

# Meeting Minutes

Date: 04.6.2021

Location: Microsoft Teams at 11:00-13:00

Meeting Recording: [link](#)

## Agenda

1. Notes and comments on previous MoM
2. FSLC Partners achievements in March and April 2021: more details available now
3. The latest lean season food assistance unpacked: with Mr. Totamirepi Tirivavi, D/Director for Family and Social Protection & Commissioner for Refugees, Ministry of Public Service, Labour & Social Welfare.
4. Food Systems Summit: update following the 1<sup>st</sup> National Dialogue Workshop held on 3<sup>rd</sup> of June.
5. Updates from Partners
6. AoB

## Participants

ActionAid Zimbabwe, ADRA Zimbabwe, British Red Cross, CAFOD, Christian Blind Mission (CBM), CRS, Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), FACT Zimbabwe, FAO, FSLC, GOAL, ICRISAT, IRC, LEAD, Mercy Corps, Ministry of Public Service - Labour & Social Welfare Oxfam, Practical Action, SCOPE Zimbabwe, UN OCHA, Welthungerhilfe, WFP, World Vision, Zimbabwe Project Trust (ZimPro), Zimbabwe Red Cross Society.

## Discussion

### **1. Notes and comments on the previous MoM**

No feedback on the previous minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021. Minutes approved without any further changes.

### **2. FSLC Partners achievements in March and April 2021, including 2021-Q1 government's food assistance figures**

During the month of April 2021, FSL Cluster partners reported to have reached 1.9 million people with either in-kind food distribution, cash or vouchers modality in both rural and urban areas. Among them, 1,599,097 beneficiaries received in-kind food assistance, while the remaining

355,851 received cash-based support in urban areas. Additionally, the Government through the Department of Social Welfare reached 2.1 million beneficiaries.

Dashboard is available for download from Food Security Zimbabwe Website at the [link](#)

Comment: Apart from colour coding the country map, it would also be important to show the percentages of people assisted compared to total population of the district especially since populations are not evenly distributed.

Having percentage of people reached vs those deemed in IPC zones 3 and 4 i.e., those deemed to have been in food insecure and should have been targeted will be helpful in further understanding the response.

Q: Was a decision taken not to specifically identify where cash program is being implemented? There is an effort to go towards more cash even in the rural context and this is going to expand moving forward and useful to organisations doing cash and having a map showing icons where cash programming is located would be useful to partners.

A: Currently, we are combining all food assistance into one map. However, moving forward, this can be split into both in-kind food distribution and cash assistance. The other option we are currently working on is having an online dynamic map which has more flexibility in data visualisation.

Additionally, we have three districts right in the middle of the map that do not have any activities reported and the cluster will reach out to partners to see whether there is anyone working in the area.

**3. The latest lean season food assistance unpacked: with Mr. Totamirepi Tirivavi, D/Director for Family and Social Protection & Commissioner for Refugees, Ministry of Public Service, Labour & Social Welfare.**

Highlights prepared:

Ministry of Public Service, labour and social welfare in the process of introducing an integrated Management Information Systems (MIS) for social protection program in Zimbabwe. Currently working with the support from Treasury, the World Bank. Other partners are free to come onboard to make sure the system covers the whole country.

Would like to have a database of all social protection beneficiaries in the country which will help in addressing the issues of double dipping and political interference when it comes to beneficiary selection which is possible with having database of all vulnerable individuals. Information will be available to government and development partners for all specific groups of people they would want to target.

Strict protection of beneficiary information and hoping that development partners and other non-state actors will also protect the information. There is a lack of master register / database of

beneficiaries as required under the National Development Strategy (NDS), making it difficult to see the gaps between what the government and other partners have been doing, and not being able to share coverages between partners and government and partially repotting based on areas of interest.

System to ensure strict protection of beneficiary information and helping that development partners and other non-state actors access that information

Hardware has already been procured and a consultant hired, and hopeful system should be up and running by the third quarter of 2021.

Officers are going to be trained on reporting and working with the system.

Joint targeting/programming suggested and encouraged where possible so that no one is left behind when carrying out interventions.

Information sharing is encouraged for the benefit of the beneficiaries as development partners are there to complement government efforts so that there is transparency.

### **Experience with the past lean season assistance**

- The department has been evaluating the program they are doing and have received valuable feedback from the beneficiaries that the one size fits all that the government has been using in food assistance and other social protection programs where an equal package is given, it may not be the ideal solution. It would be better that the assistance will be prorated to consider the size of the family.
- Sometimes beneficiaries do not get a comprehensive food basket. Recognizing that sometimes government does not have all the required resources to provide a comprehensive basket like what partners are doing, the department suggests that while government provides one component, they will work with partners willing to complement what the government is doing, so that the partners provide the other food basket components with the varied dietary requirement by working with partners for a more comprehensive food basket.

Q: Could you tell us more about your development plan? Have you finalised it, is it available for consultation?

A: Development plan has been finalised and will be shared shortly so that the comments and feedback can be sent back to the department. Have not been holding social protection meetings which are the platform where the plans are usually shared.

Q: About the development plan you have mentioned is that the national development strategy or this is another development plan?

A: Development plans derived from National Development Strategy and therefore as a ministry, development plans stem from NDS and fits within the NDS.

Q: Is the Management information Systems going to register the actual existing beneficiaries who receive assistance, or will it include vulnerable people who should receive social protection?

A: The system will have all current and potential beneficiaries and any partner willing to support any category of people will have access to the information. The system is flexible to ensure new beneficiaries can be added up to the list as issue and requirements keep changing.

Q: Regarding the forthcoming lean season, based on experience from previous years and government planning, do you have an idea when you will know the size of the lean season's assistance and when it will be started?

A: Waiting for figures from ZimVAC on how many people are food insecure before coming with a response plan. The response is going to be informed by data from the result so that it is evident based.

Q: This is a potentially good system and hope it will be operated at district level so that partners who would like to use the system will be able to access it at the district and not national level. At the same time, vulnerability is a moving target, and we hope the database (MIS) will continuously be updated.

A: Information should be accessible at district level and will make sure that all the districts are online. Working to ensure that connectivity will be achieved. The government has also established an ITC department within the ministry to ensure the smooth running of the system and people should access information at the district level too.

Q: About the proposed centralization of information and having a database of vulnerable people, does that mean that when development partners want to go and do assistance in a specific area, there will be no need to carry out vulnerability assessment but instead simply get access to information and then use that system to identify potential beneficiaries, or there will be a need to verify beneficiaries considering the fluidity of vulnerability as already indicated by previous speakers?

A: The intention is to have all the information in a central location which is the whole point of doing a joint comprehensive targeting. What would be done is to go and verify information to make sure you are satisfied that the people in need are the very people you are going to assist. There will be no need to conduct a new vulnerability assessment and targeting again, as most of the information would already have been done with partners so that there is transparency with no manipulation.

Q: Regarding the future lean season assistance, you mentioned you are going to do an informed targeting, looking back into the last lean season, I believe the targeting was informed by the previous figures, the big figures we have in mind was considering a target of 5.5 million people being in need. Has your office worked out the outcome of reach out of the season which is in the range of slightly above 2 million, which is the reach out over the last two months? What is your evaluation about this gap?

A: Intervention for the upcoming lean season will be based on concrete data from which accurate projections can be made. Trying to finalize ZimVAC report, which will be used to make any projection. This season has particularly been challenging especially with the effects of Covid both in urban and rural areas, which have different dynamics and therefore different targeting strategies.

Q: Wanted to know how partners will practically participate in contributing to the vulnerability list.

A: Will involve partners to make sure no one is left behind. This is also a work in progress and information will flow as time goes by.

Presentation to be shared as soon as it becomes available.

#### **4. Food Systems Summit: update following the 1st National Dialogue Workshop held on 3rd of June.**

Food Systems Summit Dialogues offer a powerful opportunity for people everywhere to have a seat at the table at this milestone UN Summit. Dialogues bring together a diversity of stakeholders, including voices that are seldom heard, and provide an important opportunity for participants to debate, collaborate, and take actions towards a better future. They give us the chance to connect, meet new partners, inspire and be inspired.

Some of the FSLC Partners attended the 1<sup>st</sup> Stage National Dialogue meeting. A few slides for that meeting presentation were showed to inform partners about the current process. The slides showed initial details related to the five Actions Tracks that are the focus for Zimbabwe:

1) Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all; 2) Shifting to sustainable consumption patterns; 3) Boosting nature positive production at sufficient scale; 4) Advancing equitable livelihoods and value distribution; 5) Building resilience to vulnerabilities shocks and stress.

For each Action Track, a summary of key successes, major challenges, and areas that need improvement were also presented.

Q: Did you also talk about the use of forecasting to implement anticipatory action to prevent food nutrition insecurity as well as all the questions related to insurance, anticipatory action that do not seem to appear in the presentation?

A: The presentation shown here is the one that took place yesterday before the groupwork took place. Contribution brought at this meeting brings out at least verbally some of the issues that were brought out in the group. The next step will be a consolidated report/presentation from the organisers/consultant including discussions from the groups.

Comments: It is fine that we list our challenges and areas that need food assistance but other area we are going to push for is the how we go about implementing some of the required improvements. Otherwise, we come up with a nice shopping list without how to put into operation.

A: At this point, the national dialogue is organised into three stages and the group work of yesterday triggered the definition of “the what.” The expectation is that the second phase will trigger the what and transformation of food systems which is the how and will get there hopefully by September.

Presentation available at the [link](#):

**5. Updates from Partners**

No update shared.

**6. AOB**

Nothing reported

END