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Headline: UK says new science initiative to work on climate-resilient crops

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Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak holds a press conference, on November 15, 2023 in London, Britain. Leon Neal/Pool via REUTERS/File Photo

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LONDON — British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak will announce a new science initiative to bring together work on developing climate-resilient crops as his government hosts a Global Food Security Summit in London on Monday.

The summit, a joint initiative between Britain, Somalia, the UAE, the Children's Investment Fund Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is due to be attended by representatives from more than 20 countries.

"We must take action to address the underlying, and often unseen, causes of global food insecurity," Sunak said.

"From the impact of Russia's war in Ukraine, to the effect of major natural disasters on food production ... alongside our partners, the UK is playing a leading role in finding solutions to some of the greatest global challenges of our time."

Britain said the new virtual science hub would be led CGIAR, a global research partnership which unites international organizations working on food security, and would link UK scientists with research initiatives to develop crops that can withstand the impacts of climate change and are more disease resistant.

The British government will also publish details of a new international development policy document, or White Paper, on food insecurity setting out plans to work in partnership with countries to tackle extreme poverty and climate change rather than just providing aid money.

Priorities will include mobilizing international finance and harnessing innovation, Britain's Foreign Office said.

Britain also said it was providing up to 100 million pounds (\$125 million) in humanitarian funding to countries worst hit by food insecurity including Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan and Afghanistan, and to countries impacted by climate-related cyclones and drought like Malawi.

(\$1 = 0.8025 pounds)

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