

11 September - 9 October 2024

# HUMANITARIAN ACCESS SNAPSHOT #6



## Occupied Palestinian Territory

### INTRODUCTION

Palestinian NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are at the forefront of responding to the worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Palestinian organizations face the same blockages incurred by INGOs, but often with intensified challenges such as safety concerns, restricted access, forced displacement orders, and logistical constraints. Since most INGO staff in Gaza are local Palestinians, the shared impact of such obstacles is deeply felt. More significantly, Palestinian NGOs and CSOs bear the highest risks in carrying out aid operations, as many of their staff are directly affected by the violence, witnessing the devastation inflicted on their own families and communities. Despite international humanitarian law's obligation to protect aid workers, since October 2023, more than 300 aid workers have been killed in Gaza alone – a number which exceeds the total amount of humanitarian aid workers killed in the entire world in any year across the last two decades.

*Humanitarian Access Snapshot #6 reflects these challenges faced by Palestinian NGOs and CSOs, alongside INGOs, in delivering aid. Some CSOs have requested anonymity and are therefore referenced as 'partners' of INGOs.*

**The undersigned international organizations want to take a moment to recognize the innumerable and unimaginable challenges and choices our Palestinian humanitarian colleagues, including those working in Palestinian CSOs, have faced over the last 12 months all whilst demonstrating continued commitment to carrying out their humanitarian mandate with an unparalleled level of professionalism, passion, empathy, and determination. Your dedication in the face of such adversity is a testament to Palestinian character and strength. We all have much to learn from you.**

### SITUATION UPDATE

As of 8 October 2024, over 41,965 Palestinians in Gaza have been killed and 97,590 reported injured, with thousands still missing under almost 39 million tonnes of rubble. Over 90% of the population in Gaza remains internally displaced and in abysmal conditions. At least 89% of Gaza is still under forced displacement orders in the face of continued bombardment and heavy rains and floods, while women and children – who make up the majority of displaced populations – face heightened vulnerabilities including health risks, limited access to reproductive services, and particular exposure to malnutrition.

Please see here [OCHA's Humanitarian Access Snapshot](#) for August 2024 and the two most recent Flash Updates on Gaza and the West Bank for additional information.

Most recently, on 6 October 2024, over 400,000 people in northern Gaza are being directed to flee to overcrowded areas in the south, overwhelming already strained resources like food, water, and medical care. These latest forced displacement orders follow similar orders issued in central Gaza on 5 October 2024, affecting thousands of people sheltering there, as well as warnings from December 2023, when a UN expert concluded that orders aimed at permanently altering Gaza's population are in serious violation of international law. The expansion of the Netzarim corridor and isolation of northern Gaza, while ongoing military operations continue to damage infrastructure and supply routes limit humanitarian workers' ability to deliver life-saving assistance. Read more on page 5 from organizations who've been unable to deliver or negatively impacted by the latest forced displacement orders.



*When the rains fell in mid-September, our tent collapsed, resulting in numerous challenges for my family, including the loss of shelter and adequate housing. Consequently, the baby fell ill and had to be transferred to Al-Aqsa hospital for treatment.*

*Wafaa, 29-year-old woman, Southern Gaza*



## KEY UPDATES FROM PARTNERS:

- Thousands of food and hygiene kits have been delayed at various procurement points across Egypt and Jordan due to prioritization requirements, security concerns, and logistical constraints. Read more on page 3.
- Displacement orders continue to have a significant impact on humanitarian organizations' ability to reach people in need, with some organizations reporting over a 30% decrease in distribution totals due to such movement restrictions. Read more on page 5.
- Multiple humanitarian organizations continued to be compelled to halt, cancel, or delay operations due to the impact of hostilities. Read more on page 6.
- Humanitarian staff experience daily fear and tension with reports of intimidation and threats, as well as loss of life, destruction of livelihoods, and forced displacement. Read more on page 6.
- Restrictions on fuel have forced humanitarian organizations to reduce or minimize their movements inside Gaza. Although many INGOs receive fuel from UN agencies, national partners reported either not receiving fuel or receiving insufficient quantities. Read more on page 5.
- The lack of cash liquidity has made it increasingly difficult to pay national staff and many employees are unable to withdraw their salaries or face extremely high exchange rates. Read more on page 5.

## Calls to Action

**States with influence** over the parties to the conflict must take concrete actions, beyond mere condemnation, to ensure an immediate and permanent ceasefire is achieved and all parties involved must cease hostilities without delay, including halting the transfer of weapons, parts, and ammunitions to parties to the conflict at risk of being used to commit violations of international humanitarian law (IHL).

**The Government of Israel** must immediately halt the forced displacement of civilians in Gaza, which causes unnecessary suffering and trauma, and severely disrupts access to essential aid.

**Parties to the conflict** must guarantee and facilitate safe, unhindered access for all humanitarian assistance, as well as the safety and well-being of all humanitarian staff. This includes a working deconfliction process, the safe entry of winterization materials, such as tents, plastic sheets, and shelter repair items. Priority must be given to vulnerable groups, including children, people with disabilities, and older people, upholding the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

**The Government of Israel**, as the occupying power, must uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law (IHL), protect and uphold the rights of Palestinians, refrain from excessive and lethal use of force, and guarantee their unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance including healthcare and other essential services across the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

**Donors** should work together to demand improved access to coordination mechanisms, particularly for Palestinian CSOs, NGOs and women-led organizations, to address safe and secure movement of aid workers and active participation in Cluster meetings.

**Donors** should fully fund the humanitarian response and provide direct and quality funding to Palestinian NGOs and CSOs, including women-led organizations, and liquidity to mitigate the collapse of the banking system and its adverse effect on local partners.

**Donors** should provide access to psychosocial support, rest, rotation, and recuperation of all staff, as available to those employed by humanitarian organizations.

**The international community** must urgently support medical evacuations of critically injured civilians.

**UN Member States** must adhere to the ICJ Advisory Opinion before more lives and futures are irreparably destroyed.

# DELAYS AND DENIALS: PALESTINIAN ORGANISATIONS

Aid obstruction does not just delay or disrupt humanitarian work - it dismantles it entirely. Agencies identified six main ways their aid efforts are systematically blocked.

- 648 tents delayed from the Jordanian side since the 24th of September till the report date, planned to be delivered to the southern governorates, as reported by the Agriculture Development Association (PARC).
- 10 trucks were delayed for over three months, as reported by PARC.
- 1,100 hygiene kits were delayed for more than a month from a factory in the West Bank for Al Fajr Youth Association, as reported by their partner Middle East Children's Alliance.
- 2,200 ready-to-eat food kits and 2,000 family hygiene kits delayed for two weeks at the Jordan corridor, due to the closure of Allenby Bridge following the recent security incident and are still at the Log Cluster warehouse in Jordan, as reported by Premiere Urgence Internationale (PUI).
- 2,500 food kits delayed from Egypt (1,400 food kits) since May 2024, 1,100 were delayed from Jordan, and 500 hygiene kits were delayed from Jordan as of August 2024, as reported by CESVI, Welthungerhilfe.
- 5 trucks (1,534 family hygiene kits) were delayed waiting in Cairo, as reported by WeWorld.
- 11 pallets of medical supplies were delayed and held in El Arish, Egypt, for six months and were finally cleared and allowed to enter Gaza in September 2024, as reported by MedGlobal.
- 16 truckloads of hygiene and dignity kits were delayed waiting in Cairo, as reported by ActionAid.
- 500 sheets of plywood and 200 rolls of insulation were delayed in Khan Younis for three weeks due to supply shortages, as reported by one of HelpAge International partners.
- 3 trucks with WASH items are waiting in El Arish to be sent along the fenced road that goes from Kerem Shalom-Karem Abu Salem to Gate 96. A total of 6 containerized desalination units are waiting in Egypt, 3 of which have been approved but cannot move as they are unable to be palletized. In addition, 3,280 water buckets are waiting in Amman, waiting to moved into northern Gaza visa Erez, as reported by Oxfam.
- 15 temperature-controlled pallets of medicines remain in Al-Erish, Egypt, without authorisation to travel onwards. The majority (10) have been stuck since the closure of the Rafah crossing in May 2024, as reported by Save the Children.
- 62 tons of multiple medical devices have been blocked from entry and are located at the Rafah crossing since the beginning of April, as reported by the **Save Youth Future Society (SYFS)**.
- DRC had 750 sealing-off shelter items kits and 750 shelter toolkits denied preclearance.

**Al-Awda lost supplies while transporting them inside Gaza, in addition to losing goods at crossings and checkpoints. For example, trucks containing food items, cleaning materials, tents for displaced people, and dignity kits were lost for a total combined cost of \$100,000.**

- 4,000 food kits and 4,000 hygiene kits were delayed since 17 September until the report date. They are waiting in Amman for delivery to northern Gaza visa direct convoy, as reported by one anonymous NGO.
- 6 truckloads of shelter items were delayed since 10 September. Goods were initially requested by the Shelter Cluster and prioritized for transport on the fenced road. 1 truckload entered on 30 September, 1 was damaged and 4 remain delayed at El Arish awaiting prioritization.
- The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) has 2,700 food parcels awaiting approval for shipment into Gaza through the Jordanian corridor. These items have been pending approval from COGAT for two weeks, and now further impacted by recent displacement orders in northern Gaza.

# ACCESS TO CRITICAL RESOURCES

A recurrent challenge reported by local organizations is the **severe limitation on access to critical resources**, including cash, fuel, medical supplies, food items, and other essential goods. The continuous closure of crossings, restricted movement of goods and continued hostilities have compelled the prioritization of certain supplies. When supplies are available, it is likely organizations incur high costs. **PUI** reports that the cost of hygiene materials and shelter items **surged by 500 to 900% in the last twelve months**.

## Building materials

Tents  
Plastic sheets  
Fuel  
Solar panels  
Plywood  
Cement

## Hygiene

Hygiene kits  
Shampoo  
Tissues  
Soap  
Sanitary products

## Medicines and Medical equipment

Chronic disease medications  
Insulin  
Painkillers  
Postnatal vitamins  
Contraceptives  
Iron  
Gauze  
Bandages  
Disinfectant  
Surgical tape  
Hydrogen peroxide  
Alcohol pads  
Burn treatment supplies  
Diagnostic tools  
Defibrillators  
Oxygen cylinders  
Ultrasound machines  
ECG machines  
Basic digital x-ray system  
Water pumps

## Winterization

Blankets  
Winter clothing

## Office materials

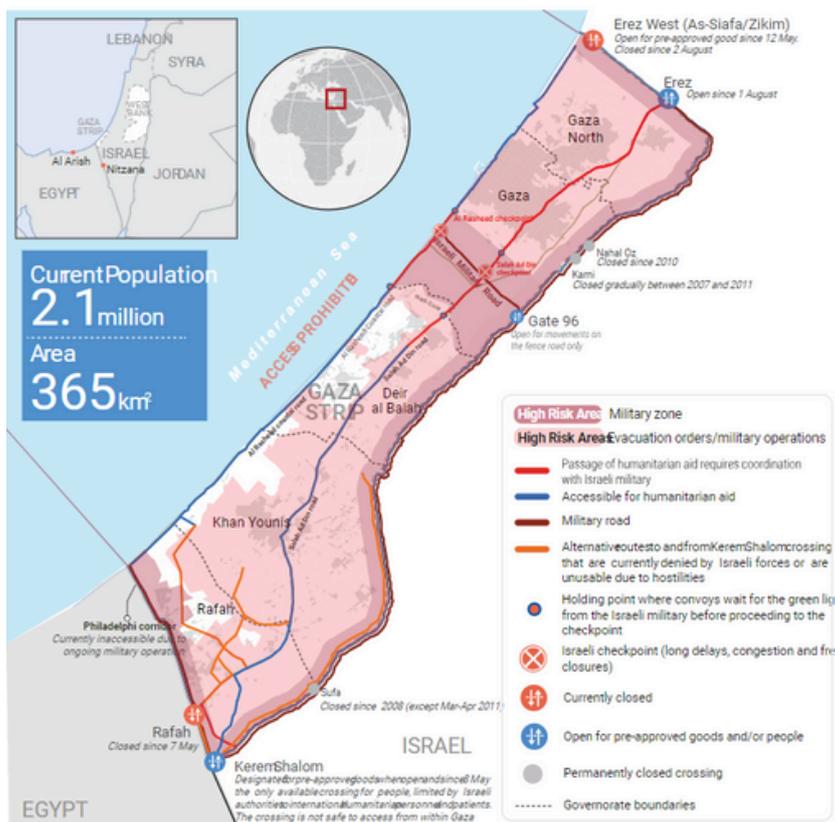
Generators  
Laptops  
Phones

## Accessibility materials

Wheelchairs  
Hearing aids  
Stethoscopes  
Eyeglasses  
Adult diapers

“ Due to repeated displacement and exposure to extreme danger, including the bombing of the house where I was staying, I feel incapable of providing services to children. I am experiencing the same needs as my child. I, too, am in need of support. ”

Case Manager at CFTA



Source: OCHA Humanitarian Access Snapshot.

**In October**, limited opening schedule due to religious holidays and increased military activities

**Erez West:** Opened on 30 Sep. Restricted access due to mission denial to the North have impacted staff oversight.

**Erez East:** Closed

**Rafah Crossing:** Closed since May 2024.

**Allenby Bridge:** Following events at the Allenby Bridge 8 September, the crossing remains closed to cargo (passengers only). Only direct convoys are exceptionally allowed to cross.

**Kerem Shalom-Karem Abu Salem:** Organizations who want to send trucks from Egypt to Gaza must collect them on the same day and get a coordination approval from CLA. Starting 1 October, UNWRA no longer covers the cargo handling costs at Kerem Abu Salem. Organizations to establish bilateral contracts with handling company.

**Fenced Road:** Operations are ongoing with limited capacity due to numerous mission denials from CLA. Fenced road is not available for food items due to deprioritization by the Clusters in favor of high-value, high-need emergency shelter items.

# BEHIND THE NUMBERS

## FORCED DISPLACEMENT ORDERS

Displacement orders and movement restrictions not only limit the movement of staff, but also obstruct and put at-risk aid deliveries to communities. **The displacement order on 6 October 2024 had a particularly acute impact on organizations' operational ability, as highlighted below.**

- Frequent displacement orders have **forced teams to relocate, often losing essential supplies** in the move, impacting organizations' ability to carry out at-scale distributions, and compelling many to only operate in the south. As reported by Juzoor for Health and Social Development and Culture and Free Thought Association (CFTA). Islamic Relief reported a 20% decrease in their distribution of hot meals and a 31% decrease in their distribution of water due to such orders.
- Organizations are **delayed for hours at checkpoints and often denied movements**. HelpAge International partner's teams were delayed for three hours at a checkpoint from Rafah to Khan Younis while Oxfam reported 6 movements that were originally planned for 1. October remained pending or received no feedback, negatively impacting the teams' ability to operate. Save the Children has been forced to cancel three planned movements for response activities within the so-called "humanitarian zone" after receiving requests for additional coordination. As per guidance received by INGOs, notifications (without coordination) are sufficient for movements within the "humanitarian zone". Similarly, WeWorld had to suspend the delivery of humanitarian goods within the 'humanitarian zone' for several days due to a lack of feedback from CLA.
- One of CESVI employees was denied entry to Gaza from Jordan solely for being Palestinian. This individual has also repeatedly faced entry refusals to East Jerusalem, where their main office is located, for the same reason.

The majority of organizations with operations in the north have been **forced to suspend all interventions**, including War Child partners and Middle East Children's Alliance, among others. CESVI's WASH interventions being affected and delayed and Islamic Relief had to temporarily suspend hot meals and water distributions in 4 shelters. Other organizations such as partners of Terre des Hommes Italia, and IRC, were negatively impacted by the displacement order. CARE International staff have reported that it is increasingly difficult for them to know whether to move or not. Several staff have moved, while others have remained in place. PARC has relocated staff for safety and operational continuity.

## FUEL SHORTAGES AND CASH LIQUIDITY

High prices and limited availability of both commodities have made humanitarian operations increasingly costly and challenging. While many INGOs receive fuel from UN agencies, **Palestinian organizations reported either not receiving fuel or receiving insufficient quantities.**

- Shortages of fuel impact workshops, rendering them unavailable, as well as field teams' mobility. It also hinders the operation of generators, leading to a **lack of electricity and internet access**, forcing reliance on alternative methods for powering computers, printers, and other essential equipment. As reported by Juzoor for Health and Social Development, CFTA, Gaza Community Mental Health Programme (GCMH), and CTCCM.
- Cash liquidity is impacted by the inaccessibility to ATMs and bank branches. Money exchange shops monopolize cash flow and set high exchange rates, severely impacting the availability of cash. As a result, organizations report **delays in the distribution of multi-purpose cash assistance, staff salaries, and rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure such as guesthouses and warehouses**. As reported by The Agricultural Development Association, the Union of Agricultural Work Committee, the Palestinian Association for Empowerment and Local Development (REFORM), and Oxfam.
- Middle East Children's Alliance, **despite wanting to purchase from small, local, income-generating projects to support their community kitchens, is unable to do so** because of their inability to pay in cash for these goods.

# STAFF SAFETY AND WELLBEING

The psychological toll on both the population and aid workers is another significant challenge. Frontline workers themselves face burnout and stress, leading to conditions such as **anxiety, depression, and insomnia**. This highlights the importance of not only addressing the mental health needs of the population but also ensuring the well-being of those providing services and assistance.

- The Agricultural Development Association had staff living near Salah al Din, Deir al Balah, and Khan Younis, all of whom had to evacuate due to displacement orders at the end of August. **The displaced included a total of 10 families.**
- CESVI, Welthungerhilfe reported that **severe shortage of food supplies and other essential provisions is taking a toll on the staff**, draining their physical energy and mental well-being, making it increasingly difficult for them to carry on with their work.
- MedGlobal reported the urgent need for **mental health resources, including medications, counseling materials, and therapy tools.**
- HelpAge International partner reported **intimidation and threats to staff by Israeli Forces** whilst distributing aid in Gaza City. The incidents occurred within the so-called 'humanitarian zone'.
- War Child reports that the **team and local communities experience fear and tension, particularly due to the significant loss of life and destruction caused by shelling.**

“ *It [was] one of the most difficult and saddening moments when I received the news about the death of my mother and son at the shelter gate while I was providing hot meal assistance to the internationally displaced people in other shelters.*

*National partner of Islamic Relief, northern Gaza*

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## BOMBARDMENT AND UNSAFE DELIVERIES

Israeli military bombardment from the air and land continues to be reported across the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of civilian infrastructure. Heavy shelling, airstrikes, and ground incursions, particularly in Jabalia Camp and Beit Lahiya, south of Gaza City, Deir al Balah, and eastern Khan Younis and Rafah continue to be reported.

- Al Amal Orphanage was bombed in Gaza City and **6 people were killed.**
- Multiple organisations had to **temporarily halt their operations** or continuously move their distribution and medical points due to displacement and ongoing hostilities. As reported by The Palestinian Red Crescent Society, Culture and Free Thought Association, CESVI, Welthungerhilfe.
- **Attacks on civilian infrastructure, including Al Amal Orphanage, Al-Faluja School in Jabalia Camp, and shelters in Gaza City have negatively impacted interventions.** The Community Training Centre and Crisis Management (CTCCM) reported that the airstrike which hit Al-Faluja School was directly next to their place of implementation for psychological support for caregivers and in the so-called 'humanitarian zone'. Staff from Islamic Relief express their frustration: **“It is not logical and acceptable to clean the interior environment of the shelters while the solid waste and wastewater is surrounding.”**
- **Damage to warehouses and distribution centers instill fear, erode public order, cause delays,** and impact already inaccessible food and medical aid. As reported by ActionAid and HelpAge International partner teams.
- **The scale and risk of unexploded ordnance (UXO) in Gaza, threatening aid workers, aid delivery, and the local population,** must be addressed in discussions. Failure to do so will hinder Gaza's long-term recovery. Islamic Relief partners' efforts, including risk education and collaboration with UNMAS, are being delayed for hours due to explosive hazards.



Save Youth Future Society  
جمعية إنقاذ المستقبل الشبابي



مؤسسة إنقاذ الطفل - فلسطين  
Palestine Save the Children Foundation



DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL  
DRC



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Save the Children



NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL

