

FSAC Monthly Meeting
Virtual meeting, 24 March 2021
Minutes of Meeting

Type of meeting	FSAC monthly meeting
Date & Location	Wednesday, 24 March 2021, Kabul, 10:00AM – 12:00 PM
Chairperson	FSAC
Note taker	FSAC
Attendees	Partners (virtual meeting)

Meeting Agenda

Min	Action Item	Responsible Party
1	Review of the previous action points	FSAC
2	Presentation on climate outlook	FEWSNET
3	Spring Disaster Contingency Plan	FSAC
4	Collectively tracking the humanitarian response in Afghanistan through perceptions of affected communities	AAP
5	REACH Initiative Afghanistan Informal Settlements Monitoring Round 2	REACH
6	Presentation on the Agriculture Working Group ToR	FSAC
7	IPC update	IPC
8	Results of the CCPM 2020 and way forward	FSAC
9	AoB; - Next FSAC meeting	FSAC

Meeting Minutes

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
1	Review of the previous action points	FSAC
<p>Action points from previous FSAC meeting were reviewed. The update of action points is as follow:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FSAC/IPC sent email to partners requesting data to be utilized in IPC Analysis Workshop 2. FSAC/IPC sent invitation email to partners to attend IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis Workshop 3. Sharing ToR of Agriculture Working Group (AWG) with partners was pending until monthly meeting of March 2021 		

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
2	Presentation on climate outlook	FEWSNET
<p>Overall, the country received below average cumulative precipitation from start until middle wet season. Comparing precipitation with long term (October – May), precipitation has been below average. However, there are some improvement in north and central highland due to recent rainfall in the month of March. The precipitation across north of Afghanistan has been above average throughout March 2021. In addition, improvements have been observed in soil moisture in northern, central highland and southwestern areas. Despite of recent precipitation, snow water volume is low across the regions which is below average and below snow water volume of last year.</p> <p>In addition, precipitation during remainder of wet season (March – May) is expected to be below average across the entire country, most likely in the southern half of the country in May. The absolute and relative precipitation deficits from March to May 2021 are expected to impact northern areas. There is an elevated probability (40-50%) of significantly below-average cumulative precipitation (lowest 20% of climatology) across the country from March to May 2021. Also, above-average mean temperatures are anticipated throughout most of the country through September 2021. However, below-average minimum temperatures remain possible in localized areas.</p> <p>In addition, snowpack development in the 2020/2021 season is expected to be significantly below average in most basins. As a result of these factors, flooding risk is expected to be below-average from March to May 2021, though localized flooding events related to springtime storms are possible. Moreover, rangeland vegetative conditions during the beginning of the spring season in late March through May 2021 and throughout the summer dry season through at least September 2021 are expected to be below average, particularly in the southern and western parts of the country. Meteorological drought conditions are likely ongoing across much of the country — with southern and western areas worst affected — and are likely to continue through September 2021. Also, there is risk for extended periods of dryness during spring wheat planting in March/April 2021 and during critical vegetative and flowering stages of both irrigated and rainfed wheat.</p>		

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
3	Spring Disaster Contingency Plan	FSAC
<p>Afghanistan Spring Disaster Contingency Plan’s objective is to save lives in the areas of highest multi-sectoral need through rapid provision of humanitarian support, provision of assistance to people in their places of origin to reduce suffering and the risk of displacement, continued monitoring of areas at highest risk of displacement and ensure preparedness for response in these locations and ensure that vulnerable people with specific needs and/or reduced coping capacities have access to assistance that meets their needs.</p>		

Period of this plan is March to June 2021 with 13.2M people in need, 7.4M planned reach and USD 390M funding is required. ICCT analysis ranked the 25 most affected provinces as high, medium, or low risk, based on a range of weighted indicators including precipitation, malnutrition, wheat production, vegetation, reliance on agriculture, food insecurity, reduced coping index scores, water quality, availability and access, household debt, and access to health services.

Based on food security and agriculture cluster plan, 13 million people are in need, 6.3 million planned reach and USD 266 million funding is required. FSAC capacity remains at scale and partners can access all districts in the country. A large proportion of the Cluster’s response is delivered through a few of its largest partners who report that they have further capacity to deliver greater volumes of assistance, if funding is provided.

FSAC will continue to evaluate the scale of the impact of La Niña in real time. It will also work with partners and government colleagues to regularly monitor precipitation, snowpack, temperature, and soil moisture to understand the scale of the meteorological and hydrological drought-like conditions that are forming. The Cluster will continue to monitor the normalized difference vegetation index (NDVI), agriculture stress index (ASI) and other agriculture-related indices to analyze the impact of the developing weather conditions on dryland/ rain-fed and irrigated agriculture, livestock health, pasture vegetative conditions and rangelands.

FSAC partners plan to respond in all 25 provinces identified as being most affected by the consequences of the dry-spell and other disasters (floods and conflict). Livelihoods assistance will be provided to 2.5 million people in IPC 3 and 4 to protect their agriculture and livestock livelihoods and increase their shock absorption capacity. Wheat and other crops are anticipated to be adversely impacted by the dry-spell and potential drought. FSAC partners will further support livestock small holders as several indicators are already showing severe stress in pasture conditions. Food assistance will be provided to more than 3.9 million vulnerable people in IPC 4 and the most food insecure pockets within IPC 3 areas, as well as IDPs, returnees and disaster-affected people. FSAC partners will further provide asset creation activities for some 600,000 people. By implementing food and cash assistance for asset rehabilitation. FSAC will also monitor pests, locusts, livestock body condition and market prices for livestock, livestock feed and meat.

So far in 2021, FSAC has received only \$7.5 million of \$553.8 million required in 2021. The livelihoods funding situation is especially grim with very few resources available for this vital part of the response. Timely funding is critical for the implementation of seasonal and time-sensitive activities (such as lean season, animal feed and seed assistance). While active conflict or insecurity may pose a challenge in accessing some areas, FSAC partners are present in all 34 provinces and have the capacity to flexibly get ahead of foreseeable challenges such as movement restrictions.

Action Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSAC will share the Spring Disaster Contingency Plan with partners)
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Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
4	Collectively tracking the humanitarian response in Afghanistan through perceptions of affected communities	AAP
<p>Accountability to affected people is providers and actors being accountable to people who receive assistance through two – way communication channel. Collectively tracking the humanitarian response in Afghanistan through perceptions of affected communities is a set of standardized perception indicators that partners can use to systematically track the response through the perceptions of affected people. It aggregates perception data at national level to contribute to collective feedback and discuss feedback and adapt programming according to feedback.</p> <p>The process includes five steps: design, collect, analysis, discuss and course correct. The objective of tracking humanitarian response is to ensure that the humanitarian response in Afghanistan is better informed and adapted to the perspectives of affected communities, strengthen a collective approach to feedback and response and include standardized perception indicators into the HRP in order to track its strategic objectives through the views of affected people. To collect data, perception question are asked to know how people think, feel and comprehend. The themes of these questions are quality of relationship, empowerment, information and communication, participation and complaint mechanism and quality of service. These questions are directly linked with perception indicators.</p> <p>The tracking can be used in HRP Afghanistan, specifically strategic objective 1: lives are saved in the areas of highest needs. The perception indicators can be % of affected people who think assistance received is relevant to their most important needs, % of affected people who believe they receive the assistance when they need it the most, % of affected people who perceive the assistance to go to those who need it the most.</p> <p>This tracking can be accomplished in 5 steps in Afghanistan: design workshop 1 (29th March 2021), design workshop 2, training, collection + analysis, dialogue and course correction.</p>		
Note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For further details, please contact Isabella Leyh at isabella@groundtruthsolutions.org 	

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
5	REACH Initiative Afghanistan Informal Settlements Monitoring Round 2	REACH
<p>The informal Settlements Monitoring was conducted by REACH in December 2020 and report will be published soon. The aim of Informal Settlements Monitoring was to discuss three main questions: what is an ISET, what is the scope of the ISET caseload across Afghanistan and do different site characteristics require different aid responses.</p> <p>Operational objectives were to review and update existing database on ISETs, providing a consolidated list of informal settlements locations and populations in the country, estimate</p>		

the population size in each settlement, providing an indication of the overall caseload in each settlement, provide cluster-relevant, multi-sectoral indicators to provide an updated profile of ISET population needs, assess and map ISETs by key service availability and accessibility to the population to inform future needs assessments, Create a vulnerability index for targeting and prioritizing communities with high vulnerability to COVID-19.

For this monitoring, data was collected in person, also remotely via smartphone and Kobo. It covered 28 provinces: 135 districts: 1,130 ISETs. The tools were prepared in consultation and approval of clusters such as wash, health, FSAC, COVID-19, protection, ES/NFI, education, mental Health & Psychosocial Support, housing Land & Property and Gender Based Violence (GBV). The assessment also includes three components to vulnerability to COVID-19. Overall, 633,133 households (recent IDP, prolonged IDP, protracted IDP, refugee, economic migrant, nomad, host community) were assessed.

Regarding COVID-19 Awareness and Prevention, 65% reported practicing social distancing, 92% washing hands frequently, 60% self-isolating if experiencing symptoms, 50% wear masks and gloves in general, 66% wear masks and gloves if experiencing symptoms and 54% avoid large crowds and gatherings. FSAC key findings of this assessment are increase of market prices in 3 months prior to data collection, people not being able to afford daily food needs and market prices, insecure and unreliable job opportunities, relying on debt and selling assets.

ISETs outputs for operational programming includes booklet of 135 district-level factsheets, outlining populations' sectoral needs and vulnerabilities and Separate COVID-19 page showing vulnerability composite score as well as COVID-19 specific indicators.

For the next steps, REACH aims to disseminate findings, conduct ISETS Round 3 and identify lingering gaps in knowledge.

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
6	Presentation on the Agriculture Working Group ToR	FSAC

Agriculture Working Group will be established with aim of providing technical support to partners, building capacity, knowledge management and addressing cross – cutting issues such as mainstreaming gender and AAP, mainstreaming adaptation, and mitigation measures on climate change.

The AWG will be chaired by FSAC. A rotational chairing amongst the members shall be considered and regulated once the AWG is fully established. The chair and secretariat will call for regular technical meetings, produce high quality and accurate minutes, circulate the agenda and minutes and regularly report to the FSAC partners about technical issues. The meetings will be held every two months or based on the need.

The AWG shall see the participation of interested UN agencies, international organization, donors, INGOs and NNGOs and research institutions. A participatory approach shall be

observed in all activities and decision-making processes. The agenda for the AWG meetings shall be established in a participatory manner with input from all members.

Action Point

- FSAC will share the ToR of Agriculture Working Group with partners for their inputs and comments

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
7	IPC update	IPC
<p>As planned, IPC Analysis Workshop was hold from 7 to 18 March 2021 with the participation of over 75 technical experts from 25 national and international partners and support of IPC Regional Support Unit and Global Support Unit.</p> <p>Total of 45 analysis units comprised of 34 provinces and 11 urban areas have been analyzed.</p> <p>The outputs of the analysis workshop are currently undergoing review and consensus building through the IPC Technical Working Group (TWG). Based on the feedback and guidance of the TWG, the report will be written and send for endorsement by steering committee, and then disseminated by the first week of April.</p>		
Action Point		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSAC/IPC will share IPC findings with all partners

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
8	Results of the CCPM 2020 and way forward	FSAC
<p>Objective of CCPM: The Country Cluster Performance Monitoring (CCPM) is designed to enable Cluster partners assess how well their Cluster has achieved its core functions (as determined by the IASC). It focuses on six core and sub-functions of the Cluster, and the Cluster's accountability to affected populations. The core cluster functions are: to support service delivery, to inform the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and Humanitarian Country Team's (HCT) strategic decision-making, to plan and develop strategy, to monitor and evaluate performance, to advocate, to build capacity in preparedness and contingency planning and to ensure accountability to affected populations (AAP).</p> <p>CCPM 2020 Respondents: Different organizations participated in this exercise: National NGO/CBO 44%, International NGO 41.3%, UN Organization – Cluster Leads (FAO/WFP) 12%, Donor 1.3% and UN Organization – Other 1.3%.</p> <p>CCPM 2020 Result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Overall satisfaction with cluster meetings:</u> 85% said it is good, 12% satisfactory, but needs minor improvement and 1.3% unsatisfactory, needs major improvement. 		

- Cluster products: 70.7% are fully satisfied, 2.7% said satisfactory, but needs minor improvement and 4% unsatisfactory, needs major improvement.
- Cluster coordination: 48% said good, 37.3% satisfactory, but needs minor improvement and 6.7% unsatisfactory, needs major improvement.
- Cluster's response priorities 54.7% said good, 33.3% satisfactory, but needs minor improvement and 5.7% unsatisfactory, needs major improvement.
- Cluster developed and agreed upon a response plan: 64% said good, 20% satisfactory, but needs minor improvement and 5.3% unsatisfactory, needs major improvement.
- Information sharing: 61.3% said good, 18.7% satisfactory, but needs minor improvement and 10.7% unsatisfactory, needs major improvement.
- In terms of cluster facilitation around emergency/contingency plans to address potential Food Security needs because of hazards and risks, 47.3% said the performance has been good, 32.4% satisfactory, but needs minor improvement and 13.5% unsatisfactory, needs major improvement.

During last week of March 2021, CCPM workshop will be held to identify actions to address areas for improvement in overall coordination performance.

Action Point

- FSAC will send invitation email of CCPM workshop to partners

AoB

Next meeting	Facilitator
Next FSAC meeting will be conducted on 3rd week of April. Exact date to be confirmed.	FSAC