

Malnutrition rates reach alarming levels in Gaza, World Health Organization (WHO)



-Photo by AFP, July 27, 2025

News release

Malnutrition is on a dangerous trajectory in the Gaza Strip, marked by a spike in deaths in July, 2025.

Of 74 malnutrition-related deaths in 2025, 63 occurred in July – including 24 children under five, a child over five, and 38 adults. Most of these people were declared dead on arrival at health facilities or died shortly after, their bodies showing clear signs of severe wasting.

The crisis remains entirely preventable. Deliberate blocking and delay of large-scale food, health, and humanitarian aid has cost many lives.

Nearly one in five children under five in Gaza City is now acutely malnourished, as reported by Nutrition Cluster partners. Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM), which measures the percentage of children aged 6–59 months suffering from acute malnutrition, has tripled since June, making it the worst-hit area in the Gaza Strip.

In Khan Younis and the Middle Area, rates have doubled in less than one month. These figures are likely an underestimation due to the severe access and security constraints preventing many families from reaching health facilities.

So far in July, over 5000 children under five have already been admitted for outpatient treatment of malnutrition in just the first two weeks, 18% of them with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), the most life-threatening form. This continues a significant rising trend since May, with 6500 children admitted for treatment in June, which is the highest number recorded since October 2023.

An additional 73 children with SAM and medical complications were hospitalized in July, compared to 39 in June, bringing total inpatient admissions in 2025 to 263. This surge in cases is overwhelming the only four specialized malnutrition treatment centres in the Gaza Strip, pushing an already fragile health system closer to collapse.

All four centres are working beyond capacity, running low on fuel, with their supplies expected to run out by mid-next month. Health workers are exhausted, and the breakdown of water and sanitation systems is accelerating the spread of disease, driving a dangerous cycle of illness and death.

Crisis taking a severe toll

The crisis is taking a severe toll on pregnant and breastfeeding women. Recent Nutrition Cluster screening data shows that over 40% are severely malnourished. The situation is most critical in the Middle Area, where rates have tripled compared to June, and in Gaza City and Khan Younis, where they have doubled.

It is not only hunger that is killing people, but also the desperate search for food. Families are being forced to risk their lives for a handful of food, often under dangerous and chaotic conditions. Since 27 May, 2025 more than 1060 people have been killed and 7200 injured while trying to access food.

WHO calls for urgent, sustained efforts to flood the Gaza Strip with diverse, nutritious food, and to expedite the delivery of therapeutic supplies for children and vulnerable groups, as well as essential medicines and supplies.

This flow must remain consistent and unhindered to support recovery and prevent further deterioration.

WHO reiterates its call for the protection of civilians and health. WHO also calls for the release of our detained colleague, the release of hostages, and for an immediate ceasefire.

-WHO Media Team

-www.who.int/news, July 27, 2025