



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

COVID-19 and its Impacts on Agrifood Systems, Food Security and Nutrition:

Implications and Priorities for the Africa Region

27 October 2020

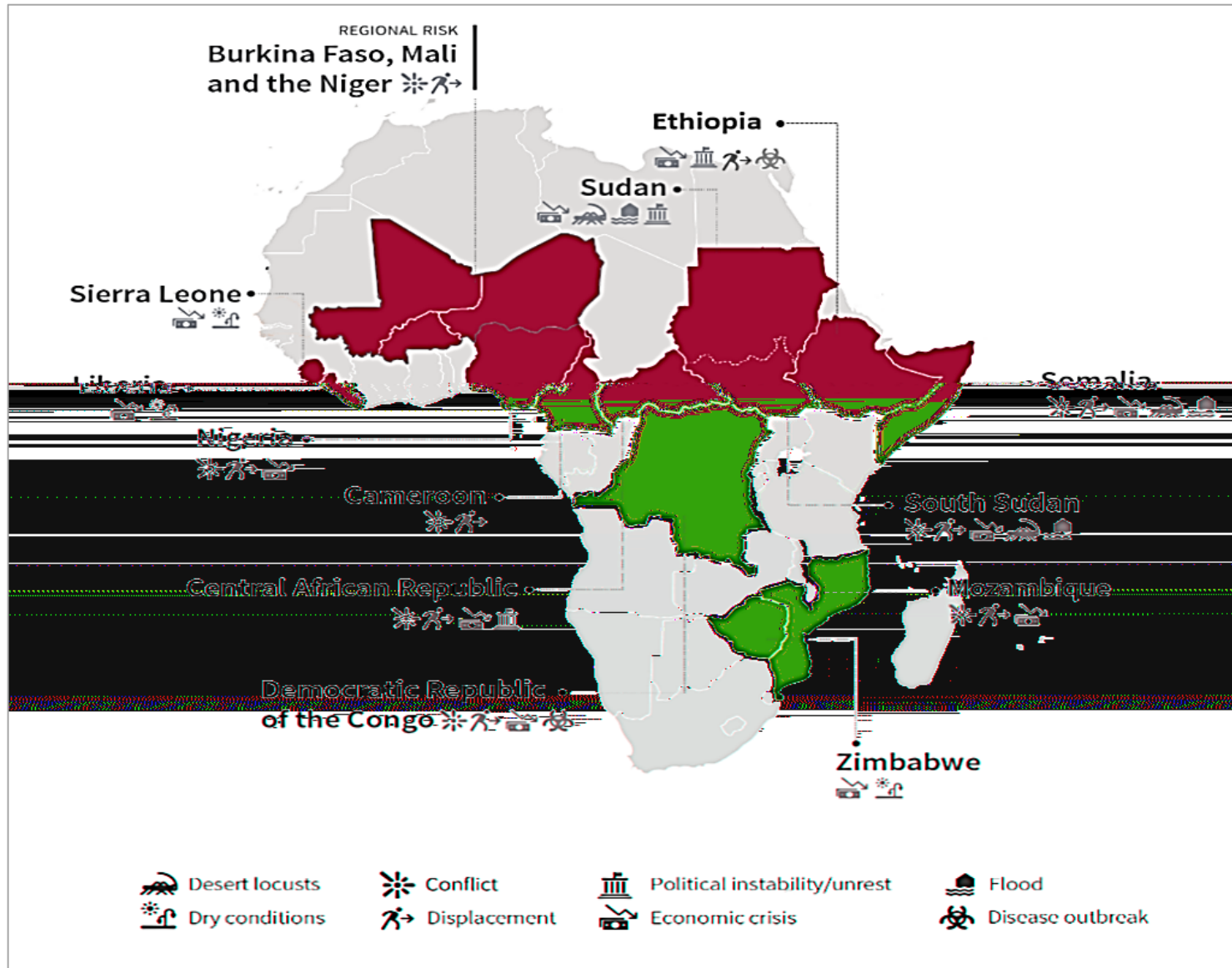
FAO Regional Office for Africa

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The Context: **Waves of Overlapping Crises**

- Covid-19 hit against the backdrop of a fragile FSN context.
- Already 235m hungry people in SSA, of which 66m in acute food insecurity.
- **New Hotspots**: 15 countries at “high-risk” of severe deterioration of FSN situation.
- **Healthy diets** – unaffordable, and out of reach for nearly a billion people in Africa
- **Africa is off-track** to meet SDG2 and AU Malabo Targets; even without Covid-19

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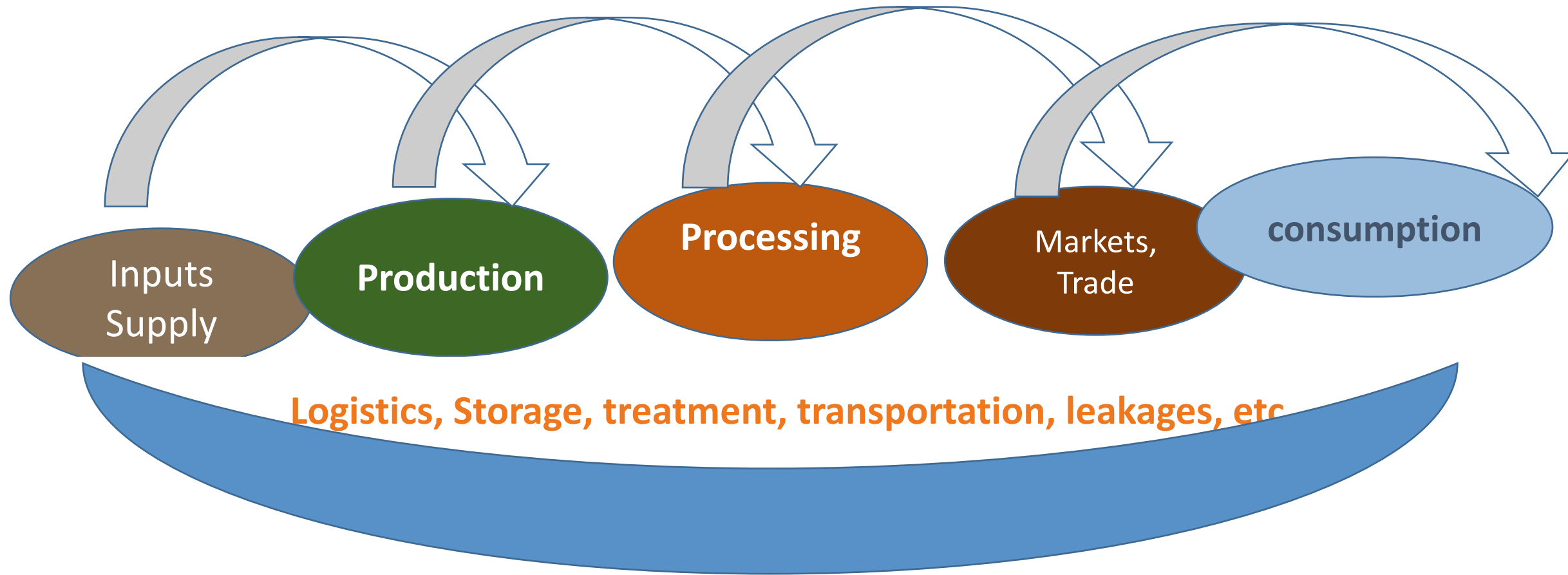
Covid-19 Impacts: **what is known so far?**

Results from socio-economic assessments...

- Impact was across the board and total
- Vulnerable groups have been affected more disproportionately
- Exposed the weakness of existing SP mechanisms

- **Production** impacted through limited access to inputs (seeds, animal feed...) and timely operation of activities
- **Supply chains disrupted** - limited access to markets for livestock, perishable nutrient dense food products (fresh vegetables, fruits, fish); same for cross-border transhumance activities
- **Small businesses and jobs** suffered including SMEs, schools closures curtailed access to food
- **Incomes were slashed** for informal sector operators, small-scale producers and traders; remittances flows;
- **Food price hikes** – already healthy diets are luxury for the poor, further undermining access to healthy and nutritious food
- **The limited public funds** – were switched from social protection to health emergency.

The Whole Food Supply Chain has been touched ...



Input suppliers (seeds, animal feed, fertilisers, labour, etc.), Farmers, Herders, Fisher-folks, SMEs, processors, transporters, wholesalers, retailers, food preparers, consumers, etc.

Covid-19 Impacts: *Projections, Likely Future Scenario*

Economic down-turn caused by Covid-19 is expected to make the situation even worse.

- **Economic activity:**

- predicted to contract by 2.8% in 2020,
- per capita income is projected to decline by 5.3% (for SSA),
- Recovery from COVID-19 is likely to be slow and uncertain because crisis still unfolding
- Impact more pronounced in countries such as SIDS, less developed landlocked countries, etc.

- **Hunger and Malnutrition:**

- The fastest growth in the number of hungry people compared to other regions.
- Projected to become the region with the highest number of undernourished people, accounting for half of the total in 2030.
- Undernourishment in Africa could increase by up to 40 million people in 2020 because of Covid-19.

- **Poverty:**

- Risk of millions being pushed into extreme poverty.
- Likely wiping out any modest gains made towards achieving the SDGs.

Response and recovery measures towards building back better: **Immediate and Short-term measures**

1. Protecting health and safety of people as top priority

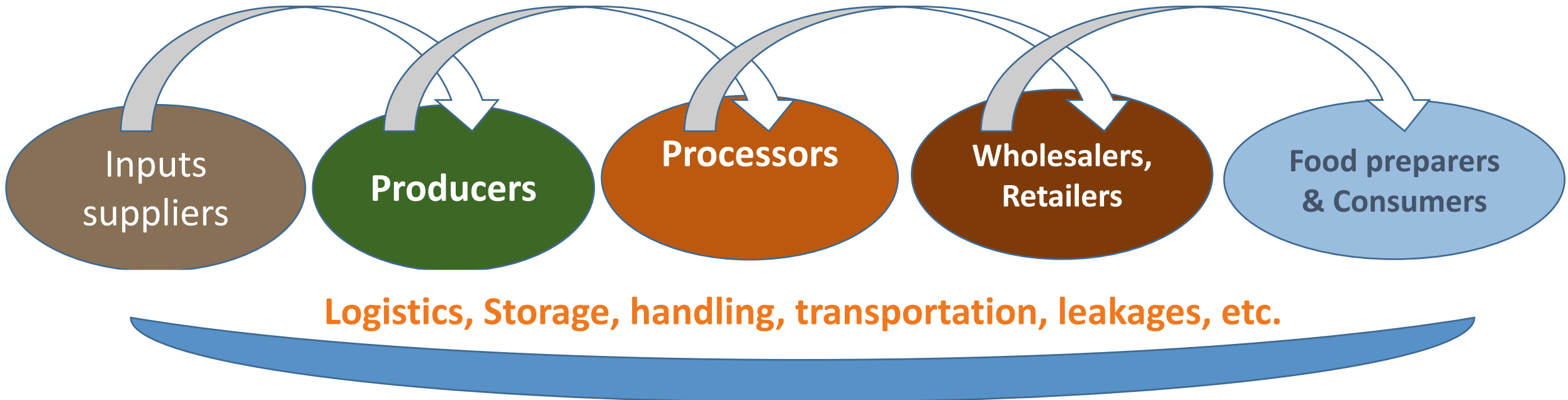
2. Preventing a public health crisis from becoming a food crisis!

- Social Protection - very significant for Africa, due to overlapping threats of crises and weakness of social welfare systems (only 10% of SSA population covered under some sort);
Hundreds of new or adapted social protection initiatives were registered in more than 42 countries in response to the pandemic – these need to be sustained and strengthened!
- Support smallholder farmers and producers to protect the integrity of the food supply chains.
Recognize measures taken by government to protect the agri-food supply chains as essential functions (e.g., reduced import taxes for essential commodities and staples, logistical measures to ensure food supply flows, etc.

- **Protect lives and livelihoods** and meet the needs of the most vulnerable

- **Safeguard agri-food supply chains**

Beyond the short-term: Build resilient and sustainable agrifood systems
– to address multiple risks of shocks



Empower and Enable: women and men, producers organisations, SMEs, those in the logistics, food prepares, consumers, etc.

Beyond the short-term:

Imperatives for holistic, integrated and coordinated Response

- 1. Food systems transformation approach** along the whole value-chain
- 2. Multi-sectoral collaboration:** agriculture, health, trade, industry, infrastructure, energy, environment, social-sectors, Finance, etc.
- 3. Multi-stakeholders engagement:** stakeholders/actors, public, private sector, CSO, development partners,
- 4. Innovation and digitization:** seizing opportunities for transformation
- 5. Opportunities for effective partnerships** (to mobilize technical and financial resources)
 - Scaling up of digital technologies for providing various agri-food services (extension, markets, finance, etc.)
 - Data analytics and platforms such as FAO GEOSPATIAL platform for effective policy support to food systems.

Beyond the short-term:

Imperatives for holistic, integrated and coordinated Response

FAO's Comprehensive Covid-19 Response and Recovery Programme :

7 Key Action Areas

1. Reinforce the Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19
2. Improve Data for Decision-making
3. Ensure Economic Inclusion and Social Protection to Reduce Poverty
4. Bolster Trade and Food Safety Standards
5. Boost Smallholder Resilience for Recovery
6. Prevent the Next Zoonotic Pandemic through a strengthened One Health Approach
7. Trigger Food Systems Transformation

Beyond the short-term:

Imperatives for holistic, integrated and coordinated Response

Enhanced Advocacy and Partnerships

- At regional level – with the AU and its institutions
- Sub-regional level – with Regional Economic Communities
- National level – MS, UNCTs, Partnerships Platforms

- Engaging all relevant stakeholders and partners

Engage ALL relevant stakeholders and partners at ALL levels!

Beyond the short-term:

Imperatives for holistic, integrated and coordinated Response

Enhanced Advocacy and Building Partnerships : some examples

- 16 April – African Ministers for Agriculture Meeting
 - Established joint TF (AUC, FAO, WFP, IFAD, WB, AfDB, EC, AUDA/NEPAD).
 - TF members co-lead specific work-streams (high level advocacy, integration with existing frameworks, responding to food crises hotspots, and resource mobilisation).
- 27 July – Joint meeting of Ministers responsible for Agriculture, for Trade, and

Finance

- Adoption of Declaration and Action Agenda
- Expanded the TF to include Trade actors/partners
- Follow up actions at country levels ... Ongoing!
 - Opportunities for multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder engagements

Beyond the short-term:

Imperatives for holistic, integrated and coordinated Response

Mobilization of Resources: Some examples

- Development partners scaled up financing through repurposing existing programmes as well as design and financing of new investments.
 - AfDB's Feed Africa Response to COVID-19 instrument;
 - European Commission and European financial institutions;
 - IFAD multi-donor COVID-19 Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (RPSF);
 - World Bank repurposed investment programs to assist countries;
 - FAO's Covid-19 Response and Recovery Programme.

Summing Up: Response and recovery measures towards building back better

1. Immediate and Short-term measures:

- Protecting health and safety of people as top priority, and
- Preventing a public health crisis from becoming a food crisis!

2. Beyond the short-term: building resilient and sustainable agri-food systems

3. Imperatives for holistic, integrated and coordinated response:

- Food systems approach along the whole value-chain;
- Multi-stakeholders engagement and empowerment;
- Multi-sectoral collaboration;
- Seizing opportunities for transformative approach – innovation and digitization
- Opportunities for effective partnerships (to mobilize technical and financial resources)

4. FAO's Comprehensive Covid-19 Response and Recovery Programme : 7

Action Areas

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Gracias

Merci

Obrigado

Thank you
