Ukraine

Rapid Response Plan
March–December 2022

Supporting agricultural production to bolster food availability and access
The war in Ukraine that began on 24 February 2022 has led to large-scale human suffering across all regions of the country. As the dynamics of the war continue to evolve, large portions of the population are affected by damage to critical infrastructure, lack of basic services and disruptions of supply chains, requiring multisectoral humanitarian assistance. In order to address the rapidly deteriorating food security situation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has developed a Rapid Response Plan (RRP) to provide life- and livelihood-saving interventions to support the most vulnerable smallholder and medium-sized farming households through 2022.

The Government of Ukraine has requested FAO to support vulnerable producers through the provision of cash and agricultural inputs, and to support maintenance of overall access to critical markets. FAO will continue to lead strong inter-agency coordination, working with government and Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster (FSLC) partners to ensure that response activities complement those carried out by other actors.

FAO’s technical capacity in the areas of livestock and crop production, and leadership on agriculture, food systems transformation and livelihood support, has enabled the Organization to identify inputs that can bolster the production of targeted producers and, therefore, safeguard food security across the country in 2022 and into 2023. With spring planting season ongoing, and the harvest of winter wheat likely to be disrupted, farmers need urgent support to meet agricultural deadlines and maintain production. In addition, commercial livestock producers lack physical and/or economic access to animal feed and veterinary medicines, which are crucial to livestock survival and production. This will enable producers to feed supply chains and markets at the current level. Shortages of fuel and liquidity are significant barriers to maintaining production.

This RRP is a revision of the initial RRP that was issued by FAO in March. It responds to the worsening food security situation and the limited availability of critical agricultural inputs, including seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, equipment, fuel and livestock supplies, arising from a combination of logistical and financial factors. The RRP has been designed to complement the Government of Ukraine’s response and will be implemented in coordination with government partners.

FAO requires USD 115.4 million, increasing its initial request of USD 50 million, to support 376 660 households (979 320 people) through December 2022. FAO will utilize a programmatic approach to implement the RRP whereby individual contributions from resource partners add to the overall achievements of the programme.
Context

The food security situation in Ukraine has deteriorated rapidly as a result of the war. The war has already caused extensive damage and loss of life in key population centres, spread across rural areas, and sparked massive displacement. Populations in active conflict zones are facing severe shortages of food, water and energy supplies. Vulnerable people are likely to fall deeper into hunger and malnutrition as insecurity continues to impact local and national food systems. The situation is particularly concerning for some population groups, including households headed by women, who were already significantly more food insecure than households headed by men (23 percent compared to 13 percent of households headed by men).¹

Agriculture is central to Ukraine’s economy, playing a key role in protecting food security and livelihoods across the country. It is also a driver of employment and inclusive economic growth in rural areas. The smallholder farming sector contributes 41 percent to the gross agricultural production,² and is critical to local employment, livelihoods and food security. Smallholders are also key suppliers to short local value chains. In addition to growing around one-fifth of the grain produced in the country, smallholders dominate subsectors essential for a diverse and nutritious diet, including vegetables (85 percent), fruits and berries (83 percent), honey (99 percent), milk production (70 percent) and eggs (45 percent), and are responsible for almost one-third of total national meat production.³

FAO’s immediate concern is the ongoing spring planting campaign and the anticipated disruption to the upcoming winter crop harvesting, which typically occurs in June/July. The vast destruction of crops and infrastructure threatens food security in Ukraine in 2022 and into 2023. FAO estimates that one-third of the crops and agricultural land may not be harvested or cultivated in 2022. The forced displacement of conflict-affected populations and the conscription of men into territorial defense forces is resulting in labour shortages and an increased burden on women. This situation is exacerbated by a decrease in the access and availability of crucial agricultural inputs. FAO will support the government to prevent the further deterioration of critical local food production in at-risk communities and ensure that small and medium-sized farmers can prepare their land, meet planting deadlines and maintain the supply of crop, vegetable and animal products to critical markets.

Women make up 54 percent of the people in need of assistance in the ongoing crisis. The war has exacerbated the pre-existing inequality between women and men, and each has taken on different roles in the context of the war. Women are bearing additional burdens of war and must be represented in all decision-making platforms on de-escalation, conflict prevention, mitigation and other processes in pursuit of peace and security for the people of Ukraine.⁴ Project activities will be designed to meet the specific needs of women as identified in a gender analysis.
FAO has carried out national assessments of key stakeholders (i.e. local governments and agricultural producers), finding that there is limited availability of critical agricultural inputs, namely seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, equipment, fuel and livestock supplies. This is due to a combination of logistical and financial factors. Through semi-structured interviews, approximately 30 percent of farmers reported facing non-functioning supply chains (wholesale, distribution and retail) and input supply networks. The prices of seed, fertilizer and fuel have increased by an average of 35–45 percent throughout the country, and are expected to continue to rise. Farmers’ limited access to markets to sell their stocks exacerbates their shortage of funds, which is further compounded by the reduction in liquidity from traditional lenders. Small commercial producers and subsistence farmers face most of the aforementioned challenges both in terms of frequency and severity.

As food access, production and overall food availability deteriorate, efforts to bolster agricultural production and the functioning of food supply chains will be critical to averting a food crisis in 2022 and into 2023. Investing in production in regions least affected by conflict in the immediate term will contribute to covering the food requirements of internally displaced populations in the west, which are increasing in number, and address food insecurity elsewhere in the country. Close monitoring is essential to identify areas that may become accessible as the context evolves for further investment.
Investment in agricultural livelihoods is key to maintaining vulnerable populations’ food security. Food availability will be increasingly limited by reduced imports, and food access will be curtailed by higher prices, lack of inputs and the destruction of productive assets and infrastructure. Immediate support is needed to aid farmers to get crops into the ground within planting windows and to support livestock holders to maintain their animals’ health and production. Furthermore, an increased burden has been placed on women, who are now mainly responsible for production and harvest, requiring urgent assistance.

Timely delivery remains of utmost importance. The current sowing season for spring vegetable crops has already begun for much of the country (timing varies according to oblast and prevailing soil and weather conditions). Therefore, procurement of seed and associated inputs to grow spring vegetables and other crops must be scaled up, and distribution to farmers must be immediate. FAO aims to expand its operations to address the needs of communities in oblasts that have become accessible, but remain affected by blocked markets and lack of inputs.

The winter wheat crop, which was planted in October 2021, is a critical staple in the country, and will be ready for harvest in June/July 2022. FAO is working with government and private sector partners to ensure that farmers will have the necessary equipment and inputs to harvest their crops. In the medium-term, FAO plans to support farmers with a range of inputs and cash to ensure they are able to prepare their land and sow winter wheat for the upcoming fall season in September/October 2022.

The RRP complements the Government of Ukraine’s response and directly responds to the request for support from the government. As co-lead of the national-level FSLC, FAO has a comprehensive view of the sector and its contributing actors. FAO will share information collected with the government and FSLC partners to keep them informed and prepared to respond to potential food shortages that could worsen food insecurity in the short and medium-term. Key nutritional commodities such as meat, eggs and dairy are vital sources of protein, but have a limited shelf-life; it is difficult to safely process, transport and store them. Close monitoring of these key supply and value chains is needed to ensure that vulnerable populations have access to nutritious and diverse diets.

FAO conducted a rapid needs assessment of the agricultural sector in Ukraine (at the oblast level across the country, and in areas with significant population displacement) to identify the needs in order to design a timely response. The findings were shared broadly in late March through the Note on the impact of the war on food security. Key results reveal that a main need among small and medium-sized producers is cash to assist in the sowing campaign, as many farmers across the country are facing increasing difficulties in accessing loans. The deficiency in financial liquidity is at least partly due to severe disruptions in markets – farmers are no longer able to sell their stocks of cereal and oilseeds and, therefore, lack the funds needed to support the coming season’s activities.
Going forward, FAO is supporting data collection and analysis to monitor food security, the agricultural impacts of the war and livelihood needs at the household and regional level. A specific focus will be on monitoring internally displaced populations and host communities. In addition, FAO will monitor people in the east who either choose not to, or are unable to, evacuate, including elderly people and people with disabilities who cannot take care of themselves. Support must be provided to these vulnerable groups who may increase in number as the war progresses. In addition, FAO will continuously monitor the return of internally displaced people who will require financial and material assistance to reestablish their livelihoods and agricultural production.

FAO will utilize a programmatic approach to implement the RRP. FAO has been operating in the conflict-affected areas of eastern Ukraine since 2014, helping improve the food security, nutrition, livelihoods and economic recovery of the most vulnerable households. The escalation of the war necessitates a large-scale expansion of FAO activities and technical support across the country.

The agroecological conditions in Ukraine, which vary by oblast, allow for the implementation of a variety of production systems and commodities. Based on an analysis and prioritization of key supply and value chains, FAO will provide small and medium-sized producers with a range of agricultural and livestock inputs. The RRP will take into account geographic considerations and enable farmers to supply local markets to ensure food availability. This intervention requires customized approaches based on local production patterns and area-specific challenges related to supply chains and markets.

FAO will provide crop and livestock inputs in the immediate and medium-term. In the immediate term, FAO will provide vegetable and crop seed along with cash transfers to 100 000 household-level and smallholder farmers during the spring campaign, and reach 200 000 household-level and smallholder farmers in the autumn to meet seasonal deadlines for food production. Support for livestock holders will include the distribution of small livestock, animal health inputs, and feed/fodder. This support will enable 76 660 households to produce milk, meat and eggs to meet the growing demand. In the medium-term, FAO will continue to support medium-sized producers and key market actors along agri-food supply chains to bolster market functionality and access to food in key communities and urban centres. Producers of medium-sized farms will also be supported with winter wheat planting inputs in the autumn.
Targeting

To bolster food production, FAO will target beneficiaries from three distinct producer groups.

- **Household producers**: These include producers who engage in agricultural production on household plots (0.5–0.8 ha) mainly to provide for their own consumption. It also includes households whose land units (paj) are 2–3 ha on average and are mostly rented out to agricultural enterprises. While these households play a pivotal role in ensuring the food security, incomes and livelihoods of rural populations, they are often unregistered. Without registration, farmers’ access to formal financial services is limited. Furthermore, the ability to identify these households to provide support is constrained. The current inability to change their status due to the war requires cooperation with united territorial communities to facilitate the provision of inputs.

- **Smallholder producers**: These producers operate family-owned farms, which may be up to 100 ha in size, often cultivating additional rented land. Frequently, hired labour is used to support production. These producers consume what they produce and use it to cover the needs of their livestock. They also sell their products locally, contributing to local supply chains. Smallholder producers in western oblasts, where there has been a significant increase in the population, require support to meet the increased demand and to reduce the stress on existing food systems.

- **Medium-sized farms**: These producers own, on average, 250–1 000 ha of land. While they are adapted to growing grains, they are versatile and contribute greatly to national food security. They are not typically part of large-scale agribusiness associations or agro-holdings.

Vegetable and crop seed

Priority crops available on the domestic market (spring vegetables, soybeans, cereals and potatoes) have been specified in the RRP based on the sector needs identified by the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food, and on their importance to nutritious and diverse diets. Moreover, each crop plays a significant role in the income generation of targeted beneficiaries. Production packages for households have been designed for key commodities, and will be combined with vouchers and cash as necessary.

Livestock, feed and animal health

There is high demand for the provision of small livestock, including poultry, piglets, sheep and goats, which will be distributed in appropriate areas. Key associated inputs such as feed, fodder, mineral supplements and veterinary medicines will also be provided to safeguard these livestock assets. All animals provided will be vaccinated prior to distribution.
Cash transfers and grant schemes

FAO plans to use multi-purpose cash (MPC) transfers in combination with other assistance, or on their own, as part of its response. FAO’s current approach to cash transfers in Ukraine aligns with the unconditional, MPC modality that can support a wide range of basic needs of displaced and other vulnerable, conflict-affected households. The crisis has increased the need for this type of flexible support across the country. In this RRP, FAO aims to reach 15,000 households with MPC assistance in line with the Minimum Expenditure Basket determined by the Ministry of Social Policy and other parameters of the approach of the Cash Working Group (CWG).

In addition, preliminary data collected by FAO, through ongoing assessments, demonstrates that farmers at all levels need cash to procure inputs and services for food production and to maintain their farming operations. FAO will therefore also utilize the cash+ modality, providing farmers with input packages (through in-kind distribution or vouchers) along with cash transfers, where appropriate, which recipients can use to support food production costs, including labour, transportation and equipment, in areas where these items are locally available in the markets.

Through its ongoing assessment and its regular participation in the CWG, FAO will continuously monitor the appropriateness of cash transfers to the local contexts as the crisis evolves, including changing needs, prices, availability and access to markets and areas of operation. Concerns over cash assistance may include sudden reductions in purchasing power due to inflationary pressure, and potential issues including but not limited to cash access and liquidity with financial systems, among others. Post-distribution monitoring will be conducted to collect beneficiaries’ feedback on the utilization, timeliness, appropriateness, sufficiency and effectiveness of cash transfers provided.

Through a grant scheme, FAO will target micro- and small-sized producers to support primary production, post-production handling and critical processing functions that are essential to maintaining food security for local populations under the activities of Outcome 2. The approach is harmonized with Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food priorities, which target farmers who are facing a shortage of liquidity where markets are functioning. The grant scheme will also target producers along key value chains for commodities, which play a significant role in the diet of the local population.
To achieve Outcome 1 FAO requires USD 90 million

Outcome 1. Critical food production systems are maintained.

1.1 Provision of inputs and cash for vegetable production (spring vegetable and potato) – seed, fertilizer and plant protection inputs.

- USD 15 million
  - Distribution of spring vegetable production packages by April/May 2022.
  - Distribution of potato production packages by April/May 2022.

1.2 Provision of inputs and cash for cereal crop production (wheat and oilseed) – seed, fertilizer and plant protection inputs.

- USD 40 million
  - Provision of wheat production packages to enable planting in October.
  - Support of the winter wheat harvest in June/July, targeting smallholder and medium-sized farmers through the cash+/voucher modality.

1.3 Provision of livestock production inputs and health services – mineral/vitamin supplements, fodder and feed inputs.

- USD 35 million
  - Distribution of mineral supplements, feed and fodder packages to households in the second and third quarter of the year.
  - Delivery of veterinary services and provision of input packages, in coordination with government partners, at the regional level through December 2022.
  - Provision of small livestock (poultry, piglets, sheep and goats) to sustain the production of meat, eggs and dairy, to bolster household consumption and short value chains through December 2022.

Outcome 2. Agri-food supply chains, value chains and markets are supported.

2.1 Facilitation of agri-businesses to provide technical support services to household-level and smallholder producers through grants.

- USD 8 million
  - Provision of services to support livestock production, including artificial insemination, animal husbandry, dairy production and processing, and training on hygiene practices and food safety, etc.
2.2 Provision of support to targeted private farmers and associations to maintain key supply and value chains through grants.

USD 10 million

- Support of dairy value chains, including cheese, milk and eggs, targeting small businesses and associations with grants.
- Establishment of alternative market linkages where traditional markets have been disrupted.
- Holding agricultural input voucher fairs in rural areas where markets are functioning, and the security situation permits access.

2.3 Facilitation, in partnership with the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food, of the transportation and storage of blocked food stocks to critical markets through contracts and grants.

USD 7 million

- Regularly identifying supply chain breakdowns by agricultural subsector (livestock, dairy, crop, etc.). This will be conducted through agreements with institutional partners and sectoral associations.
- Facilitating market linkages to include transportation, storage and processing of commodities to identified recipient markets with vulnerable populations. This will be conducted in collaboration with civil society and private sector actors.
- Coordination of public-private sector partnerships in cooperation with the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food, with large and medium-sized private companies that play key roles in value chains (bread, oil, eggs/dairy) that are critical to national food security. This will be conducted through agreements and grants.
- Supporting the establishment of veterinary and phytosanitary laboratories.

Outcome 3. Accurate analysis of evolving food security status and needs is ensured.

3.1 Coordination of FSLC – regular food security, market and value chain assessments.

USD 0.4 million

- Continuing nationwide surveys using semi-structured interviews of key informants, targeting oblast-level administrations (Tier 1), commercial farmers at the rayon level (Tier 2) and nationally representative households (Tier 3) to analyse inputs and food access, availability and utilization. This will be conducted through FSLC joint partnerships.
- Conducting Food Insecurity Experience Scale assessments on a quarterly basis in coordination with FSLC partners.
- FSLC coordination with government, national associations and civil society partners.
- Conducting nationwide damage and loss assessment on a quarterly basis.
Implementation arrangements

Institutional framework

FAO is maintaining its presence in Ukraine to stay and deliver, and has reinforced its team by surging technical staff to support the scale-up of the response, with a specific focus on operations, cash programming, food security information and analysis, procurement, security, coordination, needs assessments and communications.

Currently, FAO’s physical office presence has shifted to Lviv and Polyana, Zakarpatska Oblast, with individual area coordinators continuing to oversee emergency operations across the country. The Organization retains capacity to operate in areas in eastern Ukraine (along the previous contact line) and is rapidly scaling up to support the government in the newly impacted and recently opened areas. FAO is undertaking contingency planning for areas where it may be able to expand operations in the event these areas become accessible.

The design of the RRP allows for complementarity and mutuality. A conflict-sensitive approach will be applied in all interventions to ensure that, at a minimum, the principle of ‘do no harm’ is implemented. For example, interventions need to be cognizant of the design of delivery mechanisms so that any pre-existing local tensions or marginalization are not exacerbated, and that at-risk groups are not excluded.

Accountability to Affected Populations

FAO recognizes that the war is causing an increase in the scale of populations considered vulnerable, requiring the systematic mainstreaming of protection within the emergency response. FAO is committed to ‘do no harm’, implementing conflict-sensitive programming and protecting the safety and dignity of the most at-risk populations. An accountable humanitarian system, where more decision-making power is in the hands of those affected by crises, is central to principled humanitarian action. The Organization’s commitment to Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) works to ensure that FAO’s actions protect and restore human dignity and agency, remaining relevant and effective, and leaving no one behind.

In order to inclusively address needs on the ground and promote meaningful access, engagement and empowerment, FAO adheres to the six core principles related to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) across key programmatic areas to map and mitigate risks, including FAO cluster responsibility for food security.

To mitigate possible protection and conflict-sensitivity concerns that could impact the implementation of emergency rapid response activities, FAO will establish a community feedback and complaints mechanism, including dedicated toll-free helplines for calls and SMS, operated by a PSEA focal point and support team responsible for receiving and recording all feedback from beneficiaries and other stakeholders. The number will
be disseminated widely and publicized through awareness-raising and sensitization meetings with local beneficiary representatives to maintain safe and accessible pathways for beneficiaries to report on sexual exploitation and abuse, strengthen AAP and ensure greater transparency.

FAO will require implementing partners to promote and reinforce the mechanism on the ground to address grievances of the beneficiary population and to ensure the quality of inputs being provided. The collection of beneficiary feedback will also improve accountability and guide FAO to better meet the needs of vulnerable people moving forward. Third-party monitoring modalities will be utilized to foster the highest degree of transparency and accountability in monitoring.

Given its sustained and growing presence in Ukraine, FAO has cultivated strong relationships with the government, local partners and affected communities. The Organization will rely on its strong operational experience and established partnerships to scale up conflict-sensitive approaches in order to mitigate negative impacts and avoid fuelling negative conflict dynamics. Regular identification and mitigation of risks will further enable FAO to avoid harm throughout all stages of the programme cycle in order to balance longer-term sustainable objectives with immediate humanitarian imperatives.
Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning

In the evolving context, it is crucial that FAO understands the changing needs of its target population and addresses programme challenges and opportunities in delivery. FAO has invested in the establishment of comprehensive monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) systems and mechanisms at global and regional levels, as well as at the country level. A dedicated international expert has been engaged at the Ukraine office to further design and adjust MEAL activities across the programme.

A complaints and feedback mechanism to ensure beneficiaries have a say in the quality of the assistance provided will be integrated into the project. Further to that, a sound and consistent post-distribution monitoring system will be maintained to determine how the cash was utilized by the beneficiaries, if the amount is sufficient and if it is delivered in a timely manner to cover basic needs.

The programme will be improved through real-time assessments and a mid-term evaluation in the fourth quarter of 2022. Third-party monitors will be considered, sourced and engaged as part of the evaluation and for oversight of field activities and partnerships. Programme monitoring will benefit from the uptake of AAP systems and mechanisms in line with international standards in humanitarian and emergency contexts.
Key partnerships and coordination

FAO, together with implementing partners, will work in close collaboration with the government, other United Nations (UN) agencies and international non-governmental organizations to ensure that interventions are complementary, and that duplications and overlaps are avoided. FAO will regularly participate in UN coordination meetings, cluster meetings and consultations to provide updates on the implementation of activities. FAO will continue to play a critical role in the humanitarian response through its co-leadership of the FSLC and its technical support of food security information collection and analyses, needs and continuous impact assessments, early warning and monitoring systems, among others.

Going forward, FAO will continue to work with private sector service providers, national associations and implementing partners that are well-associated and knowledgeable of local conditions and needs. This approach builds capacity and resilience among civil society partners, as well as benefiting the farmer through their participation in the programme activities.

Communication, visibility and outreach

FAO has a robust national communication team, supported by regional and headquarters-level experts, and will dedicate efforts to produce timely facts and figures, key messages and bulletins on a regular basis, to be shared with the donors, beneficiaries, partners and relevant stakeholders. Advocacy messages where necessary will be linked to the current context as part of the humanitarian-development nexus. Videos, geotagged photographs, news releases and appointed FAO focal points will be made available to the media and key stakeholders.

Where the security context allows, media field trip visits will be conducted to create awareness and undertake joint monitoring exercises with partners. Relevant information, education and communication materials will be produced and distributed widely. An active social media presence will be maintained throughout the response operation, and the FAO website will also be used for raising awareness. Human interest stories will also be collected and shared. In addition, FAO will build the capacity of partners through training and provision of appropriate communication equipment to support communication.
## Requirements

FAO requires USD 115.4 million to reach 376,660 households (979,320 people) through December 2022. It is anticipated that the RRP will be followed by a continuing programme based on the evolution of the crisis. The subsequent programme will follow the recommendations of the fourth quarter evaluation and the findings of consultations with partners from the government and civil society.

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<td><strong>Total (USD million)</strong></td>
<td><strong>115.4</strong></td>
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## Notes


4. UN Women. 2022. *In Focus: War in Ukraine is a crisis for women and girls*. In: *UN Women*. 29 March 2022. New York, US. Cited 6 April 2022. [shorturl.at/ajIPU](shorturl.at/ajIPU)

5. Food security, market and value chain assessments are conducted in close coordination with the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food in order to ‘do no harm’ given the heightened protection concerns as a consequence of the ongoing hostilities.


7. In line with the FSLC agreed targeting approach, the average household size is comprised of 2.6 people.