



Minutes of the FSLC Ad Hoc Meeting 9 March 2022

Attendance:

Farai Mukwende – FSLC Coordinator	Derek Murambadoro – Welthungerhilfe
Maria Goss – FSLC Co-coordinator	Kudzai Tavareva – Oxfam
Sasha Guyetsky – WFP	Jansen Mchombo – Save the Children
Elisha Moyo – WFP	Hope Nyandoro – DCA
Benjamin Kwenda – WFP	Angeline Mujeyi – ICRISAT
Rudo Sagomba – WFP	Gift Mashango UNDP
Tsitsi Magadza – FAO	Thokozile Ncube – UNICEF
Princess Gabayi -FAO	Shepherd Gudyani – World Vision
Oxwel Madara – Christian Care	Sithandekile Maphosa – World Vision
Dr. Abdul Matin – CIMMYT	Sharon Fungai Mudhumo – Zimbabwe Council of Churches
Tavirai Marega – Lower Gweru Development Association	Nqabayezwe Moyo – CRS
Sekai Mudonhi – CRS	Raphael Kembo – Oxfam
Auxilia Gombera – Oxfam	Admire Mukorera –
John Chinyama – CRS	Toindepi Kamusewu -
Titus Mafemba – Plan International	Mangarai Zhou – EFZ
Isaac Chaipa – Goal	Edmond Musegedi – Mercy Corps
Leonard Unganai – Oxfam	Gilber Phiri – Cafod
Ezekiel Kanengoni – Save the Children	Fungai Gutusa – Care International
Gwenzi Mhondoro – Zimbabwe Red Cross	Esther Sharara – Action Aid International
Criswell Maranda – CRS	Katharina Weithler – Welthungerhilfe
Patisiwe Zaba – Mercy Corps	Tiri Shuro – Christian Aid
Idzai Murimba Munyeche – Tearfund	Everjoice Mpofo – Trocaire
Tinashe Tsepete – Goal Zimbabwe	Linnet Moyo – CRS
Siphokazi Moloinyane – FAO	Colen Shoko – Mercy Corps
Levy Mombe – ICRISAT	Cassandra Siwela – FP
Ulitile Muchivete – ICRISAT	Rita Gwarada – TDH
Ezekiel Kanengoni – Save the Children	Nelly Maonde – Start Network
Mirrima Ndava – WFP	Tsuro Bore – COSV
Rungano Benza – UNDP	James Ngoma – MSD
Nyasha Mazango – UNOCHA	B Kwenda -MSD
Atupele Kapile – UNOCHA	R Chadyiwa -MSD
Felix Gossrau - ACF	Angeline Matereke – Save the Children
Admire Mandizvidza – Zimbabwe Red Cross	Shepherd Chishaka – SOSCVZ
Tafadzwa Horomani – Plan International	Olwin Manyanya – DanChurchAid
Annastancia Mangisi – WHH	Kelvin Magutorima – Plan International
Farai Shonal – Plan International	Tafadzwanzhe Zinyoro – WFP
Pascal Manyakaidze – LID Agency	Vincent Chiunya – Welthungerhilfe
Augustine Masomera – Care International	Ackulina Jonga – WHH
	Catherine Bwerinofa – Care

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Minutes

1. Opening remarks

The ad hoc meeting was necessitated by the current dry spell across the country and the concerning reports of crop stress and failure. The meeting is therefore to bring together cluster members to get an impression of the impact of the dry spell from the perspective of partners who are operational in the districts of operation.

2. FAO/FEWSNET/WFP Joint update

FAO, FEWSNET and WFP regularly monitor satellite imagery for food security monitoring. A joint presentation was made to the cluster showing observations across the country based on some core parameters as noted in the 3rd dekad of February. Main issues arising:

- Much of the southern south-east, west and northwestern parts of the country received zero to 5 mm of rain between the 2nd and the 3rd dekad of February and this has implications for crop health.
- Rainfall received in many stations in the east, west, north and south of the country show that the rainfall received dropped to below the mean by the end of February into March.
- Significant dryness is noted across the whole country and there was inadequate moisture available for cropping and 'drought like' conditions are being observed in many parts of the country.
- However, pasture may still be in fair condition but will further deteriorate without rain.

3. MSD Seasonal Update

The MSD gave an update of the season indicating that La Nina conditions are still being maintained and normal to above normal rainfall has been reviewed across much of the country cumulatively. However, this refers to quantities and does not account for the spatial and temporal distribution of the rainfall, especially if the current dry spell is considered. Some areas may experience low dryness more than 28 days but not all. More details are in the accompanying MSD PowerPoint presentation.

4. Discussion and reports from the field

- There is concurrence from the group that the geospatial data and the MSD report, reflect what is being observed in the districts of operation.
- As observed from the WFP Harare sub-office, most of the Mashonaland Provinces are experiencing extreme dryness with many areas reporting crop stress or permanent wilting.
- The 18 ZRBF districts also present similar conditions of extreme dryness from February 2022.
- Manicaland usually fairs better than other provinces but is currently experiencing dryness. Oxfam's program in the province notes that even small grains and other drought tolerant crops that are usually hardy are already showing signs of stress and will likely deteriorate further if no significant rains are received.
- In Mash Central, especially Mbire, it is important to note that Cyclone Ana resulted in up to 80% write-off for crops. Therefore, this dry season threatens the replanted crops.
- The observations from the field point to a need to strengthen DRR, social protection and forecast-based financing models in the country.

- In Chegutu, price of maize is on the rise. This also matched with WFP observation from their market analyses.
- There is need to look at implications for on-farm labour and see if the dry spell has resulted in a reduction in labour opportunities.

Other questions arising:

- **Question:** Should MSD not declare a drought considering the prevailing situation? **Response:** MSD merely provides weather and forecast information. The mandate for drought declarations lies in other offices including Agritex, DCP and the President's office.
- **Question:** Can MSD declare an end to the rainfall season? **Response:** MSD cannot declare an end to the rainfall season before the official season end dates. Short range forecasts are used to determine what each 10-day period will look like. Therefore, they cannot extend those observations to cover periods beyond the 10 days.
- **Question:** Was this dry spell not forecasted ahead of time? **Response:** MSD has noted that this season is a bit unusual in the sense that when it rains, the intensity and volume has been high. But when it has been dry, it has also been to the other extreme. However, the cumulative rainfall received remain in the ranges of normal to above normal. Another point to note is the action of cyclones that either bring rain to the country or take away moisture. Apart from Tropical Storm ANA which brought rains to the country, the rest of the systems have turned away from the continent when they enter the Mozambique channel. This has resulted in moisture being drawn away from the continent, thus affecting Zimbabwe.
- **Question:** The geospatial analysis did not include Matabeleland South. Can more detail be given? **Response:** Based on the rainfall pattern of dekad 2 and 3, as well as the current forecast period for March, we can infer that Mat South is one of the most affected provinces. MSD to share actual precipitation data from Mat South stations that will clarify which areas are most impacted.
- **Question:** Will the ARC Replica trigger a payout? **Response:** from START Network. Up to the end of February the trigger had remained below the thresholds. However, some changes are being observed from the beginning of March which could point towards a possible payout this season. However, this is still being seen. This is a partnership that includes government, start network and the WFP.
- **Question:** Can the IPC be activated so that a deeper understanding of the vulnerabilities and implication for the next year be made clearer? **Response:** The decision to carry out an IPC rests with the government through the Food and Nutrition Council. The FNC will be better placed to respond and provide guidance?

Way forward:

- Once the 1st Round Crop and Livestock Assessment Report is made available by Agritex, it will be shared with the FSLC members so that more inferences can be made from it.
- DCP, Agritex and ZINWA to be invited to the next meeting so that they can inform the way forward.
- All contributions and observations will be compiled into a short report that will be shared with various forums including OCHA and HCT to inform decision making.
- Next FSLC meeting scheduled for the 25th of March.