

Humanitarian Situation Update #211 | Gaza Strip

30 Aug 2024



A vehicle of the World Food Programme shot at while approaching an Israeli checkpoint after escorting aid trucks in Gaza. Photo by WFP

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 2 September.

Key Highlights

- Attacks hitting humanitarian personnel and missions are further limiting the delivery of life-saving aid.
- In August, the number of humanitarian missions and movements within Gaza that have been denied access by Israeli authorities has almost doubled.
- For the first time since the beginning of hostilities, the Israeli military announced that residents, displaced people and humanitarian organizations could return to certain evacuated areas.

Humanitarian Developments

- Israeli bombardment from the air and land 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 Beit Hanoun, southwest Gaza city, eastern Khan Younis and Deir al Balah and east as well as south Rafah, with heavy fighting, also continue to be reported. Rocket fire was reportedly fired from within Gaza.
- Between the afternoons of 26 and 29 August, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 167 Palestinians were killed and 321 were injured. Between 7 October 2023 and 29 August 2024, at least 40,602 Palestinians were killed and 93,855 were injured, according to MoH in Gaza.
- The following are some of the deadly incidents reported between 25 and 29 August:
 - On 25 August, five Palestinians, including three children and one woman, were reportedly killed and 15 others injured when a house was hit near Patient's Friends Society Medical Centre, west of Gaza city.
 - On 26 August, five Palestinians including a girl and a woman, were reportedly killed and others injured when an apartment, hosting internally displaced people (IDPs), was hit in Al Yarmouk Street, central Gaza city.
 - On 26 August, five Palestinians, including four children, were reportedly killed when an apartment was hit in At Tuffah neighbourhood, east Gaza city.
 - On 26 August, seven Palestinians were reportedly killed on the beach of Gaza city.
 - On 26 August, seven Palestinians, including a woman, two boys and a girl, were reportedly killed and others injured when an apartment was hit in central Al Maghazi, in Deir al Balah.
 - On 26 August, five Palestinians, including a journalist, were reportedly killed and others injured when a car was hit in in Al Mawasi, Khan Younis.
 - On 27 August, six Palestinians, including two girls and a boy, were reportedly killed and seven others, including children, were injured in Batan as Sameen area in western Khan Younis.
 - On 28 August, nine Palestinians, including two children and a person with disability, were reportedly killed and others injured when they were hit at the entrance of Al Manfalouti governmental school, designated as an IDP shelter, on Salah ad Deen Road in eastern Deir al Balah.
 - On 29 August, eight Palestinians, including two children and three women, were reportedly killed and others injured when a residential building was hit near Al Amal Hotel, west Gaza city.
- Between the afternoons of 26 and 30 August, at least one Israeli soldier was reportedly killed in Gaza, according to the Israeli military. Between 7 October 2023 and 30 August 2024, according to the Israeli military and official Israeli sources cited in the media, more than 1,539 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed, the majority on 7 October and its immediate aftermath. The figure includes 339 soldiers killed in Gaza or along the border in Israel since the beginning of the ground operation. In addition, 2,263 Israeli soldiers were reported injured since the beginning of the ground operation. As of 30 August, it is estimated that 107 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including hostages who have been declared dead and whose remains are withheld in Gaza. On 27 August, one Israeli hostage and the body of an Israeli soldier presumed to have been killed on 7 October were returned to Israel.
- Following the partial resumption of operations at the European Gaza Hospital in Khan Younis on 25 August, 17 out of Gaza's 36 hospitals are now functional – all of them partially; three in North Gaza, seven in Gaza, four in Khan Younis and three in Deir al Balah. While the Al Aqsa Hospital in Deir al Balah remains open, almost all patients and the hundreds of IDPs seeking sanctuary there fled, after an evacuation order was issued on 25 August, to areas nearby and hostilities intensified. In response, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the MoH expedited the previously planned opening of a field hospital elsewhere in Deir al Balah. MSF states that it was “left with no choice” but to prematurely open the facility, delayed thus far due to difficulties bringing supplies into Gaza, and that the facility is only partially functional and now operating under pressure amid dire shortages of supplies and resources. Nine out of 14 field hospitals are operational in Gaza, five of them only partially, while only 44 per cent of primary health-care centres (58 out of 132) and medical points (126 out of 285) continue to provide minimal services. On 27 August, the NGO Emergency [announced](#) that “after several months of waiting to obtain humanitarian permits,” it had managed to enter Gaza and was endeavoring to open a clinic that would provide basic medical and surgical care, outpatient reproductive health services and post-operative follow-up care, among other services.
- For the first time since the beginning of hostilities, the Israeli military announced on 29 and 30 August that residents and IDPs could return to certain in southern of Deir al Balah and west of Khan Younis, which had previously been subject to evacuation orders. These areas had seen many residents displaced following evacuation orders issued on 16, 21 and 25 August. UN and humanitarian partners are preparing to return and continue their missions, as these areas included service facilities, water wells and more. Since October, more than 86 per cent of the Gaza Strip's space remains affected by evacuation orders, including over 40 orders issued since 1 January 2024.* Hundreds of thousands of displaced families continue to be forced to move into an area of around 47 square kilometres (approximately 13 per cent of Gaza's total land area, as of 30 August), designated by the Israeli military in Al Mawasi, which has become overcrowded and lacks essential infrastructure and services.

- Briefing the UN Security Council on 29 August, the Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Joyce Msuya, [stated](#): “The situation in Gaza is beyond desperate... Civilians are hungry. They are thirsty. They are sick. They are homeless. They have been pushed beyond the limits of endurance – beyond what any human being should bear,” Msuya highlighted the struggle that people are facing to find shelter and other essentials while being forced into a small area of the Strip. Severe overcrowding, coupled with the lack of clean water, sanitation facilities and basic hygiene items like soap, are taking a heavy toll on children, with skin infections continuing to [increase](#) among them. As of 30 June, WHO had already [recorded](#) 103,385 cases of scabies and lice, 65,368 cases of skin rashes and 11,214 cases of chickenpox in the Strip. With MSF support, the Palestinian Agricultural Development Association (PARC) has been [providing](#) emergency latrines, solar water pumps and basic health care to some of the displaced people arriving in the Al Mawasi area of Khan Younis. “Every day, we see between 300 to 400 people at the medical clinic, of which 200 cases are related to skin conditions,” [explained](#) PARC pediatrician Dr. Youssef Salaf Al-Farra, underscoring that children are the most affected by highly contagious skin conditions. MSF claims that, for three months, it has been trying to import 4,000 hygiene kits, comprising items such as soap, toothbrushes, shampoo and laundry power, to improve living conditions in Khan Younis, but the importation has not been allowed by Israeli authorities.
- The number of unaccompanied and separated children in Gaza has likely increased to 3-5 per cent of the overall displaced population according to a recent [assessment](#) by International Rescue Committee (IRC). Doctors reported to the IRC that children without surviving family members are being found in hospitals, essentially living there alone due to the lack of alternative care arrangements. IRC indicated that, since October, 41 per cent of families in Gaza were caring for children who were not their own, and a UN survey in April 2024 estimates that this rate is more than eight times higher than in other emergency situations, where the figures range between three and five per cent. Despite the care provided by community members, the grave conditions and the lack of resources are heightening fears of child neglect, particularly amid recent displacements, as families may be forced to prioritize their own children over others, due to limited space and resources. IRC concluded that “children who are abandoned or separated from their families, as well as orphans, face particularly high risks of child labour, exploitation, neglect and mental health issues. Their access to critical resources for survival is also severely reduced.” To tackle family separation, [UNICEF](#) is distributing 450,000 identity bracelets to children, including the child’s name, date of birth, and the phone number of a family member.
- Attacks on humanitarian personnel and missions are increasing the risk of limiting access and delivering life-saving aid. The World Food Programme (WFP) announced that, while operations across Gaza continue, it has had to temporarily suspend staff movements following an attack on one of its convoys on 28 August. The UN Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security Gilles Michaud [highlighted](#) that humanitarians, including UN personnel, are operating under extreme risk, with the ongoing crisis being the deadliest on record for the UN. This attack underscores the rapidly shrinking humanitarian space in Gaza, said WFP Executive Director Cindy McCain, [stating](#) that “this is totally unacceptable and the latest in a series of unnecessary security incidents that have endangered the lives of WFP’s team in Gaza... The current deconfliction system is failing and this cannot go on any longer...”
- In August, the number of humanitarian missions and movements within Gaza that have been denied access by Israeli authorities has doubled in the north (68 vs. 30) and almost doubled in the south (99 vs 53), compared with July. Between 1 and 29 August, out of the 199 planned humanitarian missions coordinated with the Israeli authorities for northern Gaza, 74 (37 per cent) were facilitated, 68 (34 per cent) were denied access, 42 (21 per cent) were impeded (including missions that succeeded), and 15 (8 per cent) were cancelled due to logistical, operational, or security issues. In southern Gaza, out of 372 coordinated humanitarian movements, 173 (46 per cent) were facilitated, 99 (27 per cent) were denied access, 52 (14 per cent) were impeded, and 48 (13 per cent) were cancelled.
- The forced evacuation of WFP’s main operating hub in Deir al Balah, has drastically reduced its capacity to provide critical food assistance as the Programme also lost access to its last operational warehouse in the governorate and had to evacuate five community kitchens, which were crucial for feeding displaced families. Recent mass evacuation orders issued by the Israeli military have significantly intensified these threats, causing severe disruptions in the delivery of life-saving aid and drastically reducing the availability of safe spaces for aid workers. The UN Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security Gilles Michaud [noted](#) that over 200 UN personnel were forced to evacuate from Deir al Balah, a key humanitarian hub, further straining the already overstretched operations. The dire security situation has caused significant setbacks, particularly in health and food security with the planned polio vaccination campaign, which requires a large number of staff to enter Gaza, continues to face severe delays due to the heightened security risks as highlighted by Michaud. Staff may be able to return and continue their work in areas previously evacuated but announced safe to return by Israeli authorities. Michaud and McCain have both called on all parties to respect international humanitarian law and ensure the safety of humanitarian workers.
- Food delivery is severely hampered by ongoing fighting and damaged roads, and limited crossing points. The WFP [reports](#) that Palestinians are confined to small areas with inadequate sanitation and health care, frequently displaced by evacuation orders that disrupt vital aid services, including WFP-supported food distributions and community kitchens. In the past two months, WFP has managed to bring in only half of the 24,000 metric tonnes of food aid required to hit its targets. Due to dwindling supplies and decreased aid inflows, it has been forced to reduce the contents of food parcels distributed. WFP also emphasizes the urgent need for road repairs, warning that war-damaged roads, already difficult to navigate, are expected to become impassable with forthcoming rain and flooding. In a positive development, WFP reports that the community kitchens it supports in northern Gaza have begun providing hot meals with fresh vegetables, marking the first delivery of such produce which aims at supplementing emergency food rations and preventing malnutrition.

Funding

- As of 29 August, Member States have disbursed about US\$1.63 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 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 and non-food items, water, sanitation, and hygiene, 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 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 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](#).

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