From the West Bank, you’ve been trying to support those in Gaza, but you say that’s been extremely difficult?

No one can bear what’s happening there. No human being, really. Now, [there have been] more than 100 days of killing and genocide here in Gaza and [the] West Bank, and especially [in the] Gaza Strip. Raids are continuous. Bombardments are continuous on the people in houses, in hospitals, in mosques.¹ There is no water. The wastewater is mixed with pure [drinking] water.² No one can live there. Many people [are] dead because of starvation.³ Children died because there is no milk.⁴

They are sleeping in the street in Rafah.⁵ Emergency support does not reach the people [very well]⁶ ... I am trying to assist. Many friends call me from Rafah to support them. ... I tried to find tents – really – for them to live. Tents – sometimes they are located in the middle of Gaza. In order to reach Rafah from the middle of Gaza, you need three hours. And you [can't] guarantee [whether] you can come back because snipers [are] everywhere, bombardments [are] everywhere, fright, [and] war [is] everywhere. Anyone who moves, [can be killed]. Because, also, there [are] many people now, killed [on the street], no one can then take [them] to bury them. So the dogs eat them.⁷

¹ Al Jazeera. (2023, October 31). What Gaza infrastructure has been damaged since Israel declared war? https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/13/what-infrastructure-in-gaza-has-been-damaged-since-israels-assault


[The] second thing [is] ... There is not sufficient food to eat. Yesterday there was a group of youth. I know them. They walk[ed] around – more than 10 kilometres inside Rafah – to find small cans [of food]. They didn't find any.

Imagine, [they] told me this, for example. You want to go to the bathroom? No, no. There is no bathroom. [There are] 50 people inside one tent in Rafah. And there is no bathroom. The diseases spread between people. Of course, I lost many friends. And they delete families. Imagine a family of 30 people. They are living in an apartment. One rocket deletes [them] all. Gaza needs 20 years to rebuild. Psychologically, people – they are deteriorated.

Before October 7th, you were supporting farmers in the olive oil industry, and promoting food security. What does food security look like today?

Really, really, we have a need. families, [don't] work. There's no food, no assistance, no water, no infrastructure. So, food security — there is no food security now. Put yourself [in these] people's [shoes for] one day. Imagine that you are living in that place. [There is no] access to bring bread for your family. [There is no access] to bring milk for your children. What can you do? Yesterday, a woman from this place – from Tulkarm – [told me] that "I need just one thing to be alive. I need water. Just water now." Because the Israelis demolished all the water infrastructure. What I can say? I walked kilometres to bring water to give to her. If we speak about food security, there's no food. First of all, we need any kind of food. We are not looking for food security, but food, itself. What about the people [who were already vulnerable] before the war? What about the farmers before the war who [have been] suffering since [a] long time? What about the land defenders before the war? They suffered before the war. Now, no one is looking out for those people.

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Interview With Arab Center for Agricultural Development’s Thaer Fakhoury
23.1.2024

[This transcript has been edited for clarity]

What can I do? I spent all of my savings. I speak of my savings, from [everything I've done] in my life. But I am proud because I gave milk to children, I gave food to people with disabilities, I gave food to older people and the people who are affected by this kind of aggression.

You live in the West Bank. What does every day look like for you now?

I hope one day the war will end and to have a real life, [and for] our children to go to school. We are just waiting [for] when the Israelis are coming. And [we are] telling each other, “Take care, take care. They are here, they are not here.” That's our life since the 7th of October. And, for myself, I am not afraid. No, I am afraid for my kids. We are thinking only [about] the kids. For ourselves, we said, okay, “like [the] people of Gaza.” But what sin [have] our kids done to be injured or to be killed by Israel?

In the West Bank, they came to my house, they damaged everything. Each night and day, they come, they damage houses in camps, especially in Tulkarm City, where I live, and [in] Jenin City. They come to arrest, to damage, to kill anybody in front of them, and to steal, also. When they came to my house – I am [on the] third floor. My [brother is on the] second floor. [My mom] is on the first floor. [It was] three o'clock in the morning. I [heard] knocking. I said, from my window, “Who is it?” He told me bad words ... They entered more than 30, 35 soldiers... They arrested my brother and they damaged all the contents of the three floors.

Two days ago they entered the Tulkarm [refugee] camp. They damaged everything. Streets. Water. Infrastructure. Electricity. Homes. And they arrested 100 youth. And they killed six youth. [Media outlets document 8 deaths between the 17th and 18th of January 2023 in Tulkarm as a result of raids]. This is what's happening inside the West Bank.

You cannot move from city to city or from city to village. Exactly like South Africa [during Apartheid]. We have barriers. There's no defending for us. When Israeli soldiers invaded houses, they said to the people, “We will continue this kind of escalation and damage to convince you to leave this place to Jordan.” And the people here said, “No, [we will] die, [we won't] leave.” We will die here, but not leave this place.

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