



Save the Children

RAPID QUESTION GUIDE TO INFORM RURAL LIVELIHOOD RESPONSES FOR **COVID-19**

Guidance

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The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on designing and identifying appropriate livelihoods interventions within the context of COVID-19.

In many circumstances, Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) and social protection will be appropriate for ensuring families' adequate access to healthy foods (as detailed in the Financing Families Big Idea). However, simultaneous measures can also be taken to support livelihoods to enable households to continue accessing income. In many contexts, agriculture, livestock and fisheries work – which are critical food and income sources for poorer households in many countries - continues, providing a brief window of opportunity to intervene at critical moments in the seasonal calendars of different regions (e.g. planting in West Africa and harvesting in Southern Africa).

This document presents a series of questions per livelihood type to prompt reflection and analysis on possible interventions to support families' livelihoods. It focuses on rural livelihoods, although also concerns urban markets that rely on rural-based production. A list of possible response options is then provided.

SECTION 1: KEY QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON LIVELIHOODS AND FOOD ACCESS

Please take into consideration government policies and positions on COVID-19 that apply to the following rural-based livelihoods.

Agriculture:

Main challenges/issues to address (depending on physical distancing requirements and on where in the seasonal calendar a given country or livelihood zone is): access to inputs, availability of labour force, access to markets, functionality of extension services

Planting and crop maintenance:

- Can smallholder farmers access their fields to prepare land, plant and do crop maintenance? Can they access water, if necessary?
- Do larger-scale farmers have the labour and services they require to prepare, plant, and do crop maintenance?
- Can households access the inputs they need (tools, seeds, fertilizer, etc.)?
 - Are they available in local markets?
 - Can households afford them?
- Are/can agriculture extension services be provided?
- Are farmers and labourers practicing safe physical distancing measures? And can they access minimum hygiene facilities/ items?

Harvest:

- Can smallholder farmers access their fields to harvest their crops?
- Do larger-scale farmers have the labour they require to harvest their crops?
- Are farmers and labourers practicing safe physical distancing measures? And can they access minimum hygiene facilities/ items?
- Do smallholder farmers have storage and preservation facilities for their harvest/ production? Do they have capacity to safely preserve production? Do community grain banks exist?
- Markets: can smallholder and larger-scale farmers access markets to sell their production?
 - Has transportation to markets and/ or collection points been impacted? If yes, how? (e.g.: road closures, transport taxes, extended transport hours due to curfews, etc.)

- Has demand and/or have prices changed? Consider demand from local (smaller) and larger-scale areas of consumption (including from restaurants, hotels, etc.), and if government has imposed any price ceilings/ regulations

Livestock & fisheries:

Main challenges/ issues to address: market access, storage and preservation, changing demand

- Can households access the inputs they need (fodder, vaccinations, fishing nets, etc.)?
 - Are they available in local markets?
 - Can households afford them?
- Can transhumant pastoral communities engage in regular seasonal movements?
- Do households have adequate storage/ preservation facilities (for both fishing and livestock production)?
- Can households access minimum hygiene facilities/ items?
- Markets: can households access markets to sell their livestock and fishing production?
 - Has transportation to markets and/ or collection points impacted? If yes, how? (e.g.: road closures, transport taxes, extended transport hours due to curfews, longer food safety checks etc.)
 - Has demand and/or have prices changed? Consider demand from both local (smaller) and larger-scale areas of consumption (including from restaurants, hotels, etc.)

Other income sources:

- Are households continuing to engage in other income sources, such as petty trade or self-employment (e.g.: motor mechanic) whilst adhering to physical distancing?
 - If yes, what type of support might they require to ensure continuity? (e.g.: access to inputs)
 - If no, consider providing CVA to ensure their basic income. (Refer to the Financing Families documentation for details.)

SECTION 2: IDENTIFYING THE MOST NEEDED AND FEASIBLE RESPONSE OPTIONS

Response options:

This section outlines a range of potential livelihood interventions to respond to the different challenges found through answering the above questions. This is not an exhaustive list.

At the end of this section we also include a list of operational considerations that will help determine which response options are feasible and/or how they could be supported.

Challenge/ Issue	Response Option
Limited or no access to fields/ fishing areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage kitchen gardening or homestead gardening close to the home through the provision of inputs (through in-kind distributions or vouchers), addressing any gender barriers in access to inputs • Advocacy for agriculture and fishing workers as “essential workers”; • Promote physical distancing measures, including where collective labour is used.
Limited or no access to agriculture, livestock, fishing inputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide vouchers, cash or distributions-in-kind to households linked to local suppliers • Advocate for scale up or out of Government social protection systems of assistance as needed
Limited or no availability of agriculture, livestock, fishing inputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide or facilitate loans (including access to credit), grants or distributions to suppliers • Refer to market transportation responses if availability is linked to transportation blockages

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate to local and/or National government regarding urgent need for access to inputs and support market actors as needed • Address any gender barriers in access to inputs
Reduced or lack of availability of labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for agriculture and fishing workers as “essential workers” • Work with local government to explore opportunities for alternative labour sources that may now be available, such as students or individuals from businesses that have temporarily
Reduced agriculture extension services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote alternative support measures such as mobiles messages, and transfer of information from those with access to mobile phones to those without, and especially women farmers. • Explore ways extension workers can support the response (such as market monitoring, hygiene messaging, etc.)
Interrupted transportation and collection of production to sale points	<p>Opportunities to overcome transportation challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate safe collection “meet-up” points between production areas and buyers/intermediaries from larger areas of consumption (including urban areas) • Advocate for the opening of safe trade corridors • Provide or support provision of storage and preservation structures to prevent waste during transportation, especially for perishable products <p>Opportunities to shorten supply chains and increase local demand to sell production locally (to limit transport needs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute vouchers to poorest households and link to local producers/sellers to increase demand for production
Decreased market demand, for example of fish or vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide (nutritious) food vouchers to households, linked to producers and/or sellers
Poor storage facilities that limit life of production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support improved storage for agriculture and fishing production at household level, to prolong storage time (provide structures and increase knowledge) • Promote/ support community grain banks to help mitigate against future price increases.
Increased food prices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate to governments for the regulation of food prices and for increased social assistance • Support community grain banks to mitigate against future further increases
For all of the above....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate hygiene, IYCF, and physical distancing messaging in activities • Use any available gender analysis/local knowledge to ensure women are able to access inputs, information and markets where needed

Operational considerations:

- Do we have programme teams on the ground able to access communities?
- Are our staff able to work in ways that protect their own health and that of others?
- Are Government staff still operational and accessing communities– e.g. agriculture extension workers?
- Which other actors are able to work directly with communities, including community groups themselves?
- What communication channels are available to work with communities and market actors?
- What types of remote support options are available or could be created? E.g. drawing on SMS systems for sharing information on prices, agriculture extension services, availability and location of seeds and tools, labour demand and supply, transport blockages for market actors, as well as health messaging, working through other local community groups via phone and/or internet?
- What are other actors doing and where are the main gaps?