





Article

# Growing and Eating Food during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Farmers' Perspectives on Local Food System Resilience to Shocks in Southern Africa and Indonesia

Nicole Paganini <sup>1,2,\*</sup> , Kustiwa Adinata <sup>3</sup>, Nomonde Buthelezi <sup>4</sup>, David Harris <sup>5</sup>, Stefanie Lemke <sup>2,6</sup> , Alberto Luis <sup>7</sup>, Jennifer Koppelin <sup>1</sup>, Abdulrazak Karriem <sup>8</sup>, Fezile Ncube <sup>9</sup>, Enzo Nervi Aguirre <sup>10</sup>, Tandu Ramba <sup>11</sup>, Inês Raimundo <sup>12</sup>, Nedim Sulejmanović <sup>1</sup>, Haidee Swanby <sup>13</sup>, Daniel Tevera <sup>14</sup>  and Silke Stöber <sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> Centre for Rural Development (SLE), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 10115 Berlin, Germany; jenniferkoppelin@web.de (J.K.); nedim@posteo.de (N.S.); silke.stoerber@agr.ar.hu-berlin.de (S.S.)

<sup>2</sup> Societal Transition and Agriculture, University of Hohenheim, 70599 Stuttgart, Germany; ac0447@coventry.ac.uk

<sup>3</sup> Indonesian Farmers Community Network (JAMTANI), Jawa Barat 4037, Indonesia; kustiwa.adinata@gmail.com

<sup>4</sup> Cape Town Research Farmer Club, Cape Town, South Africa; nomondeb3@gmail.com

<sup>5</sup> Motivator Kondoran, Indonesia; david.pusbinlat@gmail.com

<sup>6</sup> Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience, Coventry University, Coventry CV1 5FB, UK

<sup>7</sup> Associação pela Agricultura Biológica, Biodiversidade e Desenvolvimento Sustentável, Maputo, Mozambique; albertoluis1026@gmail.com

<sup>8</sup> Institute for Social Development, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town 7535, South Africa; razack.karriem@gmail.com

<sup>9</sup> Hope Tariro Trust, Masvingo, Zimbabwe; fezilecz@gmail.com

<sup>10</sup> Development Practice, University of California—Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 94720, USA; enzo\_nervi@berkeley.edu

<sup>11</sup> Pusbinlat Motivator—GT, Indonesia; mtvkondoran@gmail.com

<sup>12</sup> Center for Policy Analysis and Department of Geography, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo 3453, Mozambique; inesmacamo@gmail.com

<sup>13</sup> Critical Food Studies, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town 7535, South Africa; haidee@polka.co.za

<sup>14</sup> Environmental Studies and Tourism, Department of Geography, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town 7535, South Africa; dtevera@uwc.ac.za

\* Correspondence: paganini@hu-berlin.de

Received: 15 September 2020; Accepted: 14 October 2020; Published: 16 October 2020



**Abstract:** The COVID-19 outbreak forced governments to make decisions that had adverse effects on local food systems and supply chains. As a result, many small-scale food producers faced difficulties growing, harvesting, and selling their goods. This participatory research examines local small-scale farmers' challenges as farmers but also as consumers and their coping strategies during the month of April and one week in June 2020. The study was initiated and conceptualized in collaboration with small-scale farmer members of an existing research network in selected urban and rural areas in South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Indonesia. Participants co-designed the research, collected and uploaded data through digital survey tools, and contributed to data analysis and interpretation. A common observation across regions is that the measures imposed in response to COVID-19 highlighted and partly exacerbated existing socio-economic inequalities among food system actors. Strict lockdowns in Cape Town, South Africa, and Masvingo, Zimbabwe, significantly restricted the production capacity of small-scale farmers in the informal economy and created more food insecurity for them. In Maputo, Mozambique, and Toraja and Java, Indonesia, local food systems continued to operate and were even strengthened by higher social capital and adaptive capacities.