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WFP News Release

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FOOD SITUATION WORSENS FOR REFUGEES IN MALAWI; URGENT SUPPORT REQUIRED

LILONGWE - The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Malawi is deeply concerned about the worsening food situation for approximately 40,000 refugees and asylum-seekers following a cut in the amount of food assistance they receive. WFP urgently requires US\$1.7 million to resume full rations from August to December 2019.

In May this year, WFP was forced to reduce by half the food rations it provides to refugees and asylum seekers due to insufficient funding. Current maize stocks are due to run out in December while supplies of other food commodities will be completely depleted in October without additional funding. WFP is appealing to the donor community to step forward to prevent these vulnerable people having to literally go without food.

The situation has been triggered by the flow of refugees into Malawi for more than two decades following political instability and social unrest mainly in some parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and in Burundi. From January to July 2019 alone, about 2,000 new arrivals have been registered.

“We are very grateful to our donors without whose support the refugees would not survive. We appeal for their continued backing, especially at this critical moment. We also call on the Government of Malawi and all concerned parties to provide a way out of this situation for refugees,” said WFP Malawi Representative, Benoit Thiry.

Malawi hosts 40,000 refugees most of whom depend on food assistance from WFP and other humanitarian partners. A Joint Vulnerability Profiling Exercise (JVPE) conducted by WFP and UNHCR in November 2018 showed that eight out of ten refugees in Dzaleka Camp are highly vulnerable and depend entirely on food assistance to meet all their food and other essential needs.

A baseline survey on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) conducted in June 2019 showed that women and girls opt to engage in survival and transactional sex in exchange for in-kind and monetary assistance. A reduction in rations may heighten this risk for women and girls.

Due to limited access to arable land or physical means of earning a living in the camp, refugees and asylum seekers depend on food and other assistance provided by WFP and



development partners. Flexible funding is needed to support a transition to a targeted cash-based assistance to the most vulnerable as well as livelihood support for the refugees and asylum seekers living in Malawi.

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