



SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

INFORMATION MEMO FOR ADMINISTRATOR POWER

Date: December 17, 2023

From: Andrew Plitt, SDAA/ME

Subject: Humanitarian Assistance Worker Deaths in Gaza since October 7 and Partner Operating Status

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- The number of humanitarian aid worker deaths in Gaza in such a short period is unprecedented.
- Insecurity, unreliable deconfliction, and the pace of kinetic activity continue to prevent humanitarian organizations from providing even minimal levels of humanitarian assistance.

BACKGROUND:

Based on USAID/West Bank and Gaza (USAID/WBG) reporting during the Administrator's Crisis Action Team (ACAT) meetings, you requested information on humanitarian assistance worker deaths in Gaza since October 7, including USAID implementers. Deputy Administrator Adams-Allen also requested information on the operating status of partners.

Aid Worker Deaths

Between October 7 and December 17, eight USAID-funded local implementing partner staff died in Gaza. This includes two staff of USAID/BHA-funded international NGOs, three staff of subpartners of USAID/BHA-funded international NGOs, and three staff from USAID/WBG partner organizations, as well as two volunteers from a USAID/ME centrally managed program. State/PRM partner UNRWA has lost 134 staff, and WHO has lost one staff member.

USAID implementing partners and subpartners have contacted USAID to request evacuation support, which USAID is currently unable to facilitate for Palestinians. For example, four partners from "Save Youth Future Society" have reported being in imminent danger and requested our support for evacuation of them and their immediate family members. Some have reported prolonged detention and interrogation by Israeli Security Forces.

As of December 10, the Aid Worker Security Database (AWSD) recorded 147 aid worker deaths, all of which were Palestinians. The AWSD updates the data daily. The database includes other violent incidents affecting humanitarian aid workers and is available [here](#).

Operating Status

USAID/WBG estimates that programs funded with Economic Support Fund (ESF) assistance are approximately 5 percent operational in Gaza and 50 percent operational in the West Bank. Middle East Partnership for Peace Act (MEPPA) programs are approximately 20 percent operational.

In Gaza, the pace of kinetic activity, unreliable deconfliction between military targets and civilian interests, and the lack of essentials, such as fuel and drivers willing to work under dangerous conditions, continue to prevent most humanitarian operations within Gaza.

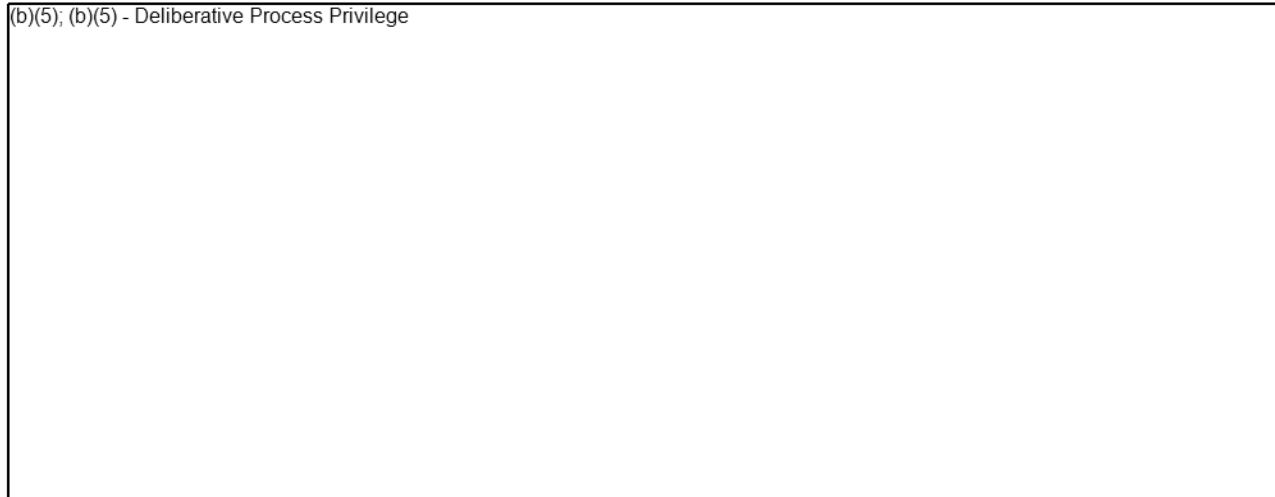
Humanitarian organizations are providing limited services in shelters and some distributions in southern Gaza's Rafah Governorate. Beyond aid worker deaths, fighting, airstrikes, and evacuations have displaced USAID implementing partner staff multiple times. Many of our Gaza-based partner staff members' family members have been killed or injured and/or their homes destroyed. Few USAID activities in Gaza are providing humanitarian assistance, but most are sheltering in place and waiting to be able to implement. Three of USAID/BHA's NGO partners are currently providing very limited assistance inside Gaza on an ad hoc basis, in addition to WFP and OCHA. Partners are largely limited to in-kind food distribution and activities that can be supported remotely, such as electronic cash transfers; significant critical elements of multi-sector awards—such as support for health care, WASH activities, and protection services—are largely suspended.

In the West Bank, the operating status is constrained for different reasons than in Gaza. The ability to operate is uneven depending on location. USAID partners are continuing activities but have had to pull back in certain areas or change approaches. Operations in volatile areas, including in and around Jenin, Hebron, and Nablus, are particularly difficult. Access and movement restrictions make it hard to travel between cities, which inhibits staff and beneficiary travel, requiring USAID to make adjustments to implementation approaches. Each partner and activity evaluates their operating abilities based on their individual challenges. MEPPA partners have not been able to conduct people-to-people activities. All of our partners are using the opportunity to strategically reassess their interventions and make adjustments in close coordination with the Mission.

The general operational environment, which includes private-sector business and enables USAID's grant packages, technical assistance, and increased access to finance, is affected. Extra coordination is required by USAID/WBG with the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) to enable partner commodities to enter into the West Bank, including for construction. We will continue to provide updated information on the topline messages we are receiving from partners, with whom the Mission and DART are in regular contact, to monitor conditions, needs, and safety.

NEXT STEPS:

(b)(5); (b)(5) - Deliberative Process Privilege



Drafter: (b)(6)
Approved: (b)(6)

Bureau Level Clearances

(b)(6)

Clearance Status

Date

Clear	12/14/2023
Clear w/edit	12/14/2023
Clear	12/14/2023
Clear	12/14/2023
Clear	12/13/2023
Clear	12/13/2023
Clear	12/13/2023
clear	12/18/23
Clear w/ edits	12/19/2023
Clear	12/19/2023

From: Andrew Plitt
Sent: Sun, 17 Dec 2023 01:25:05 +0000
To: Erin Wroblewski
Subject: Re: USAID Contractor Killed in Gaza

Yes Monday is good.

Andrew Plitt (he/him/his)
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On Sat, Dec 16, 2023 at 8:24 PM Erin Wroblewski <ewroblewski@usaid.gov> wrote:
Hi Andy,

Miley is working with the Mission and RMT to get the metric you are looking for. Is Monday ok for a response to the DAA?

Thanks,
Erin

Erin Wroblewski
West Bank and Gaza Desk Officer
Bureau for the Middle East
United States Agency for International Development
E mail: ewroblewski@usaid.gov

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On Sat, Dec 16, 2023 at 7:56 PM Andrew Plitt <aplitt@usaid.gov> wrote:

FYSA - Paloma is looking for the info memo tasked by ACAT...

Andrew Plitt (he/him/his)
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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Paloma Adams-Allen** <padams-allen@usaid.gov>

Date: Sat, Dec 16, 2023 at 3:56 PM

Subject: Re: USAID Contractor Killed in Gaza

To: Andrew Plitt <aplitt@usaid.gov>

CC: Bayly Winder <bwinder@usaid.gov>, Hillary Schrenell <hschrenell@usaid.gov>

Tnks! Eager to see once you have an update draft

--

Paloma Adams-Allen

Deputy Administrator, **USAID**

Tel: (202) 712-4095

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On Sat, Dec 16, 2023 at 3:55 PM Andrew Plitt <aplitt@usaid.gov> wrote:

There is a draft I looked at late Thursday but sent it back to desk/mission for a better assessment (metric if possible) on the ability of our implementers to execute their programs under the circumstances—particularly in the West Bank since we know how impossible it has been in Gaza.

Andrew Plitt (he/him/his)

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On Sat, Dec 16, 2023 at 2:30 PM Paloma Adams-Allen <padams-allen@usaid.gov> wrote:
Hi there,

In one the ACATs last week I requested a copy of the paper being prepared for the Administrator on the impact of the war in Gaza on our USAID-funded partners. Is that ready?

Tnks, P

--

Paloma Adams-Allen

Deputy Administrator, **USAID**

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Cari Bower** <cbower@usaid.gov>

Date: Sat, Dec 16, 2023 at 12:09 PM

Subject: USAID Contractor Killed in Gaza

To: Paloma Adams-Allen <padams-allen@usaid.gov>

Good morning DA Adams-Allen,

Sorry for this bad news, a USAID contractor, his wife and 2 children were killed in Gaza.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2023/12/16/usaid-contractor-hani-jnena-killed-gaza/>

Cari Bower

Chief, SEC Intelligence Branch

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From: Ngoc Clark
Sent: Sun, 17 Dec 2023 20:00:17 +0000
To: Erin Wroblewski
Cc: Andrew Plitt; Jeanne Pryor; MEALeadership; WBG Desk; metaskers
Subject: Re: USAID Contractor Killed in Gaza

Hi Erin,
If this needs to be submitted ASAP, could you please go ahead and send it forward to the ES listserv. Thanks so much!

Ngoc Clark (she/her/hers)

Chief of Staff

Bureau for the Middle East

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

RRB 6.08-112

Mobile: (b)(6)

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On Sun, Dec 17, 2023 at 12:30 Erin Wroblewski <ewroblewski@usaid.gov> wrote:
Thanks, Andy. Collaborative effort -- game ball goes to Miley!
Ngoc - am I correct that MEtaskers moved this to ES? If Desk needs to do that, please confirm that the whole ES listserv is the right POC.

See you all tomorrow.
Erin

On Sun, Dec 17, 2023 at 2:16 PM Andrew Plitt <aplitt@usaid.gov> wrote:
I clear. Nicely done. Please move this to ES ASAP. I will bootleg to DA-PP & DA-MR teams.

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