

### ESCALATING FOOD CRISIS FOR 2.2M PEOPLE



The prevailing food security situation across all regions of the Gaza Strip has reached a dire state concerning the availability, accessibility, and utilization of food. Each individual is grappling with the profound impact of this crisis.

#### North Gaza - Gaza

- **Displaced population struggles amidst escalating conflict.** Around 291,795 internally displaced persons (IDPs) are in UNRWA designated areas and public facilities, with the majority, over 64%, in North Gaza and 36% in the Gaza governorates.
- **Structural devastation peaks in North Gaza and Gaza.** As of 26 November, North Gaza and Gaza exhibit the most significant surge in damage, witnessing 14,773 and 14,959 newly affected structures, respectively. Gaza City stands out with the highest count of recently destroyed structures. The proportion of new damages in Gaza City exceeds 70% compared to the images captured on November 7th, whereas in North Gaza, it is 26%. Considering both governorates, the total damaged structures account for 80% of the overall structural damage in Gaza (UNOSAT).
- **Heart-wrenching choices for residents amid escalating conflict.** Several residents, compelled to abandon their homes amid escalating conflict, particularly in Jabalia, recounted the heart-wrenching decision to leave behind the meagre portions of stored food. The weight of survival took precedence, making it impossible to carry these provisions amidst the challenging circumstances. Now, these families find themselves without sustenance for several days, trapped in a dire situation exacerbated by full shelters and a profound scarcity of food.
- **Financial strain amplifies humanitarian crisis.** Despite the Palestinian Authority managing to disburse 50% of salaries to the employees, numerous families cannot access these funds to meet their essential needs, mainly food. The non-functioning of banks poses a significant hurdle, requiring individuals to endure lengthy waits at ATMs from the early morning. Given the complex security conditions and elevated risks associated with such withdrawals, this exacerbates their suffering and hampers their ability to secure necessary provisions.

#### Middle Area - Khan Younis - Rafah

- **Displaced Across Regions: Seeking Refuge in UNRWA-Designated Areas.** Approximately 1.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) have sought refuge in UNRWA-designated areas, with distinctive concentrations in Rafah, the Middle area, and Khan Younis, as well as additional individuals finding accommodation within host families.
- **Infrastructure Strain in Rafah: Overwhelmed Shelters and Distressing Conditions.** The city's infrastructure grapples with the escalating number of displaced individuals, leading to overwhelmed shelters and distressing conditions, including limited access to essential resources.
- **Surge in Structural Damage: Central Region Under Strain.** The central region witnessed a notable surge in structural damage, reflecting a 26% increase from November 7th, with a total of 2,449 affected structures.
- **Humanitarian Aid Struggles: Challenges in Rafah and Wider Gaza Strip.** Aid distributions face constraints in Rafah, and across the Gaza Strip, the flow of aid has largely halted, leaving thousands exposed to harsh conditions on Rafah's streets.
- **Delayed Aid and Prioritization: Middle Area Residents Face Challenges.** Residents in the Middle area experience repeated delays in receiving aid, attributed to the prioritisation of newly displaced individuals from the north, with the possibility of further adjustments.
- **Food scarcity and purchasing challenges.** In the Middle area, the absence of agricultural activities has left this governorate devoid of a consistent and reliable supply of vegetables. Some residents have reported that shop owners are now selling vegetables by piece, with customers buying them piece by piece. In such dire circumstances, certain families are compelled to purchase potatoes on a per-piece basis.

#### PARTNERS RESPONSE: 4-10 December

- **UNRWA** distributed flour to about **160,000** people north of Gaza. In the south, flour distribution reached about **1,153,020** people, including **75,000** families outside shelters. Wheat flour to produce bread is a staple food but covers only approximately 10% of the daily SPHERE standard 2,100 kcal per person needed
- **WFP** In December so far, around 600,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) in designated shelters received high energy biscuits or biscuits for one day, and around 110,000 received food parcels or wheat flour to last two weeks. (The total figure accounts for overlap between people receiving more than one type of assistance). 11,385 displaced people in host communities received food parcels to support their food needs for 15 days.
- **WFP** is supporting community kitchens to provide hot meals to IDPs in partnership with its cooperating partner, Rebuilding Alliance. Moreover, provided around 30 mt of wheat flour, chickpeas, and salt to 6 community kitchens reaching around 20,560 people across Gaza.
- Through **AAH, American Friends Service Committee, Anera, Beit Lahia Development Association, IHH, MECA, PAEEP, PARC** and **TAAWON**, 300,000 people received food assistance using different modalities, such as food parcels, hot meals, RTE food and a very limited amount of food voucher.
- **World Central Kitchen (WCK)** is partnering with **ANERA** and **MECA**, providing hot- meals and ready-to-eat (for two days/family of 5 people- 6.43 kg and for seven - family of 5 people- 19 kg. World Central Kitchen plans to provide community kitchen kits (pots and other kitchen equipment) , wood pellets or charcoal, and food products to feed 28,000 meals.



# GAZA

## Update #9

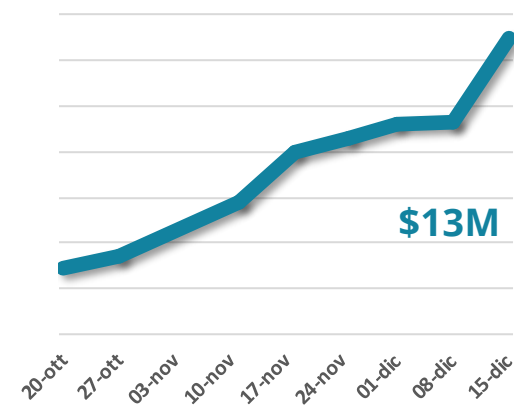
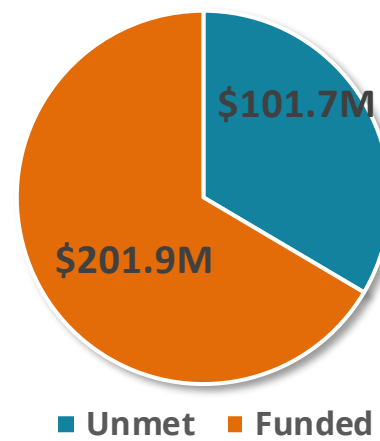
15 DECEMBER 2023

### 23 OPERATING PARTNERS

- |                                     |                         |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ACF                                 | Mercy Corps             |
| ACTED                               | NRC                     |
| American Friends Service Committee, | OXFAM Novib             |
| AFS                                 | PAEEP                   |
| ANERA                               | PARC                    |
| Beit Lahia Development-             | PUI                     |
| CRS                                 | Save the Children       |
| DCA                                 | Secure Islamique France |
| FAO                                 | Taawon                  |
| Islamic Relief Palestine            | UNRWA                   |
| Middle East Children's Alliance     | UPA                     |
| IHH                                 | WFP                     |

### FUNDING MOBILIZED

Through Flash Appeal    Outside Flash Appeal



### FOOD PRODUCTION OUTLOOK

- **Input Costs:** Farmers continue to face severe shortages and significantly increase costs for essential inputs such as fertilizers, seeds, and fuel, further squeezing their any profit margins. The scarcity and rising prices of these inputs can hamper agricultural productivity.
- **Market Access:** With certain commodities disappearing from the market and others being sold on the black market, farmers are encountering challenges in accessing fair and stable markets for their produce. This disrupted their ability to sell their goods at reasonable prices.
- **Livelihoods of farmers:** The overall economic instability and distorted market conditions threaten the livelihoods of farmers who depend heavily on agricultural activities, leading to financial hardship. Significant difficulties in selling crops or getting them to market due to disruptions in supply chains and market dynamics.
- **Increased Agricultural Damage:** according to the latest [UNOSAT Gaza Strip Agricultural Damage Assessment](#), there has been a substantial decline in crop health and density compared to the preceding six seasons. Razing, bombing, and the use of heavy vehicles are identified as contributors to this decline. Agricultural areas, covering approximately 50% of Gaza's total area, have seen an 18% reduction in arable land health in November 2023 compared to the six-year average. Notably, the North Gaza Governorate experienced a significant increase in damage (39%), and the Gaza Governorate witnessed an increase from 17% to 27% between November and December 2023.
- **Immediate threats to food production: contamination of agricultural lands.** Experts from the MoA reported widespread contamination with explosive remnants. Soil and water sources are affected, posing immediate threats to food production.
- **Supply chain vulnerability: Potential contamination of crops.** The contamination extends to crops entering the food supply chain. Human health risks emerge from the consumption of contaminated crops.
- **Long-Term impacts on agriculture: adverse effects on productivity.** Adverse effects on plant growth, soil quality degradation, and damage to arable land threaten agricultural productivity. Environmental consequences include threats to local flora and fauna.
- **Challenges in post-war agricultural recovery: extensive decontamination needed.** The recovery of the agricultural sector faces challenges requiring extensive decontamination efforts. Sustained investments are crucial for overcoming post-war challenges.
- **Crucial imperatives: ensuring food safety and agricultural sustainability.** Addressing these challenges is essential for ensuring food safety. Promoting agricultural sustainability is a key factor in effectively recovering affected areas.
- **Public health emergency:** The widespread contamination of soil and water sources poses a severe public health threat. As these contaminants leach into water supplies, the risk of waterborne diseases increases, affecting agricultural communities and the general population.

### MARKET OUTLOOK

- **Inflation on the Rise.** In November 2023, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) witnessed a substantial increase of 18.35% compared to October 2023 (which already had an increase of 12% w.r to September) (PCBS). Other increases were registered for the most common food items, such as:
  - Egg price (84.41%)
  - Potato (69.4% increase)
  - Table salt (66.67% increase)
  - Canned vegetable (36.19% increase)
  - Various pasta products (29.98% increase)
  - Fresh chicken prices (27.17% increase)
  - Legumes (21.69% increase)
  - Vegetable oil (16.33% increase)
  - Cereal flour (12.85% increase)
- **Parallel market.** The existence of a parallel market underscores a noteworthy economic distortion, particularly concerning commodity prices. Essential items like flour, bread, fuel, gas, medicines, and health supplies for children and individuals are finding their way into the black market. This phenomenon is linked to the scarcity of these commodities, disruptions in supply chains and insufficient aid distribution.
- **Fueling Inflation** Prices for certain goods experienced remarkable increases, including a 431.51% surge for some products, with gasoline prices rising by 133.63%, and diesel prices increasing by 101.71% due to limited quantities in the region.



### HUMANITARIAN AID OUTLOOK



Under normal circumstances since 7 October, approximately 25,000 trucks should have entered Gaza by now.



As of 13 of December, 3708 aid trucks have entered since the war – 15.4% of the usual entrance.



Part of the trucks entered are carrying human food items, but the quantity is still not sufficient to address the basic needs of 2.2 million people on a daily basis.

- For the first time since the escalation of hostilities on October 7th, aid trucks underwent screening at the Israeli-controlled **Kerem Shalom** crossing before entering Gaza through the Rafah crossing. While this aims to address delays, humanitarian agencies argue it's insufficient, asking for the complete reopening of it,
- The fighting and security situation are limiting the operational space of partners. The food security needs are overwhelming the capacity to respond. Food assistance sporadically reached North Gaza and Middle areas this week.
- The UN's ability to receive aid in Gaza is significantly hampered by a shortage of trucks, fuel scarcity, telecommunications blackouts, and risks to staff reaching the Rafah crossing amid high social tension and looting. There's a pressing need for increased aid inflow and enhanced local capacity to handle the incoming assistance.
- Tens of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs), arriving in Rafah since December 3rd, are grappling with severe overcrowding within and outside shelters. Extensive queues form for hours at aid distribution centers as people urgently seek provisions such as food, water, shelter, healthcare, and protection

- **Humanitarians must have safe, unimpeded, and sustained access to distribute life-saving assistance throughout the territory.**
- **Partners request the opening of additional crossing points to enable the delivery of humanitarian assistance at scale**
- **Partners request delivering fuel and cooking gas to the Strip to facilitate aid delivery by humanitarian workers, the functioning of mills and bakeries, and enable people to cook whatever minimal food they might come across.**



Photo: UNRWA