Gaza now the world's worst hunger crisis and on the verge of famine

January 9, 2024 Occupied Palestinian Territory -

Gaza is suffering the world's worst current hunger crisis – an entirely man-made catastrophe resulting from Israel's ongoing attacks and siege of the territory that is starving civilians.

Islamic Relief staff in Gaza describe harrowing scenes as most families are now going whole days without eating anything at all, desperate children are roaming rubble-filled streets searching for whatever scraps of food they can find, and emaciated newborn babies are dying from disease and hunger. Parents are going without food to try and give a few mouthfuls to their children, but malnutrition is soaring.

Young children, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers are most at risk of malnutrition, but almost everyone in Gaza is now going hungry and facing crisis or worse levels of food insecurity.

On the internationally recognised 5-phase scale used to classify food crises, more than half a million people in Gaza – a quarter of the entire population – are now believed to be at the most severe

into the territory. Deliberately depriving civilians of food and other aid is a violation of international law.

Despite repeated announcements there has been no improvement in the quantity of supplies getting to desperate civilians. Humanitarian aid alone cannot be enough to address a crisis of this magnitude, yet Israel continues to completely ban essential commercial goods from entering Gaza. Commercial supplies previously accounted for over 90% of trucks coming through the Kerem Shalom crossing.

Without commercial supplies coming in, Gaza's markets are almost empty and the price of what little food is available has spiralled out of reach for most people. In recent days the number of trucks entering Gaza has averaged just over 100 per day – only a fifth of what used to enter daily before 7 October, which even then was insufficient.

Most of Gaza's fertile farmland has been destroyed and almost all agricultural, livestock and fishing production has halted due to the bombing. Most bakeries have been bombed and the few that are left are unable to bake bread as they don't have flour or fuel.

An Islamic Relief aid worker in Gaza says: *"Many people are going days without eating anything. People risk their lives to search the streets for food, only to come back empty-handed because there is none. There is a real threat of famine unless the bombing stops and more supplies are allowed in urgently. Almost everybody is affected – very young children are becoming malnourished and pregnant women are living in terrible conditions in crowded shelters where they can't get food or water and diseases are spreading."*

workers and aid trucks, as well as civilian infrastructure – further severely restrict humanitarian agencies' ability to reach people in need.

In addition to the lack of food, Israel's bombing has destroyed Gaza's health, water and sanitation systems, and the risk of disease is spiralling out of control.

Notes

- Since the start of this escalation Islamic Relief has worked with local partners to deliver food aid including almost 1 million ready to eat meals, more than 94,000 vegetable packs and over 14,000 food parcels, as well as other aid such as hygiene kits and psychosocial support for children.
- The latest analysis from the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) on worsening food security in Gaza is available here

About Us

Board of Trustees
Board of Directors
Our history
Our strategy
Modern Slavery Statement
Policy and publications
Evaluations
'Do no harm' commitment
Gender pay gap
Terms and conditions
Why support us?
Scams and fraud

What we do

Protecting life and dignity
Empowering communities
Campaigning for change
Strengthening the Islamic Relief Partnership
Seasonal projects
Our promises

Work With us

Current opportunities
What we offer UK colleagues
e offer expatriate colleagues

Winter Appeal

Palestine emergency appeal

Sudan Emergency Appeal

Horn of Africa Appeal

© Islamic Relief (Worldwide) TM 2019. Privacy Statement , Terms & Conditions Registered Charity No: 328158. Company Reg No: 02365572. OSCR Reg No: SC042020. Head Office: 19 Rea Street South, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6LB, United Kingdom. Disclaimer: Islamic Relief is not affiliated with any external websites. Islamic Relief is not responsible for the content of external internet sites and any links from external web sites to this site do not constitute an endorsement of that site by Islamic Relief. Important: About email scams Staff Resources: Extranet, Email, Remote Office.