

PM pledges new support for countries on the food security frontline



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UK to provide an additional £372 million for countries most impacted by rising global food prices

47 million more facing acute hunger as a result of climate change, the pandemic, and Russia's assault on Ukraine

UK funding will support emergency food aid, malnutrition programmes and scientific advances in agriculture

The Prime Minister is today [Friday] committing a significant package of support to help countries hit the hardest by rising global food costs and shortages of fertiliser, including many Commonwealth states.

Driven by the war in Ukraine, global food prices have hit a 50-year high. More than 275 million people worldwide were already facing acute hunger at the start of 2022 - according to the UN that is expected to increase by 47 million people if the conflict continues, with the steepest rises in sub-Saharan Africa. Price spikes are also pushing households into crippling poverty, with a further 1.4 million expected to be driven below the poverty line in Kenya, for example, as a result of the global crisis.

The Prime Minister is pledging £372 million in aid today to provide immediate and longer-term relief to countries on the frontline of this crisis.

The UK is also working with allies to break Russia's immoral blockade of Ukraine's grain exports and address global supply issues. The Prime Minister will commit to look at the UK's own demands on land and use of biofuel ahead of the G7 - globally, the use of grain for biofuel is contributing to reduced

availability and increased costs for human consumption.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

While Vladimir Putin continues his futile and unprovoked war in Ukraine and cravenly blockades millions of tonnes of grain, the world's poorest people are inching closer to starvation.

The Government has put in place an unprecedented package of support to help the most vulnerable households in the UK deal with the rising cost of living.

But it is also right that we step up to support countries on the frontlines of conflict and climate change, where an increase in the price of bread can mean the difference between a child living or dying. From emergency food aid to reviewing our own biofuel use, the UK is playing its part to address this pernicious global crisis.

The package announced today includes:

£130 million for the World Food Programme this financial year, to fund their lifesaving work around the world including in Commonwealth countries in Africa, Asia and the Americas

£133 million for research and development partnerships with world-leading agricultural and scientific organisations to develop and implement cutting-edge technologies to improve food security, such as new drought-resistant crop varieties.

£52 million for UN's global emergency response fund, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). CERF allocated \$100 million (£80m) in April for an urgent response to seven countries at risk of famine.

£37 million for the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development [IFAD], to work with the private sector and governments to address poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries.

£17.7 million through the FCDO's Green Growth Centre of Expertise to improve the effective use of fertiliser and increase food production in countries including Rwanda,

Kenya and Ghana.

£2 million for the Nutrition Match Fund, which matches governments' national spending on addressing wasting – the most acute and deadly form of child malnutrition – pound-for-pound. The fund was launched last November and has already supported treatments in Commonwealth countries like Nigeria and Mozambique, and the UK is encouraging other donors to step up.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

At least 140 million people across Africa are already suffering from food insecurity, and millions more are facing food shortages as a result of Russia's illegal war in Ukraine. Putin is using food as a weapon on a global scale.

The UK's vital funding will provide humanitarian aid to increase access to food across the worst hit African countries, and help protect millions of people at risk from a growing global food disaster.

Ukraine produces as much as half the world's sunflower seeds, a tenth of its wheat and up to a fifth of barley and rapeseed, and many African countries import a significant proportion of their fertiliser, wheat and vegetable oils from Ukraine, Russia and Belarus. Russia's blockade of Ukraine's Black Sea ports is preventing the export of up to 23 million metric tonnes of grain, and the conflict will significantly impact the next harvest.

The African Development Bank claims that shortfalls in fertilizer supply mean Africa could lose a fifth of its food production in the next two harvesting seasons, worsening food insecurity in developing countries already struggling to cope with climate change, the fall-out from the pandemic and domestic conflicts.

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