

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	863
Land:	Gaza-Vestbredden
Kilde:	Oxfam International
Titel:	No aid or access as Israel intensifies its ethnic cleansing of the North Gaza governorate, says Oxfam
Udgivet:	27. november 2024
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	14. januar 2025

No aid or access as Israel intensifies its ethnic cleansing of the North Gaza governorate, says Oxfam

Israel is in the late stages of ethnic cleansing of the North Gaza governorate, Oxfam says. For fifty days, Israel has prevented Oxfam, its partners, and other humanitarian agencies from delivering life-saving aid to thousands of starving people in north Gaza.

Amitabh Behar, Oxfam Executive Director, said: “Our staff in Gaza have been desperately trying for nearly two months to reach starving civilians but have been blocked by the Israeli military. We know that many children are trapped and will be starving to death.

“Israel’s ethnic cleansing of the North Gaza governorate proves once again that it is operating with impunity from the dictates of international law. It is laying infrastructure for a long-term military presence – a de facto annexation of the land – and burning any remaining hope of a just and peaceful solution.

“The international community remains impotent and, in some cases, fully complicit. This is a dark moment in history as Israel is subjecting thousands of men, women and children to starvation as a weapon of war while world leaders look on in full awareness and choose to do nothing,” Behar said.

Around 50-75,000 people are trapped there without access to food, water or power. Israel claims them as combatants because they have not left, or been able to. It is impossible to know how people are surviving there or how many are dying, including from malnutrition.

The UN has confirmed that there have been no fully completed UN food missions into North Gaza governorate since 6 October. All kitchens and bakeries have shut down and nutritional work suspended, including support programs for child malnutrition and for pregnant and breastfeeding women. Israeli authorities have rejected all UN attempts to send in emergency medics and provide fuel to keep water and sanitation services operating.

An Oxfam worker said: “The north is cut off – Jabalia, Beit Lahia, Beit Hanoun – there is only chaos and confusion, hunger and death. In the north, no one can help those people – no one – no food, no electricity, only famine. It’s horrific to contemplate.”

Oxfam’s partner, Juzoor, still has staff working in the north. Its Executive Director, Dr. Umaiye Khammash, said that recent Israeli bombardments have hit a Juzoor-run homeless shelter “causing panic and chaos”, along with one of Juzoor’s 15 health points “destroying equipment and burning medicines”, and also a food and medical storage facility the organization runs.

Dr Khammash said Juzoor staff “are stronger than us and send messages saying thank God there is something we can do”. They are still providing some medical support from their centers that remain open, including helping women give birth. He described people going without any food and children dying of malnutrition. To date, Juzoor has lost ten staff killed by Israeli bombing.

Oxfam is part of the Food Security Cluster, made up of UN and international agencies, all of whom have been continually denied permission to enter the North Gaza governorate since Israel escalated its military siege there on 6 October. Oxfam had received 1,840 food parcels and, had permission been granted, could have trucked in 800 parcels immediately – a shipment would have served 5,600 people with food.

Around 100,000 people have recently fled north Gaza under Israeli forced displacement orders. Oxfam staff trying to support them have heard harrowing testimonies. Israeli soldiers have told people fleeing “don’t dream of northern Gaza again” and made false promises of food being available at the end of their forced marches out. A man from Beit Hanoun described living in a damaged school with his young son, having to sift insects from flour to make dough and lighting fires inside a classroom for fear of attracting the attention of military drones outside.

Another person told Oxfam: “There was an elderly man in a wheelchair whose chair got stuck in the sand. The soldiers ordered us to move on without him.”

An Oxfam staff member said that the forcible transfers south into the neighboring region around Gaza City have created overcrowding to such a degree that conditions there are now “famine-like”. Despite being in charge of Oxfam’s aid distributions in the north, he himself is only able to have one daily meal, consisting of one item. He has been displaced ten times in a year.

He said: “There is no market in Gaza city. We are in famine-like conditions here too. Last week, we had 280 food parcels and hope to deliver them here this week. The people who have been displaced from the north are in a really shocking state. Meanwhile, the southern part of Gaza is like another country entirely separated from us”.

Across the entirety of Gaza, including the south, an average of 37 trucks of aid entered each day last month and 69 a day in the first week of November. Before 7 October, 500 trucks a day of aid and commercial items used to cross into Gaza.

Oxfam is demanding an immediate, unconditional, and permanent ceasefire and immediate access for humanitarian aid to north Gaza. Access to aid must be scaled up across all of Gaza and Palestinians must be given the freedom to move home, rebuild, and live in peace free of occupation or blockade.

Notes to editors

Aid missions to the North Gaza Governorate were particularly disrupted since the start of the Israeli ground offensive on 6 October. Between 1 and 18 November, 85 per cent of* 41 coordination requests for humanitarian missions in North Gaza governorate were either denied (17) or impeded (18), while seven per cent (3) were facilitated. Specifically, 31 of these 41 requests were made for the besieged areas of Jabalya, Beit Hanoun, and Beit Lahya, with all but four* attempts being denied during this period. These four attempts were severely impeded and could only accomplish limited objectives.

The siege in North Gaza encompasses most of the Governorate's residential areas, including Beit Hanoun, Beit Lahya and most of Jabalya. The whole of North Gaza Governorate includes the besieged area but also the Zikim (Erez West) crossing, which has been accessible throughout the 50 days, as well as southern Jabalya.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) prohibits the use of starvation as a method of warfare. As the occupying power in Gaza, Israel is bound by IHL to provide for the needs and protection of the population of Gaza. In 2018, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 2417, which unanimously condemned the use of starvation against civilians as a method of warfare and declared any denial of humanitarian access a violation of international law.

Contact information

Matt Grainger in the UK | matt.grainger@oxfam.org | +44-07730680837

For updates, please follow [@NewsFromOxfam](#) and [@OxfamMena](#)