COVID-19 and Sustainable Food Systems:
Responses and innovations to tackle vulnerabilities
and build back better
MODERATOR
Brent Loken

Food Science Lead
WWF
Tips for a smooth webinar

Housekeeping rules

Listen-only
All attendees are in listen-only mode (muted).

Questions in chat box
Attendees can send questions to the presenters by posting them in the question box in the control panel.

Direct question to presenter
Please indicate to which presenter the question is addressed.

Selected questions
After the presentations we will select a few questions from the chat box.

Recorded
This webinar is being recorded and a Youtube link will be shared with all attendees and available on the SFS Programme website.
Welcome and introduction

- Brent Loken, Food Science Lead, WWF

Keynote speech

- Dr. David Nabarro, WHO Director-General’s Special Envoy for COVID-19

Research findings

- Stieneke Oenema, Coordinator, UNSCN
- Yuna Chiffolleau, Research Director, INRAe
- Overview of participants answers

Practical cases

- Vice-minister Ana Cristina Quirós Soto, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Costa Rica
- Potira V. Preiss, counselor of the Council of Food Security and Nutrition (CONSEA) of Rio Grande do Sul state, Brazil

Comments from experts and Q & A

- Martina Otto, Head of Cities Unit, UNEP
- Fatima Hachem, Senior Nutrition Officer, FAO
- Margarita Astrálag, Director of the Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division (ECG), IFAD
Background

Why this webinar?

**Webinar series**
Part of a series of webinars shedding light on the *Food Systems Approach in Practice*, organized by the Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) Programme of the UN One Planet Network.

**Sustainable Food Systems Programme**
The SFS Programme is a global multi-stakeholder partnership that supports countries to shift to sustainable food consumption and production patterns, *with a food systems approach*.

**3rd Global Conference SFS Programme**
The webinar will help inform the 3rd Global Conference of the SFS Programme (November 2020).

Check our website for further resources and information on how to join and take action!
Questions we will try to answer

1. What positive innovations/changes would you highlight among response measures to the COVID-19 crisis in light of the need to transition to sustainable food systems?

2. What policy measures will be essential to ensure we turn the COVID-19 crisis into an opportunity to build sustainable food systems?
MODERATOR
Brent Loken

Food Science Lead
WWF
Beyond Boundaries

Emerging zoonotic diseases, nature, and human well-being
Rise of new emerging infectious diseases
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoonotic Pathogen Types</th>
<th>Host/Reservoir</th>
<th>Vector/Intermediate Host</th>
<th>Human Infection</th>
<th>Direct Drivers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Vector-borne zoonotic</td>
<td><img src="animal" alt="Bird" /></td>
<td><img src="vector" alt="Bug" /></td>
<td><img src="human" alt="Person" /></td>
<td><img src="driver" alt="Land-use" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example diseases: West Nile virus, Lyme disease</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Vector-borne with zoonotic origin; now restricted to people</td>
<td><img src="vector" alt="Bug" /></td>
<td><img src="human" alt="Person" /></td>
<td></td>
<td><img src="driver" alt="Exploitation" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example diseases: malaria, dengue fever</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Direct transmission from animal host, no secondary transmission</td>
<td><img src="animal" alt="Bird" /></td>
<td><img src="human" alt="Person" /></td>
<td><img src="human" alt="Person" /></td>
<td><img src="driver" alt="Land-use" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example diseases: hantavirus pulmonary syndrome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Pathogens with reservoirs of both wild and domestic species</td>
<td><img src="animal" alt="Bird" /></td>
<td><img src="vector" alt="Chicken" /></td>
<td><img src="human" alt="Person" /></td>
<td><img src="driver" alt="Exploitation" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example disease: avian influenza</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Paramyxoviruses</td>
<td><img src="animal" alt="Bat" /></td>
<td><img src="vector" alt="Pig" /></td>
<td><img src="human" alt="Person" /></td>
<td><img src="driver" alt="Exploitation" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example diseases: Hendra, Nipah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Filoviruses</td>
<td><img src="animal" alt="Bat" /></td>
<td><img src="vector" alt="Primate" /></td>
<td><img src="human" alt="Person" /></td>
<td><img src="driver" alt="Exploitation" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example diseases: Ebola, Marburg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Coronavirus</td>
<td><img src="animal" alt="Bat" /></td>
<td><img src="vector" alt="Dinosaurs" /></td>
<td><img src="human" alt="Person" /></td>
<td><img src="driver" alt="Exploitation" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example diseases: SARS, MERS, COVID-19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Direct Drivers:**
  - Land-use change
  - Agricultural intensification
  - Exploitation of wildlife
  - Climate change
  - Wild animal hunting, butchering, and consumption
Most important drivers of novel emerging infectious diseases (e.g., COVID-19)

- The production, sale, and consumption of live high-risk wild animals alongside live domestic animals, inside and out of markets, across scales
- Intensification of agriculture and animal production
- Land-use change (primarily due to agriculture)
Indirect driver: increasing global demand for animal protein and wildlife products
Leverage points in the context of systems change
Carefully constructed interventions to avoid making the vulnerable more vulnerable.
Keynote

Dr. David Nabarro

WHO Director General’s Special Envoy for COVID-19
Stineke Oenema

Coordinator
United Nations Standing Commission on Nutrition (UNSCN)
COVID-19 and Sustainable Food Systems: Responses and innovations to tackle vulnerabilities and build back better

The evolving impact of the pandemic on how people meet the food system

Stineke Oenema, UNSCN Coordinator
COVID-19 and Nutrition

• Large parts of the world in semi-confinement
• World’s economy moving in slow motion.

The disease and the measures that are taken to reduce its spread → disruptions in day-to-day food supply, at all levels.

→ Predictions of an increase of at least 150,000 child deaths [1].

→ COVID-19 related restrictions risk pushing many into acute hunger (FSIN 2020) [2].

→ Increased overweight/obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs). People with obesity and NCDs are more vulnerable to becoming severely ill and to die from COVID-19.[3]

[1] https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(20)30229-1/fulltext
Every day, people buy and consume food through their food environment: the interface between people’s diet and the wider food system.

The food environment has been conceptualized in various ways:
- CFS HLPE defines it as “the physical, economic, political and sociocultural context in which consumers engage with the food system to make their decisions about acquiring, preparing and consuming food” [4].

- FAO defines it more in terms of food itself: “all the foods which are available and accessible to people in the settings in which they go about their daily lives. That is, the range of foods in supermarkets, small retail outlets, wet markets, street food stalls, coffee shops, tea houses, school canteens, restaurants and all the other venues where people procure and eat food” [5].


More recently, Turner et al. (2018) proposed a new conceptual framework that more clearly defines the external and personal domains of food environments influencing attitudes and habits [6].

Food availability, prices, vendors, product properties, marketing and regulation design the food environment externally, while a healthy food environment depends also on personal aspects such as geographical accessibility, affordability, convenience and desirability.

The COVID-19 pandemic potentially impacted all elements of the food environment. ➔ This shows food environment is very sensitive to shocks elsewhere in the system.

Preliminary results of UNSCN survey on the impact of COVID-19 on personal food environments:

- 2015 responses from 118 countries, online, convenience sampling
Food-related daily routines: the 3rd most disrupted activity

Rank the following options from 1st to 6th, where 1st is the area that you have been most affected and 6th is the one you have been least affected.

- Food related activities: e.g. changes in food purchasing and acquisition, sources of food, food as a social event
- Work/school related activities: e.g. transition to virtual platforms, working mostly alone, changes in job search
- Income related activities: e.g. loss of employment, furlough, decrease in earnings from inability to sell goods/services
- Social activities: meeting friends and family, travelling
- Entertainment related activities: e.g. attending events, playing sports
- Health and hygiene related activities: e.g. hand washing, accessing healthcare services and advice
2 out of 3 respondents indicated an increase in food stockpiling, likely linked to the finding that nearly half report buying more food out of anxiety.
Home cooking and food stockpiling seem to be accompanied by increased awareness of food waste (63%) and the promising indication that food is not being wasted more than normally (93%).
Home cooking seems to be the big winner

Please consider the following food related habits and indicate whether you have experienced any changes:

- Increase
- Slight increase
- No changes
- Slight decrease
- Decrease

- Leaving the house to shop for groceries
- Eating out (e.g., restaurants/Safetaria/fast food)
- Eating at someone else's place (e.g., family, friends)
- Ordering take-away or fast food meals with deliveries
- Cooking at home
- Eating fresh fruits and/or vegetables
- Using canned fruits and/or vegetables
- Using frozen fruits and/or vegetables
- Heating frozen meals to eat

UNSCN
United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition
UNITED NATIONS DECade OF ACTION ON NUTRITION
2016-2025
Home cooking seems to be the big winner: 50% of the respondents indicated an increase and another 24% a slight increase in the practice.
KEY TAKEAWAY MESSAGES

• Now is the time to support and enact changes in the food environment that guide people towards making more sustainable and healthy choices.

• This is an open window for strengthening local food systems with shorter supply chains, nutrition at their core and greater food diversity to enhance resilience and deliver healthy food for all—leaving no one behind.

• Take action at person level:

  ✓ Focus on local foods – purchase from local suppliers and growers
  ✓ Get adventurous in the kitchen with foods produced in your area
  ✓ Focus on nutrition - set healthy aims in your cooking
  ✓ Avoid food waste by making the most of what you have
For overall actions and continually updated recommendations by the UN to protect health and nutrition in times of COVID-19, visit https://www.unscn.org/en/news-events/recent-news?idnews=2039
UNSCN vision

A world free from hunger and all forms of malnutrition is attainable in this generation
Yuna Chiffoleau

Co-leader of the French National Experts Network on Local Food

National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAe)
Eating in times of coronavirus: Field data from France

Dr Yuna Chiffoleau, Inrae, France
Co-leader of the French National Experts Network on Local Food

SFSP Covid-19 Webinar, 3rd of June, 2020
Methodology

On-line survey launched 15 March 2020, by a collective of researchers, agricultural and rural development practitioners and civil society associations

- Open-ended questions. Expected responses: **qualitative (and quantitative) data about the impacts** of the crisis on food systems

- More than 600 contributions as of 11 May (1st day of the progressive reopening of France), 2/3 from consumers also describing their food environment, thus covering more than **2 000 situations from all regions of France** + additional inputs (interviews, newspaper articles, etc.)
Localisation of the respondents in France (11th of May, 2020)
High demand for local food and direct food chains (10x higher) for reassurance, to support farmers and/or to get fresh products

Many grassroots initiatives to procure local food
- Informal neighbourhood purchasing groups
- On-line platforms (farmer drives, social entrepreneurs developing open source digital tools)
→ extension of local food consumption to ‘regular’ consumers

Public programs were often uncoordinated or counter-productive (e.g. maps, open air market management)
- Cities/territories that have official local food policies were no exception

‘Food fracture’ despite solidarity actions
Research and Policy Recommendations

Reducing vulnerabilities while improving complementarities between the different food systems, in a resilience AND transition perspective, requires:
- better knowing and controlling the concrete food flows (= both socio-economic relations and spatial physical flows of products with specific quality characteristics) (while data remain mainly private), and anticipating possible shocks (drought, social movement...)
- balancing the institutional support towards local food systems (e.g. agricultural land management)
- favouring the dialogue between the food systems

Modalities of support to grassroots initiatives by local authorities but also by the State and European policies

Organisation/regulation of a Right to sustainable food, experimentation of a State and local authorities sponsored social insurance for food (similar to the healthcare system)
Manger au temps du coronavirus


Contact : yuna.chiffoleau@inrae.fr; anne-cecile.brit@civam-bretagne.org
Mrs. Ana Cristina Quirós Soto

Vice-minister

Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Costa Rica
Potira V. Preiss

Counsellor

CONSEA RS - Council of Food Security and Sustainable Nutrition of Rio Grande do Sul state, Brazil
Sustainable Food Systems: Responses and innovations to tackle vulnerabilities and build back better

Potira V. Preiss

Juliano Sá, Lisete Souza, Fernanda Vasconcellos
CONSEA - Council of Food Security and Sustainable Nutrition of Rio Grande do Sul state (RS)

*Advisory council to the executive, an articulation body between government and civil society for the establishment and fiscalization of Public Policies on Food Security and Nutrition;

* Created by Law 11.914 - May 11, 2003), it is one of the instances of the state Food Security System

Main functions:
* Liaison between State and civil society in favor of Food security
* Development of guidelines and priorities for Public Policies
* Encouraging the creation of local Food Councils
* Social Control of State Actions

CONSEA - Council of Food Security and Sustainable Nutrition of Rio Grande do Sul state (RS)

#CONSEAcontraCorona

@CONSEARS
consea-rs@stas.rs.gov.br
https://stas.rs.gov.br/consea-rs

Rio Grande do Sul
Population: 12 million
Area: 281,748 km²
Cities: 497 municipalities
Responses in face of COVID - 19

**March 18**
* Launch of a document with recommendations to maintain food security for the population in the face of the Coronavirus pandemic and reinforcing the need for active action by the Government of RS

**March 26**
* Constitution of “The Gaucho Emergency Committee to Fight Hunger” further expanding mobilizations with a wider range of organizations
* Joint meetings with RS Municipal Food Councils
* **Working on 3 lines of action**

#CONSEAcontraCorona

@CONSEARS
consea-rs@stas.rs.gov.br
https://stas.rs.gov.br/consea-rs
1 - Food for Vulnerable Populations

1. Creation of a “reporting” channel for non-compliance with the right to food;

2. Mobilization with civil society organizations to donate food baskets to vulnerable populations;
   
   * Disclosure of campaigns to raise funds and food - more than 100 tons of organic food donated by the MST (Landless Workers Movement) alone;
   
   * Delivery - more than 3 thousand food baskets donated.

3. Recommendations to the State Government for emergency food purchase and distribution
   
   * At least 2.5 million vulnerable people in RS (unemployed, people without income, indigenous communities, quilombolas, gypsies, immigrants, etc.)
   
   *Priority to purchase food from family farmers

#CONSEAcontraCorona
2 - Food for school children

*The National School Feeding Program – PNAE was created in 1979 and since 2009 has started to encourage family farming and agroecological products:
  * minimum purchase of 30% of family farming;
  * premium value for agroecological products.

*Due to suspension of school activities during the pandemic, it required a change in the law (Law No. 13.987 / 2020) authorizing the use of the FNDE resource to distribute food baskets to students;

We are monitoring how this is unfolding!

*Against the guidelines, the RS Government bought 185 thousand food baskets, costing 22 million from a single wholesaler and with an inadequate composition: excess sugar and ultra-processed products.
  * Public notes of concern from AGAN and CRN-2 due to low nutritional quality and non-compliance with the law;
  * Unicafes, Coceargs and Fetraf delivered a representation to the Public Ministry requesting an investigation of the incident.
3 - Fostering quality food offer for general population preferably through for family farmers direct marketing channels (farmers markets, home delivery, CSA systems)

* higher income for family farmers;
* healthier and more accessible food for consumers.

1. Liaison with state and municipalities government for the maintenance of marketing with safe measures
   * e.g.: reversal of the decree preventing farmers from other municipalities from trading in Porto Alegre.

2. Encouragement for population to purchase healthy food from family farmers

   Support in the platform “Where to buy real food in the pandemic?”
   https://feirasorganicas.org.br/comidadeverdade/

3. Constant dialogue with family farming organizations in RS
   * monitoring the situation of family farmers;
   * supporting preventive care and safety adaptations in marketing strategies.
Main Challenges:

1. COVID's intensity in the country;

2. The context of high social precariousness of the population;

3. The disarticulation of public policies on food and nutrition security in recent years, in all instances - state, federal and municipal;

4. Slow and insufficient action by the State, in some cases contrary to international recommendations, either to combat COVID or to guarantee food security;

5. The lack of CONSEA's own structure to act effectively: at the moment we do not have our own headquarters, basic logistics equipment - total dependence on the voluntary performance of the councilors, given limit range for our actions.
1. What positive innovations/changes would you highlight among response measures to the COVID-19 crisis in light of the need to transition to sustainable food systems?

2. What policy measures will be essential to ensure we turn the COVID-19 crisis into an opportunity to build sustainable food systems?
Martina Otto

Head of Cities Unit

UN Environment Program (UNEP)
Fatima Hachem

Senior Nutrition Officer

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Sustainable diets and nutrition

Fatima Hachem
Senior Nutrition Officer
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Rome, Italy
Sustainable Diets and Nutrition

Positive changes we are seeing among response measures in light of the need to transition to sustainable food systems

• COVID-19 has repositioned nutrition and diets as central to increasing resilience to pandemics
  • People with preconditions related to poor diets (obesity, CD, diabetes and cancer) have increased risk for severe infection and mortality
  • Maintaining healthy diets is necessary before, during and after the pandemic – poor diets are major risk factor for disease
• Wider realization that healthy diets that can support the immune system and help reduce inflammation have also less environmental impact and pressure
  • balanced, diversified and rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and nuts.

Essential policy measures to ensure we turn this crisis into an opportunity to build resilient and sustainable food systems

• Ensure market functioning and stability in times of crisis for the availability and affordability of sustainable healthy food options;
• Reduce inequity in access to sustainable healthy diets to shield vulnerable populations;
• Promote food knowledge, competencies and skills to make the right food choices;
• Invest in short diversified supply chains;
• Recognize and support agro-biodiversity as a contributor to sustainable healthy diets.
Margarita Astrálagar

Director, Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
COVID-19: Implications for food systems and the need to build resilience

Margarita Astrálaga, Director, Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division
COVID-19 and the Mainstreaming Themes

**Climate and Environment**
- Significant drops in GHG emissions and air pollution
- Likely to be temporary without supporting policy

**Gender**
- Rural women are very exposed to the COVID19 threat:
  - Discriminatory norms and less access to assets
  - Disruptions to work in the informal sector
  - Shoulder much of the care burden

**Nutrition**
- Constrained economic activity could reduce incomes and access to nutritious foods
- Production and distribution of nutritious foods may be disrupted
- Food insecure among most vulnerable

**Youth**
- Largest threat posed by disruption to supply chains and increased unemployment:
  - Additional 24.7 million likely to be unemployed
  - Youth already 3 times more likely to be unemployed
Building resilience: IFAD’s response

- Rural Stimulus Facility
- Repurposing projects
- Existing commitments
- Policy Engagement

Resilience
What did participants say?

Highlights from responses to the webinar’s questions

Moderator: Brent Loken
1. What positive innovations/changes would you highlight among response measures to the COVID-19 crisis in light of the need to transition to sustainable food systems?

- Community/civil society’s rapid collaboration to fill the gaps and ensure access to healthy foods.
- ICTs to facilitate collaboration among actors to connect producers with consumers.
- Agroecological approaches, shorter supply chains.
- Increase in garden farming, increase in home cooking.
- National level governments listening more to local level governments.

2. What policy measures will be essential to ensure we turn the COVID-19 crisis into an opportunity to build sustainable food systems?

- Building local, or city-region, food policies, strategies, and/or action plans for change.
- Adaptive, locally-embedded, politically sensitive approaches that apply a food systems approach to address interlinkages between actors, manage trade-offs and achieve synergies.
- Fair pay, recognize and protect “invisible” actors (e.g. migrant seasonal workers). Improve incentive schemes for small food systems actors. Extend safety nets that include nutrition criteria.
- Protect biodiversity, halt land conversion and reduce food loss and waste.
- Diversify the food industry and its agricultural practices.
- If governments have shown they can implement strict measures for an infectious disease public health crisis, it can do the same to limit unhealthy, unsustainable food and its impact on people and planet!
Q & A
The need for a food systems approach

It is critical that governments take a food systems perspective to ensure a food system that can deliver stable access of affordable, healthy and sustainable food and decrease the risks of future pandemics. This requires focusing on inclusive collaboration, coordinating actions between different policy agendas, participatory decision-making in which the needs of all food systems actors are balanced with emphasis on the most vulnerable.

Livelihoods

It is essential to recognize the unique needs of vulnerable social groups; and recognize the potential of small farmers and businesses; and address inequity in access to safe and decent working conditions.

Diets and nutrition

It is essential to focus on policy measures that promote sustainable healthy diets for all as an essential pillar of preventive measures for future outbreaks.

Promotion of agro-biodiversity can contribute to increase resilience.

Nature

It is essential that we lessen our impact on the environment, that we halt habitat conversion, and that we address the existential threat of climate change.

Nature-based solutions such as agroecology, regenerative agriculture, can contribute to human and planetary health.
Thank you!

Stay tuned for upcoming webinars in the “Food Systems in Practice” series!