

Doctors Against Genocide Delivers Emergency Relief to Gaza's Most Vulnerable: The Disabled and Blind

The most vulnerable communities are not able to get aid and are most likely to suffer from severe starvation

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Dr. Nidal Jboor

SENDING URGENTLY NEEDED FUNDS TO GAZA

Money raised will help trusted local groups buy and
distribute food and water to Gaza's starving population

In response to the deliberate mass <u>starvation</u> unfolding in Gaza, Doctors Against <u>Genocide</u> (DAG) has launched an emergency response to help supply urgently needed food and water to the desperate population there.

The US-based group of medical professionals began delivering urgently needed funds to trusted local aid

groups in four areas of Gaza within hours of setting up the initiative on Tuesday July 29th. "Our funds are helping to deliver hot meals, fresh vegetables, clean water, and bread to communities across Gaza," said Nidal Jboor, a co-founder of Doctors Against Genocide and an internal medicine specialist in Dearborn Heights, Michigan.

The entire two million population of Gaza is now at risk of starvation. The widely condemned US-Israeli Gaza Humanitarian Foundation provides no milk or formula for babies and its distribution locations have become deathtraps where even children have been shot by Israeli soldiers. Meanwhile, weapons continue to flow to Israel and the bombings continue.

"As we saw in the vote last night, we cannot wait for our elected officials to act," said Jboor, referring to the resolutions of disapproval brought on July 30 by Vermont independent, Bernie Sanders, that would have stopped the sale of \$675 million in bombs and shipments of 20,000 automatic assault rifles to Israel. Only 24 senators voted to stop the bombs, and 27 to block the assault rifles, all of them Democrats along with Sanders and Angus King of Maine, also an independent.

"We knew we had to act immediately to deliver life-saving aid in Gaza," said Dr. Jboor. Among those receiving support from Doctors Against Genocide is a community of blind and disabled individuals who face immense challenges reaching distant aid distribution sites. They urgently need resources to access food nearby. Since October 2023, approximately 1,200 people have become newly blind due to direct eye injuries from Israeli attacks, and an additional 4,000 have suffered partial vision loss.

Although merchants are charging exorbitantly high prices for what little food is available in Gaza, the funds DAG is sending will help offset the

Children in Gaza are being starved. Even formula is banned. Many children suffer from Kwashiorkor and Marasmus which are diseases caused by protein and caloric deficiency.

financial strain on the local aid groups on the ground, all of whom DAG members know personally.

"All of them have been struggling lately due to the astronomical prices," said Dr. Karameh Kuemmerle, a DAG cofounder and Boston pediatric neurologist. "That is why DAG is stepping in to help. Whenever there's scarcity, some will try to exploit it, but we don't have the luxury to say 'no' at this point and we don't have time to fix it. The situation is too desperate."

DAG is also raising funds to build an urgently-needed field hospital on the grounds of the partially destroyed Al-Shifa Hospital in northern Gaza, once the largest hospital serving the Palestinian population there. Plans have been drawn up for a 140-bed hospital housed outdoors in sturdy tents, along with two operating theaters, two recovery rooms and communal space for employees.

"Al-Shifa was once the beating heart of Gaza's healthcare system, but now stands in ruins," Jboor said. "After months of unrelenting bombardment, it is barely functional, just when Gaza needs it most. Patients are being treated in hallways, on floors and in tents. Children and the wounded are being turned away due to lack of space."

The rebuild at Al-Shifa is "the only immediate solution in an emergency capacity to provide the urgent relief needed now," said Kuemmerle, who recognizes the risks involved in going forward with the project, given the likelihood that Israel could target it, as Israeli forces have been doing at all of Gaza's hospitals. Israel has also deliberately kidnapped and killed doctors, part of a

strategy to eliminate the capacity for Palestinians to survive long-term.

"We are always scared that there is a target for any reconstruction in Gaza," Kuemmerle said. "But that should not be an excuse for us not to do anything."

Doctors Against Genocide, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, is on the frontlines of the most urgent crises, delivering life-saving aid to healthcare workers and civilians under attack while mobilizing global medical advocacy to expose war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, and demand justice. Donate here.

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