

# EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN WEST BANK AND GAZA: FACTS AND FIGURES

June 2025 update

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# PREFACE

This document provides an updated overview, as of May 2025, of the impact of the war in Gaza on education, training, employment, and the livelihoods of its residents. It builds upon the initial brief of the European Training Foundation released in November 2024, which synthesised the latest data from diverse sources including UN agencies, international organisations, and NGOs.

This update documents the scale of internal displacement, damage to education infrastructure, disruption of schooling, and the consequences for Gaza's labour market and economic stability. In addition to offering a snapshot of the current situation, the report outlines potential implications for long-term human capital development, the prospects for economic and educational recovery, and the essential steps towards reconstruction.

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<sup>1</sup> This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

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# 1. Introduction and context

This report provides updated data (as of May 2025) on the impact of the war in Gaza on education, training, employment, and the livelihood of Gaza residents. It builds on the ETF brief released in November 2024, offering the most recent figures and developments regarding displacement, damage to education infrastructure, impacts on students and teachers, access to education, economic losses, emergency funding needs, and broader education and labour market trends.

For the purposes of this report, and in the context of the ETF's work, *human capital* refers to the skills, competences, knowledge and attitudes that support individuals in accessing employment, realising their potential, and contributing to the development of prosperous, innovative and inclusive societies.

The data compiled draws on multiple authoritative sources, including situation updates from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), crisis reports from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNICEF situation reports, World Bank damage assessments, and documentation from NGOs including Save the Children and the Education Cluster. The reporting period spans from late 2024 to May 2025. Comparative data and historical baselines are used throughout to illustrate the extent of deterioration and to highlight the unprecedented scale and nature of this crisis.

The table below compares the situation reported in November 2024 with the most recent data available (spring 2025). It shows that conditions – already critical in late 2024 - have either remained unchanged or worsened. Displacement continues to affect the vast majority of the population, most schools remain unusable, and there has been minimal progress in economic recovery. The following sections provide detailed analyses for each area of impact.

**Table 1. Impact of the Gaza war on education in numbers: 2025 snapshot**

| Indicator                                             | November 2024                            | Source No. | May 2025                                                    | Source No. |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Population internally displaced                       | ~1.9 million (≈90% of Gaza's population) | 1          | ~1.9 million (≈90%) (cumulative; many displaced repeatedly) | 1          |
| Students with no access to school                     | ~658,000 (100%)                          | 2          | ~660,000 (100%) (all school-age children)                   | 1          |
| School buildings damaged or destroyed                 | 493 of 564 (87%)                         | 3          | 538 of 564 (95%)                                            | 4          |
| Estimated economic damage to education infrastructure | US\$341 million                          | 2          | ≈US\$870 million                                            | 5          |
| Gaza unemployment rate                                | ~45% (pre-war baseline)                  | 2          | ~80% (end of 2024) (economic collapse)                      | 5          |
| Emergency education funding need (appeal)             | -                                        | -          | US\$230 million needed in 2025; ~7% funded                  | 6          |

Sources: 1. UNRWA, Situation Report #170 on the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, 2025. 2. World Bank, Gaza interim damage assessment, 2024. 3. Save the Children, Education under attack in Gaza, n.d. 4. United Nations Children's Fund, State of Palestine – Humanitarian Situation Report No. 37, 2025. 5. World Bank, Impacts of the conflict in the Middle East on the Palestinian Economy, 2025. 6. Humanitarian Action, Education - Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2025.

## Scale and patterns of displacement

Internal displacement in Gaza remains at an extraordinary scale. As of May 2025, an estimated 1.9 million people – around 90% of Gaza's total population of 2.1 million – have been displaced at some point during the ongoing conflict. Many families have been forced to relocate multiple times, with UN sources reporting cases of individuals being displaced ten or more times due to shifting frontlines and expanding “no-go” zones. This level of displacement far exceeds that of previous conflicts. By

comparison, the 2014 Gaza conflict led to the displacement of around 500,000 people or approximately 28% of the population significantly less than the 90% observed in the current crisis (UNRWA, 2014).

A temporary ceasefire in early 2025 provided a short pause in the displacement trend. Renewed hostilities beginning on 18 March 2025 triggered another wave of mass displacement. Between late March and April 2025 alone, over 430,000 additional people were displaced due to intensified military operations and evacuation orders (UNRWA, 2025). By April 2025, evacuation or military exclusion zones covered 100% of Rafah governorate, 84% of North Gaza, 78% of Gaza City, 51% of Khan Younis, and 41% of Deir al-Balah. These areas, accounting for over two-thirds of Gaza's territory, were rendered uninhabitable due to displacement or militarised exclusion orders. Even during the January to March 2025 ceasefire period, most displaced individuals were unable to return home due to extensive damage to housing and infrastructure (UNRWA, 2025).

## Shelters and living conditions

At the height of the crisis, large numbers of civilians took refuge in overcrowded improvised shelters, often located in UNRWA-run school buildings. As of early March 2025, UNRWA was operating 116 shelters housing approximately 148,000 displaced persons. This represented a significant reduction from the peak in late 2024, when shelter populations exceeded 600,000, but many people were relocated to informal camps or remained near destroyed homes. Humanitarian conditions for internally displaced persons are severe, with basic necessities unattended due to the ongoing siege. As of May 2025, almost all of Gaza's residents depend on humanitarian aid for food, water, and other essentials, and virtually all households now live in poverty. This represents a marked deterioration compared to pre-war levels; poverty rates in Gaza were around 53% in 2017 and 59% in 2020<sup>2</sup>. With continuing hostilities, displacement continues, the majority of Gaza's population is homeless or living in temporary shelters, unable to rebuild due to the ongoing conflict.

## 2. Estimated damage to the education system

### Scale of destruction

The war has caused unprecedented damage to Gaza's education infrastructure. As of spring 2025, 778 out of 815 schools in Gaza - around 95.5% of all educational facilities - have sustained damage. Of these, around 574 schools have been directly hit, with many severely damaged or completely destroyed, while others have sustained varying degrees of blast and shrapnel-related damage. In practical terms, well over 200 schools will require complete reconstruction, and most others need major repairs to be able to safely reopen. Education Cluster assessments from April 2025 found that 88.5% of education facilities need major rehabilitation or full reconstruction. Many school buildings have been reduced to rubble or left as hollowed-out shells, and those still standing often have structural cracks, blown-out windows, or collapsed walls from repeated shockwaves. Several schools have sustained multiple strikes; for instance, an UNRWA school in Bureij sheltering displaced families was hit twice by airstrikes in a single day in May 2025, causing severe damage (UNRWA, 2025). By comparison, during the 2014 Gaza conflict, 219 schools were damaged - with 22 beyond repair - or about 40% of all facilities at that time.

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET or VET) is particularly vulnerable to disruptions during conflicts as it relies on teachers and trainers with specialised expertise who are difficult to replace. VET facilities also often host specific equipment and tools that can be damaged, making maintenance and updates challenging during prolonged conflicts. Since October 2023, both enrolments and access to VET institutions in Gaza have been suspended and 12 out of 17 TVET units, spread across 14 public schools, have been severely damaged.

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<sup>2</sup> The 59% poverty rate in 2019 is based on observed data, whereas the 2020 figure is a projection based on modeling due to data collection constraints. See Gansey et al., 2021.

Gaza's higher education institutions have not been spared. All of Gaza's approximately 12 universities and colleges have been damaged or destroyed. Major institutions, such as the Islamic University of Gaza and Al-Azhar University, were among the first to be targeted. Smaller institutions, including Israa University, also suffered severe damage; one of its campuses was occupied by military forces and later demolished. Damage to facilities such as laboratories, libraries, and classrooms has critically undermined the continuity of tertiary education. In April 2024, UN experts raised concerns about systematic attacks targeting Gaza's education system, characterising the destruction as deliberate and widespread (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2024).

The few school buildings that remain physically intact are not fully operational due to their role as emergency shelters for internally displaced persons. This use puts additional strain on already fragile infrastructure and increases the risk of further damage or attack. As of May 2025, at least 311 education facilities and UNRWA installations have been directly impacted by hostilities, some repeatedly. The environment around many schools is hazardous, with unexploded ordnance and debris posing ongoing risks. While comprehensive structural inspections have yet to be conducted, initial assessments indicate that virtually no education facility in Gaza can resume normal operations without substantial repairs and clearance of unexploded ordnance. Consequently, Gaza's education sector faces extensive reconstruction needs, effectively requiring a near-total rebuilding of the education infrastructure once conditions permit. The implications for economic damage and reconstruction are explored further in the relevant sections below.

## Complete closure of schools and universities

This prolonged disruption threatens students' transition to higher education or vocational training, with long-term implications for the country's human capital development. As mentioned above, while Gaza previously experienced brief school closures during conflict escalations, the current crisis represents the longest and most comprehensive educational shutdown in recent history.

The conflict has severely disrupted both higher education and TVET in Gaza. Approximately 87,000 university students have experienced significant interruptions, as most campuses have been destroyed and internet connectivity is severely compromised. While some institutions initially attempted to continue classes online, ongoing power outages and limited communication infrastructure made these efforts unsustainable. Many professors and students have been displaced, with some leaving Gaza entirely, resulting in an almost complete halt to higher education. This disruption has cascading effects: professional programmes in fields such as medicine, engineering, and teacher education have stopped, delaying graduation and entry of new professionals into the workforce. Research and postgraduate activities have ceased entirely. Additionally, the widespread destruction of laboratories, equipment, and academic records poses substantial obstacles to restarting universities.

## Impact on students, teachers and education personnel

As of May 2025, nearly 100% of students in Gaza – approximately 650,000 - 660,000 children at primary and secondary levels - remain out of regular, in-person schooling (UNICEF, 2024), meaning that they have missed more than an entire academic year. The scale and duration of this disruption are unprecedented. By comparison, during the 2014 war, schools reopened within roughly two months of the ceasefire (UNRWA, 2014). Today, the ongoing conflict has prevented any significant resumption of schooling. The conflict has had a similarly devastating impact on teachers and education personnel. Before the conflict, Gaza's schools employed approximately 18,000 - 20,000 teachers across government-run, UNRWA, and private institutions. Now, most of them are either inactive or engaged in limited ad-hoc education initiatives. The human toll has been severe. By April 2024, the Gaza Ministry of Education reported at least 5,479 students and 261 teachers killed (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2024).

Beyond the physical damage, the psychological toll on students and teachers is immense. Nearly all surviving students have experienced trauma, displacement, and loss. Many have lost family members, homes, classmates and now face severe mental health challenges. Humanitarian agencies estimate

that over 520,000 children in Gaza currently require psychosocial support (UNRWA, May 2025). Teachers are similarly affected. Many have been displaced, lost loved ones, or are struggling to support their own families. In many cases, teachers have effectively become front-line humanitarian workers, providing psychological first aid to traumatised children in shelters. Efforts to address the mental health crisis are ongoing but insufficient. Since the conflict began, UNRWA and partner organisations have provided nearly 300,000 psychosocial support sessions for displaced children and adults, but demand far exceeds supply, and access to constant care remains limited (UNRWA, May 2025). The situation is further compounded by the disruption of professional development and training for teachers. With schools closed and communication severely disrupted, teachers have little or no access to training, peer support or education resources. As a result, the conflict has not only interrupted academic learning but also inflicted deep human suffering on students and educators alike – trauma that will require years of recovery and support.

## Temporary and remote learning efforts

In response to the education emergency, UNRWA, UNICEF and local authorities have launched temporary learning initiatives, although these efforts have reached only a fraction of Gaza's students. Beginning in August 2024, Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS) were established within displacement shelters or relatively safe areas. Supported by a "Back to Learning" campaign, these makeshift classrooms offered basic education to children unable to access formal schooling. At their peak in early 2025, 449 TLS operated across 58 UNRWA shelter sites, providing basic education to roughly 56,000 children, about 8.5% of the total student population. Classes followed shortened, rotating schedules, typically offering approximately 2.5 hours of instruction three days per week. Priority was given to younger children (grades 1–4) for in-person instruction, while older students were encouraged to access remote learning resources when feasible. However, renewed fighting in March 2025 forced many TLS to close again. By late April 2025, only 182 TLS remained operational, with weekly attendance falling to about 24,500 children – approximately 30% of attendance during the ceasefire period (Global Education Cluster, n.d.). In parallel, on 1 January 2025, UNRWA launched a distance learning programme that included both online and offline resources. Approximately 277,700 children (around 42% of all students) enrolled. Participants accessed self-study materials and online lessons in core subjects (Arabic, English, mathematics, and science).

In the higher education sector, institutional initiatives such as the TESI project (UNIMED, 2024) as well as smaller-scale initiatives, often led by displaced educators from Gaza, are helping some students complete or continue their academic studies through distance learning. However, connectivity and electricity shortages significantly limit regular participation. Despite these challenges, these initiatives have provided some educational continuity and routine for many students.

## A lost generation

Despite the best efforts by UNRWA, UNICEF, and other stakeholders, the overwhelming majority of Gaza's 660,000 students have had minimal or no meaningful access to education for over a year and a half. The gap continues to widen. Continuous displacement and persistent insecurity remain major obstacles. When new evacuation orders were issued in March 2025, at least 52 government schools and 60 temporary learning sites were forced to suspend operations, affecting around 50,000 children who had briefly resumed schooling during the ceasefire. By mid-April 2025, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that all formal schools remained closed to in-person education. Infrastructure deficits further exacerbate the situation; the electricity grid is not operational, and schools rely on limited generator fuel for power, severely restricting the availability of lighting and digital equipment. Extremely limited internet access impedes remote learning opportunities (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2025).

Gaza now faces the likelihood of a "lost generation" of learners. Research consistently shows that prolonged periods out of school lead to increased dropout rates, loss of learning, and diminished future opportunities, especially in contexts with limited remote education capacity (World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF, 2021). In addition, widespread trauma and the immediate survival needs of displaced families often override educational priorities. Many children are living in overcrowded tents

or shelters that lack the privacy and stability needed for effective learning. While parents and community volunteers have made efforts to maintain informal education and recreation activities, these efforts cannot substitute formal education. Furthermore, the presence of explosive remnants of war continues to pose serious risks, compelling education-focused NGOs to prioritise delivering Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) sessions to help children avoid accidents.

### 3. Estimated economic and labour market damage

#### Physical damage estimates

The economic cost of the war's impact on Gaza's education infrastructure continues to rise sharply. An interim damage assessment conducted jointly by the UN, World Bank, and EU (covering the period up to the end of January 2024) estimated the cost of direct physical damage at around US\$341 million. However, this figure reflects only the first three to four months of the conflict. By early 2025, sustained destruction had caused a dramatic increase in these estimates. The World Bank's Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA) conducted in early 2025, indicates that physical damage to the education sector had reached around US\$870 million. This figure covers the estimated costs required to repair or reconstruct damaged schools, technical institutes, and higher education facilities. For context, this figure is more than eight times Gaza's pre-war education budget and vastly exceeds the approximately US\$20 million in education-related damage recorded after the 2014 conflict.

The estimated US\$870 million in education infrastructure damage in Gaza is exceptionally high, even when compared to other global crisis contexts. This figure exceeds the total education capital stock of some countries. Prior to the war, Gaza already faced a shortage of educational facilities and required significant infrastructure expansion to meet existing needs. The current crisis has dramatically amplified this need, necessitating not only the replacement of nearly all existing facilities, but also the construction of new ones. For context, overall sectoral damage in Gaza across all areas was estimated at US\$18.5 billion as of January 2024 and is expected to surpass US\$20 billion by mid-2025. Initially education-related infrastructure damage represented about 2% of this total. However, as destruction continues, the proportionate impact on the education sector is expected to grow.

#### Damage to related sectors

The collapse of the education system does not occur in isolation. Other sectors critical to human capital development - particularly health, energy, infrastructure, transportation, construction, manufacturing and housing - have also been severely affected, further compounding the challenges to restoring education (ETF, 2024).

As of June 2025, the World Health Organisation reports that only 17 of Gaza's 36 hospitals remain only partially operational (47%), with 60% of the primary healthcare clinics non-operational (World Health Organisation, 2025). This has immediate consequences for the well-being of children and their ability to attend school. The energy infrastructure has also been devastated: most schools and homes are without power, while catastrophic housing damage (exceeding US\$13 billion) has rendered hundreds of thousands of students homeless. Together, these interconnected damages massively complicate and increase the cost of restoring educational services. An estimated 26 million tons of rubble will need to be cleared before reconstruction can begin. Basic utilities, such as water, electricity and telecommunications, must also be restored before schools can be rebuilt and reopened.

#### Income and poverty

Due to the collapse of employment opportunities, poverty in Gaza has become almost universal. The World Bank reported that by late 2024, virtually all Gaza households were living in poverty, heavily reliant on humanitarian aid to meet basic needs. While short-term poverty in the West Bank also more than doubled (from approximately 12% pre-war to around 28%), poverty levels in Gaza have reached near-total coverage. Many households have lost primary breadwinners to violence or detention, further

exacerbating their economic vulnerability. Public-sector employees have faced severe salary reductions: since the onset of the conflict, Palestinian Authority (PA) employees in Gaza have received only around 60–70% of their salaries, continuing a policy of salary cuts initiated in 2021 (World Bank, 2025). Private-sector workers have largely lost all income, with most businesses shuttered or destroyed. Consequently, the dependency ratio - the proportion of non-working dependents to employed individuals - has significantly increased, placing enormous financial strain on the few households still receiving income or remittances. A stark indicator of economic collapse has been severe inflation: consumer prices in Gaza surged by over 230% in 2024 due to extreme shortages, rendering essential goods unaffordable without aid (ILO-PCBS, 2024). Prices briefly stabilised during the early 2025 ceasefire due to improved humanitarian access, but renewed blockade conditions from March 2025 led to another sharp rise. As a result, even households with limited financial resources often find markets depleted or goods prohibitively expensive. Gaza's economy has effectively regressed by decades, with the World Bank projecting that, under current trends, Gaza's GDP per capita might not return to pre-war levels until approximately 2038, essentially affecting an entire generation (World Bank, 2025).

## Impact on Gaza's labour market and employability

Gaza's labour market has collapsed under the combined pressure of the ongoing conflict and blockade. Private-sector businesses are either closed or destroyed, while public-sector employment has been significantly weakened by the conflict. By the end of 2024, Gaza's unemployment rate reached approximately 80%, nearly doubling the pre-war rate of about 45%, which was already among the highest globally (World Bank, 2025). As a result, approximately four out of every five Gazans who are willing and able to work currently have no employment. Those who remain employed, primarily in health, humanitarian aid, or essential services, frequently face irregular or partial salaries. Youth unemployment, previously around 63% for those aged 15–24, has likely risen significantly and may now approach near-total levels given the near-complete absence of economic opportunities. Women's employment, already low before the war (with about a 20% labour participation rate), has further declined (World Bank, 2025). Many women-owned small businesses and employment opportunities in education and healthcare have been severely impacted or lost altogether. The conflict has also eliminated access to employment opportunities in Israel, which before the war provided jobs for approximately 18,000–20,000 Gazan workers – holders of official permits by mid-2023, a dramatic increase from nearly zero formal employment opportunities just five years earlier (ILO-PCBS, 2024).

## Implications for youth and future workforce

According to the latest data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), there are approximately 2.3 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip (PCBS, 2024), with the youth population, defined as those aged 15 to 24, constituting about 22% of the total population in Palestine.

The implications of the crisis for youth employment and Gaza's future workforce are severe. Even before the war, Gaza's youth had limited economic opportunities, often pursuing education primarily as a means to improve employment or emigration prospects. Now, with education severely disrupted and the economy devastated, young people face increased risks of prolonged unemployment and disengagement (ETF, 2024). Without alternatives, there is a heightened risk of youth turning to negative coping mechanisms. Others may seek migration opportunities, potentially leading to significant brain drain. For youth currently in their late teens or early twenties, the loss of critical education, training, and early-career work experience during these defining years will be difficult to compensate later, potentially limiting their lifetime earnings and productivity (ETF, 2024). The ongoing conflict has effectively halted the pipeline of skilled workers; there were no new cohorts of graduates in 2024 or 2025, no vocational training programmes operational, and many skilled professionals have been killed or displaced. This cumulative disruption presents a significant long-term challenge to Gaza's economic recovery and human capital development.

## 4. Funding needs and gaps

### Humanitarian funding appeals

In response to the ongoing educational crisis, the United Nations and humanitarian partners have outlined substantial funding requirements. The 2025 Flash Appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, issued in December 2024, includes a dedicated funding request for the education sector, amounting to approximately US\$230 million. This funding is intended to support emergency educational services, minor repairs to damaged facilities, provision of psychosocial support, establishment and operation of temporary learning spaces, distribution of educational materials, and teacher training on trauma-informed approaches (ACAPS, 2024). This appeal, however, does not include the cost of the comprehensive, long-term reconstruction of educational infrastructure, which would need to be addressed separately in longer-term recovery plans. Additionally, the Flash Appeal requests approximately US\$120 million for emergency education and mental health and psychosocial support. Of this, US\$110.6 million is allocated for Gaza alone, reflecting the scale of damage to the education sector and the need for continued emergency learning and psychosocial interventions (UNRWA, 2024).

### Funding gaps

Despite the clear and urgent needs, the education sector remains significantly underfunded within the broader humanitarian response. As of early 2025, only a small proportion of requested funding had been secured. According to OCHA's financial tracking, by March 2025, the education sector had received approximately US\$16.6 million, representing only around 7.2% of the US\$230 million required. Consequently, over 92% of educational emergency needs remained unmet, marking one of the largest sectoral funding gaps in the humanitarian appeal. Education typically struggles to attract donor funding compared to immediate life-saving sectors such as food security and health. In February 2025, UNICEF highlighted that persistent funding shortfalls severely limit response capacity, preventing agencies from scaling essential programmes such as Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS) and procurement of learning materials. By mid-2025, funding shortages remained critical, forcing the Education Cluster to reduce or stop some TLS and remote-learning initiatives.

### Pledges versus critical needs

The Education Cluster has identified priority interventions that urgently require funding. These include repairing minimally damaged school buildings to serve as safe learning environments, expanding temporary learning facilities (using tents or prefabricated units), delivering catch-up and remedial classes, printing and distributing self-learning materials for all grade levels, training educators in psychosocial support and trauma-informed pedagogy, and equipping schools with generators, water, and sanitation facilities to ensure basic operational conditions. Without adequate funding, these interventions cannot reach necessary scale or effectiveness.

While international donors have provided some initial support – such as the global Education Cannot Wait fund, which allocated an initial grant of around US\$2 million in late 2023, and limited bilateral aid to UNICEF and partner NGOs – the amounts remain far below requirements. Despite ongoing high-level advocacy, including appeals from global education leaders highlighting the risks faced by Gaza's children, education remains underfunded due to donor fatigue and prioritisation of immediate life-saving interventions.

### Looking forward

The current funding gap not only limits immediate emergency education interventions but also threatens to delay the long-term recovery and reconstruction of Gaza's education system. In March 2025, the Education Cluster emphasised the urgent need for sustained and substantial funding to maintain the education-in-emergencies response.

Given the scale of destruction, support must extend beyond the initial emergency phase, through recovery, and into full reconstruction. Without adequate resources, each month that passes compounds learning losses and heightens the risk of irreversible educational setbacks for Gaza's children.

Maintaining educational continuity, even at minimal levels, also serves as critical protection: without structured educational activities, children face heightened risks of exploitation, child labour, early marriage, and other protection-related dangers. Thus, addressing the education funding gap is both a humanitarian necessity and a protective priority. Yet, as of May 2025, education remains among the most severely underfunded sectors in the Gaza humanitarian crisis.

Research shows that rebuilding education, training and employment support systems in conflict-affected areas requires a comprehensive strategy that integrates immediate humanitarian support assistance with long-term reconstruction efforts. In the case of Gaza, the scale and specificity of the conflict are arguably unprecedented. In line with the Education in Emergencies (EiE) frameworks (INEE, 2024), while the current crisis in Gaza is marked by profound loss and devastation, efforts to rebuild in the future may aim to strengthen the resilience and inclusiveness of education and training systems. Such recovery must be rooted in a deep respect for the dignity and rights of affected communities, prioritising their needs and voices as part of a long-term commitment to peace and justice.

This would involve not only restoring skills development activities integrating immediate humanitarian needs with EiE principles (access and inclusion, safety and well-being, coordination and collaboration, quality learning, equity and gender, community engagement) (INEE, 2024) but also reconstructing the broader education and skills development system to promote long-term peace and development. This includes rebuilding educational infrastructure, reforming curricula to support conflict-sensitive education, and integrating vocational training to provide pathways to meaningful livelihoods. This holistic approach, supported by multilateral organisations and academic literature (UNESCO, 2003; Pherali and Sahar, 2018, Schultz *et al.*, 2024), recognises that education can contribute to both immediate relief and long-term development, addressing the complex needs of learners in fragile and conflict-affected situations.

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