

TECHNICAL REVIEWER'S EDITORIAL



Dr. ir. Barthélemy G. Honfoga

¹Associate Professor, Agri-marketing, Food Security and Policy Analysis Expert
Head, School of Agricultural Economics, Socio-anthropology and Communication for
Rural Development
University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin
Email: honfogabg@yahoo.fr

Dear Scholars, Researchers and Development Specialists!

Dear Readers and Sponsors of the African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development!

One year ago, we launched a call for papers to inform you about how to address the devastating Covid-19 pandemic, an *“invisible enemy” that was born in China and spread quickly across the whole world!*

Worldwide, as of 5 June 2021, the Covid-19 death toll has reached about 3.7 million out of 173.4 million infected people; about 156.2 million people recovered¹. Africa accounts for 0,02% of infected people, its death/infected ratio is about 3.8%, and its healed/infected ratio is 90.6%². Knowledge about the disease seems to be improving. Some vaccines have been even developed in Europe, the US and China and are being tested. Pharmaceutical firms and their international consortia have published some statistical evidence to claim the growing “efficacy” of their vaccines. However, if the disease can still claim at least one life, then it is a threat to humanity. Moreover, growing morbidity of affected populations and the related impacts of Covid-19 on their livelihoods and countries’ economies remain a serious concern. There is still fear about Africa’s vulnerability to the pandemic, regarding its poor health infrastructure, overall food insecurity and poverty. However, knowledge about the SARS-Cov2 virus –the cause of the Covid-19 pandemic– seems to have improved, regarding prevention and healing of the disease. There is a wealth of information available about it from various trusted and untrusted sources, with variable degree of reliability and sincerity. Yet, life ethics should be preserved in whichever sorts of information diffusion and actions. The African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development (AJFAND) has chosen the scientific approach in its attempt to gather useful answers to some critical research questions. Beyond medical and clinical concerns, the economic and social impacts of the pandemic should be genuinely diagnosed and handled. Bearing in mind that agriculture, food, nutrition and development are the focus of this journal, our potential authors were invited to address the following questions in this Special Covid-19 Issue:

- What endogenous knowledge (in agriculture, nutrition, medicine, biology, industrial technology, engineering, economics, philosophy, art, etc.) are available down there, that African Governments have forgotten, refused or are hesitating to value so far to prevent or get rid of the pandemics?
- How best can African Governments address the Covid-19 and other pandemics (AIDS, Malaria, livestock pandemics, etc.) that are constraining the continent’s development?
- What new paradigm and result-oriented approach can effectively unveil and value Africa’s development potential, as far as the health sector is concerned?

¹ [COVID Live Update: 173,380,006 Cases and 3,729,181 Deaths from the Coronavirus - Worldometer](https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/)

² [Coronavirus nombre de cas en Afrique | En direct \(coronavirus-statistiques.com\)](https://www.coronavirus-statistiques.com/)

- To what extent have new information and communication technologies made a difference in fostering useful agendas and promoting wise decision-making in Africa?

Although we have not been able yet to dig fully into the domains of all the above research questions, we think the present harvest is worth the challenge. Our aim in this issue is to shed some light on the way forward in terms of relevant policy decisions and practical interventions that should be undertaken on the ground to address the Covid-19 pandemic, based on reliable scientific knowledge and information. The articles published in this special issue of AJFAND are all about prevention of the disease. We may classify them into two groups: socioeconomic research papers dealing mostly about food security, and nutrition-and-medical research papers dealing about food safety, diets and health care services. There is as yet no paper on healing the disease. Strong findings from Africa herbal medicine or integrated medicine are also still awaited. When available, we may publish such papers in a next issue on Covid-19. In the meantime, a few personal testimonials from professors who have been sick of Covid-19 may stand for the healing aspect. We expect they will add more flavour and energy to the articles published in this Special Issue.

We wish you good reading and learning! Considering the papers' policy implications, we also strongly believe you will be AJFAND's dedicated ambassadors who will engage in a vibrant advocacy towards policy-makers and governments to butt Covid-19 out of Africa and other developing regions.

Thank you very much for your attention! We highly value your support!

Dr. ir. Barthélemy G. Honfoga,
Associate Professor, Agri-marketing, Food Security and Policy Analysis Expert
Head, School of Agricultural Economics, Socio-anthropology and Communication for
Rural Development
University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin