



Bi-Weekly Press Briefing: Nigeria - Looming Food Rations Cuts - WFP

15-10-2021 | Edited News

Shotlist

1. Exterior wide shot, United Nations flag flying.
2. Medium-wide shot, inside the press conference room, showing speakers and participants.
3. **SOUNDBITE (English): Tomson Phiri, World Food Programme's (WFP) spokesperson: "The World Food Programme will be forced to cut food rations in a matter of weeks. We are not talking of months, we are not talking of a six-month period, we are talking literally of weeks unless we receive aid and funding."**
4. Close shot, a journalist, masked, listening to the press conference, Mr. Phiri on screen and to rear.
5. **SOUNDBITE (English): Tomson Phiri, World Food Programme's (WFP) spokesperson: "We are facing very severe levels of hunger that we have witnessed since, this is probably the highest that we are witnessing since the crisis exploded in 2016. Approximately 4.4 million people are facing acute food insecurity in the conflict-affected states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe."**
6. Close shot on one of the journalists' hand, writing down notes from the press briefing.
7. **SOUNDBITE (English): Tomson Phiri, World Food Programme's (WFP) spokesperson: "What makes this situation of concern, is that we are already providing prioritized assistance. There have already been austere measures that we had implemented, and the situation now will mean we have no other choice but to implement deeper cuts. We urgently require 197 million United States Dollars over the next six months to be able to sustain our operations in Nigeria."**

8. Close shot on one of the journalist's laptop showing the press briefing broadcast on Zoom, speakers in the background.
9. **SOUNDBITE (English): Tomson Phiri, World Food Programme's (WFP) spokesperson: "The situation is largely been driven by insecurity. Of course, we have a confluence of climate crises as well in the north, but it is largely insecurity with reports of non-state armed groups targeting civilians, community leaders in the north-east."**
10. Close shot, a journalist, masked, attending the conference.
11. **SOUNDBITE (English): Tomson Phiri, World Food Programme's (WFP) spokesperson: "The peak lean season was between June and August and just after that people are really on the brink and by that I mean you are talking about, we are assisting 1.7 million people and of these 800,000 people face emergency levels. Emergency levels is just one step away from phase 5, that is catastrophic, that is a step away from famine."**
12. Medium shot, inside the press conference room, showing speakers and the broadcast on Zoom.
13. Close shot on a journalist, masked, taking notes.
14. Medium shot, journalists attending the meeting.

Story

Ahead of World Food Day (16 October), the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) warns that it may soon be forced to cut food rations to more than half a million women, men and children in north-eastern Nigeria while calling urgently for funding of at least US\$ 55 million in the coming weeks.

Speaking at a press briefing at the United Nations in Geneva, Tomson Phiri, World Food Programme's (WFP) spokesperson said that **“the World Food Programme will be forced to cut food rations in a matter of weeks. We are not talking of months, we are not talking of a six-month period, we are talking literally of weeks - unless we receive aid and funding.”**

Without additional resources, the food assistance agency will run out of funds for emergency food distribution and nutrition support by the end of October 2021.

The cuts would then come as hunger reaches a five-year high in the country which has been suffering years of conflict and insecurity. According to Tomson Phiri, **“we are facing very severe levels of hunger that we have witnessed since, this is probably the highest that we are witnessing since the crisis exploded in 2016. Approximately 4.4 million people are facing acute food insecurity in the conflict-affected states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe.”**

The situation in the country has been worsened by the socio-economic fallout due to Covid-19, high food prices and limited food supply. Furthermore, the number of internally displaced people reached more than 2 million in September 2021. WFP estimates that over 1 million children are malnourished. Food assistance is already prioritized for the most vulnerable ones.

“What makes this situation of concern, is that we are already providing prioritized assistance”, Mr. Phiri stated. He added that **“there have already been austere measures that we had implemented, and the situation now will mean we have no other choice but to implement deeper cuts. We urgently require 197 million United States Dollars over the next six months to be able to sustain our operations in Nigeria”.**

For five years, WFP has provided life-saving food and nutrition assistance to severely food insecure people, displaced families in camps, and to vulnerable people living in host communities.

“The situation is largely been driven by insecurity. Of course, we have a confluence of climate crises as well in the north, but it is largely insecurity with reports of non-state armed groups targeting civilians, community leaders in the north-east,” said WFP's spokesperson.

WFP ramped up its response to address rising food insecurity and the impact of Covid-19 with life-saving food assistance. However, the situation in north-eastern Nigeria remains dramatic.

Tomson Phiri said that **“the peak lean season was between June and August and just after that people are really on the brink and by that I mean you are talking about, we are assisting 1.7 million people and of these 800,000 people face emergency levels. Emergency levels is just one step away from phase 5, that is catastrophic, that is a step away from famine”.**

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