

COVID-19 Situation Report #4

JUNE 25, 2020

- The rate of increase in the number of COVID-19 cases has picked up in AGRA focus (1) countries; food insecurity remains a concern due to COVID-19 and natural disasters such as floods.
- GDP and cross-border trade continue to take a hit, with Burkina Faso the second country to report quarter on quarter decline in agricultural output (4.69%) following Nigeria, which also [expects 4% quarter on quarter decline](#) in the contribution of the agricultural sector to GDP.
- The funding from international organizations is growing, but only a few countries are putting the money to work. In new disbursements, Nigeria has distributed \$277MM of the country's \$2.9 BN COVID-19 response package.
- Governments are continuing to put COVID-19 economic stimulus packages at the center of their 2020/2021 budgets.
- AGRA published a COVID-19 [policy response package](#) for AGRA countries, and a [policy brief](#) recommending that government sectors increase coordination as part of a robust response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- AGRA's COVID-19 "at a glance" by [focus country](#) & [financial resources](#) committed that AGRA is aware of.

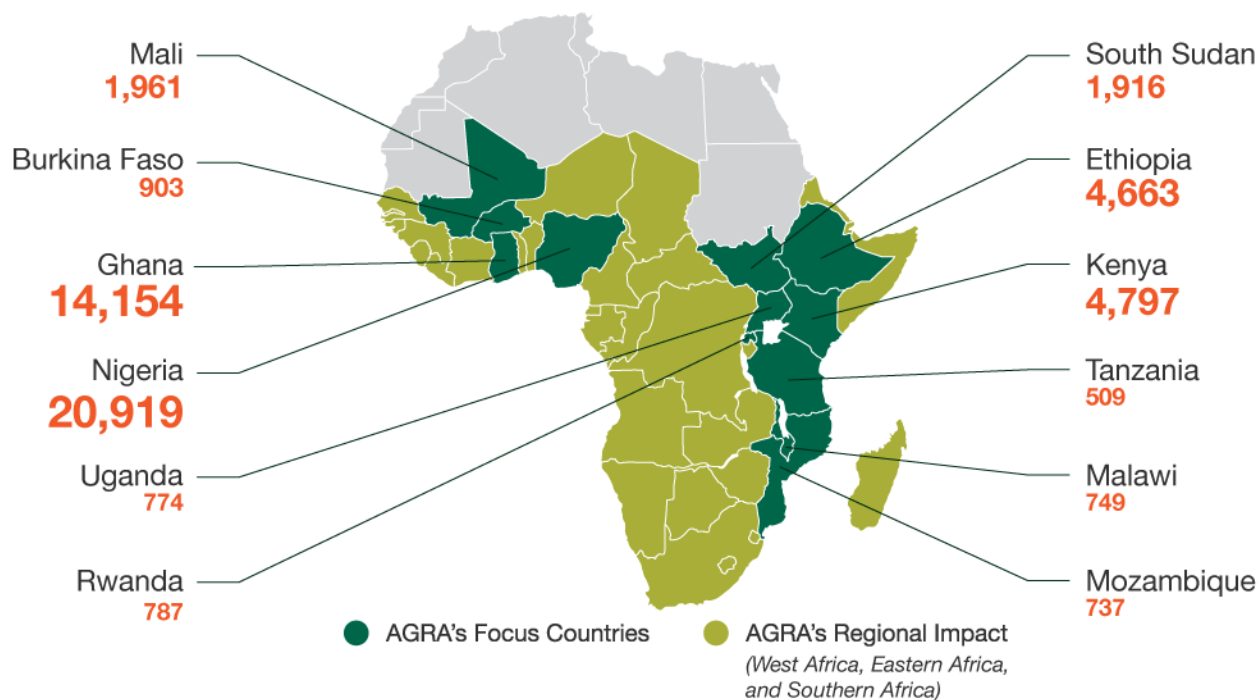
Food security remains a concern as the COVID-19 rate of increase picks up across Africa.

Food insecurity has continued to rise across Africa as the pandemic continues to spread. David Beasley of the World Food Programme [warned in Foreign Affairs](#) of the possibility of a steep rise in hunger as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the number of people experiencing acute hunger around the world expected to double to 265 million by year's end. Floods in East Africa are also contributing to the region's food insecurity, with Rwanda the latest to suffer from flooding. In Uganda, an additional 2.4 million people are expected to face hunger as a result of floods. In Kenya, farmers in 29 counties will need food assistance and inputs for the 80,000+ hectares that have been affected by floods.

In AGRA focus countries, the number of COVID-19 cases increased by 60%, rising to more than 52,000 cases from approximately 32,000 cases two weeks ago. The recovery rate is improving, with the rate of those dying as a result of COVID-19 remaining low – around 2% of those reported infected have died. Nigeria and Ghana as well as Kenya and Ethiopia are all seeing the number of cases of COVID-19 increasing faster than in other AGRA-focus countries.

COVID-19 Cases in AGRA Focus Countries

June 22nd, 2355hrs EAT



GDP and cross border trade continue to take a hit from the COVID-19 pandemic. Burkina Faso became the second country to report quarter on quarter decline in agricultural output (4.69%), following reports from Nigeria ([see June 11 sitrep](#)) that the country also expected a (4%) quarter on quarter decline in the contribution of the agricultural sector to GDP. Cross-border trade continues to suffer from continued border closures, even though food transport is allowed. Countries remain on alert while easing restrictions to allow businesses get back to normal. [ECOWAS ministers in mid-June recommended](#) the gradual and phased re-opening of borders as “imperative in view of the need to revive the economies of ECOWAS member countries”.

However, in some countries, where life is almost returning to normal, infections are now spreading to the communities without clear traces of source. For example, in Uganda this is worrying health officials who are beginning to propose a second total lockdown.

The funding from international organizations is growing, but only a few countries are putting the money to work, often due to low absorptive capacity or obvious projects ready for support. Governments continue to refine their COVID-19 response plans in many AGRA focus countries, while some are putting the plans into action to alleviate the impact of the pandemic. This is perhaps conversion into action of funds received from international institutions. This week, the Central Bank of Nigeria disbursed \$277M for COVID-19 response as part of the \$2.9BN package passed by Nigerian parliament. In the [last sitrep](#), we reported on Ghana’s disbursement of \$120MM to support SMEs .

Countries continue to appeal for funds; the Government of Ethiopia for example has appealed for \$1.65BN assistance from international institutions. Ethiopia has received \$411MM from the IMF and \$82MM from the World Bank in the past.

Governments are continuing to put economic stimulus packages at the center of their 2020/2021 budgets amidst strong domestic pressure to prioritize COVID-19 response as a priority. In Uganda, the proposed national budget as presented by the government has attracted criticism in the media and parliament for not incorporating parliamentary recommendations on COVID-19

response stimulus. It is now under review and will be presented again to parliament. In Malawi, the budget for the National COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan has been revised upwards by \$131 MM (MK97billion) from \$213 MM (MK157 billion), representing a 62% increase. As mentioned above, Ghana has launched a fund of \$120MM to support SMEs and Nigeria has disbursed \$277MM for COVID-19 response.

AGRA's Response to COVID-19

- **AGRA published a COVID-19 [policy response package](#) for AGRA focus countries.** The **package** provides a summary of the COVID-19 pandemic by country, and the impact on the ag sector in fourteen countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The package also provides detailed recommendations as to how partners can support the government policy response, and will be updated monthly.
- **AGRA's policy brief to support policy makers.** AGRA released its first policy brief responding to the impact of the pandemic. The [policy brief](#) examines how to better link the agriculture and food sectors to other parts of government, to enhance coordination and the institutional capacity of governments to deal with large shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Coordinating support to governments.** Across all AGRA focus countries, we are engaging, and supporting co-ordination efforts and design of COVID-19 response plans.
 - AGRA has convened a meeting of 11 permanent secretaries from agriculture ministries in focus countries to understand the changes caused by COVID-19, what they have done to respond, what their needs are and what they have learned. The group held its second meeting on June 2, with its third meeting planned for early July.
- **Linking farmers with buyers and processors.** Across all AGRA focus countries, we are participating and supporting co-ordination efforts.
 - As COVID-19 measures continue to be eased in West Africa, in Ghana, AGRA is engaging with partners to assess farmers' preparedness for the West African planting season. In Burkina Faso, AGRA is also assisting farmers to secure inputs.
 - In countries such as Tanzania and Mozambique, the normal function of regional markets for crops has been interrupted, due to knock-on effects from COVID-19 mitigation efforts, specifically in Tanzania and Mozambique. In both of these countries, AGRA teams are linking farmers with agro-dealers, off takers and processors.

Partnerships to increase productivity, incomes and the resilience of small-holder farmers in Kenya. Through its partnerships work, AGRA has collaborated with a number of private sector companies to strengthen the relationship between village-based advisors (VBAs) and the input and off-taker companies from the private sector. The companies demonstrate their products, and train VBAs to become agents. The VBAs sell inputs to farmers during planting season; they purchase crops from the farmers, aggregate the crops and sell to off-takers in the harvest season. The input companies supply seed, fertilizer, and inoculants (a type of bacteria to stimulate crop growth) to the VBAs, and train VBAs and agro-dealers on the use of their products. The off-taker companies train VBAs to become their agents to aggregate produce, and train VBAs on post-harvest handling and desired grain quality.

In addition to supplying seeds and fertilizers to help farmers improve food security, village based advisors offer a wide range of "last-mile" technologies and services to improve resilience and

encourage the diversification of products among smallholder farmers and assist them to adapt to climate change and uncertainties such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

A good example is that of 37 VBAs in Embu and Kiambu counties in Kenya who have established nurseries for the *Gliricidia sepium* tree and have hosted demonstrations. *Gliricidia* is not only a fast growing, deep-rooting nitrogen fixing tree that encourages good sustainable land management practices, but it also doesn't compete with crops for nutrients and water. The tree can be used by farmers to shade crops, and can serve as live fencing, fodder, firewood, and green manure. VBAs can generate income from the sale of seeds and seedlings to farmers; after the tree is grown, farmers can in turn harvest the tree and sell it back to VBAs who aggregate the wood to be used as biomass. The biomass is used by companies who are turning to renewable energy sources to power their industries.



- **Unlocking financing for agri-focused SMEs.** AGRA is working with UNECA to unlock how Africa Exim Bank can support agri-focused SMEs so they can access money to be able to continue doing business.
- **Supporting data and analysis.** In Kenya, AGRA is providing support to government data and analytics through Kenya's COVID-19 war room.
- **Strengthening innovation for small-holder farmers.** In response to COVID-19, AGRA is partnering with technology partners to supply smart and SMS extension content for farmers.
 - In Mali, AGRA staff are facilitating the development of an electronic distribution system that will facilitate the distribution of fertilizer during the planting season.
 - In Uganda, where public transport has resumed and shops are open, AGRA's village-based advisors are playing a crucial role in last-mile delivery of agro-inputs and off taking of produce sustainably. Especially when movement restrictions were in place, the role of village advisors has been key, as they are locally known and based in farmers' communities, and are also flexible enough to reach the farmers.

Related COVID-19 News

- **Africa.com:** [New Analyses and Insights on the Impact of COVID-19 on Africa's Agricultural and Food Systems](#)
- **Thisday News:** [The Impact of Covid-19 On Food Security](#)
- **ZME Science:** [Coronavirus threatens to worsen global food crisis, UN warns](#)
- **rfi:** [L'agriculture africaine entre choc et résilience face au Covid-19](#)

About the Sit-Rep

As COVID-19 continues to spread across Africa, our bi-weekly sitrep is designed to provide timely information, reflecting what we hear from small holder farmers and partners on-the-ground in 11 countries in sub-Saharan Africa (1). We welcome your feedback at sitreps@agra.org

(1) Ghana, Rwanda, Nigeria, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Mali, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Malawi, and Tanzania.

COVID-19 situation and response at a glance by country (selected highlights only, updated as of June 19, 2020)

Country + summary of current situation	COVID19 challenges	Government ask/response	AGRA activities (highlights only)
<p>Burkina Faso. Most COVID-19 measures are suspended including curfews. Gatherings of more than 50 prohibited.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrictions on gatherings more than 50 people mean that it's difficult to reach stakeholders and deliver introduction and adoption of new technologies at scale and provide technical assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Bank has provided \$147MM (50% donation/50% loan) to support the National Economic and Social Development Plan and emergency response to COVID-19. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing season preparation activities: contracting, inputs need assessments, connecting farmer organization with finance institutions. Planting is underway in most of the country.
<p>Ethiopia. Movement restriction has been eased by regional states and there is no restriction on grain trading. Farm inputs are being distributed. COVID-19 pandemic poses clear threats to Ethiopia's reforms and relatively strong economic growth, with "wide-ranging and serious" impacts across Africa's second most populous country, a new UN assessment finds (13 June 2020).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Movement and meeting restrictions do not allow to conduct mass trainings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government of Ethiopia appealed for \$1.65B (506M COVID-19 related) international assistance. Ethiopia and the World Bank (International Development Association) signed a \$250MM financing agreement in support of the COVID-19 Supplemental Financing to the Second Ethiopia Growth and Competitiveness Programmatic Development Policy Financing (50% in the form grant, balance in credit). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AGRA country team working with grantees in preparation for planting season.

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<p>Ghana. The three-week partial lockdown on Ghana's two main cities, Accra and Kumasi was eased amidst fears of the impact of a prolonged lockdown on the country's economy. Ghana borders continue to be open for goods movement keeping govt. advice on public health protection guidance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The easing of COVID-19 measures is making it easier for the team to implement programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$120MM credit scheme to support SMEs. Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) in coordination with MoF, MOFA, OVCF, GIRSA has committed a loan facility of GHC 23.2 MM (\$4.1 MM) to support 6 players along the poultry value chain WFP (\$0.5MM) and AGRA (\$1.5MM) will support measures that mitigate the impact of COVID19 on smallholder food security. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking advantage of the easing of COVID-19 Measures, AGRA team are engaging implementing partners including field monitoring visits to assess farmers, community-based advisors, consortia members preparedness for the planting season.

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<p>Mali. Curfew remains in place including restriction of social gathering. Limited working hours 7:30am to 2:30pm. Exception to shops that are open to 7-8 pm remains in place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food prices have increased and overnight travel is restricted. 	<p>As part of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government has adopted a certain measure, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the 2020-2021 campaign, the price of cotton is set at 200Fcfa / kg for the first choice and 175Fcfa / kg for the second choice. In addition to this basic price, the government grants, exceptionally, a subsidy of 35 billion CFA resulting in a bonus of 50 FCFA on the price of each kilogram of seed cotton produced and sold to the Malian Company for the Development of Textiles (CMDT). • Draft modification of the 2020 finance law due to COVID-19: The budget deficit increases by 317.239 billion Fcfa Decreasing budget revenues: 62.023 billion Fcfa (taxes) and 189.056 Fcfa (customs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing Campaign preparation activities, including facilitating farmers access to input market, and continued support to Ministry of Agriculture in development of response plan for planting and marketing season ahead.

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<p>Kenya. Food markets are 95% open, while livestock markets are 54% open. 220 fish landing sites were affected by floods and need close to 2bn for rehabilitation. Fishponds with an estimated value of Ksh 450 MN have also been destroyed. There is an emerging issue with crop markets. Most traders have moved to hawking produce on roads and are hesitant to move back to structured markets.</p> <p>Prices of most commodities continue to stabilize (~10% increase in the past two weeks); 70% of informal settlements dwellers in Nairobi are skipping meals based on survey done by population council and MoH.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrictions on gatherings mean that training can't be conducted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash transfers to the most vulnerable are underway. War room established together with AGRA and ongoing. The govt. announced \$503MM of economic stimulus to fight COVID-19. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AGRA is providing support to government war room. Team supporting digitization for village-based advisors to provide trainings.
<p>Nigeria. Curfew remain in place. Non-essential interstate travel restrictions remain enforced</p> <p>The Kaduna and Niger State Government have taken further steps to ease the lockdown.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited access to inputs and extension agent services due to restriction of movement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African Development Bank (AfDB) approved \$288.5MM for Nigeria COVID-19 fight The Federal Government of Nigeria has approved the sum of \$33.4MM intervention fund for pest control in Nigeria. The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has disbursed @\$277 MM to beneficiaries from the \$2,9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AGRA is providing support to Nigeria's extension system and planting season activities.

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		<p>BN COVID-19 pandemic intervention fund so far, according to data provided by the bank from Monetary Policy Meeting for May 2020.</p>	
<p>Rwanda. Travel across the country open except two districts bordering Congo (Rusizi and Rubavu).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross border trading with neighbors is a challenge but seems Govt easing up of COVID-19 measures seem to offer a return to some kind of normality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Govt has been distributing food to vulnerable in cities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGRA team continues to support farmers through planting season. • Team plan to resume field visit while still observing govt guideline on health protection.
<p>Uganda. Life almost returning to normal as going back to normal business as buyers resume. Infections now spreading to the communities without clear traces of source. This is worrying health officials who are beginning to propose a second total lockdown.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictions on movement create a challenging environment during the planting season. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government reads out 2020/2021 national budget. It has been heavily criticized for not incorporating parliamentary recommendations on COVID-19 response stimulus. It is now under review and will be presented again to parliament. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are learning that VBA can play a crucial role in last-mile delivery of agro-inputs and off-taking of produce sustainably
<p>Malawi. Gatherings above 100 are limited.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited supervision on harvesting and handling of seed by out-growers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the Minister of Finance during his budget presentation on 12 June, 2020 “in the 2020/2021 fiscal budget, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGRA Malawi team continue supporting the grantees virtually on seed sampling and certification.

Country + summary of current situation	COVID19 challenges	Government ask/response	AGRA activities (highlights only)
<p>The World Food Programme Issue No.3 report dated 16 June, 2020 indicates that weak demand for produce has been observed, likely due to consumers' lack of spending emanating from job losses or fear of the prospect of future job losses.</p> <p>Should the weak demand continue it may adversely impact smallholder farmers' incomes in the coming months.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue supporting the grantees virtually on seed sampling and certification. 	<p>\$13. MM (K10.0 billion) has been allocated for maize purchases by the National Food Reserve Agency and ADMARC to restock the Strategic Grain Reserve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition, a total of \$8.4 MM, which is equivalent to K6.3 billion from the World Bank is also available for maize purchase. The budget for National COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan has been revised upwards by \$131 MM (MK97BN) from \$213MM (MK157 BN) representing a 62% increase. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AGRA is working in collaboration with MwAPATA to undertake a rapid assessment focused on impact of COVID-19 on food trade as supported under our Regional Food Trade program.
<p>Tanzania. The govt continues to relax measures to improve business and investment climate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of inputs will be highly affected by limited movement due to COVID-19. Restricted public gathering above 10 people continue to present challenge to Agricultural programs 	<p>Govt. tabled budget for 2020/2021 that has series of measures to stimulus economic activities and improve investment climates. The measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of Agro-Industrialization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AGRA Consortia have resumed providing technical support to farmers using one to one discussion and ICT platforms where possible. The support includes capacity building training, validation workshops etc. Western TZ: Managing various stages of short rain seasons

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricted trucks movements to from Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of VATA on crop insurance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern Highlands TZ: Local and Regional Trade facilitations Equipping FOs with quality control tools (e.g. moisture meters). Northern Highlands TZ: Potato seed production and distribution & Preparations for the upcoming training for potato producers market association.
<p>Mozambique. The Mozambican Government announced a continuation of the Level-3 State of Emergency until June 30. Some of the measures including the Movement restrictions remains the same.</p> <p>International flights continue to be restricted till June 30th.</p> <p>The Ressano-Garcia / Lebombo post near Komatipoort is the only open land border between South Africa and Mozambique, for cargo only.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many field activities cancelled due to government restrictions on movement due to COVID-19. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive actions plans has been published by the government including implementing Agencies and funding amount that will be implemented between now and Dec-2020. Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihood short term fund required \$105MM, Secured \$6MM. Medium-term actions (Until December 2021) \$75MM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AGRA team continued to work with consortia grantees to support farmers in the harvesting season. AGRA support will follow under the ongoing engagement with AgRED on COVID-19 response.

Financial resources committed as of June 21, 2020. These are resources committed that AGRA is aware of; the table may be changed as updates occur and we are made aware of them.

	Total	World Bank	IMF	Donors	WFP	Govt	Local Private Sector	Other	Remarks
	\$MM	\$MM	\$MM	\$MM	\$MM	\$MM	\$MM	\$MM	
Ghana	1,345.5	100.0	1,000.0	125.0	0.5	120.0			The govt. has proposed \$390MM humanitarian budget Govt. \$120MM Stimulus Package for SMEs.
Mali	233.2	25.1	200.0	2.3			5.8		
Burkina Faso	200.8	148.0				50.0		2.8	Govt. \$50MM support to AG sector.
Nigeria	1,592.8			6.6		1,202.6	94.4	289.2	Govt. \$1.2BN funding for mechanization in 632 local govts. CBN providing \$90.3MM economic stimulus for households and businesses.
Ethiopia	499.0	82.6	411.0	5.4					The govt. has set up a \$1.3BN Budget to mitigate COVID-19.
Kenya	1,652.0	50.0	758.0	141.0		703.0			EU = \$5MM, Other UN agencies = \$135M, RF = \$1MM GOK has set up \$100MM SME recovery budget and \$100MM cash transfer to vulnerable people Govt. Economic stimulus package = \$503MM
Uganda	581.5		491.5	75.0		15.0			US Govt. \$3.4MM, EU \$31.6MM to support Govt effort to tackle COVID-19. GOG has dedicated \$15MM for food relief and IFAD set up \$40MM rural poor stimulus fund envelope.
Tanzania	-								
Rwanda	4.0			4.0					US Embassy has donated to support Govt. effort
Malawi	42.7					42.7			Govt allocated \$22MM to agriculture, \$14MM for grain purchase
Mozambique	569.0	100.0	337.0					132.0	Govt. setup \$700MM budget to mitigate COVID-19 Impact Islamic development fund has \$132MM in project support in the IMF's Pro-Saúde health support Program.
Total	6,720.5	505.7	3,197.5	359.3	0.5	2,133.3	100.2	424.0	