

The Human Rights Council



Ensuring Access to Food and Humanitarian Aid for Civilians in the Gaza Strip Amid Armed Conflict

-Committee Guide-

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The HRC was founded as a subsidiary body of the United Nations in 2006.

It replaced the Commission on Human Rights, which had been regarded as overly politicized.

As one of the main UN bodies tasked with protecting human rights, the HRC discusses a large variety of issues, from preventing discrimination to political rights and the rights of refugees.

In addition to being a discussion forum for these issues, the HRC issues recommendations to the General Assembly and promotes human rights education.

47 member states elected by the General Assembly make up this body and the HRC meets for at least three sessions a year in Geneva.

An innovative mechanism has been introduced in 2006 to improve respect for human rights: In the Universal Periodic Review, the human rights situation in every member

state is reviewed every four years and recommendations are issued by the other members.

The first session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) took place from 19 to 30 June 2006 in Geneva.

Representatives from over 100 countries attended, and the session focused on setting up the Council's structure and priorities.

2. INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

In 2006, the militant group Hamas won Palestinian parliamentary elections and took full control of the Gaza Strip. This prompted Israel and Egypt to impose a strict blockade on the territory, further isolating it and limiting access to essential goods. This has led to a growing humanitarian crisis, with widespread poverty, limited access to clean water and medical care.

Since then, multiple military escalations between Hamas and Israel have taken place in 2008–09, 2012, 2014, and most notably in May 2021, resulting in thousands of casualties, with Palestinian civilians disproportionately affected.

The situation intensified significantly on 7 October 2023, when Hamas launched a large-scale attack on Israel, killing approximately 1,200 people and taking over 250 hostages. This triggered a substantial military response from Israel.

Since 7 October 2023, more than 45,000 Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip, according to Gaza's health ministry. Entire neighborhoods have been destroyed, and the humanitarian situation has reached catastrophic proportions.

Beyond the immediate violence, countless civilians are suffering from severe hunger and thirst. Children are especially vulnerable to sickness caused by lack of food and clean water, due to the ongoing blockade and destroyed infrastructure. Humanitarian organizations regularly report that the civilian population in Gaza is unable to meet its most basic needs.

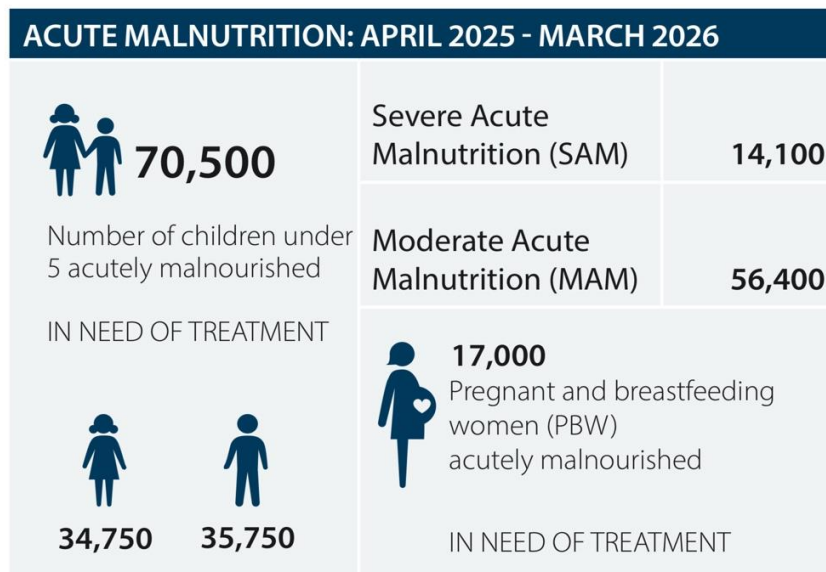
During times of intense conflict, humanitarian access often becomes severely restricted. Aid deliveries are often delayed, denied entry, or caught in the crossfire. Hospitals are overwhelmed, and displaced families struggle to find adequate shelter and sufficient food.

In January 2025, following 15 months of conflict, Israel and Hamas agreed to a ceasefire and prisoner exchange. However, this ceasefire collapsed in March 2025 after multiple violations and resumption of hostilities. Since then, the humanitarian situation in Gaza has deteriorated significantly, with over a million people still lacking basic necessities like food, water, and medical care.

II. FACTS AND CURRENT SITUATION

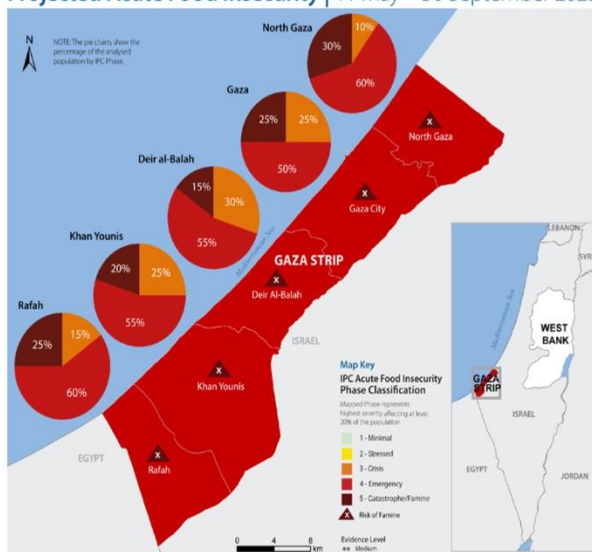
1. FACTS

- Current and projected acute malnutrition

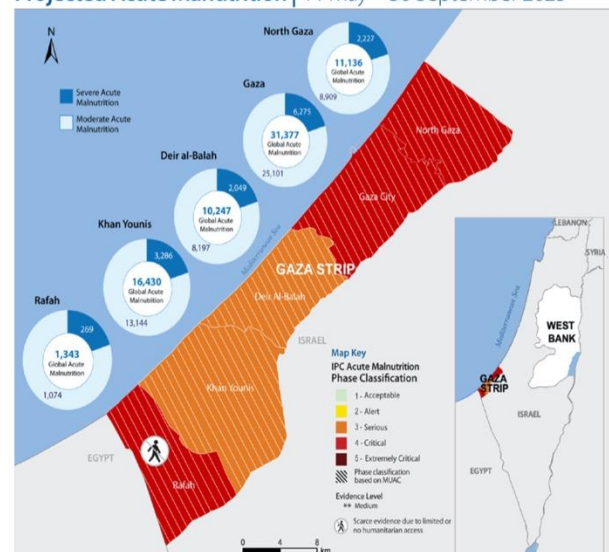


- Projected Acute Food Insecurity and Malnutrition

Projected Acute Food Insecurity | 11 May – 30 September 2025



Projected Acute Manutrition | 11 May – 30 September 2025



2. CURRENT SITUATION

As of June 2025, the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip has reached a critical and life-threatening level. According to recent reports by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the World Food Program (WFP), nearly the entire population of Gaza is experiencing severe food insecurity. Of these, more than 133,000 individuals are facing catastrophic hunger (IPC Phase 5), with over 664,000 in emergency conditions (IPC Phase 4). Many families survive on one meal per day and child malnutrition has reached alarming levels.

The delivery of humanitarian aid still faces significant challenges. Because of ongoing fighting and a strict blockade by Israeli authorities, only a small number of aid trucks are allowed into Gaza, much fewer than needed. In March 2025, humanitarian organizations like the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported that aid deliveries almost completely stopped. As a result, many community kitchens and bakeries were forced to close. Although some aid is now entering through a limited number of crossings, including the Rafah humanitarian corridor in Egypt, the volume of assistance remains insufficient to meet the urgent needs of the population.

According to the WHO, public infrastructure has been severely damaged. By June 2025, only 19 out of 36 hospitals remain partially operational and over 94% of Gaza's healthcare facilities have been either destroyed or are out of services.

The security situation remains unstable. On 5 June 2025, at least 34 civilians were killed and more than 100 were injured while waiting for food in central Gaza, according to the United Nations Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). This was one of several attacks targeting locations where humanitarian aid is distributed. The United Nations stated that blocking humanitarian aid on purpose and using hunger as a weapon may break international law and could be considered war crimes under the Rome Statute. As the situation continues to deteriorate, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) passed a resolution on 12 June 2025. It called for humanitarian aid to

be delivered immediately, safely and without any restrictions to civilians in Gaza. The resolution also reminded all parties that they must follow international humanitarian law, especially to protect civilians and aid workers.

III. MAJOR PARTIES INVOLVED

The United Nations (UN)

Many UN organizations including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the World Food Program (WFP) are leading efforts to bring food, water, and medical aid into Gaza. On 12 June 2025, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the safe and unhindered delivery of aid.

The State of Israel

Israel plays a central role in the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Since the outbreak of the current conflict, Israel has imposed strict border controls and security checks, significantly reducing the number of aid trucks entering the Gaza Strip. The Israeli government argues that these measures are necessary for national security.

The United States and the European Union (EU)

The United States and the European Union are among the largest donors of humanitarian aid to Palestinians. Both have called for the protection of civilians and the respect of international law. However, they have also maintained strong support for Israel.

Egypt

Egypt holds an important position in the humanitarian response because it controls the Rafah border crossing, which is currently one of the few routes through which aid can enter the Gaza Strip. Although Egypt has supported some humanitarian deliveries, it maintains strict regulations on the movement of people and supplies. The Government justifies these restrictions with security concerns.

IV. EVALUATION OF PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO BRING FOOD AND HUMANITARIAN AID TO THE GAZA STRIP

During a temporary ceasefire from January to March 2025, thousands of aid trucks brought essential supplies into Gaza, providing some relief. However, after fighting resumed in March, Israel mostly closed border crossings, severely limiting aid.

In May 2025, the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), supported by the US and Israel, was created to manage aid distribution. This system has been widely criticized for causing chaos, violence, and failing to reach many in need. The UN and humanitarian groups have raised concerns that the system undermines neutrality and puts both civilians and aid workers at risk. At the same time, another delivery system route through Jordan, Cyprus, and Egypt has faced delays and security problems.

V. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

- Humanitarian aid is help given to people who are in urgent need because of wars, disasters or other crises. It usually includes food, water, medicine, shelter and other basic things to save lives and reduce suffering.
- A blockade is when military forces prevent goods, people or supplies from entering or leaving a specific area, usually during a conflict. It is often used to weaken an opponent by cutting off resources.
- A ceasefire is an agreement between conflicting parties to stop fighting for a certain period. It is usually meant to allow peace talks or provide time for humanitarian aid.
- IPC phase stands for Integrated Food Security Phase Classification. It is a system used to measure and describe the severity of food insecurity in a region, ranging from minimal food insecurity to famine.
- UNRWA stands for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. It is a UN agency established to provide education, healthcare, social services, and humanitarian aid to Palestinian refugees.

VI. USEFUL LINKS

- <https://www.who.int/news/item/12-05-2025-people-in-gaza-starving--sick-and-dying-as-aid-blockade-continues>
- <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1159596/>
- <https://www.unrwa.org/>
- <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/hunger-crisis-deepens-global-hotspots-famine-risk-rises-un-warns-2025-06-16/>
- <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/06/1164271>