



HOLODOMOR REMEMBRANCE

UNWLA TOOLKIT
2025





CORE MESSAGE & PURPOSE

WHAT?

The Holodomor (1932–33) was a man-made famine that killed up to 10 million Ukrainians. It was a deliberate act of genocide by the Soviet regime to suppress Ukrainian people.

WHEN?

Holodomor Remembrance Day, observed annually in November, honors the millions who perished in the 1932–33 Soviet-engineered famine and raises awareness to help prevent future genocides.

WHY?

- Education** raises awareness in communities about human rights and the importance of historical truth.
- Advocacy** ensures the Holodomor is globally recognized as a genocide.
- Commemoration** cultivates compassion for the victims and strengthens solidarity with Ukraine's ongoing struggle for freedom and justice.



PROGRAMMING IDEAS



Candle-Lighting Vigil: Host a community vigil to honor Holodomor victims.

Panel Discussion: Invite historians or survivors' descendants to discuss the Holodomor's impact.

Exhibit: Create a display of historical photos and survivor testimonies at a library or museum.

Hybrid/Virtual Options:

Live-stream a vigil on Zoom with global Ukrainian diaspora participation.

Host a virtual panel discussion with Ukrainian scholars from HURI or local universities.

Community Engagement:

Holodomor Awareness Walk: Organize a community walk with signs sharing Holodomor facts.

Film Screening: Screen *Harvest of Despair* (1984), *Mr. Jones* (2019) or *Black Raven* (2023) followed by a discussion.

Annual Holodomor Commemoration: In cities with Ukrainian communities and memorials (e.g., DC, Chicago, LA, Philadelphia) lay flowers, hold a memorial service with a historian and clergy, engage local officials, and bring together Ukrainian organizations.



EDUCATIONAL TALKING POINTS

MYTHS & MISCONCEPTIONS

Myth: The Holodomor was a natural famine due to poor harvests.

Rebuttal: Soviet archives confirm deliberate policies targeting Ukrainian peasants, including grain seizures and border blockades.

Myth: The Holodomor only affected rural areas.

Rebuttal: Urban populations also suffered due to restricted food access.

KEY FACTS

Dates: 1932–33, peaking in spring 1933.

Death Toll: Estimated 5–7 million Ukrainians.

Cause: Soviet policies, including grain requisitions and forced collectivization.

Recognition: Recognized as genocide by 30 countries, including Canada and Ukraine (according to HREC).

It highlights the weaponization of food, relevant to modern conflicts and humanitarian crises.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Why is it critical to recognize the Holodomor as a genocide today?

How does the Holodomor connect to modern threats against Ukrainian sovereignty?

What lessons can we learn from the Holodomor about food security and human rights?



EVENT PROMOTION TOOLS

KEY FACT: The average person needs to see information about an event at least three times before deciding to attend. Ensure consistent messaging and broad visibility across all available channels.

Media Outreach: Research contact information of the local media outlets and share press release

Information to include:

[Branch City], [Date] – UNWLA Branch [Number] invites the community to a Holodomor Remembrance Vigil on [Date] at [Location]. Join us to honor the victims of the Holodomor (1932–33 genocide in Ukraine) and advocate for historical truth. Contact: [Branch Contact Info].

Community Outreach: Send email invitation to the local organizations and to community leaders; share on social media, put posters or flyers in local community centers, churches, and schools.

Information to include:

Subject: Honor Holodomor Victims with Us on [Date]

Dear [Community Member/Partner],

UNWLA Branch [Number] invites you to a Holodomor Remembrance Vigil on [Date] at [Time, Location/Link].

Learn about the 1932–33 genocide and show solidarity with Ukraine. RSVP at [Contact Info].

Sincerely, [Your Name], UNWLA Branch [Number]

PRO TIPS:

Post event on your social media and invite UNWLA National to co-host event - it will increase visibility of the event

Use #HolodomorYEAR to build online awareness.



BUILD PARTNERSHIPS



IDENTIFY YOUR
POTENTIAL PARTNERS
AND INVITE THEM TO
COLLABORATE.



Universities with history or genocide studies programs, local schools.

Ukrainian museums, Holodomor memorials, diaspora groups.

Ukrainian parishes for hosting vigils & promoting events.

Human rights organizations and NGOs.



FAMILY FRIENDLY SPACE



Kid-Friendly Activities:

Candle Craft: Provide templates for kids to decorate paper candles with Holodomor remembrance messages.

Story Time: Share age-appropriate stories about Ukrainian resilience at Saturday schools.

Teen Engagement:

Social Media Challenge: Encourage teens to share Holodomor facts with #HolodomorYEAR.

Debate Club: Organize a debate on the Holodomor's global significance for high school students.



GIVE-BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY



In November, we remember the Holodomor through liturgies, exhibitions, and lectures, while also celebrating Thanksgiving with gratitude for our blessings. As we give thanks, let us honor the past by helping those in need today.

Volunteer with a local food bank as a branch, individual member, or group of friends.

Food banks provide food products and or meals to our communities. Find an opportunity near you. Tasks may include sorting and packing food, assisting with preparation, and distributing to neighbors and families.

Ensure you wear something that identifies you as a member of the UNWLA (or, at the very least, the Ukrainian community).

Organize a food drive for a local food bank, community kitchen or shelter.

Partner with a local women's shelter of your choice.

Reach out to local businesses — banks, dance studios, salons, spas, employers, and community centers — to sponsor or participate.



CONTINUE YOUR WORK

FOLLOW-UP

Share vigil photos and recaps on social media, tag present community leaders and organizations.

Write post-event press release and share with local media.

Send thank-you letters to partners, speakers, and attendees.

Submit an event summary to UNWLA's communications department to share your work with nationwide community.

Collect feedback to plan future events.

FOLLOW-UP

Advocate for Holodomor recognition by requesting proclamations from local officials (use UNWLA templates).

Encourage libraries to purchase Holodomor books (e.g. The Holodomor Reader by HURI) to expand genocide and history collections and suggest their inclusion in curricula.



THANK YOU

FOR REMEMBERING AND SERVING

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