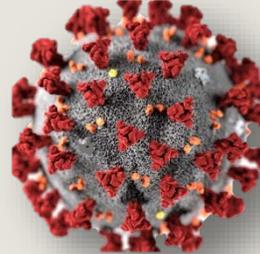


# Multi-Phase Assessment of the Effects of Covid-19 on Food Systems and Rural Livelihoods in Sub-Saharan Africa

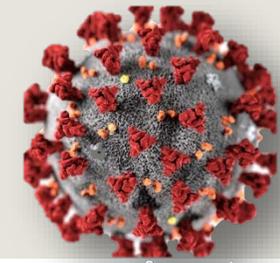
**John Thompson**

**Deputy Director, Sussex Sustainability Research Programme (SSRP),  
Fellow, Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and  
CEO, Agricultural Policy Research in Africa (APRA) Programme, Future Agricultures Consortium (FAC)**

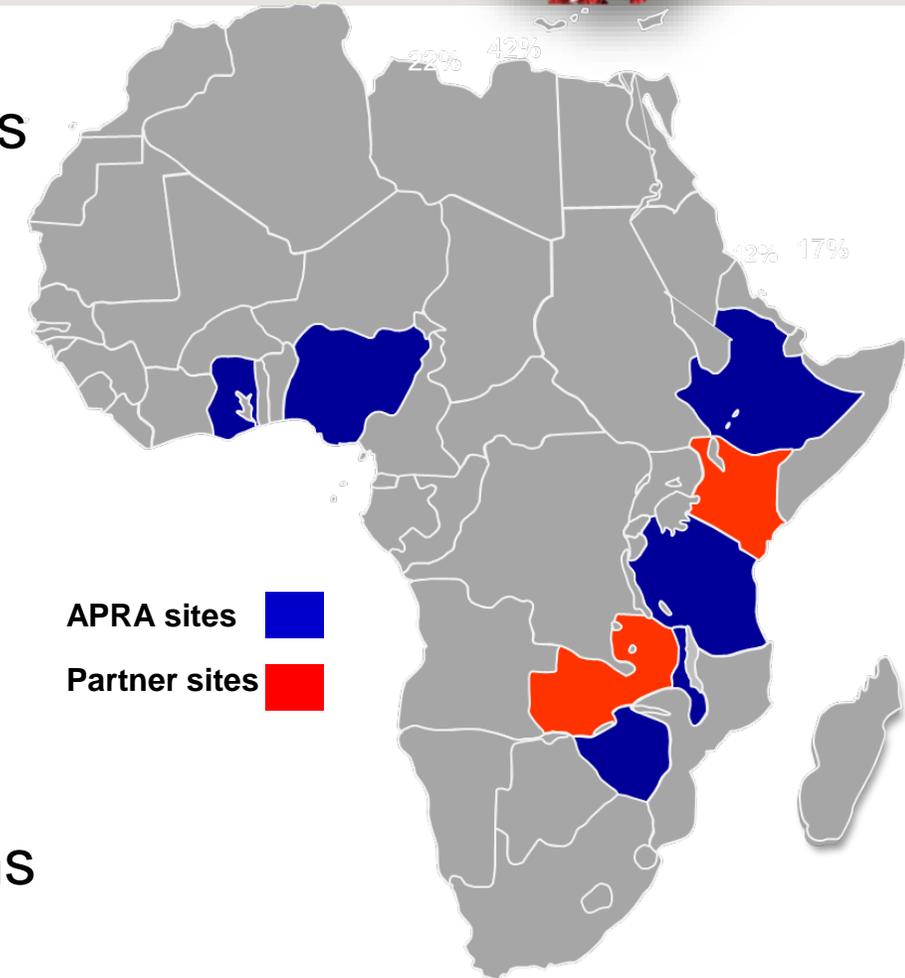
**Presentation for the Sussex Covid Research Networking Conference – Monday, 1 November 2021**



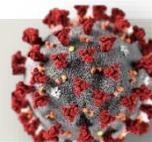
# A Multi-Phase Rapid Assessment



- ✓ Built on **long-standing partnerships and ongoing research** to identify field sites and design instruments (*'outcome indicators'*) - **8 countries**
- ✓ Most contained **detailed household rosters**
- ✓ **3 rounds of quant survey research and qual key informant interviews in 8 countries** (N=751 R1; N=846 R2; N= + N=825 R3 + KIIs>65)
- ✓ Sampling strategy ensured selection of **female-household heads in sample (N=210; 24.8%)**
- ✓ **Tried and tested mobile technologies** and platforms for quantitative data collection



# Impact of COVID



State COVID-19 interventions – government lockdowns; mobility restrictions; closure of markets, businesses and schools; social distancing;

## Farming

Decreased availability and increased cost of labour and inputs; decreased access to extension, mechanisation and financial services; reduced cultivation area

## Transport and Movement

Travel restrictions within villages and between rural and urban areas; reduced availability and increased cost of transport; migration back to 'home' villages

## Marketing

Restricted access to local and regional markets; reduced visits by outside traders / buyers to purchase produce at farmgate; closure of international borders to trade

## Income and Employment

Decreased availability and increased cost of labour; decreased off-farm employment and household enterprises; lower income and decreased purchasing power

## Mediating Factors Leading to Differential Outcomes

Current socio-economic position; Political situation; Other environmental shocks and stresses; Support services from the state, private sector, NGOs, CBOs; Coping / adaptive strategies of households and communities; Traditional leadership and community mobilisation (structures in place from previous crises)

## Access to Health Services and Info

Disrupted services – partly caused by movement restrictions; people fearful to travel and attend clinics; concerns about official health messages and guidelines

## Burden of Care

Increased care responsibilities of elders, children some migration back to villages; school closures mean children must study at home and take on other tasks

## Purchasing Power

Reduced opportunities and income from on-farm and off-farm employment and enterprises; higher prices for transport, food and essential goods and services

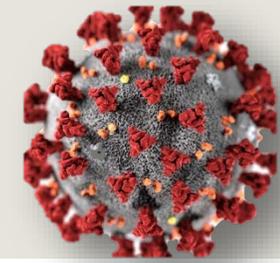
## Quantity and Quality of Diet

Declining availability and diversity of key foods (staples, F&V) in local markets; increased food prices; skipping meals; reliance on indigenous foods

## Livelihood Security

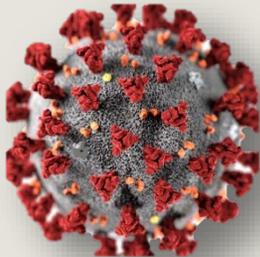


# Summary Findings



- Only a partial picture so far – **differential impacts... Not a ‘food production crisis’ (yet)** ... More an **‘income-nutrition-livelihood crisis’**
- **Some households are coping and finding ways to adapt** – emergence of a **‘COVID economy’** – but how long can they continue to **‘hang in’**?
- **COVID one of many perturbations** - hhs affected by multiple short and long-term shocks and stresses (climate, locusts, conflict, etc.) – intersecting stressors
- **Government responses mixed** – early lockdown seen as positive action, but concerns about maintaining controls for political gain; growing resistance...
- While the negative impacts are largely the result of government measures (rather than actual morbidity and mortality from COVID) – **there has been little support from government (or others) to help fill the gap restrictions have caused**





# Thank You

John Thompson ([j.thompson@ids.ac.uk](mailto:j.thompson@ids.ac.uk))



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