



Food and Agriculture
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United Nations

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World Food Day



COVID-19 and food systems perspectives on food safety and food security

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The COVID-19 pandemic: unprecedented times

From the beginning of the pandemic, FAO focussed on keeping food supply chains moving, trade flows and markets operational, and ultimately assuring food and nutrition security.

“As countries combat the coronavirus pandemic, they must also make every effort to keep the gears of their food supply chains moving.”

Maximo Torero, FAO Chief Economist



Role of the UN and FAO

UN Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition

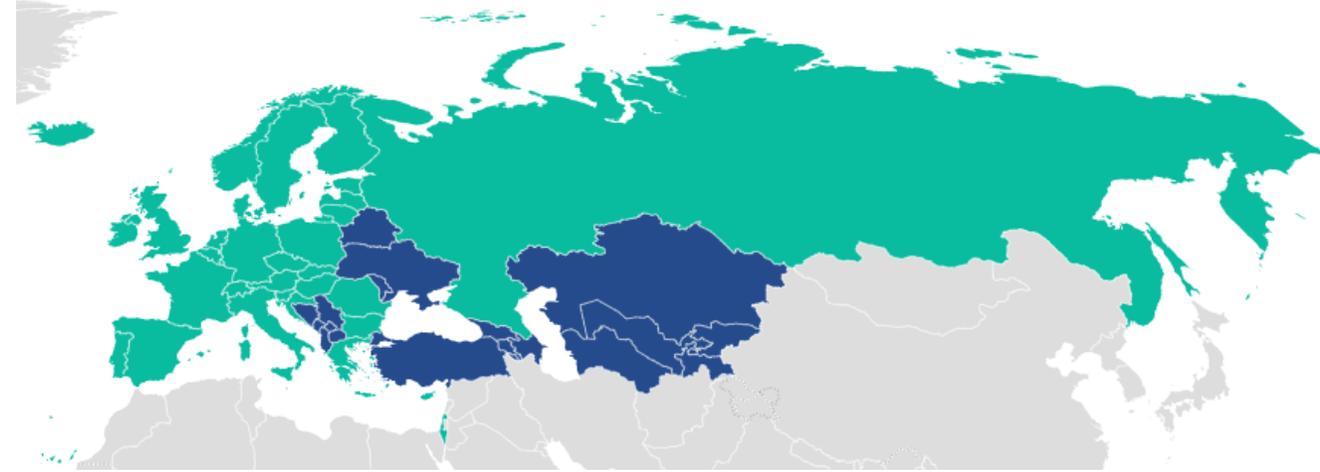
- save lives and livelihoods, focusing attention where the risk is most acute
- strengthen social protection systems for nutrition
- invest in a sustainable future

FAO COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme

- impacts on livelihoods, global food trade, markets, food supply chains and livestock
- One Health approach: support countries to prevent, detect and control diseases and related health threats
- Technical and policy briefs and guidance, policy tools

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_policy_brief_on_covid_impact_on_food_security.pdf
<http://www.fao.org/partnerships/resource-partners/covid-19/en/>

FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia



54 Members, 18 Programme Countries

Albania	Kazakhstan	Serbia
Armenia	Kosovo (UNMIK)	Tajikistan
Azerbaijan	Kyrgyzstan	Turkey
Belarus	Montenegro	Turkmenistan
Bosnia and Herzegovina	North Macedonia	Ukraine
Georgia	Republic of Moldova	Uzbekistan

Assessing COVID-19 impacts: not all farmers, food enterprises have been affected in the same way



INPUT COMPANIES



FARMERS



TRADERS/STORAGE



PROCESSING



HO-RE-CA



RETAILERS

Since early April 2020, the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia supported countries to use a **rapid survey questionnaire** to explore how the pandemic has been affecting agrifood value chains.

- data from **input suppliers, farmers, processors, wholesalers and retailers, and traders;**
- major value chains **grains and cereals, fruits and vegetables, livestock, dairy and fisheries;**
- **seven rounds** of the survey in selected ECA countries

Survey results (April - June 2020) – Early problems in logistics

Trade bans, cross-border trade interruptions export restriction policies on wheat and other major food items (Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Ukraine). Most were lifted by the end of June 2020.

Food import and export slowed down markets lost, blocks at the customs/border, tighter food safety controls

Supply of agri-food inputs temporarily disrupted

Crop sector: seeds and fertilizers (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Georgia, BiH);

Livestock sector: veterinary products, animal feed (Tajikistan, Albania, BiH, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan);

Agro-processing sector: ingredients supply, some needed re-formulation, adapt to different market needs;

Transportation and storage costs increased, products lost especially perishable products - fruits, vegetables, meat

Survey results (April - June 2020)

Local markets disrupted closure of food markets, livestock markets, reduced tourism, closure of restaurants, hotels, etc.

Financial loss Value Chain Operators accumulating debt and face financial difficulty (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Bosnia and Herzegovina); livestock farmers in particularly affected.

Labour availability migration and remittances interrupted, knock-on reduction in wages (Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan)

Food prices increased prices of most key staples in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan increased in first half of 2020;

Consumer choice and demand altered reduced demand, less tourists, shift to increased demand from supermarkets and home food delivery;

Despite the challenges and difficulties, food supply operators are adapting to live with the restrictions, some opportunities for certain segments of the market (digital solutions, e-commerce, supermarkets).

Policy response in the region



- Export bans and restrictions (quotas)
- Import facilitation
- Green corridors
- Providing agricultural loans and finance
- Implementing administrative price controls and market interventions
- Social support to vulnerable populations
- Food distribution operations
- Facilitating marketing and developing e-commerce platforms

COVID-19 and livestock/veterinary sector



Virus origin – wildlife products?

- Focus on risks of disease transmission in the wildlife-livestock interface, relevant policies to decrease risk;
- Prevent the emergence of novel diseases through increased surveillance

Disruptions/effects in the supply chain

- Animal feeds, veterinary medicines supply chains
- Livelihoods of livestock farmers and families
- Markets (food and livestock) and value chains disrupted
- Altered/increased use of antibiotics? Need to be assessed

COVID-19 and food security

Overall, in the ECA region, there is **no acute food security challenges** (no major issues with availability, food shortages were/are prevented, and stocks);

In fact, some countries **forecast record agricultural output and exports** of agricultural products in 2020.

However as the crisis is more protracted and economic crisis looms, food security and nutrition situation should be closely monitored, to protect the most vulnerable (those already vulnerable may be worst affected).

Availability:	Access:
Agri-food value chains and food supply	Household, or individual income Cost of food and healthy diet
Utilization:	Stability:
Changing consumption patterns, and food use Nutritional status and well-being	Market shocks and uncertainty Price fluctuations Trade policy



COVID-19 is not a food safety issue. There is no evidence to show that the virus is transmitted by food.

Competent authorities

- Virus outbreaks at production sites (slaughterhouses, food factories)
- Reliable information to all stakeholders (websites, videoconferences)
- Continue oversight and official food control activities

Food businesses

- Integrity of food supply chains (products, ingredients and materials)
- Additional hygienic measures – social distancing, barriers, personal hygiene, food handling
- Access to new markets

Consumers

- Increased attention to food choices, food handling and hygiene
- Heightened awareness about animal origin foods (e.g. wild meat)

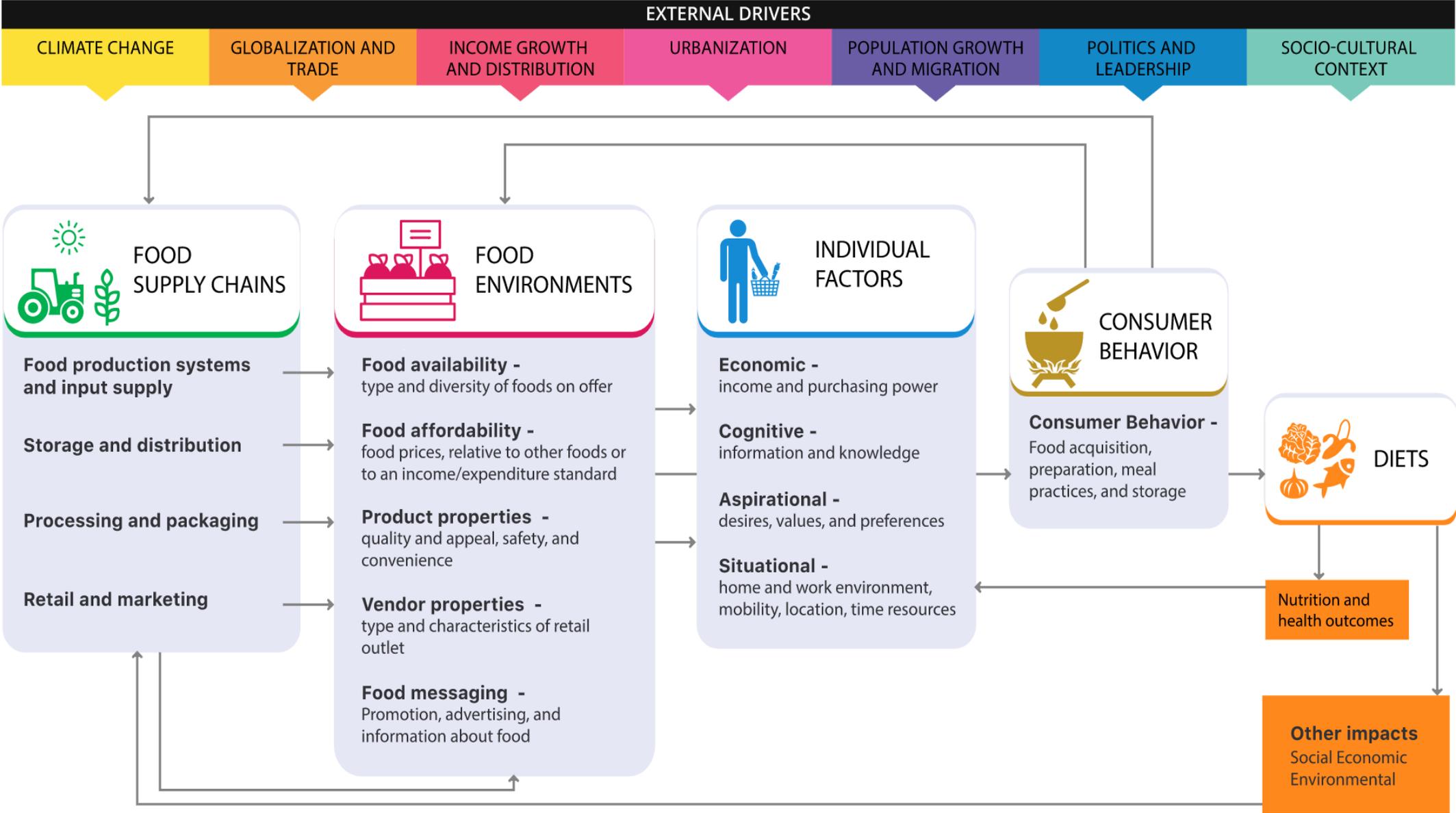
Food Safety in the time of COVID-19 <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca8623en>

COVID-19 and Food Safety: Guidance for competent authorities responsible for national food safety control systems

<http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca8842en>

COVID-19 and Food Safety: Guidance for food businesses: Interim guidance <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca8660en>

Build back better: More sustainable and resilient food systems



ADAPTED FROM: HLPE (2017). NUTRITION AND FOOD SYSTEMS. A REPORT BY THE HIGH LEVEL PANEL OF EXPERTS ON FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY, ROME, ITALY.

Continuing challenges are likely to stay

Ongoing assessment and analysis of potential impacts on food systems (smallholders, operators, consumers) to understand the issues better, and to find the best coping mechanism for each country's context.

Health protection equipment, notably for food transport operators and workers in the food manufacturing industry.

Input supplies: Inventories of imported items – especially fertilizers, pesticides, veterinary products and packing materials – importers access to “green lanes.”

Improve value chain capacity: take stock of cold storage capacity, notably for meat products.

Minimise food loss and waste: through facilitating market access and sales, storage and logistics, and social protection programmes (food banks)

Access to finance and credit: Credit guarantee schemes for operational costs. Marketing assistance loans to meet cash flow needs. Transforming short-term debts into longer term repayment horizons.

Thank you for your attention!

Further information on FAO's work on COVID-19
<http://www.fao.org/2019-ncov/en/>

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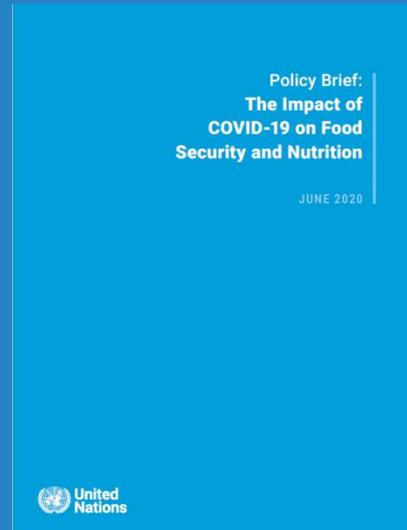
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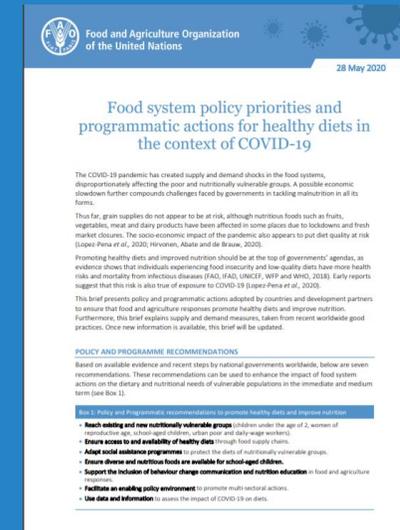
<http://www.fao.org/document/s/card/en/c/cb0450en>



<http://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CA8869EN>



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