

# IPC ALERT: Worst-case scenario of Famine unfolding in the Gaza Strip

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The IPC Global Initiative is issuing this Alert based on the latest evidence available until 25 July to draw urgent attention to the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, following the IPC analysis published in May 2025, which detected a risk of Famine. According to IPC protocols, an Alert does not classify areas or provide population estimates and does not constitute a Famine classification. However, given the most recent information and data made available, a new IPC analysis is to be conducted without delay.

- The worst-case scenario of Famine is currently playing out in the Gaza Strip. Conflict and displacement have intensified, and access to food and other essential items and services has plummeted to unprecedented levels.
- Mounting evidence shows that widespread starvation, malnutrition, and disease are driving a rise in hunger-related deaths. Latest data indicates that Famine thresholds have been reached for food consumption in most of the Gaza Strip and for acute malnutrition in Gaza City.
- Immediate action must be taken to end the hostilities and allow for unimpeded, large-scale, life-saving humanitarian response. This is the only path to stopping further deaths and catastrophic human suffering.

Amid relentless conflict, frequent displacements, extremely limited humanitarian access, and collapsing health care systems, the worst-case scenario is rapidly unfolding in Gaza.

The latest IPC analysis published on 12 May 2025 projected that the entire population in the Gaza Strip will face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) by September 2025, including half a million people in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5), characterised by an extreme lack of food, starvation, destitution and death. Malnutrition was expected to reach Critical levels (IPC AMN Phase 4) in North Gaza, Gaza and Rafah governorates, with more than 70,000 cases of children under the age of five and 17,000 cases of pregnant and breastfeeding women (PBW) facing acute malnutrition across the territory. A risk of Famine was detected in all areas of the Gaza Strip.<sup>1</sup>

Since the last analysis, bombardments have intensified and ground operations expanded, with a devastating impact on civilians with nearly 6,700 people killed and critical infrastructure destroyed.<sup>2</sup> Since mid-May, an additional 325,000 people have been displaced, and 88 percent of the territory is currently under evacuation orders or within militarised areas.<sup>3</sup> People's access to food across Gaza is now alarmingly erratic and extremely perilous.<sup>4</sup> Since 27 May, over 1,000 people were killed while trying to access food in Gaza.<sup>5</sup>

Humanitarian aid remains extremely restricted due to requests for humanitarian access being repeatedly denied and frequent security incidents.<sup>6</sup> Despite the easing of the blockade on 19 May, only a trickle of humanitarian assistance, mainly food, has entered the Gaza Strip. Bakeries remain closed, and community kitchens—though operational—are vastly inadequate to meet the scale of needs.<sup>7</sup>

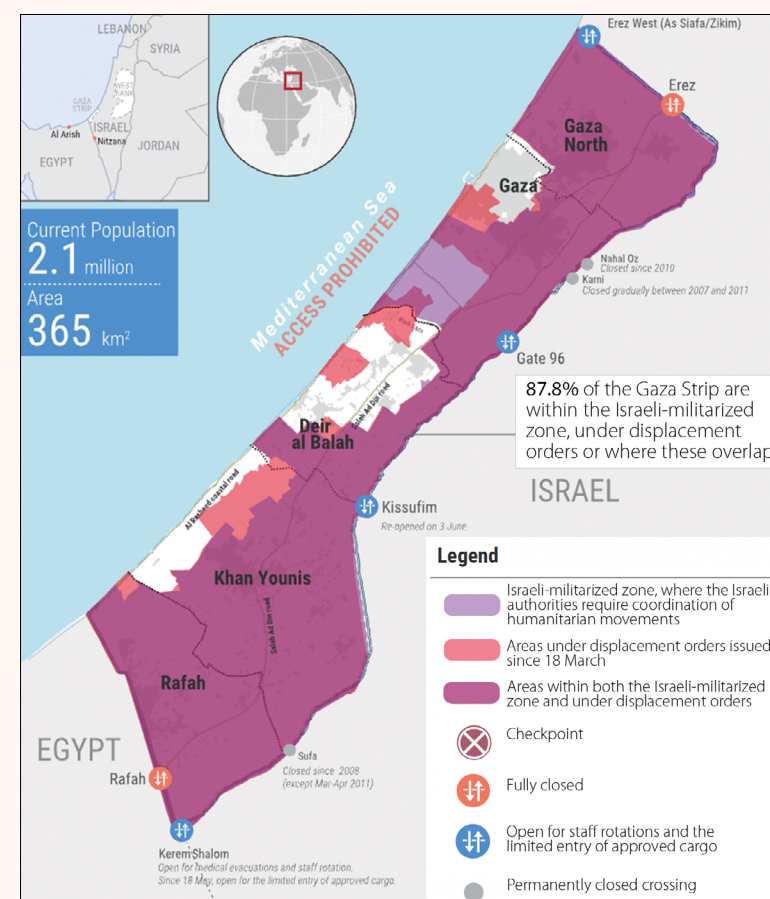
Meanwhile, Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) claims to have distributed over 89 million meals from four distribution sites, primarily in militarised zones along the Khan Younis–Rafah border—where less than a quarter of the population is located.<sup>8</sup> However, most of the food items are not ready-to-eat and require water and fuel to cook, which are largely unavailable. Reaching these distribution points requires long, high-risk journeys, with unequal access across governorates. Operating on a first-come, first-served basis, the most vulnerable groups are largely unable to access this food.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, food consumption has sharply deteriorated, with one in three individuals going without food for days at a time.<sup>10</sup> Between May and July 2025, the proportion of households experiencing extreme hunger has doubled. The food consumption threshold for Famine (IPC AFI Phase 5) has already been passed for most areas of the Gaza Strip.

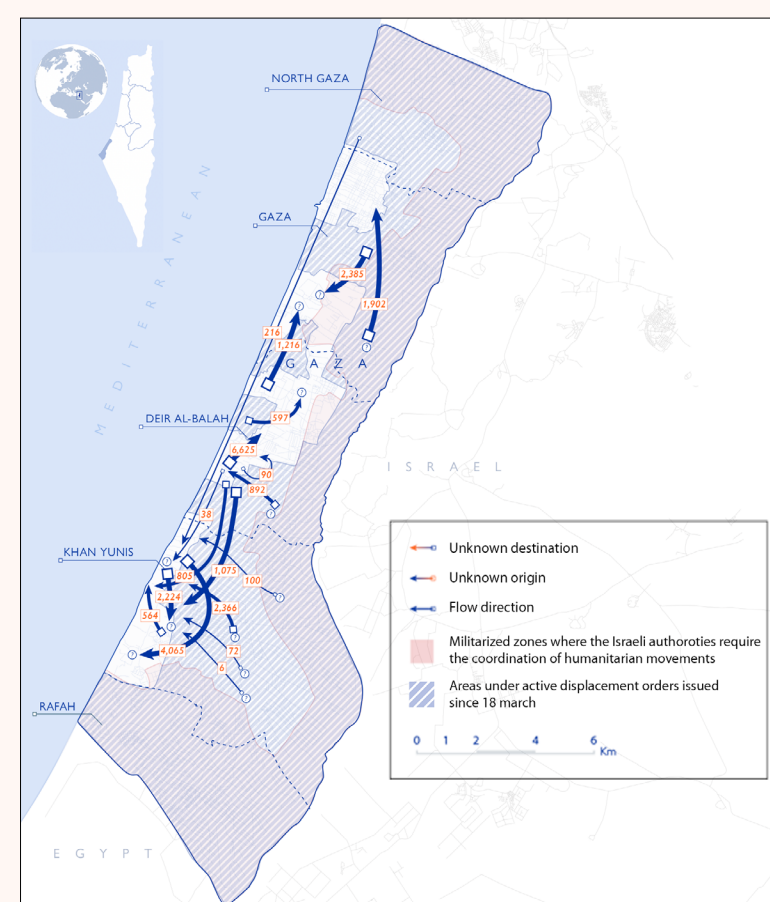
Malnutrition has been rising rapidly in the first half of July and has reached the Famine threshold in Gaza City. Over 20,000 children have been admitted for treatment for acute malnutrition between April and mid-July, with more than 3,000 severely malnourished.<sup>11</sup> Hospitals have reported a rapid increase in hunger-related deaths of children under five years of age, with at least 16 reported deaths since 17 July.<sup>12</sup>

Immediate action must be taken to alleviate the catastrophic suffering of people in Gaza. This includes scaling up the flow of goods, restoring basic services, and ensuring safe, unimpeded access to sufficient life-saving assistance. None of this is possible unless there is a ceasefire.

Map 1. Movement restrictions, 25 July 2025. Source: OCHA.



Map 2. Population movements, 23 July 2025. Source: SMC.



## Key figures

**21 MONTHS OF CONFLICT**

Nearly two years into the conflict, over 59,500 people have been killed and 143,000 injured.<sup>13</sup> 70 percent of the infrastructure has been destroyed or damaged.<sup>14</sup>

**88 % OF GAZA TERRITORY UNDER MILITARISED ZONES OR DISPLACEMENT ORDERS**

The safe space for the population of the Gaza Strip is shrinking to less than 12 percent of the territory. Since the end of the ceasefire on 18 March, more than 762,500 displacements have been recorded.<sup>15</sup>

## Recommended actions

**End hostilities:** An immediate, unconditional, and sustained ceasefire is critical to reversing the catastrophic levels of human suffering.

**Ensure humanitarian access:** Unhindered, safe, stable and sustained humanitarian access must be guaranteed across the entire Gaza Strip and through all entry points—land, sea and air—to enable the delivery of lifesaving, multi-sectoral assistance and services at scale, and data collection on human welfare across the Gaza Strip.

**Protect civilians, aid workers, and civilian infrastructure:** Protect civilians seeking assistance and accessing essential services. Protect humanitarian personnel so they can deliver assistance in line with humanitarian principles. Protect and restore critical infrastructure essential for survival, including health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), roads and telecommunications networks.

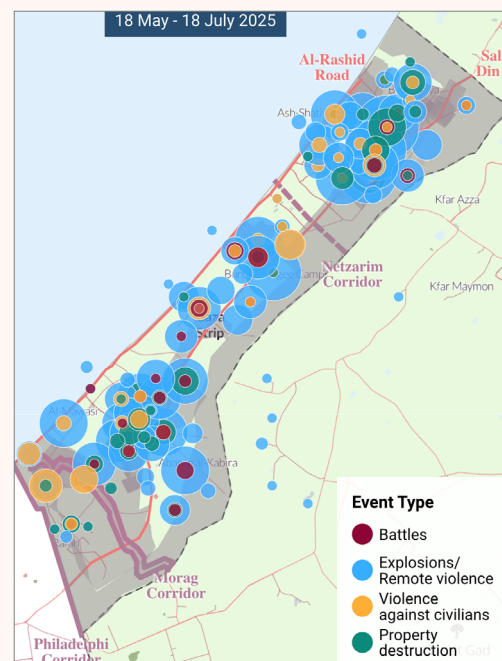
**Restore life-saving and multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance safely and with dignity, following humanitarian principles and International Humanitarian Law (IHL).** Ensure people's access to food and other essential items and services, prioritising the most vulnerable. This includes food, health and nutrition services (including essential maternal and child therapeutic feeding), shelter, WASH and livelihood assistance, along with other essential items, such as fuel and cooking gas.

**Restore the flow of commercial goods and local production capacities.**



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Map 3. Gaza conflict monitor, 18 July 2025.  
Source: ACLED.



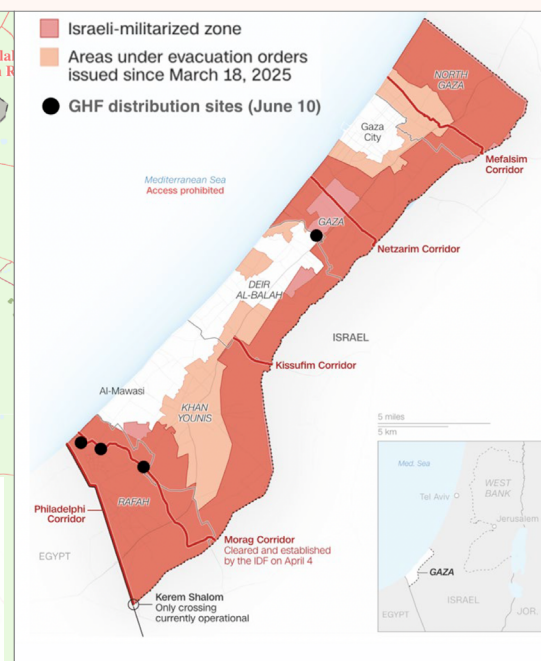
## Conflict continues unabated amid rising casualties and injuries

Casualties and injuries continue to steadily increase following the re-escalation of conflict since March, with a recent surge in July. As of 21 July 2025, air and ground operations expanded to the town and surrounding areas of Deir al-Balah—which until now had been largely left unscathed—forcing thousands of people to move westwards towards the sea and south to Khan Younis.<sup>16</sup> Since the resumption of hostilities on 18 March over 6,200 people have been killed—and over 22,000 others seriously injured—bringing the total number of people killed since October 2023 to almost 60,000.<sup>17</sup> Reports of civilians being killed while queuing at clinics or food distribution points are increasingly concerning. Between 27 May and 21 July, over 1,000 people were killed while trying to access food, the majority of whom were near militarised food Secure Distribution Sites (SDS).<sup>18</sup> Just recently, on 20 July, two deadly incidents occurred, including an attack on a humanitarian convoy carrying vital food to northern Gaza that resulted in the killing of at least 73 people and more than 150 injured.<sup>19, 20</sup>

Safe spaces are becoming virtually non-existent, as the population is increasingly confined to ever-shrinking areas not designated as military zones or subject to displacement orders—primarily in Gaza City and the middle governorates.

Evacuation orders remain constant and disruptive. Since the resumption of hostilities on 18 March, 60 orders were issued and over 762,500 people have been newly displaced, including more than 25,000 people between 15 and 22 July.<sup>21</sup> Over half of the recent population movements were within the same governorate, primarily within Gaza Governorate. The other movements were primarily from the northern to southern governorates, with significant flows of people moving from or to Al Mawasi in Khan Younis, and from Jabalia to western Gaza City—accounting for 40 percent of all movements.<sup>22</sup> With no safe refuge available, many people are sheltering in overcrowded sites, damaged buildings, or open areas.<sup>23</sup>

Map 4. GHF distribution sites, 25 June 2025.  
Source: FEWS NET.



## Humanitarian assistance is largely insufficient, and lack of access to food and other essential items remains a major concern

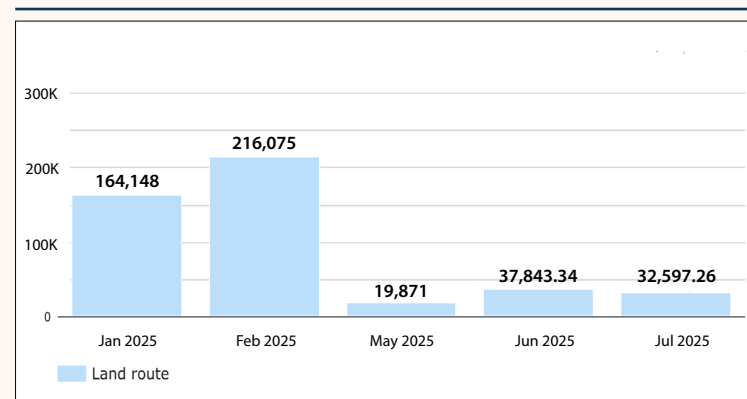
Since 19 May, following an 80-day blockade on entry of humanitarian aid and commercial supplies, the UN has been able to partially resume operations—albeit at a scale far below what is needed.<sup>24</sup> While an estimated minimum of 62,000 metric tons (MT) of staple food is required per month to cover the basic food needs of the Gazan population; it is important to note that this does not include fresh foods such as vegetables and meat.<sup>25, 26</sup> However, according to COGAT, only 19,900 MT and 37,800 MT of food overall (including GHF supplies) entered the territory in May and June respectively—noting that no aid entered the Gaza strip between 2 March and 18 May.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the drastic restrictions on the entry of supplies, humanitarian agencies have been struggling to deliver aid safely due to the presence of armed actors near convoy routes and distribution points, compounded by widespread desperation often leading to acts of looting. Official UN estimates show that only 14 percent (1,300 MT) of the 14,900 MT of official humanitarian assistance – including food (97 percent) and essential non-food items (3 percent) - that entered the Gaza Strip in June 2025 reached the distribution points.<sup>28</sup> Community kitchens, a lifeline for many Gazans, continue serving meals but at a much reduced capacity. On 20 July, community kitchens were only able to serve 100,000 meals in the north and 58,000 meals in central and southern Gaza, a 30 percent reduction compared to the previous day, and about one-third of the daily average in May.<sup>29</sup>

Current conditions in the Gaza Strip have prevented the delivery of principled humanitarian assistance to people in need. In late June, 25,000 people - accounting for less than 1.5 percent of the population—mainly in the south—received humanitarian food assistance from UN agencies and other humanitarian organisations for the first time in weeks.<sup>30</sup> In the northern governorates, humanitarian access has been additionally constrained by the repeated closures of the Zikim Crossing.<sup>31</sup> Current stocks of lifesaving and preventive nutrition supplies are expected to be fully depleted in the next month.<sup>32</sup>

Meanwhile, the GHF started distributing food supplies on 27 May. However, the scale-up initially foreseen from the original target of 1.2 million people monthly (57 percent of the population) has not yet materialised. Serious concerns have been raised about people's ability to access food from the four distribution sites, which are all located in militarised areas, exposing the people to major security threats.

Figure 1. Food deliveries in Metric Tons (MT), 23 July 2025.  
Source: COGAT



## Insight from the Famine Review Committee

The Famine Review Committee (FRC) again calls for immediate and comprehensive action to end the extremely dire humanitarian catastrophe in the Gaza Strip. We endorse this Alert and express horror at the rapidly deteriorating situation and killings of civilians seeking humanitarian aid.

The IPC findings published on 12 May highlighted the increasing risk of Famine. Many of the risk factors identified in that report have continued to deteriorate. Although the extreme lack of humanitarian access hinders comprehensive data collection, it is clear from available evidence that starvation, malnutrition, and mortality are rapidly accelerating.

Expansion of the ground and air assault to areas in Deir al-Balah on 21 July 2025 is likely to lead to further destruction of essential civilian infrastructure, as well as large-scale forced displacement and additional population movement into increasingly overcrowded concentration zones.

Food aid shipments have been highly inadequate, and our analysis of the food packages supplied by the GHF shows that their distribution plan would lead to mass starvation, even if it was able to function without the appalling levels of violence that have been reported. The fact that people continue to risk being shot or caught in stampedes at distribution sites indicates the extremely desperate level of hunger that the population is experiencing.

Many nutritional programmes have run out of nutrition supplies and the number of sites able to provide health and nutrition services has greatly decreased. Shipments of medical supplies are also severely constrained, leading to increased human suffering and elevated morbidity. Deprivation of adequate clean drinkable water is causing extreme suffering and has greatly increased the risk of morbidity and mortality.

The factors outlined above combine to further increase the risk of Famine. We call for the immediate end to the blockade and a full return to the distribution of food and essential supplies by the UN and other humanitarian organisations - in accordance with humanitarian principles and IHL. We call on all parties with influence to ensure that humanitarian assistance is resumed at scale, a ceasefire is implemented, and that data collection on basic human well-being is facilitated. In the absence of rapid and concerted action famine is inevitable.



## When is Famine Classified?

**Famine** (IPC Phase 5) is the highest phase of the IPC Acute Food Insecurity scale, and is classified when an area has:



\*or 15% GAM by Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) with evidence of rapidly worsening underlying drivers of acute malnutrition.

For further information on how the IPC classifies Famine, please consult the [IPC Famine Fact Sheet](#).

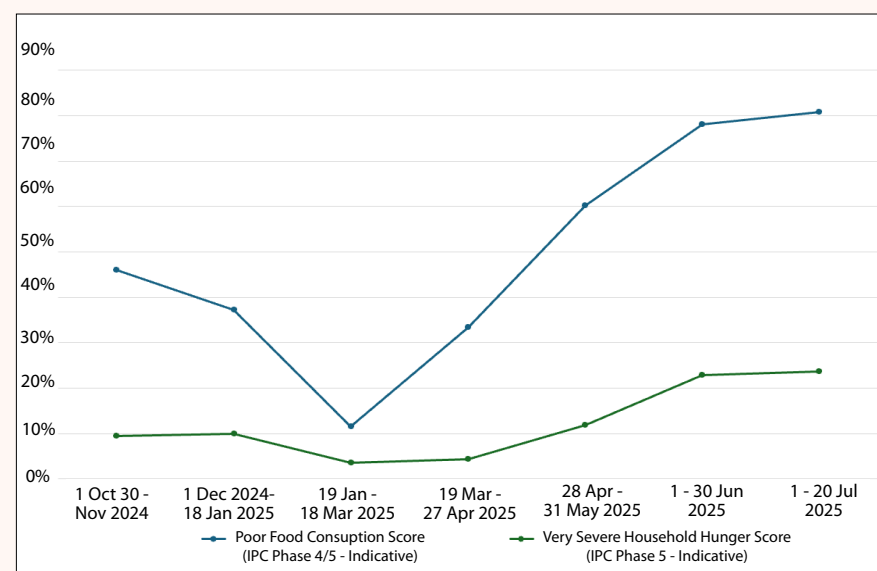
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### Catastrophic levels of food insecurity deteriorate at an alarming pace

The increase in hostilities, frequent displacements, and extremely restricted humanitarian access (from land or sea) have driven a significant deterioration in food security across the territory. The reinstated ban on fishing since 12 July further compounds the already collapsing local production, which has been severely hampered by conflict-related damages, and lack of access.<sup>33</sup> With virtually no means to grow, harvest, or catch their own food, humanitarian assistance has been a lifeline for Gazans, but what makes it in and reaches people is highly insufficient.<sup>34</sup> Markets are collapsing as retailers grapple with severe stock shortages, following weeks without commercial food entry. Prices of the meagre remaining food items continue to rise at an alarming rate. In June, wheat flour prices experienced extreme fluctuations, with sharp increases ranging from 1,400 percent to 5,600 percent compared to late February.<sup>35</sup> Given that most of the food distributed is not ready-to-eat, the dire lack of cooking gas and clean water to prepare meals is a major concern. As a result, households are increasingly forced to burn waste for cooking—exposing themselves to serious health risks.

Food diversity has collapsed to its worst level since the start of the conflict, triggering both acute and long-term consequences.<sup>36</sup> While some households are not eating anything for an entire day, those who are eating are often surviving on only basic foods like bread. This has had a devastating impact on vulnerable groups (particularly children under five and PBW) reflected in the increasing prevalence of acute malnutrition. The latest data, collected remotely through Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) in July 2025, confirm that food consumption across the Gaza Strip has reached its lowest level since the onset of the conflict.<sup>37</sup> The situation has worsened dramatically, with 81 percent of households reporting poor food consumption—up from 33 percent in April—with the most severe deterioration observed in northern Gaza. A similar trend can be observed for the Household Hunger Scale with 24 percent of households experiencing very severe hunger in July compared to 4 percent in April, crossing the Famine threshold for food consumption. Most households (86 percent) reported regularly not having food to eat of any kind and nearly all (96 percent) reported that they went to bed hungry multiple times in the last month. Nearly nine out of ten households resorted to extremely severe coping mechanisms to feed themselves, such as taking significant safety risks to obtain food, and scavenging from the garbage.

Figure 2. Food consumption trends, 20 July 2025, Source: CATI



### Acute malnutrition surges across the Gaza Strip, reaching the Famine threshold in Gaza City

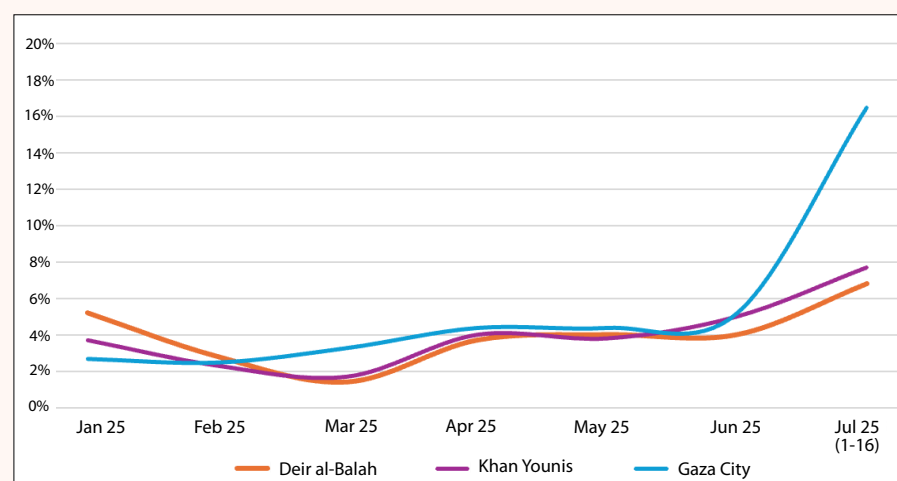
Prior to April, adults were prioritising feeding children over themselves, resulting in more than half of households with children still consuming pulses, grains, and dairy products.<sup>38</sup> This coping strategy, combined with the implementation of large-scale blanket supplementary feeding programmes, appears to have mitigated a rise in acute child malnutrition despite the high levels of acute food insecurity. However, since April, this prioritisation strategy is no longer sufficient in maintaining children's dietary diversity and nutritional status. While children's dairy consumption has been steadily declining since January, the April-June period saw a sharp decline from 31 percent in April to 18 percent in May and 9 percent in June.<sup>39</sup> Micronutrient deficiencies are likely rising rapidly alongside acute malnutrition, with dire impacts on children's health, development, and risk of mortality.

WASH conditions are worsening at similarly alarming levels driven by the persistent lack of fuel, which hampers water purification efforts.<sup>40</sup> As of June 2025, over nine out of ten households reported experiencing water insecurity.<sup>41</sup> Diarrhoeal diseases are on the rise, which accounts for 39 percent of reported illnesses in July.<sup>42</sup>

Access to the already degraded health services is becoming increasingly restricted due to frequent evacuation orders, which have led to the closure of health facilities and the emergence of new insecure zones. The ongoing fuel shortages are further restricting service delivery of all essential health and nutrition preventive and treatment programmes. Furthermore, the denial of entry of life-saving and preventive supplies, compounded by looting, have led to the depletion and reduced access to already limited stocks, which is shrinking day by day. This is gravely concerning, as they play a crucial role in preventing and treating malnutrition. The combined limitations on health and WASH services significantly heighten the risk of disease outbreaks across the Gaza Strip.<sup>43</sup>

Between May and July 2025, acute malnutrition rates doubled in Khan Younis and increased by 70 percent in Deir al-Balah. In Gaza City, the situation is extremely critical, with the prevalence of global acute malnutrition based on MUAC soaring from 4.4 percent in May to an alarming 16.5 percent in the first half of July, reaching the Famine threshold based on GAM by MUAC.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, two-fifths of pregnant and breastfeeding women were acutely malnourished in June.<sup>45</sup> The situation in North Gaza Governorate, which faces similar challenges, is also a major source of concern. However, it cannot be verified due to lack of data.

Figure 3. Prevalence of global acute malnutrition based on MUAC for Children Under 5, July 2025. Source: Nutrition Cluster



### Risk of Famine - Assumptions under Reasonable Worst-Case Scenario (Developed during the May 2025 analysis)

**Conflict:** Conflict intensifies and/or expands across the Gaza Strip, with large and full-scale ground operations and continued presence of armed actors across the Gaza Strip. Further damage to critical infrastructure is expected.

**Humanitarian access:** A continuation of the blockade with no access for humanitarian actors. Humanitarian agencies will not have access to the most vulnerable populations of the Gaza Strip to provide goods and services essential for survival.

**Displacement:** Large scale displacement with further expansion of evacuation zones and no-go zones. Populations will have reduced areas for habitation and density of displaced populations will increase.

**Access to essential items:** Vast majority of people would not have access to food, water, shelter, and medicine. Shortage of hygiene items and disease outbreaks.

**Essential services:** The complete collapse of the health system and essential services as stocks deplete and referral options are not possible. Severe water insecurity, and a collapse of solid sanitation systems in most areas across governorates and overcrowding, would worsen health conditions and increase morbidity among children and adults.

### X What is risk of Famine?

#### For the IPC, risk of Famine...

... refers to a reasonable probability of an area going into Famine in the projected period. While this is not perceived necessarily as the most-likely scenario, it is a scenario that, generally speaking, has a realistic chance of occurring.

... complements the Famine projections of the most likely scenario by providing insights into potential Famine if prospects evolve in a worse manner than anticipated.

... differs from Famine projections because it focuses on a worst-case scenario that has a reasonable and realistic chance of happening.

... is a statement about the potential deterioration of the situation from what is expected. It is not a new classification, and it is not to be accompanied by population estimates.

... is an additional assessment that focuses on assessing if the area could realistically go into Famine during the projected period. Not all areas need to undergo assessment for risk of Famine.



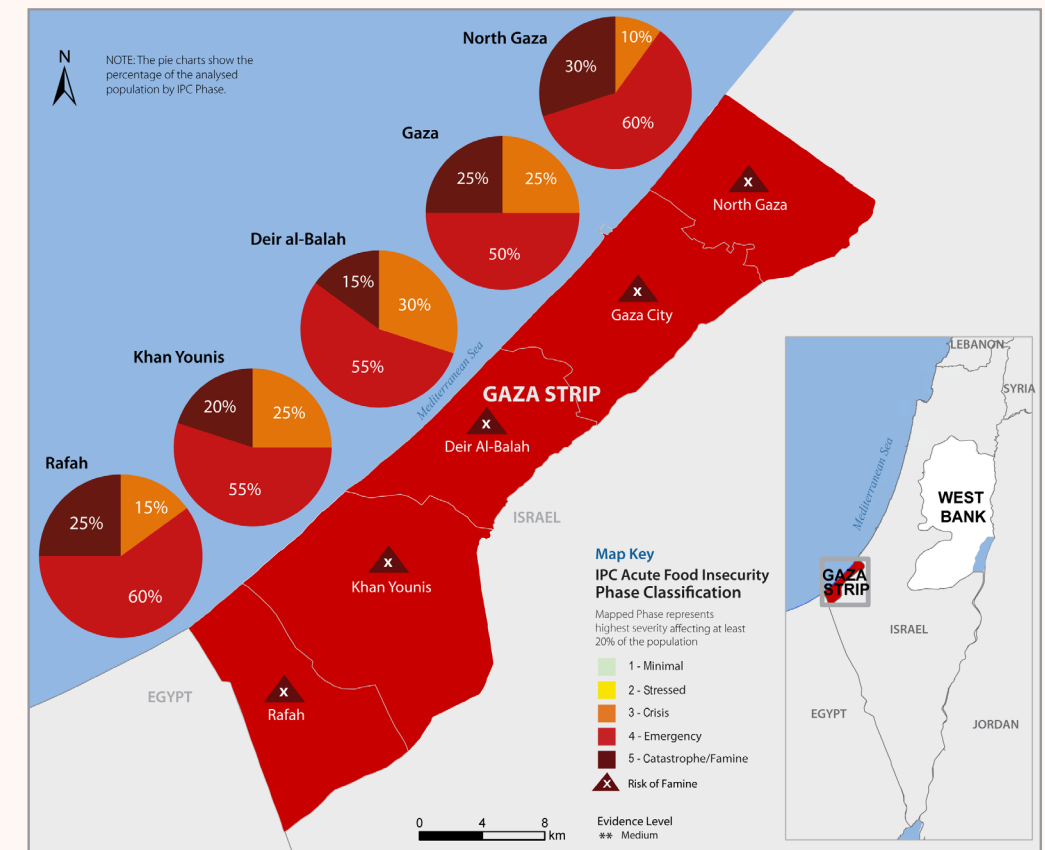
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- <sup>44</sup> Nutrition Cluster, SoP Nutrition Cluster presentation, 23 July 2025. [https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1a9Alptg1Ae\\_E3IMh4XBIBBQJWRmLKkDN/edit?slide=id.p1#slide=id.p1](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1a9Alptg1Ae_E3IMh4XBIBBQJWRmLKkDN/edit?slide=id.p1#slide=id.p1)
- <sup>45</sup> Nutrition Cluster, SoP Nutrition Cluster presentation, 23 July 2025. [https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1a9Alptg1Ae\\_E3IMh4XBIBBQJWRmLKkDN/edit?slide=id.p1#slide=id.p1](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1a9Alptg1Ae_E3IMh4XBIBBQJWRmLKkDN/edit?slide=id.p1#slide=id.p1)

The maps below illustrate the classifications projected for the period 11 May to 30 September, at the time of the last IPC analysis in May.

Map 5. Projected IPC Acute Food Insecurity, 11 May - 30 September 2025  
Source: IPC Global Initiative, May 2025



Map 6. Projected IPC Acute Malnutrition, 11 May - 30 September 2025  
Source: IPC Global Initiative, May 2025

