

## Justice Department's demands for Voter Data Sparks Debate Over State Authority

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A recent internal review by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has found no evidence that Hamas systematically stole U.S.-funded humanitarian aid in Gaza. Conducted in June 2025 by USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance, the assessment examined 156 reported incidents of aid theft or loss between October 2023 and May 2025. According to government sources, none of the incidents were

directly attributable to Hamas, while 44 were linked either directly or indirectly to Israeli military operations.

These findings contradict earlier public claims made by both U.S. and Israeli officials, who had accused Hamas of diverting or profiting from humanitarian shipments. Such allegations had been used to justify the establishment of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, a U.S.-backed private initiative designed to manage aid flows while bypassing traditional United Nations and NGO channels. The initiative has been widely criticized by aid organizations for undermining neutral humanitarian delivery systems.

Despite the USAID report, the U.S. State Department continues to assert that Hamas was involved in aid diversion, citing unreleased video footage and alleged misconduct among aid workers. Israeli authorities have supported this position, although neither government has provided publicly verifiable evidence to substantiate the claims.

Humanitarian groups and United Nations agencies have consistently denied allegations that Hamas is stealing aid. A senior U.S. envoy also acknowledged that Israel had not presented specific proof to support its claims, and that independent investigations had not confirmed any systematic diversion by the group.

The findings come amid a deepening humanitarian crisis in Gaza. International aid organizations report widespread malnutrition, food insecurity, and growing starvation, especially among children and pregnant women. Several Western governments, including France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, have joined calls for Israel to lift

restrictions on aid access and take responsibility for exacerbating the crisis through its blockade policies.

Critics of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation argue that it centralizes control over aid delivery, involves armed contractors, and compromises humanitarian neutrality. Questions have also been raised about the initiative's effectiveness and ethical implications, particularly as traditional multilateral channels are sidelined.

The USAID review underscores a crucial issue for U.S. government policy: whether decisions around humanitarian aid are being driven by verified evidence or by political considerations. With lives at stake and Gaza's humanitarian needs growing more urgent, transparency, accountability, and evidence-based strategies are essential to ensuring that aid reaches civilians without distortion or delay.