

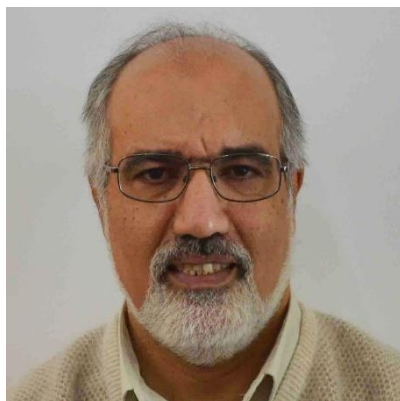


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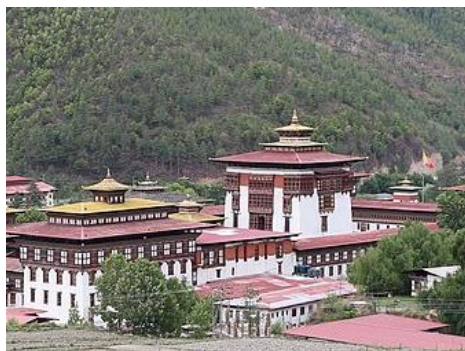


APRC/20/12

The impact of COVID-19 on food and agriculture in Asia and the Pacific and FAO's response



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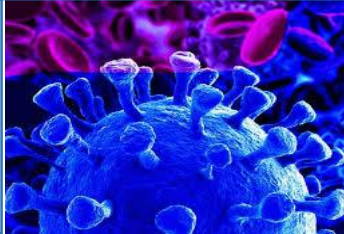
Outline

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- 2. COVID country impact assessments on food systems: Key Findings**
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- 4. FAO actions to support countries COVID responses**
- 5. FAO Umbrella programme to support countries COVID recovery**
- 6. Suggested actions by the APRC**

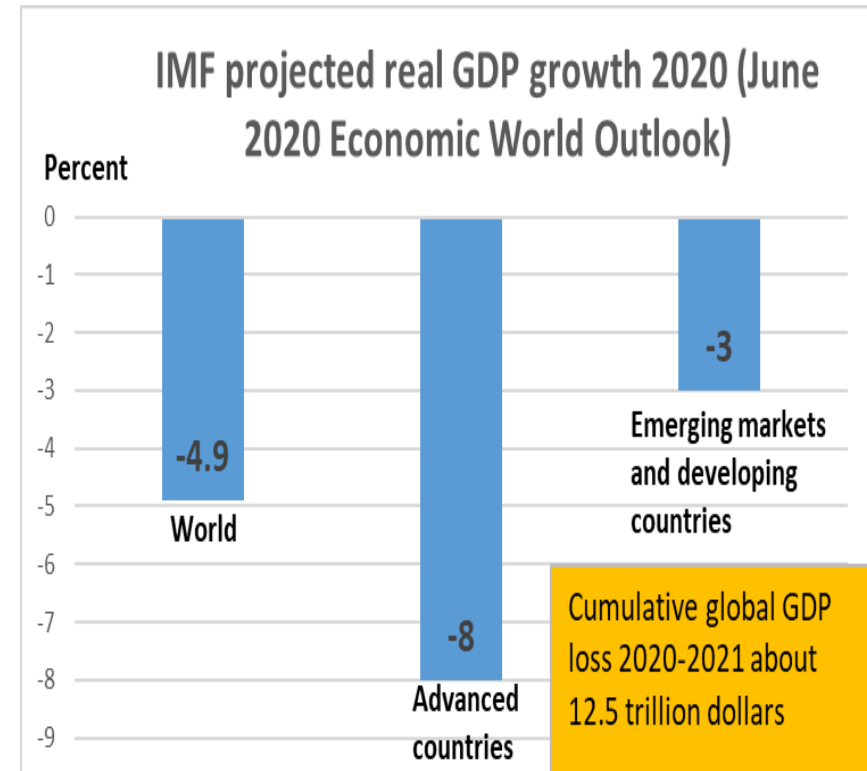
COVID pandemic impacts: Widespread, deep, continuing

COVID-19 human toll in Asia and the Pacific:

- ❑ 4.5 million infections
- ❑ 103,000 deaths
(end of August)



Economic downturn:
Staggering global losses





COVID pandemic impacts: Widespread, deep, continuing

Food insecurity and malnutrition

According to FAO latest food insecurity report (SOFI, 2020):

- *COVID-19 added 83 - 132 million people to the undernourished in the world in 2020*
- *An additional 6.7 million children suffer acute malnutrition*



COVID country impact assessments on food systems: Key Findings

Food demand and supply disruptions

- Formal and informal Job losses, business closures, movement and transport restrictions resulted in demand drop in some products and supply disruptions
- Rumours and misperceptions about virus spread (affect demand and supply)
- Impacts higher for perishable products, animal and fish products, and imported products
- Staples and cereals less affected (high initial reserves)
- Labour shortages, input and credit service restrictions hampered field activities

COVID country impact assessments on food systems: Key Findings

Rural economy and food security impacts

- Reverse migration from urban to rural and across borders created challenges for sending and receiving countries.
- Women and youth disproportionately affected (higher presence in informal activities)
- Higher impacts for small island countries dependent on tourism, remittances, food imports
- Increased deforestation, animal trafficking and illegal mining



COVID response options for rebuilding food systems

Rebuilding resilient food supply chains

- Promote short value chains; smart farming and digital market platforms; modernize digital-enabled extension
- Adopt digital technologies for market monitoring, supply chain tracking, value chain traceability

Strengthening Food safety and preventing human-animal disease risks

- Delink wildlife from agriculture and livestock; monitor encroachment; track illegal trade
- Redesign fresh urban food markets with robust traceability and disease tracking and hygiene management



COVID response options for rebuilding food systems

Strengthen trade, Intra-regional trade, enhance trade facilitation

- Deepen intra-regional trade coordination, standards harmonization, trade and market information sharing (e.g., ASEAN; preferential trade agreements)
- Trade facilitation through digital data agreements, paperless trade; harmonize food quality standards.

Leverage digital innovations require critical enabling conditions

- Expand ICT infrastructure connectivity to rural areas (private-public partnerships)
- Enhance government capacity to regulate, set data standards, interoperability of data systems



COVID response options for rebuilding food systems

**Social protection
for vulnerable
groups key
element in COVID
recovery**

- Expand social protection (SP) to rural vulnerable groups: smallholders, women, youth, returned migrants
- Link social protection schemes to agricultural production, rural work programs
- Insert returned migrants to rural economy (loans, training, Social protection)
- Provide fiscal/financial incentives and training, digital literacy targeting smallholders, agripreneurs, women and youth



FAO actions to support countries COVID response

Recognizing member countries quick and bold interventions to mitigate the impacts of COVID on food supply, FAO provided both technical and financial support from the start of the pandemic:

- Set up a RAP COVID RAPID task force AND Supported over 20 country COVID rapid impact assessments on food situation
- Mobilized own financial resources (TCP funds; USD 5.7 M)
- Redirected trust fund projects (USD 20 M) and raised new funds (USD 20 M) to support country COVID response priorities
- FAO partnered with WFP, IFAD, and WB for COVID impact/response and contributed to UN Socio-economic impact assessments
- FAO and partners are contributing to UN-led MPTF for COVID recovery initiatives



FAO Umbrella program to support countries COVID recovery

**FAO Umbrella
Programme on
COVID recovery**

*Improve data for
decision-making*

*Social protection
and poverty
reduction*

*Trade and food
safety*

*Smallholder
resilience for
recovery*

*Prevent next
zoonotic
pandemic*

*Food systems
transformation*

*Global
humanitarian
response plan*

**FAO is realigning its
work agenda to
post-COVID
environment**

- FAO is redirecting technical and financial resources to support countries COVID priorities
- FAO is readjusting its structure to meet the post-COVID/UN agenda programming
- FAO is committed to broadening partnerships (including private actors) to fulfil its role in COVID recovery and beyond



Suggested actions by APRC

- Share knowledge and experiences achieved on COVID response and recovery in countries
- Provide guidance on FAO's Comprehensive Plan for COVID response and recovery at global level
- Provide guidance on FAO's regional priorities and continued engagement for COVID response and recovery at regional level;
- Suggest areas for regional collaboration across countries, including intra-regional trade, food security, youth employment, innovations, etc.



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Thank you

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