



Impact of COVID-19 on food systems

Timor-Leste

Country overview July 2020



Land use

Land area: 149,000 km²
25.6% agricultural land
17.5% GDP from agriculture
and fish (2018)



Population

1.3 million people
69% rural
Adjusted income
per capita US\$1,371



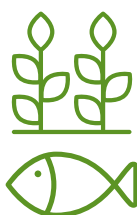
COVID-19 and health

First recorded case: 21 March 2020
At 31 July 2020: 24 known cases;
no deaths
At July 2020: No spread;
no hotspots



Local response to COVID-19

State of emergency: 28 March 2020
School, business, international
border closures
Medical testing and
messaging campaign
Government and community
support for unemployed
and vulnerable
Imported rice stockpiled



Agriculture and fisheries

Top staples: cereals, maize,
rice, coconuts, bananas
Low productivity; low soil fertility
Local demand for staple
food crops
Imports critical for food availability
Small-scale and seasonal
fishing for local markets



Key risk multipliers

Agricultural pests and diseases
Highly variable climate and onset
of monsoon; seasonal droughts
Risk of COVID-19 outbreak
for health system

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Key findings



Smallholders

Main crop already harvested at COVID-19 onset
Limited availability of agri-inputs
Transport ban may slow spread of livestock disease



Supply chains

Supply chain disruption across land border
Reduced demand for export crops
Imported rice supply chains maintained



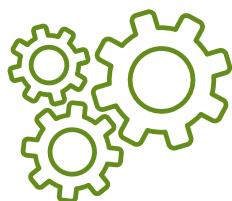
Governance

Petroleum Fund used for social protection
Integrated Crisis Management Group formed
Temporary income support for poor households



Community

Existing labour migrants continue to send remittances
Aspiring migrants affected by travel ban
Greater impacts on women's income, purchasing power and workload
Off-farm income vital for dry season



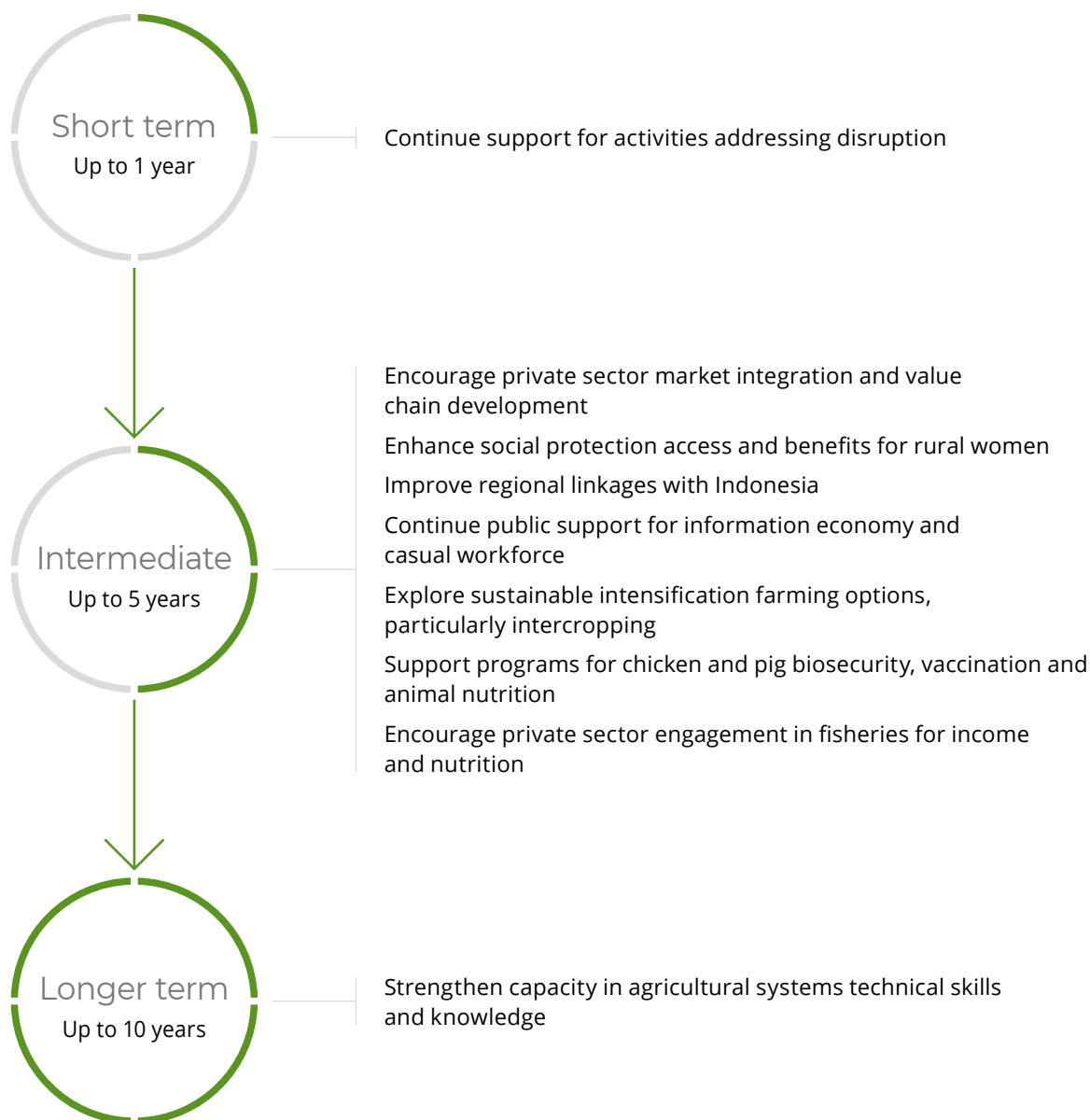
Employment

Impact on informal sector; recovery underway
Major disruption to tourism sector
Few opportunities for unemployed and underemployed youth

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Suggested opportunities for action



Short-term opportunities include resource mobilisation and pivoting existing activities towards COVID-19 responses (up to 1 year). Intermediate-term opportunities include addressing gaps in knowledge, redressing negative impacts and/or boosting aspects of recovery or resilience (up to 5 years). Longer-term opportunities include research and development to address systemic challenges and options for transformational change (up to 10 years).

Visit www.aciar.gov.au/covid19-assessment-stage2 to learn more about the impacts of COVID-19 on food systems in Timor-Leste and the Indo-Pacific region



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