



FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative



National and local policy interventions to support trade,
food markets and enterprises

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Food Security and Nutrition in the Context of COVID-19: Impacts and Interventions



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How does COVID-19 sickness and related health policies reduce food security and incomes?

- Sickness, fear of disease and social distancing policies close food and input markets, restaurants and food processing plants creating unemployment and ruining small and medium enterprises (SMEs)
- Barriers to international and internal movement of people disrupt supply of inputs to farmers (labor, fertilizer, seed), food imports and food supplies to cities
- Reduced incomes and reduced food supplies lead to inadequate diets and reduced food security
- The burden falls hardest on women, children and members of marginalized groups



Why focus interventions on private food supply chains (FSCs)?

- National private FSCs are the dominant source of food (Reardon et al. 2020)
 - In Africa 80% of value of food consumed comes through markets that are dominated by SMEs
 - 20% of food consumed is produced and consumed on farm
 - Government supplies maximum 4% in any country
- FSCs are a major source of employment (Dolislager et al. 2020)
 - 65% of rural employment
 - Farmers account for 40%, 5% is hired labor on farm, 20% elsewhere in FSCs
 - 25% of urban employment are in FSCs

Interventions to keep FSCs open - 1

1. “Green channels” to mitigate the impacts of restrictions on internal and international movement

- Have clear definitions and careful monitoring with input from key FSC players
- Attend to health protection at blockage points (border crossings, internal movement)
- Address financial resources to SMEs

2. Maintain food processing and informal and formal market operations with policies to keep workers and traders healthy through

- training, social distancing, improved health services & market infrastructure

Input Shops – Before



Inputs Shops – After



Interventions to keep open- 2

3. Ensure functioning of transportation infrastructure including maintenance of roads, rails, ports and communications

4. Target policies and resources to sustain food-chain SMEs particularly those serving vulnerable groups such as women and minorities





How can policy systems in lower income countries develop effective and inclusive policies?

These policy systems face important constraints

- Limited human capital
- Limited data systems and financial resources
- Little input from women, farmers, engaged SMEs and large agribusiness
- Food and ag policy systems often have limited influence on health and income distribution policies

This crisis and the rebuilding process could be an opportunity for the food and agricultural policy systems to prove its importance and to grow



Using the crisis to strengthening capacity of national policy systems

Include agricultural and food policy institutes in developing and *strengthening* COVID-19 policy response and rebuilding plans

- Government must ensure the food and agricultural policy institutions participate in response plans not just the health and disaster management ministries.
- Invest in *data and analytics* to strengthen the evidence-based policies
- Open the planning, policy making and spending process to political interest groups, civil society and the press
- Develop more inclusive policy and decision-making processes based on *mutual accountability* among stakeholders

Donors must **support national food policy programs to be an important part of COVID response policies**

Support food policy centers to expand and adapt to the COVID-19 challenges
Support policy-related research programs at universities in U.S. and elsewhere that are attempting to strengthen national policy research capacity in Global South.
Continue support for international research centers, especially those that are strengthening national policy research capacity



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