

UNICEF reports over 50,000 children in Gaza suffer from acute malnutrition

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Shaima, 8-years-old, waits her turn in the crowd to get a meal from a charitable hospice that

distributes free food in the city of Rafah, southern Gaza Strip in December 2023

United Nations, September 7 (RHC)--The United Nations children's agency, UNICEF, says "more than 50,000" Palestinian children suffer from acute malnutrition due to Israel's genocidal war on Gaza, calling for an immediate ceasefire to avoid the "real" risk of famine in the besieged strip.

"We estimate that well over 50,000 children suffer from acute malnutrition and need lifesaving treatment, now," UNICEF Director of Child Nutrition and Development Victor Aguayo said on Thursday.

His remarks came as the UN food agency, FAO, and the World Food Program (WFP) have described the situation in Gaza as "one of the most severe food and nutrition crises in history."

"It's important to remember that nearly half of Gaza's population who are suffering this devastation are children," Aguayo said. Referring to his last week's visit to Gaza, he said: "I saw how months of war on civilians and severe restrictions to humanitarian response have led to a collapse of the food, health and protection systems, with catastrophic consequences for children's nutrition."

Aguayo noted that the diets of young children "are extremely poor", with "over 90 percent of them eating at best two types of food per day – day in, day out – for weeks and months in a context of toxic stress and lack of access to safe water and sanitation."

He also warned that "the risk of famine and a large-scale severe nutrition crisis in Gaza is real." "There is only one way to prevent it: we need a ceasefire, immediately, and with a ceasefire, sustained and large-scale humanitarian access to the entire Gaza Strip."

The UNICEF official noted that the ceasefire and unrestricted humanitarian response will allow families to access food, including specialized nutrition for young children, nutrition supplements for pregnant women, and health, water, and sanitation services for the entire population.

Israel launched the war on Gaza on October 7 after the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas waged the surprise Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the occupying entity in response to the Israeli regime's decades-long campaign of bloodletting and devastation against Palestinians.

The Tel Aviv regime has also imposed a "complete siege" on the territory, cutting off fuel, electricity, food and water to the more than two million Palestinians living there.

Since the start of the offensive, the Tel Aviv regime has killed at least 40,878 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured 94,454 others. Thousands more are also missing and presumed dead under the rubble in Gaza.

[SOURCE: PRESS TV]

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