

U.N. food program seeks \$500M

by UPI

UNITED NATIONS - A United Nations food program has issued an emergency appeal for donations as the amount of food aid sent abroad from the United States is plunging. The World Food Program, which feeds about 73 million people worldwide, is seeking funding to close a \$500 million gap caused by global spikes in food and fuel prices, the United Nations said in a release issued in New York. "We urge your government to act quickly on this request so that we may avoid cutting the rations for those who rely on the world to stand by them during times of abject need," Josette Sheeran, WFP executive director, wrote in letters to donors. The price of food and fuel has jumped 55 percent since June 2007, Sheeran said. The food program has worked to lessen the effects of the increases, including buying 80 percent of its food supplies in local and regional markets. Because of rising food and fuel prices, the new estimated figure to cover projects in 78 countries is \$3.4 billion, the organization said. The revised estimate doesn't include emergency operations.

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