

**GAZA
UNLOCKED**



PHOTO: BASEL YAZOURI

The Gaza employment crisis

No portion of the Gaza economy has been left untouched by the blockade.

Many of the basic raw materials and resources needed to produce goods in Gaza are blocked from entering Gaza, and exports are down nearly 85 percent from their pre-blockade levels. Electricity is available for no more than eight hours per day, fuel is limited, and in most areas of Gaza, access to water is severely restricted. Together, these factors—combined with repeated Israeli military attacks on Gaza—have destroyed Gaza’s business and industry, resulting in the closure of 90 percent of factories and workshops.¹

Other key sectors of the Gaza economy, including fishing and farming, have also been impacted by the blockade. Under the Oslo Accords, Palestinian fisherman in Gaza should be able to fish anywhere within a 20 nautical-mile fishing zone. Since the blockade was imposed however, Israel has allowed Palestinians to fish only within a zone between three and six nautical miles off the coast of Gaza, negatively affecting the fishing industry and the livelihoods of those who rely on it. Farmers have also been devastated by the imposition of a no-go zone that extends up to one kilometer into Gaza along the border with Israel, which limits Palestinian access to 35 percent of prime agricultural land.

¹ <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/5/7/gaza-economy-squeezed-siege-weakened-war.html>

Quick facts

Impacts of the employment crisis

- Gaza’s unemployment rate is over 40 percent—one of the highest in the world. Youth unemployment is over 60 percent.
- Since 2007 the Gaza gross domestic product (GDP) has shrunk by 50 percent. Average income is now at least 31 percent lower than it was in 1994.²
- In 2007 the garment industry accounted for 17 percent of Gaza’s GDP. Because of the blockade, 87 percent of garment factories closed and those that remain open function under capacity.³
- Of the 3,500 to 3,700 permits issued to Gaza traders to allow them to exit Gaza for business purposes,

² <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/05/21/gaza-economy-on-the-verge-of-collapse>

³ <https://fsmr.org/2016/08/gazas-garment-sector-sees-a-small-boost-as-export-blockade-eased/>

1,600 were revoked during 2016 without explanation. During the same period, 160 of the total of 350 travel permits issued to prominent business people from Gaza were revoked without reason.⁴

- In the first half of 2016, just 175 trucks left Gaza carrying goods produced in Gaza on average each month. This is just 16 percent of the total allowed out of Gaza prior to the blockade. 57 percent of Gaza households are food insecure, and approximately 80 percent receive some form of food assistance.

4 http://gisha.org/UserFiles/File/publications/Security_blocks/Security_blocks_factsheet_designed.pdf

What can you do?

Demand an immediate end to the blockade on Gaza

U.S. government policy officially supports Israel's continued blockade on Gaza—and it is the blockade that has resulted in this crisis facing Gaza's population. The blockade is illegal and immoral and must end.

Contact your government representatives, and demand that they call for an immediate change in U.S. government policy and support the complete end to Israel's blockade on Gaza.

Take action: afsc.org/endtheblockade



**American Friends
Service Committee**

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace, and humanitarian service. Its work is based on the Quaker belief in the worth of every person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice. Since 1948, AFSC has worked in the U.S., Israel, and the occupied Palestinian territory with Palestinians, Israelis, and other committed activists to support nonviolence, challenge oppression, and—since 1970—to end Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territory. This work is guided by our "Principles for a Just and Lasting Peace in Palestine and Israel." These principles support the implementation of international human rights and humanitarian law and call for an end to Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territory, implementation of refugees' right of return, equality, and justice for Palestinians and Israelis. More: afsc.org

LEARN MORE

The following organizations in the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel address and challenge Israel's policies on Gaza:

Al-Mezan
www.mezan.org/en

Palestinian Center for Human Rights
www.pchrgaza.org/portal/en

Gaza Community and Mental Health Program
www.gcmhp.net/en

B'Tselem
www.btselem.org

Gisha
www.gisha.org

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
www.ochaopt.org