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UN food agency warns G8 ministers of unparalleled hunger crisis as funding falls



Fighting hunger

12 June 2009 – The head of the United Nations World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) today warned that the poor and hungry around the world are facing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis, while global food aid has hit a 20 year low.

WFP Executive Director, Josette Sheeran, urged development ministers of the Group of Eight (G8) industrialized nations meeting in Italy today to support the agency – which depends entirely on voluntary donations – in its efforts to help some of the world’s hungriest survive.

“With one in six people going hungry, one child dying every six seconds, and 80 per cent of Sub-Saharan African countries facing higher food prices than a year ago, the poor and the hungry are facing one of the biggest crises in our lifetimes,” said Ms. Sheeran.

Underscoring the permanent impact that hunger has on children, she said that the world risks losing a generation unless they have adequate access to nutrition during this crisis.

She added that hunger can also lead to dangerous destabilization, and impact global peace and security, saying that “without food people revolt, migrate, or die.”

“None of these are acceptable options,” she said.

In a message directed at the G8 meeting, Ms. Sheeran said that at “this moment of dramatically growing need, it would be wrong to cut our funding.”

On top of the mounting humanitarian crisis, WFP said earlier this week that it is suffering a funding shortfall of almost \$450 million needed for the next six months to continue feeding the hungry in the Horn of Africa region where it is aiding some 17 million hungry people and numbers are expected to rise.

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