

Role of mechanization in addressing impact of Covid-19 pandemic in the agricultural sector in the Asia-Pacific region

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Photo: Sandro Liberatori

Covid-19 pandemic

- Brought unprecedented challenges in the agricultural sector in the Asia-Pacific region
- Threatens to stagnate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, reverse gains made in recent years
- Between 83 and 132 million people may be added to the ranks of the undernourished globally in 2020 due to the pandemic

Impact of the pandemic on agriculture



Photo source: myanmar.ifpri.info

Examples of positive government interventions

- Exempting farmers and stockbreeders from movement restrictions
- Facilitating transportation of agricultural produce
- Creating 'green channels' for smoother delivery of raw materials and produce, food imports
- Dedicated aid programmes for several industries including agriculture



Role of sustainable agricultural mechanization in supporting recovery and building resilience

- Introduce greater speed of operations in food production
- Address shortage of manpower & support social distancing measures
- Improve efficiency of storage and processing including for perishables >> empower farmers to better decide time and price of sale
- Promote conservation agriculture for enhancing resilience of smallholders
- Mechanization solutions for livestock farms to prevent and control zoonotic diseases
- Retain returning migrant workers & youth in agriculture



Photo courtesy: Zheng Guohua

Recommended priorities for region to ‘Build Back Better’ through Sustainable Mechanization

- Address needs of smallholder farmers
- Strengthen rural infrastructure
- Promote ICT-enabled mechanization technologies
- Promote research and development
- Encourage role of youth
- Deepen private sector engagement





Thank you!