FOOD SECURITY & GRAIN INITIATIVES
Why is Food Security Important in the Context of Russia's War in Ukraine?
Background

- Ukraine is a “breadbasket of Europe”
- 55% of the territory is arable land; Ukraine has 30% of the world’s black soil
- Pre-2022, Ukraine produced enough food to feed 400 million people per year
- World Food Programme (WFP) sources 40% of the wheat for its emergency food-relief programs from Ukraine
Ukraine is a major supplier of key crops
% share of global exports, 2019

- Sunflower oil: 42%
- Maize: 16%
- Barley: 10%
- Wheat: 9%

Ukraine plays a crucial role in the global food supply
% of wheat imports sourced from Ukraine

- Moldova: 92%
- Lebanon: 81%
- Qatar: 64%
- Tunisia: 49%
- Libya: 48%
- Pakistan: 48%
- Indonesia: 29%
- Malaysia: 26%
- Egypt: 26%
- Bangladesh: 25%

Source: Our World in Data, UN Food and Agriculture Organization
Source: UN Food and Agriculture Organization, data for 2020
Russia's Attack on Ukraine's Agriculture & Farmland

- Since February 2022, Russia blocked safe passage to and from Ukrainian ports.
- It has been setting sea mines in the Black Sea and shelling Ukrainian ports.
- 1 in 6 Ukrainian crop storage facilities has been damaged, destroyed, or captured by Russia.
- Over 4 million tons of Ukrainian grain were destroyed or stolen and smuggled from occupied territories.
- 30% of Ukraine’s farmland is occupied by Russian forces or unsafe due to shelling or mining.
Spillover Effects on Global Food Security

- Global food system had already been affected by the pandemic and the climate crisis pre-invasion.
- Since February 2022, an increase from 287 million in 2021 to 349 million people suffering from acute food insecurity in 2022.
- Increase of the Food Price Index by 14% and increase in the cost of fertilizer.
- Vulnerable countries dependent on grain imports were hit the hardest (Lebanon, Tunisia, Somalia, Libya, Eritrea).

→ Russia is weaponizing food supplies in its war against Ukraine.
Black Sea Grain Initiative

- Facilitated by the United Nations and Türkiye to allow the export of 22 million tons of Ukrainian wheat, corn, and other cereals and signed in July 2022.
- **800 vessel trips** exported over **21 million tonnes of food** (February 2023).
- 65% of exported wheat reached developing countries.
- Challenges:
  - Russia’s threats to leave the deal
  - Slowdown in vessel inspections – 145 ships are waiting in the waters of Türkiye

The first commercial vessel carrying grain under the Black Sea Grain Initiative. UN OCHA/Levent Kulu
Grain from Ukraine

- Launched by President Zelenskyy on the 90th anniversary of the beginning of the Holodomor.
- Humanitarian program aims to supply at least **60 vessels** of Ukrainian grain to over **1 million people** in countries most vulnerable to food insecurity (e.g. Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Congo, Kenya, Nigeria and Yemen).
- Ukraine so far raised **$200 million from 30 countries**, including EU, Qatar, Türkiye, Japan, Norway, Korea, Canada and the United States.
- Food security is a critical part of President Zelenskyy’s 10-point peace formula.
"Ukraine, as one of the guarantors of global food security, will continue making its key contribution. Despite the war. Despite any challenges. Ukraine will fulfill its export obligations regarding the supply of grain and other foodstuffs to the global market," – Volodymyr Zelenskyy at the first International Food Security Summit.
In attempts to deflect its responsibility for disrupting the global food supply, Russia has been spreading disinformation and conspiracy theories around food security, primarily targeting affected countries in Africa and Middle East.

Key disinformation narratives focus on:
- Impact of Western sanctions on food security
- Recipients of Ukrainian grain
- Deliberate withholding of food supplies by the West
Harmful Language - Food Security Edition

'War in Ukraine is a food security crisis'

The World Food Programme's regional chief, Cordone Fleischer, on why peace is the best long-term solution for the country and those around the world dependent on its grain.

15 September 2022, Peyvand Khosravi

War in Ukraine drives global food crisis

Hungry world at critical crossroads

News alert:

Our team in Syria is working to deliver essential supplies to communities affected by a magnitude 7.8 earthquake

The Russian-Ukrainian Conflict and Its Food Security Implications in Northwest Syria
Thank you!