

As Israel starves Gaza, one in 10 children under the age of five are now acutely malnourished



Rafah, February 11 (RHC)-- As Israel continues its mass starvation campaign in Gaza, nearly 10 percent of children under 5 years of age in Gaza are acutely malnourished and wasting, UN officials have reported.

According to screenings by members of the Global Nutrition Cluster, a UN-affiliated group, 9.6 percent of children aged between 6 months and 5 years are currently experiencing acute malnourishment. The data

is based on arm measurements that show wasting, or a show of malnutrition based on individuals' thinness compared to their height.

This is 12 times higher than the amount of acute malnourishment observed in this group before Israel's current genocidal assault began, of 0.8 percent, officials report. Hunger is especially severe in northern Gaza, where Israeli forces first concentrated their assault, with a 16.2 percent rate of acute malnourishment among children under five, above the World Health Organization and UNICEF's "critical" threshold for wasting.

Hunger is only expected to get worse as Israel continues its horrific blockade. Famine in Gaza is widespread, affecting 577,000 Palestinians in Gaza, and is likely to expand to the entire population of 2.2 million in coming weeks and months, UN officials have reported. Many adults report skipping meals and food in order to feed their children.

Israel has already made it extremely difficult for humanitarian aid to enter and be distributed across Gaza, blocking the vast majority of trucks from crossing the border and then targeting aid workers once they enter. As countries like the U.S. continue to defund the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), the aid group primarily responsible for distributing and coordinating aid in the region, mass hunger will almost certainly spread even more quickly.

Israel's assault has already had gruesome effects on children. UNICEF recently reported that Israel's siege has already orphaned 19,000 Palestinian children in Gaza. According to Save the Children, an average of over 10 children a day lost one or both of their legs in the first three months of the siege; these children are forced to go through harrowing medical procedures without anesthesia or other medical supplies, with the health system in Gaza nearly totally dismantled.

Israel's campaign of indiscriminate bombing, disease and famine has killed over 12,000 children, with thousands left missing under the rubble of their former homes and neighborhoods.

People in Gaza have no safe harbor, and on Friday Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that he has ordered the military to prepare to evacuate civilians from Rafah, a city at the very southern point of Gaza, where about 1.7 million of Gaza's 2.2 million Palestinians are sheltering after having fled from the near-total destruction in the north. There is nowhere further south for Palestinians in Gaza to move than Rafah, which is also home to the border crossing to Egypt that is not allowing Palestinians through.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/346863-as-israel-starves-gaza-one-in-10-children-under-the-age-of-five-are-now-acutely-malnourished>



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