



COVID-19 and the Cocoa Value Chain in Ecuador

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Covid-19: new challenge or new opportunity to enhance sustainability of
agricultural and fisheries value chains in EU partner countries?

Disruptions in the VC and pathways

- Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic the sector is growing
 - Exports increased by 21% compared to 2019
 - “El cacao ecuatoriano conquista mercados en la pandemia” Cit. “El comercio”.
- Retail side: smaller businesses were mainly affected by shop closures

Solutions undertaken and effectiveness

Actions taken at different levels:

Macro level:

- Product quality differentiation
- Long term investments pay off

Sales side:

- Online marketing

Producers' level:

- Producers' Organisations responded in different ways showing the power of collective action
- Government facilitated access to credit

New challenge or new opportunity

The pandemic stresses the importance to catch opportunities:

- On farms diversification / Agro-forestry systems
- Promote and strengthen farmers' organisation
- Develop/increase internal demand

Concluding remarks: lessons learned

- Importance of product differentiation and long-term perspective but,
- The pandemic is not over yet
- Pending questions: how demand (& prices) will be affected in the long term, and how this will affect the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the cocoa VC?