



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON INDIAN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

During the Covid-19 pandemic, agricultural and its related activities in India were excused from restrictions. Though, the lockdowns led to different interruptions in the agricultural supply chain, and affected the agri business drastically. With this backdrop the present paper plans to reveal the brunt of Covid-19 on various sub-sectors and suggests some of the measures to the government to address the problems faced by the farmers.

INTRODUCTION

With Covid-19 currently spreading in Bharat, huge consequences of health and livelihoods area unit feared, and also the government has obligatory 21-day national imprisonment to limit virus transmission. Given the precarious livelihoods of the many Indians, agriculture, food security, and safety web policy and program responses also are desperately needed. India has taken early action to limit to unfold of Covid-19, ordering 21-day nationwide imprisonment for its population of one.3 billion individuals beginning quarter day. The novel coronavirus has unfolded wide in Bharat comparatively recently compared to different countries, and also the range of rumoured infections is low thus far, with 5,274 cases and 149 deaths as of Apr eight. However, as Covid-19 cases area unit increasing quick, there's nice concern concerning the disease's potential unfold and impact. Bharat must be prepared for a potential surge. Testing ought to be expanded considerably. The government views the pattern of the unfold of Covid-19 as like the 2009 H1 and N1 flu pandemic, which means the unfold is unlikely to be uniform. When the 21-day amount expires, it's aiming to maintain the complete imprisonment in "hotspot" areas and relax it in different places. These measures could facilitate in limiting the health crisis, but as in different countries the complete closure of all economic activities except essential services can produce associate economic condition and misery for the poor, with huge job

losses and rising food insecurity. The economic shock can doubtless be way more severe for Bharat, for 2 reasons. First, pre-Covid-19, the economy was already fastness down, combination existing issues of state, low incomes, rural distress, deficiency disease, and widespread difference. Second, India's giant informal sector is especially vulnerable. Out of the national total 465 million employees, around ninety-one were informal employees in 2017-18. Lacking regular salaries or incomes, these agriculture, migrant, and different informal employees would be hardest-hit throughout the imprisonment amount. With this backdrop the present paper concentrate on the doubtless impacts on agriculture, providing chains, food, and nutrition security, and livelihoods.

AGRICULTURE AND VALUE CHAINS DURING COVID 19

Covid-19 is disrupting some activities in agriculture and providing chains. Preliminary reports show that the non-availability of migrant labor is interrupting some harvest activities, notably in northwest Bharat wherever wheat and pulses area unit being harvested. There are unit disruptions in provide chains owing to transportation issues and different problems. Costs have declined for wheat, vegetables, and different crops, nonetheless shoppers' area unit usually paying a lot of. Media reports show that the closure of hotels, restaurants, sweet retailers, and tea retailers throughout the imprisonment is already depressing milk sales.



Meanwhile, poultry farmers are badly hit thanks to info, notably on social media, that chicken are the carriers of Covid-19. The government has properly issued imprisonment tips that exempt farm operations and provide chains. However, implementation issues resulting in labor shortages and falling costs ought to be corrected. Keeping provide chains functioning well is crucial to food security. It ought to be noted that a pair of to three million deaths within the Bengal famine of 1943 was thanks to food provide disruptions not an absence of food convenience. Farm populations should be protected against the coronavirus to the extent of potential by testing and active social distancing. Farmers should have continuing access to markets. This could be a mixture of personal markets and government procurement. Tiny poultry and dairy farm farmers want a lot of targeted facilitate, as their pandemic-related input provide and market-access problems area unit imperative. Farmers and agricultural employees ought to be enclosed within the government's help package and any social protection programs addressing the crisis. As imprisonment measures have inflated, demand has up for home delivery of groceries and E-commerce. This trend ought to be inspired and promoted. The government ought to promote trade by avoiding export bans and import restrictions.

BRIDGING THE HEALTH SHOCK AND ECONOMIC SHOCK THROUGH SOCIAL SAFETY NETS APPROACH

The imprisonment has clogged off the majority of economic activity. In urban areas, resulting in the widespread loss of jobs and incomes for casual employees and also the poor. Estimates by the Center for watching Indian Economy show that state shot up from eight.4% in the period of time to twenty-third within the initial week of Apr. In urban areas, the state soared to thirty.9% as of Apr five. The closure can cause much misery for casual employees and also the poor, WHO lead precarious lives facing hunger and deficiency disease. The best thanks to addressing this imperative want is to use social safety nets extensively to stabilize their lives with food and money. The Indian government has quickly older the crisis and proclaimed a \$22 billion relief package, which has food and money transfers. Many state governments have proclaimed their own support packages. The central government's relief package, referred to as Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, is geared toward providing safety nets for those who hit the toughest by the Covid-19 imprisonment. However, it's inadequate compared to the big scale of the matter. Honor economists Esther Duflo and Abhijit Banerji say that the govt. ought to be a lot bolder with the package's social transfer schemes. The \$22 billion in defrayal is simply

zero.85% of India's gross domestic product. This is often a lot of under the packages gone US, European and a few Asian countries. Bharat ought to suppose larger and be defrayal a minimum of four-dimensional to five of gross domestic product. The central and state governments should pay a lot, although there's a one-time hike within the business deficit. For the same the following measures need to take; *Food and nutrition security* - Government warehouses square measure overflowing with seventy-one million a lot of rice and wheat. To avoid exclusion errors, it's higher to supply universal coverage of distribution within the next few months. Nutrition programs like Integrated kid Development Services (ICDS), midday meals, and Anganwadis (rural kid care centers) ought to still work as essential services and supply rations and meals to recipients' reception. Eggs will be added to enhance nutrition for kids and girls. Many state governments have started innovative programs to assist informal staff and therefore the poor. As an example, the Kerala government is providing meals with distributed diets at the doorsteps of households. *Cash transfers* - Dismissed informal staff wants money financial gain support. The govt. has provided Rs. 500 (\$6.60) per month to the bank accounts of two hundred million ladies via the January Dan money inclusion program. However, this too is low. We want to possess a minimum of Rs.3000 (\$40) per month in money transfers for the following 3 months. *Migrant staff* - There square measure regarding 40-50 million seasonal migrant staff in the Asian nation. In recent days, international media have broadcast pictures of many thousands of migrant staff from many states trudging for miles and miles on highways; some walked over one thousand kilometres to come to their home villages. They ought to be each money transfers and alimentary food. Covid-19 is an unexampled challenge for India; its giant population and therefore the economy's dependence on informal labour build lockdowns and different social distancing measures massively tumultuous. The central and state governments have recognized the challenge and responded aggressively but this response ought to be simply the start. Asian nations should be ready to scale it up as events unfold, easing the economic impacts through even bigger public program support and policies that keep markets functioning.

CONCLUSION

The Covid-19 crisis has bought to the fore some of the persistent problems that Indian agriculture faces. Despite the impressive strides made toward improved access to institutional credit, dependency on informal credit sources remains high, especially among smallholder farmers. The government has to step in to ensure farmers can



access fresh credit for the Kharif season. The other important dynamic that policymakers and the wider development community need to look at is preserving the role of women in agriculture. The surplus labor in rural areas can potentially undermine the status of women in agriculture, and push them further into economic exclusion. The Self Help Groups (SHGs) movement that includes SHG federations and women-owned Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) should be utilized to improve market price realization for women farmers and improve the engagement of women in value-addition activities such as low value processing. The push for market reforms has put the focus on the transformative role of FPOs in agriculture marketing. The dilution of the agricultural marketing provides a huge opportunity for FPOs to link directly with buyers across the country and also to develop more direct-to-consumer supply chains, and in the process, improve their incomes.

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