



Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on agri-food value chains: Fractures, responses and opportunities for building back better

Dietmar Stoian, Paswel Marennya, Jason Donovan & Gabija Pamerneckyte

FTA Covid 19 Rapid Research Response: Presentation of the results of FTA studies

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Literature review



- Stocktaking exercise of studies within & outside CGIAR
- 129 publications varying in degree of methodological robustness:
 - 47 high
 - 53 medium
 - 29 low
- Principal criteria: peer review, empirical data, sample size
- Fully screened only studies ranked 'high' or 'medium' (n=100)
- Period covered: May 2020 through Feb. 2021 (ongoing expansion until July 2021)



Coverage of chain actors by publication type

	No. of pubs	Input dealers	Producers	Processors	Wholesalers / Retailers	Consumers	Service providers	Transport agents / distributors	Unspecific
Peer-reviewed journal article	29	2	25	7	11	3	4	1	0
Report	27	8	24	8	14	12	1	3	0
Working/Discussion paper	18	7	14	4	11	8	2	2	0
Policy brief/note	14	1	5	3	5	4	1	0	2
Project note	6	0	5	0	3	0	0	0	0
Blog / Web-article/ presentation	6	1	6	1	3	2	0	1	0

	Hot spots (highest tercile)
	Intermediate spots (medium tercile)
	Cold spots (lowest tercile)

- Emphasis on production and retail/consumption
- Little on processing or input & service provision
- Geographic focus: Asia & Pacific, Africa (less on LAC)

Coverage of chain actors by commodity

	No. of pubs	Input dealers	Producers	Processors	Wholesalers/ Retailers	Consumers	Service providers	Transporters / Distributors	Unspecific
Staples (mainly cereals)	61	11	47	13	30	19	5	5	0
Livestock products	58	10	46	10	30	17	5	4	0
Fruits & veggies	52	11	42	11	25	14	4	4	0
Fish & aquatic foods	50	12	45	15	25	13	5	5	0
Forest & tree products	4	0	4	1	2	0	0	0	0
Unspecific	12	2	7	1	4	4	2	2	2

	Hot spots (highest tercile)
	Intermediate spots (medium tercile)
	Cold spots (lowest tercile)

- Emphasis on staples, fruits & veggies, and fish, aquatic and livestock products
- Little on forest & tree products

Coverage of effects and responses by publication type

	No. of pubs	Price effects	Private sector response	NGO response	Public policy response
Peer-reviewed journal article	29	22	17	3	12
Report	27	23	17	7	16
Working/Discussion paper	18	15	7	2	12
Policy brief/note	14	8	12	4	9
Project note	6	4	2		3
Blog / Web article/presentation	6	5	3		1
Total	100	77	58	16	53

	Hot spots (highest tercile)
	Intermediate spots (medium tercile)
	Cold spots (lowest tercile)

- Strong emphasis on price effects
- Private and public sector responses well covered
- NGO response less so

Preliminary evidence (1)

- Worst-case scenario (food VC collapse) did not materialize → food system "surprisingly resilient"
- Value chains most affected: livestock, dairy, fish & fresh produce → disjuncture between on-farm availability and logistical interruptions
- Disposal and waste: milk (Ethiopia), meat (Egypt, Tunisia), fish (India, Bangladesh), bananas (Ecuador, Ghana, India) & fresh produce (diverse countries)
- Non-perishable products less affected
- Also affected: input chains (seeds, fertilizers, agrochemicals)
- Unclear picture regarding resilience of domestic vs. global value chains



Preliminary evidence (2)

- Reduced mobility: affecting various nodes across value chains
- Labor-intensive formal sectors: more affected than informal sectors
- Price hikes mostly ephemeral
- E-commerce: anecdotal evidence
- Responses by NGOs less clear than those by governments and private sector
- Finance restrictions: little documented
- The long game: lingering and knock-on effects → yet to be seen (and studied)
- Relevant: pre-existing conditions (existing fractures, exposure to previous shocks)
- Knock-on effects: yield reduction, demand-supply shifts, business closure or restructuring (reshoring, digitalization), credit, nutrition & health effects → follow-up studies

