



**Raising the voice of farmers
in their struggle to fight
climate change and the
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by the Climakers Alliance

The COVID-19 pandemic outbreak arrived at a time when many countries in the world are already confronted with serious pre-existing burdens of climate change and food insecurity. Many farmers experienced and are still experiencing huge losses due to natural disasters – droughts, floods, insects' invasion – and the pandemic outbreak exacerbated existing critical conditions. While the world is struggling to flatten the curve on COVID-19, climate change effects have not disappeared, and neither should action to fight climate change.

We can consider COVID-19 as a turning point in the history of food systems: it has demonstrated that agriculture is at the centre and farmers are key actors of the food systems and that the system is fragile. However, COVID-19 also has demonstrated that speedy, collective action is possible where all the actors are capable of immediate changes when called upon to act.

The way farmers and all the stakeholders of the food value chain responded to the resulting shocks of the pandemic outbreak could be considered as a best practice to react resiliently to current and future climate change ripple effects: when the world came to a standstill, holding its breath for the COVID-19 pandemic to pass, farmers and the broader agricultural sector have been working to ensure food and nutrition security for the world population.

Always at the forefront of dealing with nature, farmers have embraced the necessary risks and stood up for their families, communities and home countries. But farmers are not alone in this: sustainably bringing nutritious food onto the tables of billions of people is a joint effort of the entire value chain. Now, more than ever, it is important to ensure that we are not breaking this chain, and we are sending a strong message of smooth collaboration and joined-up thinking.

That is why, this year, we, the members of The Climakers Alliance decided to raise the voice of farmers in their struggle to fight climate change and the pandemic outbreak, by asking them two questions:



The Climakers are the members of the Farmers Driven Climate Change Alliance, namely the farmers of the world, who are leading this initiative, and other stakeholders – including the private sector, civil society, research centres, multilateral organizations – that are **committed to providing bottom-up, pragmatic and successful solutions to climate change.**

While the world is struggling to flatten the curve on COVID-19, climate change effects have not disappeared, and neither should action to fight climate change.

- In the actions of mitigating climate change effects and adapt it to, how does COVID-19 affect the capacity of the farmers in your country?
- Which are the best practices you are implementing to adapt to it and/or mitigate its effects considering the need to continue working during the health emergency?

The experiences collected have been published in the [COVID-19 Special Edition of "The Climakers-Stories from the Field"](#). This publication presents 15 science-assessed best farming practices from 14 countries across the globe with the aim to shine a light on the way the farming community has been reacting resiliently to the climate crisis during COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. They show and testify the unique practical expertise of farmers, as a combination of traditional knowledge and experience from living and working on the land and with the hands in the soil every day.

Climate Change does not stop, and neither do the Climakers!

Check out more about these stories and the farmers-driven climate change agenda at www.theclimakers.org





BELGIUM: In Belgium, over the last years, the periods of drought are getting longer, therefore smart irrigation techniques that use water extremely efficiently are being implemented. Farmers are more secure of a stable and high-quality yield, even though periods of drought, while using water efficiently.



CANADA: Climate change has been affecting farming in Quebec with warm temperatures that last longer and cold temperatures that last shorter. The pandemic worsened the already difficult situation and some best practices were implemented such as the opening of borders to allow seasonal workers enter the country; farmers were encouraged to plant trees between their fields to form wind-breaking hedges; and increased use of the cover crop.



GERMANY: From Germany, an experience of a farm testifies the benefits of improving soil health to fight climate change, while leveraging on production for local markets to cope with COVID-19 value chain disruption.



BELIZE: In Belize, in order to cope with the challenges faced by climate change and COVID-19, farmers downsized and diversified production, developed market techniques and invested in water harvesting.



ECUADOR: Because of the increase in the seawater temperatures and the spread of COVID-19, oyster farmers faced multiple challenges, like a prolonged presence of predators in the sea and a decrease in oysters' production. The initiatives carried out by the Cooperativa de Pescadores Artesanales Virgen de Regla supported producers to keep working and accessing new markets, thus improving their incomes.

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

GUATEMALA: In Guatemala, farmers have been diversifying their production and markets (from international to local markets) to cope up with climate change and COVID-19.



GUATEMALA, HONDURAS: The spread of COVID-19 has worsened an already complicated situation: roofed gardens, water harvesting and bio preparations are the main practices implemented by farmers in order to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change.



HONDURAS: In Honduras, climate change and COVID-19 placed a huge burden on the production of avocado, potato, strawberry and basic grain crops. Farmers had to find alternative solutions in order to continue to produce such as the use of greenhouses and improved seeds tolerant to droughts.



MAURITIUS: The COVID-19 pandemic coupled with climate change, have amplified the existing pressures on the farming sector. Farmers have been implementing many mitigation practices (Agro-ecological practices; minimised use of pesticides). FALCON (Farmers in Agriculture, Livestock, Cooperative, Organic Network) is supporting the adoption of these solutions and helping producers to cope up with COVID-19 disruption in the value chain (marketing; inputs' purchase).



IVORY COAST: Ivory Coast is facing both effects of climate change (increased temperature, droughts) and the effects of COVID-19 (farmers and food value chain actors' income decline). ANASEMCI (National Association of Seed Companies of Ivory Coast) and PANAFCI (National Platform for Family Agriculture in Ivory Coast) promoted practices to adapt to climate change (i.e diversified production) and face COVID-19 advocating for farmers raising their needs during the pandemic.



KENYA: In Kenya, the National Farmers' Federation (KENAFF) developed an emergency response plan to support farmers respond to COVID-19, Climate Change and desert locusts' invasion built on information dissemination and knowledge sharing, USSD (mobile technology), market facilitation, Model Kitchen Garden, Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and need-based extension services.

STORIES FROM THE FIELD



NEPAL: Because of COVID-19, under the slogan “rural products in urban areas”, NACCFL is working in the front line on helping farmers selling perishable and non-perishable products helping them to find a market. Furthermore, NACCFL decided to train farmers in organic agriculture, who started farming accordingly, adopting agricultural practices with the aim to mitigate the effects of a changing climate.



NICARAGUA: Climate change has brought extreme climatic variations that have significantly affected the national territory and caused the loss of agricultural production and even life losses. However, despite the challenges faced, seed banks proved to be a model that can survive in this difficult scenario as seed facilitators.



NEW ZEALAND: In order to curb the negative impacts of a changing climate and the spread of the pandemic, farmers in New Zealand implemented best practices such as online trade; increased farm planting of trees; actions to increase biodiversity; riparian protection and stock shelter among others. Therefore, farmers were able to work despite the difficult situation.



PARAGUAY: Pandemic has brought with it challenges and Paraguay has been no exception. Specifically, the two most affected sectors were floriculture and aquaculture. Thanks to organized association, product and market diversification, farmers managed to curb the negative impacts of the pandemic