

United Nations Agency Seeks to Get Food Aid to Yemen by July



Geneva, June 3 (RHC)-- The United Nations World Food Program (WFP) says it is scaling up its operations to provide emergency food aid to 2.5 million Yemenis by July as the war-racked country is facing with an increasing number of hungry people.

"The conflict has increased the number of hungry people in the country," WFP spokesperson Elisabeth Byrs told a press briefing in Geneva, Switzerland, on Tuesday. She added that WFP will need roughly \$43 million every month to distribute full emergency rations to some 2.5 million people in the impoverished state during the next three months.

According to reports, there are currently 12.5 million food insecure people in Yemen, some two million more than the time when the crisis began in the country in March. WFP plans to begin providing 12 million people in Yemen with emergency food assistance from August to the end of the year.

The UN agency has so far managed to reach some 1.6 million Yemeni people with nearly 20,000 metric tons of food. "A key problem is that prices continue to increase for all food commodities, limiting the functioning of food markets," Byrs told reporters. Yemen imports almost 90 percent of its food from abroad.

On March 26th, Saudi Arabia launched its airstrikes on Yemen without a UN mandate. The military campaign is aimed at restoring power to Yemen's fugitive former President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi, who is a close ally of Riyadh.

Yemen is faced with a worsening crisis as Saudi Arabia continues its military campaign against its impoverished neighbor.

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