



Tuesday 10 November 2020 at 02:00pm - 04:00pm PNG time | via Zoom

### Chair

Chair: Mr. Brown Konabe, Director, Food Security Branch, DAL

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

### Participants

Refer to Annex 1.

## Agenda

- a. Review of action items from last meeting
- b. Update on COVID-19
- c. Update on African Swine Fever
- d. Update on Fall Armyworm
- e. Presentation on the impact of Fall Armyworm
- f. Update on West Papua Refugees, new arrivals in Iowara
- g. Updates from cluster members
- h. AOB

### Review of actions from last meeting

1. No comments from Cluster Members for this section.

### Update on COVID-19

2. Mr. Laki provided the following updates:
  - a. As of 8 November, there have been 599 COVID-19 confirmed cases and 7 COVID-19 deaths reported in PNG. 585 patients have recovered.
  - b. The National Capital District (NCD) has the highest number of cases with 346, followed by Western Province with 203 cases.
  - c. From the period of 2-8 November 2020, there have been eight new cases: four from West New Britain, one from New Ireland Province, two from NCD, and 1 from Hela Province (first case)



- d. The total number of provinces that have reported COVID-19 to date is now 15 provinces.
- e. The 12 existing National Pandemic Measures released/revised on 5 October 2020 are still in effect.

### Update on African Swine Fever

3. Dr. Puana Provided the following updates:
  - a. NAQIA not receiving further reports of pigs dying in the Mendi-Munihi District.
  - b. Have received reports of pigs dying from three months ago from the Nipa Kutubu area. NAQIA has investigated these deaths by using rapid test kits, however, results have been negative so far. The samples collected have been submitted to the Australian Animal Health Lab and are awaiting PCR results. Thus, Southern Highlands is fairly quiet in terms of pig deaths at the moment.
  - c. The eastern half of Southern Highlands is still free of ASF.
  - d. Deaths reported in the Tambul area in Western Highlands. Rapid kit tests carried on pigs in this area were negative.
  - e. People are now reporting pig deaths of any kind to authorities because of increased ASF awareness. This is helpful to NAQIA, however, is a constraint to resources.
  - f. NAQIA is monitoring Enga very closely because of ongoing pocket infections in the Laigap Pogera corridor. There were also reports of infections in the Task Valley.
  - g. In Tari, Hela, NAQIA has reestablished a base after leaving due to security issues. Pig infections have also reported in Magarima in Hela and were investigated; however, reports were false.
  - h. Next phase to change into offensive mode, focusing on eradicating based on voluntary culling, and also looking at recovery of farms and on-farm biosecurity husbandry practices in farms. All these are to be included as activities in the six-month work plan.
  - i. People are now beginning to cull their own infected pigs and burying them.
  - j. NAQIA needs funding assistance to sustain ASF operations.
4. Mr. Kanua informed the cluster that MDF has put together a proposal to undertake some of the work on pig partnerships to look at improving production/productivity in the cross breeds and supply of cross breed pigs to the farming community, and look at low cost affordable feeds, targeting SME piggeries.



## Update on Fall Armyworm

5. Mr. Tenakanai provided the following updates:
  - a. The Fall Armyworm (FAW) continue to spread in Papua New Guinea with surveillance findings recording the presence in Upper Highlands Provinces of Hela, Southern Highlands, Enga and Western Highlands Provinces. The initial surveillance in Jiwaka Province has confirmed that FAW continued to spread to Chimbu and Eastern Highland Provinces.
  - b. Morphological evidences of FAW have been confirmed in specimen collected in East New Britain Province awaiting molecular confirmation
  - c. NAQIA team will travel to Autonomous Region of Bougainville to conduct FAW surveillance and awareness on 12 November 2020.
  - d. In the Southern Region FAW surveillance has not been conducted in North Fly, the hinterland of Teleformin District and Northern Province, however, FAW has been confirmed in South Fly district of Western Province, Gulf, Central and Milne Bay Provinces.
  - e. FAW is also confirmed in Morobe and Madang Provinces. East and West Sepik will be investigated to confirm FAW.
  - f. The impact of FAW are investigated by partners including National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI) and private sectors such as Ramu Agri Industries and commercial farmers.
  - g. Risk communication strategies need improvement to include advice for farmers on how to manage FAW in their crops. A consultative meeting is planned for Lae to bring Government Agencies, Partners and Private sector to discuss FAW management strategies, impact on crops and farm production.
  - h. FAW found to be present in low (coastal) and high altitude (Highlands Region) areas in PNG.

## Presentation on the impact of Fall Armyworm

6. Mr. Saese, corn farmer from Vintage Agriculture in Morobe, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the impact of Fall Armyworm on his commercial maize crops titled 'Crop yield and quality loss caused by Fall Armyworm – commercial maize farming, NADZAB, Wamper, MP':
  - a. The Vintage Agriculture has produced around 60 hectares (ha) of corn for local feed production



- b. FAW was first noted around late December 2019 and spread quickly to the entire crop and is currently part of their crop.
  - c. FAW has impacted their 10 ha corn field causing reduced yields down 4.6 ton/ha and 3 ton/ha, resulting in 40 percent income loss which is significant to the business.
  - d. In response to the pest, Vintage Agriculture has used insecticide and bio control agents to manage and eradicate. The company is quickly adjusting to crop rotation program with the introduction of legumes and tightening up the crop fallow program to eliminate volunteer crops and other weed hosts.
  - e. The company going forward will need to adopt several crop management strategies and is seeking support from authorities.
  - f. They would also like to work closely on any new technologies, information and crop management strategies that can assist in their cropping program.
7. Mr. Duran the General Manager for Rumion Limited, a maize major maize producing company in Morobe Province, informed the cluster that they have had.
- a. There has been some incidence of FAW affecting their crops.
  - b. Less than two percent of their crops have been damaged by FAW and other pests.
  - c. Their yields have been significantly reduced, about 10 percent reduction, however, they do not fully attribute this to FAW as there are other factors contributing to their yield decline, such as significant amount of rainfall in March and April 2020 causing saturation in parts of their corn fields during reproductive stage, thus, impacting overall yield.

### Update on West Papua Refugees, new arrivals in Iowara

8. Ms. Taoi gave a brief on the background and purpose of the Iowara mission and UN agencies involved in the mission – UNHCR (leading agency), UNDP, UNICEF, IOM, UN Women and FAO, and informed the cluster of the sectors which were assessed of the new 145 asylum seeker arrivals in Iowara – WASH, Education, Nutrition, Food Security and Agriculture, and Child Protection.
9. Ms. Sikas-Iha provided gave an update to the Cluster on the Food Security and Agriculture issues found during the mission:
- a. Iowara is currently very wet as it has been raining often in the past months.
  - b. The new arrivals have been provided seeds and tools, however, will take them three to six months for the crops to mature.
  - c. They will not be able to sustain themselves until their crops mature, thus, they need food supply assistance for the next few months.



- d. The current supply of food rations to the new arrivals is being supplied by the Western Provincial Administration and Department of Provincial and Local Level Government Affairs.

### Update from cluster members

10. Dr. Schmidt informed the Cluster that IFPRI is going to be starting trainings with key individuals in FPDA and other organizations in the next coming weeks in regards to their food price monitoring work. IFPRI hopes to put out the first food price bulletin for monitoring food prices across five markets, in December.
11. Mr. Kunsei informed the Cluster that ADRA is now in Western Province conducting their El Nino programs and also awareness for Fall Armyworm in the communities in Oriomo-Bituri Rural LLG of South Fly District, Western Province.

### AOB

12. Ms. Sikas-Iha informed the Cluster that there is a planned meeting for FAW Stakeholders coming up in Lae in early December 2020.
13. FAO and UN have opened an office in Tari to support ASF response in Hela Province.

### Action Items

1. Circulate to Cluster African Swine Fever updates by Dr. Puana – NAQIA.
2. Circulate to Cluster Fall Armyworm updates by Mr. Tenakanai – NAQIA.
3. Circulate presentation of impact of Fall Armyworm by Mr. Humphrey Saese – Vintage Agriculture.

### NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 8 December 2020 | 2 pm PNG time via Zoom

### ANNEX 1 – ATTENDANCE LIST

#### Attendees:

1. Emily Schmidt – IFPRI
2. James Marshall – DFAT Australia
3. Brown Konabe – Chair-DAL
4. Helmtrude Sikas-Iha – CO-chair-FAO



5. Ian Laki – FAO
6. Chanelle Taoui – UNHCR
7. David Tenakanai – NAQIA
8. Igali Puana - NAQIA
9. Matthew Kanua – MDF
10. Humphrey Saese – Vintage Agriculture
11. Dave Duran – Rumion Limited
12. Willie Kunsei – ADRA