



2 ZERO HUNGER



SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

Before 2022, Ukraine had served as one of the world’s main “breadbaskets,” supplying around 45 million tonnes of grain annually to the global market. The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, however, disrupted the normal trade of food and fertilizers. Mountains of grain and other foods built up at Ukrainian ports, contributing to even higher staple food prices and increasing the number of people on the brink of famine.

On 22 July 2022, the Russian Federation, Türkiye, Ukraine and the United Nations launched the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI) for the safe exports of grain, related foodstuffs and fertilizer from designated Ukrainian ports to global markets. UNODC played a critical role in the functioning of the BSGI: On behalf of the Joint Coordination Centre (JCC), established to facilitate the implementation of the BSGI, UNODC inspectors examined shipments to ensure that only authorized goods and crew were leaving or entering Ukraine.

From 7 August 2022 until 17 July 2023, UNODC inspectors helped to clear over 1,967 vessels, bringing over 32.8 million metric tons of grains and foodstuffs to the world. Additionally, by helping food exports reach global supply chains, the BSGI has helped to lower prices, reducing financial burdens on consumers worldwide. These efforts directly contribute to achieving SDG 2 by 2030.

Furthermore, illicit crop cultivation goes hand in hand with poverty and food insecurity. Although growing illicit crops often helps small rural farmers cope with food shortages and the unpredictability of agricultural markets, economic dependence on illicit crops is not sustainable in the long term.

UN entities work closely together to address the different targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda.

Target 2.4: By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality



Illicit crop cultivation affects food productivity and food security of affected communities, in that the land that could have been used for agricultural purposes is used to cultivate illicit crops, thus pushing poor farmers into a trap, where they are forced to rely on illicit crop cultivation to fulfil their basic food and financial needs.

UNODC, through its alternative development and sustainable livelihoods programmes, contributes to sustainable development by providing environmentally and economically viable, legal alternatives to illicit crops in rural communities. Alternative development programmes assist farmers in shifting to licit and sustainable alternative livelihood practices, and improve their farming techniques as well as increase their income, thus enabling them to increase their productivity and achieve food security.

In Afghanistan, a UNODC project implemented in 2022 promoted small backyard poultry farms run by women, increasing food security through the production of eggs and offering income generation support to over 1,000 female-headed households. In Myanmar, the introduction of permanent crop systems has been accompanied by short-term, high-value food crops to ensure food security for farmers and their local communities. In Lao PDR, achieving a stable food security situation through the introduction of improved agricultural development linked to markets has been a key objective of a project implemented in Phongsaly Province. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, food security has been enhanced through the introduction of local food crops, vegetable gardens and the breeding of livestock. And in Colombia, alternative development interventions under the national peace process have had a strong focus on food security by introducing food crop cultivation to beneficiaries.

On the global scale, UNODC's initiatives increase the culture of lawfulness and global access to staple grains; at the local level, they also ensure that communities transitioning to licit crops are given adequate access to food resources, contributing thus to achieving SDG 2.

