



MIFTAH Policy Paper | Nov 19th, 2025

## ***After the Ceasefire: Combating the Famine in Gaza***

### **Executive Summary**

The outbreak of famine in the Gaza Strip has been a deliberate, man-made policy pursued by the Israeli government as part of its genocide. In August 2025, famine was declared by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) for the first time in the region.

Evidence gathered by MIFTAH through sworn testimonies from women and girls demonstrates that starvation in Gaza is not an unintended by-product of war, but a deliberate and systematic policy used to subjugate and besiege the civilian population.

MIFTAH's report, "Famine and the Violation of the Right to Food," outlines the intersection of starvation, displacement, and bombardment, highlighting the gender-specific impacts these practices have on women. It situates the famine within the framework of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and acts of genocide under international law. Article 8(2)(b)(xxv) of the Rome Statute defines as a war crime the act of "intentionally using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare by depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival, including willfully impeding relief supplies as provided for under the Geneva Conventions." The report also shows how the militarization of humanitarian aid and the manipulation of financial systems have turned basic survival into a tool of political coercion against Palestinians, especially women.

### **Context and Key Findings**

Since October 2023, Gaza has been subjected to an intensified siege that has systematically destroyed its food systems, restricted the entry of aid, and weaponized hunger. On 22 August 2025, the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) confirmed the outbreak of famine—the first officially declared famine in the region's modern history.

MIFTAH's field documentation reveals the mechanisms driving this famine: denial of food and medical supplies through the closure of crossings and the blocking of aid; targeted destruction of farms and bakeries; direct attacks and killings of civilians seeking food; and economic strangulation. These practices constitute the militarization of humanitarian aid as part of Israel's genocide. Testimonies collected from women describe mothers skipping meals to feed their children, pregnant women suffering miscarriages, and families forced to eat unsafe substitutes or animal feed. Hunger has become both a means of domination and a slow, methodical form of killing.

Largely absent from discussions on the famine is its interconnected nature, in which crimes of starvation and reproductive violence interact. Beyond isolated tools of destruction, these forms of violence converge into an interlocking system that dismantles Gaza's social fabric, erodes its continuity, and threatens its collective survival. They also demonstrate how the targeting of women in particular generates far-reaching effects on the entire Palestinian population. To counter normalization and impunity, these crimes must be recognized and addressed as mutually reinforcing acts of genocide.

## **Recommendations**

### **For Diplomatic Missions and International Actors**

#### *a. Ensure Legal Accountability and International Prosecution*

- Support the submission of documented cases of starvation to the International Criminal Court as war crimes, crimes against humanity, and potential acts of genocide.
- Call for the establishment of a UN-mandated Independent International Commission of Inquiry on starvation and siege practices in Gaza.
- Activate universal jurisdiction mechanisms in national courts to prosecute individuals and entities complicit in starvation policies.

#### *b. Enforce International Obligations of the Occupying Power*

- Demand immediate and unconditional lifting of the siege on Gaza and restoration of unhindered humanitarian access in line with Articles (55) and (59) of the Fourth Geneva Convention.
- Impose sanctions and diplomatic consequences for continued obstruction of aid or deliberate deprivation of food and medical supplies.
- Advocate for the deployment of international humanitarian observers to monitor aid delivery and protection of civilians.

#### *c. Adopt a Gender-Responsive Humanitarian Approach*

- Integrate gender and protection priorities into all humanitarian and reconstruction frameworks for Gaza, ensuring dedicated funding for nutrition and reproductive health services.
- Support psychosocial rehabilitation programs for women affected by starvation, displacement, and trauma.

#### *d. Reinforce the Integrity of Humanitarian Action*

- Reject cooperation with militarized aid mechanisms such as the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF).
- Reaffirm commitment to the four humanitarian principles and coordinate assistance exclusively through neutral, transparent, and locally accountable channels.
- Demand the reinstatement of UNRWA as the main international agency in charge of distribution of humanitarian aid

## For International and Local NGOs

### a. Strengthening Documentation and Evidence-Based Advocacy

- Continue systematic documentation of starvation-related deaths, malnutrition, and deprivation through rights-based and gender-sensitive methodologies.
- Build coalitions to prepare comprehensive legal files for submission to UN treaty bodies, the Human Rights Council, and the International Criminal Court.

### b. Enhance Humanitarian Resilience and Local Response

- Support community-based survival mechanisms, including local food distribution networks and women-led solidarity kitchens.
- Advocate for local procurement of food and medical supplies to revitalize Gaza's agricultural capacity.

### c. Monitor and Report Violations

- Publish regular situation briefs linking field data to legal obligations, highlighting instances of aid obstruction and targeting civilians.
- Coordinate with health, nutrition, and legal NGOs to ensure unified reporting and visibility of famine-related issues.

To read MIFTAH's full report on the issue, **Analytical Report on Field Testimonies: Starvation and the Violation of the Right to Food in the Gaza Strip**, scan the QR code here:

