



Displaced Palestinians in Gaza. Photo by UNRWA

# Humanitarian Situation Update #227 | Gaza Strip

08 Oct 2024

As of 4 October, the Humanitarian Situation Update is issued by OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory twice a week. The Gaza Strip is covered on Tuesdays and the West Bank on Thursdays. The Gaza Humanitarian Response Update continues to be issued every other Wednesday. The next Humanitarian Situation Update will be issued on 10 October.

## Key Highlights

- Hundreds of thousands of people and dozens of humanitarian facilities have been affected by four new evacuation orders issued by the Israeli military; at least 70,000 people have been displaced and there are growing risks that humanitarian access will be further constrained, particularly between southern and northern Gaza.
- The Israeli military launches a military operation in northern Gaza and the area is becoming increasingly cut off.
- September saw the lowest volume of commercial and humanitarian supplies entering Gaza since at least March 2024, with a drop in dietary diversity of children aged 6-23 months and pregnant and breastfeeding women across Gaza, reports UNICEF.
- Nearly 68 per cent of Gaza's cropland has been damaged, increasing the imminent risk of famine and jeopardizing current and future potential food production, warns FAO.

## Humanitarian Developments

- Israeli bombardment from the air, land and sea continues to be reported across the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of civilian infrastructure. Between 5 and 7 October, Israeli forces issued several evacuation orders for areas in northern Deir al Balah, North Gaza and Gaza governorates, reminding residents that these areas are still considered active combat zones, as well as areas in Khan Younis (additional information available below). On 6 October, the Israeli military announced that a military operation commenced the night before in Jabalya, with heavy fighting in the area reported. Rocket fire by Palestinian armed groups toward Israel was also reported. On 7 October, the UN Human Rights Office [stated](#) that the "attacks in northern Gaza, combined with mass evacuation orders, which are inconsistent with international humanitarian law, raise serious concerns about the forced displacement and forced transfer of Palestinian residents of Gaza."
- In a statement marking one year since the 7 October attack in Israel and the escalation of hostilities in Gaza, Ms. Joyce Msuya, Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator [said](#) that no "statistics or words can fully convey the extent of the physical, mental and societal devastation that has taken place," stressing that "we know what must happen: The hostages must be released and treated humanely. Civilians must be protected and their essential needs met. Palestinians arbitrarily detained must be released. Humanitarian workers must be safeguarded and their work facilitated. Perpetrators must be held accountable for any serious violations of international humanitarian law. And the assault on Gaza must stop."
- Between the afternoons of 4 and 7 October, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 163 Palestinians were killed and 737 were injured. Between 7 October 2023 and 8 October 2024, at least 41,965 Palestinians were killed and 97,590 were injured, according to MoH in Gaza.
- The following are some of the deadly incidents reported between 4 and 6 October:

- On 4 October, at about 14:10, five female Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in Al Bureij refugee camp, in Deir al Balah.
  - On 4 October, at about 16:00, seven Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit, in Ash Shati' (Beach) camp, in Gaza city.
  - On 4 October, at about 23:30, six Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit northeast of An Nuseirat refugee camp, in Deir al Balah.
  - On 5 October, at about 8:30, six Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when a group of people was hit in east Beit Hanoun, in North Gaza.
  - On 5 October, at about 20:00, ten Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit, in Jabaliya town, in North Gaza.
  - On 5 October, at about 22:00, nine Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit west of Jabalya refugee camp, in North Gaza.
  - On 5 October, at about 22:00, five Palestinians, including two children and two women, were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in Beit Lahiya, in North Gaza.
  - On 6 October, at about 2:10, 21 Palestinians were reportedly killed and others injured when Al Aqsa Martyrs Mosque in front of Al Aqsa Hospital was hit in Deir al Balah.
  - On 6 October, at about 14:10, five Palestinians, including one girl, were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in Ash Shati' refugee camp west of Gaza city. The Palestinian Civil Defense reported that others remained under rubble.
- Between the afternoons of 4 and 8 October, one Israeli soldier was reportedly killed in Gaza and one soldier died of wounds sustained in Gaza in June 2024, according to the Israeli military. Between 7 October 2023 and 8 October 2024, according to the Israeli military and official Israeli sources cited in the media, more than 1,548 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed, the majority on 7 October 2023 and its immediate aftermath. The figure includes 348 soldiers killed in Gaza or along the border in Israel since the beginning of the ground operation. In addition, 2,299 Israeli soldiers were reported injured since the beginning of the ground operation.
  - Between 5 and 7 October, the Israeli military issued four new evacuation orders for: 11 blocks in Al Bureij and An Nuseirat refugee camps in northern Deir Al Balah; Gaza and North Gaza governorates; 31 neighbourhoods in North Gaza including Beit Hanoun, Jabalya and Beit Lahiya; and eight neighbourhoods in Khan Younis. Residents were ordered to relocate immediately to Al Mawasi area west of Khan Younis, in southern Gaza. According to the same announcements by the Israeli military, the area designated for civilians to stay (Al Mawasi) initially expanded by 10.71 square kilometres and was subsequently reduced by 1.4 square kilometres. As of 7 October, the Israeli-designated area for civilians to relocate is estimated to span 57 square kilometres or some 15 per cent of the Gaza Strip. At present, the total area covered by evacuation orders in the Gaza Strip, excluding those that have been revoked, constitutes about 84 per cent of the Gaza Strip.
  - These orders affect hundreds of thousands of people, particularly in northern Gaza where more than 400,000 people are under pressure to move southward to Al Mawasi, which is already overcrowded and lacks basic services. Humanitarian access also risks becoming further constrained, particularly between southern and northern Gaza, and so are the accessibility and functionality of key humanitarian facilities within areas slated for evacuation. Initial estimates from the Site Management Working Group (SMWG) indicate that about 50,000 people have already moved from North Gaza toward Gaza city and more than 20,000 have moved from An Nuseirat and Al Bureij refugee camps toward southern Deir al Balah and Khan Younis. The SMWG additionally reports that 12 sites for internally displaced persons (IDPs) are in areas newly affected by these orders in northern Deir al Balah, and so are more than 300 patients in the Indonesian, Kamal Adwan and Al Awda hospitals in North Gaza according to the Health Cluster, and dozens of facilities that offer critical health, water, hygiene, sanitation, and education services.
  - Overall, the World Health Organization (WHO) reports that 10 hospitals with a cumulative capacity of 730 beds, 19 primary health-care centres and 32 medical points in the North Gaza and Gaza governorates risk being affected by the unfolding situation. Should WHO and its partners be unable to maintain these facilities fuelled, critical health services in Intensive Care Units, operation theatres, maternity wards, haemodialysis units and emergency departments might have to be abruptly stopped. Additionally, essential health supplies and medications must be immediately delivered to these facilities, including trauma disposables and medications for patients with non-communicable diseases. In light of the dire shortage of blood units, on 7 October, the Ministry of Health appealed to people in northern Gaza to urgently donate blood, either at the Emergency Department of Al Shifa Hospital or at As Sahaba Medical Complex.
  - The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reports that, in September, the volume of supplies entering Gaza – both commercial and humanitarian – has been the lowest since at least March 2024, noting that the situation is expected to further deteriorate. A survey conducted by UNICEF in mid-September of over 2,500 recipients of humanitarian cash assistance shows that both the availability of goods and the dietary diversity of children aged 6-23 months and pregnant and breastfeeding women decreased across all areas of Gaza compared with July. According to survey responses, over 35 per cent of children and 40 per cent of pregnant and breastfeeding women had only eaten one food type the day prior to the survey and 30 per cent in both groups had only consumed two food types. Moreover, only five per cent of pregnant and breastfeeding women had consumed dairy products, and six per cent of children had eaten some meat, with these percentages plummeting to one and three per cent in northern Gaza,

respectively. Moreover, the survey, complemented by in-person visits to markets, showed further price increases of basic food items in northern Gaza. For example, rice and vegetable oil in northern Gaza now cost more than US\$5 per kilogramme (kg) or litre (l), while remaining more affordable in Deir al Balah and Khan Younis (below \$2/kg and 2.5/l, respectively).

- According to the World Food Programme ([WFP](#)), in the northern governorates, wheat flour and canned food are the only food items readily available on the market. Dairy products are unavailable, while vegetables, fruits, eggs, and vegetable oil are in severe shortage and priced very high. Other food items, such as pulses and rice, are moderately available. In Deir al Balah and Khan Younis, wheat flour, canned food, rice, pulses, and vegetable oil remain available. However, there is a moderate shortage of vegetables and eggs, while dairy products are in severe shortage. Media reports [suggest](#) that the spike in the price of market commodities is partly due to extremely high increases in costs of bringing in commercial supplies, including hefty import permits, transportation costs, and fees paid to private security companies to secure the trucks due to looting driven by the breakdown of law and order. These costs are then passed on to consumers. An [analysis](#) conducted by Christian Aid in late August in northern Gaza shows that, while the price of some staples like bread and flour has decreased since March, others have continued to soar, with onions for instance costing 700 per cent more compared to five months prior, and some products such as chicken, dates or bottled water being unavailable, forcing people to buy drinking water from mobile tanks.
- No cooking gas has entered northern Gaza for twelve consecutive months, according to the Food Security Sector ([FSS](#)), while the price of firewood on the market is making it inaccessible to most households. Firewood found in markets is sourced from the remains of demolished homes, furniture and electricity poles, WFP [reports](#), and its relatively high prices, combined with severe gas shortages “is pushing more people into energy poverty.” This continues to force displaced families, who are among the most vulnerable people, to cook by burning wood and plastic from waste, which hinders proper food preparation, exacerbates health risks and causes environmental hazards, including the risk of fires in severely overcrowded tent sites.
- The latest satellite-based agricultural damage [assessment](#) conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and UNOSAT shows that 67.6 per cent of Gaza’s cropland had been damaged, as of 1 September, up from 57.3 per cent in May and 42.6 per cent in February 2024, with North Gaza currently having the highest proportion of damage among all governorates (78.2 per cent). Additionally, over 71 per cent of orchards and other trees, 67 per cent of field crops, and 58.5 per cent of vegetables have been damaged. Heavy vehicle tracks, razing, shelling, and other conflict-related pressures have also significantly damaged Gaza’s agricultural infrastructure, with a total of 1,188 out of 2,261 agricultural wells (52.5 per cent) and over 44 per cent of greenhouses damaged. Furthermore, most of the Gaza city port infrastructure and vessels were destroyed in October 2023 and remain non-functional, with severe repercussions on trade and livelihoods.
- The extremely limited entry of fertilizers and other livestock and crop production inputs into the Strip continues to be a key obstacle hampering the restoration of local food production in Gaza, with agricultural activities – including small-scale gardening that is critical to enhance dietary diversity – remaining largely suspended, highlights FSS. Coupled with the “unprecedented levels” of agricultural damage in Gaza, FAO Deputy Director-General Beth Bechdol, [stressed](#) that this “raises serious concerns about the potential for food production now and in the future” and “compounds the imminent risk of famine in the whole Gaza Strip.”
- The Gaza Strip has faced a year of humanitarian crisis, with frontline civil defense, health, and aid workers enduring immense challenges. Over 300 aid workers have lost their lives in Gaza, the majority being UNRWA staff, making Gaza the most dangerous place for aid workers globally. The situation is equally dire for health workers; MoH reported that a total of 986 health workers have been killed, including some who are counted as aid workers. Furthermore, the Palestinian Civil Defense (PCD), which is currently operating at 20 per cent of its capacity, reported that 85 of its staff have been killed, and another 292 injured, with 14 instances of staff being hit while on duty. Additionally, 52 PCD vehicles have been destroyed or damaged, and a lack of fuel and spare parts, alongside access constraints, have resulted in over 15,600 unaddressed appeals for assistance, PCD reported.

## Funding

- As of 8 October, Member States have disbursed about \$1.72 billion out of the \$3.42 billion (50 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 September 2024, the Occupied Palestinian Territory Humanitarian Fund (OPT HF) managed 87 ongoing projects, totalling \$77.5 million. These projects aimed to address urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (90 per cent) and the West Bank (10 per cent). They were strategically focused on education, food security, health, protection, emergency shelter and non-food items, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), coordination and support services, multi-purpose cash assistance and nutrition. Of these projects, 48 projects are being implemented by international non-governmental organizations, 27 by national NGOs and 12 by UN agencies. Notably, 31 out of the 60 projects implemented by INGOs or the UN are being implemented in collaboration with national NGOs. Monthly updates, annual reports, and a list of all funded projects per year, are available on the oPt Humanitarian Fund [webpage](#), under the financing section.