



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

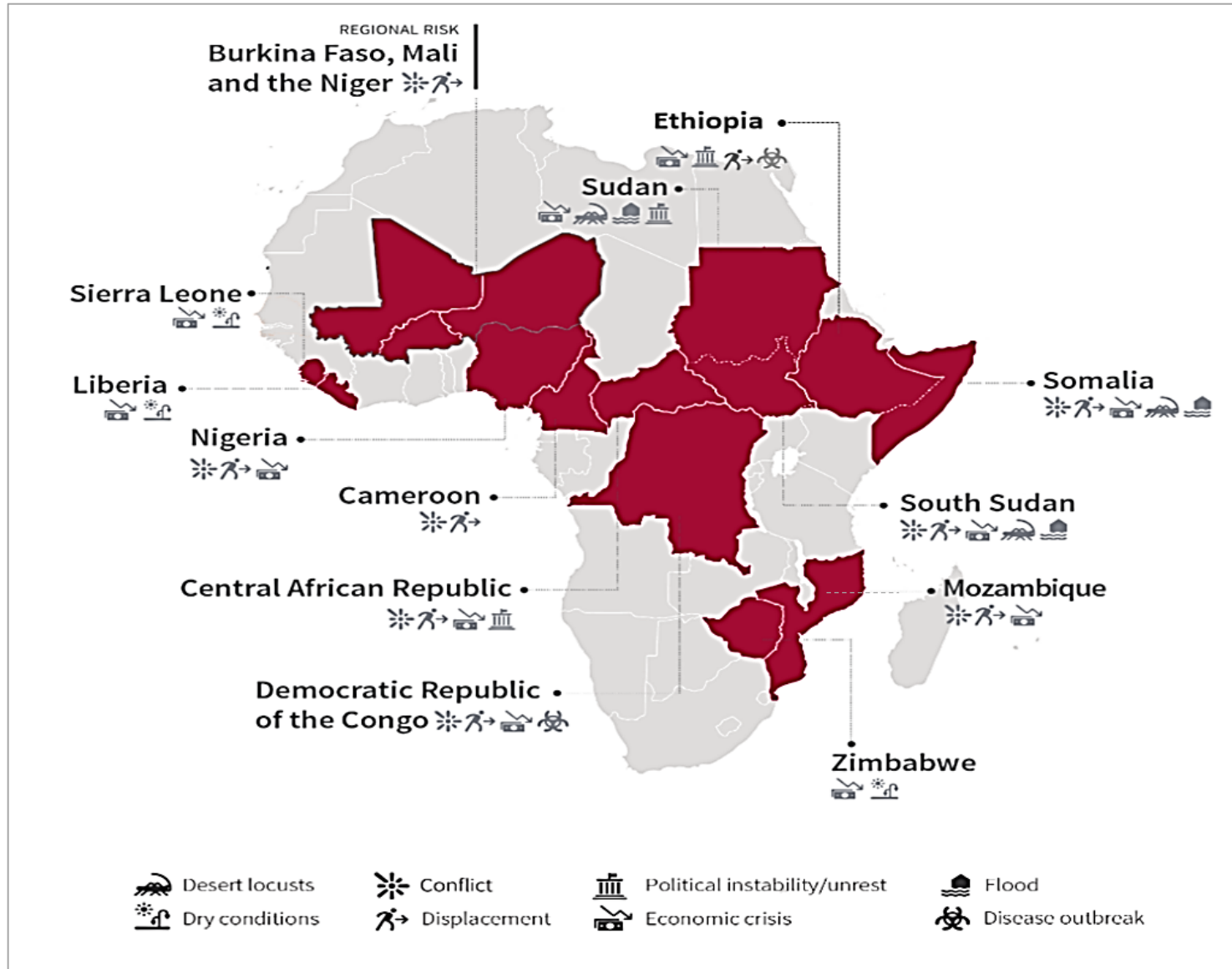
FAO Regional Office for Africa

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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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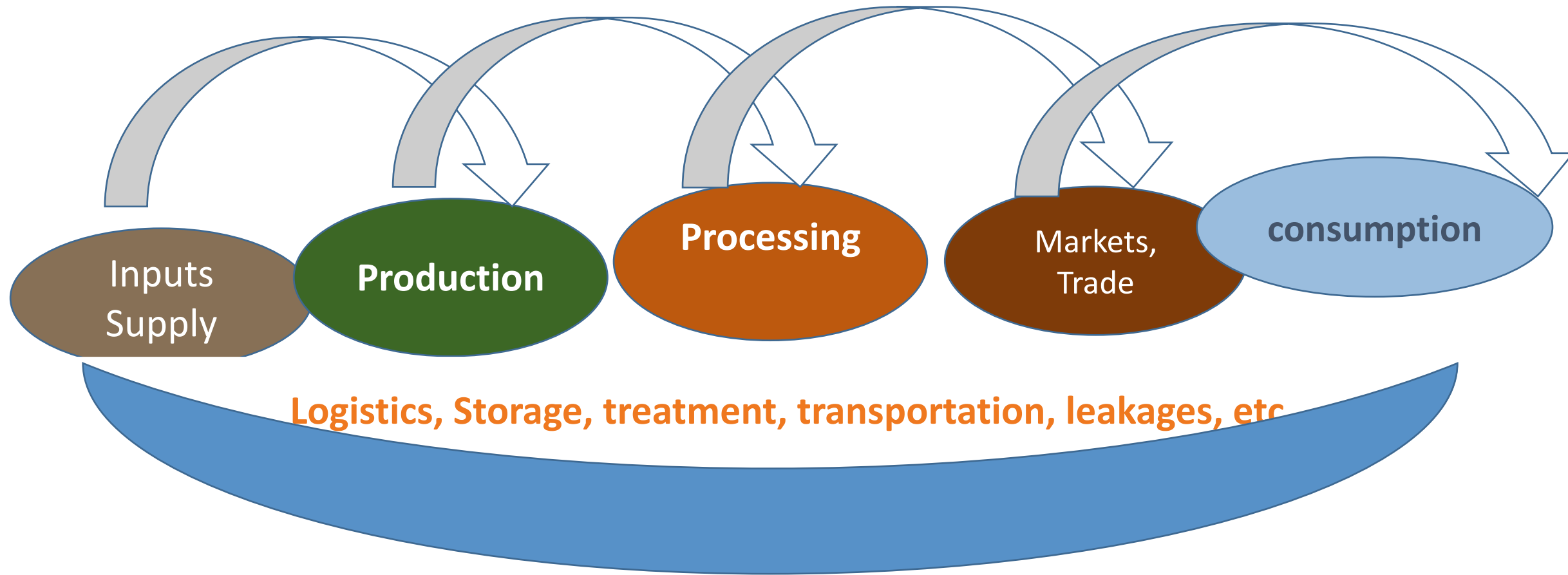
Covid-19 Impacts: what is known so far?

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

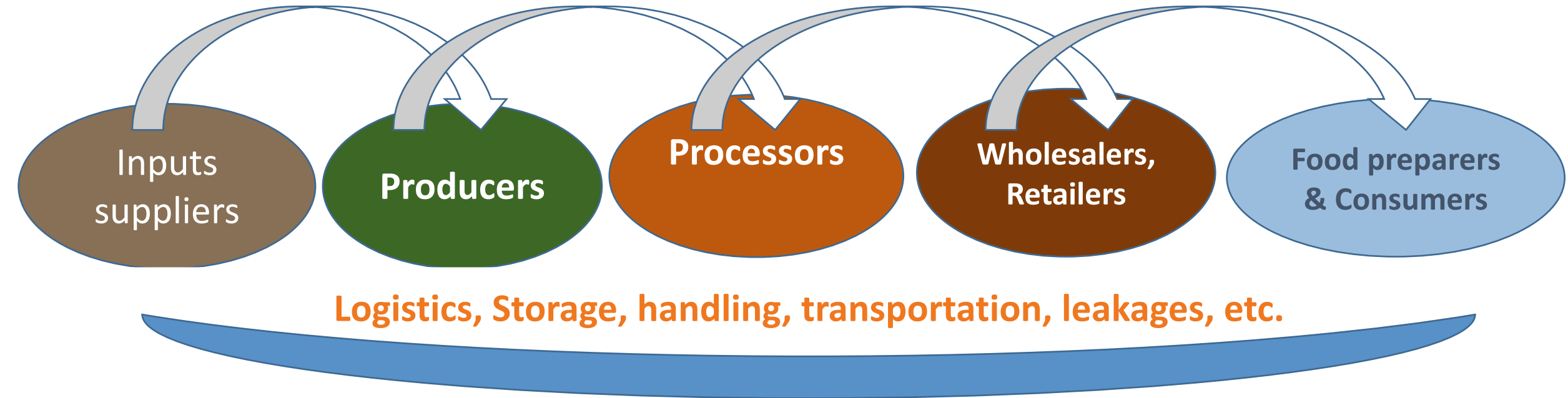
2. Preventing a public health crisis from becoming a food crisis!

- 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.

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- **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
