



PALESTINE COUNTRY REPORT

THE STATE OF THE
HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Gaza is one of the most acute and complex humanitarian contexts globally due to decades of protracted crisis, escalating violence and a prolonged blockade. This environment has generated persistent, large-scale needs while placing sustained pressure on core humanitarian principles.

As such, Gaza provides a critical lens through which to examine the performance and limits of the global humanitarian system. Failures in this setting have far-reaching implications. When the humanitarian system cannot uphold its commitments to prevent and alleviate human suffering impartially, broader questions are raised about the consistency and credibility of humanitarian action elsewhere.

'If the Red Cross is not respected in Gaza, then the whole humanitarian order is at risk. What happens here reverberates far beyond these borders. Leaders must act as if Gaza is a precedent, not an exception.'

(key informant interview (KII), international non-governmental organisation)

Long-term exposure to assistance has shaped how populations affected by the crisis engage with and assess the humanitarian response, influencing their expectations and critiques around service quality, transparency, accountability and dignity. For these reasons, Gaza shows too how humanitarian principles, coordination mechanisms and localisation commitments operate in a highly constrained and politicised environment.

This Palestine country report summarises research conducted between 2022 and 2025 as a contribution to the *SOHS 2026*. The global report assesses needs, evaluates performance and analyses adaptations to the humanitarian system in different crisis settings over that period. This country-specific analysis draws on the perspectives of affected populations and frontline responders to examine systemic challenges, identify lessons and emerging practices, and provide insights for national stakeholders in Gaza.

1.1 Methodology

Seventeen KIIs were conducted with humanitarian practitioners involved in the Gaza response, including representatives from UN agencies, international and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations and other humanitarian actors. Additionally, five focus group discussions (FGDs) were held

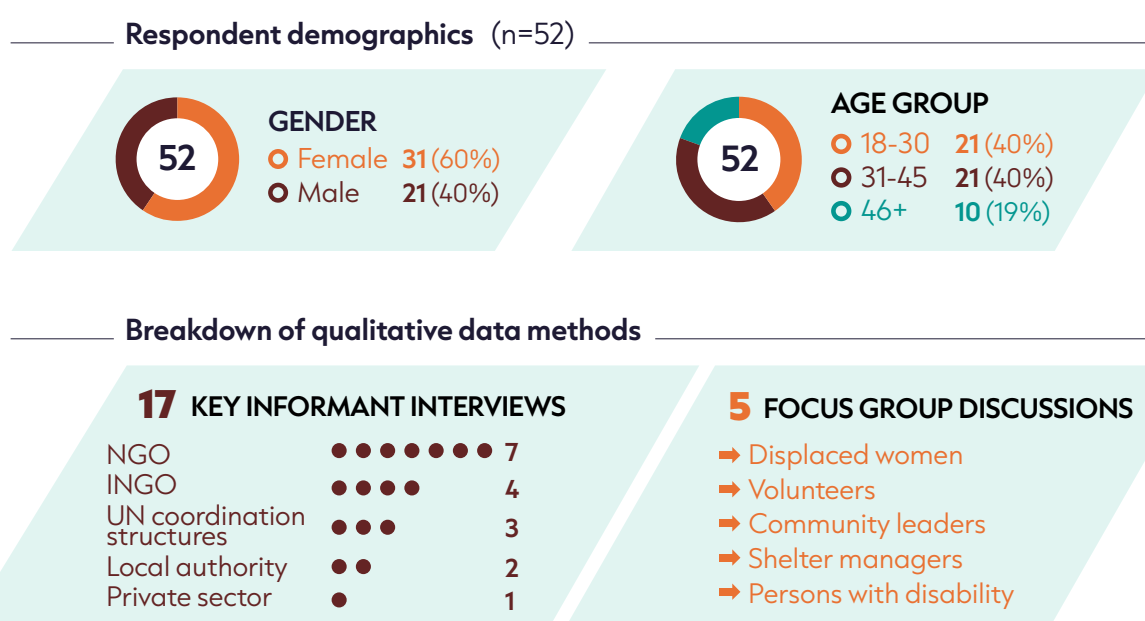
with populations affected by the crisis and with community representatives to capture lived experiences and perceptions of humanitarian assistance.

Data was collected over three iterative phases to enable emerging themes and gaps from earlier rounds to inform subsequent data collection and analysis. Figure 1 shows the research phases and engagements with different stakeholder groups; Figure 2 shows the demographics of respondents. For more detail, see [Annex 1](#).

Figure 1: Research phases and stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder group	50%	75%	100%	Total
Community leaders	1			1
Displaced women	1			1
INGO		3	1	4
Local authority	2			2
NGO	1		6	7
Persons with disability	1			1
Private sector			1	1
Shelter managers		1		1
UN coordination structures	3			3
Volunteers	1			1
Total engagements	10	4	8	22

Figure 2: Demographics of respondents



1.2 Study limitations

Data collection was constrained by insecurity, access restrictions and communication disruptions, which likely resulted in underrepresentation of the most isolated and inaccessible populations. Sampling was based on access and operational networks, thereby introducing selection bias towards connected and more visible groups.

Response bias may have affected the findings of this research as well. Despite assurances of anonymity, some participants may have limited their disclosures due to fear of repercussions and concerns about losing their access to assistance. Humanitarian practitioners may have moderated their disclosures due to organisational mandates, institutional positioning or political sensitivities that shape how operational realities are discussed.