



Urgent Relief at Turning Point in Gaza

CRS Works with Church and Local Partners to Provide Relief in Gaza as Ceasefire Takes Hold



CRS staff in Gaza prepare for distributions of shelter support. Photo by CRS staff.

CONTEXT

In Gaza

The recent ceasefire in Gaza has brought a glimmer of hope to the more than 2.1 million Gazans who have been living in catastrophic conditions and unrelenting bombardment over the past two years. While some aid has begun to flow into Gaza in recent days through newly opened crossings, the humanitarian situation remains desperate. Hunger and malnutrition are widespread, particularly in northern Gaza where famine was declared in August. People are returning home to find their houses destroyed. Many are living in makeshift shelters, in the ruins of buildings and in the open air. Safe shelter is of urgent concern, especially as winter approaches.

Since the ceasefire began, hundreds of thousands of people have traveled back to Gaza city. Access of aid remains a challenge, with ongoing restrictions and streets blocked with concrete and rubble. UN and international partners are calling for a sustained and respected ceasefire that prioritizes children's rights and ensures the safe and instant delivery of lifesaving aid. According to the UN Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), since October 2023, more than 67,938 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza—nearly 30 % of whom are children.

"We pray that the ceasefire in Gaza holds. When increased aid can enter, we can deliver. We have teams, offices, warehouses and distribution points—and are further expanding our capacity on the ground to respond. Since October 2023, we've reached 1.8 million people—and we're ready to do more."

—Jason Knapp, CRS country representative,
Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza

HOW TO HELP

- Donate online:
support.crs.org/donate/holy-land-conflict
- Donate by phone: 1-877-HELP-CRS
- Donate by check:
Catholic Relief Services, Holy Land Response
P.O. Box 5278, Tipton, IA 52772-0517



In the West Bank

Humanitarian conditions remain severe and worsening across the West Bank. Since October 2023, nearly 1,000 Palestinians have been killed amid ongoing Israeli operations and settler attacks, concentrated in northern and central governorates. According to OCHA, more than 39,843 people have been displaced, and 3,164 Palestinian-owned structures across the West Bank—including East Jerusalem—have been destroyed, confiscated, sealed or forcibly demolished. As the 2025 olive harvest begins, communities face risks of settler violence and restricted access to farmland.

CRS AND PARTNER RESPONSE

Despite staggering challenges, CRS and our partners have reached 1.8 million people in Gaza since 2023 with food, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, cash assistance and social and emotional support.

The Church's historical and cultural presence in Gaza and the broader region is more vital than ever. CRS' long-standing partners are deeply rooted in the life of the community and are trusted across religious and social lines.

CRS has supported communities in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza since 1961 and has maintained a continuous presence in the Gaza Strip since 1984. CRS currently has 110 staff members across Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza—including 65 staff in Gaza and 22 in the West Bank—and offices in East Jerusalem, Ramallah, Bethlehem, and northern and southern Gaza. Additionally, CRS has pipelines for the procurement and entry of goods into Gaza from Jordan, Egypt and the West Bank.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Decades of work with communities, the local Catholic Church and partners enables CRS' rapid, impactful and flexible response in the fast-changing context. Urgent needs include:

Safe and Dignified Shelter and Housing:

Emergency shelter supplies; shelter repair kits; cash for home repair; construction of transitional shelters; upgrading of collective shelters; home repairs; rehabilitation of community infrastructure. *Since October 2023, CRS and partners have provided shelter assistance—including bedding, living supplies, tarps, tents and shelter repair kits—to 341,790 people.*

Food and Cash Assistance: Food rations—including dry rations and ready-to-eat meals—for people who lack access to food, markets and cooking facilities. Multipurpose cash assistance for families to purchase food and basic items where markets are accessible, and, thereby supporting the local economy. *Since October 2023, CRS and partners have provided food and cash assistance to 1.18 million people.*

"Our supply pipelines, thanks to our long-standing partnerships, in Jordan and Egypt are stocked and ready. With decades of trusted presence in the region, CRS continues to serve people with courage and compassion in Gaza—alongside local communities, the Catholic Church and partners."

—Jason Knapp, CRS country representative, Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: Critical hygiene supplies; access to clean water through water trucking and provisions; construction of latrines in makeshift camps; support for sanitation and hand-washing facilities; rehabilitation of water systems and treatment units. *Since October 2023, CRS and partners have provided clean water, latrines, hygiene and sanitation kits and supplies to 519,986 people.*

Social and Emotional Support: Assistance for children and adults to manage grief, distress and trauma through psychological first aid; recreational activities for children in child-friendly spaces; creation of a referral network for specialized care; training and support for caregivers. *Since October 2023, CRS and partners have provided social and emotional support to 15,770 children and adolescents, and 3,328 caregivers.*

Support for Church Partners in Gaza: CRS continues to work with a network of longstanding, committed partners in Gaza who enjoy community trust and have strong grassroots connections. CRS also supports Church partners in Gaza as they open their doors to serve as temporary shelters for approximately 400 people. CRS has assisted with hygiene items, cash assistance, clothing, tarps and other humanitarian goods as available. In a time of fear and flight, we work with our partners to uphold human dignity, even in the most challenging circumstances.