in June to 79,082-86,925 metric tons in July. Of the total food cargo entering through Kerem Shalom Crossing in July, only eight per cent was humanitarian aid and the rest were commercial trucks, FEWS NET added. Furthermore, the results of two market surveys commissioned by FEWS NET in July showed a high reliance on both humanitarian aid and market

purchases, a slight improvement in food availability and diversity in Deir al Balah and Khan Younis coupled with a deterioration in other governorates, and persistent challenges to market functionality including high food prices, lack of liquidity and the emergence of “thieves markets.”

- Following the closure of Rafah crossing in early May, humanitarian organizations have faced a range of obstacles that impeded their ability to regularly pick up supplies entering through Kerem Shalom Crossing, including insecurity, continued hostilities, impassable roads and lawlessness. Consequently, there was a 61 per cent reduction in the total volume of humanitarian aid that was picked up by humanitarian organizations from Kerem Shalom Crossing between May and July compared with the period between January and April (94 vs. 37 trucks per day).
- The launching of two rounds of a polio vaccination campaign in the Gaza Strip at the end of August and in September is critical to prevent the spread of variant poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) in the Gaza Strip and reduce the risk of its re-emergence, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF [highlighted](#) on 16 August. Each round of the campaign requires at least 96-per-cent coverage, where MoH in collaboration with WHO, UNICEF, UNRWA and partners will provide two drops of novel oral polio vaccine type 2 (nOPV2) to more than 640,000 children under ten years of age. The UN agencies stressed that the success of the vaccination campaign depends on the implementation by parties to the conflict of humanitarian pauses for seven days to “allow children and families to safely reach health facilities and community outreach workers to get to children who cannot access health facilities for polio vaccination.” Other factors essential for the campaign’s success include the availability of “cash, fuel and functional telecommunication networks to reach communities with information about the campaign.” “Without the humanitarian pauses, the delivery of the campaign will not be possible,” WHO and UNICEF warned.
- The collapse of Gaza's solid waste management system, exacerbated by ongoing hostilities, access restrictions and a critical shortage of essential resources, has created additional, urgent humanitarian needs. The two major landfills are inaccessible and non-operational, leading to the uncontrolled accumulation of waste at over 140 temporary dumping sites throughout the Gaza strip. This solid waste situation has drastically heightened public health risks, as decaying waste fosters the spread of diseases, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) warned, based on findings of an assessment carried out in June. According to the [UNDP assessment](#), the waste management infrastructure is currently in a critical state as most vehicles and equipment have been destroyed. Only one out of five medical waste collection vehicles is operational, only one out of 12 medical waste disinfection autoclaves that had been supplied by UNDP to hospitals is functioning, and neither of the two medical disinfection microwaves is in service. Moreover, only 20 per cent of the 251 waste collection vehicles and 18 per cent of the 7,300 waste containers are currently available for use. The assessment highlights the necessity of restoring access to major landfills, ensuring a steady fuel supply, and securing funding for new waste management equipment. UNDP is supporting two projects that collect about 680 tons of waste daily from Rafah, Khan Younis, and Deir al Balah, accounting for 60 per cent of southern Gaza’s 1,100 tons of daily waste generation, and a total of around 90,000 tons of waste was collected between January and 15 July 2024. In northern Gaza, the [Municipality of Gaza](#) reported that there are about 150,000 tons of accumulated waste in Gaza city, warning that this significant buildup of waste is significantly heightening the risk of disease spread.
- According to the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster, the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU), the main WASH service provider in Gaza, is currently managing water chlorination across the Gaza Strip using its contingency reserves of sodium hydrochloride. In the absence of additional supplies, existing reserves are expected to last for only one month, raising significant concerns for the ability to disinfect water. The situation is further complicated by the need for increased chlorine dosing, with the current concentration requirement now double the previous level (12 per cent compared with six per cent) due to degradation from prolonged storage and rising temperatures. Efforts to import sodium hydrochloride into Gaza have continued to face considerable obstacles, and no shipments have so far arrived in Gaza due to ongoing access impediments. According to [UNICEF](#), disinfectant chemicals are considered “dual use” and are only allowed into Gaza selectively. In response, the WASH Cluster in Gaza is developing a comprehensive chlorination plan to facilitate the importation of chlorine, ensure the availability of necessary supplies, coordinate distribution, and support the CMWU in effectively disinfecting drinking and domestic water before distribution. The lack of chlorine poses a serious threat to public health, as inadequate water disinfection increases the risk of waterborne diseases spreading among the population. On the other hand, in a positive development, UNRWA [announced](#) on 15 August that a crucial water well in Khan Younis, destroyed during military operations, has been rebuilt and is now the largest source of clean drinking water for 100,000 displaced people, serving as a vital lifeline for families in the area.
- Between 1 and 15 August, out of 109 planned humanitarian assistance missions to northern Gaza that were coordinated with the Israeli authorities, only 46 were facilitated, 37 were denied access, 19 were impeded, and seven were cancelled due to logistical, operational, or security reasons. In addition, out of the 177 humanitarian assistance missions to areas in southern Gaza that were coordinated with the Israeli authorities, only 96 were facilitated, 46 were denied, 19 were impeded, and 16 were cancelled.
- The overall number of denied aid missions so far in August is the same as the number of denied missions in the whole month of July (83) and the rate of denial has increased from 15 to 29 per cent of missions for which coordination was requested. Moreover, in southern Gaza, although the number of requested missions in the first half of August fell by around 10 per cent compared with the corresponding period in July (177 vs. 196), the number of impeded missions increased from 15 to 19 and the number of denied missions surged from 12 to 46. Also comparing the first halves of July and August, there was a two-fold increase in the number of requested missions to northern Gaza (from 53 to 109) but a five-fold increase in the number of denied missions (from 7 to 37). Accordingly, these figures reveal a concerning rise in barriers to aid, particularly in northern Gaza, impacting hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people and indicating a more restrictive environment for humanitarian operations.

## Funding

- As of 14 August, Member States have disbursed about US\$1.6 billion out of \$3.42 billion (47 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 a total of 98 ongoing projects, totalling \$81.4 million. These projects aimed to address urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (89 per cent) and the West Bank (11 per cent). The projects were strategically focused on Education, Food Security, Health, Protection, Emergency Shelter & Non-Food Items (NFI), Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), Coordination and Support Services, Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance and Nutrition. Of these projects, 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 OPT. Of total funding, 89 per cent has been allocated to projects in Gaza. A summary of the oPt HF activities and challenges in July 2024 is 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](#)).