COVID-19 and Food Security: Update June 04, 2020

ANNEX: REGIONAL UPDATES FROM AGF FOOD SECURITY FOCAL POINTS

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East Asia and Pacific

East Timor

The main issue on food security remains the northern (Batugade) border. The border is still only open for 2 hours on Wednesday leading to many trucks being stranded at the border. Agriculture inputs are packed in with other goods in trucks and are difficult to separate out. As a result agriculture input shops are out of stock. Customs have agreed that they would request their DG to allow a number of logistics companies to repackage their trucks. MDF is compiling the list of the companies. Then they will hopefully issue a declaration that will allow border control to process these trucks more quickly. Also, hopefully the border opening hours will be extended beyond 2 hours.

Rising food commodity prices as reported by WB project SAPIP from Bobonaro, Liquica, Oecusse and Covalima. WFP and UNDP are monitoring rice prices, which they say seem to be stable at USD 55 cents per kg and not yet reflecting 10% price hike in Vietnamese rice market. They now monitor in 7 Municipalities. Rice stock is sufficient: Three ships carrying imported rice from Viet Nam arrived in Dili port on 27 April 2020, 4 May 2020 and 8 May 2020 carrying 2,700MT, 4,150MT and 4,200MT of rice respectively.

MAF budget to increase food security has been cut in half, this impacts their ability to fix crucial rice irrigation schemes. MAF was awarded USD 4.8 million but this has been slashed in half. MAF is now unable to go ahead as planned, to a program to increase food supply in the south coast and Viqueque, and ensure the availability of agricultural, livestock and fisheries inputs, machinery and repairs of irrigation schemes.

Lack of data on food security and COVID-19 related response interventions by donors and MAF. WB is supporting Oxfam to map DP activities on: 1- Food security; 2- Market access support; 3-Agriculture inputs; 4-Food security targeted for COVID response / recovery. Mercy Corps is conducting a food market actors survey (including inputs and food supply chains) and will share results of this including an
action plan soon (first week of June). UNICEF undertaking a food and nutrition survey that is statistically representative for all households in all municipalities. WFP is training Food Security officers in Liquica to collect data on the Food Security situation (source: SAPIP PO Liquica). WFP also doing price monitoring, mostly focusing on rice, but is looking at possibly expending to other commodities.

Severely restricted market access noted by SAPIP project officers in Liquica, Oecusse, Covalima and Bobonaro, due to restrictions in rules around passenger movements and maximum number of passengers in public transport. Hopefully the new State of Emergency decree law will alleviate some of this (still not out as of this writing) Elsewhere, farmers have been able to increase sales, and transportation issues for their collectors (middlemen) have mostly been resolved. Reasons for increased sales was that street vendors were not operating normally but supermarkets (where they sell their produce) were.

Indonesia

In response to the pandemic, the Government of Indonesia has expanded the coverage of existing social protection programs as well as deployed new schemes specific to COVID-19: over IDR 405 trillion have been allocated for COVID-19 response measures, including IDR 110 trillion for social protection of the most vulnerable.

The Government is preparing for next coming planting season which is challenging due to a prolonged dry season. MoA is working on improving irrigation facilities to ensure that the next planting season will produce sufficient rice production. President Jokowi announced that hundreds of thousands of hectares of peatlands in Kalimantan will be prepared for rice cultivation. This may have severe environmental consequences.

MoA is promoting so-called “Family Farming” or backyard farming (Pertanian Keluarga) to enhance household nutrition.

WFP reports that although at this point Indonesia’s national food balance remains safe for most major commodities, it may undergo changes due to import dependency for certain commodities (wheat, sugar, garlic, beef, and soybean).

According to the Government, as of end April 2020, several provinces were estimated to have a deficit of food commodities, including rice, maize, sugar, chili, garlic, red onion (shallots), and eggs, as they are not (major) producers of these commodities. No cooking oil deficits have been reported at the provincial level.

Rice production, overall on a downward trend, in the first half of 2020 is estimated to be 13% lower than in the same period last year, but would still be sufficient to maintain a 6.4 million tons surplus by end of June 2020.

Prices for most major food commodities remained stable as of end of Apr 2020, thanks to increasing supplies from seasonal harvests and a possible reduction in demand due to social distancing measures, limited movements, and reduced purchasing power or cautious spending.

Low farmgate prices for selected domestically produced food commodities may have mixed impact on farmers who may experience challenges to gain sufficient income from their produce and hence may not be able to obtain inputs needed for the next cultivation season.

Social distancing and challenges in transportation have led to bottlenecks in the timely marketing of highly perishable commodities, i.e. fruits, vegetables, eggs, dairy products and fish.
Malaysia

Malaysia lowered its export duty on crude palm oil to 0% for June from 4.5% in May according to the Malaysian Palm Oil Board. There has been a slump in global demand of the edible oil as efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus outbreak shuttered restaurants and curbed travel around the world. Malaysia benchmark palm oil prices have plunged about 35% since the start of the year to trade at 2,130 ringgit per tonne on Thursday, hovering near 10-month lows.

Mongolia

Mongolia’s agriculture sector contributes significantly to income generation and holds considerable export potential. It accounts for about 12 percent of the GDP and employs one third of the workforce. Livestock represents about 90 percent of agricultural production, and meat and milk represent about 7 percent of the GDP. Agriculture attributes 7 percent of total exports, which makes it the second-largest export sector after mining. Historically, the crop sector contributes less to Mongolia’s agriculture. The Government has successfully been implementing policies to increase domestic production of wheat, potatoes, vegetables, and fruit to expand supply and reduce import dependency. It is expected that Covid-19 will lead to bottlenecks in imports of rice, fruits, and vegetables. Covid-19 also affects exports through supply chain disruptions, trade restrictions, and increased food safety barriers.

In March 2020, Mongolia consumer price index increased by 6.4% from the same period of previous year. This mainly due to increase in prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages group by 10.5% (meat and meat products by 20.2%, non-alcoholic beverages by 4.3%), alcoholic beverages and tobacco group by 4.5%, clothing, cloth and foot wear group by 6.4%, housing, water electricity and fuels group by 5% and health by 3.3%. A rapid assessment by FAO shows 72 percent of households have compromised on food quality and 47 percent are worried about not having enough food. This is mainly due to a loss of income rather than the amount of food available. Observations of 32 food products from 12 food markets in 6 districts of Ulaanbaatar show that the prices of 12 products (mostly staples of the Mongolian) diet have increased from the week before. Four products saw a decline in prices and the prices of nine products were stable, based on the FAO food price trend bulletin from May 13. The product types are shown in the table below:

**Food Price Trend, May 13, 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>Decrease</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flour, unpacked</td>
<td>Flour, packed, 1st grade</td>
<td>Flour, unpacked, 1st grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flour, packed, premium</td>
<td>Milk, packed, 1L</td>
<td>White rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk, packed, 0.5L</td>
<td>Horse meat, with bones</td>
<td>Vegetable oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt, packed, plain</td>
<td>Eggs, imported from Russia</td>
<td>Lamb without bones (3.27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread</td>
<td></td>
<td>Beef with bones (2.56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td></td>
<td>Beef without bones (5.2%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green tea</td>
<td></td>
<td>Goat meat (1.34%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sugar, unpacked</td>
<td></td>
<td>Potato (local)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apple</td>
<td></td>
<td>Carrots (local)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cabbage (local)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beetroot (local)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Onions (imported)</td>
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Meat is a staple in the Mongolian diet and the high prices have resulted a reduction in consumption. Prices of beef and mutton meat have increased seasonally since December 2019 and, in March 2020, they were 10 and 35 percent higher than the previous year. In mid-May, the prices of lamb, beef and goat meats continued to rise, about 0.55-5.2 percent compared to the first week of May.

However, the rise in meat prices is not completely due to COVID-19. The high level is a result of tight market availabilities to do reduced sales of livestock after the autumn as well as high demand by China, the country’s main meat importer. Since the beginning of 2019, China has increased meat imports of all meat categories, including beef, mutton, and chicken due to domestic tightness caused by the African Swine Fever epidemic, which is estimated to have killed at least 1.2 million domestic pigs.

To help stabilize the meat prices, the government announced it would start to sell reserved meat at 24 locations in 6 districts of Ulaanbaatar between May 2-8, 2020. The reserved lamb meat and goat prices are set at 35 percent lower than market price. Reserved meat is extra meat that the government purchased when prices are low and frozen for use in times when supply is low. While helpful in times of need, consumers often complain about the low quality.

Vegetable prices produced locally have increased at major markets. Due to the Mongolia’s climate, it is very difficult to plant vegetables and so many vegetables are imported from China and are sold cheaper than those grown in Mongolia. About 70 percent of total consumption of fruits and vegetables are imported. However due to the boarder closures, the prices of both Chinese and Mongolian vegetables have increased, and all stocks are depleting.

The future wheat forecast is optimistic due to above-average planting of 2020 wheat crop that was driven by strong demand and public incentives. Land preparation and early planting for the 2020 wheat crop, to be harvested in September, are progressing smoothly supported by favorable weather conditions and ample supplies of irrigation water. Strong local demand, together with official programs promoting wheat production, are expected to be around the above-average production levels in 2019 – 407,000 tons. The government announced in March its plans to support wheat producers amid the COVID-19 pandemic through the distribution of agricultural inputs, including equipment, fuel, fertilizers and pesticides at subsidized prices.

To mitigate the effects of COVID-19 disruptions along the food supply chain, the Mongolian government passed a resolution on February 12, 2020 to protect consumers against price hikes. The Authority for Competition and Consumer protection (AFCCP) is tasked to prevent and combat excess pricing, creating artificial scarcity, misleading advertisement commodity overstock and speculation in an emergency. As part of this effort, several companies have been fined for doubling meat prices.

A proposal to increase import duty on vegetables (from 20 percent to 30 percent) aimed to support domestic production is under discussion in the parliament. The aim of the proposal is to reduce Mongolia’s reliance on import and supplying the market with locally produced foods. The government will issue loans totaling around USD 53 million to farmers at a 3 percent annual interest rate. Seeds for 700 hectares of land will also be distributed. In addition, the government plans to fully aid development of winter greenhouses and increase their capacity by 20 hectares. This will help mitigate the climatic effects and prolong planting seasons. Mongolians consume 190,000 tons of fruits and vegetables annually, but local farmers have only been able to produce 90,000 tons of vegetables a year, leading to a large
dependence on imports. The proposed proposal is expected to help increase harvest by 40 percent and substitute up to 70 percent of imported goods.

Summary of the main measures announced against COVID-19, as of April 14, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>Monetary policy</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Taxation</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public health measures</td>
<td>• Decrease of the policy rate</td>
<td>• Deferrals on consumption</td>
<td>• Exemption from social insurance contributions, waiver of personal</td>
<td>• Government plan of USD 1.7 billion, including a three-month private</td>
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<td>from 11% to 9%</td>
<td>and business loan repayment</td>
<td>income tax and corporate tax for 6 months</td>
<td>employment scheme</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Reduction of the liquidity</td>
<td>• Borrowers’ credit rating</td>
<td>• Exemption of wheat, wheat seed, all types of rice, sugar and</td>
<td>• Acceleration of the nationwide Digital Mongolia program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ratio of banks from 25% to 20%</td>
<td>maintained for 6 months</td>
<td>vegetable oil from customs and value added taxes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Closure of all borders (China, Russia)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Prohibitions of public</td>
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<td>gathering and closures of</td>
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<td>education institutions;</td>
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<td>obligations to wear masks</td>
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<td>• Suspension of passenger trains</td>
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<td>• Control checks at the</td>
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<td>entrance of the main cities</td>
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**Myanmar**

Parliament has approved the a US$200 Million World Bank financed project. The project will be an important platform to implement the government’s COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP), which was announced on 27 April 2020. The project activities respond to COVID-19 impacts on farmers input access and facilitate the agriculture sector recovery.

Due to the COVID outbreak, several livestock farmers stopped raising chicks. Thus, GoM has increased the import quota for boiler/poultry to 920,000 from Thailand from May 15 to June 15. Before COVID-19, Myanmar was headed to meet its domestic consumption requirements (about a million boilers are needed to satisfy the nations monthly demand). Import quota was relaxed to prevent price hikes in poultry meat.

**Papua New Guinea**

There are 8 registered COVID cases in PNG. The market prices of food products have remained stable and there are no evidence of significant supply disruptions.

Of the PGK5.6 billion Government is preparing a PGKK200 million (US$500,000) stimulus package established with Bank of South Pacific to support SMEs to cope with the impact of COVID-19

**Philippines**

The Department of Agriculture has partnered with Grab Philippines for the sale and delivery of fresh produce from local farmers and food growers amid the coronavirus pandemic. Under the partnership, the ride-hailing firm will be delivering online through its GrabExpress feature vegetables, fruits, and
meats purchased by Metro Manila customers from the agency's eKadiwa initiative. The department of Agriculture tied-up with private sector to promote its e-kadiwa platform.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) launched this week its integrated urban fish-garden farming program (urban aquaponics program). This will bring urban gardening closer to homes and will provide interested municipalities with the proper equipment to start an integrated fish and vegetable garden in their respective communities.

As part of its Rice Rationalization policy, NFA began calibrating its rice releases to Local governments (LGUs) and relief agencies to focus on rice dispersal operations and “ensure that buffer stocks are safely and promptly delivered where they will be most needed during the lean months.”

The department of Agriculture tied-up with private sector to promote its e-kadiwa platform.

Europe and Central Asia

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan was one of the first countries to impose export restrictions on food products in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Those restrictions were first imposed on bans on certain items, like flour, but some were later changed to quotas after complaints by domestic producers. Now, citing a decrease in the magnitude of the crisis, the Ministry of Agriculture plans to lift all export restrictions and bans on June 1, 2020. This is largely driven by the good agricultural outlook for 2020, including for wheat, the main staple food in the country and in the region. The USDA estimates the wheat production in 2020/21 to increase by 18 percent, to 13.5 million tons from 11.5 million tons in 2019/20. Export of wheat and flour (in wheat equivalent) is projected to increase by 12 percent, to 6.7 million tons from 6.0 million tons in 2019/20.

Uzbekistan

In the first four months of 2020, the export of horticulture products, which accounts for more than 80 percent of agri-food export, declined by 42 percent by value and 20 percent in volume compared to the same period last year. The reason has been the decline in demand from the main buyers, Russia and Kazakhstan, where consumers face the sharply declining purchasing power.

The production of wheat, the main staple, is projected to decrease by 6 percent in 2020/21, to 6.4 million tons compared to 6.8 million tons in 2019/20. The import of wheat and flour (in wheat equivalent) is projected to grow by 18 percent in 2020/21, to 3.1 million tons from 2.7 million tons. Lower production, higher import dependency, and more volatile prices could postpone or derail the planned abolishment of the state order system for wheat in 2021.

Tajikistan

The country started exporting horticulture products from the new season, mainly to Russia and Kazakhstan, but Tajikistan’s exporters face uncertainty over transiting through Uzbekistan due to the rising number of COVID-infected people in Tajikistan. In addition, after returning home, drivers are required to stay in quarantine for 14 days, increasing the cost for exporters and transport companies.

Local prices of wheat flour grew by 4.6 percent in the last three months compared to 2 percent decline during the same period last year. Rising food prices and declined remittances significantly affect the purchasing power of consumers, especially the vulnerable population.
Latin America and the Caribbean

Summary points and highlights:

- A report published last week by FAO and ECLAC regarding food systems and COVID-19 in LAC found evidence of higher than usual food inflation. Overall, for March and April 2020 as a whole, the report shows that in nine out of eleven countries of the region analyzed, the monthly food rate has been above its historical average for two consecutive months. In the case of Argentina, Colombia, Guatemala, Peru, and Uruguay, food prices have been growing at an accelerated rate (above their historical 75th percentile) for the two months and in the specific case of Uruguay, the growth rate has been above the 90th percentile for March and April 2020.

- According to data available as of March 2020, agricultural exports in the region have generally increased more (or decreased less) than total exports of goods during the COVID-19 pandemic. Peru, Uruguay and Argentina are the Latin American countries whose agricultural exports have taken the greatest hit. On the other hand, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Brazil, Belize and Paraguay have seen the greatest increase in agricultural exports. As at 21 May, data up to April 2020 was only available for Brazil, El Salvador and Paraguay, whose agricultural exports increased by 35.6% and fell by 0.85% and 10.3%, respectively. As a reference, global exports of goods (from 69 countries for which data up to March 2020 is available) fell 8.46% in March 2020 compared to March 2019, while agricultural exports increased by 1.64%.

- The World Food Programme estimates that the number of people experiencing severe food insecurity in LAC could quadruple from the current 3.4 million to 13.7 million in 2020. Areas of special concern include Haiti, where the number of people in severe food insecurity could rise from 700,000 to 1.6 million, and the Dry Corridor of Central America, where it could increase from more than 1.6 million to close to 3 million.

- Unrest due to food shortages and restrictions continues in the region. Police in Santiago, Chile, clashed with demonstrators protesting food shortages during lockdown. The Government said it will respond with 2.5 million food kits. Similar protests have also taken place in Colombia where food insecurity is expected to double and affect 7 million people.

- Hurricane season is expected to compound COVID-19 impacts in the Caribbean and Central America. June 1 marks the start of the 2020 Atlantic hurricane season, one which meteorologists predict will be worse than usual, with up to eighteen named storms—including eight reaching hurricane strength—before the season officially ends November 30. The Caribbean is particularly vulnerable to these catastrophic events. And with a warming climate fueling more destructive storms, the situation is only likely to get worse over time. Yet this year, the region must also confront COVID-19, stretching scarce financial resources even thinner as its leaders worry about the pandemic’s global economic fallout—especially on the all-important tourism sector. In Central America, impacts have already been felt as at least 17 people were killed by Tropical Storm Amanda, which made landfall Sunday.

Status of local food supply

Food price warnings

- According to the last update published on May 12th, FAO has flagged high domestic price warnings in Colombia (rice) and Haiti (cereals) and moderate domestic price warnings in Argentina (beef), Brazil (cereals) and Peru (rice). In the previous release of domestic price warnings (this past April), Colombia, Haiti and Argentina were flagged with moderate domestic price warnings.
• Food price inflation: A report published last week by FAO and ECLAC regarding food systems and COVID-19 in LAC, found evidence of higher than usual food inflation. Overall, for March and April 2020 as a whole, the report shows that in nine out of eleven countries of the region analyzed, the monthly food rate has been above its historical average for two consecutive months. Most interestingly, in the case of Argentina, Colombia, Guatemala, Peru, and Uruguay, food prices have been growing at an accelerated rate (above their historical 75th percentile) for the two months. In the specific case of Uruguay, the growth rate has been above the 90th percentile for March and April 2020. Notwithstanding the above, and while the data indicate a very recent higher than usual growth in food prices, further evidence, including information on market fundamentals, would be needed to indicate a medium-term upward trend in food prices.

Food shortages

• Guatemala: Rising undernutrition. Access and mobility restrictions in Guatemala are creating long-term concerns for longstanding food security and nutrition concerns as well. Recent figures indicate that there are 14,845 cases of acute undernutrition through 16 May 2020, nearly triple the amount of cases reported for May 2019. The Government is deploying teams to 20 chronically food insecure municipalities, as families in these areas are missing routine nutritional check-ups, partly due to mobility restrictions.

• Chile: Restrictions are leading to protests. Police in Santiago, Chile, clashed with demonstrators protesting food shortages during lockdown. In response, the Government of Chile has launched the “Alimentos para Chile” (Food for Chile) program, which will provide baskets of food and hygiene products to middle class and vulnerable families who are in quarantine due to the coronavirus pandemic. The program, which is getting underway with a pilot plan in the districts of Quinta Normal, Estación Central and Santiago, will deliver 2.5 million baskets of food and hygiene products to families throughout Chile.

• Colombia: Protests have taken place in Colombia where food insecurity is expected to double and affect 7 million people. Venezuelan migrants and refugees continue to be at high risk. In Colombia, 79 per cent of surveyed migrants say they face challenges acquiring food. Only 28 per cent in Ecuador say they have sufficient food. Many now seek to return to Venezuela despite restrictions within and between countries.

• Regional: The World Food Programme estimates that the number of people experiencing severe food insecurity in LAC could quadruple from the current 3.4 million to 13.7 million in 2020, based on analysis in countries where it has a presence. Areas of special concern include Haiti, where the number of people in severe food insecurity could rise from 700,000 to 1.6 million, and the Dry Corridor of Central America, where it could increase from more than 1.6 million to close to 3 million. The forecasted contraction of the regional economy will likely hit hardest those who rely on daily earnings from jobs in the informal sector (in Bolivia, that is up to 60 percent of the population). Besides, in a recent survey conducted by WFP in nine countries, 69 percent of the 41,000 respondents said they had seen a reduction in their incomes due to the pandemic — with women being particularly affected.

Emerging issues in domestic supply chains

Agro-logistics

• Venezuela: Fuel shortages are endangering food production. FEDEAGRO is forecasting that a 95% nose-dive in fuel supply services in production regions will affect production for the winter season.
Added to that concern is the fact that these areas are experiencing an extended period of drought.

**Production**

- **Argentina**: Record wheat harvest will guarantee fresh funds through the end of the year. The wheat farming area in Argentina is expected to expand in 2020/21. Accordingly, the Rosario Stock Exchange has estimated that wheat exports will reach USD 3.1 billion, providing the government with a key source of foreign currency.

- **Mexico**: Mexico’s dairy industry is experiencing a slowdown due to the domestic economic situation and pandemic emergency measures. Even though Mexico’s dairy industry is being hit hard, the forecast for 2020 is not too pessimistic, as production of milk and dairy products is expected to continue with a slight positive trend, as both retail consumption and factory use consumption continue to demand dairy products. However, imports are expected to see a downward trend due to the exchange rate between the Mexican peso and the U.S. dollar. Whenever there is an economic crisis, dairy products in Mexico are affected as consumers seek cheaper and more affordable food items.

- **Ecuador**: Planted area continues to decline, particularly in coastal regions. However, production per hectare continues to grow. The export of soluble coffee represents 95 percent of total exports. This soluble coffee is comprised of about 50 percent of imported raw material. Exports of specialty coffee beans continue to increase due to changes in crop management and marketing strategies. The current challenge, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, is the ability to harvest the expected volumes.

- **Peru**: Demand for Pulses Increasing in Peru in Response to COVID-19 There is currently a surge in demand for pulses (canary beans, navy beans, lentils, green peas and chickpeas) in Peru. Due to COVID-19, consumers are increasing purchases and consumption of pulses. In response, local importers are increasing purchases amid expected future shortages in stocks, lower yields, and higher prices. FAS Lima conducted an assessment of nine local importers to gather information about the current situation. These importers comprise 85 percent of the total pulse market.

- **El Salvador**: El Salvador’s coffee production is expected to reach a historic low of 505,000 sixty-kilo bags in marketing year (MY) 2019/20. The Salvadoran coffee sector continues to struggle mainly due to low international prices and continued coffee leaf rust. The MY2020/21 crop is forecast to decline even further to 475,000 bags. The COVID-19 pandemic quarantine is making it hard for the sector to carry out much needed post-harvest practices.

**Sector growth**

- **Mexico**: The Mexican economy contracted by 2.2% during the first quarter of the year (which is lower than the preliminary estimate of 2.4% in April). Nonetheless, primary activities, such as agriculture and livestock, grew 1.1% during the initial three months of 2020.

**Emerging issues in international trade and supply chains**

- **Bolivia**: Decreased flow of international freight carriers. According to figures from the International Transport Association, only 3 out of every 10 truck trailers are operating. Freight volumes in the major sectors—soybean, minerals and construction—have fallen. Volumes of soybean cargo have declined by 50%, although production is in the advanced stages, since the industry is operating below its usual capacity.

- **Chile**: Fruit exporters can present a copy of their certificate of origin in Latin America, Europe or
Asia. The presentation of the copy of the certificate of origin is a measure that has been implemented because of the problems arising from the pandemic. The copy can be presented in Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador and Venezuela), Europe (European Union, EFTA, the United Kingdom and Turkey) and Asia (China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Thailand and Malaysia).

- **Colombia**: 23 tons of avocado – en route to Shanghai. Having agreed on a phytosanitary protocol in July 2019, Colombia will send 23 tons of Hass avocado to China this week, thereby accessing an important market for this product. During 2019, Colombian avocado exports grew to 44,570 tons, which is 42% more than last year.

- **Central America**: Transporters in the region are still not satisfied with Costa Rica’s pilot plan. Costa Rica’s pilot plan regarding the movement of goods has failed to garner full approval. Government representatives and truckers continue to discuss different ways to guarantee the flow of goods while protecting workers’ health. Nicaragua has blocked the entry of goods from Costa Rica, while transporters in Panama have agreed to gradually lift border movement restrictions. Panama’s government has issued decrees to open a controlled route with specific health protocols in place.

- **Ecuador**: According to the Association of Commercialization and Export of Bananas of Ecuador (ACORBANEC) there has been a reduction in banana exports from January to March of this year, mainly due to the reduction in purchases from the main banana buying countries because of the pandemic, and the measures taken to avoid contagion. According to the Association’s accounts, exports have fallen from 37.6 million banana boxes in January to 30.1 million boxes in March. The sector generates more than 260 000 direct and indirect jobs in Ecuador.

**Policy responses**

**Trade (full record to date)**

- **Costa Rica**: On 25 April 2020, decreed the import of 50 012 tons of rice at a reduced tariff rate of 6.5 percent, rather than the 35 percent currently in force.

- **Honduras**: Exports of red beans were halted in late March to ensure sufficient domestic supplies. This temporary export ban will be valid until further notice.

- **El Salvador**: Exports of red beans were halted in late March to ensure sufficient domestic supplies. This ban will be valid until 31 December 2020. The country purchased around 50 000 tons of white maize, 7 000 tons of rice and 5 000 tons of beans to boost its national strategic reserves. Temporary elimination of the Central American Common tariff on imports of certain food products, pharmaceutical products and personal protective equipment (March 20, 2020 – open-ended).

- **Guatemala**, on 21 March 2020, set duty-free quotas for the import of 200 000 tons of white maize and 152 000 tons of rice valid until the end of this year, to boost domestic supplies.

- **Bolivia**: On 13 April 2020, suspended import tariffs on wheat for a period of two years.

- **Colombia**: On 9 April 2020, set duty-free imports for maize, sorghum and soybeans until 30 June 2020.

- **Antigua and Barbuda**: Introduction of duty and tax relief measures on essential relief items and key food items (April 1 to June 30, 2020).
Public support to the agri-food sector (subsidies, price ceilings, strategic food reserves)

- **Public procurement of rural products pumps R$1.3 billion into Brazil’s rural economy.** While some economic activities are dwindling, there is good news for family farming in Cachoeiro: two programs for public procurement of food from rural areas will pump approximately R$1.35 billion into the rural economy this year. The city purchases various products such as vegetables, fruits and eggs from small-scale rural producers, which are then used to prepare meals served by the municipal school system.

Food safety

- **13 thousand food production units in Mexico receive safety certification.** Mexico now has an updated record of nearly 13 thousand packaging and production units in the agriculture, livestock farming, aquaculture and fisheries sectors that are certified in safety systems, in order to provide consumers with food produced under optimal sanitary conditions. The National Service for Agrifood Health, Safety and Quality (SENASASA) promotes the application of Contamination Risk Reduction Systems (CRRS) and Good Production Practices, to implement measures to reduce the risk of physical, chemical and microbiological contamination in food.

Regional-level coordination and information initiatives

- **International cooperation: the cornerstone of global trade recovery** International cooperation and regional integration will be critical to ensuring that value chains continue to run smoothly and distribution channels remain open, while driving the recovery of global trade, in the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. Anabel González, former Minister of Foreign Trade of Costa Rica, and Cassio Luiselli, the former Advisor on agricultural development to the President of Mexico, stressed the importance of these issues in a webinar organized by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), focusing on repercussions on international trade and sanitary regulations in the wake of the pandemic.

- **Access issues are affecting indigenous groups in the Amazon basin,** where Caritas reports there are more than 43,000 cases. The Coordinating Body of Indigenous People of the Amazon Basin (COICA) launched a US$5 million Amazon Emergency Fund to offset lack of access to health care, food and medicine, limitations that restrictions are further compounding.

Other issues that may compound the impacts of COVID-19

Drought

- **Uruguay: MGAP has now included the northern region among its drought-stricken agricultural emergency areas.** The Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP) has expanded the area where it has declared an agricultural emergency due to drought. MGAP estimates that there are 1,500 family farmers and 300 beekeepers in the newly included areas. Family farmers can apply for assistance.

Tropical storms

- **Hurricane season and COVID-19 pose twin threats to vulnerable Caribbean islands.** June 1 marks the start of the 2020 Atlantic hurricane season, one which meteorologists predict will be nastier than usual, with up to eighteen named storms—including eight reaching hurricane strength—before the season officially ends November 30. The Caribbean is particularly vulnerable to these catastrophic events. And with a warming climate fueling more destructive storms, the situation is
only likely to get worse over time. Yet this year, the region must also confront COVID-19, stretching scarce financial resources even thinner as its leaders worry about the pandemic’s global economic fallout—especially on the all-important tourism sector.

- At least 17 people were killed by Tropical Storm Amanda in Central America, which made landfall Sunday. The first tropical storm of the Eastern Pacific season moved over southeastern Guatemala on Sunday morning, bringing drenching rains to much of Central America. Two deaths have been reported in the country, according to the Associated Press. In El Salvador, 15 people died in the flooding, which began Friday, according to President Nayib Bukele’s office. More than 2,000 people were in emergency shelters. The U.S. National Hurricane Center (NHC) said Amanda or its remnants are expected to produce rain totals of 10 to 15 inches over El Salvador, southern Guatemala, western Honduras, and the Mexican states of Tabasco and Veracruz.

Migration and remittances

- The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) indicates that remittance flows to Latin America and the Caribbean could contract by 10-15 percent in 2020 and that it could take four to eight years for them to recover to the levels reached in 2019. In Haiti, remittances accounted for more than 30 percent of GDP; in El Salvador and Honduras, about 20 percent; and in Jamaica, Guatemala and Nicaragua, more than 10 percent. Between 80 and 90 percent of remittances are used to cover the basic needs of recipient households (food, health, and housing), so their contraction will impact consumption and the incidence of poverty.

Select SLCAG response

- Haiti: project CERC activated for USD 9.6 million for activities including a land preparation, communications for social distancing and sanitation, and a range of mitigation measures against COVID-19 impacts on the agri-food sector.
- Peru: project restructured to support the repatriation to Peru of trainees supported by the National Agricultural Innovation Program who were left stranded away from their homes (both inside and outside of Peru) because of travel restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 crisis.
- Honduras: project preparing to restructure and activate CERC to procure prioritized good for the COVID-19 emergency.

South Asia

Nepal

Background

The emergence of new Corona virus, currently named as SARS-COV-2, from Wuhan city of Hubei province, China since the last week of December 2019 has crippled the global health system. In Nepal, the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed on January 23, 2020 in a student who returned from Wuhan, China. The Government of Nepal introduced a lock down on March 24, 2020 in response to the increased threat of COVID-19 in Nepal amidst increasing cases and deaths across the world, though there were not many confirmed cases and evidence of community transmission in Nepal. Though an effective public health measure to slow the progress of COVID-19, the implementation of lockdown has affected all sectors of
economy including agriculture and livestock. As can be seen from the table below as of May 26, 2020 a total of 38,737 PCR tests have been carried out with 454 people testing positive and four death.

COVID-19 Key Statistics

May 22, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People in Quarantine</th>
<th>Total PCR Test</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Death</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25,030</td>
<td>38,737</td>
<td>38,283</td>
<td>454</td>
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<td>49</td>
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</table>

May 29, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People in Quarantine</th>
<th>Total PCR Test</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Death</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86,057</td>
<td>60,916</td>
<td>59,874</td>
<td>1,042</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Impact of COVID-19 and the Shut Down

- **Harvesting of wheat crop:** According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, it is estimated that the country has been able to harvest more than 70 percent of the wheat crop (pers. Communication, May 2020).
- **Vulnerable districts:** As can be seen from the map below, the southern plains in eastern Nepal seems to be the hardest hit with the virus spreading to the west and north.

Source: World Food Program, April 2020

- **Shortage of fertilizers:** Fertilizers are imported from outside. Due to the shutdown of factories
and plants it is likely that the country will face shortage of fertilizers (DAP and urea) for paddy (The Kathmandu Post, May 26, 2020). Shortage of labor is another factor that is likely to impact paddy planting with the stoppage of seasonal migrant laborers from India.

• **Food situation**: Shortage of staple, particularly rice is anticipated as India halts all rice exports but Nepal will be fine, say officials. According to WFP (April 6, 2020), Nepal imported an average of 62,600 MT of rice and 49,000MT of maize per month, imports from mid-February to mid-March were 52,352 MT for rice and 30,594 MT for maize. National food stocks in markets are reportedly sufficient to last 3 months overall (see map for a by-district breakdown of market food stocks while the Nepal Food Management and Trading Company stand at 23,675 MT with procurement planned for another 10,000 MT. These figures, however, were challenged by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development in the article that appeared in Republica (local newspaper) on April 24, 2020.

• **Absorption of returnees**: The expatriate Nepali working overseas and India continue to return to Nepal. Nearly 500,000 to 600,000 Nepali migrant workers are likely to return to Nepal in the near future (The Kathmandu Post, May 21, 2020). The Post goes on to report, based on the estimate from the Nepal Association of Foreign Employment Agencies (NAFEA) nearly 20 to 25 percent of an estimated 3 million Nepali workers are likely to return to home. Reintegrating them will be a big challenge.

Take Away from the Address to the Nation by the President (14 May 2020) and Prime Minister (25 May 2020)

Both the President and the Prime Minister highlighted the need to double agriculture production in the next 10 years besides recognizing agriculture as the most important sector to create employment. Some of the key points highlighted in the address included:

- Commercialization and mechanization of agriculture for efficient and high returns.
- Increasing local production to reduce reliance on food import
- Support to the Small and Medium Enterprises, vital for rural economic growth.
• Prioritized investment in seeds, fertilizer and supply and irrigation.
• Programs to absorb youth and returnee expatriate workers in agriculture.
• Provision of grant to establish cold storage, seed/grain storage facilities and centers of excellence.
• Introduction/adoption of landuse system to save agricultural lands and land use system to be based on suitability of the land.
• Establishment of the land bank.
• Acceleration and strengthening of vaccination programs, livestock breed improvement, improved feed and nutrition and strengthening quarantine facilities.
• Promotion of organic farming and identification of international market for Nepali organic products.

Take Away from Budget Speech by Finance Minister (28 May 2020)

• Emphasis is placed on Health and Education.
• Agriculture has received US$ 342 million which is US$ 50 million higher than the allocation last year.
• In terms of agriculture the proposed budget aims at self-reliance in food production through increased agriculture and investment in infrastructure (seed, irrigation, fertilizer, cold storage, grain storage centers, local markets, provincial level hub markets etc). Most of these activities already align well with the activities supported by the ongoing operations namely Food and Nutrition Security Enhancement Project and Nepal Livestock Sector Innovation Project and are already inclusive in the Rural Economic and Enterprise Development Project Through currently under preparation which has a dedicated COVID-19 response component.
• Investment in agriculture is to create 120,000 jobs over the coming year.
• Provision of concessional loan (at 5%) for COVID-19 affected entrepreneurs.
• Cooperatives have been seen as the key element in boosting agriculture production and therefore the budget puts emphasis on strengthening the cooperatives.
• As indicated in the address to the nation by the President and the Prime minister Land Bank and Labor Bank will be established with the intention of addressing labor problems and job creation.

Government Response and WB Contribution

Government of Nepal is currently preparing a Relief, Resilience and Recovery Plan to address the impact of COVID-19. WB was given an opportunity provide inputs into the plan for various sectors. The following provides the activities proposed by the Agriculture GP for inclusion in the RRR plan.

Relief (1 to 3 months)

• Provide subsidized seeds and fertilizers for spring and summer plantation.
• Support Palikas (municipalities) in distribution of relief packages to the affected farmers and agri-entrepreneurs.
• Accelerate implementation of One Health activities.
• Facilitate government procurement of agricultural produce.

Recovery (within 12 months)

• Assess the impact of COVID-19 on the agriculture sector and agri-business.
• Boost and sustain supply chain.
• Engage returnee youth in agriculture.
• Provide start up support to agriculture-based enterprises.
• Boost agricultural production
• Engage the returnee youth in agriculture (REED and NLSIP)

**Resilience (within 24 months)**

• Resume agriculture trade and supply chains
• Establish market centers in each Palika and promote local food system

**Donor Food Security Group and COVID-19 Response**

• Following the request from the Ministry of Finance a simple restructuring has been carried out for the Nepal Livestock Sector Innovation Project to create Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC), with zero allocation now. Allocation will be made when CERC is triggered by the government of Nepal. In addition to CERC Nepal projects are to review project activities to align with COVID-19 mitigation and identify if there are activities that warrant cancellation.
• The activity matrix asking various donors to pledge their support to address impacts of COVID-19 has been duly filled in by the various donors and submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development.
• ADB approved US$ 250 million concessional loan to alleviate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which includes measures to strengthen the country’s public health systems and mitigate the adverse economic and social impacts of the pandemic, particularly on the poor. It may be noted that EU has already provided financial budgetary support of EU 40 million to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development.
• Agriculture GP is in coordination with the FAO CP in order to carry out the impact assessment of COVID-19 in Nepal under the guidance of Willem Janssen. The TOR is under preparation and the work is expected to begin by mid-June 2020.

**Next Steps**

Coordinate with the MoALD in order to advance assessment of impact of COVID-19 in agriculture and implementation of Climate Smart Agriculture Investment Plan which will also include recommendations to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

• Review project activities to identify if there are activities that warrant cancellation.
• Continue to advance preparation of the Rural Enterprise and Economic Development (REED) for the Board approval in the first quarter of next FY. As COVID-19 response, REED will allocate US $ 20 million to support restoring the food and agriculture supply chain, which has been disrupted due to the limited movement and lockdown and will promote local economy system which might play a more important role in the post-COVID-19 rural economy. More specifically, the project will support investments in (i) regional market centers that promote trade, market linkages and agribusiness development at the selected economic corridors and, (ii) municipal agriculture centers and value-chain infrastructure investments at local level that will strengthen seed supply, food supply and agricultural extension services including climate smart agriculture. These centers and value-chain infrastructure investments will address ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and consequent disruption in food supply by restoring food supply chain from production side, ensure food security, will be decentralized to reflect local needs, and create new job and business opportunities in seed and agro value-chain businesses.
• Further, the project will mainstream COVID-19 response across the project, by ensuring to target the returning migrant workers through labor-intensive Cash for Work under last-mile infrastructure component (US$ 12 m), and by ensuring to reach out to those COVID-19 affected farming and producer households (as a result of loss of income, remittance)

**Annex Table: Matrix on Proposed Measures on COVID-19 Response**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Food Security</th>
<th>Livelihoods</th>
<th>One Health</th>
<th>Cost estimate</th>
<th>Time Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Existing operations</td>
<td>FANSEP, NLSIP</td>
<td>FANSEP, NLSIP</td>
<td>NLSIP</td>
<td>US$ 102.7M(^1)</td>
<td>Up to June 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Operations</td>
<td>REED(^2)CSAIP(^3)</td>
<td>REED</td>
<td>20 M</td>
<td>US$ 100M(^4)</td>
<td>6-36 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Operations</td>
<td>IFAD, KOIKA, WFP</td>
<td>ADB, IFAD, FAO, KOIKA</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-NA-</td>
<td>6-24 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others; allocation for CERC</td>
<td>FANSEP, NLSIP</td>
<td>US$ 2M US$ 15M (estimate only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bangladesh**

**Nutrition**

• Children are facing a nutrition crisis due to lack of milk formula. With parents having to choose between milk formula for babies and food for the family, many children are going hungry.

**Prices**

• The price of broiler chicken is rising sharply. Getting enough protein has been a major challenge over the past months. Recently, broiler chicken prices have increase in all of Dhaka’s city corporations. Over the last two weeks, the price of broiler meat has increased by 30%
• Other food products have gone up slightly, due to high demand before the Eid holiday.
• The price of onions has decreased by 18%
• Prices have increased for rice by 3%, potatoes by 8%, lentils by 6%, and Pangas fish by 2% compared to the first week of April
• Compared to pre-lockdown (the week of 22 March), the average price increase for key food items has been: 23% for rice, 42% for lentils, 26% for potatoes, and 26% for broiler meat. Onions are currently cheaper than pre-lockdown prices.
Markets
- Despite Eid, fewer people are going to markets.
- Ahead of Eid (May 23-24), many shoppers visited markets but with less to spend.
- Markets are open for business but are not prepared. With Eid festivals, Dhaka’s wet markets were open for business. They drew large crowds, increasing the risks of transmission as few safety measures within markets were practiced. Little training has been put in place to ensure adequate steps have been taken to keep vendors and shoppers safe.
- Overall, the poor are going to markets less frequently shopping just twice a week, when before they would have gone daily.

Coping Mechanisms
- Many of the poor are turning to begging. An increasingly common sight in Dhaka has been people begging in the streets and in front of the markets. Without jobs or cash for up to two months, many of the poor have no other option but to beg for food.
- The poor have been skipping meals and many people face starvation
- Many of the poor can no longer extend credit. To survive, many of the poor have had to take out loans, buy food on credit, and delay payment of rent. But with this situation continuing for so long, neighborhood stores are increasingly unable to extend credit further. Some households are now borrowing money from neighbors or rural relatives, while others take out loans at high interest rates.

Impact of Government Actions
- The Government’s cash transfer program to distribute 2,500 Tk in cash to five million poor households was launched on May 14, but as of May 22 few families have yet to receive it. There have been several delivery issues reported implementing this program.
Sub-Saharan Africa

Food Security Situation in West Africa - SAFA1 Countries

Liberia

Status of the Food Supply

The nation’s staple food, rice, prices have increased in Bomi, Bong, Cape Mount, Gbarpolu Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Margibi, Maryland, Montserrado, River Gee and Sinoe Counties where the virus has affected, as the MoA’s County Coordinators report.

![Table 1: 25kg Rice Price Index (LDS)](image)

Cassava: Bomi and Cape Mount Counties noted for huge cassava outputs are not affected by the lockdown as cassava farming is taking place undisturbed. But according to one of MoA’s partners for food price monitoring, EULAPPARTNERS, that includes Welthungerhilfe, Concern Worldwide, ZOA and SPARK, processed cassava prices have increased.

![Table 2: Other Food Items Prices as Monitored by (EULAP-PARTNERS)](image)
As of April 8, 2020, Liberian dollar (LD) depreciated against the USD by 20.3 percent (y/y) and 5.5 percent compared to end-December 2019. The exchange rate depreciation continues to fuel inflation, impacting the livelihood of the poor through rising food prices and prices of necessities.

The price of Liberia staple food (rice) has been rising, fueling long queues as uncertainty looms.

While availability of basic food supplies remains stable to date, primary productions is becoming increasingly affected as government restrictions on movement of people and goods may become more severe going forward with potential impacts on agriculture input and labor availability.

**Number and Nature of People Whose Food Security Might Be Negatively Affected or in Jeopardy**

Most Liberians (83%) live below the poverty line of US$1.25/day and 49% of the population are food insecure (World Food Program [WFP]). In the 2019 Global Hunger Index, Liberia ranks 112th out of 117 qualifying countries. With a score of 34.9, Liberia suffers from a level of hunger that is considered very high. During this COVID pandemic era, the lack of food, which is one of basic human needs of man, could lead to heightened social tensions and insecurity.

**Emerging Issues in Domestic Supply Chains**

Reports from Ministry of Agriculture’s County Coordinators point to increase in the price of an imported 25kg rice bag in several parts of rural Liberia due to scarcity which is triggered by cross-county travel restrictions of food sellers and food producers.

Liberia currently imports 99% of all goods consumed from outside Africa including Rice (second largest import by value) but has been struggling with maintenance of food reserves. Imports account for more than half of country’s total cereal requirements. Rice for human consumption accounts for over 80 percent of imports, while wheat and maize account for about 13 percent and 6 percent, respectively. Cereal import requirements for the 2020 marketing year (January-December) are forecast at 500 000 tonnes, similar to the previous year and about 10 percent above the average as local traders are aiming to replenish their stocks Most of Liberia’s edibles, including pepper, grand nuts, and other products, come from Guinea— and border closures have begun to impact availability of these products with price hikes expected to follow.

**Issues in Accessing Markets**

In some parts of rural Liberia, farmers’ foodstuffs are perishing due to lack of markets thus causing decline in their income and turnover capital to prepare for this year’s planting season that has already started, the MoA’s rural liaisons revealed.

As a result of those challenges, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, upon request from the MoA, on April 30 instructed County Superintendents to convey to all security actors deployed in the leeward to allow farmers to carry on their farming activities and transporting crops to markets without hindrances during this lockdown

Official restrictions on population movements, combined with heightened levels of fear, have led many people to stay at their homes. Although these measures have not affected the access to food, further restrictions on population movements could hamper the access to land and have a negative impact on 2020 agricultural production. Market are open for transactions between 10am and 3.00pm daily with strict health regulations and guideline.
Commodity Specific Concerns

The price of 25kg bag of rice rose from LD$2,800 at end-March to LD$3,000 during the week. Recent favourable rains have contributed to the recovery of pasture conditions. Currently, forage availability is satisfactory in the main grazing areas of the country, allowing animals to maintain good body conditions and enhance their market value. The animal health situation is generally good and stable, with just some localized outbreaks of seasonal diseases, including Trypanosomiasis and Contagious Bovine Peripneumonia.

Issues with Cross Border/International Trade

Meat (Cattle, Sheep and Goats): Liberia heavily depends on its northern neighbor, the Republic of Guinea and West African regional state of Mali, for cattle and sheep stocks. But with the spread of COVID-19 cases in those two countries, the MoA’s Quarantine Division, which monitors and regulates the movements of plants and animal husbandry imports into the country, reports no imports of cattle and sheep from the two Republics.

Liberia has closed its borders with the two neighboring countries (Guinea and Cote-D’ivoire) while it depends on imports for 73% of its domestic food. Major stakeholders involved in the rice sector have cautioned the government of potential food crisis on top of the pandemic as importation of rice have halted due to cross-border trade restrictions amid limited capacity for domestic production to meet local demand. The import restrictions have progressed from limiting forex on imports of various food commodities to outright closure of the borders – all this happened before COVID-19.

Export Policy Changes

Liberia has not announced any import ban or restriction, however the shutdown of manufacturing plants around the world and general slowdown is already affecting the rubber sector, which is the largest formal employment, and Liberia’s largest export product. None of the rubber processors are buying rubber today; lay-offs are imminent.

Government Purchase of Stocks

The Government is collaborating with Donor Partners in buying for buffer stocks. Ministry of Agriculture and WFP is collaborating on emergency purchase of rice, cassava, edible oils, beans and pulses ahead of the rainy season. Emergency distribution targets the most vulnerable households, as well as households facing lost income as a result of the COVID emergency. Other stocks are pre-positioned in warehouses and storage facilities in hard to reach areas.

Input Related Problems

Local poultry farmers through their umbrella group complains of unavailability of poultry feeds on the local market which is a major hindrance to their production. Feeds are imported from neighboring Guinea which has closed its borders with its southern neighbor, Liberia, to contain the COVID-19 spread. The group seeks Government of Liberia’s intervention to persuade its Guinean counterpart to allow Liberian poultry producers purchase feeds from that country.

Rice farmers in Bong and Rivercess Counties are impaired to continue farming because there are lots of seed rice with no buyers and access to markets because of the lockdown, while farmers in Maryland are craving for seed rice and farming implements for this planting season. Gbarpolu, River Gee and Sinoe Counties report of uninterrupted rice planting this season in spite of the lockdown.
Vegetables: Even though vegetable farming is taking place, but at a lower scale as MoA’s County Coordinator report fertilizers shortage in Bomi, Bong, Cape Mount, Maryland and Montserrado Counties. Fertilizers are needed to increase vegetable production.

Markets are well supplied with both local and imported commodities across the country. However, field reports indicate that prices of staple foods continued to increase in early 2020 due to some macro-economic factors including the high inflation rate, the liberalization of the exchange rate and the weakening of the local currency. According to Trading Economics, the year-on-year food inflation rate increased to 32.38 percent in October 2019. The cost of inputs is prohibitively high for smallholder farmers. This often leads to a dependency on buyers to pre-finance or supply inputs in exchange for vegetables at harvest; a relationship which many farmers consider to be exploitative. Vegetable traders have the power to set the price of the produce they purchase from the farmers and do not always deliver the necessary inputs at the required time in the farming cycle. Many agro-processing businesses are operating below capacity due to labor shortages linked to restrictions on movements.

**Labor Availability**

Social distancing and restrictions on movement have reduced supply of labor for the current planting season. The short-term effects on labor movements could be exacerbated by the morbidity effect if significant number of people fall ill due to COVID-19 or fear falling ill and retreat from the labor market.

**Responses**

The Government of Liberia has proposed several interventions including:

- **Labor intensive agricultural productive infrastructure**, including secondary and tertiary irrigation infrastructure (canals), rehabilitation of tertiary roads that connect farmers to markets, and other forms of rural infrastructure
- **Support to input delivery networks**. Upstream support could aim to enable wholesalers, distributors and agrovets meet working capital needs. Downstream support involves organized distribution of seeds, fertilizers, and agro-chemicals to farmers in places where input markets are likely to face severe impacts.
- **Construction of warehouses for agricultural commodities** with the understanding that the infrastructure would then be offered for concessions to the private sector. Jobs will be created in the short-run. The increased capacity will in the long-run enable the expansion of warehousing receipts systems and commodity exchanges.
- **Building assets for small-scale processing of staples**, for example milling and drying maize, cassava drying and packaging, fish smoking and drying, milling and cleaning rice
- **Upgrading the sanitary infrastructure in wet markets**, including the supply of water and sanitation services, and providing necessities such as sanitizers to market participants
- **Block grants for communal infrastructure such as boreholes**, micro-power generation, drainage channels, etc.
- **Expanding mechanization** to ramp up land preparation and alleviate short-term supply of labor. The approach might involve partnering with tractor booking service providers that operate akin to Uber and linking the service providers with clusters of farmers across the country.
- **Provide individual grants** to farmers to support on-farm irrigation equipment, procurement of equipment for poultry production, innovative solutions for small-scale preservation of food, biogas equipment for green management of agricultural waste, etc.
World Bank Response

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the health team has processed a package of support worth $17mn in record time to strengthen the Government of Liberia’s immediate capacity to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak and in the longer-term, strengthen its response to disease outbreaks and emergencies. In agriculture, we are working on fast tracking project activities under the Smallholder Agriculture Transformation and Agribusiness Revitalization Project (STAR-P) to the tune of $1.5million and activation of CERC under the same project to the tune of $10.525million. A second phase of support is under consideration in other critical areas including: education, energy, and others.

Cote d’Ivoire

Prices remain stable and supply is averagely good but is declining in some remote areas

World food Program reports the price trends for the main foodstuff, in some of the main urban areas of the country. The different colored dots indicate the level of change in prices for three weeks in a row (from April until mid-May). We can see that aside corn powder in Bondoukou, there is no increase above 5% (red dot, cf legend below). This price rise is explainable with a lower production than usual in that area.

Table 1: Foodstuff price trends (11-17th, May)

![Table 1: Foodstuff price trends (11-17th, May)](image-url)

World Food Program, 2020
Compared with previous year, we realize that this lower availability has been translated into substantial price rise for maize powder (+38.5%, and +36.4% respectively in Bondoukou and Korhogo). For some unclear reason, grain prices follow a different trend in Bondoukou (-10%). May be grains are not so much in demand at the moment, but rather powder. Also this price discrepancy might suggest a time lag between the purchase and the grinding period. Globally, prices are stable and rare significant increases explainable with production gaps.

In this week’s report (May, 17th-24th), CNLVC confirms some price stability for tubers (yam, cassava, potato) and cereals (rice, millet, sorghum). Meanwhile, the price increase is visible with some vegetable (okra, peppermint). This trend is very similar with what CNLVC reported the week before (11-17th), suggesting at least two weeks continuity, with regards to the trend. The vegetable price increase relate with their seasonal low availability, as validated by following table.

Table 2: IVC Staple food availability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IVC Staple food availability</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
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CNLVC, 2019

Meanwhile, the availability of goods is not as good in some rural areas than in the rest of the country. CIRAD underlines the following: “But villages have not yet seen any overall price increases. Only the price of rice has noticeably begun to increase – the price of imported rice in particular rose by around 5% between March and April” Although this statement covers a different period of time (than the one of the report), it’s worth being highlighted for the sake of monitoring. Indeed, in one of the previous bulletin,
we were making a point about the lower rice import compared with the last five years average. **World food program also pinpoint declining availabilities for maize (+35% in Korhogo), cassava (+36% in Korhogo), yam (+44% to +50% in Ouangolo and Ferke)**, triggering some significant year on year price increase.

In the end, few price increase have been noticed, but they are minor and result from availability decline. For the local goods, those decline have not be triggered by the pandemic, but rather lower production in some cases. However, the lower imported rice availability in some remote areas proceeds from lower imported volumes over 2020 first quarter, following the export restrictions in the origin countries (India, Vietnam...).

**Nature and Number of People Who’s Food Security Might Be Negatively Affected or in Jeopardy**

The Food Crisis Prevention Network projection forecast a rather comforting evolution of the food security situation in the country. During the June-August period, the percentage of population to face risk food insecurity should decline to 2.7%, compared with 3.7% for March-May.

Our opinion is that this could be understandable from a food supply perspective, as there is no major hiccups for now, unless the sanitary crisis. Meanwhile, the financial accessibility could be problematic in the long run, as companies, and specially SMEs and informal sector might have been significantly impacted with the crisis, generating subsequent job losses. Consequently, with a lowered purchasing power, risk food insecurity would be higher.

**Emerging Issues in Domestic Supply Chains**

For the first time since several weeks, we see an inflection in the proportion between the declared cases and the number of people healed from disease, those last one represent more than half (52%) of overall cases: 1257 persons against 2423 total cases.

Meeting Ivorian senators recently, health minister appear combative and optimistic for the future, arguing that it was time Ivorian people to go back to work despite the disease. Even if there is no (for now) new directive regarding Abidjan lockdown, people start expecting that this measure will be not be renewed after May, 31st. If it happens, it will then a major turnaround in the lift of limitations as Abidjan remains the heart of economic activity and host about 25% of the country population. More explicitly, the restoration of the travel dynamic would be beneficial for consumption in hotels and restaurants upcountry, with a positive impact on sectors like poultry, very much dependent on those channels.

**Emerging Issues in International Trade**

Over a three months period (April, 6th to July, 6th), some measures has been taken to exempt medical goods importers from taxes. This covers a wide range of goods including medical equipments and other health inputs related to the fight against the Covid 19 disease (Please refer to link in footnote for detailed list of items).

**Issues with Labor Availability**

According to CIRAD: “The closure of borders, if imposed, could thus reduce the workforce available at the start of the mid-crop harvest of cocoa beans, the seeds of the cocoa tree. Some planters are even stuck in the neighbouring countries they come from. As part of a project to track agroecological innovations by cocoa planters, CIRAD and its partners are monitoring eight villages in the cocoa-growing area. Three of these villages have reported delays or a slowdown in bean purchases. The “pisteurs” (middlemen) are afraid of catching coronavirus. These cocoa trade intermediaries also report a decrease
in transport to Abidjan. Such traffic disruptions could eventually affect the delivery of beans to the country’s ports. So the impact of the disease on supply chain would be two fold.

Firstly, production would be affected though workforce unavailability. Certainly, this additional workforce is needed because this period match also with sowing for food crop, combined with high cocoa bean counts requiring beans sieving before delivery to the exporters in the port. From Traitants and cooperatives, we are told that the bean count is relatively high this year, what will logically increase need for sieving at warehouses gates; and probably blending of very high and very low bean counts wherever possible for traitants. All of this will come with additional workload which will make the workforce gap even more tangible.

Secondly, they highlight about disruption in supply chain. In fact, some transport inefficiencies has been reported although the government made clear that goods transportation was not targeted with movement restrictions. But this should change, as some steps has been made into the right direction: curfew has been lifted. Next to that, Ramadan month just ended, this should be also of help, as it happens sometimes that muslim believers (the community is dominant in transportation) cannot perform as usual due to fasting, which could have disturbed their predisposition to be efficient during this period.

Responses to the Crisis

The government, as per the economic support plan, spotted 20.300 workers who lost their job, or put on standby after the start of the crisis. They will receive some financial support over the next three months, according to their categories. The monthly amounts as follows; maneuvers: 60.000fcfa, Supervisers: 120.000 fcfa, Managers: 240.000fcfa, Executives: 360.000fcfa

Community Based Initiatives: Most target vulnerable parts of the population.

- Solidarity minister some donation in Boundiali (as Mayor) reaching 300 vulnerable families including goods and small equipments (buckets...);
- Bloom NGO made similar donation in Abidjan to vulnerable women and is expected to reach up to 3000 of them in the next months;
- Company CADERAC made 20 million fcfa donation to the authorities to support fight against pandemic

Support for Farmers

Many donations have been made, but not a lot of them are directly oriented toward farmers.

OLAM donation to farmers targeted 12 rural areas and 117.000 beneficiaries. The donation should amount about 100.000 usd, and should include items (masks, hydro alcoholic gel, bins...)

World Bank Response

Same responses highlighted in the past weeks still prevail. These are (i) expedited preparation of food crop project (P171613) to boost domestic rice production and support emergency activities in the poultry industry (ii) restructuring of the cashew nut competitiveness project (P 158810) to support the private sector (local processors and exporters ) in purchasing raw cashew nut from farmers (iii) emergency DPO (200 Million usd) to support reforms in the cashew nut sector to mitigate the negative impact of the COVID 19 crisis and in other sectors of the economy (social, governance, energy, informal sector, finance).
CNLVC : Conseil National de Lutte contre la Vie Chère. This entity created in 2017 (Order n° 2017-410) is chaired by prime minister and trade minister as vice president. Its executive secretary is under several ministries: Trade, SME promotion, Arts and crafts.

Weekly Bulletin, September 2019, 2nd

Food Security Update Côte d’Ivoire May 05 2020

Memorandum n° 2088 /PMPE/DGD, May 4th, 2020

CIRAD: Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement

Traitants are businessmen, most of the time wholesalers, involved in the delivery of commodities (cocoa, cashew...) to exporters in the Port.

Food Security Situation in Eastern and Southern Africa – SAFA3 Countries

Food Security and Food Demand Continues to be Severely Affected Due to Price Spikes and Currency Depreciation, School Closure, and Reduced Incomes

In South Sudan, there is continued concern that households may be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in Akobo and Duk counties and renewed concern that some households may be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in Ayod county of Jonglei. A SMART survey conducted by Action Against Hunger in Ayod in April concluded the prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) was above the Extremely Critical threshold at 30.9 percent (GAM weight-for-height z-score ≥30 percent). The higher GAM prevalence relative to previous surveys may be driven by a combination of high disease prevalence, low access to water, and low dietary diversity and quality. Moreover, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse outcomes continue to be driven by low household food access during the lean season due to the impacts of recent COVID-19 movement restrictions and long-term impacts of the 2019 floods, poor macroeconomic conditions, and conflict on household income and food prices. Food consumption gaps indicative of Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes are present in counties that have been most significantly affected by these shocks, including in Jonglei, Upper Nile, Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, and parts of Central and Eastern Equatoria states.

Over 6 million people are at risk in Zimbabwe making it the most food insecure in southern Africa and 2.1 million in Tanzania and 1.1 million in Malawi face food insecurity. The outlook for Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi is better, but access to available food is being limited by reduced income and, in some cases, higher prices, and can deteriorate rapidly. Urban poor and very poor are the most affected. Based on the assessment of the current harvests and the development of the pandemic, WFP released estimates for food insecurity in the coming months: 2.1 million people in Tanzania and 1.1 million in Malawi.

Huge grain price spikes in Zimbabwe: more than 1,000 percent compared to the same time last year. The month on month inflation rate for April 2020 was 17.6 percent, falling by 9.0 percentage points on the March 2020 rate of 26.6 percent (ZIMSTAT, 2020). The month on month food and non-alcoholic beverages inflation rate stood at 28.4 percent in April 2020, gaining 10.7 percentage points on the March 2020 rate of 17.7 percent (ZIMSTAT, 2020). The price of grain in local currency has increased by more than 1,000 percent compared to the same time last year (FCS, 2020). Increase in prices of food commodities comes against depressed incomes affecting purchasing power and food security. The ZWL has depreciated against the dollar by 32% since the beginning of the month. Local ZWL incomes are stagnant & food prices have increased. Government has suspended customs duty on imported wheat flour and maize for 6 months to reduce the cost of commodities and ensure affordability. Moreover, the ZWL continues to devalue against the USD, which plummeted to as low as US$1 to $75 on the parallel market, leading to a spike in the price of basic goods. Most supermarkets/businesses peg prices to the parallel market exchange rate, which they argue is the replacement cost for imported commodities.
In Sudan, more people are expected to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse food security outcomes. An increased number of people, including protracted IDPs in Darfur and South Kordofan, and poor households in urban and rural areas most affected by COVID-19 control measures, are expected to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse food security outcomes through September 2020. Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes are expected among IDPs in conflict-affected areas of Jebel Marra in Darfur and SPLM-N areas of South Kordofan as well as parts of Red Sea and Kassala during the peak of the lean season between June and September 2020. Staple food prices have continued to increase more rapidly than normal in May. Prices for sorghum, millet, and wheat have increased by 20 to 50 percent between April and May. At these levels, prices remain more than double compared to last year and more than four times higher than the recent five-year average. These high prices, in combination with significant reductions in labor income, are likely to continue driving well above average humanitarian assistance needs through at least September 2020.

In Tanzania, most households are accessing food, but about 2.1 million people may need food assistance as a result of COVID-19 impacts. Prices for locally produced staple food continue to drop as more harvest reach markets and households. A proportion of market-dependent consumers may need assistance to maintain an acceptable level of food consumption in the next seven months from June-December 2020. A recent Urban Food Security Assessment by WFP - focusing on Dar Es Salaam - reports that most of the (sampled) households (80%) have acceptable food consumption while 12% have borderline consumption and 8% poor food consumption. Male headed households have a slightly better food consumption compared to female headed households. In the event of a shock, particularly the impact from the COVID-19, the population in the borderline food consumption group is likely to fall into 'poor' food consumption resulting in 20% of population in need of assistance. It is estimated that up to 2.1 million people may need food assistance as a result of the socioeconomic impacts of C19. Poverty is the main driver of food security, since households mostly depend on the market purchase (92%) as their source of food. Close to three quarters of the households (72%) rely on petty trade as their main source of income/livelihood, followed by casual labor and self-employment services. About 83% of the households indicated that their main sources of income decreased compared to last year and 44% attributed the loss of income to COVID-19, since most of the households depend on petty trade while trade is reportedly affected.

Household income and jobs in Ethiopia were hit hard because of COVID-19 pandemic. About 55 percent of respondents report either reduced (51 percent) or a totally lost (4 percent) income. About 13 percent of respondents lost their job since the outbreak (19 percent in urban areas and 10 percent in rural areas). Hospitality, construction, and wholesale and retail were the most affected. Also School closure affects nutrition and food security in Ethiopia: Since March 16, 2020, Ethiopia closed all primary and secondary schools. School closures may deprive the children of poor families of food, because they often rely on
school feeding programs; the long-term impacts of lost months of schooling and nutrition will be particularly severe for children from poor families. **Food lacking affects food security severely in Ethiopia:** about 23 percent of households had run out of food in the previous 30 days (mid-March and April). March is the month in which food security tends to diminish and food prices start to rise. By then many rural households, especially smallholder farmers, are beginning to run out of the food they stocked up after the harvest. Food security is expected to deteriorate over the next few months, until the harvest.

**The Gov. of Ethiopia estimates that for the current year, due to C19 related disruptions, food insecurity numbers would drastically go up.** The national food poverty index is estimated to be 24%, which indicates that 24 million people will be vulnerable to food insecurity. Already, 8 million people are already included in the Productive Safety Net Project (PSNP) plan and the transfers are being implemented in all targeted regions. The Humanitarian Response Plan is targeting 5.9 million food insecure people and resources are being transferred for the first two distribution rounds. Government and international partners are also expected to mobilize resources to respond to identified HRP requirements. Therefore, **an additional 10 million food insecure people will require emergency food assistance.** C19 has created serious demand side/income shocks on both rural and urban areas. On the supply side (there is an big impact on the perishables (dairy/vegetables) etc. where the demand mis-match between consumption centers and production centers and logistics disruption is creating significant challenges for producers. However, the ongoing locust plague is a big risk and if locusts are not managed well, then in addition to demand shocks, we could see a potential supply shock, causing disastrous impacts.

**Remittances have plunged in Ethiopia and Malawi since the outbreak.** About 24 and 39 percent of households reported that remittance as a recent means of livelihood have been reduced and totally lost, respectively. Remittances from Malawians working in South Africa are having a hard time sending money home as they have lost jobs and income, and many are being deported.

**In Malawi, prices for locally produced staple food continue to drop - and so do incomes** - as more harvest reach markets and households. A proportion of market-dependent consumers may need assistance to maintain an acceptable level of food consumption in the next seven months from June-December 2020. Home-grown crops are the main source of food for over 70% of Malawian’s rural households. Reduced income due to job losses and economic slowdown is particularly threatening urban vulnerable population. Income from crop sales is expected to be below average. A scenario of lockdown is unlikely to happen any time soon.

**Food prices inflation is around 17.5 percent in Zambia.** This is mainly due to the increase in the prices of fish, meat and cooking oil. Food markets remains open and operational, with some restrictions placed by the authorities in response to COVID-19 outbreak.

**Food Supply is Variable Across the Countries but Lack in Zimbabwe More than Other Countries Due to C19**

**In Zimbabwe, 2.1 million MT of maize are needed for human and animal consumption.** Zimbabwe will have a deficit of over 1 million MT maize to meet consumption needs, including animal feed. USDA World Agricultural Production update projects 850 000MT of maize to be harvested. Only 1% of the WFP monitored markets have maize grain or mealie meal. Early maize grain and traditional (small) grains supplies on are much lower than usual. Prices are high. Shortages of subsidized maize meal continue across the country. Readily available stocks on the parallel market highly priced and not affordable for poor households. Government placed a 30% incentive on the price of maize sold to the food reserve agency to reduce side-selling & encourage early delivery of maize. This incentive increases the price from ZWL12,639 (US$168.52) to ZWL 16,000MT (US$213). Temporary ban on importation of soybeans and meal feed to create a demand for locally produced soybeans (soybean is an ingredient for livestock feed.)
Ongoing harvests in Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi have good prospects, and food surpluses are likely. All three countries are trying to purchase maize to restock its respective national grain reserve as a response to current or future food shortages.

In Zambia, it was announced that the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) will be procuring 1 million MT of maize this season from farmers, to enhance the grain stock of the country. The decision for FRA to procure around 1 million MT is expected to impact the market prices, and depending on the buying price, this may result in crowding out the private sector from the grain market.

In Malawi and Tanzania, food and inputs - seeds, fertilizers, etc. - are mostly availability in markets. As all neighboring countries, Malawi seeks to restock the Strategic Grain Reserve with maize. This is priority for the GoM (The Government is asking for Bank support to do that). Maize production is estimated at 3.78 millions MT (11.5% more than last year). Production of roots, tubers, rice, millet and sorghum has also increased. Food continues to be available in both urban and rural markets, with over 90% of markets fully operational. Maize is available in 76% of markets countrywide. Food imports are not having important disruptions. However, food shortages are expected from September onwards. (https://ifdc.org/2020/04/23/east-and-southern-africa-fertilizer-watch/). For 2020/21 GoT plans to ensure availability of 760,000 tons of fertilizer and 22,000 tons of pesticides for the next planting season. The Government has allowed fertilizers to be imported without following the normal procedure of importing collectively using the Bulk Procurement System. Limited regional movement might affect timely delivery of inputs for the next planting season, especially those needed early in the season starting in July.

Promising harvest and increased supermarket prices and lack of some items in Zambia. The MoA has released the annual crop forecast for 2020, which anticipates increases for all crops due to the above average rainy season. Maize being the main crop, is showing an increase of around 65 percent from last year. C19 is impacting large chains and supermarkets, with most of the items being imported. Increase in prices is observed, in addition to absence of some items.

Ethiopia experience reduced coffee exports due to C19 supply chain disruptions. Ethiopia’s coffee production for MY20/21 (Oct-Sep) is forecast to be 7.5 million 60-kg bags (450,000 metric tons). Exports are forecast to reach a record 4.1 million bags (247,200 metric tons). The US was the fourth largest buyer of Ethiopian coffee in 2018/19, accounting for nearly ten percent of total Ethiopian coffee exports by volume. U.S. coffee imports totaled US$ 5.7 billion in the MY 2018/19 with $120 million of that from Ethiopia. For the 2019/20 marketing year, experts say Ethiopian exports will reach around 3.9 million bags of coffee (234,000 metric tons). This export downturn is due to the C19 crisis causing reduced orders from importers and a slowdown in local and international transport. Coffee is Ethiopia’s most important export commodity, accounting for about 29 percent of the value of all exports in 2018/19. Moreover, C19 hits during the lean season, the Meher season, accounting for 90% of Ethiopia cereal production, will start now. The sowing should begin in the next 1-3 weeks and the rains, so far, has been good and MoA indicates that they have adequate inputs (fertilizer/seed) and do not anticipate a big cereal production shortfall. The next few weeks needs serious monitoring in terms of acreage and composition of commodities planted and how the cropping season emerge. However, the ongoing locust plague is a big risk and if
locusts are not managed well, then in addition to demand shocks, we could see a potential supply shock, causing disastrous impacts.

In Southern Africa, maize supply on major markets improved seasonally as the 2020/21 marketing year began. Prices remain well above average. South Africa continued exporting maize to structurally-deficit countries of the region, especially Zimbabwe where regional imports have expanded considerably in recent months following the easing of phytosanitary (GMO) restrictions. Zambia maintained a ban on maize exports, while informal exports from Zambia persistent and were driven by favorable price trends in neighboring countries.

Weather and Climate Variability are Affecting Crop Production and Livestock, including Death

In western Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Sudan, there is an increased likelihood of moderate to locally very heavy rain through the end of May, signaling an early to timely onset of the main June to September rainfall season (according to rainfall forecast.) Cropping and rangeland conditions remain favorable across most of the region, despite the recent devastating floods which negatively impacted some agricultural areas in the central and western sectors. Outside of flood-affected areas, rainfall significantly subsided, marking an early to timely cessation of the long rains season in parts of the eastern Horn and much of Tanzania.

In Zimbabwe, water availability and access challenges are increasing especially in low rainfall areas following a below-average rainfall season and an early cessation of rains in February compared to the typical March/April. This is increasing household difficulties to meet domestic, livestock, and other livelihood water needs. The situation is expected to worsen during the dry season through October/November. Pasture and livestock conditions are also expected to deteriorate earlier and faster than usual in such areas, with atypically high livestock deaths expected, especially for cattle.

Data Collection Took Place in Ethiopia

The World Bank conducted a High-Frequency Phone Survey of Households (HFPS-HH) in Ethiopia between April 22 and May 13, 2020. A sample of 3,249 households, drawn from both urban and rural areas in all regions of Ethiopia, were participated on the survey.

Food Security in Senegal CMU

Senegal

The regulatory rice stock stands at 150,117 metric tons, compared to 122,617 metric tons last week (an increase by 22 percent), enough to cover domestic consumption for two months. Consumer prices remain stables.

Furthermore, the domestic rice production is underway with 300,000 metric tons of paddy rice expected to be harvested later by July. However, the bird invasion is threatening the rice production, but strong measure is being taken with the Government of Senegal jointly with the Mauritania’s one for an adequate treatment using plane.

Regarding key horticultural products, the supply of onion and potatoes was enough to satisfy increased demand resulting from the end of Ramadan celebration. Onion price is in overall stable except an increase by 14 to 20 percent observed in few regions. Potatoes price showed an increase varying from 13 percent in Dakar to 33 percent in other regions.

Additional Government response to COVID-19 is an increase by US$ 33 million (FCFA 20 billions) of the Ministry of Agriculture annual budget moving it from US$ 66 million to 99 million (from FCFA 40billion to
60 billions) to speed up the rice food security program, improve farmers access to inputs and machinery, and prevent from army worm disease and locust evasion becoming a threat for the West Africa region. The input subsidy distribution started.

Livestock Ministry get an additional budget of US$ 5 million (FCFA 2 billion) to support herders with animal food subsidized at 100 percent by the Government.

**Guinea Bissau**

The cashew season usually runs from April through September, but lockdown measures are hampering cashew harvest and trading. Financing of the cashew campaign has been jeopardized as the current system works based on short term loans (4 months) with no grace period and based on foreign payments of cashew imports on a rolling basis during the campaign. Cashew accounts for 95 percent of exports and directly contributes 10-15 percent of fiscal revenue. Lower export revenues will likely exacerbate fiscal and external vulnerabilities. In addition, the delay in cashew sales increases the risk of food insecurity, as cashew is the major source of income for 80 percent of the rural population. The Government recently raised funds in the regional market to support the sector through strengthening the liquidity positions of commercial banks. *The authorities need to explore alternative solutions to facilitate access to finance for local cashew farmers and traders while seeking international assistance* (Source: CMU Weekly Economic Update, June 1st, 2020).

**Mauritania**

Despite the COVID-19 crisis, the monthly inflation slightly decreased in April 2020 (3.2 percent) compared to March 2020 (3.3 percent). This reflects the measures taken by the authorities to waive custom duties and taxes on essential food imports, which have helped maintain food inflation at constant rate of 2.9 percent (y-o-y) since February 2020. The authorities should closely monitor food prices to avoid inflationary pressures (from potential shortages and price speculation) that could put a significant portion of the population at risk of food insecurity (Source: CMU Weekly Economic Update, June