Minutes 2020/7

Tuesday 25 May 2020 at 02:00pm - 04:00pm PNG time | via Zoom

**Chair**

Mr. Brown Konabe, Director Food Security Branch DAL

Co-chair: Helmtrude Sikas-Iha FS Cluster Coordinator FAO

**Participants**

Refer to Annex 1.

**Agenda**

1. Short introductions and review of previous meeting
2. Impact of COVID-19 on food security situation adjusting to new normal
3. Progressive update on African swine fever
4. Progressive update on Fall armyworm
5. Review of previous meeting minutes
6. Progressive partner updates
7. Review of cluster action items
8. AOB and closing

**Introductions and review of previous minutes**

9. The meeting commenced with the Chair initiating the short introductions followed by members of the cluster
10. There was no objection to the previous meeting minutes

**Situational overview on food security on COVID-19 transitioning to new normal**

11. The Cluster Coordinator reiterated on the transition to the new normal and the measures put in place by the government to slow the spread of COVID-19 throughout the country
12. She said though it is the government’s expectation for the transition to take place and adjust to the measures and ensure vital services within the economic but more so in the agriculture and food security sector are enabled
13. This means the transition to new normal at the workplace, at school, at the markets and with the transport system as well
14. For each citizen, this means accepting responsibility for protecting each person, their families and the communities
15. She added that in this week’s sitrep addition, it features how the communities within the food security, agriculture and livelihoods sector are adhering or adjusting to the new normal
16. That social distancing is not observed at the time of the mission especially in markets. The farmers’ reasons being that farmer’s gardens are flushed with mature crop produce and
are in dire need to sell after the lock down. They also need the income after several weeks of lock down. With that, the spaces at the main markets are not enough to cater for everyone’s needs.

17. A few provinces are still on lock down and others are at ease with restriction to movement and travel. Same for workplaces in government and private sector as well.

### Progressive update on ASF and FAW

18. Paula of FAO provided the update on ASF that there was possibility that the infection has spread to Mt Hagen in Western Highlands, Wapenamanda in Enga and Tari in Hela.

19. She also reported on the ongoing work on setting up the 11 checking points at the boarders of Southern Highlands, Hela and Enga.

20. For the Fall army worm update, Paula again reported that surveillance and monitoring is ongoing for Markham in Morobe, Madang and Central provinces.

21. In Morobe province where it houses most of the maize and cereal production areas, there is no confirmation of the incidence of the FAW.

22. A question was raised in relation to an online article on a vaccine for ASF and the chair took note.

23. Remarks from cluster member that similar to COVID-19, both ASF and FAW are here to stay and that stakeholders will have to place emphasis on managing both the plant and animal diseases.

### Progressive partner updates

24. Steve Burns of AHC updated the cluster on the discussion on the AUD 6 million market project that they will be funding for a total of 14 markets.

25. The project is in collaboration with the Prime Minister’s office and in partnership with UN Women as well, in coordination with the Department of Implementation Rural Development (DIRD).

26. The focus of the project is to reduce the risk of women sellers and consumers at the market and restore the livelihoods of women with a duration of 1 year.

27. Cluster members were interested and requested some sort of documents- Steve said they will produce a fact sheet and for wider sharing.

28. James from DFAT reported that the new project name for the Lae Food Security Working Group is the “Hand up Program”.

29. In line with this, DFAT will be rolling out an adaption agriculture schools program in Lae to create income opportunities and increase local food production.

30. The AUD 300-400 project will be working on technical skills production including fish ponds for protein in the long run contribute to the schools agriculture curriculum.

31. As well, the program will look into poultry egg production in primary schools which includes horticulture as well.

32. Allan- World Bank reported on the PNG Agriculture Commercialization and Diversification Project (PADC).

33. That the World Bank team is waiting on the government to complete signing of this project.

34. That the project as mentioned earlier will support both ASF and FAW and that a UN agency-FAO has been selected to implement that component of the project for the Bank.

35. The team is currently working manual for the project. Allan again emphasized on the importance for NAQIA to provide timely and substantive information.
36. This is so partners like WB could mobilize remote support and understand what can be provided
37. Emily reported that the International Food Policy Research Institution has created a Policy Portal. The portal is linked [here](#)
38. The policy portal is in response to COVID-19 and identifies trends and implications for food systems and the different actions taken in countries including PNG
39. Cluster members enquired if this in coordination with the PNG National Research Institute (NRI). Emily responded that this was a good feedback and they IPFRI will get in touch with NRI
40. Contacts of NRI were given to Emily for coordination between IFPRI and NRI
41. In relation, to the Government’s Freight subsidy program – the arrangement between National Planning and Bismark Shipping Limited, Joe FPDA reported on volumes of fresh produce shipped in the last few months
42. Joe Koima reported data on fresh produce from Bismark and Consort shipping deliveries from February to May, 2020.
43. It was estimated that the drop was about 10 containers. In Feb the Bismark shipped 750 tons/ week, then 900 tons/week, then April 120 tons/week and 150 tons/ week in May
44. For Consort shipping- briefly, in January they had shipped 170 tons/week, in February 383 tons/ week, in March 5 tons/week and 0 tons/week in April
45. Joe also mentioned that from his discussions with Bismark that it is not possible to ship vegetables from Lae to Wewak or other parts of the county except from Lae to Port Moresby
46. In relation to this the Cluster Coordinator, noted that though the arrangement at the shipping to transport fresh produce is in place, however there are concerns that the arrangement from farm to the shipping yard and after the shipping yard in Port Moresby to the Port Moresby markets/supermarkets/hotels are lose
47. There needs to be better arrangement and coordination for farmers and traders to benefit from the scheme
48. Allan of the World Bank added that this is a great opportunity from the National Planning and the government and there more support should be given in this area
49. He also mentioned that there is a call for proposal and enquired if the members are aware
50. Joe will provide feedback to the cluster the report of what he report and Joe is also yet to report to cluster the seed stock-take report
51. Matt Kanua of MDF reported that they will working with ENB and Pomio on developing markets
52. The project, to be managed by the East New Britain Market Authority aims to deliver market services
54. Aaron English of ACIAR added that if anyone had questions, to send them to Doreen Iga ACIAR Country Manager- PNG
55. Mike Bourke gave a heads up to interview 20 people as part of the second phase of the ACIAR food resilience system impact assessment that would be covering 5 countries in the Indo-pacific area including PNG
56. Phase 3 of the assessment would depend on the results of phase 2 of the ACIAR impact assessment
57. Trudie of FAO reported on the planning meeting between stakeholders who had projects/assessments in relation on food supply chains impacted by COVID-19
58. The outcome of that meeting was there was two assessments concurrently happening by ACIAR and FAO. ACIAR doing an indo-pacific and FAO is focusing on PNG. FPDA and partners are concentrating on monitoring of market prices of fresh produce – a survey is underway and near completion.

59. Results of the two assessments and the survey should inform the way forward for most of the COVID response and recovery activities for the government/organizations/donors within the food security, agriculture, livelihoods and the economic sector at large.

60. DAL reported that a proposal is currently in development between DAL and FPDA to submit to IFAD to reprogram long term activities to support recovery of farmers from impact of COVID-19. The focus areas are the monitoring of market prices, promotion of seed production and integration of e-agriculture.

61. A question raised by Cluster Coordination for the cluster members to share information on how the agriculture sector is coordinating with other government partners in relation to the government’s economic stimulus package.

Action Items

62. Joe FPDA to share contact details of private sector (Shipping companies) to be sent to Cluster Coordinator to add to the mailing list and to join the next food security cluster meeting.

63. NAQIA to provide second mission surveillance report on ASF.

64. Cluster coordinator to send 3W to cluster members to map COVID-19 activities within the sector.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 9 May 2020 | 2 pm PNG time via Zoom

ANNEX 1 – ATTENDANCE LIST

Attendees:

1. Steve Burns, DFAT
2. James Marshall, DFAT
3. Mathew Kanua - MDF
4. Emily Schmidt, IFPRI
5. Allan Oliver, World Bank
6. Mike Bourke, ANU
7. Aaron English, ACIAR
8. Paula Pupune, FAO
9. Brown Konabe, DAL, Chair
10. Helmtrude Sikas-Iha, FAO, CO-chair
11. Caroline, SSM
12. Steven Hoko, DAL
13. Lavinia Tovue, Phamplus