**Nobel Prize-Winning U.N. World Food Programme Has Record of Rape, Poisoning Scandals**

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The Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) its annual Peace Prize for 2020 on Friday, overlooking a history of corruption, mismanagement, and sexual assault among its ranks.

In its [statement](https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2020/summary/) announcing the decision, the Committee expressed mounting concern about lack of access to food globally, particularly in light of repressive government lockdowns to prevent the spread of the Chinese coronavirus. The WFP, it said, won the award “for its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict.”

According to the Nobel Committee, the WFP was [responsible](https://allafrica.com/stories/202010090665.html) for aiding “100 million people in 88 countries” throughout 2019. It asserted that the Chinese coronavirus pandemic “has contributed to a strong upsurge in the number of victims of hunger in the world” and applauded the WFP’s “impressive ability to intensify its efforts” given the current situation.

“The world is in danger of experiencing a hunger crisis of inconceivable proportions if the World Food Programme and other food assistance organisations do not receive the financial support they have requested,” the committee insisted.

David Beasley, the executive director of the U.N. agency, [described](https://allafrica.com/stories/202010090679.html) the award as a “humbling, moving recognition of the world of the WFP staff who lay their lives on the line every day to bring food and assistance for close to 100 million hungry children, women and men across the world.”

“Every one of the 690 million hungry people in the world today has the right to live peacefully and without hunger. Today, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has turned the global spotlight on them and on the devastating consequences of conflict,” Beasley said.

The international recognition for the world’s biggest aid organization bookends a decade otherwise marred by a variety of scandals, from concerns about corruption and theft of aid to struggles internally to contain sexual assault and rape, and at least one incident where WFP food aid poisoned and killed people.

Internally, an independent review of workplace culture in the WFP revealed a year ago that over two dozen people at the agency had experienced rape or sexual assault while on the job. The number of reported incidents of sexual assault more generally was significantly higher.

The study, conducted by consultants from the firm Willis Towers Watson (WTW), also [found](https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2019/10/14/WFP-United-Nations-abuse-harassment-discrimination) “startling results concerning the experience of abusive behavior” more generally at the WFP. Consultants organized an anonymous survey of staffers at the company. Of those asked, 28 said they experienced “rape, attempted rape, or other sexual assault,” about double the number who reported similarly throughout the entire U.N. Respondents reported higher rates of “abuse of authority” – 35 percent said they had seen it at the organization – where the term was defined as including “overbearing supervision” and “interference with career opportunities.” Another 29 percent said they experienced non-sexual harassment, including “shouting and aggression” and “spreading rumors.”

The report concluded that the WFP needed a “systemic overhaul” of how it treats its employees.

Shockingly, the rate of sexual assault revealed at the WFP by the survey was significantly lower than that of the United Nations generally. According to the U.N. Safe Space Survey [published](https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2019/11/12/u-n-food-agency-hit-with-multiple-sexual-harassment-and-assault-claims/) in January 2019, 38.7 percent of U.N. workers have experienced sexual harassment there. These statistics also only involve cases where the victims are U.N. employees. The United Nations is facing pervasive accusations of [rape](https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2016/07/27/south-sudan-mass-rape-peacekeepers/) (including of children), sexual [assault](https://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2015/08/20/u-n-peacekeepers-accused-of-underage-rape-in-central-africa/), “[sex for food/aid,](https://www.breitbart.com/middle-east/2018/02/27/first-haiti-now-syria-fresh-sex-for-aid-allegations-rock-u-n-global-charities/)” and other crimes through many of its agencies, most notoriously its “[peacekeeper](https://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2018/04/24/nepalese-u-n-peacekeepers-accused-child-rape-south-sudan/)” program.

“If we have a claim of rape by anyone in the WFP, if we can substantiate, I can’t begin to tell you how aggressive [we will be],” David Beasley, the executive director, [told](https://apnews.com/article/94349c39bcf243428c3b0d2029ec8c8c) the Associated Press last year.

Regarding the humanitarian efforts the WFP actually conducts, it has faced over a decade of concerns regarding widespread corruption, resulting in food falling into the hands of warlords, terrorists, and other criminal actors, who then sell it to fund their illicit operations. A 2009 report [revealed](https://www.thenational.ae/world/africa/corruption-eats-into-somalia-s-food-aid-1.502144) that both Somali officials and warlords were selling to the intended recipients U.N. food specifically labeled “not for sale.”

“In south and central Somalia, where nearly 20 years of war has ravaged the country, warlords commonly steal food aid and use it to control the population,” UAE’s the National reported that year. “Here in the more stable northern region, where many have sought shelter from the fighting, some of the food is stolen by corrupt officials looking to make a profit.”

A U.N. security council report [leaked](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/mar/10/aid-somalia-stolen-un-report) a year later found that as much as half of the nation’s food aid, mostly run through the WFP, never reached intended recipients, as it was stolen before it got there. The culprits, according to the report are “corrupt contractors, radical Islamic militants and local U.N. workers.”

Corruption continued to mar the agency throughout the decade. A 2015 Fox News report [accused](https://www.foxnews.com/world/world-food-program-badly-mismanaged-special-donor-trust-funds-auditors-say) the WFP of losing millions to poorly managed funding.

“The United Nations World Food Program in 2013 and 2014 used millions of dollars of specially designated donor trust funds as an all-purpose piggy bank, often without creating safeguards to ensure the money was used properly and as its donors had intended,” the report alleged, “according to an internal report by WFP’s Office of the Inspector General.”

The report allegedly concluded that the funds, in “some instances … were used for purposes not consistent with the original intent.”

In addition to corruption concerns, the WFP aid that does reach intended recipients for free is not always safe for consumption. Last year, the WFP announced it would stop distributing a “super cereal” meant for malnourished people in Uganda because experts [found](https://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2019/05/31/world-food-program-reveals-u-n-sent-uganda-food-with-mold-bacteria-carcinogens/) it laden with dangerous bacteria, mold, and possible carcinogens.

The WFP said in a statement:

This issue is unprecedented in its implications for WFP’s global supply chain as the food supplies on hold around the world amount to over 21,000 metric tons, with an estimated replacement value of US$22 million. WFP has taken extensive preventative action as the health and safety of the people we serve is our foremost concern.

The initial halt in distribution began in March after initial [reports](https://www.wfp.org/news/wfp-stops-distributing-blended-food-uganda-people-fall-sick-karamoja) of the cereal being dangerous surfaced – [linking](https://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2019/09/05/potentially-lethal-u-n-super-cereal-blamed-making-dozens-ugandans-sick/) it to the deaths of 400 people and hundreds of illnesses. Those found to have gotten sick after eating the cereal reportedly showed signs of “mental disorder.”

By September, the WFP had to once again [stop](https://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2019/09/05/potentially-lethal-u-n-super-cereal-blamed-making-dozens-ugandans-sick/) distributing the “super cereal” because more people reported illnesses. The WFP reportedly impounded 21,000 tons of “super cereal.”