

FSAC Monthly Meeting

Virtual meeting, 24 November 2021

Minutes of Meeting

Type of meeting	FSAC monthly meeting
Date & location	Wednesday, 24 November 2021, Kabul, 10:00AM – 12:00 PM
Chairperson	FSAC
Note taker	FSAC
Attendees	67 partners

Meeting Agenda

Min	Action Item	Responsible Party
1	Learning how to integrate Accountability to Affected People into your organization and project	AAP
2	Findings and analysis of our Round-3 Assessment survey "Impacts of Shocks on Agriculture Livelihoods and Food Security"	FAO
3	Climate Outlook	FAO
4	Feedback from the regions	FSAC
5	Post IPC monitoring plan	IPC
6	AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AHF 1st Standard Allocation 2021 Date of next FSAC meeting 	FSAC

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
1	AAP Presentation on AAP	AAP

The AAP presentation started with short review of previous AAP presentations in FSAC meetings. To apply AAP, it was recommended that humanitarian players should do the followings:

- Listen to the needs and concerns of all people whose lives and well-being are affected by crises
- Respect their rights, dignity, and expertise
- Establish trusted feedback-complaint-response channels
- Consider their views to design programming
- Provide timely, appropriate, and relevant assistance
- Monitor and adjust responses based on feedback
- Communicate transparently and honestly about what we do and why
- Evaluate their satisfaction with aid efforts
- Act on violations (PSEA especially)

At global level, AAP/ Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse have been covered in IASC commitments. It involves leadership's commitment and adopting agency mechanisms. Based on core humanitarian standard, humanitarian response should meet the following criteria:

- Appropriate, relevant, effective, timely, coordinated, and complementary
- Strengthen local capacities and avoid negative effects
- Based on communication, participation, and feedback
- Welcome and address complaints
- Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve
- Staff are supported to do their job effectively and are treated fairly and equally
- Resources managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose

In addition, AAP has been considered in Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). Communication and community engagement is essential in AAP which provides opportunity of listening and acting on people's needs, suggestions, feedbacks, and complaints. This can be met through message, focused group discussions, surveys, face to face meetings, etc. To integrate AAP, administrative actions on policies and process should be taken. Moreover, staff should be dedicated to AAP activities and resources should be considered. AAP should also be included in project's budget.

Feedback – complaint – referral/response mechanism is a twoway communication channel people can use to raise issues regarding their experiences with humanitarian organizations, programming, staff, and others associated with assistance. Major steps are awareness and engagement to give feedback, feedback given and acknowledged, feedback analyzed and processed, feedback is actioned, and finally, action or response is communicated. At the end of presentation, case studies of feedback mechanisms in Nepal, Congo and Afghanistan were presented.

Perception survey is one method of feedback mechanism. It involves questions about people's feeling, thinking, and understanding. Then perception questions are analyzed as perception indicators. For food security and agriculture, possible themes can be cash assistance, livelihood protection, livelihood resilience, quality of agricultural inputs, right to give feedback about assistance, organizations, staff and that all aid is free, etc.

Action Point

- AAP will be adjusted to 1st Standard allocation.

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
2	Findings and analysis of our Round-3 Assessment survey "Impacts of Shocks on Agriculture Livelihoods and Food Security"	FAO

FAO presented updates of 3rd round of survey on Agricultural Livelihoods & Food Security in the Context of COVID-19 and other Shocks. The objective of assessment are to provide real-time monitoring & analysis of data for strategic decision making and programming to support farmers and herders along key agricultural value chains and their food security and to inform analytical processes such as the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC), the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), HRP and such.

Data has been collected in August/September 2021 with in person interviews. The survey was conducted in 20 provinces 828 communities and 7155 households, and in each province 300 to 400

Households were covered. In addition, 249 Agri Input Vendors and 110 Extension Officers were participated in the mentioned survey.

According to assessment, 87% of households reported shocks (higher than usual food prices 62%, drought 59%, much higher than usual fuel prices 49%, plant diseases 43%, violence and insecurity/conflict 40%, sickness or death of household member 38%). 75% of crops producer and 80% livestock herders reported income decrease in the last 3 months compared to the same period in a typical year. Main income sources have been production and sale of livestock and livestock products, production and sale of staple crops, production and sale of vegetable or fruit etc.

In general, the agricultural season performed badly: 50% of farmers declared harvesting less than a typical year, and 28% a lot less. Wheat is of particular concern. 92% of crop producers in Kunar, and 76% in Paktika reported less harvest. Moreover, 82 percent crop producers in Nimroz, followed by 76 percent in Bamyar reported a lot less (less than half) harvest.

78% of crop producers faced difficulties (plant disease 81%, low quality of seeds 66%, not enough irrigation or rainfall water 61%, Could not access insecticides 34%). Drought is associated with worst outcomes in terms of crop production. Main crops being affected are wheat, grape, potato, tomato, rice, and bean. Additionally, 49% of households faced difficulties accessing seeds because of higher price, insufficient income to buy and unavailability from local market.

Based on assessment, 66% of crop producers faced difficulty in selling crops in the last 3 months. The main reasons were higher marketing costs [such as transportation], low prices, usual traders or local customers not buying as much as usual and damage and losses due to delay or inability to physically access markets. 76% of livestock producers faced difficulties due to livestock diseases, constrained access to pasture, constrained access to water, difficulty to purchase feed and difficulty to access veterinary services. 63% of livestock herders faced difficulty selling main livestock.

The Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) shows the prevalence of Recent food insecurity, with relative margins of error. 74.8% (± 1.9) of households in the surveyed provinces faced severe and moderate food insecurity, but only 1.6% (± 0.6) were severe, suggesting a selection bias. FIES also calibrated RFI to be consistent with IPC Phase 3 or above.

99% of the surveyed households reported need for assistance. The main recommendations are as below:

- Urgent livelihoods saving humanitarian response at scale to protect the lives of farmers, herders and the landless people in rural areas and support them in continuing to cultivate their smallholding farms, sustainably manage their marginal herds and local agriculture-based employment opportunities thereby mitigating key “push factors” of forced displacement.
- Ensure that the humanitarian assistance to farmers, herders, and landless households - in the form of in-kind crop-cultivation inputs, livestock protection inputs, unconditional cash transfers and/or implement cash-for-work, poultry inputs, and kitchen gardening activities - is not only timely and season-sensitive but also adequate in its quantum to support these food insecure households to address their annual food security needs.
- Improve the local availability, affordability and access to quality agriculture inputs and extension services (crop and veterinary) while strengthening crop and livestock disease surveillance and enhancing investments for addressing the chronic / structural issues hindering farmers and herders’ access to these inputs and services locally.
- Secure the continuity of agriculture inputs and products’ supply chains by emphasising market information systems, addressing market-entry barriers and post-harvest practices, including conservation, storage, drying, and processing of grains, fresh fruits, and vegetables.

- Enhance programming that focuses more on linking humanitarian assistance to resilience building and development especially for addressing the structural issues in production, supply chains, extension services, and timely affordable access to quality inputs locally for smallholder farmers and herders.
- Continue the regular monitoring, at scale, of impacts of various shocks on rural areas with a special focus on the cumulative and cascading impacts on smallholders and ecosystems to ensure real-time analysis of shocks is available and the same informs policy and programming.

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
3	Climate Outlook	FAO
<p>FAO provided update on the climate situation and presented prediction of coming winter and weather condition and effects of the La Niña. As per latest available forecasts in November 2021, key global and regional climate prediction centres indicate that the La Niña phenomenon is currently active going into winter of 2021-22 and spring of 2022. Forecasts suggest a weak to moderate La Niña event hitting Afghanistan in the wet winter precipitation season of Nov-21 to Mar-22, which will be a consecutive event (“double-dip LN”) following a moderate-severe La Niña in 2020-21 that resulted in a severe drought in Afghanistan. This La Niña event will most likely result in a back-to-back drought in 2022 and the 3rd drought in 5 years (2018, 2021 & 2022) with severe adverse impacts possible in 2022 on crop production, livestock health, local ecosystems, and agricultural & landless rural households’ coping capacities.</p> <p>Moreover, lower than average precipitation is forecast from December 2021 to February 2022 in Afghanistan, which is likely to continue further into 2022. Below average snowfall is anticipated leading to lower-than-average snowpack formation during Dec-Feb months with <i>cascading adverse effects on irrigation availability</i> in spring-summer months. Higher than average temperature is most likely across most of Afghanistan. Poor soil moisture conditions are possible during critical cereal cultivation months, which along with the reduced precipitation may result in below average wheat production in Afghanistan. Cumulative adverse effects on pasture vegetative conditions and fodder availability are anticipated in spring-summer months. Possibility of flash floods / localized flooding in spring months is expected to be more than likely.</p> <p>It is recommended to prioritize Anticipatory Action approach that monitors La Niña progression & real-time effects on food-livelihoods security while protecting crop production & livestock health and mitigating the “push-factors” of displacement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close monitoring through community-based ground-truthing & earth-observations of: (i) crop & rangelands growth conditions, (ii) precipitation and snowpack formation, (iii) soil moisture levels, (iv) surface and groundwater availability, (v) outbreak of crop pests & animal diseases, and (vi) livestock animal body conditions. 2. Forward looking Impact analysis on: (i) wheat growth in rainfed & irrigated areas, (ii) irrigation availability, (iii) rangelands growth, (iv) fresh fodder availability & pricing, and (v) animal body conditions. 3. Contingency Planning & Evidence generation to inform policy and AA-ER programming decisions. 4. Advisories to support wheat crop growth, plant protection measures and maintain livestock body conditions. 		

5. Anticipatory assistance in the form of emergency livestock protection assistance including veterinary services as well as second season crop cultivation inputs to marginal livestock/land holding households.
6. Increasing Cash for Work actions to enhance local irrigation, soil-water conservation structures and short-term income boost to HHs.

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
4	FSAC Regional Updates	FSAC
<p>FSAC updated partners on situation of different regions as below:</p> <p>West region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects are being implemented without any major difficulty. • Farmers who worked on cash for work projects but have yet to be paid which is a major difficulty. Also, cost of the agricultural inputs increased drastically. The vulnerable farmers cannot purchase seeds and fertilizers this year due to multiple shocks. • Wheat seeds and fertilizers are still the urgent needs for rural areas. <p>East region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The operations are going well, but sometime de-facto authorities during operation inputs delivery, they are investigating, which could negatively impact time delivery of the humanitarian assistance to vulnerable people. • One of the constraints is that the de facto authority asks for coordination at different levels. Several groups are in the area with no proper coordination mechanism in place among them. • Most of the people became vulnerable because they have lost their jobs, and mostly rely on agriculture and livestock-based livelihood. People are in dire need for food assistance and livelihood support. <p>South region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The operation is normal, with a few changes in the rural areas. Demand for food and wheat are higher and the process of documentation is easier with some sectorial departments. • Access is easy, no constraint at access at all. The big problem is that sectorial departments are unprofessional and demands of these sectors are out of NGOs mandate. • The emerging need of people is irrigation water and drought has highly affected wheat cultivation. <p>North region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project implementation in the new environment is easier than before, easy to access all the districts without any security concerns, with a reduced bureaucracy. • No major access issue so far with the de-facto government. Access to cash remains a big challenge for everyone specifically for the NGOs affecting the cash transfer projects implementation process. • The purchase power is very weak, with huge number of unemployed people. The need of food is very high in rural and urban areas, prices are fluctuating and there is no income source for people. <p>Northeast region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of CBT activities are still slow and difficult due to banking system and lack of cash with the HAWALA system. • Physical access to the areas has improved, but major challenges are interference of the De-facto authorities in beneficiary selection process, distribution process and imposing of their active/armed soldiers as beneficiaries. They are also collecting their portion from the distributed assistance at the community level (mostly after completion of the distribution and absence of distributors) 		

- Although the impacts of drought had been limited, but still had high impact on fodder availability. Distribution of fodder to livestock owners remain a gap.

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
5	Post IPC monitoring plan	IPC
<p>Post IPC analysis monitoring draft planning was shared, and it will be further discussed and finalized in a IPC TWG meeting. Considering exceptional food insecurity situation, it was decided to develop concept note and matrix of for a post IPC monitoring plan. IPC TWG will review all the data received and result of this exercise will be documented and shared with partners, donors, and IPC global support team for advocacy purposes and further action. It was mentioned that key assumptions and indicators will be followed up to monitor the situation. It will include precipitation, NDVI, drought/dry Spell, seasonality, COVID, disability with the different sources. In addition, other contributing factors such as sanction on the de facto government, banking system functionality, remittance, salaries of staff, health system, Foreign Aid, data on the conflict, exchange rate, food availability, export and import, prices, food stock, livelihood will be considered.</p> <p>The outcome indicators, food indicators (FCS, HDDS, HHS, LCSi, rCSI) will be followed up. Based on the information it will be decided to revise the analysis or conduct new analysis. The exercise will be conducted in the mid of the December 2021 and second round will be conducted in January 2022.</p>		
<p>Action Point</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPC TWG and AWG will have a meeting and draft IPC monitoring tool. 		

AoB

Minutes No	Agenda	Action
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st Standard Allocation Updates Date of next meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st standard allocation announced, eligible partners submitted concept Notes. Asked for full proposal and will be submitted by 28 to FSAC for review and on 30th of November partners will upload in GMS. SRC/TRC will review the proposal and endorsed. There is additional 5 million USD for local NGOs and it still open, any local eligible NGO can apply. Next FSAC meeting will be conducted earlier, the meeting may be called in 2nd or 3rd week of December but exact date to be confirmed.