



Zoom in with COGAT

Discrepancies in UN Aid to Gaza Data

Given the humanitarian situation in Gaza, accurately collecting and reporting humanitarian aid data is of great importance. Organizations – from other aid agencies to international bodies to the media– rely on the UN data that is collected and published. It is widely considered to be the source of truth.

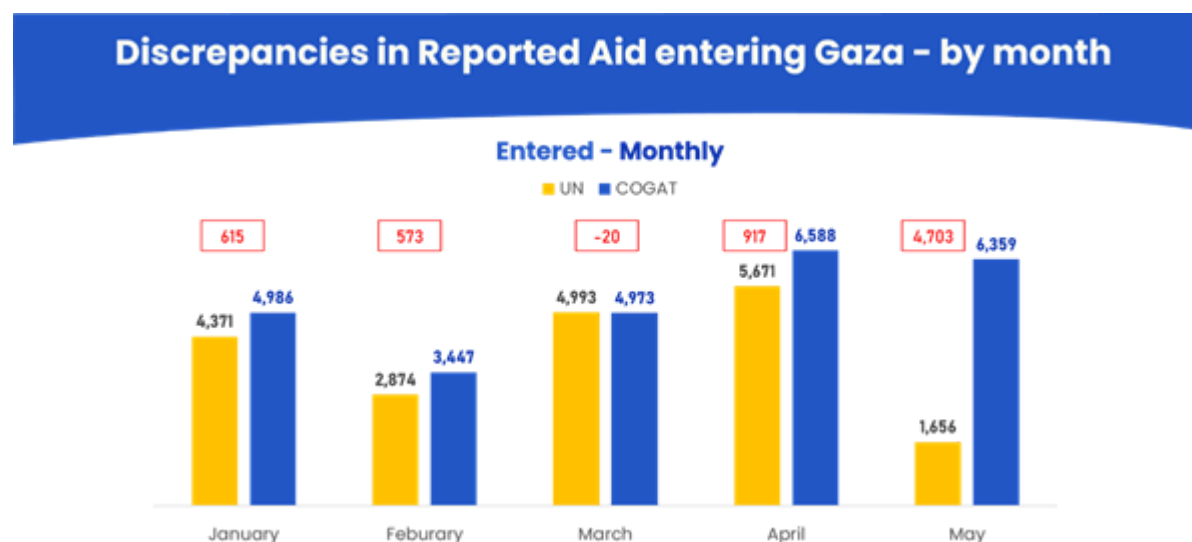
In light of the centrality of UN data, it is critical that it be accurate and provide a complete picture of the aid going into Gaza. There are however, significant gaps in the data presented on the UN dashboard ^[1], and the data collected and published by COGAT. After an in-depth review and analysis, it is clear that the UN data presents what is, at best, an incomplete picture of aid going into Gaza, and that there are methodological problems that result in significant underreporting.

The UN figures not only inconsistently record humanitarian trucks from the private sector and other NGO trucks, but is also missing data on **UN aid entering Gaza**. These gaps have existed throughout the war, but have become extreme since the end of April and through the month of May 2024.

Prior to October 7, 2023, UN OCHA was responsible for collecting data and publishing reports. However, since October 7th, UNRWA has taken over data collection and reporting. Their methodology is deeply flawed, lacks transparency, and is presented in such a way that makes it nearly impossible to understand the aid numbers they record.

After a thorough review and analysis of the data collected by COGAT and UNRWA – **we have identified underreporting of over 8,000 trucks from the beginning of the war, with 4,880 ‘missing’ trucks in the month of May alone**. Part of the UNRWA underreporting is due to the fact that they do not include aid trucks coming in from the Erez Crossings and JLOTS, and at Kerem Shalom they only collect partial data.

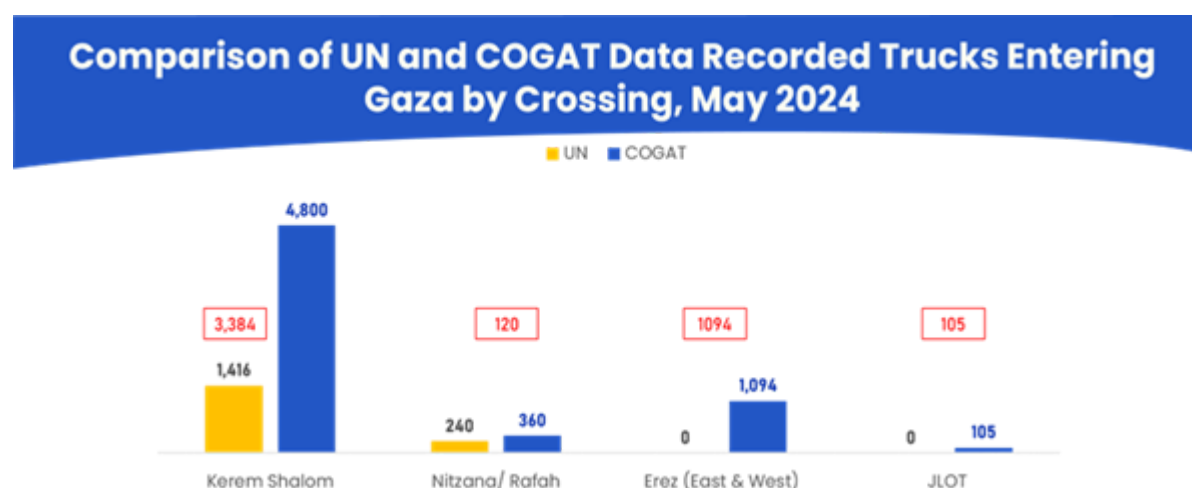
COGAT, the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, is the official Israeli body responsible for coordinating and tracking aid entry into Gaza. As such the unit records and publishes aid data on its website ^[2]. The data is collected by COGAT representatives at the various crossings into Gaza, and is communicated to the UN among other bodies on a daily basis.



Incomplete AID Data

There are a number of ways in which the UN data collected on aid trucks is incomplete. Below is a review of the different problems represented in the UN data and their origins.

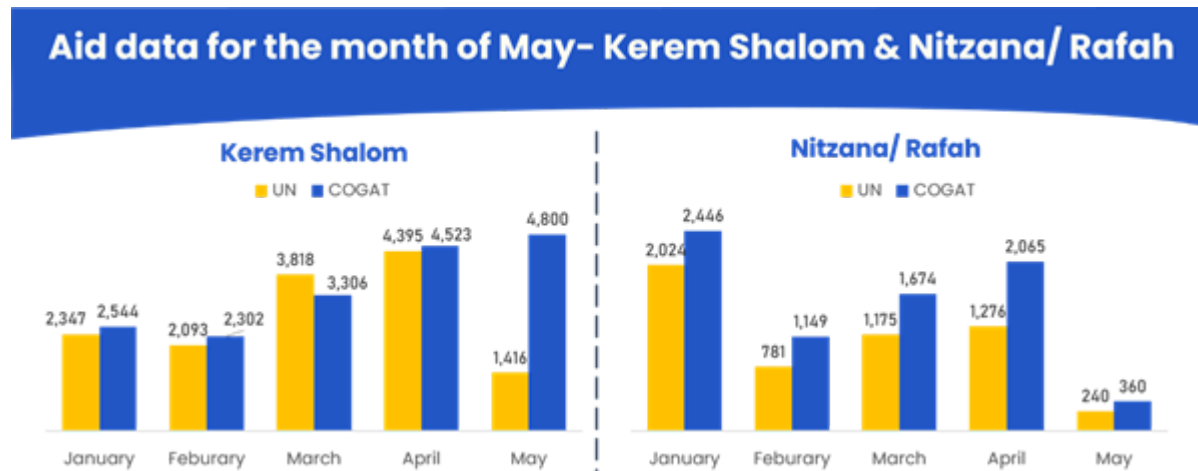
1. Incomplete data collection at crossing points



Over time, the number of entry points for humanitarian aid into Gaza has expanded, particularly in May 2024 when the Erez East and West crossing was opened and JLOTS pier became operational. However, the mechanisms and methodology by which UNRWA collects and calculates aid into Gaza has not expanded to include the new crossing points.

In contrast, COGAT monitors and calculates each of the entry points, with a designated COGAT officer assigned to monitor each one. As such COGAT numbers reflect aid entering Gaza from Kerem Shalom, Nitzana/Rafah, Erez (East and West), JLOTS, and air drops.

2. Incomplete Data Collection at Kerem Shalom and Rafah Crossings



The way that COGAT calculates the number of trucks going in via Kerem Shalom and Nitzana/Rafah crossings is first, the itemized manifest lists are submitted by the various actors (this includes all UN agencies, NGOs, donor countries and private sector), and then those lists are verified, physically by a COGAT officer at each entry point (i.e. at Kerem Shalom and Nitzana).

Because UNRWA does not provide any disclaimers or transparency around their counting methodology, we cannot explain why their numbers differ from COGATs. It is possible that they are only partially counting non-UNRWA aid based off their physical presence at the crossing points (i.e. they record trucks that they see entering Gaza if they are present at the crossing, but they don't if they are not there at the time that other trucks go through). However, there is no way to verify this conclusion due to their opaque methodology.

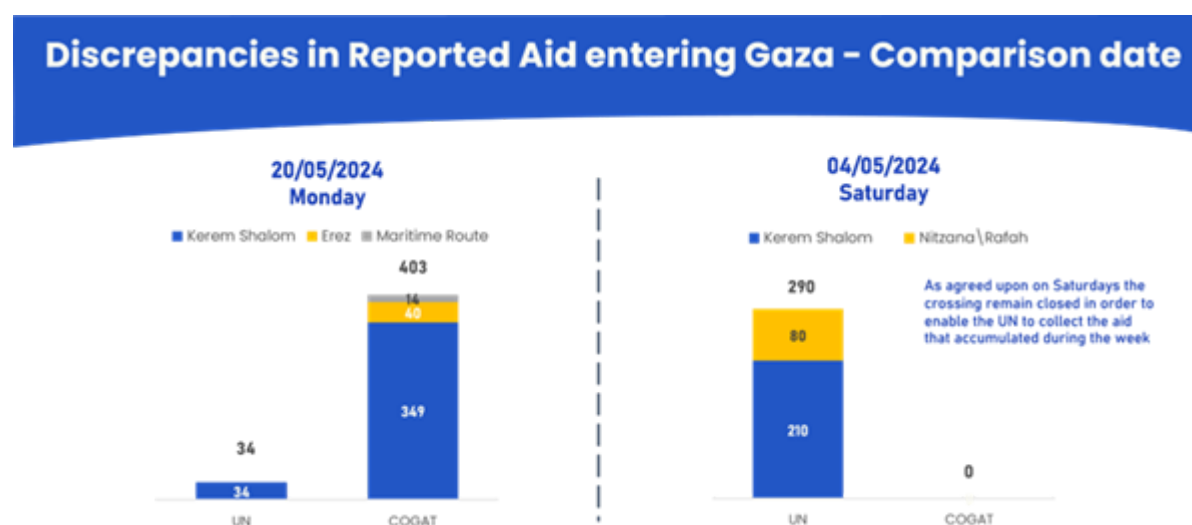
As a result of the UN's partial counting, since the beginning of 2024, there are 3,406 trucks missing from their Kerem Shalom data and 2,198 trucks missing from their Nitzana/Rafah data.

3. Aid Transferred vs Aid Collected

One of the sources of confusion when trying to compare the trucking data is that COGAT reports on the number of trucks that are inspected and then enter Gaza through the various entry points on a daily basis. The day that a truck undergoes security screening and enters Gaza is the date that COGAT records the truck in the tally.

Alternatively, UNRWA's dashboard, entitled "Gaza Supplies and Dispatch", appears to tally only the number of trucks that they collect from the Palestinian side of the crossing. It remains unclear how they calculate the non-UNRWA aid that is also collected from the crossings that they do monitor (i.e. only Kerem Shalom and Nitzana/Rafah).

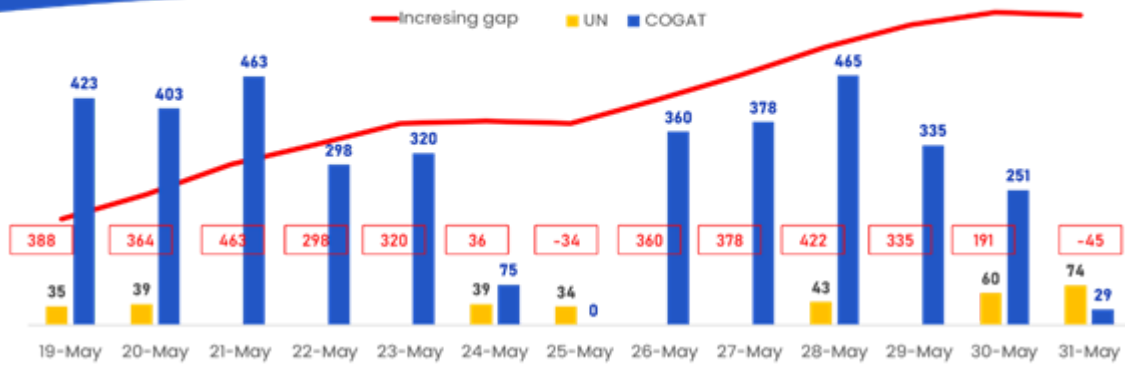
This is why, as seen in the graph below, there are significant differences in daily tallies. On a Saturday in which new trucks are not traversing the crossing points, COGAT records zero trucks, but UNRWA records the trucks of aid that were collected. Alternatively on a day in which new trucks are entering Gaza, COGAT records those that enter whereas UNRWA only records those that they collect.



The difference in the calculation methodology poses a challenge for any independent user trying to resolve the differences and verify the humanitarian data against one another.

In periods where there is a significant backlog of humanitarian aid piling up at Kerem Shalom, the gaps in numbers increases. For example, as of June 6, 2024, there are more than 1,000 truckloads of aid sitting on the Gaza side of Kerem Shalom awaiting collection by the UN. Those trucks have been recorded by COGAT, but not by the UN.

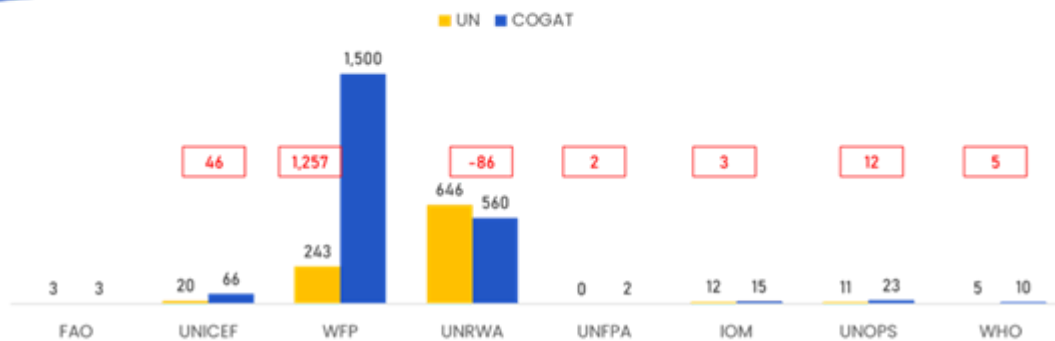
Data table of a two-week period during May



4. Incomplete data collection on UN Aid

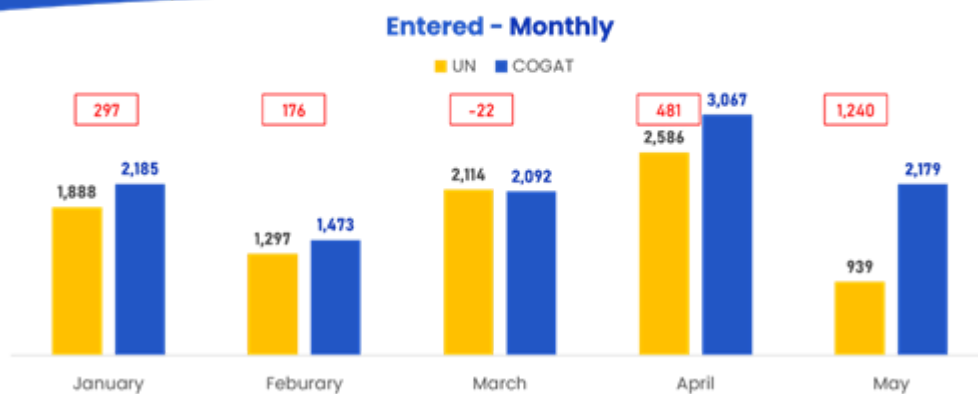
Even if you discount the trucks coming from other aid organizations, donor countries or the private sector, the UNRWA data is also missing data for other UN agencies.

Discrepancies in Reported UN Aid entering Gaza , May 2024



This is significant because it means that even when it comes to tracking UN aid – ignoring all other sources of humanitarian goods entering Gaza – the UNRWA system fails to accurately track and tally the UN trucks entering Gaza. For the month of May, **they are missing 1,239 UN aid trucks** that entered Gaza.

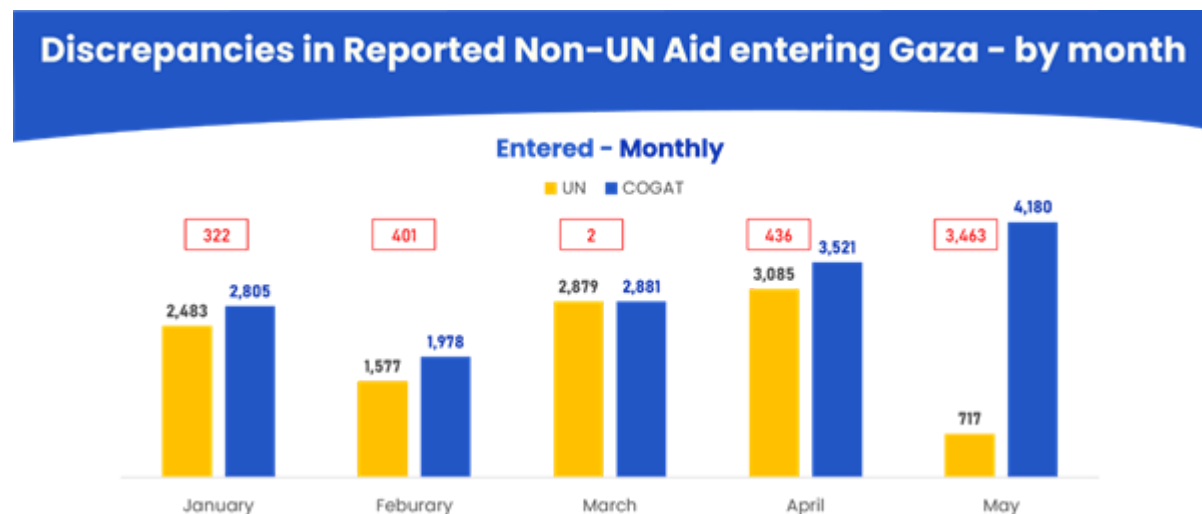
Discrepancies in Reported UN Aid entering Gaza – by month



Not only is UNRWA inconsistently accounting for aid trucks from other UN agencies, evidently, they are not presenting the full scope of the other UN agency humanitarian effort. This lack of consistency in accounting for other UN agency aid trucks is even more

inexplicable when taken in consideration with the fact that **UNRWA is assisting on the collection of the other UN aid trucks from all the crossings (i.e. including Erez and JLOTS).**

5. Incomplete data collection on non-UN actors



Just as there are significant gaps in the data reporting on UN aid entering Gaza, those gaps are even more significant when it comes to reporting on non-UN actors, which includes aid sent by donor countries, NGOs and the private sector. The fact that there isn't accurate data collection and presentation of non-UN actors further exacerbates the disconnect between the humanitarian overview provided by the UNRWA data and the reality on the ground.

This is even more significant as over time the number of humanitarian actors and their pace of contribution has increased. Similar to UNRWA's lack of adaptation to include aid tally from Erez and JLOTS, they have not adjusted their data collection mechanisms to consistently and accurately reflect the efforts of non-UN actors. **Whereas in January the gap was 'only' 322 trucks, in May that number ballooned to 3,463.**

6. Daily Aid Data Alignment vs UNRWA Dashboard

COGAT has a daily coordination meeting every evening with representatives from the UN, the US and Egypt to review that day's humanitarian effort, trouble-shoot and agree upon efforts for the following day. Part of this meeting is devoted to reviewing the data, specifically the trucks going through the various crossing.

Within the format of the daily coordination meetings, the UN is informed on the COGAT data and daily tally. The UN has not objected or endeavored to correct or align the COGAT

data with theirs during these meetings.

7.UNRWA vs OCHA data collection

It is important to note again that UNRWA has been the UN body collecting aid data since the beginning of the war. Prior to October 7th, OCHA was the UN body collecting data and writing reports. This is part of the OCHA mandate and they had an established system in place for such data collection. In contrast, this is not part of the UNRWA mandate, nor do they have the capabilities or systems in place to accurately capture and report on the totality of the humanitarian effort in Gaza.

Because they are now providing the data on which the entire UN system and other international actors rely, their systematic underreporting of aid entering Gaza poses a significant problem for those trying to get an accurate understanding of the aid situation on the ground.

Conclusions:

UN data is used widely and considered accurate by the international community and is the basis on which professional bodies and studies evaluate the humanitarian situation and needs in Gaza. The sizable and growing gap in the reported data is contributing to an increasing disconnect between reporting and the reality on the ground

There are no disclaimers on the UNRWA dashboard that would enable professional bodies or other users to understand the limitation and methodological restrictions in their data. UNRWA data presents only a partial picture, but purports to represent a holistic one.

UNRWA does not have the mandate or the capabilities to be collecting and presenting the aid data. Historically and according to the UN mandate, OCHA is the professional body that should be collecting this data, and they have not since Oct. 7, 2023.

The UN data, relied upon by the rest of world, is missing significant humanitarian aid data. This contributes to a distortion between the reality on the ground and the widely accepted reports.

[1] <https://www.unrwa.org/what-we-do/gaza-supplies-and-dispatch-tracking>

[2] <https://govextra.gov.il/cogat/humanitarian-efforts/home/>

How much food has entered the Gaza Strip? How much medical aid? What medical initiatives are ongoing in Gaza?

Check out COGAT's website for the latest figures: bit.ly/3Ri64DJ.

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