



CUARTO EXAMEN TURNO LIBRE READING

The dual threat of extreme weather and the COVID-19 crisis: Anticipating
The impacts on food availability

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a profound effect on the global economy and is jeopardizing the livelihoods and food security of millions of people. In June 2020, the World Bank released its outlook on the global economy, estimating a contraction of 5.2 percent and the deepest global recession in decades. The effects of this global recession on agri-food production, consumption and trade are likely to be adverse.

The global recession is occurring in the context of a rapidly changing climate. This year is expected to be the second hottest in recorded history. Weather forecasts for 2020 indicate a high probability that extreme weather will adversely affect food production in many countries.

Anticipating how extreme weather events may affect food availability in the context of a severely weakened global economy, and where the risks posed by this dual threat are greatest, is important for taking proactive steps to reduce these risks.

The COVID-19 pandemic creates a host of challenges in terms of food production and demand, which can adversely affect food availability in some countries. On the supply side, the COVID-19 outbreak and containment effort measures, such as physical distancing, have led to disruptions in production, processing and marketing of food items, leading to increased food price volatility and stock-outs of some food items. Disruptions in food systems may lead to a loss of 451 million (or 30 percent) of jobs in food systems globally.

The livelihoods of roughly 1 billion people have been put at risk by COVID-19. Job losses and reductions in income may reduce global demand for some food items. More importantly, the loss of livelihoods severely affects the capacity of vulnerable households to access the food they need. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has projected that, globally, reductions in gross domestic product (GDP) due to the COVID-19 crisis could increase the number of undernourished people in net importer countries by between 14.4 to 80.3 million.

Net food-importing countries face some of the greatest challenges in the context of the COVID-19 crisis for several reasons. On the one hand, these countries depend on revenue and foreign exchange earnings from exports, which are reduced due to contractions in global economic activities and demand. On the other hand, they face considerably more volatile and unstable market conditions for food imports. The combination of these factors can lead to reductions in local food availability, particularly in poorer net food-importing countries.

While the global economy and agri-food systems throughout the world have been weakened by the COVID-19 crisis, an unstable and rapidly changing global climate poses additional risks.

The first months of 2020 were some of the hottest on record, and anomalously high temperatures are forecasted to persist in many parts of the world in the months to come.

Weather disasters have a direct effect on food supplies. When they occur in major global exporting regions, weather-induced supply side disruptions can lead to increases in global food prices, adversely affecting consumers worldwide.