



## Meeting Minutes (December 2023)

**Title:** FSC Myanmar National Coordination Meeting

**Location:** Online via Zoom

**Date:** 12.12.2023 (Tuesday)

**Time:** 3:00PM - 5:00PM (Yangon Time)

**Meeting Chair:** Laurent Gimenez (Cluster Coordinator)

**Meeting Co-Chair:** Majid Ali Shah (Cluster Co-coordinator)

### PARTICIPANTS

**27** Organisations including **3** donors, **18** INGOs, **1** NNGO, **1** Red Cross and **4** UN Agencies, (**50** individuals) participated in the meeting.

### AGENDA

1. The state of Agriculture and Agri-Food System (by IFPRI)
2. Agriculture Input Trader Pilot Survey Myanmar (by FAO)
3. CESVI Myanmar Activities in Central Dry Zone (by CESVI)
4. Securing Land Rights and Livelihoods in South-East Myanmar (by Covenant Institute)
5. AOB

## SUMMARY OF MEETING DISCUSSIONS AND ACTION POINTS

PROCEEDING	Action Point/ Remark
<p><b>1. Welcome</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The meeting commenced at 3:00 PM, was chaired by the Cluster Coordinator. The meeting chair welcomed the participants to the meeting and presented the agenda for the meeting.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>2. The state of Agriculture and Agri-Food System</b>, presented by IFPRI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The data is from the 4th round of a survey conducted between June 26th and July 25th, 2023, covering 5,001 households in Myanmar.</li> <li>The survey's questions aim to assess agricultural performance during both post-monsoon and pre-monsoon periods.</li> <li>Insecurity significantly impacts farmers, with varying degrees of severity across different regions.</li> <li>Approximately 13% of farmers in dry-zone areas and 12% in coastal areas are unable to cultivate due to conflicts.</li> <li>The trends indicate that despite the availability of inputs, labor inputs present a major challenge, with 17.1% of farmers encountering difficulties in this area.</li> <li>The prices of inputs have seen a slight increase from previous seasons.</li> <li>Farmgate prices experienced substantial increases during the dry season, with paddy prices rising by as much as 69%, oilseeds (sesame, groundnut) by 33% to 38%, and major pulses (black gram, green gram) by 19% to 22%.</li> <li>It is noteworthy that output prices have risen more than input prices, suggesting increased profitability for farmers during this period.</li> <li>Food prices for common diets escalated in August 2023, increasing by 19% in three months, 30% in 12 months, and a significant 72% in 15 months, rendering a healthy diet financially inaccessible for a large segment of the population.</li> <li>The report explores how escalating violence and insecurity negatively affect the agricultural sector.</li> <li>Agricultural exports in 2023 have declined, with rice exports from January to November reaching only two-thirds of the volume of the same period in 2022, marking the lowest level since the 2015/16 season.</li> <li>Rising violence and insecurity are leading to fragmentation in agricultural markets, particularly in rice markets, where the price difference for a 50 kg bag has more than doubled in the last five months, exceeding 100,000 MMK as of December.</li> <li>Conflicts are affecting food prices, resulting in higher rice prices in insecure areas and lower prices in secure areas from the end of August to early December 2023.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Presentation:</b>  <a href="#">The State of Agriculture and Agri-Food System</a></p>
<p><b>3. Agriculture Input Trader Pilot Survey Myanmar</b>, presented by FAO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The survey utilized Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) with a combination of convenience sampling and sampling based on 'market catchment' areas. It involved 227 agricultural input businesses, including 171 from the FAO database and additional contacts.</li> <li>The survey focused on four products: fertilizer, seeds, livestock feed, and veterinary drugs, with a limited representation of livestock input traders.</li> <li>It was observed that frequencies for key aspects like difficulties, supply, and demand did not completely align with the findings of the current survey.</li> <li>A direct correlation was found between logistics length and supply challenges, particularly in conflict-affected areas, impacting the availability of both seeds and fertilizers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Presentation:</b>  <a href="#">Agriculture Input Trader Pilot Survey</a></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The survey highlighted the use of Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), a set theory-based framework valuable for understanding causal relationships.</li> <li>• It discussed the impact of two distinct causal paths: one resulting from the aftermath of Cyclone Mocha, and the other involving local-level challenges exacerbated by insecurity, affecting the availability of fertilizers and seeds.</li> <li>• The survey explored how conflict and violence affect demand, with poor harvests reducing the need for seeds and high prices, combined with the lack of credit, leading to fewer clients.</li> <li>• The presentation concluded by proposing strategic interventions such as targeted cash transfers, seed vouchers, and organized fairs to improve access to essential inputs. These measures also offer opportunities to support local seed growers and promote the use of locally produced organic fertilizers.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Activities in Central Dry Zone</b>, presented by CESVI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CESVI operates in Myanmar's dry zone, specifically targeting two townships (Nyaung-U and Myingyan) in the Mandalay Region and nine townships (Magway, Minbu, Myothit, Yenangyaung, Chauk, Pakokku, Natmauk, Pwint Phyu, and Aung Lan) in the Magway Region.</li> <li>• The organization concentrates on agricultural and livelihood activities, impacting 270 villages and benefiting over 59,000 households.</li> <li>• Their initiatives include boosting productivity through the adoption of innovative agricultural technologies and implementing a COVID-19 recovery project.</li> <li>• In the Mandalay region, CESVI's focus is on climate-resilient agriculture and livestock activities.</li> <li>• In the Magway region, the organization is executing the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme in collaboration with the FAO and the S.A.F.E.C.R.O.P.S project.</li> <li>• CESVI also supports local women's groups, providing capacity-building programs and engaging in agricultural activities.</li> <li>• Discussions during the presentation emphasized the importance of improving access to finance for small businesses and enhancing local governance structures.</li> <li>• Their activities encompass facilitating market access, providing training and skill development, and fostering women-led businesses.</li> <li>• The presentation concluded by showcasing some key achievements, such as the establishment of a women's pancake production business and job creation initiatives for youth, which have contributed to income generation and employment opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Presentation:</b>  <a href="#">CESVI's Activities in Central Dry Zone</a></p>
<p><b>5. Securing Land Rights and Livelihoods in South-East Myanmar</b>, presented by Covenant Institute</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covenant Institute is a non-profit organization focused on development and capacity building in Southeast Myanmar.</li> <li>• Its key areas of work include governance, peace and conflict resolution, livelihoods, and education. The organization engages in community development through research, advocacy, and training.</li> <li>• The Institute aims to enhance the well-being of conflict-affected communities by securing land tenure and improving livelihoods through sustainable agricultural practices.</li> <li>• Its objectives include promoting the acceptance of customary land tenure rights and enhancing food security in Northern Kayin State.</li> <li>• Food security interventions include both short-term and long-term agricultural projects, such as home and school gardening initiatives, technical training, and the provision of agricultural inputs.</li> <li>• Farmer Producer Groups (FPGs) are established to create a Multi-Stakeholder Network, facilitating market expansion and capacity building.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Presentation:</b>  <a href="#">Securing Land Rights and Livelihoods in South-East Myanmar</a></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs) are formed at the village level, offering starter kits, technical support, and access to loans.</li> <li>• Notable achievements of the Covenant Institute include training over 669 participants (70% women) in agricultural practices and 125 students (65% female) in school gardening.</li> <li>• Covenant Institute is committed to sustainable development, significantly contributing to the improved well-being of conflict-affected communities in Southeast Myanmar.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>6. AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CESVI addressed the situation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Kalaw Township, Southern Shan State, where it's estimated that 2,000 to 5,000 individuals are living in private homes, and an additional 300 to 500 are residing in shelters. These IDPs primarily originate from Kayah State and Northern Shan State.</li> <li>• There's an urgent need for security intervention in this area. CESVI has expressed their readiness to support such an intervention and has provided their email for further communication regarding this matter.</li> <li>• The World Food Programme (WFP) also discussed their efforts in distributing cash assistance across six townships, including Kalaw. However, they are encountering challenges due to the political climate and budget constraints.</li> <li>• The Cluster Coordinator emphasized the importance of staying informed about any rapid assessments or interventions being planned or executed in the area.</li> <li>• It was suggested by the Cluster Coordinator that a separate follow-up on this issue would be beneficial to coordinate efforts effectively.</li> </ul>	