

THE ROLE OF ECLAC – FAO IN RESPONDING TO THE POST-PANDEMIC ERA THROUGH THE TRANSFORMATION OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGION 2020-2022

Adim Seto Ali Masquri

International Relations Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Slamet Riyadi University, Surakarta, Central Java, Indonesia

Correspondence Email : adimsetoali@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper seeks to determine the role of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in responding to the post-pandemic era through the transformation of food and agriculture in LAC Region. The COVID-19 pandemic, which began in early 2020, has shaken global stability related to food and agriculture issues, especially in LAC region. The agricultural sector is an important sector in LAC region that acts as the basis for food production and ecosystems in the region. Regional and international organizations such as the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have attempted to recovering the agricultural and food sectors from the impacts of the COVID pandemic. **The method** used is qualitative, with data sources from books, journals, and other official media. These **findings** illustrate the role of the ECLAC and FAO organizations in transforming agriculture and food in LAC region after the COVID pandemic. **Novelty** – The post COVID-19 agriculture and food transformation strategy implemented by ECLAC and FAO in LAC region has become an important factor for the region. This can provide input for the governments of countries in LAC region in taking appropriate policies for countries in the region.

Keywords: Post Covid-19; Food and Agriculture; Latin America and the Caribbean

1. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic broke out in early 2020, which then hit LAC region at the end of February 2020. In May 2020 the world health organization, designated this region as the epicenter of the Covid pandemic, this region accounted for more than 40% of deaths Due to the pandemic worldwide (OECD, 2020). The pandemic has had an impact on social and economic dimensions, such as increasing poverty rates in countries in LAC region, which at the same time is exacerbated by problems in the food chain and agriculture which have further exacerbated socio-economic conditions as a result of the pandemic in the LAC region (UNITED NATIONS, 2022).

The spread of the pandemic in early 2020 forced governments from countries in the region to establish policies that could limit movement nationally and internationally. The implementation of these policies has an impact on the smooth supply chain of food and agricultural commodities, which in turn exacerbates the impact of the pandemic (Vicente A. Benites-Zapata dkk., 2021). LAC region experienced an increase in the number of populations experiencing hunger during the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2021 the hunger rate reached a new record, an increase of around 30%, this indicates that this region has serious food problems as a result of the pandemic (Diego Arguedas Ortiz, 2021).

As an effort to minimize the impact caused by the Covid-19 pandemic on vital sectors such as food and agriculture, a collaboration is needed between countries LAC region as well as with regional or international organizations. According to (FRIEDRICH EBERT

STIFTUNG, t.t.) international cooperation will increase the solidarity and plurality of countries in a region, so that they can work together in overcoming various existing problems through existing projects or agreements, to create justice and peace in the region.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are international organizations that have a role in coordinating economic issues that include food and agriculture issues in the region. The two organizations collaborate to carry out transformation related to food and agriculture, which are serious problems in the post-pandemic region (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic has left extraordinary food insecurity in the LAC area. The pandemic has disrupted the food supply chain consisting of the production process, labor, and international trade. It is the duty of a country to maintain national stability through post-pandemic national food security (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2006). Latin America and the Caribbean have become areas affected by global dynamics such as the Covid-19 pandemic, so food security is needed to ensure sustainable food from the production process to consumption, as well as being adaptive in dealing with various global dynamics after the Covid-19 pandemic (World Economic Forum, 2022).

The LAC area has a tendency not to have an adaptive nature in facing global dynamics such as a pandemic, so that the region has a large risk opportunity related to food and agriculture security, thus requiring a comprehensive transformation in order to create an area that has food security in the face of various global dynamics that occur. . In this study, we would like to explain the role of ECLAC and FAO as international organizations authorized to promote international cooperation through the transformation of food and agriculture in the LAC region after the pandemic. The time limit for this study is based on the start of the pandemic in early 2020 until the post-pandemic period in 2022.

2. Literature Review

International Cooperation

International cooperation is defined as a form of strengthening rational relations between countries individually and collectively, international cooperation has a rational nature because individually or collectively it can be part of an agreement. (Scott Barret, 1999). An international cooperation is needed by every country in the world, countries in the world can certainly have a common interest in facing any obstacles that arise, so a positive relationship is needed to achieve an international cooperation. (Joseph Grieco dkk., 1993).

In the international world, an obstacle that arises in relations between countries can be resolved by carrying out positive international cooperation. Countries in the world think that the obstacles that arise can be resolved through a more complex international cooperation, namely through an international institution or organization in accommodating the interests of member countries, as well as helping these countries to work together in solving overcoming problems that exist between each other (Joseph Grieco dkk., 1993).

Food Security

Food security is defined as the availability of food and there is the ability to obtain it, food security includes food self-sufficiency which focuses on increasing production to meet food needs in a country (Adedeji & Adebayo, 1989). The food system is one element in food

security, namely a series of activities from the food production process to the stage of consumption by consumers. The world's food system has supported the food supply of the global population. The world's food system is vulnerable to existing global dynamics such as wars, pandemics, climate change, etc (Cheikh Mbow & Cynthia Rosenzweig, 2019).

Food security can be achieved if there is scientific research that is quite intensive in the food system, so that it can develop new breakthroughs in a sustainable food system, which in turn will increase food productivity while creating a new scheme in the process of distributing food to consumers (Alexander Y. Prosekova & Svetlana A. Ivanova, 2018). The process of food production, storage, and distribution can be influenced by global conditions, so that regional government policies in an area are needed to encourage the achievement of food security by mainstreaming food policy while at the same time intervening in a country's policy in a regional scope by an authorized international institution or organization in food matters (Elena Briones Alonso dkk., 2018).

3. Research Method

This research uses qualitative research methods because this research aims to present the theme raised, namely international cooperation as a response to the post pandemic era which focuses on the role of two international organizations, namely ECLAC and FAO in responding to the post pandemic through transformation efforts. food and agriculture in LAC region. Qualitative research methods will facilitate the process of presenting data and analyzing through qualitative descriptive. In this study, primary and secondary data sources were obtained from books, journals, and official websites from the internet. The data sources relate to information about the issues raised in the study.

This research uses library research data collection techniques using 4 steps of analysis, namely: (1) library source search, by collecting all data sources related to the issues studied; (2) Data reduction, selecting data that has been collected and focusing on data related to research; (3) Interpretation of data, presenting the findings in the study with effective sentence patterns; (4) Data verification, ensuring the truth of the data presented by drawing conclusions according to the data that has been researched objectively (Wahyudin Darmalaksana, 2020).

4. Result and Discussion

Food security is defined as a situation where all people in the world can have access anywhere and anytime physically and economically to healthy and nutritious food as a form of healthy life (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2006). Food security includes several supporting aspects such as ecology, economy, social and politics. The low food security of a country will have a significant impact on the social, economic and political conditions of the country (Bryan L.McDonald, 2010).

Uncertain global dynamics such as military conflicts, pandemics, climate change, have weakened the food security of various countries, which at the same time has increased hunger rates and the number of people who are increasingly malnourished. According to (Bryan L.McDonald, 2010), Global dynamics that occur will directly affect global food security, which in turn will create a vulnerability in the global food system network. Food insecurity ultimately becomes a problem that must be minimized by the national government

of a country, as well as collectively with international organizations, in an effort to ensure food safety.

Maintaining food security is a big challenge, where every component that has a relationship with the problem of the food system must collaborate with each other such as science and technology, the national government of a country, and intervention from international organizations (Martin Barry Cole dkk., 2018). The effective use of food science and technology supported by government policies and international organization policies will assist a country in achieving national food stability or security.

Food and Agricultural System in LAC Region During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Global dynamics such as the Covid-19 pandemic have led to global uncertainty regarding food and agriculture systems, which in turn reduces a country's ability to end hunger and malnutrition by 2030. The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted supply chains caused by the emergence of barriers in international trade during the Covid-19 pandemic. Barriers to international trade that include trade in food and agricultural products have a significant impact on developing countries, such as countries in LAC region, where the region is experiencing a decline in the number of indicators of food security and nutrition which is far from stable (Walter Belik, 2020).

LAC region has been known as a region producing food and agricultural products, this region has a production capacity of 14 percent of the world's food and agricultural commodities, which are projected to experience rapid growth. However, after the Covid-19 pandemic took place, the region experienced a decline in food and agricultural commodity production, which was caused by several supporting factors that were also affected by the pandemic, such as transportation, manufacturing, and fuel. During the pandemic, perishable food products became one of the commodities most affected by the pandemic, such as fruits, milk, eggs, and other products of animal origin (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020d).

The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted food and agricultural supply chains which directly impacted the export of food and agricultural commodities in the LAC Region. Disturbance to a country's exports can be classified as a threat to a country's national security in the economic sector, especially in the food and agriculture sectors. The food security of a country is positively influenced by trade relations between countries concerning imports and exports, where each country has a dependence on income from these activities (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020b).

The majority of exports of food and agricultural commodities in LAC region, 80 percent support the global food system outside LAC region, while the remaining 20 percent are exported to South America and Central America (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020d). LAC region is an area that has a heterogeneous nature in terms of international trade, as shown in table 1.

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Net exporter of agrifood products	Net importer of agrifood products
Argentina	Antigua and Barbuda
Belize	Bahamas
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Barbados
Brazil	Cuba
Chile	Dominica
Colombia	El Salvador
Costa Rica	Grenada
Ecuador	Haiti
Guatemala	Jamaica
Guyana	Panama
Honduras	Dominican Republic
Mexico	Saint Kitts and the Nevis
Nicaragua	Saint Lucia
Paraguay	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Peru	Suriname
Uruguay	Trinidad and Tobago
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Source : FAO and CELAC (2020)

Table 1 shows trade in food and agricultural commodities in LAC region

The pandemic has caused disruption of the food and agricultural chains in LAC region which affects the export and import numbers from countries in the region, disruption of the food and agricultural chain begins with production problems, where during the pandemic restrictions were made the number of workers in order to break the chain of the spread of the Covid-19 virus which directly affects labor-intensive commodities. Another disturbance arose at the goods distribution stage, the disturbance arose due to the implementation of border closure policies from various countries in the world to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The policy of closing national borders directly affects export and import activities, which at the same time has an impact on consumers and producers who need access to food and agricultural commodities (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020b).

The state as an actor conducting international trade has the authority to set boundaries in international trade, so as to minimize the impact of trade between these countries on domestic socio-economic conditions. The heterogeneous nature of trade in LAC region, indirectly encourages countries in the region to determine trade mitigation in order to regulate trade flows while minimizing the impact of these trading activities, which must be oriented to national welfare (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020c).

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The food security of countries in LAC region is vulnerable due to dependence on imports, Caribbean countries such as Antigua, Barbuda, Cuba, Saint Lucia, Barbados, and Haiti have greater vulnerability than other countries in Latin America. caused by the high number of imports of food and agricultural commodities. This dependence is exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic which has increasingly increased the number of imports from these countries. Countries such as Grenada, Bahamas, Dominica, Cuba, Jamaica, and Suriname have export strength in fruit and vegetable commodities. However, these countries along with Peru, Honduras, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Chile also have vulnerability due to their dependence on Cereal, Meat, and Dairy producing countries (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020b).

The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a larger demand contraction, which directly impacts producers who need broad access to raw goods. Activity restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic ultimately impacted markets selling food and agricultural commodities, causing a decline in sales numbers which directly affected producers who suffered losses. Food and agricultural commodity producers in the Caribbean region have a higher vulnerability than other countries. in the region, this is due to the slowdown in the production process caused by the lack of demand from consumers as a result of the decline in the number of tourists visiting countries in the Caribbean region. This vulnerability ultimately affects fishermen, ranchers and farmers in LAC countries as a result of increasingly uncertain markets (Graziano da Silva dkk., 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic at the same time has resulted in a drop in fuel prices, this has an impact on increasing the amount of fuel supplies for food and agricultural product producers, so as to reduce production costs which have a positive impact on food and agricultural commodity prices. The Covid-19 pandemic has also resulted in a fall in currency exchange rates in LAC countries, such as Argentina, Uruguay and Colombia. The decline in currency exchange rates in countries in LAC region, has an impact on the country's export activities, the depreciation of the currency exchange rate encourages producers to increase production capacity (Graziano da Silva dkk., 2021).

The Role of ECLAC and FAO in the Transformation of Food and Agriculture in LAC Region 2020-2022

The pandemic has caused disruption in the food and agricultural chains, which in turn worsened the socio-economic security of countries in LAC region. At the beginning of the pandemic, namely in 2020, the poverty rate in LAC reached 83.4 million population, this had an impact on people's ability to access food, where the pandemic had caused an increase in poverty rates so that this condition could lead to in food crisis conditions if there are no steps for sustainable food and agricultural transformation (Scaling Up Nutrition, 2020).

The transformation of the food and agricultural system requires cooperation between institutions and government, an institution has a standard system of rules in regulating relations between actors. An institution has an important role related to food security. An institution especially related to food and agriculture has a set of rules that aim to ensure a country can achieve food security, and encourage the national government of the country to implement food policies in a transparent, effective, and efficient manner. If a country has a high level of food security, that country can have a greater role or access to markets, so that the country can directly coordinate food related issues of production and consumption to ensure the national food stability of a country (Vicente A. Benites-Zapata dkk., 2021).

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The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations are two of the many international organizations in the world under the auspices of the United Nations. ECLAC is an international organization under the United Nations system that is authorized to promote socio-economic, and environmental sustainability in LAC region (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2021). While FAO is an international agency under the United Nations that functions as an organization to ensure food security for all individuals around the world, FAO is committed to alleviating hunger, while working to improve nutrition through food and agricultural productivity for a better life (United Nations Office of the Secretary-Generals Envoy on Youth, 2013). The two international institutions work together in an effort to transform food and agriculture in the LAC region.

ECLAC and FAO stated that preventing food crises in LAC is a big challenge, because the food and agriculture sectors have a long chain from production to consumption. ECLAC and FAO have a priority goal in minimizing the impact of the pandemic on food stability, namely preventing the increase in hunger rates in the region. ECLAC and FAO encourage national governments from countries in LAC region to provide soft credit supported by efforts to attract foreign investors, in order to maintain the stability of the flow of raw materials needed by food product producers (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020e).

ECLAC and FAO encourage countries in the region to form a rapid response committee, in an effort to respond to the impact of the pandemic effectively and efficiently. The state must review the national food security of its country, so that the government as a policy maker can analyze the problems that arise while minimizing the disturbances that arise in the agricultural sector as a sector that supports the national food security of a country. ECLAC and FAO also encourage countries in the region to ensure the availability of public access to food commodities in full, so as to minimize the problem of malnutrition that arises due to the pandemic. Governments of countries in the region are encouraged to maintain stability related to the food and agricultural sectors, so as to minimize the impact caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, especially in rural communities who require greater support from the government as the front line of national food production (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020a).

In an effort to support the transformation of food and agriculture in LAC region, ECLAC and FAO establish policies related to food and agriculture, including; (1) Improving the distribution chain of food and agricultural commodities, as an effort to support quality food production and a maintained supply quantity, (2) countries in the region must ensure that producers of food and agricultural commodities have obtained the necessary economic facilities to maintain the financial capacity of producers as well as consumers. (3) support the provision of sustainable investment facilities so as to expand the socio-economics security system of the community, as well as an effort to realize sustainable and environmentally friendly production (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020).

As an effort to transform food and agriculture in LAC region after the Covid-19 pandemic, ECLAC and FAO are trying to build a structured system to make it easier to monitor prices and the amount of available stock related to food and agricultural commodities. countries must provide full support to ensure sustainable economic development, while encouraging investment in the agricultural sector. The state must ensure a smooth distribution system for food and agricultural products, so as to reduce the country's

food loss. The government must ensure that the policies implemented related to food must be effective and on target, the government at the same time builds a regional international cooperation framework so as to prevent trade disruptions, which indirectly reduce the barriers that arise in the food and agricultural sector in Latin American countries and regions. caribbean (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020c).

Referring to the theory of international cooperation and food security, the two activities are mutually sustainable. A country's food security can only be achieved if a country cooperates with each other regionally and internationally, which includes cooperation with competent international institutions related to food and agriculture, which can assist in bridging communication between actors, so as to ensure the socio-economic stability of a country. the country, especially in the food and agricultural sectors, which are experiencing disruption due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

5. Conclusions and Suggestions

The food and agriculture system has become the most crucial sector in LAC region, this sector is affected by the pandemic which is quite significant which affects the national food security of countries in LAC region. ECLAC and FAO as international institutions under the United Nations, implement food and agricultural transformation policies LAC region in order to minimize the impact received by the food and agricultural sectors as a result of the pandemic, as a form of response to the post-Covid-19 era. The policies implemented by ECLAC and FAO can provide input to the governments of countries in LAC region, so that they can take appropriate policies in protecting the food and agriculture sectors from global dynamics that occur or will occur as a form of food mitigation in order to achieve food security of national food.

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