AFGHANISTAN FOOD SECURITY & AGRICULTURE CLUSTER

FSAC Monthly Meeting

Virtual meeting, 22 September 2021

Minutes of Meeting

Type of meeting	FSAC monthly meeting
Date & Location	Wednesday, 22 September 2021, Kabul, 10:00AM – 12:30 PM
Chairperson	FSAC
Note taker	FSAC
Attendees	81 partners

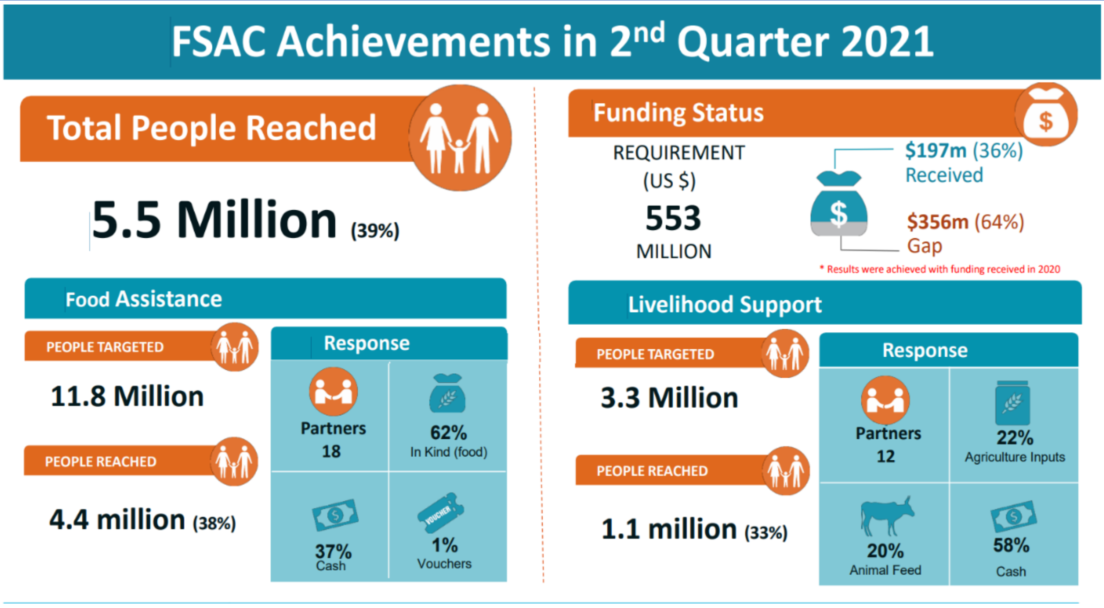
Meeting Agenda

Min	Action Item	Responsible Party
1	FSAC Quarterly Update – FSAC	FSAC
2	Field Updates – Partners to provide updates	FSAC/Partners
3	Market price update	WFP
4	Update on Seasonal Food Security Assessment	FSAC
5	Climate update	FEWS Net
6	FSAC packages review process	FSAC
7	AOB • Date of next meeting	FSAC

Meeting Minutes

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
1	**FSAC Achievement in 2nd Quarter in 2021**	**FSAC**

- Until the end of 2nd quarter, FSAC partners assisted 4.4 million people (38% of its 2021 food target) with food assistance
- 1.1 million (33% of its annual livelihoods target) with livelihoods assistance.
- FSAC received USD 197 million against its HRP appeal of USD 553 million.
- 62% of food was provided in-kind, 37% through cash and only 1% through voucher.



- On the livelihoods side, 22% of the livelihoods was agriculture-based support, and 20% animal feed. 58% of the livelihood's response was provided through cash.

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
2	Field Updates	FSAC Regional Focal Points and Partners

West region:

- Security is better and partners access has improved, however the major challenge is that Taliban demands task from NGOs.
- Taliban authorities interfere in beneficiary selection process.
- Several coordination meetings have been conducted between humanitarian actors in the region and the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA)new authorities. Despite the challenges, so far, the response partners received from the authorities is positive.
- The IEA authorities are asking NGOs and their projects to be registered with the new government; however, the challenge is that a clear registration procedure does not exist.
- Female staff are not allowed to work and attend their offices.
- Food security situation is deteriorating. Households had a poor harvest and their food stock and savings will be exhausted by September.

Central region:

- Due to the collapse of the old government partners operation was stopped for about 2 weeks. Partners have resumed some of their operation especially activities considered of high criticality.
- OCHA also conducted several OCT coordination meetings.
- Disruption of the banking system poses is a big challenge. This especially makes the implementation of MPC activities difficult. Some of the partners cannot even cover their day-to-day operation cost.

- 23,000 HH conflict IDPs received food assistance from WFP in month of July, August, and September in 11 provinces.
- Inter-agency joint need assessments were conducted in July, August and September and all related partners had great coordination and contribution.

East region:

- Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan authorities ensured partners on their security, and they asked partners to resume their operation. Initially partners were not sure, and they were reluctant to start operation, however, majority of the partners resumed their operation.
- Partner's access has improved, however, recent attacks in Jalalabad is a new concern for humanitarian actors.
- There are IDPs who have returned to their areas of origin, and they need to be supported with food and livelihoods assistance.
- Price changes have been observed in various food and non-food items. Prices of food various food commodities increased more than 20 to 30 %. Contrary to this, prices of livestock decreased by around 30% and it's because people are running out of cash and lost their normal income and they had to sell their livestock to survive.
- There are few groups of Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, once partners get permission from NGO commission, the IEA technical department asking why they did coordinate with them.

North Region

- The same as most of other regions, female staff are not allowed to work.
- Food security situation has deteriorated significantly, and this is mainly because of increase in prices, loss of employment and reduction in income. Many people started to sell their housing materials to cope with the hunger and poverty.

Southern Region

- Most of the humanitarian actors resumed their operation and response delivery is ongoing.
- Although access has improved due low security incidents, however, coordination remains as a challenge. Parallel government structures exist, and this makes the coordination work difficult.
- Humanitarian actors are not allowed to register name of female headed households
- Lack of commodity in the market and weak purchasing power of people is a major challenge in the face of growing food insecurity.

Minutes No	**Agenda**	**Facilitator**
3	Market price update	WFP

- Prices have increased this month compared to last month and especially with the prices during the previous government.
- Political instability and demand pressure for foreign currencies led to significant increase in the exchange rate. It's worth mentioning that any rise in the price of dollar

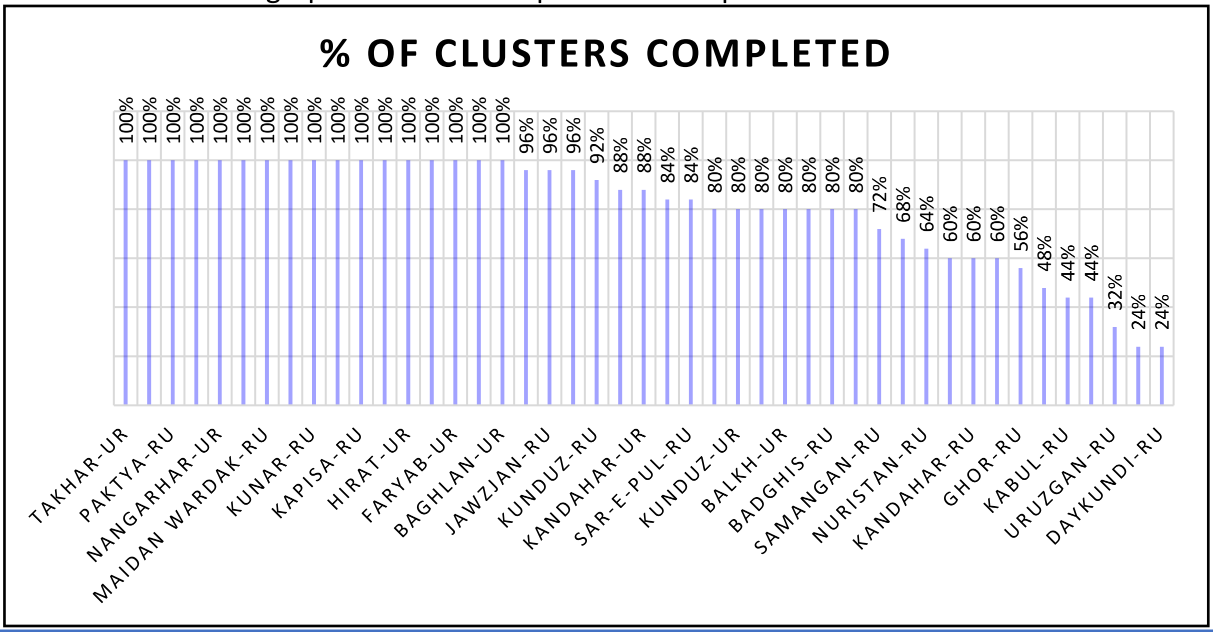
directly led to increase in food prices specifically increase in basic foods such as wheat flour.

- Despite huge increase in exchange rate, the price of diesel declined due to new custom procedures.
- Work opportunities drastically declined by 30% compared to 2 months ago. Both casual labour/wheat and pastoralist ToT deteriorated in this period
- AFN exchange rate against US dollar is the highest in the past 20 years. On average, the exchange rate increased by 0.3% this month while the level of increase was above 7% in July 2021.
- The price for **high price wheat flour is** 2.5% higher than August 2021 **and** 11% than July. Additionally, l**ow price wheat flour is** 2.5% above August 2021 and 10% higher than July.
- Prices for rice 4%cooking oil 9%, and sugar 9% have increased compared to last month and July.
- Prices for agriculture inputs such as DAP 8% and urea 7% have increased compared to last month and July.

Action Point

Minutes No	**Agenda**	**Facilitator**
4	Progress on SFSA 2021	FSAC

- SFSA enumerators training was conducted in Kabul from 9 – 12 September 2021. with 350 enumerators being trained.
- A post training test was taken and of the 350 trained enumerators, and 317 enumerators were selected to collect data.
- After the training, enumerators were sent to field to immediately start data collection. So far, around 80% of the data collection is completed. Data collection in Panjsher, Kunduz and Sare pul provinces are falling behind schedule, however, field teams are trying to recover.
- Below is the graph of field work update: 21st Sept 2021



Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
5	Updates on the Climate Situation	FEWS NET

FESNET discussed the situation in the previous 2020-2021 wet season and its implication on food security. It also provided an update on the climate outlook for the upcoming months and 2022. Below are the key points discussed during the meeting.

The preceding wet season:

- The climate mode in 2020-2021 wet season was La Nina, which caused meteorological drought. Meteorological drought progressed to an agricultural drought and later into a hydrological drought for some parts of the country.
- Poor precipitation performance was observed in some of the regions in the country while above average temperatures were observed across the country except in central Afghanistan and in some other localized areas.
- Snowmelt water availability ended early in most basins, which adversely impact yields for some areas during the main season, and more broadly for second (dry) season irrigated production.
- The significantly below normal snowpack development in various basins from the beginning of January through mid-February 2021 was the main reason that led to cascading hydrological, soil-moisture and agricultural drought conditions, especially in the northern, western, and southern parts of the country. The snowpack anomaly was the main reason that brought down the irrigated wheat production. In addition, below-normal precipitation during April-May brought down rainfed wheat production in the above areas.
- The La Nina condition in 2021-2021 wet season, impacted the overall wheat production and led to below average harvest in the country resulted in further dependency on wheat flour imports from the region. This situation has increased the vulnerability of the HHs against the prices and other factors would impact the smooth importing process of the wheat flour and wheat to the country.
- Moreover, the La Nina condition, impacted the pasture areas and led to below average pasture condition and reduced income from the livestock sector in the country.

Heading to the upcoming wet season of 2021-2022:

- There is >60% probability of La Nina in August-October 2021. The La Nina will most likely prevail through January-March 2022. The forecasts show that La Nina will reach its peak intensity in late 2021.
- Below-average precipitation is expected due to La Nina in the northern hemisphere from October 2021 through end of March 2022. It is important to note that although similar (La Nina) conditions were present at the beginning of 2020/21 wet season, however, the country received near-average precipitation by the end of December 2020/21 wet season (mainly due to extreme meteorological event, Nov.13-15, 2021).
- If below-average precipitation and above-normal temperature conditions persist (as projected) till the end of March 2022, agricultural drought conditions will be realized much earlier during 2021/22 season because of the rolling drought effect.

Assumption on the upcoming wet season of 2021-2022

- According to NMME, C3S, and WMO ensemble forecasts, above-average mean temperatures are most likely throughout most of the country through at least May 2022

- According to C3S, NMME, and WMO ensemble forecasts, cumulative precipitation during the 2021/22 winter wet season from October 2021 to February 2022 is expected to be below average. Moreover, precipitation is expected to be below average during the peak planting period in October and November.
- Precipitation during the spring rainy season from March to May 2022, based on NMME forecasts of regional precipitation and La Nina, is also most likely to be below average. However, uncertainty exists due to the long lead time and a variety of outcomes are possible.
- Vegetation conditions are expected to follow typical seasonal variations during the dry season, remaining stable or declining from current levels which are average to below-average across most of the country through the start of the 2021/22 precipitation season in October. Given expectations for above-average temperatures and below-average precipitation in the 2021/22 season, vegetation conditions are then expected to remain stable or deteriorate, resulting in near average to below average in most areas through the spring (around February/March), after which point vegetation conditions are expected to improve, but less than they typically would, with negative anomalies expected to increase notably from March to May.
- Meteorological, agricultural, snow and hydrological drought are likely ongoing across parts of the west, south, southeast, and north and are likely to continue through at least May 2022.
- Snowpack and snow water volumes are expected to continue to decline through around September/October 2021 in northeastern basins with annual cycles, as is typical, and remain below average. Given expectations for precipitation, snowpack development and snow water volumes are anticipated to remain below average in most basins throughout the 2021/22 precipitation season through May 2022. This is likely to reduce water availability in downstream areas for the main agricultural season and will limit water availability for second season crops.

Minutes No	Agenda	Facilitator
6	**FSAC Package Review**	FSAC

As per comments received from partners, FSAC is going to review its food assistance packages. A questionnaire is being developed and will be shared to partners through a SurveyMonkey link. The review exercise is mainly triggered by the change in prices, operation environment and the context. FSAC requested all partners to complete the survey once received the link.

Action Point	• FSAC to share the survey link with all partners

AoB

Minutes No	Agenda	Action
1	Date of next meeting	Next FSAC meeting will be conducted on 3rd week of October. Exact date to be confirmed.