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Irish Forum for International Agricultural Development

IFIAD Webinar Series

How to address key information gaps in food systems research under COVID-19 restrictions

13:00-14:00 IST
Wednesday, 8 July 2020

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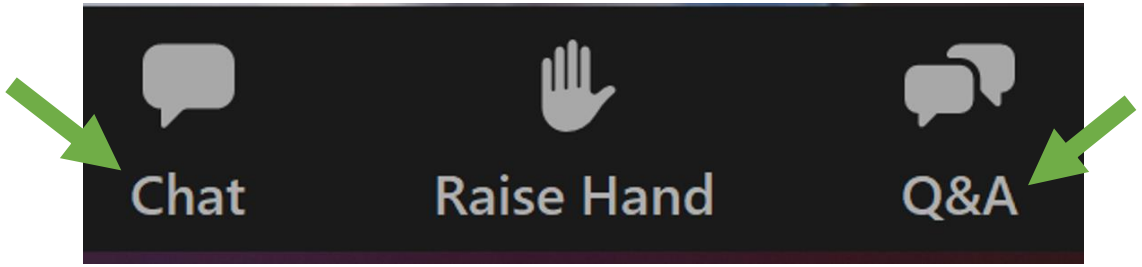
Webinar Overview

- 1 hour
- 3 presentations
- 4 speakers
- Q&A

Before we start

- All webinar participant videos and microphones are muted during presentations
- Use the **Chat** feature to contact me about any technical issues you may be having (make sure you select “All Panelists” in the Chat box before sending the message)
- Use the **Q&A** feature to submit your questions to our speakers (you can anonymise your questions if you like)



- A recording of this webinar will be made available on the **IFIAD Youtube channel**

Addressing Information Gaps in Food Systems under COVID-19

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www.crs.org

Overview of CRS's Agriculture/Livelihoods Response to COVID

- CRS Country Programs (CPs) immediately began taking action to address COVID
  - Transitioning to emergency assistance programming
  - Shifting agriculture programs to remote delivery
- HQ bringing diverse country-level adaptations together into a cohesive Agency Strategy
- Phased approach for operationalization of Strategy
  - Emergency response phase
    - *Focus on cash & voucher assistance, safe marketplaces, etc.*
    - *Primary COVID response phase led by Humanitarian Response Department (HRD)*
  - Secondary phase will focus on longer-term agricultural livelihoods thinking

Catholic Relief Services Agency COVID Strategy

COVID-19 Response Strategy

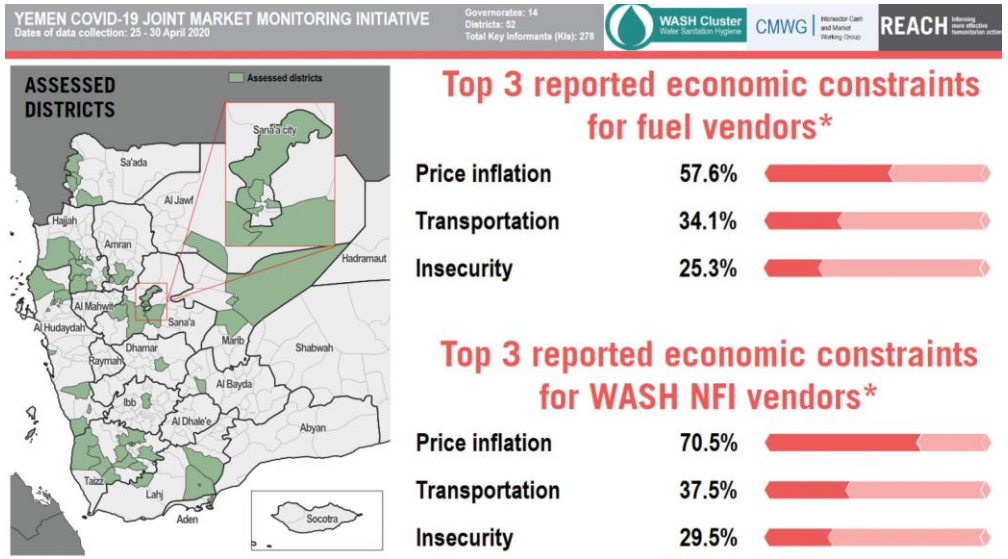
Catholic Relief Services responds to the pandemic that threatens the health and survival of people around the globe, as well as our economies and societies

RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Goal: Help people survive with dignity and restore their lives and communities	
Strategic Objective 1: Mitigate health impacts of COVID-19	**Strategic Objective 2:** Mitigate economic and social impacts of COVID-19
Intermediate Result 1.1: Communities adopt preventative behaviors to protect themselves and others from COVID-19	**Intermediate Result 2.1:** People meet their food and other essential needs
Intermediate Result 1.2: Health systems provide quality COVID-19 services across the continuum of care	**Intermediate Result 2.2:** Impacted households and micro/small businesses withstand livelihood disruptions and restart income-generating activities
Intermediate Result 1.3: Health systems continue to provide quality non-COVID-19 services across the continuum of care	**Intermediate Result 2.3:** Individuals and communities strengthen social cohesion and well-being
Cross-cutting priorities	
Safe and dignified programming approaches: CRS will ensure equitable access, especially for the most vulnerable and at-risk groups; accountability to the people we serve; support of self-protection capacities; and Do No Harm principles.	**Partnership with local and national actors:** CRS will leverage vast, long-standing relationships with government institutions, local organizations and civil society networks to heighten reach and scale.

COVID Evidence Base for Programming

- CRS Country Programs quickly began COVID programming, often without much evidence
  - Many were not regularly collecting data on livelihoods, markets, etc.
  - Created scramble for external data for decision-making
- Information systems have come a long way
  - Lots of secondary information being gathered
    - *Price trends, market monitoring, household COVID*
    - *WFP VAM, REACH reports & Mercy Corps reports, etc.*
  - Challenge now is data overload



- CRS country programs still needed more tailored or 'curated' data for programming decisions
  - Specific requests for data on household impacts, livelihood assessments, food security trends, etc.

CRS faith. action. results.

COVID Evidence Base for Programming

- Two-pronged data collection approach identified to address gap
  - Rapid, remote data collection to identify ‘red flags’ for immediate programming and/or humanitarian assistance
    - *COVID Markets & Supply Chain Monitoring*
  - Longer interval data collection to assess impacts of COVID on coping mechanisms/resilience
    - *Measurement Indicators for Resilience Assessment (MIRA)*

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COVID Markets & Supply Chain Monitoring

- Tracks trends at multiple levels
  - Household impacts today
  - Supply chain bottlenecks that forecast future issues
- Bi-weekly intervals to capture rapidly changing conditions
  - Identify ‘red flags’ for immediate action
- Highly customizable based on programming needs
  - Both food and non-food items are tracked
- Used in 11 countries and growing
  - Uganda, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Guatemala, etc.
- Countries provided summary reports for evidence-based programming decisions

Survey Level	Respondent Type
Household	Household heads
Marketplaces	Vendors Suppliers
Ports/Border Crossings	Customs clearance agents Logistics/freight forwarders

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Households

Households surveyed: 10

Key Findings and Analysis

All households report sufficient money for food and nonfood items. However, many report rice (70%), soap (70%), and palm oil (60%) to be unaffordable.

Physical market access is a major challenge, with 80% of households reporting that reduced market hours are a constraint to access.

All households report livelihood concerns, and 90% report lower than normal income.

The top causes for livelihood concerns are: lack of inputs (100%), increased price of inputs (80%), government policy restrictions (80%), and lack of money for inputs (70%).

No households report any **access to credit, but this may not reflect a change due to COVID-19.**

% Households without enough money for food and nonfood items

0%

% Households with social challenges to market access

50%

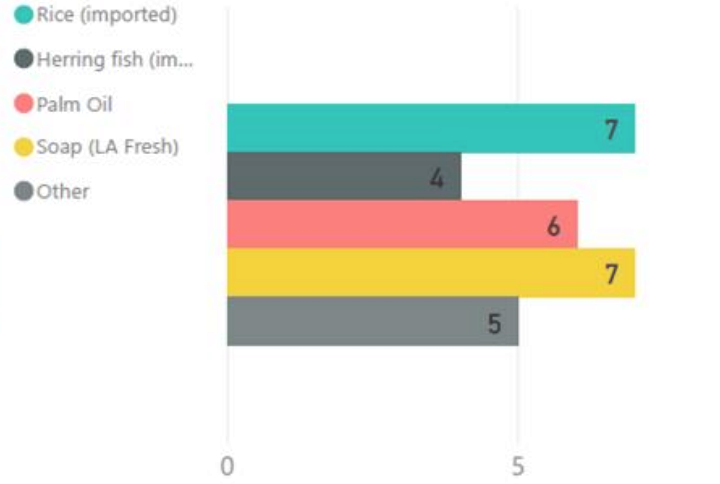
% Households with physical challenges to market access

80%

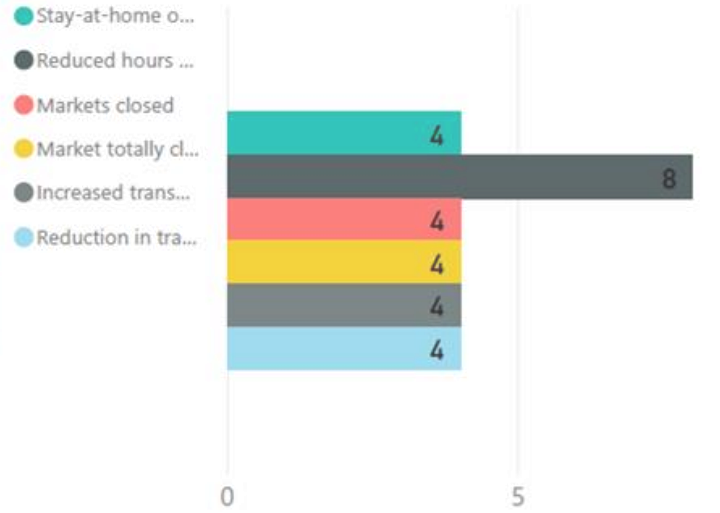
% Households with members that cannot safely access the market

20%

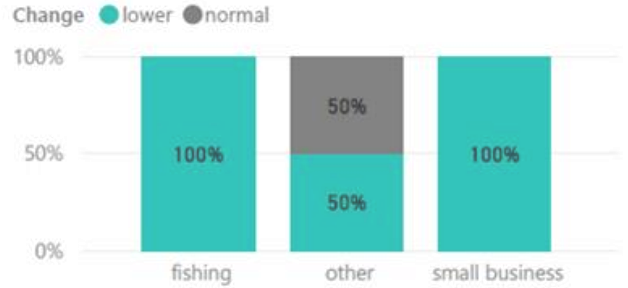
Unaffordable market items (financial access issues only)



Physical constraints to accessing markets



Reported change in income



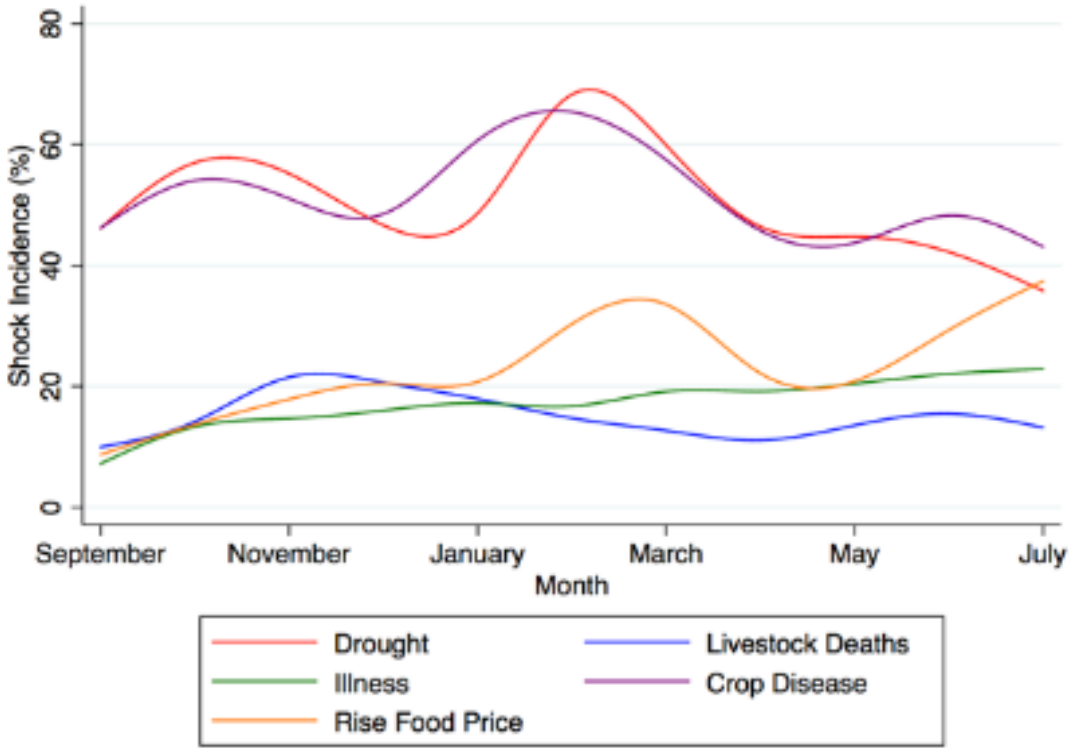
% households concerned about ability to prepare/engage in livelihood

100%

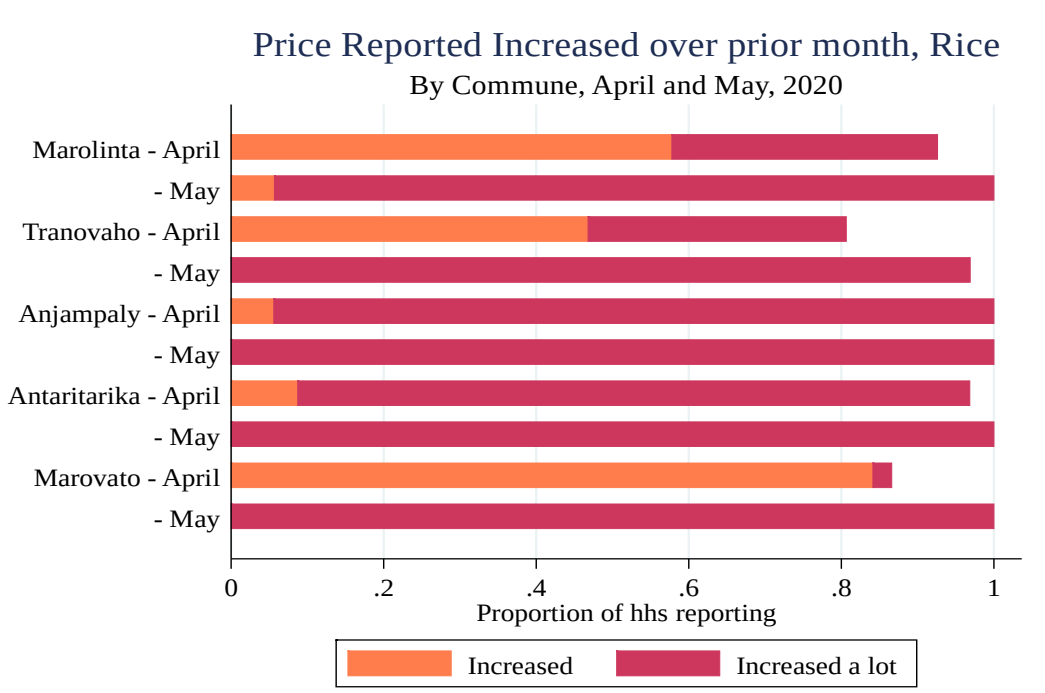
Principle causes for livelihood concern

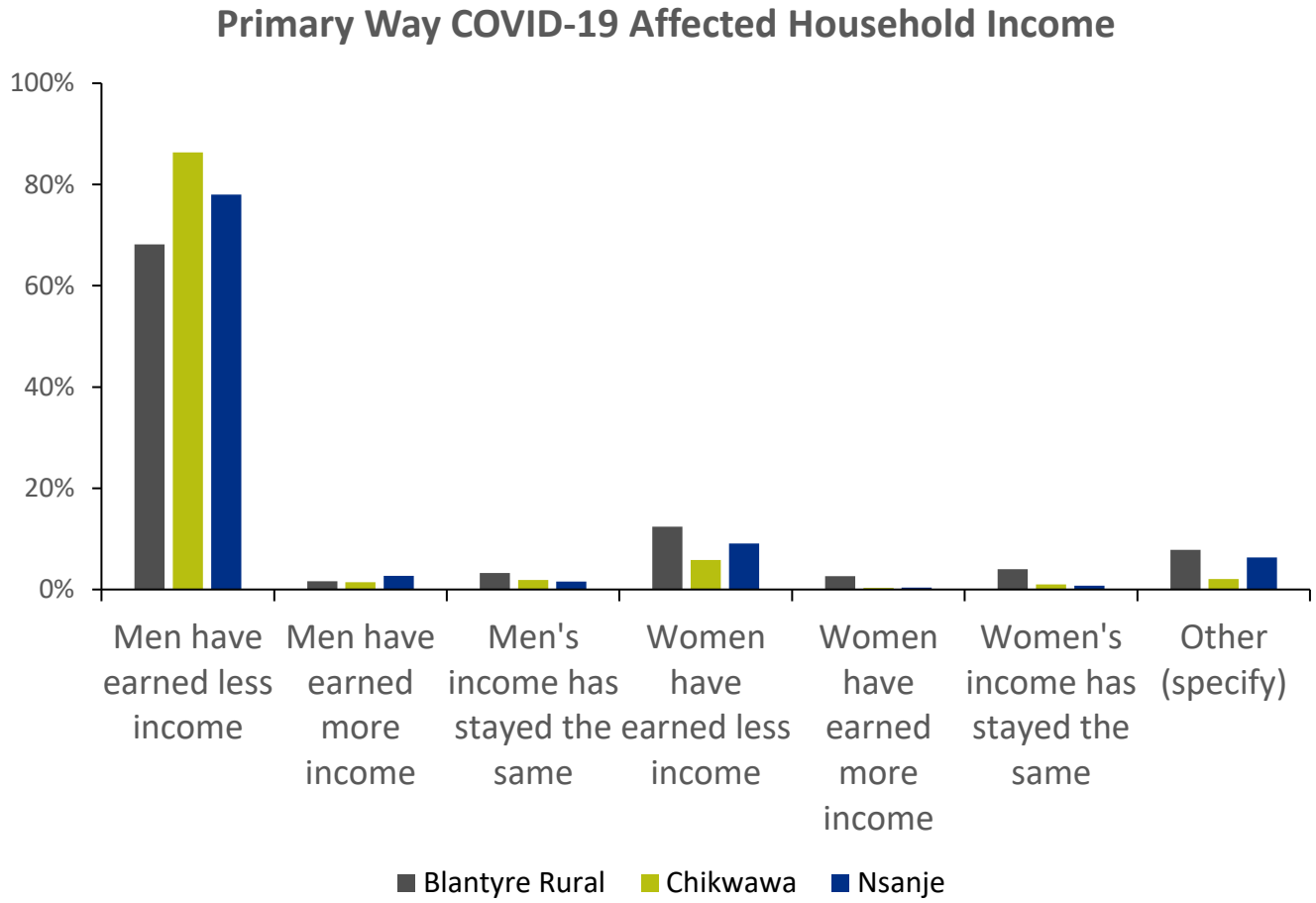
Measurement Indicators for Resilience Assessment (MIRA)

- CRS's recurrent monitoring approach
- Tracks full suite of resilience and well-being indicators
- Frequent (monthly) data collection to capture shorter-term changes, compare to other tools
- Flexible to deploy survey modules in response to specific shocks (e.g. COVID)
- Built-in collaboration with communities on data collection (through embedded enumerators) and data use for action
- Deployed in Malawi and Madagascar through large integrated USAID-funded projects



MIRA & COVID-19 in Madagascar & Malawi: Sample Data





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Synthesis & Next Steps

- Re-sensitizing Country Programs to the need for regular data collection
  - COVID exposed the need to have these information systems functioning pre-crisis
- Scaling out to track trends across countries
  - Integration into existing programming
  - Building into up-coming proposals
    - *MSC for COVID-related proposals*
    - *MIRA in FFP and/or other large integrated projects*
- Marrying short-term MSC Monitoring data with MIRA data
- Helping Country Programs make sense of the data
  - Tying data to actionable recommendations
- Sharing within our communities of practice

CRS faith. action. results.

Real-time Food Security Monitoring in the time of COVID-19

Kusum Hachhethu

Food Security and Nutrition Analyst

UN World Food Programme

www.wfp.org

World Food Programme

World’s largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger and promoting food security

Food Security Assessment at WFP

Food Security assessment and monitoring as an integral part of WFP's mandate.

WFP as a long-standing provider of food security data

- WFP's corporate food security indicators are widely used by IPC, governments, broader and development and humanitarian community to make programmatic decisions.

Near real-time data collection at WFP

- How can we collect data for food security analysis from places that are too remote or inaccessible for face-to-face surveys?

- Hunger\food security is not static: How can we capture it in a continuous basis?

Near real-time monitoring for food security

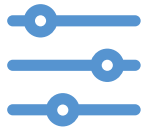
Objective:

Provide streaming analytics (continuous updates) on food security to facilitate:

1. Timely assessment of the situation and awareness among stakeholders
2. Rapid triggering of further analysis or surveys as necessary
3. Better decision making to inform more effective and targeted operational response and programming
4. More effective advocacy and resource mobilisation

How it works:

Continuous data collection conducted remotely (through live calls)



Same indicators as Integrated Food Security Phase Classification analyses

Representative data on the food security situation in a country

Data analysed automatically and results made available in near real-time

Opportunities

Speed

Data collected, analyzed and published in near real-time

Flexibility

Surveys can easily be scaled up/down or expanded to collect more information types

Cost effectiveness

cheaper compared to face-to-face surveys

IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19:

- Established remote monitoring systems leveraged in response to COVID-19 to track changes in food security trends and assess the impact on COVID-19 on household food security and livelihoods.

Remote surveys: Methodologies and best practices

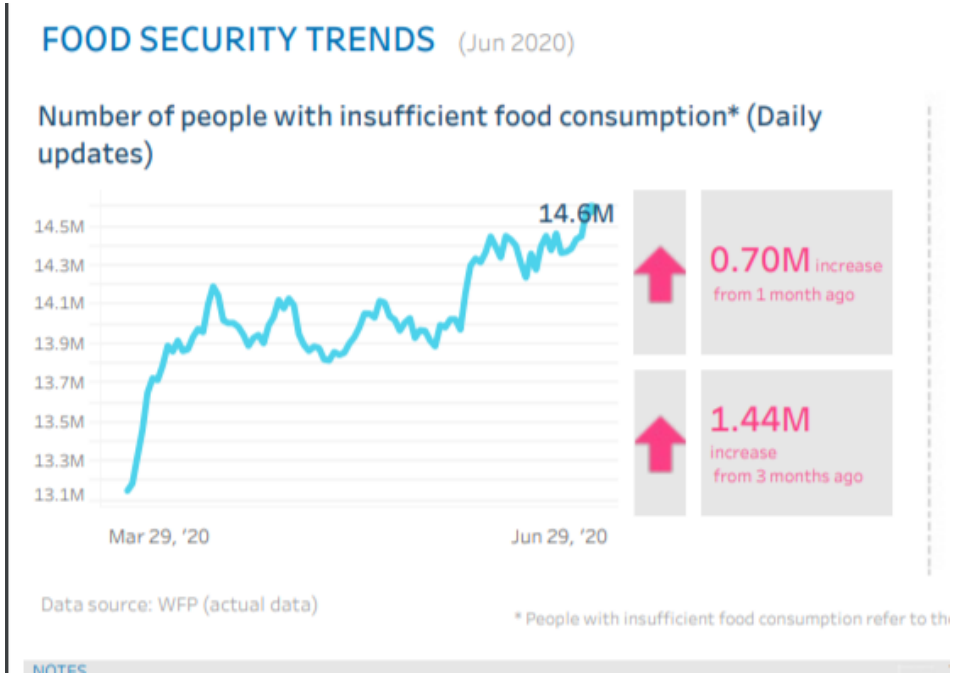
- Survey Design
  - Sampling
  - Question type
  - Questionnaire length
- Data Analysis
  - Debiasing methods

Data Visualization :

- Weekly hunger and Covid Snapshots

https://static.hungermapdata.org/hungermap/reports/hunger_covid_weekly_snapshot.pdf

- Hunger Map Live : hungermap.wfp.org



Data and information for resilient food and market systems

Lynnette Neufeld

Director, Knowledge Leadership

Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition

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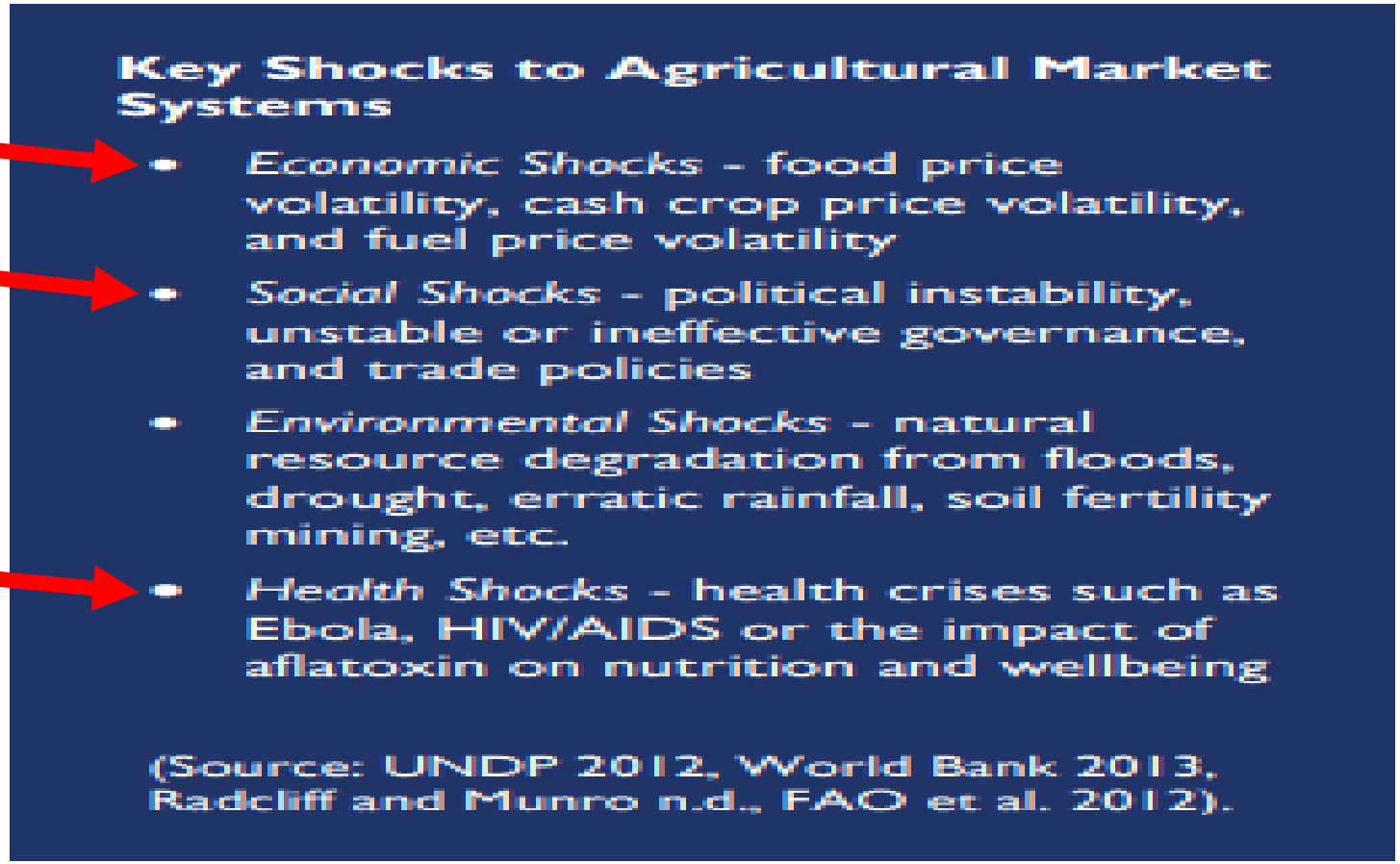
COVID-19 is causing simultaneous shocks to food and market systems



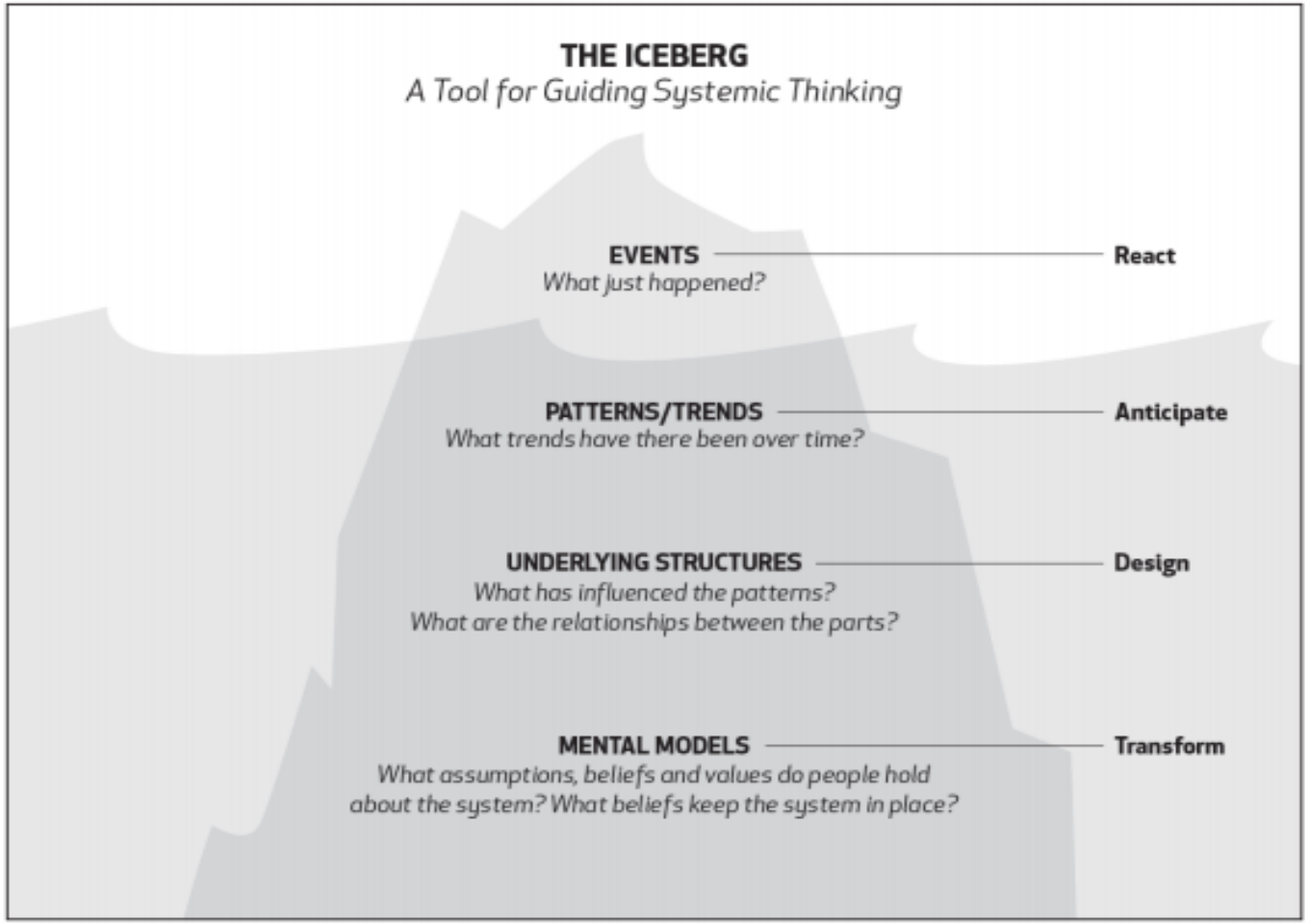
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/Market-Systems-Resilience-Measurement-Framework-Report-Final_public-August-2019.pdf

Food and market systems are not prepared for these shocks, nor do we have the information needed to address them

Existing tools can help guide our priority setting for filling information/ evidence gaps:

We are seeing a proliferation of data initiatives that describe current events, and some novel approaches to understanding patterns/ trends

Figure 2: Understanding System Behavior



Source: Adapted from the NW Earth Institute

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/Market-Systems-Resilience-Measurement-Framework-Report-Final_public-August-2019.pdf

An example: SMEs are highly involved in production, processing, retailing of nutritious foods in Africa, particularly those consumed by low income households

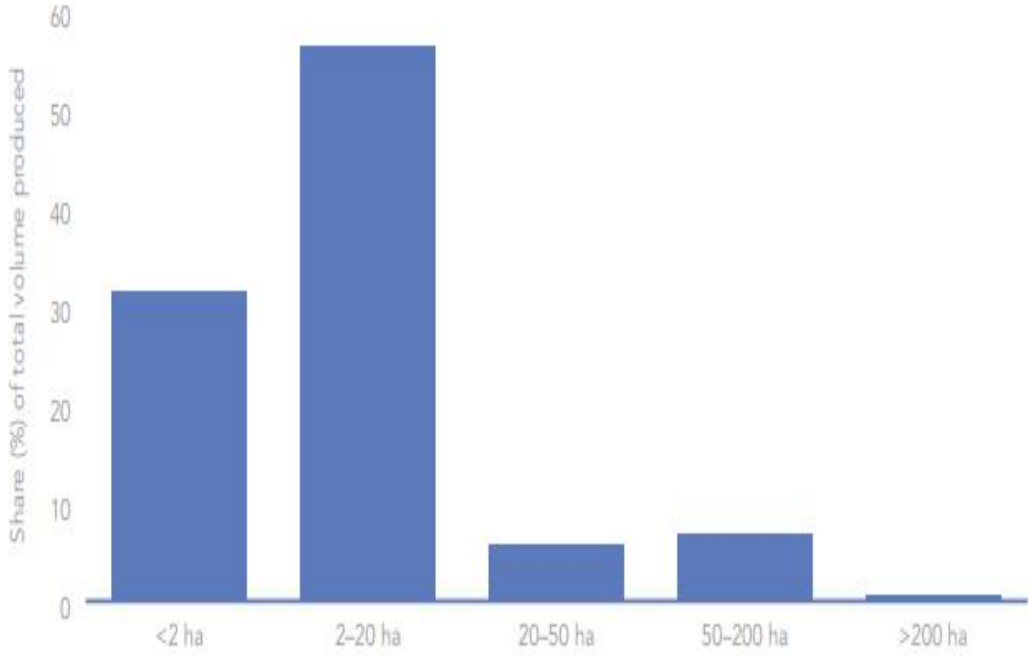


Figure 3. Share of fruit and vegetable production by different sized farms in SSA. Figure shows combined shares for both fruits and vegetables.[6] Source: Own illustration based on graphs in Herrero et al. (7).

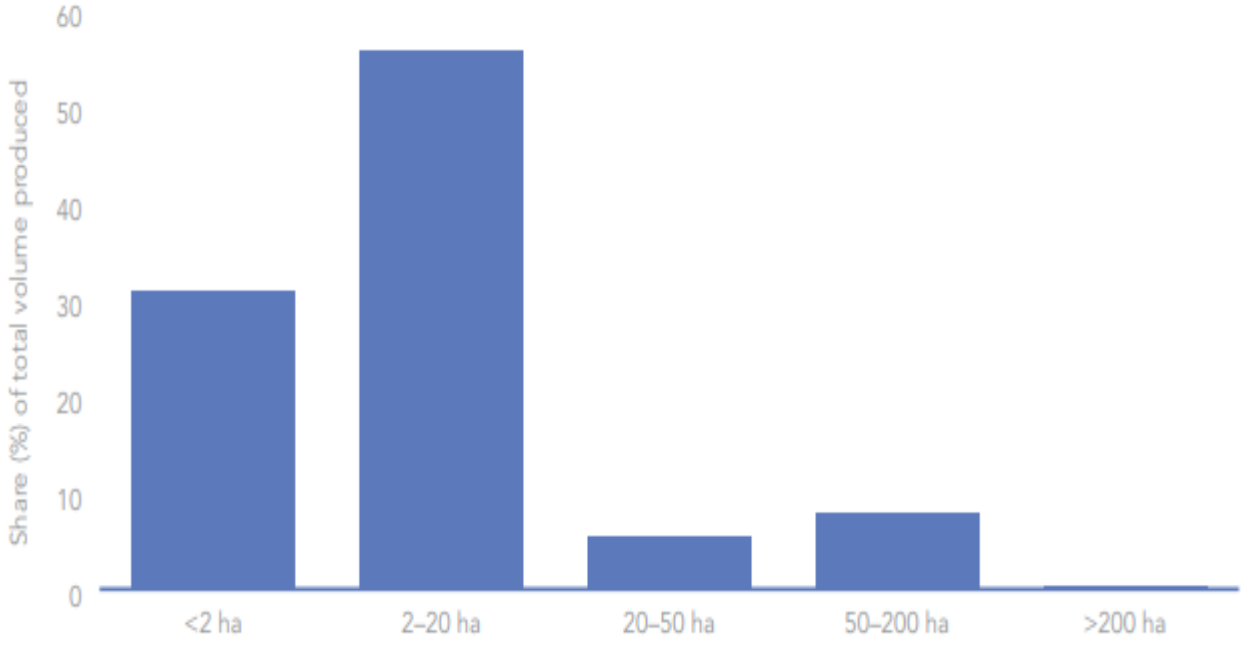
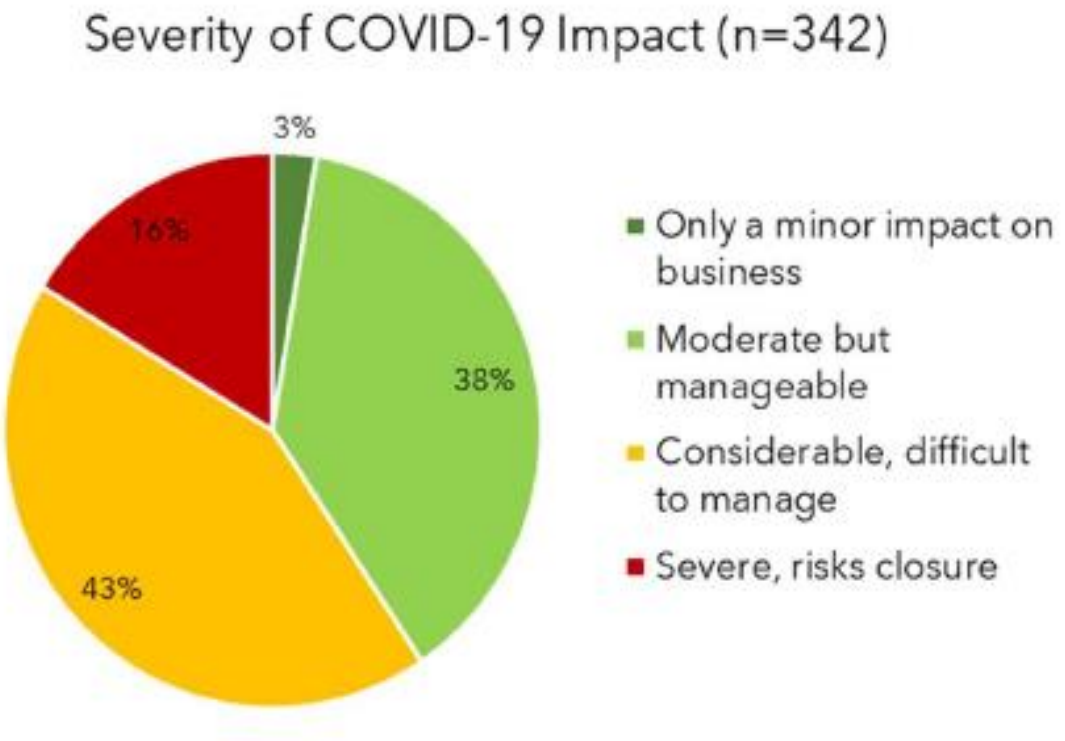


Figure 5. Share of cereal and legumes production by different farm sizes in sub-Saharan Africa. Figure shows combined shares for the cereals and legumes groups.[14] Source: Own illustration based on graph in Herrero et al. (7).

https://www.gainhealth.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/gain-working-paper-series-2-the-role-of-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises-in-nutritious-food-supply-chains-in-africa.pdf

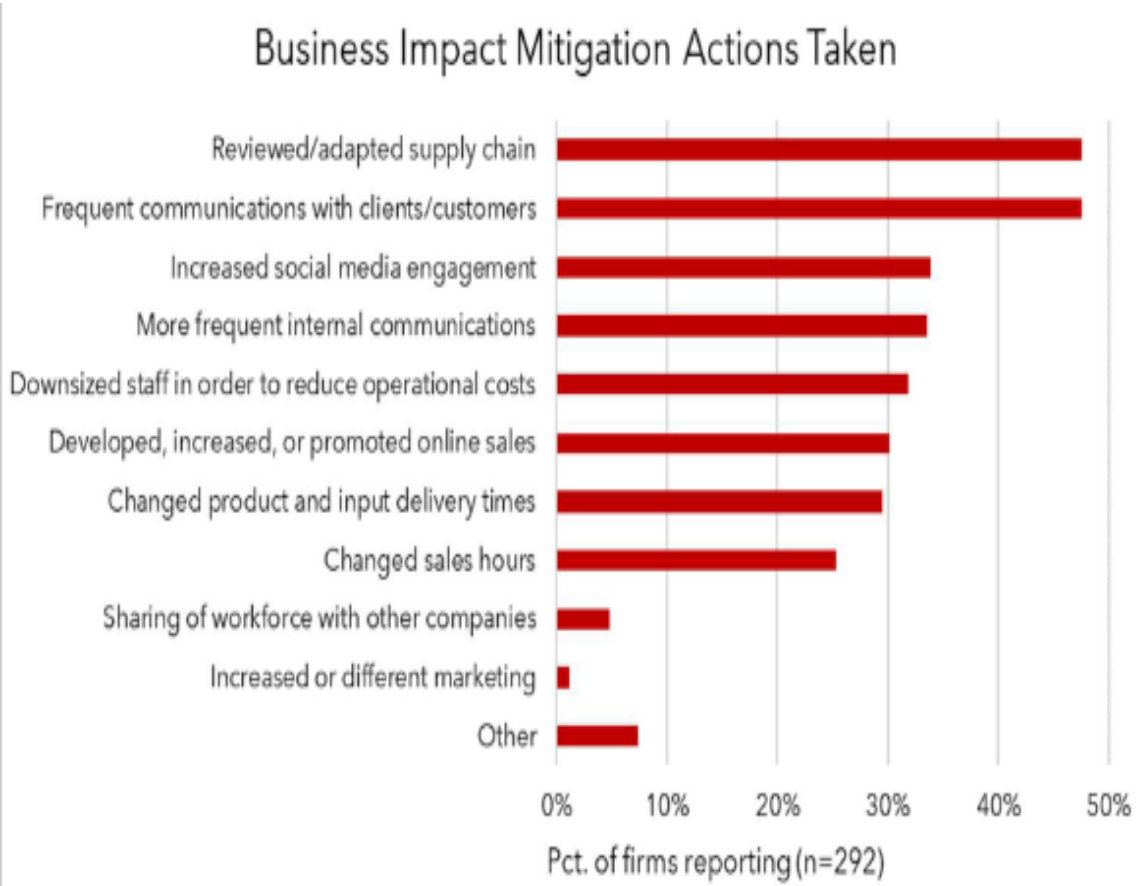
Nutritious food SMEs are being affected by COVID-19



'Due to this pandemic, some of my clients disappeared with unpaid invoices... I could not continue doing business. My clients are still waiting for me to resume the business, and because of delaying, there is a risk to lose them... Because I have contracted different farmers in country, they don't have anywhere to sell their harvest at a good price. They are taking their products to local markets [at lower prices].' - a fruit and vegetable wholesaler in Rwanda

https://www.gainhealth.org/resources/reports-and-publications/impacts-covid-19-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises-food-system

They have taken action to address these challenges and have ideas on how government can help



Reaction now, but we need resilience soon!

- Rapid adaptation of information systems have provided crucial insights into the impact of the COVID-19 crisis, that are supporting an evidence-informed *reactive* response
  - Some limitations:
    - Rapidly evolving situation
    - Poorest and most vulnerable may have limited participation in virtual information systems
- Resilience for *next time* needs more and better data to inform needed food and market systems *transformations*
  - Food Systems Dashboard
  - Food Systems Summit 2021:

https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/food-systems-summit-2021/

https://foodsystemsdashboard.org/

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Thank you for attending!

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