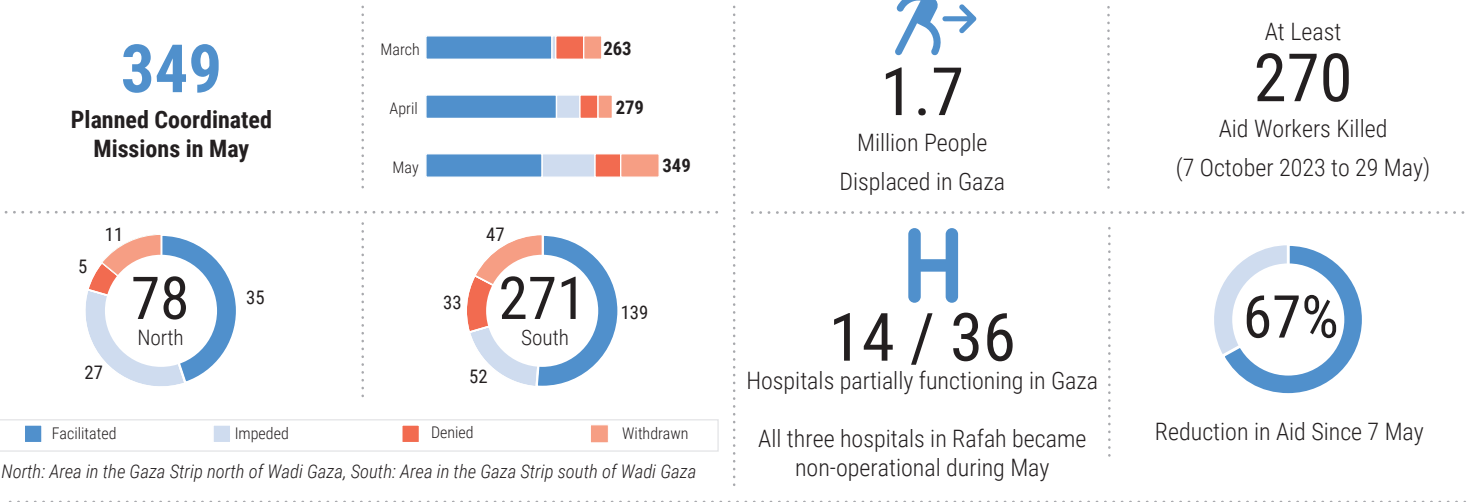


HUMANITARIAN SITUATION: KEY FIGURES



Access Overview

Safe and unrestricted humanitarian access is essential for response efforts to serve the population in need of humanitarian assistance throughout the Gaza Strip. In May, numerous constraints continued to limit the ability of affected communities to access essential services, while also impeding humanitarian organizations’ access to affected communities. Military operations within Gaza—particularly the Israeli army Rafah offensive initiated on 6 May—have continued to undermine humanitarian access and operations, placing affected communities, as well as humanitarian personnel and facilities, at heightened risk. More than 1.7 million people—75 per cent of Gaza’s population—have been displaced as of late May, with most displaced people currently concentrated into a small geographical area in central Gaza with limited access to essential services, leading to increased levels of humanitarian need and physical insecurity. Crossing closures imposed by Israeli authorities significantly curtailed the flow of humanitarian aid and personnel into Gaza during the month, preventing a reliable and sustained supply of aid from reaching the affected population. The breakdown of law and order within Gaza due to the prolonged conflict, including the theft of relief supplies from convoys, undermined response efforts and posed security risks to affected communities and humanitarian personnel. Additionally, administrative restrictions imposed by Israeli authorities obstructed the movement of humanitarian personnel and convoys within Gaza, impeding the delivery of essential humanitarian assistance and services.

Deteriorated Security Conditions Undermine Humanitarian Access and Operations

Military operations and hostilities significantly undermined humanitarian response efforts in Gaza during May, presenting severe risks to affected

communities and humanitarian personnel. As the Rafah operation expanded throughout May, humanitarian organizations faced significant challenges accessing areas affected by active military operations. Active hostilities damaged, destroyed, and led to the closure of key humanitarian and medical facilities in southern Gaza, particularly impacting western Rafah, including a large logistics and fuel base utilized by humanitarian organizations. Security conditions forced humanitarian partners to close essential humanitarian and medical facilities throughout the month, including a primary care center and Trauma Stabilization Point. As of 31 May, Rafah lacked any functional hospitals, following the evacuation of Al-Helal Al-Emarati Hospital on 30 May, the evacuation of Kuwait Hospital on 28 May, and Najjar Hospital going out of service on 7 May, according to the UN World Health Organization (WHO).

Airstrikes and attacks also continued to claim the lives of civilians throughout May. An airstrike on 26 May affected a site sheltering displaced people in western Rafah, resulting in at least 49 fatalities. On 28 May, a strike on a site hosting internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Al Mawasi area resulted in at least 21 fatalities. In addition, airstrikes and attacks resulted in the deaths of at least 270 UN and humanitarian personnel between 7 October 2023 and 31 May. During the reporting period, the Israeli army struck a UN vehicle travelling to the European Gaza Hospital in east Khan Younis on 13 May, killing one UN staff member and injuring another. On 29 May, an Israeli army attack resulted in the deaths of two Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) ambulance drivers in western Rafah. Such security incidents severely undermine humanitarian operations and access, placing affected communities and humanitarian personnel at critical levels of risk. The extensive presence of unexploded ordnance (UXO) throughout Gaza further exacerbates the severe security situation.

Humanitarian Access Restrictions to Enter Gaza

Significant constraints continue to impede the access of humanitarian personnel, supplies, and equipment through land crossings into Gaza. The closure of the Rafah Crossing on 7 May, after the Israeli army assumed control of its Gazan side, compounded these challenges during the month. Ensuring all feasible border crossings and land routes to both the northern and southern regions of Gaza are operational and accessible remains imperative to enable the uninterrupted flow of essential humanitarian assistance.

Following the closure of the Rafah Crossing on 7 May, the Kerem Shalom Crossing was designated as the primary crossing for humanitarian cargo, food, fuel, and other critical supplies. However, the crossing remained overcrowded with private sector trucks throughout the month, resulting in

Humanitarian Notification System

The Humanitarian Notification System (HNS) informs parties to the conflict about the locations of humanitarian sites and movements to enhance the safety of humanitarian personnel, sites, and operations. In Gaza, there are two types of HNS movement procedures based on risk levels: 1) Notification and 2) Coordination, for movements to higher-risk areas. Humanitarian notification does not alter the IHL obligations of parties to the conflict, but rather supports their ability to meet those obligations by providing information about humanitarian presence. Providing location information through HNS is strictly voluntary for humanitarian partners.

additional security challenges and long waiting times. In addition, the need for coordination with Israeli authorities for each movement to Kerem Shalom continued to limit its viability as an effective primary crossing. Humanitarian actors require consistent, unobstructed access to the Kerem Shalom Crossing, with appropriate procedures in place to avoid road congestion and heightened security risks. Since mid-May, persistent security incidents and mission delays have prevented humanitarian trucks from collecting critically needed cargo. Since 7 May, the flow of humanitarian aid supplies into Gaza—already insufficient to meet escalating levels of need—has decreased by 67 per cent compared to April.

The Erez and Erez West/Zikim Crossings remained partially operational during the month. Pre-approved humanitarian organizations were able to collect supplies from the Erez Crossing on four days and from the Erez West/Zikim Crossing on 15 days during May. However, accessing the crossings from the southern part of Gaza, where most humanitarian organizations are currently based, remained challenging throughout May. The need to coordinate movements and cross Israeli army checkpoints remained challenging and time consuming throughout the month. The floating dock facility—a temporary pier constructed by the U.S. Department of Defense to facilitate aid delivery into Gaza—began operating on 17 May, but was damaged by harsh sea conditions and taken out of service for repairs on 25 May. During the time it was operational in May, 137 truckloads of humanitarian food supplies—enough for approximately 100,000 people for one month—were transported from the dock, according to the World Food Programme. Israeli authorities' administrative restrictions continued to limit access to Ashdod Port during May; as a result, only one humanitarian organization was able to utilize the port to receive humanitarian cargo during the month. Adequate and reliable crossings and supply chains—including for fuel—must be established and maintained to enable humanitarian operations.

Restrictions Moving Within Gaza and Reaching Affected Communities

Humanitarian access to affected communities and essential services within Gaza continued to be severely hindered by numerous constraints throughout May. These include volatile security conditions, complex and inconsistent movement notification and coordination procedures, damaged and overcrowded roads, and inconsistent checkpoint procedures. Despite the implementation of a Humanitarian Notification System (HNS) to notify and coordinate humanitarian movements, frequent impediments, delays, and denials significantly restricted the movement of humanitarian personnel and the delivery of assistance throughout May.

The volatile security situation and increased demand for coordination and notification of movements has strained the ability of Israeli authorities to maintain consistent procedures, contributing to significant delays, impediments, and related issues with humanitarian movements. In May, out of 349 coordinated humanitarian assistance missions within Gaza, 174 (50 per cent) were facilitated by Israeli authorities, 79 (22 per cent) were impeded, 38 (11 per cent) were denied, and 58 (17 per cent) were cancelled.



Many missions classified as "impeded" experienced extended delays at holding points, some lasting up to nine hours at sensitive and insecure locations. These delays include hold times imposed by Israeli authorities along routes in Gaza, significantly increasing the security risks for humanitarian personnel. Moreover, humanitarian personnel and convoys often face inconsistent screening procedures that deviate from established protocols. Coordinated routes for humanitarian movements are frequently affected by active hostilities, damaged roads, and heavy crowding, presenting additional security risks and further limiting access to crisis-affected communities.

Israeli authorities' restrictions and prevailing security conditions continued to undermine the vital operational function of rotating humanitarian personnel into and out of Gaza during May. Movement restrictions and military operations in southern Gaza obstructed critical humanitarian missions throughout the month, leading to challenges in accessing essential supplies including food, fuel, and medical supplies at the Kerem Shalom Crossing, the primary entry point for humanitarian aid.

KEY EVENTS

