

Meeting Minutes

Date: 18.6.2021

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

Meeting Recording: [link](#)

Agenda

1. Notes and comments on previous MoM
2. FSLC Partners achievements for May 2021 + Lean Season Jan-Apr 2021 overall results
3. Food System Study: background and preliminary key findings (FAO)
4. ZimVAC 2021 Rural Livelihoods Assessment report: one-slide key figures
5. Feedback from focus themes survey
6. Updates from Partners
7. AoB

Participants

ActionAid Zimbabwe, Assemblies of God Projects, British Red Cross, CARE, Catholic Relief Service (CRS), Christian Blind Mission, DanChurchAid (DCA), ECHO, FAO, FCDO, FNSWG, FSLC, ICRISAT, IRC, LEAD, Oxfam, Plan International, Practical Action, UNHCR, UNICEF, Welthungerhilfe, WFP, WHO, World Bank, World Vision, Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), ZRBF - UNDP

Discussion

1. Notes and comments on the previous Minutes of Meeting

No feedback on the previous minutes of the meeting held on 4th June 2021. Minutes approved without any further changes.

2. FSLC Partners achievements for May 2021 + Lean Season Jan-Apr 2021 overall results

During the period Jan-Apr 2021 FSLC Cluster partners reached a total of 5.5 million beneficiaries out of 6.6 million identified as food insecure people. The figures and the period are derived from two major factors:

- 1) data are available for all actors, and
- 2) the period coincides with the peak and end of the lean season response plan of major aid agencies.

The ratio of the achievement at district level, is calculated considering all beneficiaries reached against the estimation of people in need identified in October 2020, and according to the following criteria:

People reached: for each agency, it was considered the maximum number of beneficiaries reported in any month. This is because food assistance is supposed to operate by monthly cycle for the same households being served every month of the programme. Both government and non-governmental agencies, including the UN, are included in this graph.

People in need: it was used the estimation of people in need from the ZimVAC rural assessment, and the WFP CARI report for the urban areas. This choice was made to consider all people in need who were supposed to be reached by the implementation of all programmes.

Assumptions and limitations:

- No household was targeted by two different agencies in the same month.
- The number of people reached is directly communicated by the implemented partners.
- The Food Security Cluster fully relies on each agency capacity and responsibility to report the number of beneficiaries reached, and it cannot carry out field verification in this regard.

Questions:

Comments: This is useful product and hope we can also have one in the future when planning for the next LSA will start.

3. Food System Study: background and preliminary key findings (FAO)

Building upon the 2021 food systems summit with the key objective of:

- Sharing broad food systems insights and evidence to public, private sector & civil society stakeholders
- Contribute to initial food systems stakeholder dialogues
- Broadly identify next steps to advance sustainable food system transformation (e.g., policy and investment support)
- Demonstrate the value and utility of a food systems perspective and inclusive vision about food systems and develop a multi-sector and territorial policy and investment agenda.

Q: Interesting findings, what you presented could mean that the high consumption of starch diet is because of high maize production in Mashonaland and Manicaland regions?

A: Many people were accusing maize of problems that exist in Zimbabwe in relation to food systems.

Q: Interested in the inverse correlation between food security and stunting: on one hand we are surprised to see high stunting rate in districts considered to be food secure, and on the other side, the rates are lower in areas considered to be food insecure. Do we have any explanation to that?

A: Malnutrition is a very complex issue and what nutritionists have said over the years is that one can't really attribute one factor to nutrition. There are different causes in different districts and are manifesting in terms of stunting but doesn't mean it has just one cause. While there are different things going on in different districts, we can't ignore the inverse relationship that has come out. We also know from other programs that in the 1980's and 1990's there was a big drive to do nutrition gardens in Zimbabwe. However, the focus was on production rather than getting people to consume the nutritious food they were producing. It is not enough to encourage people to grow nutritious food, one must do a lot of work to also encourage people to consume it as well – a lot to do with behaviour change.

Q: In relation to the diagram showed about the drivers within the food system and under infrastructure and technology, a lot of people said there was a lack of agriculture research and technology. I wonder whether it is a lack of agriculture research and development or limited resources that are going to make research more robust is making the process more robust? I thought your report could unpack this a little more and have more specifics like for instances what areas of research and development that we are lacking in. That would go a long way within various ways of programming.

A: Will look more closely in that area.

Comment: Zimbabwe Livelihoods and Food Security Programme (LFSP) was indeed addressing food consumption patterns and behaviour change. it is a process. The issue of production is not enough, there is need for behaviour change which is the most difficult step.

We see this food systems approach study as just the beginning and there will be a lot more of this type of analysis going forward and will see movement towards this area. There is clearly a lot of work to be done in this area in terms of governance and policy. The formation of the study, the dialogues and discussions are still going on and encourage participants who would like more discussions to get in touch, so that the process is more inclusive.

Q: Reflecting on issue of post-harvest storage, and relating to stunting and aflatoxins, to what extent was this picked up as a challenge we need to take care of in your investigation? Did this come up at all?

A: It came up, and people are still worried about aflatoxins. Some stakeholders felt it was over-emphasized by a lot of programs, and there is need to do more investigation about aflatoxins and how it influences stunting.

Comment: Thanks for the highlights as well as highlighting the need to change some of our programming attitudes. Food assistance is also very rich in terms of calories, we should question our interventions as well.

Presentation available at the [link](#)

4. ZimVAC 2021 Rural Livelihoods Assessment report: one-slide key figures

ZimVAC 2021 Rural Livelihoods Assessment report has been released and is available on FSLC Website for download

Key issues from the report:

- Cereal insecurity rate projected for the next three quarters ranges from 14% to 48% in different provinces.
- At its peak nationwide, i.e., Jan – March 2022, total number ratio of households estimated to be food insecure will be 27% of the total household translating to around 2.9 million people.
- All peak values are close to half compared to the previous two years. All HHs estimated to be cereal secure are below food poverty line → targeting should look at comprehensive HH conditions, including the scenario of reaching out not only to cereal insecure HHs.

A more comprehensive presentation on the food security component of this report will be done at a future cluster coordination meeting, possibly with the direct participation of FNC staff.

Q: Do we know more about a possible IPC follow up because those tend to be the numbers the colleagues on the donors' side are using?

Last year, ZimVAC had a cereal insecure population of 5.5 million which then came down in IPC to 3.4. Was wondering if this could also happen to the 2.94 number or are there too many factors and should just not assume we will end up with a PIN of 1/3 if we use the same IPC methodology?

A: The heads of UN agencies have been trying to engage the FNC over the last weeks on the issue of IPC. Unfortunately, FNC has been very busy trying to get the ZimVAC report out.

There is a plan for the RC and other heads of UN agencies to engage FNC early next week to lobby for an IPC. It has been agreed among the technical group to go for an acute IPC analysis for now but looking at a possible chronic long-term IPC analysis in the future.

About the numbers we cannot compare last year and this year numbers since the IPC numbers do consider certain assumptions which might not be the same across time. We cannot draw a conclusion until IPC is done with the new assumptions.

Q: Am wondering why all the households estimated to be cereal insecure are all below the poverty line

A: This was stated in the assessment with no major explanation about that. Hopefully we will get colleagues from FNC to come and present the report with more details at the subsequent meetings.

At the same time there is a new report from the World Bank Zimbabwe Economic update stating about food security in the context of economic trend in the light of Covid-19 impact. Have contacted them and looking forward to a positive feedback.

Presentation available at the [link](#)

5. Feedback from focus themes survey

A while ago cluster partners were asked to share with the cluster some suggestions about focus theme for the food clusters.

Would like to move forward with some of the themes captured in the survey via a link to a Jamboard where partners can use the pen tool to mark three of their top issues.

Jamboard pdf [link](#)

6. Updates from Partners

No update shared.

7. AOB

Nothing reported

END