



World Food
Programme

Programme
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Alimentos

برنامج
الأغذية
العالمي

The Food Aid Organization of the United Nations

WFP Video News Release
EL Barde, Southern Somalia
TRT 03'
English
23 June 2008

WFP distributed one-month rations to a total of 12,900 people in El Barde or about 50 percent of the town's entire population. In addition families with a malnourished child receive a one-month food ration from WFP. So WFP food reaches about 61 percent of the total population. Malnutrition however is on the rise because the April to June rains failed and livestock are dying because of disease and drought. Residents said more and more people were unable to buy food because of rising food and fuel prices, insecurity and a succession of poor rains and harvests.

00:00-01:04

GV of WFP food distribution on the outskirts of town
people waiting for their food ration
men loading food onto a donkey cart
armed guards

01:04-01:23

Sot WFP Executive Director Josette Sheeran

“Somalia may be our most challenging place on earth right now, combined with conflict and a very dangerous situation internally, drought, ... we have a situation of pirates at sea that have attacked our ships and disallowed us from getting food to the three million people that need it in Somalia.”

01:23 -01:38

GV food distribution
Cows' s carcass

01:38-01:54

GV of El Barde town

01:54-02:15

GV of people in the village

02:15-02:39

Sot WFP Executive Director Josette Sheeran

“Well, we are really appealing to countries that have the naval capability to help protect lives for the humanitarian food that needs to get in and these escorts can save lives because we cannot get the food in without this. We have already seen the power of this for the past six months and I know that pirates sounded like something out story books, but they are very real”

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02:39-02:44 Somali waters 22 September 2005

Gunmen seized the St Vincent and Grenadines-registered Semlow off Harardhere, 300 km northeast of Mogadishu, while it was transporting WFP food aid for 28,000

Long shot of:

WFP ship Semlow approx. 50 kilometers off the coast of Somalia.

02:440-03:00 Somali waters 16 November 2007

GV of French Naval vessel escorting WFP ships, navigating towards Merka port

WFP News Release

18 July 2008

SOMALIA FACES DIRE CROSSROADS AS INSECURITY AND DROUGHT COMBINE

LONDON – The United Nations World Food Programme said today that attacks on aid workers on the ground and threats to ships delivering food aid to Somalia, are jeopardising the lives of millions who now need urgent food assistance.

“Somalia is at a dire crossroads,” said Peter Goossens, WFP’s Country Director for Somalia at a news conference today in London. “If sufficient food and other humanitarian assistance cannot be scaled up in the coming months, parts of the country could well be in the grips of disaster similar to the 1992-1993 famine, when hundreds of thousands of people perished.”

Insecurity, drought, a succession of poor or failed harvests, are deepening the suffering of millions of people in the country, and pushing hundreds of thousands more into destitution. The situation is exacerbated by the weakness of the Somali shilling against the dollar, coupled with rising food and fuel prices.

Goossens warned that deteriorating security was hindering land and sea deliveries of food. WFP has appealed to foreign governments to provide naval escorts to protect WFP food ships against piracy.

Goossens said naval escorts from France, Denmark and the Netherlands proved invaluable over the last eight months, protecting WFP ships against piracy and armed robbery. WFP has received no commitments for further escorts beyond June.

Ninety percent of the food WFP gives to Somalia’s hungry arrives by sea.

A rash of killings or kidnappings of staff from UN agencies and non-governmental organizations in recent weeks also threaten to sabotage the response to the emergency.



The overall number of people in need of food assistance is expected to rise to 3.5 million people by December. WFP has to double the amount of people it feeds from more than one million per month, to 2.4 million by December. CARE International and the International Committee of the Red Cross are to assist the remaining 1.1 million.

Families are increasingly hungry because they cannot afford to buy food, even if available in markets. Malnutrition among children under five is rising fast. NGOs have seen a drastic increase in the numbers of malnourished children and a sharp rise in admissions to nutritional centres.

WFP food rations for families with a malnourished child are being shared with neighbours. Villagers are resorting to eating wild tubers usually eaten by wild animals.

WFP is urgently buying food for Somalia in South Africa. The agency faces a shortfall in resources of US\$210 million until the end of March 2009.

Facts:

Despite piracy and attacks on aid workers, WFP is still delivering large amounts of food assistance to people in need every month in Somalia and is in a good position to continue its operations and scale up as long as donors support its life-saving work.

A Dutch frigate escorted the final ship loaded with WFP food to Mogadishu at the end of June.

Pirates have launched 24 attacks on vessels off Somalia's eastern and northern coasts so far this year, but no escorted WFP ships were targeted despite an upsurge in attacks. There were 31 pirate attacks in 2007.

Air or overland routes to Somalia would be unable to handle the vast volume of assistance which needs to be delivered.

On 11 July, gunmen shot and wounded an aid worker with a WFP-partner NGO at a food distribution near Mogadishu. The head of another Somali NGO was shot and killed on the same day. Gunmen have killed five WFP-contracted transport staff in the country so far this year.

Video footage of WFP operations and the humanitarian situation in Somalia is available from Marco Frattini on + 39 06 6513 2275, marco.frattini@wfp.org

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WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency and the UN's frontline agency for hunger solutions. This year, WFP plans to feed around 90 million people in 80 countries.

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>.

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