

# Bridging research and policy responses to COVID-19

## Presenters

### Moderator



#### **Sara Savastano, Director Research and Impact Assessment Division – IFAD, Secretary General ICABR, and ICWAE**

Sara Savastano is the Director of IFAD's Research and Impact Assessment Division. Starting in 2016, Savastano worked at the World Bank as Senior Economist with the Development Economic Research Group. From 2008 to 2016 she was an Assistant Professor of Economics and Finance at the University of Rome Tor Vergata. After working from 2001 to 2005 with the Development Economic Research Group of the World Bank, Savastano was an economist at the Public Investment Evaluation Unit of the Italian Ministry of Economy and Finance until 2008.

She is the Secretary General of the International Consortium on Applied Bioeconomy Research. Her research focuses on land policies and institutions, rural development, agricultural efficiency and productivity, and technology adoption. She has worked as a consultant with FAO, the World Bank, IFPRI, and other public and private institutions.

Savastano holds a PhD in economics from the University of Rome Tor Vergata.

### Policy Perspectives



#### **Marie Haga, Associate Vice-President, External Relations and Governance Department**

Marie Haga is Associate Vice-President, of the External Relations and Governance Department, at IFAD. She is responsible for communications, global engagement, partnerships, resource mobilization and relations with IFAD Member States.

Haga has extensive experience in conservation, food security, foreign affairs and politics. Before coming to IFAD she worked with the Global Crop Diversity Trust, where she was Executive Director from 2013.

Haga served with Norway's Foreign Service as a career diplomat and held various positions in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including the Norwegian Mission to the United Nations in New York and the Embassy in New Delhi. She was appointed to and held the position of State Secretary/Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1997-1999.

Haga's political career includes serving as a Member of Parliament in Norway from 2001-2009. She also held three ministerial positions: Minister of Cultural Affairs (1999–2000), Minister of Local Government and Regional Development (2005–2007) and Minister of Petroleum and Energy (2007–2008).

In addition, Haga held the position of Director for Renewable Energy in the Federation of Norwegian Industries (2009–2011) and of Secretary General of the Norwegian Air Ambulance (2011-2013) - the biggest voluntary organization in Norway. Haga studied political science and was a trainee in the Norwegian Foreign Service.



**Maximo Torero, Chief Economist and Assistant Director General for Economic and Social Development FAO**

Maximo Torero is the chief economist and assistant director general for economic and social development at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome, Italy.

Before joining FAO in 2019, he served at the World Bank Group in Washington, D.C. as the executive director for Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. Between 2006 – 2016, he led the Markets, Trade and Institutions Division at the International Food Policy Research Institute in Washington. He is a professor at the University of the Pacific, Peru (on leave) and Alexander von Humboldt Fellow at the University of Bonn, Germany.

He has published more than 40 peer-reviewed academic articles analyzing poverty, inequality and behavioral economics in top journals – including in *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *Econometric Theory*, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, *Review of Economics and Statistics* and *Journal of Labor Economics*. Specifically, he has studied the role of infrastructure, institutions and technology on poverty reduction, and the importance of geography, infrastructure access and assets in explaining poverty. He is the author of 14 books, including *Food Price Volatility and its Implications for Food Security and Policy* and *Innovations for Inclusive Value Chain Development: Successes and Challenges*.

He has led several research programs and impact evaluations. He led the impact evaluation of the Millennium Challenge Corporation's \$450 million-investment in El Salvador's Northern Transnational Highway and rural electrification to increase access to markets.

Torero received the Chevalier de l'Ordre du Mérite Agricole from the French government for exceptional contribution to agriculture. The Global Development Network awarded him twice for outstanding research on development. His work has been cited in numerous media outlets, including CNN, BBC, The Economist and The New York Times. He has a Ph.D. in economics from University of California, Los Angeles, and a B.S. from University of the Pacific in Peru.



**Arif Husain, Chief Economist and Director of Research,  
Assessments & Monitoring Division WFP**

Dr. Arif Husain is Chief Economist and Director of Research, Assessments & Monitoring Division at United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Rome, Italy. Arif joined WFP in 2003 and since then he has served in many senior positions both in the field and at Headquarters. He has also worked for the World Bank and taught at the Hubert H Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs. Arif's work focuses on analyzing food security and welfare conditions in developing countries to inform humanitarian response. His research interests include application of information technologies to improve humanitarian response; understanding linkages between poverty, hunger, conflict and migration; and analysing how global economic shocks impact food security, social protection and emergency and development assistance. Arif has a Ph.D. in agricultural and applied economics with a minor in forestry from the University of Minnesota.



**Gero Carletto, Lead Economist and Manager Research Data  
Group**

Calogero (Gero) Carletto is a Lead Economist and the Manager of the Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS), a long-standing survey program at the World Bank. He is also currently managing the Center for Development Data (C4D2), a Rome-based hub of the World Bank's Development Data Group dedicated to fostering methodological innovation and strengthening capacity in household surveys in low- and middle-income countries. Gero has more than twenty-five years of experience in the collection, analysis and dissemination of household survey data. He has published more than 80 articles, books and book chapters on various topics ranging from poverty, migration, agriculture

and rural development, as well as data collection methods and measurement issues. He has previously worked for various United Nations' agencies and for the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Gero holds a Ph.D. and a M.Sc. in Agricultural and Resource Economics from the University of California at Berkeley and a Laurea cum Laude in Statistics from the University of Siena, Italy.



### **Johan Swinnen, Director General IFPRI**

Jo Swinnen is Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) since January 2020. Prior to joining IFPRI, Dr Swinnen was professor of economics and director of the LICOS Centre for Institutions and Economic Performance at the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium) and senior research fellow at the Centre for European Policy Studies in Brussels.

Dr Swinnen was a lead economist at the World Bank from 2003 to 2004 and economic adviser to the European Commission from 1998 to 2001. Over the course of his career, Dr Swinnen has been a visiting professor at various universities, including at Stanford University's Center on Food Security and the Environment, and a frequent adviser to institutions such as the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Dr Swinnen earned his PhD from Cornell University (USA) and holds honorary doctorates from the University of Göttingen (Germany) and the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra (Slovakia). He is a fellow of the Agricultural & Applied Economics Association and the European Association of Agricultural Economists, and he served as president of the International Association of Agricultural Economists from 2012 to 2015.

Dr Swinnen has published extensively on agricultural and food policies, international development, political economy, institutional reforms, trade, and global value chains, and his body of work has been widely cited. His books include *The Political Economy of Agricultural and Food Policies* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); *Quality Standards, Value Chains and International Development* (Cambridge University Press, 2015); *Political Power and Economic Policy: Theory and Empirical Applications* (Cambridge University Press, 2011); and *From Marx and Mao to the Market: The Economics and Politics of Agricultural Transition* (Oxford University Press, 2006).

## Research Perspectives



### **Marc Bellemare, Professor, University of Minnesota**

Marc Bellemare is Northrop Professor in the Department of Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota, where I also direct the Center for International Food and Agricultural Policy. He currently serves as one of four co-editors of the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*. Prior to that, he served as one of two co-editors of *Food Policy* from 2015 to 2019. His research lies at the intersection of agricultural economics, food policy, and international development. A few specific areas in which he has been conducting research include agricultural value chains, risk and uncertainty, and the consequences of high and volatile food prices.

His research has so far been featured in media outlets such as *The Economist*, the *New York Times*, National Public Radio, and the *Wall Street Journal*. For his teaching, he has won the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences Distinguished Teaching Award for Graduate Faculty in 2018.

In May 2018, he was elected to the Board of Directors of the AAEA for a three-year term.



### **Scott Rozelle, Professor, Stanford University**

Scott Rozelle is the Helen F. Farnsworth Senior Fellow and the co-director of the Rural Education Action Program in the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies at Stanford University. He received his BS from the University of California, Berkeley, and his MS and PhD from Cornell University. Previously, Rozelle was a professor at the University of California, Davis and an assistant professor in Stanford's Food Research Institute and department of economics. He currently is a member of several organizations, including the American Economics Association, the International Association for Agricultural Economists, and the Association for Asian Studies. Rozelle also serves on the editorial boards of *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, *Agricultural Economics*, the *Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*, and the *China Economic Review*. His research focuses almost exclusively on China and is concerned with: agricultural policy, including the supply, demand, and trade in agricultural projects; the emergence and evolution of markets and other economic institutions in the transition process and their implications for equity and efficiency; and the economics of poverty and inequality, with an emphasis on rural

education, health and nutrition. Rozelle's papers have been published in top academic journals, including Science, Nature, American Economic Review, and the Journal of Economic Literature. He is fluent in Chinese and has established a research program in which he has close working ties with several Chinese collaborators and policymakers. He is the chair of the International Advisory Board of the Center for Chinese Agricultural Policy; a co-director of the University of California's Agricultural Issues Center; and a member of Stanford's Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center and the Center on Food Security and the Environment. In recognition of his outstanding achievements, Rozelle has received numerous honors and awards, including the Friendship Award in 2008, the highest award given to a non-Chinese by the Premier; and the National Science and Technology Collaboration Award in 2009 for scientific achievement in collaborative research.



### **Saweda Liverpool-Tasie, Professor, MSU**

Saweda Liverpool-Tasie is a tenured associate professor in the department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics. Her current research focuses on emergent issues related to smallholder productivity and welfare within dynamic and transforming food markets in sub Saharan Africa and alongside poorly functioning markets in the region. In addition to evaluating the heterogeneous effect of poverty reduction strategies (and social networks) on rural household behavior and livelihood, she has a keen interest in understanding input use and input markets as well as evaluating input policies. Before joining MSU, she was a Post Doctoral fellow at The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). She received her PhD in Agriculture and Consumer Economics from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. She holds an MSc in Urban and Regional Planning and an MA in Third World Development, both from The University of Iowa. She also holds a BSc. (Honors) in Economics from the University of Jos, Nigeria.

She currently sits on the advisory boards of the Michigan State University's African Studies Center and the Alliance for African Partnership; a flagship program of Michigan State University's International Programs. She is a 2018/19 winner of the MSU Teacher-Scholar Award; given to six MSU faculty members every year, who early in their careers have earned the respect of students and colleagues for their devotion to and skill in teaching that is linked to scholarly work.



**David Zilberman, Professor, UC Berkeley**

David Zilberman is Professor and Robinson Chair, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, UC Berkeley. He works on agricultural & environmental policy, water, marketing, risk and innovation, and the bioeconomy. He is Fellow and President-Elect (2018) of Agricultural & Applied Economics Association (AAEA) & Association of Environmental and Resource Economists, & has the AAEA Publication of Enduring Quality Award (2005, 2010), 2015 Quality of Communication Award on agricultural biotechnology, and 2015 Quality of Communication Honorable Mention on climate change and California. He has published 300 refereed articles in Science, American Economic Review, Econometrica, the American Journal of Agricultural Economics, the Journal of Environmental Economics and Management, among others, and has edited 20 books. He is the Co-Founder of the International Water Resource Economics Consortium and the International Consortium of Applied Bioeconomy Research. He established and is Co-Director of Berkeley's Beahrs Environmental Leadership Program and the Masters of Development Practice.



**Thomas Reardon, Professor, Michigan State University**

Professor Thomas Reardon is Professor of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics at MSU. His researches focus on the links between international development and agribusiness/food industry. He researches the transformation of agri-food systems (supermarkets, processing firms, wholesale and logistics, and agricultural support services) and their effects on farmer incomes, technology, and rural employment. He also researches on agri-food business strategies implementation of innovations via the design of supply chains in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. He has also researched rural nonfarm employment and its links to food systems and agricultural technology adoption.

## **Closing Remark**



### **Carl Pray, Distinguished Professor, Rutgers University**

Carl Pray is a Distinguished Professor in the Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics Department, the School for Environmental and Biological Sciences, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. Pray earned his PhD in Economic History from the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. The focus of his research is agricultural science and technology policy in China, South Asia, Africa and Latin America. Key issues of his research are: How does government research, science policy, intellectual property rights, regulations and advances in basic sciences influence the development and adoption of new agricultural technology? What are the economic and institutional impacts of new agricultural technology – especially its impact on poor farmers in Asia and Africa?