

# Samaritan's Purse assists Gaza Humanitarian Foundation

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(RNS)—After struggling for months to find partners to help them deliver aid to Gaza, the [embattled Gaza Humanitarian Foundation](#) has picked up a collaborator—Samaritan's Purse, the international Christian disaster relief organization headed by Franklin Graham.

Since July 26, Samaritan's Purse has sent eight relief flights for Gaza carrying 169 tons of supplemental food packets that have been distributed through the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation's four Gaza-based hubs.

In addition, Samaritan's Purse has sent a medical team of six nurses and paramedics to provide first aid treatment at these distribution sites, a spokesperson for the organization confirmed.

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation is a private, Israel- and U.S.-backed project staffed by U.S. security contractors and funded with \$30 million in U.S. tax dollars, with a matching commitment from Israel. It was created to displace the United Nations' various humanitarian relief efforts, which Israel has prevented from functioning.

But since the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation began its operations in mid-May, more than 1,400 unarmed Palestinian civilians have reportedly been killed by Israel Defense Forces while seeking food aid at or near the foundation's distribution sites, known as Safe Distribution Hubs, located in remote militarized zones.

Aid groups and governments around the world have condemned the operation and accused it of violating humanitarian standards and putting civilians at risk at a time when the region is experiencing mass starvation.

# Some faith-based groups skeptical about GHF



Johnnie Moore speaks about the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation during a July 22 Zoom appearance sponsored by the American Jewish Congress and the World Zionist Organization. (Video screen grab)

Gaza Humanitarian Foundation [Chairman Johnnie Moore](#), a prominent evangelical and a onetime faith adviser to President Donald Trump, has pleaded with various international aid groups to join the effort.

Many faith-based aid groups, such as Catholic Relief Services, have expressed deep skepticism of the foundation and its methods and have rejected collaborations with it.

But Ken Isaacs, vice president of programs and government relations for Samaritan's Purse, said his organization, based in North Carolina, said he was satisfied with Gaza Humanitarian Foundation operations.

"I visited several Gaza Humanitarian Foundation sites and was impressed with how they were secured and the professionalism of the GHF staff," Isaacs said. "They are working in a very difficult situation, and I am grateful that Samaritan's Purse has the opportunity to collaborate with

GHF and other partners. We want to help as many people as we can.”

Israel’s nearly two-year war of retribution against Hamas in the Gaza Strip has killed 62,000 people and earned it international censure across the world, with leading human rights organizations concluding that Israel is engaged in a genocide.

In early March, Israel cut off all aid for Gaza, a move that Israeli officials said was taken to pressure Hamas into making concessions in ceasefire talks. That cutoff ended in May, when the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation began a limited distribution of aid in Gaza.

## **Distribution of aid problematic**

It may have been too late. International observers said starvation had set in. The Gaza Health Ministry has said that at least 271 people, including 112 children, have died of starvation to date.

International observers say that not enough aid is being allowed in and that the distribution system is deeply flawed and unable to reach the poorest people who desperately need it.

“They call them secure distribution sites,” said Alex de Waal, executive director of the World Peace Foundation at Tufts University and the author of a book on mass starvation. “Well, the people aren’t secure. A lot of them get killed. But the rations aren’t secure either.

“No voluntary agency would ever hand out food in this way. You simply don’t know who’s coming to get it and people are getting multiple boxes because they’re strong. The strongest get the most.”

On Aug. 7, Mike Huckabee, the U.S. ambassador to Israel, announced a U.S. plan to expand aid distribution operations in Gaza to as many as 16 points. But since then, Israel announced its plan to invade Gaza City, the

most populous city in the strip, forcing hundreds of thousands of residents to once again uproot themselves.

It's not clear whether the expanded sites will be opened during a full-scale military incursion of the type the government of Israel has now approved.

This is not the first time Samaritan's Purse has provided aid in this conflict. After the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel, Samaritan's Purse pledged 42 ambulances to Magen David Adom, Israel's national emergency medical service. Of those, 22 have already been provided. A spokesperson added, "We anticipate being able to do more in the future."