

Meeting Minutes

Date: 7.5.2021

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

Meeting Recording: [link](#)

Agenda

1. Notes and comments on previous MoM
2. Improved crops for humanitarian programmes (CIMMYT)
3. Update on Food Systems Summit Dialogues [FAO]
4. 2nd round Crops and Livestock Assessment report presentation (MoA-Agritex)
5. Update on next Rural ZIMVAC assessment (NGO representative at the HCT)
6. Open contributions from Partners about any significant programmes' modifications due to COVID-19
7. Updates from Partners
8. AoB

Participants

ActionAid, AGRITEX, British Red Cross, CAFOD, CARE International, Christian Aid, Christian Blind Mission, CIMMYT, CNFA-Amalima Loko, CRS, FAO, FCDO, FNC, ICRISAT, IFRC, International Livestock Research Institute, International Rescue Committee, LEAD, Mercy Corps, OXFAM, PAOZ, Plan International, Practical Action, Save the Children, TDH Italy, Tearfund/CFGF, Trocaire, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHH, WFP, WHO, World Vision International, Zimbabwe Red Cross Society, ZRBF – UNDP

Discussion

- 1. Notes and comments on the previous MoM**
No feedback on the previous minutes of the meeting held on 23rd April 2021. Minutes approved without any further comments and amendments.
- 2. Improved crops for humanitarian programmes (CIMMYT)**
This session follows to the field visit undertaken at CIMMYT on 1st April 2021, and the presentation delivered by HarvestPlus at the FSLC Partners meeting held on 23rd of April.

The presentation provided a summary of the benefits of using bio-fortification of maize, also in comparison with other bio-fortification process, like commercial fortification and food supplements.

Maize bio-fortification is mainly towards enrichment of three nutrients: pro-vitamin A (PVA), proteins, zinc, with the first two in use in Zimbabwe. The demand of orange maize grew 55% in the last year in Zimbabwe, across the five available varieties in the country. This is thanks to the significant nutritional added value of the bio-fortified maize.

It was highlighted the importance of implementing proper agronomic measures, in order to maximise the nutritional advantages of these varieties, like intercropping and proper fertilization. Also cultivating PVA maize in homestead fields seems to provide better nutrients contents compared to outfields.

Q: What kind of standards should be requested when placing an order of PVA maize, to be sure the right seeds are provided.

A: Zimbabwe has very strict seeds law. When buying from large seeds company, we should be 100% confidence the right product will be supplied.

Q: With all this work happening, are the seeds available?

A: yes, since about 5 years.

Q: Are farmers actually growing it?

A: it is a matter of behaviour changes and acceptability, as white maize is the predominant type,

A: Yellow maize caused problems in accepting different varieties, but since orange maize has been introduced, the demand has been increasing, also from NGOs.

A: To confirm, Practical Action has been working with HarvestPlus in Manicaland, and can confirm that PVA maize was widely accepted, upon proper work at community level.

Comment: better if also the GoZ could promote PVA maize within its programmes.

A: the problem is about the volume of seeds produced is not adequate for mass distribution under the GoZ schemes.

The link to the presentation for further details: [CiMMYT biofortified maize](#)

3. Update on Food Systems Summit Dialogues [FAO])

FAO provided an update of the process related to the Food Systems.

Zimbabwe has now officially confirmed the national convener, who is the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Resettlements. A National Technical Task Team (NTTT) has also been constituted, and the list of all involved stakeholders will be shared for further suggestions.

At its first meeting held on 29th of April, the NTTT has confirmed the main five actions track that will be part of the discussion. These actions tracks are:

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

Each action track has related topics to be developed.

Dialogues are designed in three stages, with the following timeframe:

- Stage 1: Held at national level with national stakeholders (end of May 2021) to initiate discussions.
- Stage 2: At subnational level, and 8 provincial consultations are proposed (end of June 2021)
- Stage 3: A national level consolidation (mid-July)

A national curator for dialogues and facilitators for each actions track have been also nominated, all but for Track 5.

Q: What recommendation to organisation that would like to arrange independent dialogues, what themes, and what timing?

A: The timing is fine from now. Independent dialogues can be triggered by anyone anywhere. It is just important to follow certain procedures to fit into the national and global process. There is no restriction in terms of themes or modality of gathering and consultations. There are clear guidance for this.

Q: NGOs might encounter problems to independently launch independent dialogues. Also, HQs might not be fully supportive on this, Maybe, the FSLC could be a platform for facilitating exchanges in Zimbabwe.

A: The FSLC could be a platform for ideas collection and sharing. It is to be elaborated how much the FSLC could also be a platform to trigger a dialogue.

A: it all depends by the appetite for this by the FSLC Partners members. Independent dialogues are open to anyone willing to organise them, Just follow the guidelines to find the best format that suits your capacities.

The link to the presentation: [Food Systems update](#)

The link to the list of identified stakeholders: [Stakeholders](#)

4. 2nd round Crops and Livestock Assessment report presentation (MoA-Agritex)

The presentation has been structured in three main sessions: 1) Crop Production situation, 2) Livestock Situation 3) Recommendations.

The presentation provided a wide range of data, with the underlying notion that this season provided much more yields overall than the two past ones.

Within the PFUMWUDZA programme, the area planted with maize reached 93.5% of the target, while sorghum achieved only 14.8%, although sorghum production is estimated to increase 135% from previous season. The good season is well represented by the expected surplus of maize production, that amounts to 828,263 t, equivalent to 36.8% of the estimated overall requirements for the country. Maize production is double when compared to 2010/2020 season. The large majority of the country is flagged as being cereal sufficient for 12+ months.

Under the livestock sector, numbers of animal head are slightly higher than previous year; for cattle is around +0.64%. cattle condition is fair to good all over the country, apart a few small niches. The same assessment.

Calving rates are instead quite poor, showing also a decrease from previous season, from 41% to 39%. This is due to both poor nutrition and poor bulls' quality, as well as use of cows in agricultural works. Diseases account for 69% of cattle mortality, followed by drought at 21%.

Milk production declined from previous season (-5.3%), and remains largely insufficient to cover national requirements, showing a gap of 94%.

Q: Noticed a lot of spatial differences in cereal yields per ward within the same district, any reasons for this?

A: There are difference in population size, and also in some wards less people practice agriculture.

Q: For districts with grazing challenges due to overgrazing, are there any range land reclamation and herd management initiatives to address this?

A: Some initiatives from the GoZ are in place. Dedicated seed are also part of the response.

Q: Fodder seeds are not very accessible in agro-dealer shops. Are there any efforts for incentives that will push private sector to stock them?

A: It is true that fodder seeds are not easily available in shops. The GoZ is committed to carry out efforts to improve availability.

Q: What is maize national production per hectare this season vs last season?

A: The estimated average is about 1.3t/ha. [more details in the presentation]

Q: Sorghum production: very low ratio of planted area compared to the target. Is the Ministry working on facilitating cultivation of small grains crops?

A: The challenge is the low volume of seeds availability.

Q: Certain areas are not good for maize, especially those area prone to drought spells, yet the GoZ continues to promote maize there.

A: The GoZ is committed to promote small grains when advisable. Still, the shortage of seeds remains a major constraint.

Comment: About the low uptake of the small grains, another issue is the lack of appropriate technologies, as small grains require dedicated operations, compared to maize. It would be advisable that the GoZ can influence the types of farm equipment available, so that proper technologies can fit into small grain production that are more adaptive than maize under certain conditions.

All details for all crops and livestock, as well as a long list of recommendations can be found inside the presentation or the full report, both available at: [2nd round Crop and Livestock Assessment report 2021](#)

5. Update on next Rural ZIMVAC assessment (NGO representative at the HCT)

Following a presentation given by the FNC at the HCT the day before, AAH provided this quick summary, in order to share major points related to the coming ZimVAC Rural Assessment.

The assessment timeline is as follows:

- Data collection 05-17 May
- 18-22 May Data cleaning
- 23-02 June report writing
- 01 June - Report validation (participation of multiple stakeholders to enhance policy recommendation) 1-day workshop to technically engage and guide policy recommendations. Opportunity for stakeholders to interrogate the results while it's still in process

The sampling will include 250 HHs per district, and 21,000 HHs overall. A Resilience pilot module will be administered in 8 districts (Masvingo & Manicaland).

Q: Would like to have more clarity about the resilience module in 8 districts.

A: No more details at the time being. The Resilience framework will be further clarified in due course. The reason for undertaking this effort is based on the high number of projects promoting resilience building, and the assessment aims at finding out how resilience was improved.

Q: Is it possible to share the concept note of the assessment?

A: The concept note is available and will be shared.

More details can be found at this link: [ZimVAC Rural Assessment brief update](#)

6. Open contributions from Partners about any significant programmes' modifications due to COVID-19

Nothing reported

7. Updates from partners

Nothing reported

END