

# The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security in View of Global Crisis

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## Abstract

This Paper highlights the enormous impact of COVID-19 on food security and agricultural food systems. In this paper COVID-19's impacts on food supply and demand will directly and indirectly affect all four pillars of food security and nutrition (FSN): availability, access, utilization and stability. Government organization as well as (NGOs) is also expected that there will be particularly concerned about the potential impacts of the virus and related containment efforts on food security and livelihoods in contexts of high vulnerability and where populations are already experiencing food crises.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, FSN, NGOs.

## Introduction

Covid19 or the novel coronavirus which was first reported in the Wuhan a Chinese City on the Dec '29'. There is lot of discussion going on in the world about this catastrophe some are saying that it may be released from the Wuhan lab, where the Wuhan institute of virology is situated while some are saying the it may came from the meat market of the Wuhan which is also very close to the lab just a few metres. But the matter of the fact is that it is now declared pandemic by the WHO and it has spread all over the globe in just few months. Food security is availability of food to the population in their daily life. Food security generally depends on these 3A'S i.e Availability, Affordability and accessibility of food it should be safe and secure to eat and healthy and nutritious at the same time. Due to COVID-19, there are disruptions in various supply chain departments because of transportation problems and other issues. One of the major concerns amidst this is the emerging Food Crisis at a global level. Movement restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic could derail agricultural input supply chains at critical times in the season, reduce informal labourers' access to farmlands and therefore both their wages and the area of land cultivated and constrain transport of goods to processing facilities and/ or markets.

## Aim of the Study

As the impact of COVID-19 is growing and affecting food systems globally, the short- and long-term consequences of this crisis becoming increasingly visible. Countries, governments, research and aid organizations as well as businesses are all taking action to prevent food systems from breaking down, and in the process create and share a great variety of information

## Content

### Impact on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN)

The COVID-19 pandemic is currently affecting food systems directly through impacts on food supply and demand, and indirectly through decreases in purchasing power, production capacity and distribute food, and the escalation of care tasks, all of which will have differentiated impacts and will more strongly affect the poor and vulnerable. Prospective risk for global food availability and food prices will depend on the time duration of the outbreak and the extremity of containment measures needed. Isolationism i.e., isolated country-level policies are likely to amplify the effects of the global level crisis on food security and nutrition, especially for lowincome and food-insecure countries.

As we know that from experience the COVID-19 outbreak comes from high-income and industrialized countries (China, South Korea, Italy, USA and Europe, among those more affected), and so far, there is a clear negative impact of the outbreak on the stock markets, industrial production and the demand for oil. But it is difficult to forecast the long-term impact of the outbreak on the economy as a whole and on FSN, and especially in



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low-income countries, based on current incident. This crisis poses enormous challenges for food security and nutrition globally. In particular, people working in casual labour, services, restaurants, and retail, for example, face massive job losses (in part due to social distancing policies, lockdown and the broader economic slowdown) and hence will surely see a major drop in their incomes.

The COVID-19 crises pose disruption in agri-food supply chains and markets may make food producer livelihoods less secure as well, especially from countries with strict policies that are leading to a reduction in overall demand. As we know that after harvesting the crops food producer i.e., farmer also engaged in non-farm and off-farm activities both domestically and internationally to support their livelihood and equally raise capital for investment in their farm. A reduction in the farmworker ability caused declines in income for food security and capital investment, can have direct implications for people's access to food, in the present and upcoming future.

#### **Impact on Food Demand**

The pandemic created first a spike in demand, due to panic buying and hoarding of food by consumers, which increased food demand in the short term basically among those who have over-bought and stocked at their homes. The unravelling impact of COVID 19 outbreak has also diminished or indirectly constrained the demand of food. The low purchasing potential, restriction, unavailability of food supply, shut down of factories & aviation, change in eating habits all these have adversely affected the food demand. It is recently estimated data by Centre for Monitoring Indian Earnings that the unemployment rate spikes up from 8.4 to 23% in mid-march. After lay off from their jobs people purchasing power is falling off which has dropped down the food demand worldwide.

Due to coronavirus infection, as it is contagious people eating habits has also changed. Pandemic has risen up the number of on to consumers and increased adaptation of ready to eat food. But the key factor that food and beverage industry is the shutdown of the restaurants and other seating areas like cafés. The food industry is segmented on online & offline food chains. COVID 19 outbreak has dual impact on this segment i.e., offline food chains that are entirely shutdown but packaged food like beverages, milk and online packed food products are witnessing an upsurge in the demand.

#### **Impact on Food Supply**

As caseloads of COVID-19 increase in countries around the world, there have been disruptions to agri-food supply chains between rural and urban areas. Although at the start of the crisis, plenty of food was within the supply chains but disruptions to food supplies have tracked outbreaks due to a rise in panic buying by people concerned about food supplies during potential lockdowns. Also, the restrictions on movement or import/export services has challenged the transportation of key food items, access processing units and markets, affecting both producers and consumers. This has led to reduction in farmer's income and instability of food prices deviating from

geographical and seasonal patterns, thus has created uncertainty for both producers and consumers. If outbreaks around the world continue over long periods of time, it is likely to reduce food availability in the markets over the medium and longer terms. This lockdown on the other end has adverse effects on the most vulnerable sections of our society such as informal laborers, vulnerable urban populations, migrants and others that rely heavily on the market to meet their food needs. Uncertain wages, unstable prices, and less availability of essential food items have serious implications for acute food security and malnutrition levels in these populations.

Breakdown in food supply chain and social distancing policies have also affected on primary school children's because they are benefitted through the government scheme. This pandemic is having a terrible effect on school children who were receiving food through the school Mid-Day meal programme, but the shutdown of schools had left them in awful situation.

#### **Impact on Food Access**

Disruptions in supply as well as the loss of jobs, incomes and casual workers with more limited savings would lack access to public healthcare. In the absence of income assistance, the working poor would face limited access to nutritious food. Many households would down step to so-called "inferior goods" as a cost-saving measure, and stabled shelf-life foods, which could be more processed and less nutritious foods in industrialized countries, or less processed and a more nutritious foods in developing countries. The supply, demand and access effects due to COVID-19 are interconnected with one another and affected food systems in complex ways. Supply chain disruptions have affected patterns of both supply and demand, while economic hardship has affected access which influences overall food demand as well as supply chain decision.

#### **Impact on Milk Consumption**

With Sweets shops, Hotels and confectioneries closed completely, oversupply of milk has emerged as a real side-effect of the pandemic. Dairy Farmers of America, estimated that farmers have to dump 3.7 million gallons (14 million liters) of milk every single day because of disrupted supply routes. This issue is not only being seen in the US, but with dairy farmers all over the globe, Milk is literally down in the Drains.

#### **Impact on Agriculture**

COVID-19 has disrupted some activities in agriculture. Due to non-availability of migrant labor there have been interruptions in harvesting activities, particularly in northwest India where wheat and pulses are being harvested. Due to disruptions in supply chains because of transportation problems and other issues, Prices have declined for wheat, vegetables, and other crops, yet consumers are often paying more.

#### **Conclusion**

Reducing the impact of the pandemic on acute food security cannot be done in isolation and requires the involvement of actors well beyond the agriculture and food security sectors. Governments

should set up a global data and analysis facility, ensuring availability of and stabilizing access to food for the most acute food-insecure populations and Ensuring continuity of the critical food supply chain for the most vulnerable populations. Governments should also be encouraged to adopt policies and make investments to support agricultural production and maintain critical supply chains, whilst ensuring the protection of the most vulnerable, including through the expansion of safety nets. Moreover, governments should ensure coordination in the response across sectors, mainstreaming health and safety measures. Strong partnerships are needed between national institutions, United Nations organizations, non-governmental organization (NGOs), farmers' groups and all other relevant stakeholders, including coordination structures, such as the Global Network against Food Crises and the Global Food Security Cluster. Efforts should be coordinated at every stage of the response, including harmonized monitoring and assessment of impacts, design of policy measures, targeting and implementation of assistance to the most vulnerable people, as well as communication and awareness raising campaigns.

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