



The Uplifting Africa Program

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The Effects of the War in Ukraine on the people of Africa and Beyond



Vladimir Zelensky has address numerous forums around the world to rally nations to assist Ukraine.

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226.7 million people are starving in Africa. The countries most affected by extreme poverty and hunger in Africa are located south of the Sahara. One in four are hungry in sub-Saharan Africa. Photo Credit: MichaelMoyo.org

Russia's unprovoked invasion into Ukraine on February 24, 2022, reverberated across the world. Ukraine and Russia are the bread baskets of Europe, North Africa and the Middle East (MENA), and Asia. Just two countries, Ukraine and Russia, make up a quarter of the grains trade – amounting to 102 million tons annually. Wheat and barley farms are concentrated in central and Eastern Ukraine where the bulk of the fighting is taking place. Additionally, due to recent

investments in the corn sector, Ukraine became one of the four largest corn exporters in the world – accounting for 17% of the world’s production.

So far, farmers have not fled their farms. However, even if they continue to tend their crops uninterrupted by the Russian military until the early summer, the harvest would not be able to transport yields to the docks to be shipped as normal. This is because Russia controls large swaths of southern Ukrainian port cities along the Black sea and is currently bombarding the remaining port cities of Mariupol and Odessa.

Ukraine and Russia’s agricultural commodity exports make up half of wheat imports for 14 African countries. Particularly, due to recent droughts, MENA countries face the highest risk because of their dependence on wheat imports. In Sudan – where Russia supplies more than 80% of Sudan’s wheat – the price of an average food basket has risen 700%. In Egypt, Ukraine’s largest exporter of wheat,

the government had to step in and set the price of bread to curtail unaffordable prices. The average African spends 40% of their income on food, making the continent vulnerable to food shortages and shocks. In Senegal, cooking oil is a food staple that is imported from Ukraine – as of 2020, Senegal imported \$7 million USD on cooking oil annually. President Zelensky addressed the United Nations Tuesday, April 5, 2022, and asserted that Russia’s invasion could lead to famine in Africa and Asia resulting in domestic instability. The international community saw this take place in Egypt in 2011

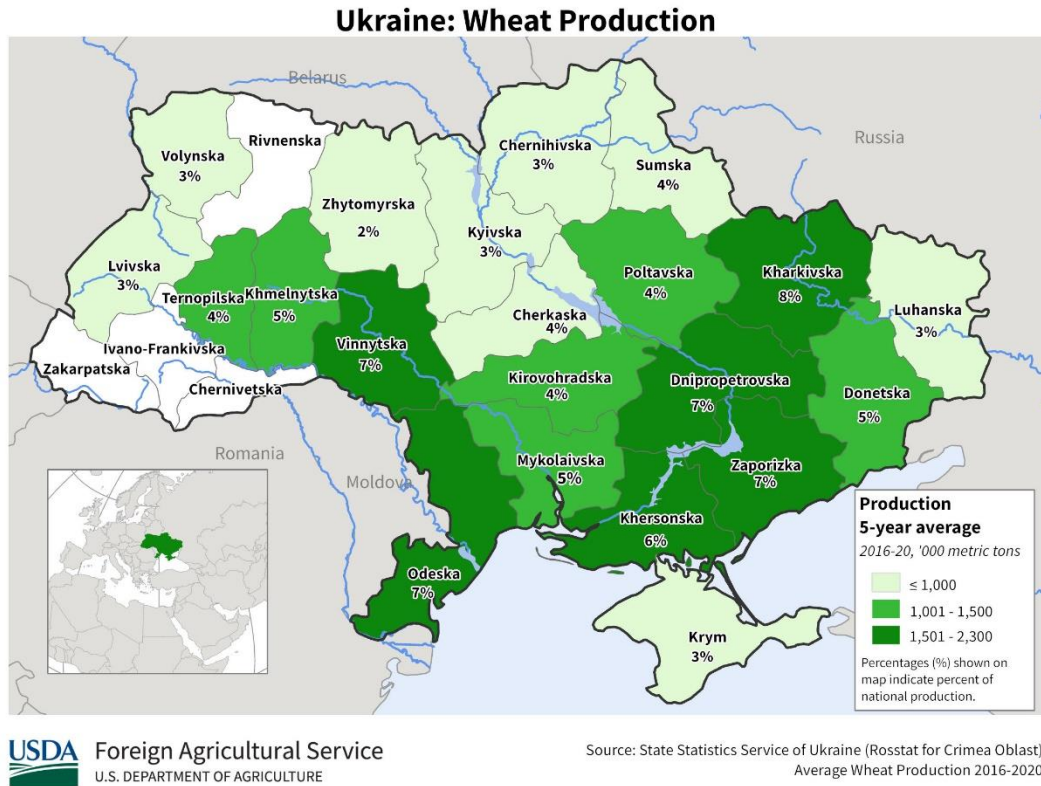
Ukrainians retake areas as Russians pull back



Source: Institute for the Study of War (21:00 GMT, 5 April)



when protestors, angered by rising food costs among other things, chanted “Bread, Freedom, and Justice” before toppling dictator Hosni Mubarak.



Africa is also experiencing increasing inflation due to raising gas and diesel prices. At the moment, the entire world is experiencing this increase in energy prices which drives inflation because of sanctions on Russia who is the largest exporter of oil, natural gas, and petroleum products. Harsh, but well deserved, sanctions by the United States and European Union on Russian gas have led to skyrocketing prices. In Ghana, inflation rose to 15.7%. Meanwhile, in Nigeria, the price of diesel shot up 190%. In Tunisia, the Government has raised fuel prices twice in one month. If Russian sanctions continue to worsen which is likely after the discovery of severe war crimes committed by Russian soldiers in the Bucha region of Ukraine, the consequences could potentially be catastrophic.

Another major impact of the Russo-Ukrainian war on Africa is the price of fertilizer. In recent years, advancements for fertilizer usage techniques have been developed in hopes of igniting Africa's "Green Revolution". African countries hope to replicate the success of Asia's and South America's Green Revolutions which, through the use of improved farming techniques and fertilizer use, these continents were able to increase yields and ultimately lower poverty rates. In Sub-Saharan Africa, a fertilizer technique called micro-dosing had proved to be successful in producing larger yields while lowering the quantity of expensive fertilizer needed. Instead of the recommended 50 kilograms of nitrogen per hectare, micro-dosing only uses 8-10 kg per hectare. Micro-dosing, still in its infancy, is a success story in Zimbabwe where local Mr. Tshuma has doubled his productivity since he started using the technique. Mr. Tshuma along with 170,000 households experimenting with micro-dosing have already saved Zimbabwe \$7 million USD in food imports annually. Although since the war in Ukraine, fertilizer prices have skyrocketed because of sanctions on Russia – the world's largest fertilizer producer. Already in Ghana farmers are reducing their crop yields since the price of a bag of fertilizer has more than doubled to \$50 USD, about 380 cedis. At the same time, a bag of fertilizer has gone up 200 % in Ethiopia. As sanctions tighten, fertilizer along with other commodities will continue to increase around the globe.



The inevitable rise in food insecurity is quite alarming for African countries considering pre-existing factors such as the Covid-19 pandemic, issues of food spoilage, climate change, and the recent backslide in democracy. However, there is light at the end of the tunnel. Russia's decision to invade Ukraine changed the way the international system views Russia. Russia, part of the BRICS countries, was a retired superpower trying to reinvent itself. But due to its botched Ukrainian invasion the international community is ostracizing Russia and planning a future without any dependence on the rogue state. This leads to the question of who will replace Russian energy in the world? And a competitive candidate is Africa. If African countries can supplant Russia and secure its energy markets, then the potential for Africa is unlimited. Nigeria has already taken the lead by opening a \$2.5 billion USD fertilizer plant just two weeks ago to make Africa self-sufficient in the fertilizer sector.

If African policymakers want to uplift Africa, then they must work towards funding the infrastructure needed to meet the gas and fertilizer demands of the world.

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