

RESPONDING TO THE GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY CRISIS

The world is facing a food security crisis of historic proportions. Countries already reeling from increased poverty, hunger, and malnutrition as a result of COVID-19, climate shocks and protracted conflict now face further suffering from Russia's unprovoked and unjustified invasion of Ukraine. Worse yet, a catastrophic, four-season drought in the Horn of Africa threatens up to 20 million people in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia by the end of this year.

The United States is at the forefront of global efforts to confront this crisis. In May, President Biden signed a bipartisan \$40 billion emergency supplemental funding commitment that provides \$760 million to mitigate the medium to long-term impacts of the current food security crisis and ramp up efforts in countries that need it most. This funding will complement a \$4.3 billion commitment of emergency resources to address acute food insecurity, mitigate famine, and address related humanitarian needs.



Photo credit: Salima Imomnazarova, Feed the Future Tajikistan Agriculture and Land Governance Activity

Feed the Future is working with our many partners to directly address the staggering impact of high food, fuel and fertilizer prices and supply disruptions, and mitigate the impacts on poverty, hunger and malnutrition. In June, President Biden emphasized the United States' leadership on these efforts by announcing the expansion of Feed the Future to eight new target countries: **the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Zambia**. By doubling down on these efforts, Feed the Future will harness the power of agriculture to drive economic growth and transform food systems in the country and the region.

IMPACT ON GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

In 2021, **193 million people** already faced acute food insecurity, according to the Global Report on Food Crises. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reports that food prices are **23% higher** than the same period last year.

Putin's invasion of Ukraine is exacerbating an already staggering global food security crisis, disrupting food and fertilizer supply chains and upcoming growing seasons. Russia and Ukraine export around 30% of the world's traded wheat and barley, one-fifth of its maize, and over half of its sunflower oil. Russia is also a major supplier of exported fertilizers.

Shortages of fertilizer, a key input for growing many of the world's crops, are driving rising food prices. In the last year, global fertilizer prices have nearly doubled from already historical highs, representing a **200% increase** since the start of the pandemic. With less ability to buy or grow nutritious food, families are forced to make tough decisions, prioritizing filling bellies with cheaper foods that do not provide adequate nutrition.

In the medium term, many developing countries are exposed to increases in food and fertilizer prices which – if not mitigated – will likely reduce household incomes, undermine crop production, reduce seasonal labor opportunities, and further decrease household access to healthy diets.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure: experience has shown investing \$1 dollar in resilience efforts now saves \$3 in humanitarian assistance down the road. Today's Feed the Future investments are helping communities withstand current food price increases and inevitable shocks in the future.

FEED THE FUTURE RESPONSE

The U.S. government's Feed the Future initiative is driving global efforts to address this global challenge by:

Mitigating the Global Fertilizer Shortage

Feed the Future is working with partners to mitigate fertilizer shortages and resulting affordability issues for smallholder farmers and agribusinesses by:

- Engaging partners such as multilateral development banks, FAO, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development to expand fertilizer production and access in sub-Saharan Africa.
- The U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) are engaging global fertilizer suppliers to expand fertilizer availability, affordability, and mitigating supply chain disruptions in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.
- The Peace Corps is returning to 11 countries with food security programming in 2022, increasing assistance to vulnerable smallholder farmers to improve soil fertility management and maximize on-farm resources.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has also announced a \$500 million grant program – doubling its original commitment – to boost fertilizer production at home to ease supply challenges.

Increasing Investments in Agricultural Capacity and Resilience

The U.S. government currently invests more than \$1.9 billion per year through Feed the Future, which is leveraging existing technical expertise, programs and partners in more than 35 countries:

- USAID is:
 - Equipping smallholder farmers and bakeries in Niger to source locally grown sorghum, as a substitute for expensive wheat imports. This alternative costs 35% less and improves nutritional quality.
 - Reducing food loss and waste in Ghana, through the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Processing and Post-Harvest Handling at Kansas State University, with storage bags treated with natural extracts to protect food from pests, creating income from saved food and reducing environmental footprint.
 - Supporting businesses in Haiti to invest in improved food-processing equipment for rice mills and cooking oil producers that better fortifies foods to boost nutrition.
- The Inter-American Foundation (IAF) is investing more than \$68 million in Latin America and the Caribbean for small-scale farmers to increase resilience by diversifying production, improving their yields, adopting low-cost technologies, and accessing new markets.

-
- USDA and USAID are collaborating with the Government of Tanzania to build farmers' resilience by mainstreaming climate-smart agriculture.
 - The DFC announced that it is seeking to invest \$1 billion in food security and agriculture projects over five years, spanning the provision of financing, technical assistance, and insurance to private sector projects in developing countries that advance agricultural production, irrigation, food processing, food storage, shipping and logistics, and fintech related to global food systems.

Cushioning the Macroeconomic Shock and Impact on Poor People

Feed the Future is mitigating the impacts of higher prices for fuel, food and other commodities by strengthening local resilience to avert food and humanitarian crises, supporting social protections and safety nets in partner countries, which includes:

- Safeguarding nutrition in Uganda by reducing the cost of fortified foods through facilitating businesses' access to government's waivers on import taxes on vitamin and mineral premix and equipment.
- Collaborating with the private sector in Kenya to improve the movement of basic food items to communities most in need.
- Following the U.S. Treasury's call to action, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) released an Action Plan to Address Food Insecurity on May 18. The plan details how IFIs are accelerating, stepping up, and deepening their response to rising food insecurity.
- With IAF support, farmer groups are developing reserve funds to address future needs and partnering with local savings and loans associations to ensure access to credit.

Sustaining High-Level Global Political Engagement

The U.S. government, through Feed the Future, is also utilizing the full range of diplomatic tools to seek commitments to address food security challenges, including:

- Leveraging all available international forums—the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, G-7, G-20, FAO, and others—to prioritize and coordinate proactive steps to respond to food security challenges, discourage export bans and other harmful practices, and work to end Russia's war causing these disruptions.
- Secretary of State Antony Blinken convened a Ministerial Call to Action on Global Food Security on May 18 at the United Nations. As of July 5, 98 countries have endorsed the Roadmap for Global Food Security released at the event, committing to act with urgency, at scale, and in concert to respond to the urgent food security and nutrition needs of millions of people in vulnerable situations around the world.
- President Biden and G7 leaders announced at the G7 Summit in June that they will contribute over \$4.5 billion to address global food security, over half of which – \$2.76 billion – will come from the United States.
- USAID is coordinating with partners and other donors in countries such as Bangladesh, Malawi, Mozambique, and Nepal to quickly assess how price changes of food, fertilizer, and other essential commodities will affect vulnerable communities.
- The U.S. Treasury assumed the role of Co-Chair of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) and will contribute an additional \$155 million to GAFSP to accelerate the response to the food security crisis.

-
- The U.S. Treasury also announced at the G7 that it will provide \$500 million to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), which includes support for Ukraine's energy and food security needs.
 - Encouraging countries with available resources to make new, additive financial donations to key humanitarian organizations providing immediate life-saving humanitarian assistance.
 - USDA is developing and implementing policies via Feed the Future's work with the African Union that will strengthen food security, trade and nutrition, particularly under the African Continental Free Trade Area.