

WFP News Video : Heads of UN food agencies call for urgent peace in famine-stricken South Sudan

TRT: 3:20

Shot: 19-20Jan2017, 18/23May2017

Shotlist:

:00-:24

Children being screened for malnutrition at a clinic. WFP Executive Director David Beasley and FAO Director General José Graziano da Silva with malnourished child.

Ganyiel Unity State

Shot: 18 May, 23 May2017

:24-:58

WFP airdrops of vegetable oil from the ground and inside the plane. Collection of vegetable oil from the dropzone.

Ganyiel Unity State

Shot: 18 May2017

:58- 1:40

WFP Executive Director David Beasley and FAO Director General José Graziano da Silva watch parachute airdrops of vegetable oil, inspecting WFP food for distribution.

Ganyiel Unity State

Shot: 23 May2017

1:40-1:59

SOT: David Beasley, WFP Executive Director (English)

“Famine is literally just a matter of miles from here and because of the cooperation, the partnership, it’s amazing to see people getting the food in conditions that are tough. But this is an area that is stable right now, you never know what is going to happen tomorrow, but every day that we can be here, is another day that we prevent famine.”

Ganyiel, Unity State

Shot: 23 May2017

1:59-2:09

WFP Executive Director David Beasley and FAO Director General José Graziano da Silva inspecting and distributing FAO fishing kits, vegetable seeds and gardening hand tools.

Ganyiel, Unity State

Shot: 23 May2017

2:09-2:23

SOT: José Graziano da Silva, FAO Director General (English)

“This all about we are preserving lives, we are preserving the livelihood where they live and teaching them how to survive in those very difficult conditions. We are saving lives.”

Ganyiel, Unity State

Shot: 23 May2017

-2:23-2:39

FAO provides fishing kits and training to help people get fish for them to eat and sell.

Kereri village, Terekeka County

Shot: 19 Jan2017

-2:39-3:00

Terekeka village residents fishing, collecting catch and market stalls in Terekeka Town.

Terekeka village, Terekeka County

Shot: 20 Jan2017

3:00-3:20

Preparation and cooking of WFP sorghum

Ganyiel, Unity State

Shot: 18 May2017

ENDS

WFP/FAO Joint News Release

24 May 2017

HEADS OF UN FOOD AGENCIES VISIT FAMINE-STRICKEN SOUTH SUDAN

FAO's Graziano da Silva and WFP's Beasley call for urgent peace

JUBA – All parties to the conflict in South Sudan must cease violence and work together to ensure that food and other lifesaving support can reach people to end famine and severe hunger, the heads of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) said yesterday.

FAO's José Graziano da Silva and WFP's David Beasley made their appeal during a visit to Unity State, one of the areas in South Sudan worst hit by the current hunger crisis.

Around 5.5 million people in South Sudan, or almost half the population, face severe hunger, not knowing where their next meal is coming from ahead of the lean season, which peaks in July. Of these around one million people are on the brink of famine.

Of those 5.5 million, more than 90,000 South Sudanese face starvation with famine declared in parts of former Unity State. This unprecedented situation reflects the impact of ongoing strife, obstacles to delivering humanitarian assistance and declining agricultural production.

Graziano da Silva and Beasley stressed that an immediate, massive response is critical, combining emergency food assistance and support for agriculture, livestock and fisheries.

“Despite the appalling conditions it is not too late to save more people from dying. We can still avoid a worsening of the disaster, but the fighting has to stop now. There can be no progress without peace. People must be given immediate access to food, and farmers need to be allowed to work on their fields and tend to their livestock,” Graziano da Silva said.

In the former Unity State, Graziano da Silva and Beasley visited people in several places who are being supported by the two agencies as they cope with the hunger crisis. They met with people facing famine on the remote Kok Island, a refuge in the Nile River where many people have sought shelter from fighting. They witnessed WFP planes airdropping lifesaving food for tens of thousands of people in Ganyiel, where regular distributions of humanitarian aid have kept famine at bay. The two agency heads saw aid workers from international and local partner organizations distributing WFP food and nutrition treatments, as well as seeds and fishing kits from FAO.

“Food, treatment for malnourished kids, kits that help people fish and grow vegetables – these are the difference between life and death for people we met in Unity state,” Beasley said. “But we can’t keep scaling up forever. The fighting has to end to make the kind of investments that give the children of South Sudan any hope for the future they deserve.”

In Rumbek, in the former Lakes State, Graziano da Silva and Beasley met with families, witnessing first-hand how they are trying to cope with the crisis.

While the situation in Rumbek is not as dire as in other parts of the country, hunger and malnutrition are serious concerns. The two UN agency heads visited an FAO project aiming to provide women farmers and pastoralists with a place to safely process milk for their families and to sell it. It also offers a space for community training.

With malnutrition levels rising inexorably across the country, the project is an innovative way to increase the availability of safe, quality milk and milk products,

which are a major dietary staple for people and a source of protein vitamins and minerals – essential components for a healthy diet.

Delays in funding cost lives

Graziano da Silva and Beasley underscored the need for the international community to further support the humanitarian efforts in South Sudan. Additional funding is needed for food distribution, improving nutrition, healthcare, water and sanitation, providing agricultural inputs, including seeds, fishing kits and animal vaccination.

Together, FAO and WFP face a funding gap of around US\$182 million for the next six months, and are struggling to raise funds to meet skyrocketing needs in several crises around the world.

“Donors have supported South Sudan over many years,” said Beasley. “WFP will continue to stand by the people of South Sudan in their time of need. But times are tight, with so many crises around the world demanding attention and support. South Sudan’s leaders must show good faith by facilitating humanitarian efforts, including getting rid of unnecessary fees and procedures that delay and hinder aid.”

WFP aims to assist at least 4.1 million people this year in South Sudan, including lifesaving food for people in remote areas who would otherwise have practically nothing to eat, as they have been cut off by fighting. WFP provides special treatments that help mothers and young children fight off malnutrition. WFP also provides cash assistance to help people buy their own food in parts of the country where there is food in shops but prices have soared so much that the poorest people are unable to get enough to feed their families.

“Saving livelihoods also saves lives,” said Graziano da Silva. “South Sudan has great potential – it has land, water and courageous people. If it also has peace, then together we can work to end hunger.”

So far 2.9 million people have benefitted from FAO’s dry season livelihood assistance, and FAO is currently distributing crop seeds and organizing seed fairs with the aim of benefitting up to 2.1 million people by the end of the main planting season. To date almost 200,000 people have received vegetable and fishing kits in famine-stricken Unity State alone.

In addition, a vaccination campaign has treated some 1.8 million livestock against diseases so far this year, and will reach up to 6 million by year end. FAO is also

scaling up the distribution of fishing kits in critical famine areas where people are living in swamps and who are in desperate need of sources of food.

Broadcast-quality video is available – please contact: jonathan.dumont@wfp.org or MariaAngela.Rosati@fao.org

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About WFP

WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience. Each year, WFP assists some 80 million people in 80 countries.

Follow us on Twitter @wfp_media and @WFP_Africa.

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The scale of the refugee crisis in Uganda is extraordinary, with average daily arrivals of over 2,000 people. The country now hosts the largest refugee population in Africa – over 1.2 million people, 74 percent from South Sudan.

The number of refugees WFP assists has more than doubled in the last year, and our operation is under considerable strain to meet their full food needs. WFP has a shortfall of US\$60 million to fund operations from May through October.

We need sufficient resources at the right time to keep our warehouses stocked in order to provide a constant supply of food for the refugees who depend on us. It takes time to convert cash contributions into food.

Overall funding has not kept pace with the flood of new arrivals.

In numbers:

Funding shortfall (to end October 2017):	US\$60 million
Number of refugees supported:	1 million
Monthly food requirement:	16,200 metric tons

Overview:

For May, WFP is being forced to cut in half the amount of cereal – maize – distributed to all refugees, although the rest of the ration will be distributed in full.

In August 2016, WFP was forced to cut in half the food entitlement for refugees who arrived before July 2015 – affecting about 200,000 people – but until now we managed to avoid further cuts despite the rapidly growing requirements.

The lean season in Uganda has meant that WFP has had to buy cereals from suppliers outside the country. None of the other WFP operations in the region have stocks available to loan due to the humanitarian crises in South Sudan, Kenya and Somalia.

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