

The destruction of food, infrastructure, and medical care, and the denial of a adequate team of aid has placed the entire remaining population

Approximately 90% of the population of Gaza have been forced to move at least once — most many times— either fleeing the bombardment or Israel's ground forces, or because the Israeli government ordered the people to evacuate. In mid-August, before the start of the most recent Israeli military offensive in Gaza, about 86% of the Gaza Strip was under militarized zones displacement orders.⁶ Most hospitals and medical centers have been destroyed or damaged. The remaining hospitals are overwhelmed with blast victims

and most medicines have run out or are in short supply. The food aid that is reaching Gaza is “largely insufficient to offset the prolonged deprivations.”⁷ Even if a cease-fire and an end to the war were declared today, it will be too late for many of those who are already

malnourished, needing access to basic healthcare, including pre-natal care, or suffering from diseases that require medicines.

This report focuses on conditions in Gaza from 7 October 2023 to 3 October 2025.

Gaza is a tragedy, but it is not a natural disaster: the consequences of the war for the population of Gaza were foreseeable, foreseen, and documented.

On 16 September 2025, the United Nations Human Rights Council concluded that,

“The State of Israel bears responsibility for the failure to prevent genocide, the commission of genocide and the failure to punish genocide.”

⁵ These categories are used by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, (IPC), by the IPC Global Initiative. See IPC, “Gaza Strip: Famine Confirmed in Gaza Governorate, Projected to Expand,” 22 August 2025, https://www.ipcinfo.org/iileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Malnutrition_July_Sept2025_Special_Snapshot.pdf.

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United Nations. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “UN and NGOs warn of humanitarian impact of intensified Gaza City.”

⁷ IPC Global Initiative, “Gaza Strip.”

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ICJ Order. Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel).

⁹ United Nations Human Rights Council,

“Legal analysis of the conduct of Israel in Gaza pursuant to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,” A/HRC/60/CRP.3, 16 September 2025. <https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/a-hrc-60-crp-3.pdf>.

Context

The current war has deep roots and the choice of where to begin the narrative is consequential. Israel's military occupation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and Israel's military victory against Egypt and Jordan

in the June 1967 Six Day War. Since then, Palestinians have peacefully resisted the occupation, taken up arms, most notably in two uprisings, "intifadas"

On 7 October 2023, Hamas and Islamic Jihad combatants invaded Israel with a force of approximately 5,600 people: the invasion and associated rocket bombardment of Israel killed 1,200 people, mostly civilians. Hamas also injured thousands more and kidnapped 251 people, some of whom have been released, since died, or been killed. 10 As of early September, about 48 hostages are believed to remain alive, 20 of whom were being held by Hamas. 11

The Israeli security forces responded immediately on 7 October by attacking Hamas in Gaza. On 8 October 2023, Israel declared war. Since then, the conflict has widened: Israel invaded Gaza; Hamas, Hezbollah,

Houthi based in Yemen and Iran conducted thousands of rocket attacks on Israeli cities; and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) attacked organizations in Iran, and Yemen. The Israeli military operations in Lebanon against Hezbollah, begun in late 2023, included bombardment in Southern Lebanon and the capital Beirut. Despite the ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon in late 2024, the Israeli military continues to target

10 Nidal Al-Mughrabi and Emma Farge, "How Many Palestinians Has Israel's Gaza War Killed," *Reuters*, 30 July 2025. <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/how-many-palestinians-has-israels-gaza-offensive-killed-2025-03-24/>.

Of the dead, 314 were soldiers. United Nations, OCHA, "One Year of Unimaginable Suffering Since the 7 October Attack," 7 October 2024. <https://www.unocha.org/news/one-year-unimaginable-suffering-7-october-attack>.
Also, Haaretz, "Israel's Dead: The Names of Those Killed in Hamas Attacks, Massacres, and the Israel-Hamas War," *Haaretz*, 19 October 2023. <https://www.haaretz.com/haaretz-explains/2023-10-19/ty-article-magazine/notfe/israels-c>
11 Stav Levaton, Lazar Berman, Nurit Yohanan, "IDF Chief: War Will Not Stop Until Hamas is Defeated; PM Says 'Decisive Stage' Starting," *The Times of Israel*, 2 September 2025. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-chief-war-will-not-stop-until-hamass-defeat-pm-says-decisive-stage-starting/>.

Hezbollah in Lebanon with air strikes. 12 Hezbollah continued to fire rockets at Israeli territory. In June 2025, the IDF attacked Iranian nuclear and military targets for 12 days. Iran's military responded by launching missiles at Israel. The Israeli military also attacked a member of Hamas' negotiating team in Doha, Qatar on 9 September 2025. 13 On 15 September 2025, they attacked newspapers in Yemen. All of these operations have caused injury, death, displacement, and the destruction of homes and life-sustaining infrastructure across the region. This report does not include an estimate of the total additional deaths and injuries in Israel, Iran, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Qatar.

The primary focus of the current report is on direct war deaths in the Gaza Strip since the war began—that is, those deaths caused by bombs, bullets, and the fires that erupt as the consequence of an explosion. It also discusses the indirect death toll, that is, those additional deaths that have resulted from military activity, and the conditions that will cause suffering even after a cease-fire. The Costs of War report on the human toll in 2024 included more data on the West Bank than is summarized here. 14 In the West Bank, as of 3 October 2025, 1,048 people have been killed and 10,320 people injured by the Israeli military, police, and settlers. 15 All told, 68,123 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank have been killed since 7 October 2023.

Reported Death and Injury in Gaza

As of 3 October 2025, nearly two years into the war in Gaza, according to Gaza Ministry of Health data as reported by the United Nations, 67,075 people have been killed and 169,430 people injured out of the 2.23 million people living in Gaza before Israel's invasion. 16

In nearly all wars of any significant duration, there are varying estimates of the number killed and wounded, and oftentimes disputes about whether those killed

12 Niha Masih, and Cate Brown, "With Qatar Attack, Which Countries Has Israel Struck Since October 2023," *The Washington Post*, 10 September 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2025/09/10/countries-israel-attacked-qatar-doha/>; Mallory Moench and Hugo Bachega, "Israeli Air Strike Hit Southern Lebanon," *BBC News*, 18 September 2025. https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ckgedgd648o_13

Masih and Brown, "With Qatar Attack, Which Countries Has Israel Struck Since October 2023."

14 See Sophia Stamatopoulou-

Robbins, "The Human Toll: Indirect Deaths from War in Gaza and the West Bank, October 7, 2023 Forward," 7 October 2024. <https://watson.brown.edu/0Toll%20Since%20Oct%202023.pdf>.

15 Gaza Ministry of Health Data as reported in United Nations, "Palestinian Casualties."

16 Gaza Ministry of Health Data as reported in United Nations, "Palestinian Casualties." Population figures drawn from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 10/07/2023, https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_IntPopulationDy2023E.pdf.

Table 1, below, compares the killing in Gaza and the West Bank to the killing in the recent U.S.-led war in Afghanistan (2001–2021) and the ongoing war in Ukraine.

Table 1. Direct Deaths in Gaza and the West Bank, in Comparative Perspective

| War | Reported Estimated Total | Average Rate of Civilians Killed per Month | % Killed |
|---|--------------------------|--|---------------------|
| People killed in Hamas attack on Israel, 7 October 2023, (including 815 civilians killed). ¹⁸ | 1,195 | 68% | |
| Gaza residents reported killed in the Gaza Strip during Israeli military operations, 7 October 2023– 3 October 2025. (Not including IDF killed) | 67,075 | c. 2,806/month | c.80% ²⁰ |
| All people killed in post-10/7 war in Gaza, including 466 Israel Defense Forces reported killed, since the IDF ground invasion. ²¹ | 67,541 | c.2,826/month | c.80% |
| People killed in the West Bank, 7 October 2023 – 3 October 2025 ²² | 1,048 | c.44/month | unknown |
| Afghanistan, 2001 – 2021 ²³ | 176,218 | c.772/month | 26% |
| Ukraine, February 2022 – July 2025 ²⁴ (including c. 13,883 civilians; 250,000 Russian military). | c. 323,000 | c.7,690/month | 4% |

17 It is sometimes very difficult to determine who is a combatant or non-combatant and these determinations are often disputed.

18 United Nations Human Rights Council report, A/HRC/56/CRP.3. "Detailed Findings Attacks Carried Out On and After 7 October in Israel," <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session56/a-hrc-56-crp-3.pdf>.

See Israeli government list of Israelis and foreign nationals killed by Hamas: <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/swords-of-iron-civilian-casualties>.

19 Gaza Ministry of Health Data as reported in United Nations, "Palestinian Casualties." Accessed 6 Oct. 2025.

20 Through May 2025, assuming that the Israeli count of 8,900 Hamas and other combatants dead or probably dead is a total of about 53,000 total killed as reported.

21 The number of Israeli soldiers killed in the "Gaza maneuver" whose names were allowed to be published, from 27 October 2023 through 5 October 2025. IDF Personnel Directorate, <https://www.idf.il/160590>. Also see IDF, <https://www.idf.il/>

<https://www.idf.il/%D7%A0%D7%95%D7%A4%D7%9C%D7%99%D7%9D/%D7%97%D7%9C%D7%9C%D7%99-%D7%94%D7%9E%D7%9C%D7%97%D7%9E%D7%94/>. Accessed 6 October 2025.

22 Gaza Ministry of Health Data as reported in United Nations, "Palestinian Casualties." Accessed 6 Oct. 2025.

23 Costs of War, "Human Cost of Post-9/11 Wars: Direct War Deaths in Major War Zones, Afghanistan & Pakistan (Oct. 2001– Aug. 2021); Iraq (March 2003– March 2023); Syria (Sept. 2014– March 2023); Yemen (Oct. 2002– Aug. 2021) and Other Post-9/11 War Zones," <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/figures/2021/WarDeathToll>.

24 "Number of Civilians Killed and Injured in Ukraine Reaches Three-Year Monthly High in July 2025, UN Human Rights Monitors Say," <https://ukraine.ohchr.org/en/Number-of-civilians-killed-and-injured-in-Ukraine-reaches-three-year-monthly-high-in-July-2025-UN-human-rights-monitors-say>. Seth G. Jones and .

The rate of killing and the percentage of civilians skilled in Gaza is comparatively high. As shown in Table 1, above, the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan from 2001 –

2021 killed about 770 people per month, and 26% of those killed were civilians. The ongoing war in Ukraine has killed a large number

There is much greater certainty about the number of Israeli combatants skilled and wounded in Gaza during the war. The IDF reported

466 “soldiers skilled during combat in the Gaza Strip” since the start of ground operations there on 27 October 2023. The IDF also reported

As discussed above, Israel's government

has widened the war to include attacks on armed forces and militant organizations in Lebanon, Yemen, and Iran. As of 5 October 2023,

Although not the focus of this paper, it is important to note that the larger regional conflict begun after 7 October 2023 has killed and

The Israeli bombardment of Lebanon, begun in late 2024, injured 16,638 people and killed 4,047 people before a ceasefire was concluded

Riley McCabe, “Russia’s Battleground Woes in Ukraine,” CIS Briefs, June 2025. https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2025-06/250603_Jones_Battlefield_Woes_0.pdf?VersionId=swtz75pqU3Del_5mBFQfV5dYKCS8J_gz.

25 Last updated by the IDF on 5 October 2025. IDF Personnel Directorate, <https://www.idf.il/160590>. Accessed 6

October 2025. The list of IDF killed in Operation Swords of Iron includes about 12 people killed in the West Bank. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Swords of Iron,” <https://www.mfa.gov.il/press-releases/2025/10/operation-swords-of-iron>.

26 These fatalities include soldiers skilled by Hezbollah and Iran.

Some of these 913 fatalities were reported to have occurred in Gaza and those are included in Table 1, above.

27 Reuters, “Israeli Attacks Have Killed 4,047 People in Lebanon, Lebanese Minister Says,” *Reuters*, 4 December 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-attacks-have-killed-4047-people-lebanon-lebanese-minister-says-2024-12-04/>.

terrorist attacks by militant organizations and individuals. 28

Some of those displaced in Israel and Lebanon have not been able to return home. Israel's attacks in Syria, Iran, Yemen and Qatar

Journalists and Humanitarian Workers Killed

Israel's government

has blocked almost all outside access to Gaza. Specifically, international media have been barred by Israel, and humanitarian

More humanitarian workers have been killed in Gaza over two years than through the course of the entire nearly 20 years of the U.S. led war in Afghanistan. According to data from the Aid Worker Security Database, 554 aid workers were killed in Gaza during the war

from 7 October 2023 to late September 2025. Of these, 28²⁸ international aid workers have been killed; thus, about 99% of the

Hundreds of journalists and media workers have also already been killed in Gaza. According to a *Costs of War* report by Nick Turse, "Thirty-

seven journalists were slain in the Gaza Strip during the first month" of the war, "making it the deadliest month documented by the Committee to Protect Journalists."

28 Amnesty International, "Israel: Hezbollah's Use of Inherently Inaccurate Weapons to Launch Unlawful Attacks Violates International Law," 20 December 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/israel-hezbollahs-use-of-inherently-inaccurate-weapons-to-launch-unlawful-attacks-violates-international-law/>.

Human Rights Watch, Tirana Hassan, "Israel and Palestine: Events of 2024," <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2025/country-chapters/israel-and-palestine>.

29 Aid Worker Security Database, 1997-Present. <https://www.aidworkersecurity.org/incidents>. Last accessed 30 September 2025.

30 Nick Turse, "News Graveyards: How Danger to War Reporters Endanger the World," *Costs of War*, 1 April 2025, p. 6, https://costsofwar.watson.brown.edu/sites/default/files/papers/Turse_Costs-of-War_The-Reporting-Graveyard-4-2-25.pdf. Turse also notes that there are different counts of journalists and media workers killed in Gaza.

31 For comparative discussion, see Turse, "News Graveyards."

Table 2. Journalists and Humanitarian Workers Killed in Gaza, Afghanistan, and Ukraine Wars³²

| War | Committee To Protect Journalists Estimates of Journalists/Media Workers Killed | Aid Worker Security Database Report of Humanitarian Aid Workers Killed in Gaza, October 2023- September 2025 |
|---|--|--|
| Israeli Military Operations in Gaza, 2023-28 September 2025 | 195 (-248)* | 554 |
| Afghanistan, 2001-2021 | 74 | 446 |
| Ukraine, February 2022- August 2025 | 19 | 32 |

* The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) is investigating additional cases of journalists being killed. 34 The higher end estimate (248) is from the UN Human Rights Office.

The rate of killing of journalists in Gaza has declined over the course of fighting.

Using data collected by the Committee to Protect Journalists, an average of about 8 journalists have been killed each month in Gaza. 248 journalists have been killed since the start of the war, an average of about 10 per month. In comparison, over the course of nearly 20 years of the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan, an average of less than one journalist was killed per month.

Journalists have been killed accidentally while reporting in many wars and this has certainly happened in Gaza. In addition, the Israel

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Sources: Committee to Protect Journalists, [Journalist Motive Confirmed and Media Workers Motive Confirmed and Unconfirmed](https://cpj.org/), retrieved from <https://cpj.org/> and Committee to Protect Journalists, [Israel-Gaza War](https://cpj.org/full-coverage-israel-gaza-war/), <https://cpj.org/full-coverage-israel-gaza-war/>. Aid Worker Security

33 Cost of War, <https://costsofwar.watson.brown.edu/costs/human.>

34

United Nations, Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, "States Must Stop Israel Before All Journalists in Gaza are Silenced: UN Expert"

35 Emma Graham-Harrison, "Israel Unit Tasked with Smearing Gaza Journalists as Hamas Fighters – Report," *The Guardian*, 15 August 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/aug/15/israeli-military-unit-reportedly-tasked-with-linking-journalists-in-gaza-to-hamas.>

havedied,"Todate,CPJhasdeterminedthattotalof59journalistsandmediaworkersweredirectlytargetedandkilledbyIsraeliforces,cas

August2025wasaparticularlydeadlymonthforjournalistsinGaza.On11August2025,theIsraeligovernmentssaidittargetedacorrespon

whowasatthetimeworkinginatenwithotherjournalistsoutidealShifaHospitalinGazacity.ThestrikekilledatotaloffourAlJazeerajournal
oneofher children inadronestrikeonher apartmentcomplex. 40

Further, the Israeligovernment hasattacked andkilled
journalistsoutsideGaza.TheCommittetoProtectJournalistshasnoted that Israeliforceskilled
sixLebanesereportersinLebanon from2023-2025 andthreeIranianreportersinIran in2025. 41

On1September2025,theattack00mCommitteetoProtectJournalistsRegionalPolicyR ReporterswithoutBorderstoprotectjournal

36 Committee to Protect Journalists, "JournalistsCasualtiesintheIsraelGazaWar."

37 SaraJabakhanji, "AlJazeeraCallsIsraeliArmyclaims'baseless'AfterIDFAccuses6JournalistsofBeingMilitants,"CBC,24October2024, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/israel-gaza-al-jazeera-journalists-1.7361844>.

38 Kelly, "TheDeadlyTollonJournalistsintheGazaWar."Reuters,
"IsraelHitsGazaHospital,KillingatLeast20People,IncludingFiveJournalists," *Reuters*, 25August2025.
<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-hits-gaza-hospital-killing-least-20-people-including-five-journalists-2025-08-25/>.

HumanRights, OfficeoftheHighCommissioner,
"StatesMustStopIsraelBeforeAllJournalistsinGazaareSilenced:UNExperts," 4September2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/09/states-must-stop-israel-all-journalists-gaza-are-silenced-un-experts>.

39 MerlynThomas,BenedictGarmanandSebastianVandermeersch,"NewFootageShowsIsraelStruckGaza'sNasserHospitalFourTimes"
BBCNews, 29August2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cly6lxn114po>.

40 HosniNedemandRaniaAbuShamala, "1MorePalestinianJournalistKilledinIsraeliStrikeonGaza," *AA*,
31August2025, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/1-more-palestinian-journalist-killed-in-israeli-strike-on-gaza/3674605#>.

41 Committee to Protect Journalists, "JournalistsCasualtiesintheIsraelGazaWar," updated19September2025,
<https://cpj.org/2023/10/journalist-casualties-in-the-israel-gaza-conilict/>.

42 AyaBatrawi, "MediaOutletsDemandIsraelGrantAccesstoGaza,HaltAttacksonJournalistsThere,"
NationalPublicRadio, 1September2025, <https://www.npr.org/2025/09/01/nx-s1-5521944/news-outlets-call-for-safety-of-journalists-covering-the-war-in-gaza>.

43 DavidGritton, "IsraeliStrikesinYemenKill35People,HouthisSay," *BBCNews*, 11September2025,
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c179e5v552ko>.

MohamedMandour,"Israel'sKillingof31YemeniJournalistsMarksDeadliestGlobalAttackin16years,"CommittetoProtectJournalists,19

Director, Sarah Qudah, said,

“Since October 7, 2023, Israel has emerged as a regional killer of journalists, with repeated incidents in Gaza, Lebanon, Iran, and now Yemen conflict.”

Gaza Ministry of Health Data Disputed But Used by Israel and NATO

With limited outside access to Gaza, observers rely on the Gaza Ministry of Health, which, since the start of the war, is the only organization on the ground that reports updates of aggregate figures from the Gaza Ministry of Health every few days.⁴⁶

The Gaza Ministry of Health recording of deaths and injuries has been done at some risk; several of the officials recording the deaths have themselves been killed while doing their work. Thus, as the scholar Mike Spagat notes,

“It is unlikely that the MoH now possesses death records for the full course of the war even remotely close in quality to those it compiled during the first months. Unsurprisingly, given the conditions under which it is produced, flaws and inconsistencies in Gaza Ministry of Health data have been identified

and there are some errors in the UN reporting of those figures. For example, the ages and sexes of those killed have sometimes been changed or corrected.

On the other hand, independent scholars have found the methods used by the Gaza Ministry of Health to be reliable, even as it modifies them to take account of changed

<https://cpj.org/2025/09/israels-killing-of-31-yemeni-journalists-marks-deadliest-global-attack-in-16-years/>.

⁴⁴ Qudah quoted in Mandour, “Israel’s Killing of 31 Yemeni Journalists Marks Deadliest Global Attack in 16 Years.”

⁴⁵ “List of identified victims, as published by the Palestinian MoH in Gaza.” Airwars.

<https://airwars.org/moh-list/>.

⁴⁶ Gaza Ministry of Health data reported by the United Nations, “Palestinian Casualties.”

⁴⁷ Mike Spagat, “Quality Data Recording in Gaza, Potentially Evidencing Genocide, Frustrated by Israeli Strikes—Contravening International Court of Justice Orders,” *Action on Armed Violence*, 19 February 2024, <https://aoav.org.uk/2024/quality-data-recording-in-gaza-evidencing-potential-genocide-frustrated-by-israeli-strikes-contravening-international-court-of-justice-orders/>.

⁴⁸ Gabriel Epstein, “Gaza Fatality Data Has Become Completely Unreliable,” *Policy Watch* 3851,

The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 26 March 2024. <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/gaza-fatality-data-has-become-completely-unreliable>.

⁴⁹ Gabriel Epstein, “How Hamas Manipulates Gaza Fatality Numbers: Examining the Male Undercount and Other Problems,” *Policy Notes*, No. 144. *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, 25 January 2024. <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/how-hamas-manipulates-gaza-fatality-numbers-examining-male-undercount-and-other>.

conditions on the ground.⁵⁰

Further, despite assertions that the Gaza Ministry of Health has been exaggerating the death toll, Israel's own intelligence service On 9 September 2025, Herzi Halevi, the former Chief of Staff of the Israel Defense Forces told a audience of Israelis that, "There are 2.2 million people in Gaza, over ten percent were killed or injured," a number that is consistent with the Gaza Ministry of Health figures for killed and injured.⁵⁴

Undercounting

The current Gaza Ministry of Health figures may in fact be a significant undercount

of the number of violent war deaths. There are two reasons. First, as is the case in most wars, the public health infrastructure in Gaza

noted that the war had disrupted and impeded the ability of the Ministry of Health in Gaza to collect data from hospitals and other health

50 Michael Spagat and Daniel Silverman, "Is the Hamas-run Ministry of Health Data on Fatalities in Gaza to be Trusted," *Action on Armed Violence*, 1 November 2023, <https://aoav.org.uk/2023/are-the-gazan-casualty-figures-being-reported-reliable-two-conflict-experts-compared-the-numbers-to-previous-attacks-and-conclude-they-are-credible/>. Assma Maad, "Why the Gaza Health Ministry's Death Count is Considered Reliable," *Le Monde*, 13 October 2024.

51 Mitchell Prothero, "Israeli Intelligence has Deemed Hamas Run Health Ministry's Death Toll Figures Generally Accurate," *Vice*, 25 January 2024. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/israeli-intelligence-health-ministry-death-toll/>.

52 Israeli official, quoted in Prothero, "Israeli Intelligence has Deemed Hamas Run Health Ministry's Death Toll Figures Generally Accurate."

53 Prothero, "Israeli Intelligence has Deemed Hamas Run Health Ministry's Death Toll Figures Generally Accurate."

54 Halevi quoted in Roni Green Shaulov,

"He Lives in the Envelope: The Concept Has Collapsed. No One Said 'do this and that' and Went Back to Sleep." *Ynet*, 10 September 2025. 55

Zeina Jamaluddine, Hanan Abukmail, Sarah Aly, Oona Campbell, Francesco Chechi, "Traumatic Injury Mortality in the Gaza Strip from Oct 7, 2023, to Jun

56 United Nations Human Rights, "UN Experts Appalled by Relentless Israeli Attacks on Gaza's Healthcare System," Office of the High Commissioner, 13 August 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/08/un-experts-appalled-relentless-israeli-attacks-gazas-healthcare-system>; United Nations UN News,

"Health and Aid Workers Targeted in Conflicts Around the World, UN Agency Says," 23 August 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165710>.

Second, many of the bodies of those killed by bombardment haven't been found. Indeed,

nonreliable figures are recurrently available for the number of people in Gaza whose bodies are yet to be recovered. In January 2025, at the start of the short

During the January to March 2025 cease-fire, several hundred bodies were recovered. However, "the lack of equipment to move large masses of rubble— exacerbated by IDF airstrikes on construction vehicles Israel identified as having been used in the October 7 attack— along with the need to avoid unexploded ordnance likely points to significant numbers of unrecovered bodies."⁵⁹ Thus, as one UN observer noted, "the unmistakable smell of death everywhere— a grizzly reminder that the ruins lining the street hide the remains of mothers, fathers, children."⁶⁰

As discussed below, in the areas where it operates, Israel's military has demolished and bulldozed away many partially destroyed buildings and some

Two separate independent scholarly analyses of the number of people killed in Gaza suggest that the Gaza Ministry of Health figures may be a significant undercount of the number of violent deaths.⁶¹ The first, a report published in *The Lancet* in February 2025 concluded that

"Our analysis supports the accuracy of the MoH reported mortality figures but suggests that these are to be treated as a minimum estimate subject to

⁵⁷ Joel Gunter, "'In Every Street There are Dead': Gaza Rescuers Reckon with Scale of Destruction," *BBC News*, 20 January 2025. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn8x00mgjxmo>.

⁵⁸ Quoted in Prothero, "Israeli Intelligence has Deemed Hamas Run Health Ministry's Death Toll Figures Generally Accurate."

⁵⁹ Gabriel Epstein, "Assessing the Gaza Death Toll After Eighteen Months of War," *Policy Notes*, No. 158. The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, May 2025.

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/sites/default/files/pdf/PolicyNote158Epsteinv3.pdf>.

⁶⁰ Olga Cherevko, "When Gaza Burned, Children Starved, Hospitals Collapsed—

[did you act? Briefing by Olga Cherevko, OCHA Spokesperson in Gaza, to journalists in UN Headquarters in New York, United Nations Office for](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/sites/default/files/pdf/PolicyNote158Epsteinv3.pdf)

[zEkdDE3NTc5MzMzMdIkajYwJGwwJGgw](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/sites/default/files/pdf/PolicyNote158Epsteinv3.pdf).

⁶¹ Jamaluddine, Abukmail, Aly, Campbell, Chechi, "Traumatic Injury Mortality in the Gaza Strip from Oct 7, 2023, to June 30, 2024."

⁶² Jamaluddine, Abukmail, Aly, Campbell, Chechi,

"Traumatic Injury Mortality in the Gaza Strip from Oct 7, 2023, to June 30, 2024," p. 476.

⁶³ Michael Spagat, Jon Pedersen, Khalil Shikaki, Michael Robbins, Eran Bendavid, Håvard Hegre, Debarati Guha-Sapir, "Violent and Nonviolent Death Tolls for the Gaza War: New Primary Evidence," 22 July 2025, p. 2.

<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2025.06.19.25329797v4.full-text>.

“75,200 violent deaths... between October 7, 2023, and January 5, 2025.”⁶⁴
In the same period, through January 2025, the Gaza Ministry of Health reported about 45,650 deaths.⁶⁵

The Ratio of Noncombatant to Combatant Deaths

In assessing the human toll, there is the question of how many of the dead are civilians and how many are combatants.

As noted above, the Gaza Ministry of Health does not distinguish the number of killed by their combatant or noncombatant. Our war is against Hamas, not against the people of Gaza.”⁶⁷

Yet, it would be hard for the Israeli military, by its own admission, to assess their targeting. As one Israeli intelligence official

The data that Israel's government itself has provided suggests

a high rate of civilian casualties. In early December 2023, Israel said it had killed about 5,000 members of Hamas, and that the ratio of killing was two civilian

64 Their range, with a 95% confidence interval, for the total number of deaths in that period was 63,600–86,800 deaths. Spagat, Pedersen, Shikaki, Robbins, Bendavid, Hegre, Guha-Sapir, “Violent and Nonviolent Death Tolls for the Gaza War,” p. 4.

65 Gaza Ministry of Health Data as reported in United Nations, “Palestinian Casualties.”

66 Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “President Herzog Holds Briefing for International Media,” 12 October 2023, <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/president-herzog-holds-briefing-for-international-media-12-oct-2023>.

67 Natasha Bertrand and Katie BoLillis, “Exclusive: Nearly Half of The Israeli Munitions Dropped On Gaza Are Imprecise 'Dumb Bombs,' US Intelligence Assessment Finds,” *CNN*, 14 December 2023. <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/12/13/politics/intelligence-assessment-dumb-bombs-israel-gaza/index.html>.

68 Prothero, “Israeli Intelligence Has Deemed Hamas Run Health Ministry's Death Toll Figures Generally Accurate.”

69 AFP and Times of Israel Staff, “IDF Officials: 2 civilian deaths for every 1 Hamas fighter killed in Gaza,” *The Times of Israel*, 5 December 2023. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-officials-2-civilian-deaths-for-every-1-hamas-fighter-killed-in-gaza/>.

70 AFP and Times of Israel Staff, “IDF Officials.”

Further, Israeli statements *have consistently overestimated* the number of combatants the IDF has killed, and hence underestimated the number of civilians they have killed. At the start of the war, the IDF website had tallies of “terrorists” killed in Gaza. Starting in 2024 the IDF said that it had killed about 17,000-18,000 Hamas operatives in Gaza. 71 These and similar

estimates of the number of Hamas and other combatants killed had been cited in disputes about the number of civilians killed as a way of suggesting that the IDF was killing too many civilians. For example, in December 2024,

Andrew Fox disputed the Gaza Ministry of Health reports and media estimates of the number of civilians killed, saying “

Given the intense scrutiny of IDF actions, Israel has an incentive to say they had killed a large percentage of Hamas. Yet, i

The Bombing: “Maximum Damage”

In asserting

that Hamas is responsible for the deaths of civilians by turning them into human shields, specifically by hiding behind and

71 Jacob Magid, “Netanyahu Lashes Foreign Press for ‘False’ Reporting Regarding Gaza Humanitarian Situation,” *The Times of Israel*, 4 September 2024. https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/netanyahu-lashes-foreign-press-for-false-reporting-regarding-gaza-humanitarian-situation/.

72 See Ros Atkins, “Israel’s War in Gaza and Proportionality,” *BBC News*, 12 September 2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cr5r76e127do>.

73 Andrew Fox, “Questionable Counting: Analyzing the Death Toll From The Hamas-Run Ministry Of Health In Gaza,” Henry Jackson Society, December 2024. <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/HJS-Questionable-Counting-%E2%80%93-Hamas-Report-web-v2.pdf>. P.

74 Harrison and Abraham, “Revealed.”

75 Harrison and Abraham, “Revealed.”

76 Peter Beaumont, “What is a Human Shield and how Hamas Been Accused of Using Them?” *The Guardian*, 30 October 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/30/human-shield-israel-claim-hamas-command-centre-under-hospital-palestinian-civilian-gaza-city>.

The Israeli government has investigated reports that its own soldiers are using Palestinians as shields by sending them ahead of Israeli forces

The current Gaza war has had several phases. In response to the Hamas attack, there

was an initial bombardment of targets in Gaza by the IDF, which began immediately on 7 October 2023, followed by ground troops or occupiers of different parts of Gaza. There was a short ceasefire from mid-January to mid-March 2025. Immediately after the ceasefire ended, Israel's government resumed heavy bombardment of Gaza. Israel also blocked all humanitarian aid from March through April 2025. Another surge in Israeli military operations in Gaza began in August 2025.

As is the case in several recent wars, the bombardment in the first few weeks, before

the ground invasion, was particularly intense and this was the quarter with the highest number of deaths and injuries. The

Israeli military bombardment in the first week targeted urban areas, first, the town

of Beit Hanoun and Gaza City, which before the bombardment began, had a population density greater than New York City.

During the first few days of the war, before the ground invasion which began on 27 October, according to the Israeli Air Force, the number of deaths and injuries, according to the Gaza Ministry of Health as reported by the UN.

⁷⁷ James Mackenzie and Maayan Lubell, "Israel Launches Gaza War's Second Phase With Ground Operation, Netanyahu Says," *Reuters*, 28 October 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/eu-calls-humanitarian-pauses-gaza-aid-israel-raids-enclave-2023-10-26/>.

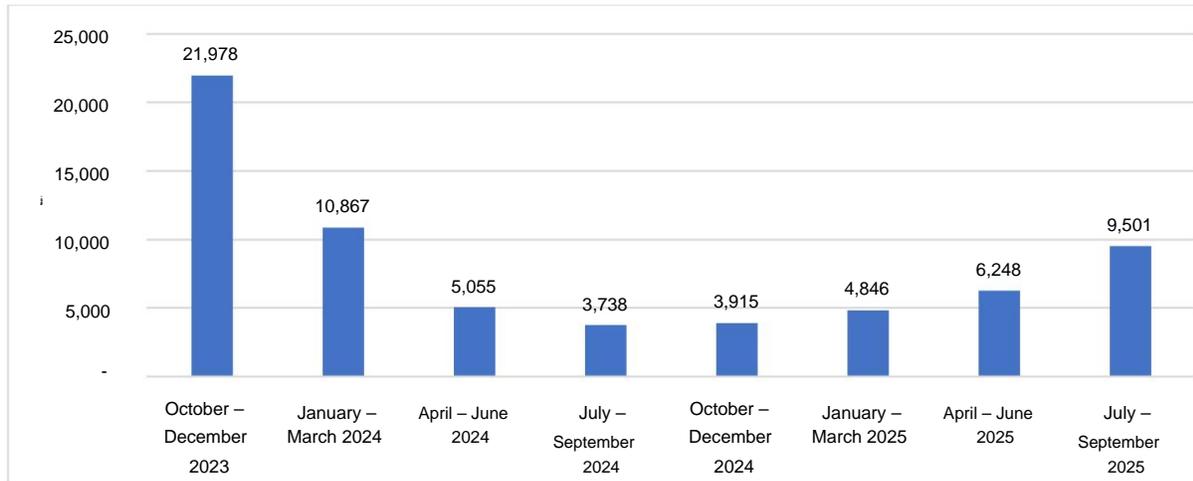
⁷⁸ Israeli Air Force, <https://x.com/IAFsite/status/1712484101763342772>.

Also see Philip Webber and Stuart Parkinson, "Gaza: One of the Most Intense Bombardments in History?" *Responsible Science Journal*, no. 7, 13 March 2024, <https://www.sgr.org.uk/resources/gaza-one-most-intense-bombardments-history>.

⁷⁹ Ryan Geitner, et al., "Patterns of Harm Analysis, Gaza, October 2023," *Air Wars*, December 2024, p. 6. <https://gaza-patterns-harm.airwars.org/assets/Airwars%20Patterns%20of%20harm%20analysis%20-%20Gaza%20October%202023.pdf>.

⁸⁰ Geitner, et al., "Patterns of Harm Analysis, Gaza, October 2023," p. 5.

Figure 1. Gaza Ministry of Health Data on the Number of People Killed in Gaza Each Quarter (October 2023-September 2025)⁸¹



Another analysis of the data, by public health scholars Jamaluddine, Abukmail, Aly, Campbell, and Chechi, using more

Because these Gaza Ministry of Health figures are, as discussed above, likely an undercount of the total killed, the number

The high level of civilian casualties compared to other recent wars is also a result of a change in Israeli military targeting

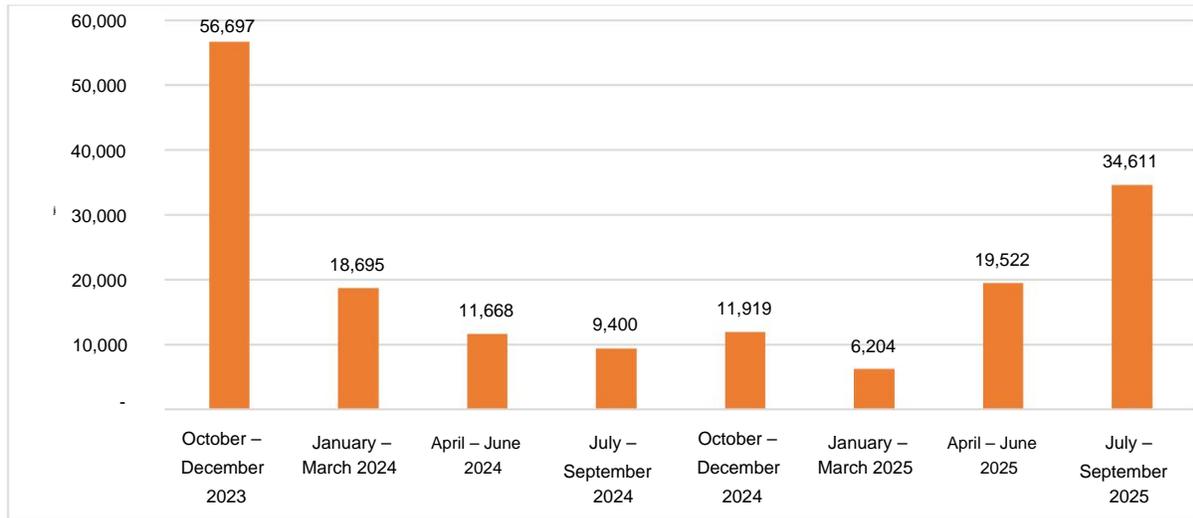
81 Source: Gaza Ministry of Health Data as reported in United Nations, "Palestinian Casualties."

82 Jamaluddine, Abukmail, Aly, Campbell, and Chechi, "Traumatic Injury Mortality in the Gaza Strip from Oct 7, 2023, to June 30, 2024," p. 475.

83 Quoted in Yagil Levy, "The Israeli Army Has Dropped the Restraint in Gaza, and the Data Shows Unprecedented Killing," *Haaretz*, 9 December 2023, https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-12-09/ty-article-magazine/highlight/the-israeli-army-has-dropped-the-restraint-in-gaza-and-data-shows-unprecedented-killing/0000018c-4cca-db23-ad9f-6cdae8ad0000?_gl=1*1lu7c11*_gcl_au*MzQwOTE5MzYuMTc1ODM3MjQ2Ng...

84 Bethan McKernan and Quique Kierszenbaum, "'We're Focused on Maximum Damage': Ground Offensive in Gaza Seems Imminent," *The Guardian*, 10 October 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/10/right-now-it-is-one-day-at-a-time-life-on-israels-frontline-with-gaza>.

Figure 2. Gaza Ministry of Health Data on the Number of People Injured in Gaza Each Quarter (October 2023-September 2025)⁸⁵



Specifically, in the first two weeks of fighting, using loosened rules of engagement that gave IDF officers the authority to risk killing up to 20 civilians. In previous

conflicts with Hamas, many Israeli strikes were approved only after officers concluded that no civilians would be hurt. Sometimes, officers

The high civilian toll is also in part a consequence of the choices that the IDF has made to use unguided and very large weapons in civilian areas.

⁸⁵ Source: Gaza Ministry of Health Data as reported in United Nations, "Palestinian Casualties."

⁸⁶ Patrick Kingsley, "Israel's Strikes on Gaza Are Some of the Most Intense This Century," *The New York Times*, 26 October 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/25/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-airstrikes.html>. ; Patrick Kingsley et al., "Israel Loosened Its Rule to Bomb Hamas Fighters, Killing Many More Civilians," *The New York Times*, 26 December 2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/26/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-gaza-bombing.html?searchResultPosition=1>.

⁸⁷ Kingsley, et al., "Israel Loosened Its Rule to Bomb Hamas Fighters, Killing Many More Civilians."

⁸⁸ Harry Davies, "Israel Strikes on Gaza Schools Used as Civilian Shelters Are Part of a Deliberate Strategy, Say Sources," *The Guardian*, 2 June 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jun/02/israel-strikes-gaza-schools-strategy>. Yuval Abraham, "Israelis Falsely Designating Gaza Areas Empty in Order to Bomb Them," *+972 Magazine*, 4 June 2024, <https://www.972mag.com/israel-gaza-empty-neighborhoods-airstrikes/>.

⁸⁹ "Mark 84 bomb" <https://mapsaimuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Mark-84-Bomb.pdf>.

15 inches (381.0 mm) of metal or 11 ft (3.4 m) of concrete, depending on the height from which it is dropped, and causes lethal fragmentation to a radius of 40 ft (12.2 m) that Israel used.⁹¹

An analysis of Mark-84 bomb craters for bombs dropped near hospitals in Gaza between 7 October and 17 November 2023 found that,

“84% of all hospitals were within 800 m, the ‘damage and injury’ range, of at least one M-84 bomb detonation, and 25% of all hospitals were within 360 m, the ‘lethal fragmentation’ range.”⁹²

On 31 October 2023, Israel's government, which said it was targeting underground tunnels and Hamas fighters, attacked Jabalya refugee camp. The attack may have used at least two 2,000-pound bombs.⁹³ The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner said,

“At around 1420 hours, the IDF struck a residential block in densely populated Jabalya Refugee Camp. The strike completely flattened an area of at least 100 m by 100 m.”⁹⁴

The Biden administration paused the transfer of Mark-84 bombs in early May 2024, over concerns that they were being used in densely populated areas. As Biden said in an interview with CNN, “Civilians have been killed in Gaza as a consequence of those bombs and other ways in which they go after population centers.”⁹⁵ The Biden administration's review of “Safeguards and Accountability With Respect to Transferred Defense Articles” found that, “given Israel's significant reliance on U.S.-made defense articles, it is reasonable to assess that defense articles covered under NSM-20 have been used by Israeli security forces.”⁹⁶

⁹⁰ “Mark 84 bomb.”

⁹¹ Humeyra Pamuk and Mike Stone, “Exclusive: US Has Sent Israel Thousands of 2,000-lb Bombs Since Oct. 7,” *Reuters*, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us-has-sent-israel-thousands-2000-pound-bombs-since-oct-7-2024-06-28/>.

⁹² Dennis Kunichof, et al., “Are Hospitals Collateral Damage? Assessing Geospatial Proximity of 2000-lb Bomb Detonations to Hospital Facilities in the Gaza Strip from October 7 to November 17, 2023,” *PLoS Global Public Health*, 10 October 2024. <https://journals.plos.org/globalpublichealth/article?id=10.1371/journal.pgph.0003178#pgph.0003178.ref011>.

⁹³ Christoph Koettl, Ainar Tifenthaler, Haley Willis, and Alexander Cardia, “Israel Used 2,000-Pound Bombs in Strike on Jabaliya, Analysis Shows,” *The New York Times*, 3 November 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/03/world/middleeast/israel-bomb-jabaliya.html>.

⁹⁴ United Nations, “Thematic Report, Indiscriminate and Disproportionate Attacks During the Conflict in Gaza (October–December 2023),” United Nations Human Rights, p. 6. <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/opt/20240619-ohchr-thematic-report-indiscrim-disprop-attacks-gaza-oct-dec2023.pdf>.

⁹⁵ Joseph Biden quoted in Kevin Liptak, “Biden Says He Will Stop Sending Bombs and Artillery Shell to Israel if It Launches Major Invasion of Rafah,” *CNN*, 9 May 2024, <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/05/08/politics/joe-biden-interview-cnntv>.

forcessinceOctober7ininstancesinconsistentwithitsIHLobligationorwithestablishedbestpracticesformitigatingcivilianharm."TheU.S.intelligence

Attacks on hospitals in Gaza continue. For example, an Israeli missile attack

NasserHospital,thelastremaininghospitalinsouthernGaza,on25August2025,hittheemergencydepartmentandthesurgeryaswellasinpatientpo

States can choose to be more or less careful about measures and minimize risks to civilians, including not only where and when to use force, but also whether or not to use precision-guided weapons. Indeed, although precision-guided weapons have been available, because the U.S. had provided them, Israel has often not used them. According to a U.S. intelligence assessment, 55-60% of the 29,000 bombs used by Israel through mid-December 2023 were precision-guided, and 40-45% of the munitions were unguided,

96 Antony Blinken,

["Report to Congress under Section 2 of the National Security Memorandum on Safeguards and Accountability with Respect to Transferred Defense Ar"](#)

97 Reuters, "Israel Receives Shipment of Heavy Bombs Cleared by Trump," *Reuters*, 16 February 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/israel-receives-shipment-heavy-bombs-cleared-by-trump-2025-02-16/>.

Action on Armed Violence, "US Ships 1,600 MK-84 Heavy Bombs to Israel Amid Concerns of Resurgent Conflict," AOA, <https://aoav.org.uk/2025/us-ships-1600-mk-84-heavy-bombs-to-israel-amid-concerns-of-resurgent-conflict/>.

98 Defense Security Cooperation Agency, News, "Israel— Munitions and Munitions Support," Department of Defense, 28 February 2025, Transmittal No. 25-34. <https://www.dsca.mil/Press-Media/Major-Arms-Sales/Article-Display/Article/4088258/israel-munitions-and-munitions-support>.

99 Reuters, "Israel Hits Gaza Hospital, Killing at Least 20 People, Including Five Journalists." Megan Fisher and Emir Nader, "Israeli Double Strike on Gaza Hospital — What We Know," *BBC News*, 25 August 2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c80d2zrdj7vo>.

Abeer Salman, Laurent Kent, Thomas Bordeaux, Gianluca Mezzoiore, and Sarah El Sirgany, "New Video Reveals Third Strike in Deadly 'Double-Tap' Attack on Gaza Hospital," *CNN*, 28 August 2025, <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/08/27/middleeast/gaza-nasser-hospital-israel-attack-three-strikes-intl>.

“dumb”bombs.100

By comparison, in Afghanistan from 7 October to 23 December 2001, the U.S. military made 6,546 strikes sorties where at least one

Table 3. Bombing Rates During Air-War Phases of Recent Wars¹⁰⁴

| War | Time Period | Approximate Number of Bombs/Missiles Dropped | Average Number of Bombs/Missiles Dropped/Day |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| US-led War in Afghanistan | 7 October– 23 December 2001 | c. 17,500 | c. 224 per day |
| US War in Iraq | 19 March– 18 April 2003 | 29,199 | c. 942 per day |
| Israel's War in Gaza | 7–12 October 2023 | c. 6,000 | c. 1,000 per day |

In the post-9/11 wars, the U.S. had a “Non-Combatant Casualty Cut-Off Value”, or NCV, the threshold above which the U.S. would hesitate to strike because there was a likelihood that too many civilians would be killed or injured.

The NCV value is set by the President or Secretary of Defense, to reflect the “cultural, geographical, operational progress, hostna

100

[Natasha Bertrand and Katie Bo Lillis, “Exclusive: Nearly Half of the Israeli Munitions Dropped on Gaza are Imprecise ‘Dumb Bomb,’ US Intelligence Assessment%20says..”](#)

¹⁰¹ Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Air Power Against Terror: America's Conduct of Operation Enduring Freedom* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2010) p. 248, figure 6.1.

¹⁰² Air Force Historical Support Division, “2001—Operation Enduring Freedom,” <https://www.ahistory.af.mil/FAQs/Fact-Sheets/Article/458975/2001-operation-enduring-freedom/>. Carl Conetta, “Operation Enduring Freedom: Why a Higher Rate of Civilian Bombing Casualties,” Project on Defense Alternatives, 18 January 2002, revised 24 January 2002). <http://www.comw.org/pda/0201oef.html>.

¹⁰³ United States Air Force, Lt. General T. Michael Moseley, “Operation IRAQI FREEDOM—By The Numbers,” 30 April 2003, Unclassified, https://media.defense.gov/2013/Jun/13/2001329960/-1/-1/0/uscentaf_oif_report_30apr2003.pdf. Anthony Cordesman, *The Iraq War: Strategy, Tactics, and Military Lessons* (Westport: Praeger, 2003) p. 143.

¹⁰⁴ Calculated from sources noted in the text above.

operations.”¹⁰⁵ The number itself is usually secret. It has been reported that in 2005, the NCV in Iraq was 30. ¹⁰⁶ In 2016, US

“senior defense officials” acknowledged that while the NCV had previously been zero for operations in Syria, the threat

US military officials sometimes complained during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that the rules of engagement, or the NCV set by civilian officials, were too restrictive because they were intended to minimize civilian harm.¹⁰⁹ By contrast, the former Israeli General Herzl Halevi, the Chief of Staff of the IDF from January 2023 until March 2025, said, “Not once has anyone ever restricted me. Not once. Not the military AG [advocate general Yifat Tomer

Yerushalmi] who, by the way, hasn't the authority to restrict me.” Rather, Halevi said, “There are legal advisers whose

The data

shows that Israeli government assertions of care, legality, and legal defensibility aside, the numbers of civilians killed

As Figure 3

shows, children comprise a significant portion of those killed. This is unsurprising since 47% of the population is under

¹⁰⁵ Scott Graham, “The Non-Combatant Casualty Cut-Off Value: Assessment of a Novel Targeting Technique in Operation Inherent Resolve,” *International Criminal Law Review*, vol. 18, no. 4, (2018) p. 1106. Annex E (Consolidated ROE) SECRET//REL TO USA, IRQ, MCFI/20151003, (2005) p. E-1-9. http://wikileaks.org/wiki/US_Rules_of_Engagement_for_Iraq.

This document was unclassified by leak in 2008. It was not an officially declassified document.

¹⁰⁷ Lolita C. Baldor, “New War Rules Emphasize Need to Avoid Civilian Casualties,” *Military Times*, 13 December 2016. Also see Tom Vanden Brook, “New Rules Allow More Civilian Casualties in Air War Against ISIL,” *USA Today*, 19 April 2016, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2016/04/19/new-rules-allow-more-civilian-casualties-air-war-against-isil/83190812/>.

¹⁰⁸

Joseph R. Biden, “Presidential Policy Memorandum Governing Direct Action Counterterrorism Operations Outside Areas of Active Hostilities,”

¹⁰⁹ Neta C. Crawford, *Accountability for Killing: Moral Responsibility for Collateral Damage in America's Post-9/11 Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

¹¹⁰ Julian Borger, “We Took the Gloves Off: Ex-IDF Chief Conirms Gaza Casualties Over 200,000,” *The Guardian*, 12 September 2025. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/sep/12/israeli-ex-commander-coniirms-palestinian-casualties-are-more-than-200000?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other.

¹¹¹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics,

“Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) Presents the Conditions of the Palestinian Population on the Occasion of the World Population

and health workers inside Gaza and access constraints currently make it unfeasible.”¹¹⁶

A survey of Gaza coordinated by public health experts in early 2025 estimated that there had already been between 4,540 and 12,500 indirect deaths. Doctors Without Borders (or Médecins Sans Frontières) suspended operations in Gaza City stating that,

“The relentless Israeli offensive in Gaza City, Palestine, has forced Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) to suspend vital medical activities in the city.”¹¹⁷

The scale of devastation in Gaza likely means that the future indirect death toll will be extremely high, even if the war ended today. The vast majority of Palestinians in Gaza have nowhere safe to live and basic public infrastructure has been gutted.

In late February 2024, the UN had estimated that 35% of structures in Gaza had been destroyed; as of 8 July 2025,

78% of all structures had been destroyed or damaged. The situation for housing is worse. More than 90% of housing is damaged or destroyed.¹¹⁸

In July 2025, Save the Children and more than a dozen other humanitarian organizations reported that,

“Palestinians continue to be squeezed into smaller, overcrowded areas that lack the resources to support human life.”¹²³

In areas that are under Israeli control, the IDF and private contractors are destroying the remaining buildings. Most recently, as Israel has

116 Jamaluddine, Abukmail, Aly, Campbell, Chechi,

“Traumatic Injury Mortality in the Gaza Strip from Oct 7, 2023, to June 30, 2024,” p. 475.

117 Spagat, Pedersen, Shikaki, Robbins, Bendavid, Hegre, and Guha-Sapir, “Violent and Nonviolent Death Tolls for the Gaza War,” p. 4

118 IPC, “Gaza Strip,” p. 1.

119 World Health Organization, “Health System at Breaking Point as Hostilities Further Intensify in Gaza, WHO Warns,” 22 May 2025.

<https://www.who.int/news/item/22-05-2025-health-system-at-breaking-point-as-hostilities-further-intensify--who-warns#:~:text=Of%20the%2019%20hospitals%2C%2012,Strip%20are%20damaged%20or%20destroyed.>

<https://www.who.int/news/item/22-05-2025-health-system-at-breaking-point-as-hostilities-further-intensify--who-warns#:~:text=Of%20the%2019%20hospitals%2C%2012,Strip%20are%20damaged%20or%20destroyed.>

120 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Reported Impact Snapshot, Gaza Strip (3 September 2025).”

121 Médecins Sans Frontières, “MSF Forced to Suspend Gaza City Activities Amid Intensified Israeli Offensive,”

MSF Press Release, 26 September 2025. <https://www.msf.org/msf-forced-suspend-activities-amid-israeli-offensive-gaza-city>.

122 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Reported Impact Snapshot, Gaza Strip (3 Sept.

2025),” <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/reported-impact-snapshot-gaza-strip-3-september-2025>.

123 Save the Children, “Gaza Humanitarian Snapshot,” 15 July 2025.

<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/Gaza-Humanitarian-Snapshot-15-July.pdf>.

taken over Gaza City, it has blown up and then bulldozed individual homes and even entire neighborhoods.¹²⁴

Healthcare is thus unavailable or inadequate for most people.

The remaining hospitals are overwhelmed and functioning without crucial supplies. Dr. Rik Peeperkorn, the World Health Organization Representative in Gaza, says that hospitals are non-functional, staff are overwhelmed, and basic supplies are cut off.

This outbreak, similar to those seen in conflict-

affected settings such as South Sudan or Syria, underscores the devastating impact of displacement and water, sanitation, and hygiene failures.

As the Gaza War approaches the two-year mark, nearly the entire population faces

conditions of a food crisis worse. The capacity to produce food in Gaza is nearly zero, with only 1.5% of cropland undamaged and accessible according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.¹²⁷ With the agricultural sector almost completely destroyed by the Israeli military, Gaza thus necessarily relies on food imports.

As UNICEF reported in August 2025,

“By the end of September, more than 640,000 people will face catastrophic levels of food insecurity—classified as IPC Phase 5—

across the Gaza Strip. An additional 1.14 million people in the territory will be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and further 396,000 people in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) than in Gaza City.”¹²⁸ As the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said in late August 2025,

“Famine is no longer a looming possibility—it is a present-day catastrophe.”¹²⁹

The number of indirect deaths is difficult to estimate and predict. Research on recent wars has found that the ratio of direct-to-

indirect deaths has varied, depending on conditions. According to the Geneva Declaration Secretariat, “Between three and 15 times as many

124 Sebastian Vandermeersch and Matt Murphy, “Israel Destroys Dozens of Buildings in Gaza City as New Offensive Intensifies,” *BBC News*, 5 September 2025.

125 United Nations, “Gaza health system ‘catastrophic’ with hospitals overwhelmed and medicines running out, WHO warns.” *UN News*, 12 August 2025. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165631>.

126 Samer Abuzerr, Hanin Hamdan and Jinan Charafeddine, “Pediatric Meningitis Outbreak in Gaza Amid Health System Collapse,” *The Lancet*, 16 August 2025. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(25\)01520-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(25)01520-X/fulltext).

127 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, “Land Available for Cultivation in the Gaza Strip as of July 2025,” *FAO*, <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/c93215e8-2ac0-4e36-a82b-25ee66fa80b7/content>.

128 UNICEF, “Famine Confirmed for First Time in Gaza,” Press Release, 22 August 2025, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/famine-confirmed-first-time-gaza>.

129 United Nations, “Gaza Death and Destruction ‘Without Parallel in Recent Times’: Guterres,” *UN News*, 28 August 2025, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165734>.

130 Geneva Declaration Secretariat, *Global Burden of Armed Violence*. Geneva, 2008. <https://www.refworld.org/reference/research/gds/2008/en/64390>.

quite a range and depends on many factors, including the scale of humanitarian assistance and the rate of infrastructure repair.

One analysis of mortality in Gaza, published in July

2024, used the Geneva Declaration Secretariat range as a starting point and then suggested that indirect death in Gaza could be as high as 132. This focus can potentially mitigate the worst outcomes seen in more isolated conflicts." However, if anything, the deterioration of conditions in Gaza since 2024 suggests that the ratio of indirect to direct deaths will be on the high

As noted, some aid is reaching Gaza. However, the destruction of infrastructure continues and the aid is inadequate to make up for the losses. As of September 2025, about 82% of the territory "was within the Israeli militarized zone, under displacement orders, or where those overla

The UN relief agency for Palestinians (UNRWA) had been providing education, health, and housing for hundreds of thousands of people in

Israel completely halted the delivery of aid to Gaza in March 2025 and for 11 weeks, no food, fuel, or medicine was allowed into Gaza. Some aid from humanitarian organizations began to be distributed in May 2025 through the U.S. and Israeli-run Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) which was created in February 2025. In May 2025, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faced domestic criticism from the right-wing for

Netanyahu said "only minimal" aid would be allowed into Gaza.

Netanyahu said, "Our best friends in the world—senators I know as strong supporters of Israel—have warned that they cannot support us if images of mass starvation emerge. We

131 Rasha Khatib, Martin McKee, and Salim Yusuf, "Counting the Dead in Gaza: Difficult but Essential," *The Lancet*, 20 July 2024, 404, 237–238 (2024). [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(24\)01169-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(24)01169-3/fulltext).

132 Michael Spagat, "A critical analysis of The Lancet's letter 'Counting the Dead in Gaza: Difficult but Essential'." Professor Spagat reviews the claim that the total Gaza death toll may reach upwards of 186,000. *Action on Armed Violence*, 10 July 2024. <https://aoav.org.uk/2024/a-critical-analysis-of-the-lancets-letter-counting-the-dead-in-gaza-difficult-but-essential-professor-mike-spagat-reviews-the-claim-the-total-gaza-death-toll-may-reach-upwards-of-186000/>.

133 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Reported Impact Snapshot (Gaza Strip) (10 September 2025)" <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/reported-impact-snapshot-gaza-strip-10-September-2025>.

134 UNRWA is the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. UNRWA, "UNRWA in Gaza" Fact Sheet. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/unrwa_the_backbone_of_the_humanitarian_response_-_factsheet_en2.pdf.

must avoid famine, both for practical reasons and diplomatic ones. Without international backing, we won't be able to complete them

Since May 2025, the GHF has operated four distribution sites in Gaza — three in southern Gaza, and one in central Gaza.

On 5 Aug 2025, UN experts citing the poor record of aid distribution under the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation called for it to be dismantled and for previous

Aid agencies continue to report that Israel has made it difficult or impossible for them to transport and distribute aid into Gaza. Israel must facilitate *all*

entry into Gaza. As the data in Table 4 shows, the flow of aid to Gaza has waxed and waned since the end of the ceasefire in March 2025.

Table 4. Outcome of Humanitarian Organizations' Requests to the Israeli Coordination/Liaison Administration for Access to Distribute Aid to Gaza in 2025¹³⁸

| Request | 18-31 March | 1-30 April | 1-31 May | June | 1-30 July | 1-31 August | September | Total | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|--------------|-----|----|-----|-----|----|
| Total Requests | 106 | 200 | 276 | 393 | 341 | 356 | 148 | 1,820 | | | | | |
| #Withdrawn* 1 | | 8 | 14 | 50 | 54 | 47 | 28 | 167 | | | | | |
| %Withdrawn 1 | | 13 | 14 | 8 | 105 | 156 | 174 | 69 | 28 | 53 | 8 | 13 | 9% |
| #Denied 75 | | | | | | | | 24 | 631 | | | | |
| %Denied | 71 | | | 57 | 44 | 33 | | 20 | 8 | 85 | 16 | 35% | |
| #Impeded | 6 | | | 38 | | | | 108 | | | 40 | 318 | |
| %Impeded | 6 | 4 | | 12 | | | | 25 | 30 | | 27 | 17% | |
| #Facilitated 24 | | 79 | 73 | 131 | 140 | 192 | | 65 | 704 | | | | |
| %Facilitated 23 | | 40 | 26 | 33 | | | | 41 | 54 | 44 | 39% | | |

135 Noa Shpigel, "We're Destroying Gaza": Netanyahu, Smotrich Rush to Soothe the Right's Fears Over Aid Renewal," *Haaretz*, 19 May 2025, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2025-05-19/ty-article/premium/were-destroying-gaza-netanyahu-smotrich-rush-to-soothe-fears-over-aid-renewal/00000196-e7b4-d93f-a3b6-fff77c780000>.

136 United Nations, "UN Experts Call For Immediate Dismantling of Gaza Humanitarian Foundation," Press Release, 5 August 2025. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/08/un-experts-call-immediate-dismantling-gaza-humanitarian-foundation>.

137 Tammam Aloudata and Philip Kleinfeld,

"International Aid Agencies Hold Secret Collaboration Meeting with the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation," *The New Humanitarian*, 8 August 2025. <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2025/08/08/international-aid-agencies-hold-secret-collaboration-meeting-with-the-gaza-humanitarian-foundation>.

138 *Withdrawn due to logistical, operational or security reasons. Source:

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Reported Impact Snapshot (Gaza Strip) (10 September 2025)."

Those Palestinians in Gaza who attempt to receive aid from the

GHF distribution sites have been shot at by private contractors and the Israeli military. A Medecins Sans Frontier report in August 2025 notes that at distribution sites in Rafa, they had received 1,380 casualties from GHF sites, including many people with gunshot wounds. 139

As of 3 October 2025, out of the total casualties reported in Gaza, 2,603 people had been killed, and 19,034 people had been injured. Data aid was not noted that among the harmed, the victims are “mostly young men and boys, seeking assistance” near what it calls militarized supply sites and along convoys supply routes. In mid-

September 2025, OCHA said that of those harmed seeking aid, “210 were killed in the first two weeks of September. While most casualties are

There is also significant invisible harm. Prior to the start of the war, the mental health status of the residents of Gaza was extremely challenging

139 Medecins Sans Frontier, “This is Not Aid. This is Orchestrated Killing,” Medecins Sans Frontier, August 2025. <https://www.msf.org/not-aid-orchestrated-killing>.

140 Gaza Ministry of Health Data as reported in United Nations, “Palestinian Casualties.” Accessed 6 Oct. 2025.

141 United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian Assistance Update #323: Gaza Strip,” 18 September 2025, <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-323-gaza-strip>.

142 Abdallah Abudayya, et al., “Consequences of war-related Traumatic Stress Among Palestinian Young People in the Gaza Strip: A Scoping Review,” *Mental Health & Prevention*, 32, (December 2023). <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212657023000478>.

143 Belal Aldabbour, et al., “Psychological Impact of the Gaza War on Palestinian Young Adults: a cross-sectional study of depression, anxiety, stress, and PTSD symptoms,” *BMCPsychology*, 12, (2024). <https://bmcpopsychology.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40359-024-02188-5>.

144 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs “Reported Impact Snapshot | Gaza Strip (10 September 2025).”

¹⁴⁵ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, “UNRWA Response in the Gaza Strip,” <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/unrwa-situation-report-190-situation-gaza-strip-and-west-bank-including-east-jerusalem>.

Finally, the environmental consequences of the war, and their health consequences, must also be noted. In 2024, the UN Environment Program (UNEP) preliminary assessment of the impact of the war said that,

“The conflict in Gaza has interrupted almost all environmental management systems and services (including ecosystem services) while ¹⁴⁷ This is not to mention the fact that the need to avoid and then dispose of unexploded ordnance will slow clean-up and recovery.

Over the long run, this war has also exacerbated climate change. The poor people in the world, and those who lack basic infrastructure, including Gazans, are most vulnerable to increased global temperatures.

There are increased ¹⁴⁸ military greenhouse gas emissions by the combatants and Israel's allies, who have transported of arms and other equipment. Reconstruction will also entail huge carbon emissions as debris is removed and homes, hospitals, schools and businesses are rebuilt. ¹⁴⁹

Conclusion

This report summarizes *some* of the existing understanding of conditions for humans

in Gaza since October 7, 2023. The main findings are well known. The scale of the human costs is much deeper and broader than this report.

¹⁴⁶ UN Environment Program,

“Environmental Impact of the Conflict in Gaza: Preliminary Assessment of Environmental Impacts,” 2024. <https://wedocs.unep.org/20.5>

¹⁴⁷ Fadwa Hodali, Krishna Karra, Caroline Alexander, and Denise Lu, “An Environmental Crisis Haunts the Ruins of Gaza,”

Bloomberg Green, 24 July 2025. <https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2025-gaza-war-environmental-disaster/?embedded-checkout=true>.

¹⁴⁸ Benjamin Neimark, Frederick Out-

Larbi, Reuben Larbi, Patrick Bigger, Linsey Cotrell, Lennard de Klerk, and Mykola Shlapak, “War on the Climate: A Multitemporal Study of G-

¹⁴⁹ Nina Lakhani, “Carbon Footprint of Israel's War on Gaza Exceeds That of Many Entire Countries,” *The Guardian*, 30 May 2025. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/may/30/carbon-footprint-of-israels-war-on-gaza-exceeds-that-of-many-entire-countries>.

¹⁵⁰ The 1994 genocide in Rwanda, where about 800,000 to 1 million mostly Tutsi people were killed in 100 days, is the most intense slaughter in the last four decades.

If this report does anything, it underscores three conclusions: First, international humanitarian law enjoins combatants to minimize harm to civilians and to care for those in occupied zones.¹⁵¹ Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in January 2024 that, "Israel's commitment to international law is unwavering."¹⁵²

The IDF told the BBC reporter Ros Atkins that it is "committed to mitigating civilian harm during operational activity" and that it "makes greater

Second, as a direct result of the Israeli military conduct in the war, more than 10% of the pre-

war population of Gaza has been killed and injured. While the Gaza Ministry of Health data is not perfect, their reports of direct traumatic deaths

Finally,

the deaths that have and will result from the destruction of infrastructure, the denial of humanitarian medicines and food, and the starvation

151

While it is a party to the four 1949 Geneva Conventions, Israel is not a party to Additional Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions, which specifies the

152 Prime Minister's Office, "PM Netanyahu's Comments on the Decision of the International Court of Justice in The Hague,"

<https://www.gov.il/en/pages/spoke-hague260124>.

153 See Atkins, "Israel's War in Gaza and Proportionality."

154 Quoted in Borger, "We Took the Gloves Off."