

## 8. Russian-Ukraine War: An Albatross to Achieving 2030 SDGs 1 & 2 in Nigeria

Awe, Abayomi Olatunji and Adams Adeola Sylvester  
Osun State University, Osogbo, Osun State, Nigeria

Email: [abayoawe@hotmail.com](mailto:abayoawe@hotmail.com);

Email: [adeola.adams@pgc.uniosun.edu.ng](mailto:adeola.adams@pgc.uniosun.edu.ng)

### Abstract

International conflicts between opposing countries cause damage, harm, and impediment to economic, social and political progress. The Russian Ukrainian conflict has significantly impacted Nigeria's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 and 2, which aim to end hunger and poverty by 2030. Embracing the qualitative research method, which involves the collection and analysing non-numerical data to understand the problem, this study reveals that the conflict has led to economic disruptions, business spin, food insecurity, worsening foreign exchange, diverted resources, and high energy costs. The war's volatility in the world food system has exacerbated Nigeria's food security, obstructing the achievement of SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger). To alleviate the conflict's effects, this paper suggested that Nigeria should focus on diversifying the economy, investing in indigenous farmers, reducing reliance on sectors open to external shocks, and investing in sustainable agriculture methods. Improving food security measures, such as domestic food production and agribusiness, is crucial for a stable and resilient food supply. This paper concludes that the Russian-Ukraine war is a gargantuan albatross to Nigeria's progress towards SDGs 1 and 2.

**Keywords:** *International conflict, Sustainable Development Goals, Food Security and Nigeria.*

### Introduction

Prior to the onset of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2022) made a forecast indicating that in the aftermath of the coronavirus epidemic, a substantial portion of key global macroeconomic indicators will return to their pre-pandemic levels by the years 2022-2023. Development groups worldwide have issued warnings indicating that low-income nations, such as Nigeria, could have significant adverse consequences due to the crisis in Ukraine (International Food Policy Research Institute, 2022; Garver, 2022). Both Russia and Ukraine have caused disruptions in the international trade of several crucial commodities, including wheat, cereal grains, energy, and fertilizer, which are traded on a large scale (IFPRI, 2022). The escalation of global supply chain disruptions has given rise to unprecedented challenges, particularly in the context of limited or non-existent product movement through the ports on the Black Sea connecting the two nations. These challenges are further compounded by restrictions on food exports in Ukraine and the imposition of severe economic sanctions against Russia (Bin-Naswhan, Hassan, & Muneeza, 2022). The situation become more severe because Russia and Ukraine play a significant role in global wheat production, accounting for around one-third of the world's wheat supply. The ongoing conflict that started in late February 2022 has had a destabilizing effect on the grain market, introducing volatility and uncertainty. Now in the third year since Russia had its boots in Ukraine, the continuous escalation of hostilities in the ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia continues to have a significant effect on the fluctuation of food prices (including wheat and grains) particularly in the low- and middle-income nations, who are engulfed in the food crisis caused by the war. According to Mark Welch, a grain economist at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Bryan-College Station, the likelihood of ongoing war or its intensification is expected to exacerbate the volatility of global wheat prices and exert an impact on the production of wheat in the United States in the year 2024 (Russell

& Russell, 2023).

Russia and Ukraine play significant roles as primary suppliers of agricultural commodities to the African continent. The nations of North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia), Nigeria in the West African region, and Ethiopia and Sudan in East Africa collectively constitute 80 percent of the total wheat imports from the countries (Mlaba, 2022; (GO, 2022). Nigeria is particularly susceptible to the prevailing surge in global food prices. The nation under consideration is widely recognized as the most densely populated country and possesses the greatest economy inside the African continent, with a population of over 217 million individuals. Like many political systems in sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria exhibits a significant prevalence of poverty, as evidenced by a poverty rate of 42.6% and a high unemployment rate of 33%. Additionally, Nigeria faces the dual challenges of severe food crises and malnourishment, as indicated by a study conducted by Ecker et al. (2021). The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)-World Health Organisation (WHO)-World Bank Group estimates further reveals that in 2022, 34.2% of children under the age of five in Nigeria suffer from stunted growth, 2.2% are overweight, and in 2020, 6.5% are wasting (UNICEF et al., 2023). In the face of these challenges, there is a likelihood that the Russia-Ukraine conflict will further exacerbate the Nigeria food crisis.

The sudden surge in food prices has had a significant impact on consumers, leading to serious consequences. Based on various research findings, it has been seen that the increase in 2010 had a comparable effect on a population of 44 million individuals, like the surge saw in 2007. This occurrence perhaps had a role in an additional 155 million individuals experiencing acute hunger and deprivation. Prices have experienced comparable growth to that observed in 2010 up until the present day. Based on recent research conducted by the Centre for Global Development, it has been determined that the elevated prices of food resulting from the conflict might potentially lead to a significant number of individuals, estimated to be no less than 40 million, facing acute hunger and seeing a decline in their socioeconomic status (Mitchell et al. 2022). The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2022) explicitly acknowledged this fact when it released its third consecutive food price index on April 8, 2022. The current prices of food have seen a significant increase of 34% compared to the same period of the previous year. This surge is the highest recorded level since the start of data collection by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

In January 2023, global food prices had a decline for the eleventh consecutive month. However, it is noteworthy that food inflation in Africa's largest economy has shown a persistent upward trend. According to the statistics office of the nation, the escalation in food inflation may be attributed to the surge in prices of various food items such as bread and cereals, oil and fat, potatoes, yam and other tubers, fish, vegetables, fruits, meat, and food goods (Odifa, 2023). However, the inverse relationship between the rise in the price of food in Nigeria and the decline in global food prices in the early time of the year may not be attributed to the resultant effects of the Russia-Ukraine war, but due to factors such as the hike in the cost of energy, rising cost of inputs for fertilizer production, high cost of transportation, rising interest rate, and shortage of currency notes. However, this is not peculiar to Nigeria alone. There is no indication of global subsiding food price inflation.

According to Vos et al. (2023), while concerns of an extended period of elevated global food prices have partially diminished about 2 years of the Russia-Ukraine war, there are still eight significant apprehensions of the security of food supply. First, it is noteworthy that prices for food items continue to exhibit a level of elevation that surpasses historical benchmarks. Second, the current state of staple food markets is constrained due to the persistent uncertainty surrounding the availability and export potential of grain reserves kept in Ukraine amidst the ongoing conflict. Third, the decrease in wheat cultivation during the autumn season of 2022 may potentially exert a substantial adverse influence on the subsequent spring planting activities. Fourth, fertilizer costs have experienced a decline from their previous highs, however, they continue to maintain a relatively elevated level, even considering the recent decrease in natural gas prices. This is particularly significant as natural gas serves as a crucial component for nitrogenous fertilizer and serves as an energy source throughout the manufacturing process. The decline in output prices of essential food items has resulted in a decrease in farm profitability due to the persistently high input costs. This is anticipated to result in a decrease in the utilization of fertilizers, therefore impacting crop yields, particularly those of rice, wheat, and maize. Fifth, the southern hemisphere has experienced poor climatic circumstances that have coincided with extended periods of drought in Argentina and East Africa. Consequently, the projected production prospects for wheat and other crops in 2023 have significantly declined in comparison to the previous year. Sixth, it is anticipated that the world economy experience a substantial deceleration in 2023, which could potentially lead to a further decline in global food consumption. African nations where there are conflicts, that are experiencing occurrence of unexpected and extreme weather events and cannot import may continue to experience food shortages. Seventh, restrictions on import and slowdown of food production, and eight, challenges faced by low-income nations regarding persistent macroeconomic issues, which further worsen the dangers associated with food security. High debt and debt service obligations, rising food and energy import prices, and devaluation of the currencies in these nations have further exacerbated the issue of domestic food price inflation.

The discourse surrounding the Russia-Ukraine conflict often fails to adequately address the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this discourse, Balbaa (2022) examines the ramifications of the conflict on the global economy, although fails to establish a connection between their analysis and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In their study, Duho et al. (2022) investigated the ramifications of the conflict but neglected to extend the discourse to encompass food-related elements. The artwork titled "Ehsas" (2022) employs far-reaching brushstrokes to create a visual composition on a global scale. However, the potential exacerbation of food and poverty difficulties resulting from the war were not considered. The ripple effect of the war is also not considered in the forthcoming agricultural season in Africa. The cost and accessibility of fertilizers will play a crucial role in addressing the prevalent issue of food insecurity across the continent. Malpass (2023) posits that the exorbitant cost of fertilizers is a significant challenge for most farmers, hence jeopardizing the agricultural cycle and overall stability of rural areas. Therefore, the current issue of elevated fertilizer costs is impeding the successful execution of the crop cycles scheduled for 2023 and 2024, consequently, elevating the cost of food. The issue of economic development has already posed challenges in several emerging economies, particularly in the African continent. Mlaba (2022) is a reference to a certain source or author. This inquiry seeks to examine the potential consequences of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine on Africa, however, fails to delve

more into the pressing problems of poverty and famine, which are significant concerns within the region. The early two Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yet, no comprehensive research has been conducted to investigate the potential threats posed by war. The hindrance of worldwide endeavours in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the year 2030 is a source of frustration. This research emphasizes Nigeria. This analysis critically examines the war within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The main aim of this research project is to provide a thorough assessment of the influence of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 and 2, with a particular emphasis on the country of Nigeria. The study also examined the methods by which stakeholders may aid the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in difficult situations. The present study has five discrete components. The next part, referred to as Part 2, presents a comprehensive explanation of the research methods utilized in this work. The examination of the impact of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine on Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2 may be in Sections 3 and 4. The concluding section of the publication comprised a concise overview of the research outcomes and put forward recommendations for further steps.

### **Research Method**

The main aim of this study is to offer social and economic policy practitioners with significant insights obtained from the results of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. During the initial phase, the author performed a preliminary empirical inquiry to determine patterns related to the influence of the conflict on Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2. The current study utilized library research approaches to acquire and assess up-to-date secondary sources, including newspapers, textbooks, articles, reviews, and reports, that refer to the influence of the conflict on Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2 (No Poverty and Zero Hunger). Moreover, the researchers have proposed a set of suggestions to effectively safeguard the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promote significant progress for people and the international society by the year 2030, drawing on their empirical research. The technique applied in this study was based on a careful selection of academic sources that employed the secondary research strategy.

### **Russia-Ukraine War as an Albatross for Sustainable Development Goal One (Poverty Elimination) in Nigeria**

The incursion of Russia into Ukraine has harmed Nigeria's previously optimistic recovery from the COVID-19 epidemic. Consequently, food and fuel prices have increased, trade disruptions surfaced, the financial space available for green transitions got constrained, and there has been a decrease in the amount of funding available for international development (Abend 2022; Lusigi 2022; Sen 2022). It is a problem because Nigeria depends on Russia and the Ukraine to import basic supplies like wheat, grains, steel, and fertilizers. Nigeria suffers food crisis due to disruption in the flow of these items. According to Luigi (2022), the actual effect on any economy is directly proportionate to how much it relies on tourism, imported grain and fertilizers as well as oil and gas exports or imports among others. There are enormous obvious long-term effects, including the potential for realignment in geopolitical power, socio-economic instability, and unmanageable debt rates, which may lead to

increased inequality and high poverty levels in Nigeria (Esfandabadi et al. 2022). The current high inflation level, skyrocketed gasoline and food prices, as well as the instability of the financial system, are the war's most noticeable repercussions in less income countries including Nigeria.

The volatility of food prices is crucial in relation to issues such as famine, poverty, and worldwide malnourishment. Low-income households allocate a substantial portion of their budget to purchasing food, but the exorbitant price of this item constrains their purchasing power. The deteriorating global food outlook due to the implementation of more stringent policies by nation-states explain the threat to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 1.

Due to a significant amount of its budget going toward imported food and transportation, Nigeria as one of the lowest incomes countries in the world suffers the most. The likelihood of food insecurity persisting is considerable and threatens several aspects of human development including health, income and education (Kagan et al. 2022). According to the UN Global Crisis Response Group's predictions for energy, food, and finance, there will be a global crisis in living standards. Food prices, energy prices, and financial circumstances are expected to rise, contributing to this disaster (Lusigi, 2022). To stabilize the commodities markets, resolve the growing consequences of debt, and concurrently strengthen the ability of people and nations to deal with the crisis, a global response is needed. Sen (2022) stated that in 2021, Kenya imported approximately 30% of its national wheat from Russia and Ukraine. In something that has semblance to Nigeria's case, as a result, a disruption in the supply chain might influence Kenya's ability to produce bread, which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most popular food item there. According to Behnassi and El Haiba (2022a, b; Sen, 2022) and other sources, Russia supplied 44% of all the fertilizer imported by Cameroon in 2021.

West Africa's capacity to feed its people would allegedly be threatened by the conflict, which would obliterate crop output there. Like this, according to (Duho et al.2022), 60% of Ghana's imports of steel and iron ore come from Ukraine. According to Kirby (2022) and others, the conflict has already caused significant difficulties for Ghana's construction sector. According to Ben Hassen and El Bilali (2022), the Russia-Ukraine violent conflict, which includes two big world agricultural powers, has several adverse socio-economic impacts that are being felt globally and might get much worse, especially for global food security. Due to COVID-19 epidemic-related supply chain disruptions, high global demand, and subpar harvests in certain political systems, the war took place at the wrong time for the world's food markets. The reason is that these identified factors have already contributed to rising food costs.

Additionally, Ben Hassen and El Bilali (2022) asserted how essential it is to comprehend the overall impact on global food security to uncover the impact of disruptions in the markets for food and fertilizer caused by war or other forms of violent armed conflict affect the cost and availability of these commodities. As claimed by Berahab (2022), hostility brought direct and significant repercussions for the security of the world's food supply. Due to the conflict, Ukraine's exports have been interrupted, population dislocation and conscription have resulted in labour shortages, accessibility to fertilizer has been hampered, and the prospects for future crops are questionable (Mlaba 2022; Wax 202).

Ben Hassen and El Bilali (2022) gave similar conclusion that Ukraine's export capacity has decreased. Second, compelled military service and demographic shifts contributed to a deficiency in the farm labour force. Thirdly, it may be difficult to acquire access to necessary agricultural supplies like fertilizers (One Africa 2022; Walker, 2022). The fact that the conflict resulted in a panic purchasing movement on both the national and individual levels was another problem that Ben Hassen and El Bilali (2022) brought to light. Both authors highlighted the importance of this topic. This development is jeopardizing the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 1 which intends to end poverty, SDG 2, which seeks to end hunger as well as SDG 12 striving to encourage responsible consumption and production.

According to Balbaa *et al.* (2022), the global food systems' inherent vulnerabilities, rigidities and inefficiencies exacerbate the effects of war on food security. People across the globe are now in an even more vulnerable condition because of this. Owing to this, suggested by Ben Hassen and El Bilali (2022), the implementation of policies and reforms that are both short-term and long-term focused will be necessary to support the transition to food systems that are equitable, healthy and environmentally sustainable.

In ways that threatens the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 1, the Russia-Ukraine war has impacted the living standard of Nigerians in the following areas:

- i. The ongoing conflicts have significantly disrupted global supply chains, especially for countries like Nigeria that are heavily involved in business with the warring parties. According to (Russia (RUS) and Nigeria (NGA) Trade | the Observatory of Economic Complexity, n.d.), Russia's exports to Nigeria in 2021 amounted to \$1.25 billion. Russia primarily exports Refined Petroleum (\$503M), Wheat (\$493M), and Potassic Fertilizers (\$71.4M) to Nigeria. Over the past 25 years, Russia's exports to Nigeria have shown a consistent annual growth rate of 16.5%, rising from \$27.3 million in 1996 to \$1.25 billion in 2021. Ukraine's exports to Nigeria in 2021 amounted to \$595 million, mostly made of wheat, hot-rolled iron, and iron blocks (The Observatory of Economic Complexity, n.d.).
- ii. Constraints to supply due to geopolitical tension have pushed up global commodity prices. This has generally fueled global inflation. There has been a steady increase in the price of staple foods such as wheat-based food items, grains, vegetable oil, and sugar, as well as energy, fertilizer, etc.
- iii. There conflict has bred business uncertainties which has made investors seek safe-havens, and this could prompt capital outflows from emerging markets, including Nigeria.
- iv. Resource diversion to sustain staple food supplies such as wheat, grains, etc. According to the Foreign Agricultural Service, Nigeria is allocating a greater portion of its budget towards the importation of wheat. Consequently, other key sectors of the economy are starved of funds to implement its annual goals.

Consequent upon this, Nigeria has witnessed:

- a. **Income and Employment Loss:** The rising costs of natural gas in Africa's industrial sector pose a significant challenge to businesses relying on it for chemical and fertilizer production. Unreliable power from the national grid has increased expenses, forcing stakeholders to increase product and service costs,

and experienced shut down for not being able to cope with the high cost of production.

- b. Increased Underemployment: Many people are in unproductive jobs, leading to economic stagnation and challenges in overcoming poverty and improving their socio-economic circumstances.
- c. A reduction in government social spending programmes such as education and healthcare, that help lift people out of poverty.
- d. Effect on the Informal Sector. A considerable proportion of the population in several developing nations is engaged in the informal sector, a sector that is frequently more susceptible to economic shocks. Economic recessions have the potential to result in less demand for goods and services within the informal sector, so impacting the livelihoods of individuals dependent on this sector.

According to (Sachs, et al., 2024), Nigeria is ranked 146 out of 166 nations in the SDG Index. Under SDG 1 (No Poverty), the report states that the major challenges (part of which is the Russia-Ukraine war) to ending poverty remain. This indicates that the nation has not made a significant improvement in elevating poverty since the war between Russia and Ukraine, rather it is rising. Figure 1 below shows that 32% of 220,631,542 of the country's population are living in poverty, out of which 89% are living in the rural areas, while 11% are living in the urban areas. Out of the population living in poverty, 49% are female, while 51% are male (World Poverty Clock, n.d.). poor citation Before the war in 2020, it was 30% of the total population and 26% in 2019.

### **Russia-Ukraine War as an Albatross for Sustainable Development Goal Two (Zero Hunger) in Nigeria**

War reduced Nigeria to a net food importer. The increase in food insecurity hurts mobility, conflict, displacement, and poverty in Nigeria. A lot of pressure is on many countries, which are now unable to fund their efforts to end hunger (Berahab 2022). Nigeria is now more susceptible to fluctuations in the price of grain and fertilizer due to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine (Ehsas 2022). According to projections from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), between 2018 and 2020, Russia exported 32% of the entire amount of wheat to Africa, while Ukraine exported 14% of that amount. Countries in North Africa, including Tunisia and Egypt, are dependent; yet the sub-Saharan African region's economic precarity increases its level of vulnerability (Pinto 2022).

The 2022 Global Report on Food Crises revealed that Nigeria is one of the 10 nations with the largest number of people experiencing food insecurity. The report findings, which include 21 of Nigeria's 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, indicated that 12.94 million individuals experienced severe food insecurity between October and December 2021. According to research conducted by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) on the impact of COVID-19 on food security in Nigeria, COVID-19-induced shocks alone have increased Nigerian family vulnerability and food insecurity (Balana et al., 2022).

Food security is largely determined by transportation costs, which are increasing due to rising oil prices (Ehsas 2022; Ozili 2022a). Even oil-exporting countries like Nigeria find it difficult to immediately offset the consequences of rising food costs. According to the Food Price Index published by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), grain prices have hit an all-time high. The cost of grain and fertilizer grew by 48

and 35%, respectively, from March 2019 to March 2022. According to the course of events, commodities conflicts will have a significant impact in the near future. Nigeria, which already faces significant population challenges, a heavy reliance on imports, unstable economic conditions, and unpredictable political climate, stands to lose the most from this potential. In Sub-Saharan Africa, which comprises most of the continent and has a population of about 1.1 billion (Lusigi 2022; Pinto 2022). The price of grain and fertilizer has recently increased due to several factors, including the global health crisis and the economic responses required to address it, energy market volatility, and infection, all of which were exacerbated by the effects of Russia's invasion of Ukraine (Pinto 2022). In a location where the cost of food accounts for 40% of overall consumption expenses, rising grain prices have been the main cause of epidemics. Food is an inelastic good, meaning that price increases do not result in a proportionate drop in demand. People require food to stay alive. In this situation, the effect is especially damaging in metropolitan regions with a high concentration of low-income households in Nigeria. Because they depend on unstable sources of income and have low savings levels, these households are particularly vulnerable to price fluctuations (Sen 2022; Pinto 2022).

The cost of some forms of fertilizer more than doubled at the start of the conflict and finally reached an all-time high. This also happened at the same time as natural gas prices rose and there were concerns about sanctions, production, and transportation problems. The export of ammonium nitrate was already prohibited by the Russian government before to their invasion of Ukraine in February. To ensure sufficient supplies are kept within the nation, the Chinese government also intends to outlaw all fertiliser exports starting in the summer of 2021 (Abu Hatab 2022; Pinto 2022). According to Luigi (2022), supply limitations are to blame for the source of the food and fuel shortages. Supply constraints that go beyond the crisis now in progress are to blame for the rise in food and fuel insecurity. Before this catastrophe, there was a famine that affected the supply of food (Ripley 2022). The root causes of the issue include climatic variability, inadequate supply system recovery on a global and regional scale, and poor productivity. While numerous places of West Africa and Southern Africa were affected by excessive precipitation levels and flooding in 2022, a significant chunk of the Horn of Africa saw below-average rainfall. The floods in Q4 2022 had a substantial impact on the agricultural region of the nation, causing extensive damage to significant hectares of land, including cropland, as well as agricultural supply-chain infrastructure. This led to huge losses in the post-harvest period. This occurrence led to a substantial increase in domestic food costs and had a detrimental effect on the ability of households to access and afford food.

The availability of food in one section of a nation or continent cannot be transported to other regions of the same country or continent where it is most needed due to insufficient infrastructure. As a result of low productivity from inadequate input and technology utilisation, a sizable chunk of Nigeria's agricultural economy is operating below widely adjudged potential. Additionally, there is significant post-harvest loss and waste due to inadequate agro-processing, insufficient storage, and strategic reserves.

Armed conflicts, according to Behnassi and El Haiba (2022), might be the main cause of food shortages in a globalized society, affecting areas outside of the battlefield. They argued that since armed conflicts were happening more often, the food crises of the past ten years have highlighted the structural issues with the fight



against food poverty in unstable contexts. Behnassi and El Haiba (2022) said that at a time of globalization, military conflicts may be the main cause of food shortages that affect areas outside of those directly affected. Behnassi and El Haiba (2022) also claimed that the continuing conflict between Russia and Ukraine has brought to light endemic flaws in global food security while also causing fresh occurrences of hunger. Conflicts make it harder for countries, households, and people to satisfy their nutritional needs. These disagreements may impede attempts to grow and gather food, prepare and transport it, supply and sell it, and other related activities. Jagtap, Trollman, Trollman, Garcia-Garcia, Parra-López, Duong, and Afy-Shararah (2022) conducted research on how the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has affected the effectiveness and flexibility of the world's food supply systems. Food is one of the most traded commodities, and following the COVID-19 effect, the situation in Ukraine, one of Europe's breadbaskets, has caused a significant further disturbance in the world's food supply systems. A long-lasting effect resulted in the disruption of the food supply chains, availability, and pricing in Nigeria.

According to Jagtap et al. (2022), the war is endangering the supply and availability of a wide range of raw materials and finished food items. Additionally, recent price increases for food have been seen in marketplaces throughout the world. Additionally, according to Jagtap et al. (2022), the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has harmed food supply chains, having significant effects on production, sourcing, manufacturing, processing, and logistics, as well as significant shifts in demand among nations that depend on imports from Ukraine. Due to the conflict and the international sanctions placed on Russia, the world's supply chain has been hampered. As a result, Africa is currently dealing with energy and food shortages, rising prices for commodities, and soaring inflation, all of which pose a threat to worsen the region's severe poverty and hunger (IMF,2022).

Considering the prevailing situation, the lack of combative actions by African nations to reduce its dependence on imports, reduce the effects of climate change, and check internal crisis, as well as the slow response to the resultant effects of the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, the major challenges to achieving SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) has remain. Sachs, et al. (2024) posit that there is a decrease in the prevalence of undernourishment. While the long-term objective is set at 2.5% by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (2020), Nigeria fell from 6.6% in 2007 to 12.7% in 2020. According to (Statista, 2023), it further decreased to 15.9% between 2020-2022 (see Figure 1). Furthermore, there is an increasing occurrence of severe food insecurity between 2020-2022, partly owing to the Russia-Ukraine crisis.

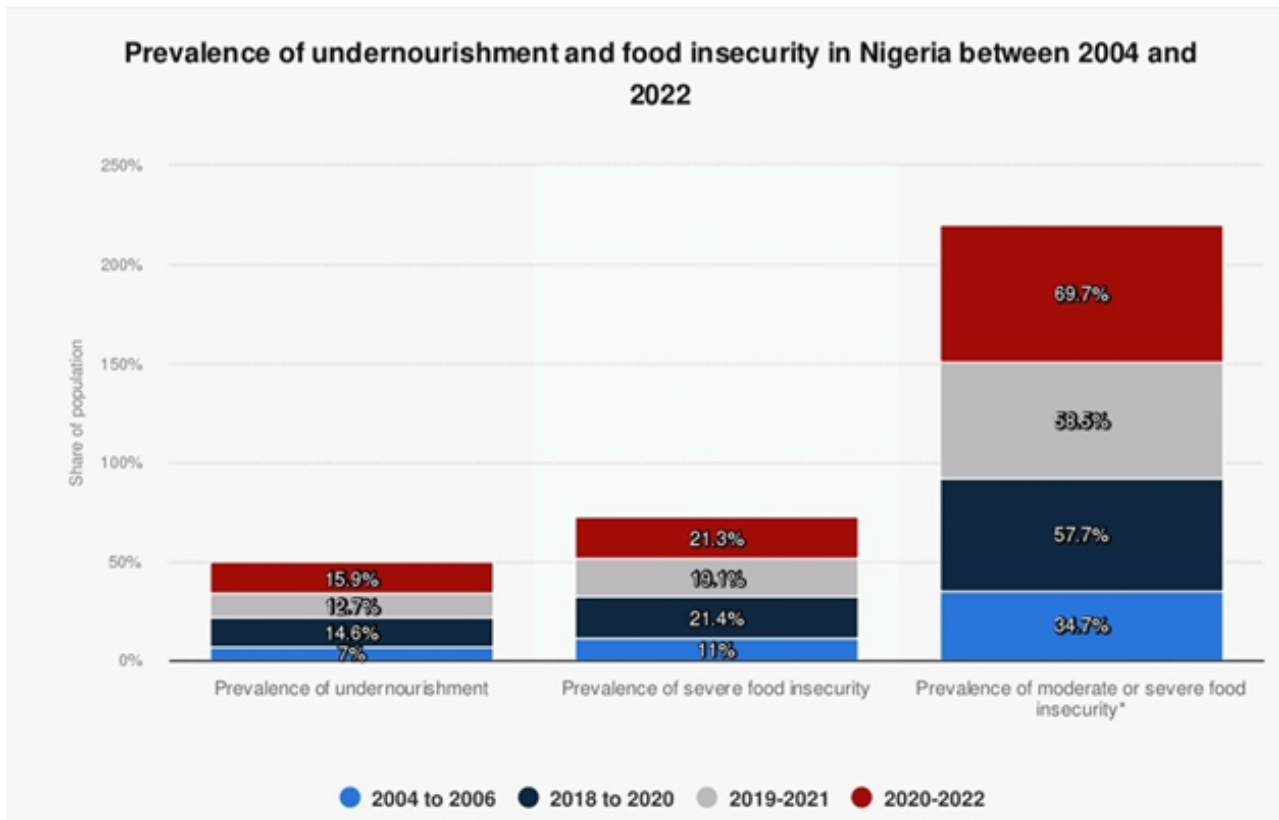


Figure 1.

Source: Nigeria; UNICEF; FAO; 2004 to 2022

The number of people who are undernourished has continue to rise in Nigeria before and during the Russia-Ukraine war (see figure 2). The crisis further revealed how vulnerable African nations' economies are as many of them are bedeviled by food insecurity.

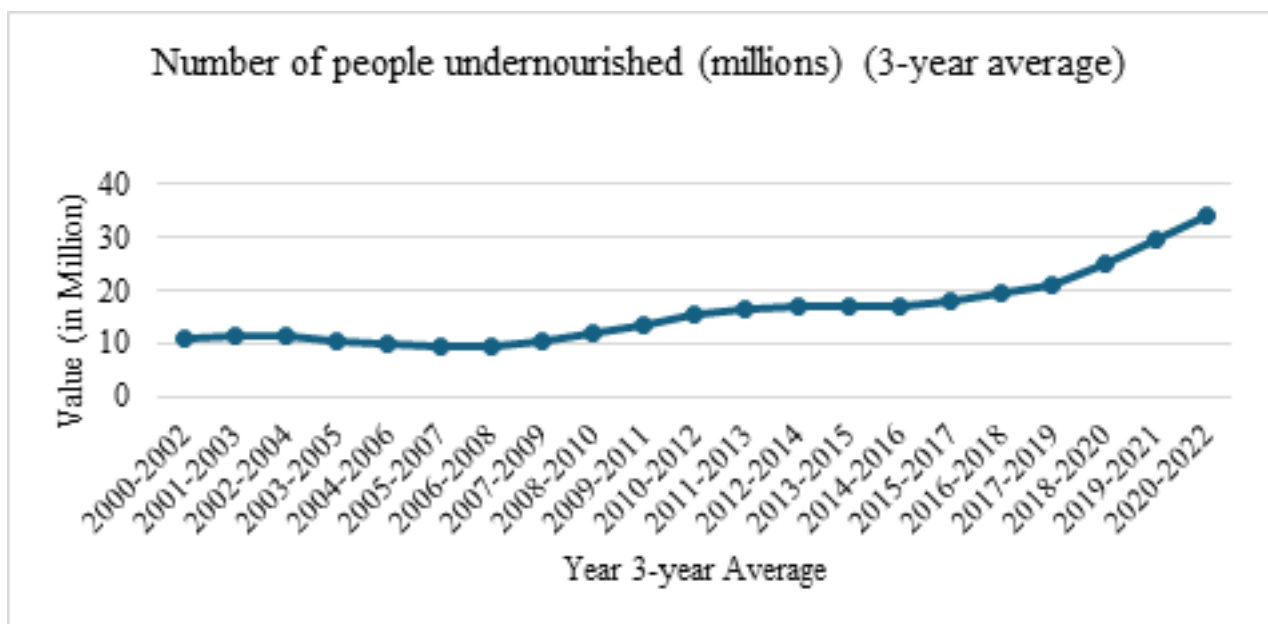


Figure 2.

Source: (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2024)

## Concluding Remark

The current studies on the Russia and Ukraine war concentrate attention extensively on the human tragedy in Ukraine and its effects on the global economy. Academics and politicians have not given the war's potential to undermine some SDG's success adequate consideration. With an emphasis on Nigeria, the paper examines how the war has negatively impacted on SDGs Agenda to end poverty and hunger that have materialized on a worldwide scale as a direct effect of the crisis. With specific attention to SDGs 1 and 2, the study discovered that Nigeria is presently facing a sharp fall in food products and energy, a hike in the cost of purchasing commodities or inflation which compound the pains of the poor population of the country consequent upon Russia-Ukraine war, international sanctions that led to the disruption of global food supply chain. The dispute between Ukraine and Russia has exacerbated the food crisis and raised the poverty level of some Nigerians against the SDGs 2030 Agenda which pledged to “leave no one behind”, especially the vulnerable groupings. The war is having knock-on effects on education, the environment, food and nutrition, the ability of people to survive and by extension blocking chances of achieving the overall SDGs 2030 Agenda. Although adverse effects of the war are directly felt by Russians and Ukrainians, beyond the borders of the battlefield, Nigeria indirectly is experiencing far-reaching detrimental effects of the hostility on energy, industry growth, food and its economy in general. Nigeria, which typically imports a significant amount of its wheat from the Black Sea region, is currently facing severe consequences due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Nigerian wheat millers are broadening their choices for wheat imports in reaction to the ongoing political tensions between Russia and Ukraine. The rise in global wheat prices caused by the prolonged conflict has led to a corresponding increase in expenditure on wheat imports. The scenario has had a detrimental effect on Nigeria's wheat supply value chain. The Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) Lagos Post projects that wheat imports for MY 2022/23 would amount to 6 million metric tons (MMT), reflecting a 3 per cent increase. Simultaneously, the uprising and inundation in the northern region of the nation significantly affected the cultivation of maize and rice, respectively. The projected decline in corn output for MY2022/23 is forecast to be 5 percent, equivalent to 12.1 million metric tons (MMT). Similarly, rice production is expected to decrease by 7 per cent, amounting to 7.8 MMT (Nigeria: Grain and Feed Update, 2022). By implication, there has been a rise in the prices of wheat-based products and grains in the country.

The continuous weakening of the naira and the discontinuation of the fuel subsidy will not only result in a decline in consumption and imports, it will also diminish the buying ability of the people, and the preference for alternative goods. The rising cost of wheat has also resulted in the demand for wheat-based products (such as bread). The projected wheat consumption for the marketing year (MY) 2023/24 is expected to decline to 4.5 million metric tons (MMT), which is a 10 per cent fall from the official estimate provided by the USDA. Projections indicate that imports for the 2023/24 fiscal year would decline by 9 per cent, reaching a total of 4.8 million metric tons (MMT). In MY 2023/24, both corn production and consumption are projected to decline. Corn production is likely to fall by 7.3 per cent to 11.8 MMT, while corn consumption is anticipated to decrease by 4.6 per cent to 12.3 MMT (Nigeria: Grain and Feed Update, 2023). These declines might be attributed to ongoing insecurity and violence in the northern producing regions, as well as high production costs.

Nevertheless, rice consumption is projected to rise by around 4 per cent to reach 7.8 MMT. This can be attributed to the distribution of rice by the government at little or no cost to communities facing food insecurity, as well as the arrival of unauthorized rice imports.

The Nigerian government is striving to enhance local wheat and grain output due to the prevailing circumstances. However, the growth in local wheat production is mostly attributed to the Flour Millers Association of Nigeria (FMAN) signing a memorandum of understanding to procure wheat at a reasonable price (Donley, 2023). The goals are to reduce the dependence of the millers on imports and motivate the local producers. Nigeria depends on imports for 95% of its wheat supplies.

The Nigerian government have also been involved in providing high-yielding seed types, agrochemicals, and agricultural equipment to farmers to increase agricultural outputs. Nevertheless, the difficulties surpass the benefits. Security obstacles in the wheat-producing area impede farmers' ability to reach their crops. Furthermore, the combination of exorbitant production expenses, the prevalence of stem borer infestation, and an inadequate financial support system would have a detrimental impact on farm produce in the upcoming years if these challenges are not curbed.

## 6. Recommendation

The ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis continues to generate substantial apprehension about its possible adverse effects on food security, both within the warring nations and on a global scale. Nigeria, being an import-dependent country continues to suffer the effects of the war, while the conflict pushes back the Sustainable Development Goals, especially goals 1 and 2 in this context. Therefore, Nigeria making progress in achieving SDGs 1 and 2 become an albatross. To prevent the manifestation of this set of consequences, it would be recommended that:

- i. In collaboration with the Flour Millers Association of Nigeria (FMAN), Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria (RIFAN), and other food farmers stakeholders, the government should strengthen the mission to promote and protect local production against import. Collaboration with the private sector that will cut down import supply of food in a bid to ensure food security should be the main drive of the government. The Russia-Ukraine war in the last 2 years has continued to subject Nigeria's daily staple to external shock due to its significant reliance on imports. Since the war started, the price of wheat in the international market pre-war has remained high, reaching a peak in 2022. A stronger collaboration with the local stakeholders of staple food in the country will change the narrative positively.
- ii. Continuous efforts must be made to improve security in warring regions. In Nigeria, there has been frequent clashes between herders and farming populations in several regions. These conflicts are mostly caused by disagreements over grazing areas. With the continuous military onslaught against bandits harbouring around forest areas, farmers in rural regions should be able to return to their farmland and, consequently, increase food production.
- iii. African countries should prioritize structural transformation and regional collaboration, reevaluate the

design of development financing and the global financial system, and keep up its continuous efforts to increase resilience.

- iv. A resilient, indigenous and sustainable agricultural/food system must be given elaborate attention by the Nigerian government and other concerned stakeholders. In order to achieve this, small-scale local farmers should be empowered financially and logistically through subsidized irrigation systems, adequate infrastructural facilities and a ready market for produced food items on a large scale. The government must sincerely embark on a policy that will ensure that Nigerians consume food items locally produced.
- v. The National Agricultural Development Fund's role is to offer financial support for the execution of agricultural policies and enhance agricultural institutions following national policies and strategies. In doing so, the fund will effectively eliminate any obstacles to prompt access to temporary funding in the sector for established stakeholders across the country who will genuinely contribute to the Renewed Hope Agenda's mission of achieving complete self-sufficiency in local food production and eventual surplus export.
- vi. There is a need to quicken the rollout of the new National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (NATIP, 2022–2027), which focuses on promoting technologies to boost efficiency in agriculture, especially for wheat and some food grains. The NATIP makes use of tactics including quick mechanization, the creation of an Agricultural Growth Fund, a revitalized extension strategy, growth of livestock and fisheries, market development, and fortification of value chains.
- vii. The Nigerian policymakers must change unfair agricultural trade regulations. It is a positive development that land borders have just been reopened. By boosting the role of markets in regulating supply interruptions, such measures will lessen the susceptibility of Nigerian families to spikes in food prices. For Nigeria to participate and take the lead in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, it is also essential to address trade inhibitions. For instance, it could be time to reevaluate import inhibitions on food items like rice and chicken meat given recent inflation. Several essential food commodities, like milk, sugar and maize are still on the list of items that are either forbidden or restricted or are not eligible for foreign exchange for imports.
- viii. Non-tariff obstacles to the trade in food, such as expensive transportation, burdensome paperwork, certification requirements, and standards, must be removed as soon as feasible. Nigeria must acquire independence and sovereignty to avert a dangerous degree of dependence on imports from foreign countries.

## References

- Abend, L. (2022). *Meet the foreign fighters risking their lives in Ukraine*. *Time*. Accessed 24 Aug 2023.
- Abu Hatab, A. (2022). *Africa's Food Security under the Shadow of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict*. *The Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 44(1), 37-46.
- Balbaa, M. (2022, April 20). *The Impacts of Russian-Ukrainian War on the Global Economy*. *ResearchGate*. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.14965.24807>
- Balana, B., Andam, K., Amare, M., Adeyanju, D. and Laborer, D. (2022). *The Russia-Ukraine crisis presents threats to Nigeria's food security, but potential opportunities for the fertilizer, energy sectors*. *International Food Policy Institute*.

- Behnassi, M., and M. El Haiba. (2022a). *Implications of the Russia–Ukraine war for global food security*. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 1–2.
- Behnassi, M., and M. El Haiba. (2022b). *Implications of the Russia–Ukraine war for global food security*. *Nature Human Behaviour* 6 (2022): 754–755.
- Ben Hassen, T., and H. El Bilali. (2022). *Impacts of the Russia–Ukraine war on global food security: towards more sustainable and resilient food systems*. *Foods* 11 (15): 2301
- Bin-Naswhan, S.A., Hassan, M.K. and Muneeza, A. (2022). *Russia–Ukraine conflict: 2030 Agenda for SDGs hangs in the balance*. *International Journal of Ethics and Systems*. DOI 10.1108/IJOES-06-2022-013.
- Duho, K.C.T., Abankwah, S.A., Agbozo, D.A., Yonmearu, G., Aryee, B.N.A., and Akomanin, O. (2022). *“Exploring the Russo-Ukrainian Crisis and Its Impact on African Countries: A Cross-Regional Analysis.”* *Dataking Policy Brief 5*, Accra, Dataking Consulting.
- Donley, A. (2023, May 2). *Nigeria feeling the impact of Russia-Ukraine war*. <https://www.world-grain.com/articles/18445-nigeria-feeling-the-impact-of-russia-ukraine-war#:~:text=%E2%80%9CNigeria%20is%20spending%20more%20on,imports%20from%20Russia%20in%202022>.
- Ehsas, H. (2022). *Russian Invasion of Ukraine and its Impacts on Food Prices Worldwide*. Preprint, Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/359184302>.
- Food and Agricultural Organisation. (2020, March). *Prevalence of undernourishment - Metadata*. AboutFAO. Retrieved September 11, 2024, from <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/e76d98d7-537d-4def-87ce-7a93e4516e1f/content>
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2022). *World food situation*. available at: [www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en](http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en)
- Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. (2024). <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#home>. Retrieved September 4, 2024, from <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#country/159>
- Garver, R. (2022). *Ukraine war fallout seen harming global poor, available at: [www.voanews.com/a/ukraine-war-fallout-seen-harming-global-poor-/6498259.html](http://www.voanews.com/a/ukraine-war-fallout-seen-harming-global-poor-/6498259.html)*.
- GO, A. (2022a, March 10). *Africa, Ukraine, and the New Geopolitics*. IPI Global Observatory. <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2022/03/africa-ukraine-and-the-new-geopolitics/>
- IFPRI. (2022, June 9). *The Russia-Ukraine crisis presents threats to Nigeria's food security, but potential opportunities for the fertilizer, energy sectors*. <https://www.ifpri.org/blog/russia-ukraine-crisis-presents-threats-nigerias-food-security-potential-opportunities>. Retrieved May 21, 2024, from <https://www.ifpri.org/blog/russia-ukraine-crisis-presents-threats-nigerias-food-security-potential-opportunities>
- Jagtap, S., Trollman, H., Trollman, F., Garcia-Garcia, G., Parra-López, C., Duong, L., Martindale, W., Munekata, P., Lorenzo, J., Hdaifeh, A., Hassoun, A., Salonitis, K., & Afy-Shararah, M. (2022). *The Russia-Ukraine Conflict: Its Implications for the Global Food Supply Chains*. *Foods*, 11(14), 2098. <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods11142098>
- Lusigi, A. (2022). *Africa and the Russia-Ukraine conflict: Seizing the opportunity in the crisis* <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/africa-and-russia-ukraine-conflict-seizing-opportunity-crisis>
- Malpass, D. (2023, October). *A transformed fertilizer market is needed in response to the food crisis in Africa*. *World Bank Blogs*. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/transformed-fertilizer-market-needed-response-food-crisis-africa>
- Mhlanga, D. (2021). *Artificial intelligence in the industry 4.0, and its impact on poverty, innovation, infrastructure development, and the sustainable development goals: Lessons from emerging economies*. *Sustainability*, 13(11), 5788.
- Mhlanga, D. (2022a). *Stakeholder Capitalism, the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), and Sustainable Development: Issues to Be Resolved*. *Sustainability*, 14(7), 3902.
- Mhlanga, D. (2022b). *The Role of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic: What Lessons Are We Learning on 4IR and the Sustainable Development Goals*. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(3), 1879.

- Mlaba, K. (2022, March 2). *How Will the Ukraine-Russia War Impact Africa? Here's What to Know*. Global Citizen. <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/ukraine-russia-war-impact-africa-hunger-poverty/>
- Mitchell, L., Hughes, S. and Huckstep, S. (2022). *Price spike caused by Ukraine war will push over 40 million into poverty: how should we respond?* Available at: [www.cgdev.org/blog/price-spike-caused-ukraine-war-will-push-over-40-million-poverty-how-should-we-respond](http://www.cgdev.org/blog/price-spike-caused-ukraine-war-will-push-over-40-million-poverty-how-should-we-respond).
- Nigeria: Grain and Feed Update. (2022, October 24). *USDA Foreign Agricultural Service*. <https://fas.usda.gov/data/nigeria-grain-and-feed-update-5>
- Nigeria: Grain and Feed Update. (2023, October 3). *USDA Foreign Agricultural Service*. <https://fas.usda.gov/data/nigeria-grain-and-feed-update-6>
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2022). *Economic and social impacts and policy implications of the war in Ukraine*. Available at: [www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/4181d61b-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/4181d61b-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/4181d61b-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/4181d61b-en).
- Pinto, T, N (2022). *Russia's war exacerbates turmoil in fragile sub-Saharan Africa*. Available online: <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/sub-saharan-africa-food-poverty/>
- Russia (RUS) and Nigeria (NGA) Trade | The Observatory of Economic Complexity*. (n.d.). <https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/rus/partner/nga>
- Russell, A., & Russell, A. (2023, July 26). *War in Ukraine continues to cause havoc in wheat market - AgriLife Today*. *AgriLife Today - News from Texas A & M AgriLife*. <https://agriflifelife.tamu.edu/2023/07/25/wheat-market/>
- Sachs, J. D., Lafortune, G., & Fuller, G. (2024). *The Sustainable Development Report*. Dublin University Press. <https://doi.org/10.25546/108572>
- Sen, A, K (2022). *Russia's War in Ukraine Is Taking a Toll on Africa*. Available online: <https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/06/russias-war-ukraine-taking-toll-africa>.
- Sustainable Development Report 2023*. (n.d.-b). <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/map/goals/SDG2>
- The Observatory of Economic Complexity. (n.d.). <https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/ukr/partner/nga>
- Statista. (2023, September 5). *Undernourishment and food insecurity in the Nigerian population 2004-2022*. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1262212/undernourishment-and-food-insecurity-in-nigeria/>
- UNICEF, WHO, & The World Bank Group. (2023). *UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Group – Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates 2023 edition 1*. In UNICEF (ISBN (UNICEF) 978-92-806-5469-1 & ISBN (WHO) 978-92-4-007379-1). UNICEF, WHO, and The World Bank Group. Retrieved September 4, 2024, from <https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme-report-2023/>
- Vos, R., Glauber, J., & Laborde, D. (2023, January 24). *Is food price inflation really subsiding?* *International Food Policy Research Institute*. Retrieved September 4, 2024, from <https://www.ifpri.org/blog/food-price-inflation-really-subsiding/>
- World Poverty Clock. (n.d.). <https://worldpoverty.io/>