POVERTY can fuel contagion, but contagion can also create or deepen poverty.
Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security

Sudan closed its borders and Uganda restricted people’s movement, while cargo is allowed from both countries:

- **Prices started increasing** (i.e. 50kg maize flour increased by 49%, from SSP 4,500 to SSP 6,700 in Juba) and **trade volume have reduced** – Sudanese traders (in Malakal & Renk) reported to be leaving South Sudan

- **Food prices in source markets in Uganda increased**, due also to stockpiling

- **Sharp devaluation of the SSP** during the last week, on the parallel market (from SSP 270/USD to 310/USD)

- **Immediate negative impacts on purchasing power of urban households**: restricted movements and trade will likely reduce livelihoods and income, thereby increasing food insecurity

Significant **socio-economic repercussions** possible due to China’s leading role in agriculture and food trade and significant share of the country’s trade portfolio

- potentially **disruption of trade and market chains** with knock-on effects on imported food prices; and,

- significant potential impacts on livelihoods, food security, national economies and global financial and food markets.
IMPACTS IN DETAIL
Loss of oil revenue

Plummeting oil prices will impact on Government revenue affecting its ability to meet import obligations and payment of public service salaries;

Currency depreciation and market-dependent populations

Possible rise in nominal price of fuel

amidst scarcity and erratic supply to markets, likely to cause further upward pressure on the prices through inflated transport costs;

Impact on commodity flows and prices

Whilst the Governments in the East African Region including Uganda and Sudan indicated they will allow commercial and food aid cargo to continue moving, the screening process has slowed down the commodity movement and limited trade volume
Real incomes of casual labourers

Significant vulnerable layer in urban areas likely to be further impacted by the currency devaluation. The purchasing power of these populations will continue to be compromised;

Vulnerability

An extensive spread of the disease in South Sudan, a poorer and food insecure country with extremely limited basic infrastructures, could take a heavier toll in terms of mortality rates.

Countries with high levels of food insecurity are generally more vulnerable and less prepared for an epidemics or pandemics outbreaks than those which are seeing a rapid spread of the disease at present.

Agriculture production

A larger hit of the COVID19 on the workforce would negatively affect the agricultural sector, characterized by labour intensive production, aggravating the repercussions on production, as the main agricultural season is about to start.
POSSIBLE MITIGATING FACTORS

- Age structure of South Sudan population: the share of people with the highest risk (by age) of developing severe disease or dying is far lower in South Sudan than in, for example, China or Europe;

- A sparse and predominantly rural based population and more limited travel networks both within the country and in the region could reduce the pace at which COVID-19 spreads.
WHAT TO DO

▪ Continue providing support to the most vulnerable populations through shock-responsive assistance and consider monitoring additional population groups that could become vulnerable;

▪ Advocate for humanitarian corridors to remain open for as long as possible and restrictions on commercial trade to be minimized to ensure adequate food supplies;

▪ Continue monitoring food prices and markets; Information is to be shared timely to decisionmakers and all actors to help evidence-based programming.