United Nations calls on Malawi to release food plan for its poor
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LILONGWE, Malawi, July 22 (UPI) --

LILONGWE, Malawi, July 22 (UPI) -- A United Nations official is calling on the government in Malawi to release its plan to combat malnutrition to ensure food aid is reaching the needy.

More than a quarter of the African nation's 15 million citizens do not make enough money to buy food that meets minimum caloric intake amounts, U.S. Special Rapporteur Olivier De Schutter said. Malawi has one of the lowest minimum wage standards in the world, $1.16 per day, and about half the country's people live in poverty, a U.N. report states.

Though there have been some successful efforts to bolster Malawian farmers' ability to grow enough food to support themselves, De Schutter said those programs need to be transparent so citizens and the international community can be sure they're working to help those who need it most.

U.N. seed money has helped provide farmers with fertilizer, equipment and other essentials, but this year the government will need to import emergency food supplies to help meet needs, De Schutter said.

"Recent high-profiled food security policies have failed to rid Malawi of chronic food insecurity and malnutrition," he said. "The country urgently needs a national food security strategy, underpinned by a Right to Food Framework Law, to hold policies to account when they do not yield benefits for the most food insecure and to ensure a coherent approach across sectors."

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