

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS SNAPSHOT #12 OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

26 MAR - 28 MAY 2025

THE EDGE OF ERASURE

Palestinians in Gaza continue to endure the devastating consequences of Israel's indiscriminate bombing campaigns, which have compounded more than 19 months of brutal destruction. The most recent total siege imposed by Israeli authorities on 2 March has stripped over 2 million people of access to food, water, fuel, and medicine, deepening an already catastrophic man-made humanitarian crisis. Across the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), annexation is accelerating in the illegally occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, through violent military raids, settlement expansion, intensified demolitions, and mass forced displacements, further entrenching Israel's unlawful control. These escalating violations are not isolated: they are systematic and risk the erasure of Palestinians.

Nearly three months have passed since Israeli authorities imposed another total siege on Gaza on 2 March. On 19 May, the Israeli cabinet approved a decision to allow “basic” food into Gaza. This is merely a drop in an ocean of needs. Conditions imposed by the Israeli authorities continue to prevent large-scale humanitarian aid delivery. For example, only one crossing is used, fewer than 100 trucks per day are allowed in, and only a fraction of that aid actually reaches those in need. These scarce truck entries only create the appearance of resumed humanitarian access. The siege remains firmly in place and starvation continues in the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian Authority declared famine in Gaza and the IPC reported that the entire population faces acute food insecurity. Intensive airstrikes continued across Gaza throughout the reporting period, and the Israeli forces’ air and ground offensive expanded and escalated sharply as of 18 May, killing hundreds in two days, while the Israeli foreign minister has declared the intention to “conquer, clear, and stay.” Since 18 March, nearly 616,000 Palestinians have been newly displaced.

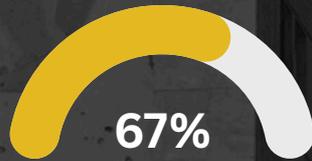
46 international and Palestinian NGOs participated in a survey sharing their experiences delivering humanitarian aid and services from 26 March to 9 May: 40 operate in Gaza, 29 the West Bank and 23 have operations across the entire oPt. While the results do not capture every NGO operating in the oPt, they reflect the deteriorating operating environment and the range of obstacles to deliver aid.

SURVEY KEY FINDINGS

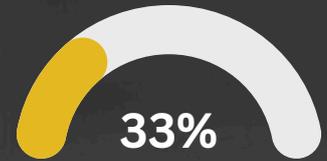
GAZA STRIP



report **having exhausted or nearly exhausted** their aid stocks in Gaza



report being **unable to reach communities and deliver services** in parts of the Gaza Strip

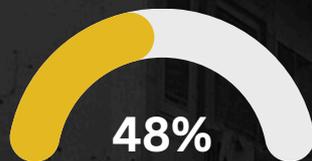


report **staff injuries or deaths** due to military attacks in Gaza

WEST BANK



report **increased movement restrictions** in the West Bank, impacting their ability to reach communities in need



report being **unable to reach communities and deliver services** in parts of the West Bank



report having had to **suspend or reduce operations** in the West Bank

TOTAL SYSTEMS COLLAPSE

Along with Israeli militarized zones, increasingly expansive forced displacement orders now **confine Gaza's population to just 19% of the territory**. Palestinians in Gaza face simultaneous and intersecting crises across every sector, with near universal displacement, widespread destruction of housing, near complete destruction of water and sanitation networks, food insecurity and starvation conditions, and a decimated healthcare system. At least **95% of school buildings have been damaged or destroyed**; many can no longer serve as shelters even.

The compound effects of these crises are already intensifying, with widespread injuries and illness combining with acute malnutrition and dehydration. Along with unhygienic conditions and lack of sanitation, the threat of waterborne disease will only grow more severe.

Among those who have not been killed in direct bombardment, deaths from these intersecting conditions will soon accelerate, and will not be prevented by token and piecemeal deliveries of food parcels. Of the small amounts of aid that have been allowed to enter Gaza, **very little has actually reached communities in need because of the operating environment caused by displacement orders, military operations, unexploded ordinances, and the collapse of civil order.**

In the face of such systematic devastation, only a comprehensive, multi-sectoral response at scale can even start to address the overwhelming, man-made humanitarian crisis.

ISOLATING COMMUNITIES

Amid these conditions, recent Israeli forces' attacks have continued to dissect Gaza into increasingly isolated zones, **cutting communities off from basic needs necessary for survival**. In many cases, remaining residents have been literally unable to move, due to exhaustion, injury, illness, infirmity, disability, contamination with unexploded ordnance, or lack of alternatives. Some areas are formally cut off or declared inaccessible, while others have been subject to such intensive shelling and forces' attacks that they have been practically unreachable for aid delivery. These conditions effectively impose sieges within the siege, **with parts of Gaza inaccessible for humanitarian operations.**

In the West Bank, Israeli forces have intensified military attacks and demolitions, including the destruction of 85% of structures in the Palestinian hamlet of Khallet Athaba' (Masafer Yatta), and the issuance of demolition orders for over 100 homes in Nur Shams and Tulkarm refugee camps. Raids and forced displacement continue across northern governorates. In parallel, attacks from Israeli settlers have escalated, with repeated violence inflicted on herding communities and agricultural infrastructure. Moreover, water deprivation and movement restrictions have further deepened humanitarian needs. As in Gaza, humanitarian organizations are unable to access certain areas in the West Bank.

The deliberate and excessive use of violence, demolitions, and displacement is not merely hindering aid delivery, it risks forcible transfer and entrenching annexation, and the erasure of Palestinians from their land.



81% of Gaza is under a no-go militarized zone or Israeli displacement orders as of 21 May (lighter red), up **11%** since April (darker red).

TIMELINE (17 April - 23 May 2025)



FORCED DISPLACEMENT ORDERS

Forced displacement orders not only force Palestinians from their homes, they also disrupt essential services and destroy critical humanitarian infrastructure. For example, on 13 May 2025, the Israeli forces issued an order in North Gaza impacting access to four water wells, two wastewater pumping stations, a desalination plant, a stormwater basin, six temporary learning spaces, and two hospitals.

17 APR	CEOs of major aid groups in Gaza <u>warn</u> aid system is collapsing.
23 APR	The foreign ministers of Germany, France and Britain issue a <u>statement</u> urging the Government of Israel to allow <u>unimpeded humanitarian aid</u> into Gaza.
25 APR	The UN World Food Programme runs <u>out of food</u> stocks in Gaza.
28 APR	Gaza Civil Defense runs <u>out of fuel</u> for 8 out of 12 of its vehicles in southern Gaza.
2 MAY	Gaza under <u>total siege for 2 months</u> .
4 MAY	Some 15 UN entities and over 200 NGOs <u>denounce</u> plans by Israeli officials to <u>dismantle the existing aid distribution</u> system. A <u>volunteer pharmacist</u> at the Palestine Children's Relief Fund is <u>killed along with her entire family</u> in Gaza city.
7 MAY	The Palestinian Authority Prime Minister <u>declares</u> Gaza a <u>famine zone</u> . A <u>midwife</u> from Al Awda Community and Health Association and her family are <u>killed</u> in an Israeli airstrike on their North Gaza home. World Central Kitchen <u>reports</u> running <u>out of supplies for cooking food and baking bread</u> .
8 MAY	Three <u>UNRWA schools</u> in East Jerusalem <u>stormed and shut down</u> by Israeli forces while classes are in session.
12 MAY	The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) <u>Snapshot</u> finds the entire population of Gaza facing high levels of acute food insecurity: <u>half a million people (1 in 5) face starvation</u> . The World Health Organization (WHO)'s <u>says</u> <u>health stocks are nearly exhausted</u> inside Gaza, only enough to treat 500 children with acute malnutrition.
13 MAY	<u>Nasser and European Gaza hospitals are struck</u> by Israeli missiles forcing the latter, the only remaining facility providing care for cancer patients, <u>out of service</u> .
15-22 MAY	In just eight days, <u>over 172,000 Palestinians are forcibly displaced</u> again in Gaza.
18 MAY	Israeli forces begin an "extensive" ground invasion across all of the Gaza Strip. <u>Indonesian hospital</u> , in North Gaza, is under siege and hit by airstrikes: its northern wall is demolished by Israeli bulldozers. The number of <u>UNRWA staff killed</u> reaches 300.
19 MAY	<u>Nasser hospital's medical warehouse is bombed</u> by Israeli forces, <u>rendering many of the scarce supplies unusable</u> . For first time since 2 March 2025, Israeli authorities approve nine trucks of aid to enter Gaza, but <u>only five trucks</u> are actually allowed in.
20 MAY	New <u>forced displacement orders</u> in northern Gaza impact key healthcare facilities, including Indonesian, Kamal Adwan, and Al Awda hospitals, in addition to four medical points. Two other hospitals, four primary care centers, and six medical points <u>lie within 1 km of it</u> . The <u>attacks on Al Awda hospital continue</u> , with "snipers aiming at the building and an artillery rocket hitting the fifth floor".
21 MAY	The <u>Director</u> of both the Maghazi Society for Community Rehabilitation and the Palestinian Relief Organization in Gaza is <u>killed</u> in <u>attacks by Israeli forces</u> .
23 MAY	The last standing hospital in North Gaza, <u>Al Awda hospital</u> near Jabalia, is <u>under siege</u> for the fourth time since October 2023. Several patient wards, the emergency room, the desalination plant and the storage unit are damaged or destroyed. Four staff are injured, including the Director.

Israeli authorities have systematically undermined the core conditions needed to provide humanitarian support. Below is an overview of the devastating impact of nearly three months of total siege in Gaza, increased movement restrictions and repeated forced displacement, as well as Israeli forces' and settler attacks on humanitarian organizations' ability to access affected communities throughout the oPt.

1 Obstruction of access to essential supplies in Gaza

ACTIONS AGAINST AID

Since 2 March, over the survey period, all humanitarian and commercial supplies were blocked by Israeli authorities. Gaza's food systems have collapsed, essential services are in ruins, and **Palestinians are being left without access to food, clean water, shelter, or medicine.**

The use of starvation as a method of war is explicitly prohibited under international humanitarian law (IHL). **93%** of the surveyed organizations reported having exhausted or nearly exhausted their stocks, including food parcels, flour, fuel, dignity and hygiene kits, assistive devices, medical supplies, essential medicines, nutrition supplements, bedding, mattresses, tents and shelter items, cleaning kits, school supplies, clothes and water treatment materials. **Hospitals in Gaza are running out of critical supplies**, with stocks of medical gases fully depleted and reports of severe shortages of hygiene materials, and food for medical staff.

Seven organizations reported losses of humanitarian aid due to destruction from military forces' attacks, having to leave behind materials due to forced displacement orders, and expiration of medicines and supplies waiting to cross the border.

“

We have distributed food parcels and hygiene kits before, but it's no longer enough. People are asking us for toilet blocks and clean water, and we simply have no supplies left to give. The trucks are stuck in Egypt and Jordan. We get daily calls from mothers who haven't bathed their children in a week.

”

— Humanitarian worker, Deir al-Balah

THE IMPACT

The Government of Israel's systemic obstruction of aid and the deterioration of the operating environment have severely affected the provision of assistance to communities in need. Organizations surveyed cited a particular impact on their ability to provide food parcels, household items such as hygiene kits, cooking materials, and blankets, mental health support, malnutrition treatments, shelter, and recreational activities for children. **Some services have already shut down, while others are at imminent risk of closure due to exhausted or rapidly depleting supplies.**

By April, nearly **25% children screened at Médecins du Monde primary health care centers were either acutely malnourished or at high risk of developing acute malnutrition**, as a result of the Government of Israel's total siege, which cut off food, water and medical supplies. By contrast, in 2022, acute malnutrition rates for children in Gaza stood at 0.8%, according to the WHO.

More than 100 community kitchens were forced to close in the first half of May, triggering a 75% reduction in daily meal production, according to OCHA. During the first week of May, a 25-kg bag of wheat flour was sold at more than USD 415, up more than 3,000% compared to the last week of February.



SUPPLIES DEPLETED



ACUTE MALNUTRITION IN CHILDREN



25-KG FLOUR BAG FOR \$415

More than one-third of organizations reported that their facilities have been directly or indirectly hit, despite them being acknowledged as deconflicted by the Israeli military. In several instances, no prior notification was given before the strikes.



Facilities hit despite deconfliction acknowledgement

“

It has become extremely challenging to work. The roads are not safe, the situation is horrific, and every morning I wake up thinking: what can I feed my kids? There are hardly any food items left. And then, I have to go to work. A couple of days ago, my colleague and I spent the entire day working from the Al Tailindi area because we needed a place with an internet connection. A few days later, I planned to return there, but I was assigned a different task and didn't end up going. That same day, Al Tailindi was bombed. I later watched videos and saw that the very desk I had been working at was destroyed. Had I not been reassigned, I would have been there, I could have been among those killed that day. No one is safe and nowhere is safe. We could all die at any time.”

”

— Humanitarian worker, Gaza

In the West Bank

Six organizations report that their staff were attacked or harassed by Israeli forces, and six report the same incidents perpetrated by Israeli settlers.

“

I often feel like I have to choose between my safety and my work. Just last month, settlers blocked our way to a training session and cursed at us. It's exhausting and unfair.

”

— Humanitarian worker, Khirbet Tuba, occupied West Bank

These overlapping risks—including killings, injuries, displacement, detentions, and attacks on humanitarian facilities—have created unbearable working conditions for humanitarian workers and represent a clear breach of international humanitarian law, which mandates their protection and access. All organizations have a growing concern over the wellbeing of staff and the operational toll on field teams, particularly due to starvation, repeated forced displacements, and psychological stress. Additionally, delivery of aid and protection services has been delayed or disrupted. Operations have had to be relocated, scaled down, or suspended entirely.

In the West Bank, protection activities, psychosocial support for women, and distributions of agricultural kits have been delayed or suspended.

3

Obstruction of physical access to deliver aid

81% of Gaza is now within Israeli-militarized zones, or under Israeli forced displacement orders. Less than 5% of Gaza's cropland is available for cultivation due to damage and access restrictions. Of the organizations surveyed, 90% (36) reported increased movement restrictions due to Israeli forces' checkpoints and area closures, as well as acute insecurity—including bombardments, fuel and transport shortages, the collapse of the humanitarian notification system, and displacement orders. North-south movements have been affected, largely cutting off access between major areas. More than two-thirds of the surveyed organizations indicated they can no longer access certain areas of operation or deliver services, particularly in northern Gaza, Khan Younis and Rafah.



report increased movement restrictions (36 of 40 NGOs working in Gaza surveyed)

Attempts to coordinate humanitarian movements with Israeli authorities continue to be systematically denied or impeded in Gaza. Between 30 April and 6 May, nearly **70% of aid movement requests were denied outright**.

On 11 May, the Israeli Government approved the resumption of land registration in Area C of the occupied West Bank, in continuation of its annexation campaign. The Government of Israel's planning regime in Area C deliberately fragments Palestinian cities, towns and villages from each other. Humanitarian organizations operating in the West Bank have reported increasing **difficulties in accessing communities that are now mostly gated by Israeli forces**.

93% of surveyed NGOs in the West Bank report a sharp increase in movement restrictions throughout the reporting period:

86%

report impeded ability to deliver aid including increased waiting times at existing checkpoints

82%

report new checkpoints, gates or military roadblocks restricting movement

69%

report more frequent and unpredictable road closures

The reporting period also saw a sharp increase in settler and military attacks. **57%** of organizations reported staff were unable to reach communities, offices, warehouses, or project sites due to checkpoint closures, while **42%** faced staff being denied access at checkpoints and **46%** reported curfews and movement restrictions preventing staff from reaching communities in need. At the same time, **72%** of NGOs reported settler violence affecting areas of operation. More than half said their staff were unable to reach communities, project sites, warehouses, or offices, and half experienced aid distributions or service delivery interruptions due to settler attacks. Three organizations reported **humanitarian convoys being denied access or forced to turn back by settlers**, and three reported staff being harassed or attacked by settlers at home or during their commute.

48% of surveyed NGOs reported being unable to access certain areas altogether.

Field aid delivery has become nearly impossible in many areas in Gaza, forcing NGOs to dramatically scale back services. Parts of northern Gaza, Khan Younis and Rafah in particular were reported inaccessible, leaving thousands of families without access to life-saving services. Critical physical and mental health services have been discontinued, and planned distributions of water, sanitation materials, and non-food items were either delayed or cancelled entirely.

In the West Bank, **87%** of organizations reported that communities are facing heightened exposure to attacks, harassment, intimidation, and displacement. **93%** reported increased restrictions on movement and access for communities, while **71%** observed a sharp escalation in settler violence. New displacements affecting communities were reported by **67%** of organizations, alongside the same percentage noting loss of jobs and income due to economic instability, lack of access to farmland, or business destruction and closure. More than **60%** of organizations also reported both a **loss of access to essential services and a deterioration in living conditions**, as well as demolitions affecting homes, schools, and essential infrastructure.

“

When I managed to go back to my place I was shocked by the level of destruction. The Israeli forces gave me only two hours to collect my things. I was afraid to find someone hiding there. They cut the electricity, so it was dark. Everything is lost. There was a picture of me, a painting made by some artist: they [the soldiers] stomped on it and ruined it. We have run a program for children with disabilities since 1995. Everything is lost now. The parents are desperate. They don't know what to do. I try to give them advice, but it's not the same. Also all the assisted devices are lost.

”

— 51 year-old woman forcibly displaced from Nour Shams refugee camp in Tulkarem, West Bank.

4 Operational independence and needs-based aid delivery

ACTIONS AGAINST AID

In February, Israeli authorities announced a US-approved plan to dismantle the existing humanitarian coordination system, dramatically scale back aid delivery in Gaza, and replace it with one fully under Israeli forces and foreign mercenary control—from dispatch to delivery—with aid reaching only pre-approved Palestinians in tightly controlled zones and through pre-approved staff.

On 9 March, Israeli authorities issued new visa and registration rules for international NGOs to operate anywhere in the oPt. Conditions are based on vague and politicized criteria, and include staff vetting, as well as alarming constraints on humanitarian advocacy that restrict fact-based humanitarian assessments and reporting.

UN entities and humanitarian organizations have unanimously rejected the scheme, warning it violates core humanitarian principles and would force Palestinians into militarized zones to access life-saving assistance. The plan as outlined effectively weaponizes humanitarian aid, turning it into a tool of oppression, further entrenching Israeli Government control over Gaza and continuing its long term displacement and collective punishment of Palestinians there.

Both these decisions set an alarming precedent for humanitarian responses worldwide, carrying serious risks for humanitarian principles of independence, neutrality, humanity and impartiality. In a context where humanitarian workers and civilians are repeatedly under attack, these plans raise serious legal, privacy, data protection and security concerns. Palestinian civil society organizations would be particularly at risk.

THE IMPACT

What can and must be done urgently

1. ENSURE A PERMANENT CEASEFIRE IS IMMEDIATELY IMPLEMENTED

- All States must take concrete actions to ensure an immediate and permanent ceasefire and that the Government of Israel abides by the International Court of Justice (ICJ)'s provisional measures. Such concrete actions include immediately halting the transfer of weapons, parts and ammunition to the Government of Israel to prevent their use in violations of international law, as prescribed by the UN General Assembly resolution (ES-10/24) on the ICJ's Advisory Opinion on Israel's presence in the oPt.
- All States must fulfill their obligations under international law including, but not limited to, the Genocide Convention and international humanitarian law (IHL). These obligations require immediate action to prevent further violations, ensure accountability, and implement countermeasures to address the ongoing man-made humanitarian crisis and breaches of international law.

2. URGENTLY UNBLOCK AID ACCESS

All States with influence must use all possible measures to:

- Ensure all parties to the conflict guarantee and facilitate safe, unhindered access for humanitarian aid throughout the oPt.
- Ensure Israeli authorities reopen all crossings into Gaza for humanitarian and commercial goods, as well as machinery and supplies needed for principled (re)construction, and patients requiring urgent medical evacuations outside of Gaza, prioritizing the West Bank including East Jerusalem, in accordance with IHL, with no restrictions on the return of those seeking to reenter.

- Ensure that Israeli authorities lift all movement restrictions, and guarantee safe, unrestricted passage for Palestinians and humanitarian organizations across the oPt. The safety and security of humanitarian actors must be guaranteed as they respond to the humanitarian imperative to assist communities, including Palestinian staff of INGOs, Palestinian NGOs, Civil Defence, and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society.
- Urge the Government of Israel to revoke its laws banning UNRWA, and ensure its mandate is respected, including by immediately ceasing all attacks on the agency and its operations.
- Call on the Government of Israel to rescind any measures that restrict humanitarian and civic space, including the recent decisions on INGO registration and visa requirements, and proposed legislation imposing financial and operational restrictions on Israeli-registered NGOs receiving foreign funding.
- Reject any aid authorization schemes that dismantle the already existing system and that do not fully respect and adhere to humanitarian principles and international law.
- Ensure that the Government of Israel, the occupying power, upholds its obligations under international law, protects and upholds the rights of Palestinians, and refrains from excessive and unlawful use of force.

3. ENSURE THE END OF THE UNLAWFUL PRESENCE IN THE OPT

- All States must uphold their legal obligations, including those reaffirmed by the International Court of Justice's Advisory Opinion on Israel's presence in the oPt, and enforce the subsequent UNGA resolution ES-10/24, and take concrete actions to:
 - End the Government of Israel's unlawful presence in the oPt as rapidly as possible, including through the full withdrawal of its military.
 - Halt the Government of Israel's annexation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, including by ceasing any settlement expansion or construction, and evacuating all Israeli settlers from the oPt.
 - Use all lawful measures to stop forcible transfers, including demolitions and forced evictions, and ensuring Palestinians' right to remain on their land is upheld.
 - Prevent Israel's announced and implemented additional fragmentation of the oPt, including in Gaza.

4. BOOST FUNDING FOR THE RELIEF RESPONSE IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY (OPT)

Donors, private companies and wealthy individuals across the world must provide direct, flexible, quality, and sufficient funding for the humanitarian response, including to UNRWA, Palestinian NGOs and civil society organizations. Recent funding cuts have had devastating consequences for a humanitarian response that was already on its knees following almost 20 months of destruction and the obstruction of humanitarian staff, infrastructure, assets, goods, tools and facilities.

Displaced children from Rafah, Al Mawasi area, Gaza Strip.

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Front cover photo: Aerial view showing destruction in Rafah after Israeli forces withdrew for a temporary ceasefire, Gaza Strip © 2025 by UNRWA is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

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