## **Boston Consulting Group Inc**

## BCG fires two partners over work on Gaza aid overhaul

Consulting group says work by employees on contentious US-backed effort was 'unauthorised'



BCG's work to help establish an aid effort that became the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation has pulled the firm into a global controversy over the project © Jhvephotos/Dreamstime

## Stephen Foley in New York

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Boston Consulting Group has fired two partners for "unauthorised work" related to a contentious US-backed effort to overhaul aid distribution in Gaza.

The consultancy said on Thursday that the pair "failed to disclose the full nature of the work during the client acceptance process" and carried out subsequent unauthorised work "in violation of BCG's policies and protocols".

The partners had been "exited from the firm", it said, without naming them.

<u>BCG</u>'s work to help establish an aid effort that became the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation has pulled it into a global controversy.

The UN, long the principal provider of aid to <u>Gaza</u>, has called the project a "fig leaf" for displacement of Palestinians because it uses private contractors and the Israeli military to secure aid supplies to distribution centres located mainly in the south of the enclave. Its executive director resigned last week saving he did not believe the

operation could comply with humanitarian principles of neutrality and independence.

GHF distribution sites have also been the scene of unrest. As starving Palestinians have sought to reach supplies, Israeli troops have repeatedly been accused of shooting at people seeking aid.

BCG said earlier this week that it had <u>halted its involvement</u> in the project on May 30 and would not be getting paid for any of the work.

US consulting firms have "client acceptance" processes to vet new projects, fearing public controversy or ethical risks. BCG said its work related to Gaza began in October as pro bono support for an aid effort intended to operate alongside other relief efforts. Subsequent work "lacked visible multilateral support", it said.

BCG's statement on Thursday said it had engaged outside counsel to investigate its involvement in the project.

"We deeply regret that in this situation we did not live up to our standards," it said. "We are committed to taking all necessary steps to address the issues identified in the ongoing investigation."

GHF temporarily halted aid efforts this week after the local health ministry said Israeli soldiers shot and killed at least 27 people and injured dozens as they waited for aid in the Rafah governorate in southern Gaza.

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