

FSAC Monthly Meeting
Virtual meeting, 22 March 2023
Minutes of Meeting

Type of meeting	FSAC monthly meeting
Date and location	Wednesday, 22 March 2022, Kabul, 10:00 AM – 12:00 AM
Chairperson	FSAC
Note taker	FSAC
Attendees	135

Meeting Agenda

Min	Action Item	Responsible Party
1	Early Warning Updates	FSAC Early Warning Group
2	Female staff ban – FSAC survey updates and operational issues	FSAC
3	FSAC food for cash transfer value changes	FSAC
4	Update on the Agriculture Food Security Monitoring System and IPC planning	FSAC
5	SAG and NGO co-chair elections	FSAC
6	AoB; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCPM heads up • FSAC National, regional and NGOs Co-Chair updates contact detail • IPC Post Monitoring Partners Checklist – Kobo Tool 	FSAC

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
1	Early Warning Updates	FSAC Early Warning Group
<p>The members of the FSAC Early Warning and Information Working Group (EWIWG) updated the FSAC partners on the climate outlook, prices, agriculture, livestock, and pasture condition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ La Niña has ended, and ENSO-neutral conditions are expected to continue through the spring and early summer of 2023. ○ Cumulative precipitation from March to May 2023 in Afghanistan will most likely be near average throughout most of the country. ○ Snow water volumes and expectations for precipitation, snow water volumes are anticipated to be below average in most basins through May 2023. This is likely to limit water availability 		

for second-season crops and will also likely have negative impacts on winter wheat and second-season crop planting.

- **Reservoir/streamflow levels** and hydrological drought are likely ongoing and will most likely persist through at least May 2023 across parts of the west, south, and north.
- **Flooding** events will likely occur at lower-than-normal levels. Although, flash flooding in the spring is likely typical.
- **Above-average mean temperatures** are most likely throughout the country through September 2023.
- **Vegetation conditions** are expected to remain at seasonally low levels during the remainder of the winter, as expected. Vegetation conditions are likely to improve, although they remain below average during March to May, due to the lingering effects of two consecutive droughts (2020/21 and 2021/22).
- **Groundwater:** As a result of the eight La Nina year since 2000 and the imbalance of groundwater use due to increased levels of discharge and decreased levels of recharge, groundwater resources have been depleted, also resulting in lower quality level. Given current snow water volumes, precipitation forecast for the remainder of the 2022/23 wet season, increased water demands due to above average temperature, and the use of groundwater for agriculture purposes as an easy and cheap substitute for surface water, the groundwater level will be further impacted, which will bring severe water provision problems in the future.
- **Winter wheat** has been cultivated very extensively except for some reduced area investment in some parts of the country (Ghor, east). The effect of the Jan/Feb cold wave on some standing wheat crops is still visible, especially in the southern part of the country where wheat has replaced poppy, report of some rust disease on wheat in eastern districts, Kama and Behsoud – sensitive varieties might see an increase in disease.
- **Pasture growth** is better this year in comparison to the last year but still, vegetation conditions are lower than normal years, resulting in potential fodder shortage in case of overgrazing. In southern areas, pasture conditions are still a concern due to the lack of precipitation.
- **Livestock diseases** There are recent reports recorded cases of Enterotoxaemia, Peste des Petites Ruminants (PPR), Pox, and Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD). At the moment, no LSD outbreaks in the coldest areas of the Country are recorded, since flies, the main vector, are not active. Some LSD reports are occurring in warmer areas. Vaccination activities on LSD are starting in North East.
- **Price of main food commodities.** The prices of wheat grain, wheat flour, rice, sugar, pulses, and cooking oil saw slight reduction compared to the last week. However, these prices remain significantly higher when compared to the 2-year average — except for cooking oil. Compared to last year, the prices of low and high-quality rice have significantly increased (by 18 percent & 23 percent respectively), while cooking oil price has decreased by 21 percent.
- **Purchasing power** of unskilled casual labor and livestock keepers improved by 2 percent, mainly due to decreased wheat prices, compared to the previous week. However, the Terms of Trade for a one-year female sheep and unskilled casual labor to wheat remain significantly low compared to the 2-year average
- **The price of DAP and Urea fertilizers** remained elevated at 42 percent and 21 percent, respectively, above their two-year average prices. It's expected that this would have already

adversely impacted winter planting along with other factors and would also negatively impact spring wheat.

The FSAC presented the findings of the IPC post-monitoring exercise. FSAC reviewed the available secondary datasets and observations provided by the FSAC regional focal points, and EWIWG key messages related to the climate outlook, agriculture, livestock, prices, and natural disasters. The results indicate that overall the IPC AFI assumptions made for the projection period are still valid throughout March 2023, therefore the projection made for 19.9 m people, and 46% in IPC Phase 3 and above (FLM) is still valid.

WFP representative questioned the contradiction view of EWIWG on the area planted for winter wheat whereas FAO highlighted a higher area for plantation and FEWS NET pointed out a negative impact on winter wheat and second harvest due to rapid snowpack melting and below average precipitation in some areas. WFP representative wanted to ensure that the EWIWG members have a common understanding of what is happening with winter wheat and whether is there any specific provincial or district-level analysis concerning winter wheat that is useful for programming. WFP questioned what action will be taken by EWIWG updates. WFP also confirmed slide changes on assumptions indicating no need for any IPC urgent update.

The FSAC highlighted that the changes in assumptions are not significant to require the IPC update. Concerning the area with the winter plantation, EWIWG members will further review the assumptions to understand some of the differences and changes and will provide the FSAC Partners with a picture of how the situation is evolving. [\(For more detailed information, please click here to refer to the meeting presentation\)](#)

Action point:

- 1. In the next EWIWG meeting, EWIWG members will have a deeper review of the assumptions to better understand some of the differences and the level of changes in assumptions.**

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
2	Female staff ban – FSAC survey updates and operational issues	FSAC

The FSAC updated the partners on the result of the survey related to the impact of the female staff ban on the Partners’ programs and operations. FSAC launched three rounds of the survey related to the female staff ban. In the first survey, there were more than 100 responses and a very large amount of NGOs reported suspension due to “out of principle” and inability to carry out their operations. In the second survey, the number of respondents was reduced to 66 and it made it difficult to understand the trend. When the FSAC launched the 3rd round of the survey, no one responded despite the extension of the timeframe. During FSAC national meeting, a quick survey was launched and only 39 organizations responded. Out of 39 organizations, 11 organizations indicated that their activities are still suspended due to the ban, and the reason for the suspension was due to inability (5 organizations) and out of principle (6 organizations). The FSAC will launch another round of surveys in the coming days and will continue at a reduced frequency (Monthly instead of fortnightly).

The FSAC advised partners to follow the core guideline on joint operating principles for Afghanistan which was endorsed by HCT and shared with partners through FSAC national meeting invitation. [\(For more detailed information, please click here to refer to the meeting presentation\)](#)

Action Points:

1. The FSAC will launch another round of survey and requests partners to respond.

	Agenda	Facilitator
3	FSAC food for cash transfer value changes	FSAC

The FSAC updated partners on the revision of the FSAC food basket transfer value. FSAC used the following mechanisms in triggering the transfer value revision process:

- **Threshold 1:** A change in food basket cost => $\pm 10\%$ (± 1 percentage point) and $<20\%$ sustained for eight consecutive weeks.
- **Threshold 2:** A change in food basket cost => $\pm 20\%$ (± 2 percentage points) sustained for four consecutive weeks.

The FSAC regularly monitors the price trackers (WFP Market price and JMMI-REACH). FSAC monitoring reports show around -11.2% percent reduced in FSAC in-kind food basket prices. After consultation with the Cash and Voucher Working Group (CVWG) and Agriculture Livelihood Working Group (ALWG), FSAC proposed a transfer value of \$ 84 and a transfer value of AFN 7,400. 50% of the basket is used for IPC phase 3 and 75% of the basket is used for IPC phase-4 [*please click here to refer to the FSAC response package guideline 2023*](#)).

Action Points:

- 1. FSAC will share the updated guideline on the response package with partners.**

	Agenda	Facilitator
4	Update on the Agriculture Food Security Monitoring System and IPC planning	FSAC

The FSAC updated the partners on the status of the Agriculture Food Security Monitoring System (AFSMS). The objective of the AFSMS is to ascertain the agriculture situation and the wet season's performance. The AFSMS covered 34 provinces (45 analytical domains). The three tools (Household questionnaire, Community, and Trader questionnaire) have been used for data collection. The data collection was completed by the 19th of March, 2023. Out of 11,250 HHs, 1978 HHs (18%) were female respondents. About the female interview types, around 1851 HHs interviewed face to face and 127 HHs interviewed via mobile. Under FSAC leadership, the FSAC partners conducted AFSMS real-time monitoring to ensure quality data collection from the field. Around 1,556 HHs which is 10% of the sample have been monitored by 26 FSAC partners organization in urban (17%) and rural (83%) across the country. The FSAC partners identified and communicated the following challenges that were shared with WFP to address them in real-time;

- Lack of coordination between FSAC partners and enumerators in some locations.
- The FSAC partners are not allowed by the local authority to monitor some areas.
- The community usually doesn't remember the name of the enumerators to report the enumerator's name to the monitors.
- The FSAC partners discovered that some of the enumerators didn't introduce themselves to the community and explain the objective of the community in some areas.
- The FSAC partners reported that some of the enumerators didn't provide enough support to the FSAC partners to monitor the location.
- The FSAC partners struggle to find the exact households which have been interviewed in certain communities.

The IPC analysis workshop for the lean season will be conducted between 8-19 April 2023. FSAC shared the invitation with the FSAC partners and analysts. FSAC will conduct a meeting with experts who confirmed their participation in the analysis workshop to clarify and explain the requirements for attending the IPC analysis workshop. [\(For more detailed information, please click here to refer to the meeting presentation\)](#)

Action points:

- 1. The FSAC will send an invitation email to the confirmed analysts about the IPC AFI workshop venue location.**

Agenda		
5	SAG and NGO co-chair elections	FSAC

The FSAC presented the results of the partners' self-nomination for NGOs-Co-Chair and Strategic Advisory group. For FSAC NGO Co-Chair nominations, the following organizations HAALO, OCHR, WHH, HLO, SOFAR, NRC, ASIO, WSTA, and Care International nominate their candidate for this role. For the FSAC Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) the following organization ADEO, Afghan aid, Care International, JACK, ECW, DELTA, SAW International, NRC, PIN, and WHH nominated themselves for this role.

About the objectives, roles, and responsibilities of the SAG and NGO Co-Chair [\(For more detailed information, please click here to refer to the meeting presentation\)](#)

Action Points:

- 1. The FSAC Partners are invited to express their vote (1 per each organization) to elect 4 members of the SAG and one NGO representative for the NGO co-chair Specific communication will be sent to FSAC Partners focal points.**

Agenda		
6	AoB; - CCPM planning FSAC National, Regional, and NGOs Co-Chair updates contact detail IPC Post Monitoring Partners Checklist – Kobo Tool	FSAC

Action Points:

1. FSAC will invite partners for Country Cluster Performance Monitoring (CCPM) workshop in April.
2. FSAC will upload the FSAC national, regional and NOGs, Co-Chair updated contact detail on the FSAC website.
3. IPC post-monitoring checklist will be shared with the partners to report any food security-related issues from their operational presence.