

COVID-19 and the Maize Value Chain in Nigeria

Muhammad BELLO (Bayero University Kano, Nigeria)

Tommie PONSIOEN (Consultant)

Mona DHAMANKAR (Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), NL)

Gideon ONUMAH (NRI, UK)

**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

Economic impacts:

- Maize price hike due to supply chain disruptions and ban on food imports
- Labour shortages and inputs access problems affected planting (especially in critical months of May/June)

Social impacts:

- Households faced food and nutrition-security problems
- Also job/income insecurity, including SME traders and migrant youth

Environmental impacts:

- Reduced vehicular traffic could lead to less pollution but negative effects possible if maize yield declines (limited uptake of inputs) and/or land pressure increases if COVID-19 persists

Solutions undertaken and effectiveness

1. Relief supplies e.g.: food items, subsidised inputs and Personal Protective Equipments (PPEs)

- Poorly targeted with no central coordination
- Many vulnerable households excluded

2. Soft loans targeting smallholder farmers and SMEs (under NIRSAL)

- Procedures too stringent – leading to high levels of exclusion
- Inadequate funds led to limited coverage

New challenge or new opportunity

No new challenges created in maize value chain due to COVID-19

New opportunity to:

1. Leverage ICT to enhance COVID-safe transactions in the VC e.g.:
 - Scale up mobile-based payments
 - Help build up reliable database of maize VC actors
 - Facilitate access to extension advisory services (e.g. for women farmers)
2. Promote new trading systems (e.g. WRS and exchange trading) which minimise direct human interactions in maize trading
3. Promote innovative finance systems which ensure sustained access to inputs by smallholders

Concluding remarks: lesson learned

COVID 19 has mixed effect on the Maize VC in Nigeria

Sustainable and inclusive growth in the VC is possible if government policies and investments complement private investment, including in some of the new opportunities identified