



World Food  
Programme

Programme  
Alimentaire  
Mondial

Programa  
Mundial de  
Alimentos

برنامج  
الأغذية  
العالمي

The Food Aid Organization of the United Nations

**Video News Footage**

**22 February 2007**

**Poverty and Unemployment prevailing**

World Food Programme (WFP)

Language: English

Length: 00:02:11

Shot: 7,10 January 2007, 12 February 2007

00:00– 00:05		W/S teenager searching in the pile of Garbage in Johr Al-Deek
00:05 – 00:20		M/S of emptying of garbage truck in Johr Al Deek, and happy teenagers with the arrival of new Garbage to dig through.
00:20 – 00:26		W/S children carrying empty cartons in Khan Younis and walking wit them.
00:26 – 00:28		C/U Children collecting empty cartons from the main market in Khan Younis.
00:28 – 00:38		W/S Empty streets of Rafah, with a few cars travelling.
00:38 - 00:43		W/S Donkey Caravan passing in the streets of Rafah.
00:43 - 00:48		M/S Man sleeping on the floor in the street.
00:48 - 00:54		W/S Young child walking with big empty bottles to be filled with water.
00:54 – 01:00		W/S People gathering around tap water in the street to fill out their empty bottles with water in Rafah.
01:00 – 01:10		W/S Girl dragging heavy cart filled with bottles of water.
01:10 – 01:31 SOT translation		SOT with Salem Sliyh, Food For Work Project-  <i>“Situation is really bad. Schools are 2 to 3 Km away and the kids have to walk. We keep telling them we’ll pay the school fees tomorrow or the day after but we have no money. They even beat the children asking for the school fees but we have no money. Where can we get money, for years now there’s been no work at all.”</i>
001:31 – 01:35		M/S Family eating porridge on the floor in the street at Khan Younis.
001:35 – 02:11		SOT with Khaled Mansour, WFP Spokesperson. <i>“Economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory have been fast deteriorating. Poverty and unemployment are at an all time high especially in Gaza strip. The World Food Programme is trying to help people cover their basic food needs. Non refugee</i>

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		<i>Palestinians get some food from the WFP, either through Food for Training Projects or Food for Work Projects that help people acquire new skills or build useful communal assets as well as general food distribution for people who cannot work”</i>
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# WFP News Release

22 February 2007

## POOR PALESTINIANS UNABLE TO PURCHASE ENOUGH FOOD, WARNS WFP/FAO REPORT

**JERUSALEM** – The United Nations has warned that rising unemployment and poverty in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, coupled with economic suffocation, are posing acute challenges to food security, leaving many families totally reliant on outside assistance, as well as threatening vital sectors of the Palestinian economy.

The warning comes in a report by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) due to be released this month, reviewing and analysing 2006 statistics and assessing food security and socio-economic conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

It says that while food security levels in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) have been maintained through regular humanitarian assistance and strong social solidarity among Palestinians, almost half of the population remains food insecure or is at risk of becoming food insecure.

The weakening economy is leading to a marked decline in living standards. According to the report, 84 percent of Gazans and 60 percent of West Bankers were found to be reducing their living expenditures by the end of 2006. Many people, who cannot afford to buy food, have been forced to sell off valuable livelihood assets such as land or tools.

“The poorest families are now living a meagre existence totally reliant on assistance, with no electricity or heating and eating food prepared with water from bad sources. This is putting their long-term health at risk,” stressed Arnold Vercken, WFP’s Country Director in the oPt.

One particularly disturbing factor noted by the report is the growing proportion of the urban population suffering food insecurity, alongside the more traditionally vulnerable rural and refugee populations. All Palestinians are to a greater or lesser extent caught between rising food prices and declining purchasing power.

“In recent years, Palestinians have shared the burden of rising poverty, but without sustainable economic recovery, the humanitarian caseload will only increase over time,” said Erminio Sacco, FAO Food Security Advisor in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.



“Food assistance alone cannot prevent this decline – there also has to be economic growth which requires political dialogue and stability,” said Vercken.

The report illustrates how restrictions on trade and movement experienced over 2006 have led to the progressive fragmentation of the economy, dragging previously self-reliant sectors of society (farmers, workers, fishermen, traders and small shop owners) into poverty and debt.

Gaza relies almost entirely on imported food, thus any closure of the Karni commercial crossing has a direct impact on the availability and price of basic commodities. The stagnation of trade experienced in 2006 drastically affected employment and income opportunities throughout the Gaza Strip leading to a serious rise in poverty.

The WFP operation was originally designed to provide 154,000 tons of food assistance to 135,500 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and 344,500 in the West Bank. However, since various restrictions were placed on international funding to the Palestinian Authority in January 2006, an increasing number of Palestinians have been facing impoverishment. WFP has responded to growing needs by raising the number of beneficiaries from 480,000 to 600,000.

Donors to date include: the European Commission (US\$35 million), the United States (US\$35 million), Norway (US\$3 million), Japan (US\$2.8 million), Saudi Arabia (US\$2.6 million), France (US\$2.5 million), Switzerland (US\$2 million), Sweden (US\$1.2 million), Canada (US\$900,000), Denmark (US\$840,000), Finland (US\$740,000), Germany (US\$650,000), Cyprus (US\$ 350,000), Italy (US\$350,000), Austria (US\$320,000), the Netherlands (US\$200,000), Greece (US\$180,000), Iceland (US\$100,000) and the United Kingdom (US\$20,000).

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WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency: each year, we give food to an average of 90 million poor people to meet their nutritional needs, including 58 million hungry children, in at least 80 of the world's poorest countries. **WFP -- We Feed People.**

**WFP Global School Feeding Campaign** – For just 19 US cents a day, you can help WFP give children in poor countries a healthy meal at school – a gift of hope for a brighter future. Visit our website: [www.wfp.org](http://www.wfp.org)

WFP now provides RSS feeds to help journalists keep up with the latest press releases, videos and photos as they are published on WFP.org. For more details see: <http://www.wfp.org/english/?n=999>.

*WFP now has a dedicated ISDN line in Italy for quality two-way interviews with WFP officials.*

**Note to editors:** WFP has video footage available. Please contact Ola EL-Tanani, WFP/Cairo, Tel. +202 528 1730 Ext. 2613, Cell +2010 6584658.

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