



A boy amid ruins in Jabalya in North Gaza, 2 February 2025. Photo by OCHA/Olga Cherevko

Humanitarian Situation Update #261 | 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. This Humanitarian Situation Update and the Gaza Humanitarian Response Update are being exceptionally issued on a Wednesday this week. The next Humanitarian Situation Update will be issued on 6 February.

Key Highlights

- Over 560,000 people have returned to northern Gaza since 27 January, aid actors estimate.
- Between 1 and 3 February, 105 sick and injured patients, nearly all of them infants and children, were medically evacuated to Egypt.
- Over one million people have received food assistance since the ceasefire took effect.
- To help people access aid, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and its partners launched a public version of the online [Humanitarian Service Directory](#).

Humanitarian Developments

- Over the past week, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) facilitated the third and fourth release operations since the ceasefire came into effect on 19 January. On [30 January](#), three Israeli and five Thai hostages were transferred from Gaza to Israeli authorities, and 110 Palestinian detainees, including 30 [children](#), were released from Israeli detention centres. Palestinian detainees [included](#) 20 prisoners from the West Bank who were released to the Gaza Strip. On [1 February](#), three Israeli hostages were transferred out of Gaza to Israel, and 183 Palestinian detainees were released from Israeli detention centres. Palestinian detainees [included](#) 111 people who were detained from the Gaza Strip after 7 October and seven detainees who were released to Egypt. In total, since 19 January, ICRC facilitated the return of 18 hostages and 583 Palestinian detainees. The ICRC reminded the parties of their responsibility to ensure transfers are carried out safely and with dignity. As of 5 February, it is estimated that 79 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza, including hostages who have been declared dead and whose bodies are being withheld in Gaza. As of January 2025, according to [data](#) provided by the Israel Prison Service (IPS) to Hamoked, an Israeli human rights NGO, there are 9,846 Palestinians in Israeli custody, including 1,734 sentenced prisoners, 2,941 remand detainees, 3,369 administrative detainees held without trial, and 1,802 people held as “unlawful combatants.” These figures do not include Palestinians from Gaza who have been detained by the Israeli military since 7 October 2023.
- Between the afternoons of 28 January and 4 February, the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza reported the killing of an additional 123 Palestinians and the injury of an additional 47 others; this includes 113 newly retrieved bodies. Since the ceasefire came into effect on 19 January, and as of 4 February, a total of 467 bodies were retrieved from areas that were previously inaccessible, MoH reported. As of 4 February 2025, MoH in Gaza reported the killing of at least 47,540 Palestinians and the injury of 111,618 others, since 7 October 2023.
- Over the past week, several incidents resulting in casualties were reported across the Gaza Strip, including:
 - On 30 January, a Palestinian boy was reportedly shot and killed in eastern Ash Shuja'iyyeh neighbourhood, in eastern Gaza city.

- On 31 January, a 19-year-old Palestinian fisherman was reportedly shot and killed off the coast of An Nuseirat Refugee Camp, in Deir al Balah governorate.
- On 2 February, a Palestinian man was reportedly killed in As Shouka area of eastern Rafah.
- On 2 February, a Palestinian child was reportedly killed and four others injured when a car was hit on Al Rasheed Road.
- Between the afternoons of 28 January and 4 February, no Israeli soldiers were killed in Gaza, according to Israeli forces. Between 7 October 2023 and 19 January 2025, according to Israeli forces and official Israeli sources cited in the media, more than 1,605 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed, the majority on 7 October 2023 and its immediate aftermath. This includes 405 soldiers killed, in addition to 2,572 soldiers injured, in Gaza or along the border in Israel since the beginning of the ground operation in October 2023.
- On 1 February, medical evacuations started through Rafah crossings into Egypt. Between 1 and 3 February, 105 sick and injured patients, including 100 children, and 176 companions exited to Egypt. These included: 37 patients and 39 companions evacuated on 1 February; 34 patients and 63 companions evacuated on 2 February; and 33 patients and 70 companions evacuated on 3 February. On 2 February, the World Health Organization (WHO) [welcomed](#) the medical evacuation of patients, indicating that an estimated 12,000 to 14,000 people still require medical evacuation outside Gaza.
- Since 27 January, and for the ninth consecutive day, population movements have continued across the Gaza Strip but have largely slowed down. The Site Management Working Group (SMWG) reports that, as of 3 February, more than 565,082 people have been observed crossing from southern to northern Gaza, the majority of whom were observed crossing on 27 and 28 January. This includes 60 per cent men, 20 per cent women, and 20 per cent children. Observed vulnerable groups include pregnant or breastfeeding women, elderly people, persons with disabilities, patients who are chronically ill or in need of urgent medical care, and unaccompanied children. Aid workers stationed along those roads continue to provide support to address urgent needs. For example, the Protection Cluster reported that Child Protection partners have distributed more than 30,000 identification bracelets to children under four years of age to prevent family separation during the journey. This intervention was critical, as partners reported that they assisted more than 250 young children who had been separated from their caregivers while crossing to the north. This is in addition to the deployment of 30 ambulances and establishment of three medical points to provide emergency care to people on the move.
- Since 30 January, SMWG observed that more than 45,678 people have been moving southwards. The Protection Cluster notes that this is due to the lack of services and the overwhelming destruction of homes and communities in the north, leaving people without viable shelter options. With more than half a million internally displaced persons (IDPs) estimated to have returned to Gaza and North Gaza governorates, the need for food, water, tents and shelter materials in that area remains critical. According to the Shelter Cluster, despite the entry of a large volume of supplies since the ceasefire took effect, priority was given to food during the first two weeks, significantly limiting the entry of shelter assistance. Expanding their support to people in Gaza and North Gaza governorates, the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) [reported](#) that they brought into northern Gaza at least 3,000 tents on 3 February, [adding](#) that an additional 7,000 tents are expected to arrive in the coming days.
- Overall, the surge in the daily entry of supplies into Gaza since the ceasefire came into force on 19 January – through Erez and Zikim crossings in the north and Kerem Shalom crossing in the south – and improved access conditions have enabled humanitarian partners to meaningfully expand the delivery of lifesaving assistance and services across the Gaza Strip. Coordination with Israeli authorities for humanitarian aid missions is no longer required, except mainly for entering the buffer zones. As a result, humanitarian partners are adjusting their response in accordance with population movements, including by expanding their operational presence and services in areas that were previously hard or impossible to access, such as Rafah, Gaza and North Gaza governorates. As of 4 February, 25 emergency medical teams operate across the Gaza Strip, including 22 in central and southern Gaza, two in Gaza city, and one in North Gaza. Furthermore, over the past two weeks, the World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) delivered more than 10 million metric tons of food to Gaza, and together with UNRWA and partners,* have reached about one million people through household-level distributions of food parcels. This is in addition to expanding bread deliveries at bakeries and community kitchens, re-opening a community kitchen in North Gaza on 24 January, and delivering fuel on 30 January that enabled the five WFP-supported bakeries in Gaza governorate to increase their production capacity by 40 per cent to meet growing demand.
- Prices for both food and non-food commodities have started to decline, although they remain significantly higher than pre-October 2023 levels, due to the unstable availability of commodities and the absence of a fully functioning commercial sector, according to WFP's recent market [monitor](#). While some prices fell between December 2024 and January 2025, many remain up to 1,200 per cent higher than pre-crisis levels. One-third of households surveyed reported improved access to food, but consumption remains relatively low, so does variety, with many relying on cereals and pulses. Shops are also facing cash and stock shortages, in addition to transportation-related challenges, mainly due to damaged infrastructure and security concerns. According to WFP, it is critical to address logistical, financial and supply chain challenges to restore market functionality and improve access to goods for people across the Gaza Strip.
- Across the Strip, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) partners are scaling up water trucking activities to increase water accessibility and meet staggering levels of need given the high level of damage to water facilities or their presence in currently inaccessible locations in buffer zones. Some partners have also been pumping water from wells that remain operational and accessible on a rotational basis to help improve equity in distribution. Between 25 and 31 January 2025, the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) and the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) reported that a daily average of 97,167 cubic metres of water was produced across the Gaza Strip; this includes 43,151 cubic metres of drinking water produced from the two operational seawater desalination plants or supplied through two of the Mekorot lines from Israel and 51,016 cubic metres produced by

municipal ground water wells. The third, Bani Saeed Mekorot water line from Israel, in Deir al Balah governorate, has been out of service for over ten days after sustaining damage due to military activities in the buffer zone, which reduced the expected water supply of 14,400 cubic metres to zero. Moreover, UNICEF provided CMWU/PWA with fuel to expand the functionality and the provision of WASH services, including to operate groundwater wells, water treatment units, trucking operations, sewage pumping and repair activities. In southern Gaza, the Southern Gaza Desalination Plant has resumed functionality at full capacity following a four-day disruption due to damage to the electricity feeder line, increasing water production to 15,000 cubic metres per day, serving areas in Deir al Balah, Khan Younis and Rafah governorates.

- Humanitarian partners in Gaza report that challenges continue in bringing into Gaza some critical humanitarian supplies. For instance, the Food Security Sector (FSS) reported that most of the agricultural inputs critical for the resumption of agricultural activities, such as seed kits, organic fertilizers and nylon sheets for greenhouses have been denied access, preventing progress in improving dietary diversity and addressing food gaps. Likewise, restrictions on the import of telecommunications equipment continue to limit critical Emergency Telecommunication Cluster (ETC) services. In North Gaza governorate, according to the WASH Cluster, massive destruction, an unstable fuel supply and the lack of materials and equipment necessary to conduct repairs (e.g. spare parts, cement, pipes) are limiting the ability of aid organizations to carry out needed repairs and emergency services, including to re-connect damaged buildings to sewage networks and establish appropriate latrine spaces. Moreover, according to the Education Cluster, the entry of educational supplies, including learning materials and student kits, continues to be restricted, being considered non-humanitarian items, leaving many children without access to essential learning opportunities and exacerbating the challenges of inadequate temporary learning spaces.
- As areas that had undergone months of [hostilities](#) become newly accessible to civilians, including aid workers, [UNMAS](#) and Mine Action (MA) partners [warn](#) of higher exposure to the threat posed by explosive ordnance (EO). Currently, humanitarian MA actors are not able to conduct disposal operations; if EO is found, it is marked with warning messages. To mitigate risks and enable the scale-up of humanitarian response, MA partners are carrying out explosive hazard assessments, escorting humanitarian convoys along critical access routes, conducting awareness-raising sessions, and distributing leaflets with information on safe practices. To date, 135,000 print materials have been distributed at monitoring points and through non-MA actors. Moreover, to support coordination, the Protection Cluster's MA Area of Responsibility has developed an interactive map, which includes all monitoring and distribution points, allowing Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) teams to coordinate and deliver safe messaging there, while mobile teams operate along Salah Al Deen and Al Rasheed roads and other areas of return. Explosive hazard assessments are also being conducted at high-priority locations that are essential for humanitarian activities.
- According to the latest [geospatial assessments](#) by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in cooperation with the UN Satellite Centre (UNOSAT) and the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), 75 per cent of fields once used to grow crops in the Gaza Strip – as well as olive orchards – were damaged or destroyed as of 31 December 2024. Furthermore, over half of greenhouses and about 67 per cent of [water wells](#) were damaged (mostly in Gaza governorate). [Livestock losses](#) reached 96 per cent, with only one per cent of poultry still alive and the fishing sector on the brink of collapse. According to FAO's assessment, home, broiler, and sheep farms sustained the most damage, and [Khan Younis](#) accounted for the largest number of damaged agricultural infrastructure. FAO [says](#) it is working to restore local food production in Gaza by scaling up deliveries of critical agricultural inputs. FAO is also focused on rebuilding agrifood infrastructure, such as greenhouses, wells and solar systems. However, the [agency](#) notes that "rebuilding Gaza's agricultural sector will be extremely expensive and will take years, if not decades."
- To help people access aid based on their needs and whereabouts, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in collaboration with clusters and thematic working groups, has launched a public version of the [Humanitarian Service Directory](#), listing aid services, helplines and messages. The directory is accessible to the public through a hyperlink and a QR code, further enhancing the humanitarian community's accountability to affected people. On 29 January, the link was disseminated via the national telecommunications companies, Jawwal and Ooredoo, to their users in Gaza, largely to support returning IDPs. The Humanitarian Service Directory was initially launched in November 2024 to support helpline operators and other humanitarian partners.

Funding

- As of 4 February 2025, Member States have disbursed approximately US\$145.6 million out of the \$4.07 billion (3.6 per cent) requested to meet the most critical humanitarian needs of three million out of 3.3 million people identified as requiring assistance in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in 2025, under the 2025 [Flash Appeal](#) for the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). Nearly 90 per cent of the requested funds are for humanitarian response in Gaza, with just over 10 per cent for the West Bank. Moreover, during January 2025, the [oPt Humanitarian Fund](#) (oPt HF) managed 101 ongoing projects, totalling \$72.4 million, to address urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (86 per cent) and the West Bank (14 per cent). Of these projects, 55 are being implemented by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), 33 by national NGOs and 13 by UN agencies. Notably, 41 out of the 68 projects implemented by INGOs or the UN are being implemented in collaboration with national NGOs. For more information, please see OCHA's Financial Tracking Service [webpage](#) and the oPt HF [webpage](#).

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