



Wednesday 09 September 2020 at 02:00pm - 04:00pm PNG time | via Zoom

Chair

Mr. Brown Konabe, Director, Food Security Branch DAL

Co-chair: Ms. Helmtrude Sikas-Iha, FS Cluster Coordinator FAO

Participants

Refer to Annex 1.

Agenda

1. Situational overview and update on COVID-19
2. Update on African Swine Fever and Fall Armyworm
3. Update on possible La Niña event
4. Update on the monitoring of food prices and agricultural inputs
5. Short and progressive partner activity updates
6. AOB

1. Situational overview update on COVID-19

1. Ms. Sikas-Iha provided the following updates on the COVID-19 situation in the country.
2. As of 8 September, 2020 the total number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in PNG is 503.
3. The total number of provinces that have reported COVID-19 cases to date is 13, with East Sepik being the latest province to report COVID-19.
4. Highest number of cases is in NCD, with 293, followed by Western Province with 184.
5. There are twelve National Pandemic Measures issued as of 20 August, 2020. There were no changes made to most measures except on Measures 9 to 12.
6. For Measure 9, the curfew in NCD is revised to begin from midnight (12 PM) instead of 10 PM, and still ends at 5 AM each day.
7. Measure No.12 on vaccine testing and trials prohibits anyone who has received COVID-19 vaccine not approved by the National Controller, from entering PNG.
8. New Ireland Province now have their own COVID-19 Provincial Measures. The total number of provincial measures are eight.



9. Currently, the Kavieng Market is still closed. The market has remained closed since the lockdown.

2. Update on ASF and FAW

2.1 ASF update

10. Dr Ilagi Puana from NAQIA provided an update on ASF:
11. In Enga the disease has now spread to Wabag District, Pogera and Wapenamanda. However, this is not major spread but only pocket infections.
12. In Southern Highlands, the disease has not spread to the eastern parts of the province, however, there were reports of pig movement to that area
13. Monitoring of ASF is being done in Eastern Highlands Province. ASF has not spread to Easter Highlands.
14. ASF is still contained in the three ASF declared provinces of Hela, SHP and Enga.
15. Pocket infections of ASF in WHP have all been eradicated through culling of infected pigs. Jiwaka Province and the rest of the lower highlands Province remains free of ASF.
16. Checkpoints that have been set up are currently manned by Police Officers, Provincial DPI officers, and NAQIA personnel, monitoring movement of pigs within and in-and-out of ASF declared provinces, and enforcing restrictions on movement of live pigs and pig products in these areas. Restrictions are also placed on air transport, transporting pork products in and out of these provinces.
17. The major constraints facing containment by NAQIA is pig movement, especially for customary, cultural and economic reasons.
18. NAQIA's next phase, for the next six months, of ASF response will be targeting non-declared ASF areas, mainly looking at controlling pig movement in these areas and training local smallholder pig farmers on biosecurity husbandry practices. This will be focused on the protection of pig production of ASF, especially smallholder and village free-ranging pig farmers, which are ASF high risk producers, working in partnership with FAO, World Bank, FAO, and other partners.
19. Ms. Muller from UN Women provided updates on the Protection Cluster's work in the Highlands in supporting and providing awareness on ASF.
20. UN Women have been working collaboration with FAO, IOM, NAQIA, under their emergency response program in Hela and the Southern Highlands.
21. At the moment UN Women is utilizing the network of 120 community mobilizers that we have worked with since earthquake in those regions, and



have been conducting training (TOT) with them, with the help of the Provincial Health Authorities IOM, NAQIA and FAO.

2.2 FAW Update

22. Ms. Sikas-Iha provided the following updates on FAW:
23. The National Planning Inception Meeting that was conducted on the 18 August 2020, involving NAQIA, DAL, FAO, PHAMA PLUS and other partners and stakeholders.

3. Update on possible La Niña event

24. Ms. Sikas-Iha stated the following.
25. The El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) has been raised to La Niña Alert.
26. La Niña events in PNG bring warm oceans, more rain and can cause flooding. This can lead to coral bleaching, waterlogged crops, and increased risk of disease like typhoid and dengue fever.
27. Above normal rainfall is favored across the country in the next wet season.
28. Seasonal maximum and minimum temperature: A warmer than normal September to November is favored across the country except for parts of Western Province.
29. Commencing of the wet season, there is a higher chance that the country will receive much more rainfall than it normally receives during a regular wet season
30. The country will prepare for early warning / early action plan.
31. Mr. Higgins stated the following.
32. The cluster leads for all DMT clusters will be meeting with the National Weather Service and the National Disaster Centre to start the discussion for early warning action plan for possible La Niña, on 10 September 2020.
33. There is over a 70 percent chance for a La Niña event occurring in PNG, with above average rainfall and temperatures expected in various regions of the country.

4. Updates on the monitoring of food prices and agricultural inputs

34. Dr. Schmidt provided the following updates:
35. There has been a lot of work by FPDA in collecting data on food prices, the NSO Consumer Price Index team is also collecting food prices
36. Each of these organizations have different reporting mechanisms, focusing on updating a consumer price index.



37. This information is important for long term monitoring, however, this needs to be redesigned and reconfigured to be put into a database. So far, this has not been seen in PNG.
38. This type of information monitoring will be useful when it comes to emergency events and situations such as COVID-19 and La Niña.
39. IFPRI wants to put this database in place to monitor food prices every month, hence, they have been having discussions with FPDA, and the idea is there will be a team formed soon.
40. Using the data that have been collected since 2012, when the CPI was recalculated, up until now, and IFPRI will start to monitor food prices in real time. There is infrastructure work that needs to be put in place in order to be able to do this.
41. The EPA has a digital database that IFPRI can work with to develop the food price database. By the end of this year, database should be up and running with a system that would allow to quickly pull out price data across major markets, and then expand to secondary markets as well.
42. This will be a system that will allow IFPRI and partners to monitor prices over time and start to understand the potential production shortfall based on increases in prices.
43. Mr. Syed mentioned that under IFAD's on going MVF project with FPDA, they have some provision for funds to support FPDA with their digital database.
44. Mr. Marshall from DFAT stated that there needs to be a technical discussion on data collection on food security and agriculture in the context of COVID-19, with technical partners on medium term planning (next 18 months), for a more evidence based and systematic approach to this data collection.

5. Short and progressive partner updates

45. Mr. Syed stated the following:
46. IFADs COVID response project has been approved by the IFAD president, having a funding of more than USD 400, 000, which will be implemented through the IFAD MVF project, implemented by FPDA
47. Through the MVF program, IFAD will be implementing the family farm team approach trainings, led by Care International and CEFI.
48. Currently pending negotiations with DAL and Department of Treasury on a few administrative issues. We are expecting the first payments of the fund to occur in early 2021.
49. Mr. Marshall provided the following updates:
50. School Gardens Project in Morobe few days ago and the launching will be in Lae tomorrow, 10 September, with the Deputy Governor for Morobe Province.



51. The Australian High Commission and DFAT are working a longer-term food security activity for the treaty villages in South Fly, Western Province.
52. Ms. Sikas-Iha provided the following updates:
53. FAW has so far been found on maize only in PNG and not on other crops.
54. Morphological identification of FAW confirmed in Erap, however, awaiting molecular identification confirmation from Australia.
55. FAO has been in discussions with DMT, UNDP colleagues and other UN colleagues from Solomon Islands and Bougainville, and there have been food security issues raised as a result of disturbances to market supply chain, caused by COVID-19 tightened international border crossing restrictions between Bougainville and Solomon Islands. There have been reports that this has affected 200 people, who are traditional borders crossers between Bougainville and Solomon Islands, trading fish and vegetables.
56. FAO will be working to assess this situation and provide needed support.

6. AOB

57. No AOB from members in this session

Action Items

1. FAO to facilitate a technical discussion via Zoom with Mr. James Marshall and technical partners on next steps and medium-term planning for data collection on food security and agriculture in relation of COVID-19 impacts.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 6 October 2020 | 2 pm PNG time via Zoom

ANNEX 1 – ATTENDANCE LIST

Attendees:

1. Emily Schmidt, IFPRI
2. James Marshall, DFAT
3. Brown Konabe, DAL, Chair
4. Helmtrude Sikas-Iha, FAO, CO-chair
5. Ian Laki – FAO
6. Ilagi Puana – NAQIA
7. Nicolas Syed – IFAD



8. Michelle Muller – UN Women
9. Richard Higgins – UNDP
10. Hudson Tabara – UNDP