



One of the makeshift sites established in Gaza city in December 2024 to accommodate displaced families from North Gaza. Photo: OCHA

Humanitarian Situation Update #253 | Gaza Strip

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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 is issued every other Tuesday. Publications issued today are exceptionally published on a Wednesday because Tuesday, 7 January, was an official holiday. The next Humanitarian Situation Update will be issued on 9 January.

Key Highlights

- Child Protection partners are facing severe challenges in bringing needed winter clothing kits into Gaza; only 19,000 kits have been distributed out of 220,000 procured.
- At least 369 aid workers, including 263 UNRWA staff, have been killed since October 2023, according to data received by the UN and its partners.
- Zero fuel reserves to operate electricity generators at hospitals across Gaza are placing the lives of patients and newborns at grave risk.
- The UN attempted to reach the besieged area in North Gaza 165 times between 6 October and 31 December 2024, of which 149 attempts were denied by the Israeli authorities and 16 faced impediments.

Humanitarian Developments

- Israeli bombardment from the air, land and sea and detonation of residential buildings continues to be reported across the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of civilian infrastructure. Rocket fire by Palestinian armed groups towards Israel has also been reported.
- Access to North Gaza governorate, which has been under intensified siege since 6 October 2024, continues to be largely denied by the Israeli authorities. From 6 October to 31 December 2024, the UN attempted to reach the area 165 times, of which 149 attempts were denied and 16 were allowed to proceed but faced impediments. Coordinated aid missions to areas in the Rafah governorate, where there has been an ongoing Israeli military operation since early May, have faced similar challenges. Overall, in 2024, the UN and its partners carried out 5,321 coordinated humanitarian movements across the Gaza Strip, including 3,707 in the south and 1,614 in the north. Of these, 48 per cent (North: 621, South: 1,936) were facilitated, 24 per cent (North: 398, South: 864) were denied, 19 per cent (North: 434, South: 567) were interfered with or initially agreed to but then faced impediments, and nine per cent (North: 161, South: 340) were cancelled by the organizers due to logistical and security challenges. Movements facing impediments were accomplished either partially or not at all.
- Between the afternoons of 30 December 2024 and 8 January 2025, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza, 395 Palestinians were killed and 936 were injured. Between 7 October 2023 and 8 January 2024, at least 45,936 Palestinians were killed and 109,274 were injured, according to MoH in Gaza.
- Key deadly incidents reported between 1 and 4 January 2025 include:

- On 1 January, at about 02:00, 11 Palestinians, including children and women, were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in Jabalya Al Balad in North Gaza.
- On 2 January, at about 01:15, at least 11 Palestinians, including four children and three women, were reportedly killed and others injured when tents sheltering internally displaced people (IDP) were hit in Al Mawasi area in western Khan Younis. The attack reportedly caused a fire in the tents.
- On 2 and 3 January, three journalists and media workers were reportedly killed in separate incidents in Gaza city and Deir al Balah. On 2 January, one journalist was reportedly killed in a drone airstrike in western Gaza city. On 3 January, three Palestinians, including a press photographer and her mother, were reportedly killed and eight others injured when two houses, including the photographer's house, were hit in northern An Nuseirat refugee camp in Deir al Balah. On the same day, four Palestinians, including a journalist, were reportedly killed and others injured when the journalist's family house was hit in Az Zawayda in Deir al Balah.
- On 4 January, at about 02:00, 11 Palestinians including seven children were reportedly killed and others injured when a house was hit in Ash Shuja'iyeh neighbourhood in eastern Gaza city.
- On 4 January, around 17:30, 11 Palestinians were reportedly killed and others remained missing when a house was hit in Ash Sheikh Redwan neighbourhood in northern Gaza city.
- On 4 January, at about 02:40, five Palestinian men, reportedly belonging to a security company that protects aid convoys, were reportedly killed when an aid-security car was hit on Salah Ad-Deen Street in Khan Younis.
- On 4 January, at about 16:00, at least five Palestinians were reportedly killed, several others were injured, and some remain missing when an entire residential block, comprising several multi-story buildings, was hit and levelled in eastern Al Saraya yard in central Gaza city.
- Between the afternoons of 31 December 2024 and 8 January 2025, three Israeli soldiers were killed in Gaza, according to the Israeli military. Between 7 October 2023 and 8 January 2025, according to the Israeli military and official Israeli sources cited in the media, more than 1,593 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed, the majority on 7 October 2023 and its immediate aftermath. This includes 393 soldiers killed in Gaza or along the border in Israel since the beginning of the ground operation in October 2023. In addition, 2,535 Israeli soldiers were reported injured since the beginning of the ground operation. On 8 January, the Israeli military said that the body of one hostage was recovered from a tunnel in Rafah. As of 8 January, it is estimated that 99 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including hostages who have been declared dead and whose bodies are withheld in Gaza.
- Between 1 and 3 January, the Israeli military issued three evacuation orders for parts of Gaza city and North Gaza and Deir al Balah governorates. Several evacuation orders had already been issued for the designated areas. Two of the orders, on 1 and 3 January, affected the same areas of Al Bureij refugee camp in Deir al Balah, covering approximately 1.23 square kilometres in two neighbourhoods. An estimated 23,1000 people were affected by the order, including 10,300 people sheltering at three IDP sites. In addition, three medical points, three water trucking points and one distribution centre were affected. The third order, on 1 January, affected parts of Jabalya in North Gaza and Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood in Gaza city, covering approximately 3.04 square kilometres in two neighbourhoods. While thousands of families are estimated to have been affected by the orders, there were no reports on observed displacement movements.
- Attacks on humanitarian workers, convoys and facilities continue to take place, further hindering humanitarian operations and jeopardizing the safety of aid workers. On 5 January, a World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) convoy, consisting of three clearly marked vehicles carrying eight staff members, was shot at by Israeli forces near Wadi Gaza checkpoint. No injuries were reported, but at least 16 bullets struck the vehicles. According to WFP, the convoy had received all the necessary clearances from the Israeli authorities. "Security conditions in Gaza must urgently improve for lifesaving humanitarian assistance to continue," WFP emphasized in a [statement](#). Also on 5 January, a WFP flour distribution warehouse operated by MA'AN Development Center in Deir al Balah was hit, killing one humanitarian worker and seriously injuring two others. Care Palestine, Ma'an's partner, [stated](#) that this "is yet another stark reminder of the daily threats to the safety and security of all humanitarian workers in Gaza, including our staff." In a 7 January statement, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) also [highlighted](#) the killing of eight of its staff as well as a series of incidents affecting MSF or MSF-supported medical facilities, shelters and movements that have been hit or attacked, but is "yet to receive accountability or admission of responsibility for the killing, maiming, or dehumanization of [its] staff and patients." According to data received by the UN and its partners, at least 369 aid workers, including 263 UNRWA staff, have been killed since October 2023.
- On 4 January, the [WHO](#) Director-General and the [UNICEF](#) Deputy Executive Director called on the Israeli authorities to immediately release the Director of Kamal Adwan Hospital, Dr Hussam Abu Safiya. The Health Cluster has equally stressed concern for the recent detention of Dr. Abdullah Albadawi, who works for PANZMA, one of the partner organizations for the Emergency Medical Team (EMT) programme. According to MoH, as of 11 December 2024, at least 330 health care workers from Gaza have been detained by the Israeli authorities and 1,057 have been killed, including three physicians who have reportedly died in Israeli custody.
- A [report](#) published on 31 December by the UN Human Rights Office stresses that "Israel's pattern of deadly attacks on and near hospitals in Gaza, and associated combat, pushed the healthcare system to the brink of total collapse, with catastrophic effect on Palestinians' access to health and medical care." Between 7 October 2023 and 30 June 2024, OHCHR verified 136 strikes on at least 27 hospitals and 12 other medical facilities, which resulted in damage, destruction and casualties among health workers and

other civilians. With shrinking access to healthcare and basic supplies, “many injured patients reportedly died while waiting to be hospitalized or treated,” while some “were often discharged prematurely due to a lack of space,” highlights OHCHR. Attacks on hospitals have also deterred women and girls from seeking assistance, with information received by OHCHR pointing to newborns having died, “because their mothers were unable to attend postnatal check-ups or reach medical facilities to give birth.” The report explains that, while “in most instances, Israel alleges that the hospitals were being improperly used for military purposes by Palestinian armed groups, insufficient information has so far been made available to substantiate these allegations, which have remained vague and broad.” The report adds that, “even in the exceptional circumstances when medical personnel, ambulances, and hospitals lose their special protection because they fulfil the strict criteria to be considered military objectives, any attack on them must still comply with the fundamental [international humanitarian law] principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack.”

- Ongoing hostilities and besiegement of North Gaza have severely disrupted healthcare services for the population remaining in the area. After the Indonesian and Kamal Adwan Hospital were rendered out of service on 24 and 27 December, respectively, Relief International (RI) [reports](#) that, on 3 January, also the Al Awda Hospital, the last partially functioning hospital in North Gaza, was ordered by Israeli forces to immediately evacuate patients and staff. While Al Awda continues to operate, access to the facility, where 34 patients and 63 staff remain, is very limited amid ongoing hostilities in the area. The hospital’s fuel tank and last remaining generator were also recently destroyed after it was directly targeted, according to RI, and it is struggling to operate due to severe shortages of medications, medical supplies and fuel.
- Across Gaza, the lack of fuel to operate electricity generators continues to severely affect the already decimated health system, placing the lives of patients at risk. On 7 January, the European Gaza Hospital in Khan Younis warned that the electricity generators would cease functioning in the space of 24 hours due to the depletion of fuel reserves, with the lives of premature babies and patients in the intensive care unit and other hospital departments being under imminent threat, appealing to the international community and WHO for urgent support. Similarly, on 8 January, the Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis [announced](#) that all the generators at the facility have stopped, and only a small generator is currently operating with an amount sufficient for three hours. In a press conference on 8 January, MoH [stated](#) that there is no fuel stock in hospitals due to the restrictions imposed on fuel entry and looting, warning that, if not additional fuel is received, this will cause a real catastrophe affecting the functioning of oxygen generators, medicine refrigerators and incubators. MoH also announced that a patient died due to the lack of fuel needed to operate kidney dialysis machines. As of the time of reporting on 8 January, MoH [stated](#) that a small amount of fuel to operate hospital generators was received, which would allow for the continuation of services until tomorrow, 9 January.
- On 31 December, 55 patients, alongside 72 companions, were medically evacuated from Gaza to the United Arab Emirates through the Kerem Shalom Crossing. This brings the number of critical patients evacuated outside of Gaza to receive life-saving treatment since October 2023 to 5,383, of whom only 436 were evacuated since the closure of the Rafah crossing in May 2024, a pace that remains, “excruciatingly slow,” [stressed](#) WHO. At this rate, it would take 5-10 years to evacuate the over 12,000 critically ill and injured patients, including thousands of children, who require urgent, life-saving treatment outside Gaza, but currently remain trapped in the Strip, explained WHO, urging the Israeli authorities to increase and expedite the approval rate, not to deny requests for child patients, and, “allow all possible corridors and border crossings to be used for safe medical evacuations.” WHO also appealed to all countries to help, “by receiving patients and offering specialized health care to prevent more suffering and deaths.”
- Food insecurity continues to deteriorate across the Gaza Strip while assistance equivalent to food rations sufficient for the whole population for more than three months (about 120,000 metric tonnes) continues to remain stranded outside the Strip. Moreover, there are restrictions on the official entry of commercial cargo, armed lootings of humanitarian supplies that partners collect from crossings, predominantly unaffordable basic commodities on local markets, and North Gaza has remained largely cut off from food assistance for three consecutive months. In central and southern Gaza, key Food Security Sector (FSS) partners had exhausted all supplies in their warehouses as of 5 January, and requests to transport food assistance entering through Erez West Crossing to areas south of Wadi Gaza have generally been denied by the Israeli authorities except in exceptional circumstances. According to FSS, if no additional supplies are received, food parcel distributions will remain severely limited, the re-opening of subsidized bakeries will be rendered impossible, and more than 50 kitchens providing over 200,000 meals a day to people in central and southern Gaza would be at risk of shutting down in the coming days. The resumption of operations of WFP-supported bakeries in Deir al Balah and Khan Younis requires at least 1,000 metric tonnes of flour to be available and regularly replenished in the warehouses whereas current stocks remain limited and are depleted almost daily. Attempts to facilitate the resumption of local food production also face challenges; while around 200 metric tonnes of animal feed were distributed to 3,800 livestock owners in December, attempts to bring in agricultural supplies to resume even small-scale agricultural activities continue to be denied by the Israeli authorities.
- On 6 January, MoH announced the death of a 35-day old baby due to the cold and lack of warm shelter in Gaza, adding that this had brought the total number of deaths due to hypothermia to eight across the Strip. MSF [reports](#) that, between October and December 2024, the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) of the Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis had admitted 325 infants, with MSF teams embedded in the unit treating “newborns and premature babies with potentially life-threatening respiratory infections, dehydration, and other complications.” According to Dr. Mohammed Abu Tayyem, a pediatrician at Nasser, the pediatric ward is [seeing](#) an increased number of children with acute bronchiolitis, pneumonia, upper respiratory tract infections and even bronchial asthma exacerbations. The doctor attributes these rising cases to the harsh winter weather, dire conditions in tents and limited heating supplies, all of which render premature and low-birth-weight babies more vulnerable to hypothermia. Commenting on the death of at least seven newborns due to hypothermia in December, the WHO Director-General [warned](#) that “more children are in danger,” and that, while “every child deserves a healthy and safe start in life... the children of Gaza are paying the price of war with their own lives.” Likewise, on 8 January, UNICEF Executive Director, Catherine Russell, [reiterated](#) that “inadequate shelter, lack of access to nutrition and healthcare, the dire sanitary situation, and now the winter weather put the lives of all children in Gaza at risk,” with newborns and children with medical conditions being especially vulnerable.

- In a statement on 3 January, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) [expressed](#) deep alarm at the “devastating impact of winter rains and freezing temperatures on displaced Palestinians in Gaza,” adding that tragic deaths due to hypothermia underscore the critical need for shelter and other assistance to immediately reach people in the Strip. Since mid-November, IOM has delivered nearly 180,000 emergency shelter items to partners inside Gaza, but due to severe access restrictions, it remains unable to distribute over 1.5 million additional winter supplies, including sealing-off kits, tents and bedding kits, which are currently at warehouses and entry points. The Shelter Cluster explains that the limited cargo capacity at the crossings, the lengthy coordination requirements imposed by the Israeli authorities to bring shelter items into the Strip and the frequent rejection of such items, alongside the high risk of armed looting continue to severely hamper the scaling up of shelter assistance in Gaza to address the needs of at least 945,000 people who urgently need thermal clothing, blankets, and tarps to seal-off shelters from the rain and cold. Meanwhile, heavy rains and flooding continue to severely affect displacement sites and makeshift shelters, with the Palestinian Civil Defence [reporting](#) the flooding of 1,542 tents on 30 and 31 December in Gaza, Khan Younis, Deir al Balah and Rafah governorates.
- Child Protection (CP) partners continue to prioritize the procurement and distribution of winter clothing kits for the most vulnerable children but face severe challenges in bringing needed supplies into Gaza that have hampered their ability to scale up the distribution of winter items. These include delays in approvals by the Israeli authorities, complex procedures and customs clearance processes in Jordan, Egypt and Israel, and armed looting of aid supplies. For instance, for over a month, about 13,000 children’s clothing kits have been awaiting entry into Gaza from the West Bank and more than 11,000 children’s clothing kits have already been lost due to looting. CP actors estimate that – if this trend continues – around 25 per cent of the overall number of procured clothing kits will be lost to looting. As a result, only 19,000 children’s clothing kits out of a total of 220,000 procured kits have so far entered Gaza and were distributed to the most vulnerable groups, including inter alia newborn babies in hospitals, children in residential care, many of whom have lost their parents, children with disabilities, and child survivors of gender-based violence.
- The Education Cluster highlights similar challenges in bringing winterization supplies into Gaza. Only 72 High-Performance Tents could so far be imported into the Strip as part of the UN Winterization plan, which have been used to establish 56 new, winter-proof Temporary Learning Spaces (TLSs) in Deir al Balah and Khan Younis, and 16 in the Gaza governorate. An additional 146 tents made available by one Cluster partner have been stranded outside Gaza for several months due to continued restrictions by the Israeli authorities on the entry of education supplies. In October, 140 prefabricated structures that had been procured by the Education Cluster to establish TLSs within Palestinian Authority schools were redirected for use in the health sector by the Israeli authorities and, as of the time of writing, these items have not yet been granted approval to enter Gaza. Presently, only 105,700 children, or 16 per cent of the total school-age population, have access to some form of learning in Gaza, with limited resources to establish winter-proof TLSs and shortages in winter clothes significantly contributing to low enrollment rates. The continued lack of access to education for the majority of children in Gaza not only jeopardizes their future, but also exposes them to immediate protection risks, including child labour, early marriage and physical injuries in the streets, warns the Cluster.

Funding

- As of 8 January 2025, Member States have disbursed approximately US\$2.53 billion out of the \$3.42 billion (74 per cent) requested to meet the most critical needs in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, between January and December 2024. Moreover, during December 2024, the oPt Humanitarian Fund (oPt HF) managed 111 ongoing projects, totalling \$82.2 million, to address urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (86 per cent) and the West Bank (14 per cent). These include 64 projects implemented by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), 34 by national NGOs and 13 by UN agencies. Of the 77 projects implemented by INGOs or the UN, 46 are being implemented in collaboration with national NGOs. For more information, please see:
 - Flash Appeal Financial Tracking [dashboard](#).
 - oPt Humanitarian Fund [webpage](#).
 - The 2025 [Flash Appeal](#) for the OPT.

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