



Tuesday 11 August 2020 at 02:00pm - 04:00pm PNG time | via Zoom

Chair

Mr. Brown Konabe, Director Food Security Branch DAL

Co-chair: Helmrude 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 West Papua refugees
4. Impact of COVID-19 on cash crops including Cocoa and Coffee
5. PNG Agri-food trends
6. Short and progressive partner activity updates
7. 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. Two hundred and fourteen (214) confirmed cases and three recorded deaths as of 9 August 2020.
3. There are now reported cases in nine provinces, with the latest addition AROB, New Ireland, West Sepik and Southern Highlands.
4. Port Moresby was in a 14-day lockdown from 28 July to 10 August 2020
5. Boroko Market and Tokarara markets are closed while all other markets in NCD remain open, and Gordons Market remain as one of the central hub for wholesale of fresh produce from sellers from Central Province.
6. Also, no restriction on fresh produce brought in from farmers/producers/sellers from Central Province to markets in Port Moresby.



2. ASF and FAW updates

2.1 FAW update

7. Mr Tenakanai provided the following updates on FAW.
8. To date, FAW in PNG has only been found on corn and no other crops as identified in literature
9. Molecular identification of FAW found in Daru Island has confirmed the pest in Daru Island Western Province
10. Morphological identification of suspected incursions in Central, Jiwaka, Morobe Manus and East New Britain Province gives positive identification as FAW, however, specimens from these areas have been sent to the Australia Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment laboratory for PCR testing or molecular identification and NAQIA is awaiting results.
11. There is high risk to corn farmers in Central Province, including those who supply maize to Ilimo Dairy Farm, and to corn farmers at Ramu, Erap and the Markham valley
12. For corn of farmers identified to be impacted by FAW in PNG, these corn have grown to reach foliage and maturity stages for harvest
13. There is a need for a FAW National Task force
14. Certain awareness materials on FAW need to be revised for farmers and layman to understand
15. Need to look at the natural enemies of the native armyworm species of the *Spodoptera litura*, for biological control
16. Integrated pest management and multi-cropping are potential mitigation strategies for the control of FAW in PNG
17. Dr Schmidt asked for the percentage of maize produced in PNG for consumption and for animal feed
18. Mr Tenakanai stated that most maize producing entity in the country, such as Ramu Agro Industries, produce maize for animal (cattle) feed
19. Mike B stated that over 90 percent of rural population grow corn for food consumption
20. Mr Tenakani reported that NAQIA is now investigating suspected incursions in Jiwaka and Kokopo in Bitapaka.
21. Based on morphological identification, Mr Tenakanai reported FAW maybe confirmed in areas outside of Port Moresby from 17 Mile up to Sogeri.
22. NARI continues to investigate FAW incursions in Morobe
23. David also stated there is little to support to FAW response in PNG compared to ASF response, thus, there needs to a FAW Task Force in the country.
24. PHAMA Plus and FAO provide NAQIA with technical and funding assistance.

2.2 ASF Update



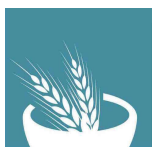
25. Mr. Tenakanai from NAQIA provided the following updates on ASF
26. A team from NAQIA with support from PHAMA plus, has been organized to be deployed to the Highlands to maintain existing checkpoints in the affected Highlands provinces and relieve teams currently on the ground in these areas.
27. There are NAQIA teams currently in Mendi, Enga, and also near the border between WHP and Enga
28. ASF has been contained in the affected areas
29. Prior to NAQIA interventions in Mendi, over 3000 pig deaths were reported by communities. As well, reports of sick pigs are from individuals in Mendi.
30. NAQIA advises pig farmers to cull their sick pigs and not to move their sick pigs from one location to another.
31. NAQIA is advocating for good husbandry practiced in the three affected Highlands Provinces
32. The Enga Provincial Government has been very supportive to ASF response in Enga.
33. Mr. Oliver added that two national consultants have been recruited to assist with ASF for two months. The Korean Trust Fund will be used to support the continuation of these consultants after the two months.
34. Ms Pupune stated that the ASF Phase 2 Delimiting Surveillance Report has been released which gives more detailed information on the spread of ASF in the three affected provinces.

3. Update on West Papua Refugees

35. Ms Sikas-Iha provided the following update:
36. One hundred and forty-three (143) refugee persons, which comprises 40 families, have been relocated by DPLLGA from Kiunga to Iowara refugee camp, North Fly District. They are currently sheltered in three houses and have been given land to resettle. DPLLGA has been providing them with food rations.
37. Inaccessibility to the camp site is an issue as road conditions are very bad. OTML has agreed to provide helicopter assistance to transport supplies in the camp site, however, recent COVID-19 case in OTML has resulted in the mine being shut down and operations on lockdown.

4. Impact of COVID-19 on cash crops including cocoa and coffee

38. Dr. Bourke reported the following on food and cash crops.



39. **Fresh food.** Sale of fresh food is now the most important source of cash income from agricultural production, at least by total value. Closure of fresh food markets in most urban centres had a huge impact on the income of many vendors, most of whom are female. This affected sales made close to the producing location, as well as the long-distant movement of fresh food. Most of the larger intermediate traders said that they continued to purchase and sell large volumes of fresh food to catering groups at mining and petroleum extraction sites.
40. **Arabica coffee.** Information collected from four coffee processors by Matt Kanua is that production was lower than normal in mid-2020. They do not attribute this to the curfews or lockdowns in the highlands as these occurred in April-May prior to the main harvesting season. Rather three reasons are offered for the low production:
 41. 1) The Internal Revenue Commission has not refunded the Goods and Service tax earlier collected by processors and buyers. Thus many buyers did not have sufficient operating capital to purchase parchment coffee.
 42. 2) The Coffee Industry Corporation did not receive the freight subsidy to transport coffee by road from more remote locations until recently.
 43. 3) Third level airlines were impacted by the lockdown in March to June and thus coffee was not transported as back-load from remote locations. As well, many small airstrips have closed because of inadequate maintenance.
44. **Cocoa.** It was reported from Madang and Milne Bay provinces that cocoa sales were impacted for a while because of the SOE. Cocoa exporters in Kokopo and Bougainville report no impact.
45. **Betel nut and betel pepper.** The ban on sales of betel nut in most urban centres and travel restrictions had a significant impact on the sale of betel nut and hence on the income of growers, intermediate traders and those selling to the public.
46. **Copra.** It was reported that people could not sell copra at one stage because of the lockdown and SOE on Karkar Island in Madang Province and from islands in Milne Bay Province. Elsewhere, copra was reported to be shipped without problems.
47. **Oil palm.** The SOE did not have a major direct impact on production or processing of oil palm. There were some initial issues getting ships to transport palm oil for export, but these were resolved.
48. **Fish and other marine foods.** Sales of fish in Wewak, Madang and Popondetta were affected, as were sales of smoked fish in Alotau and possibly in other towns.
49. **Livestock.** In markets where sale of meat and live animals was banned, people were not able to sell live chickens. It is not known how many people were able to sell them in informal markets or through other means. It was reported, but not confirmed, that a major producer of processed chickens in Lae stopped buying birds from village producers in Morobe Province.
50. **Tobacco.** Significant amounts of tobacco are now grown in the Wahgi Valley, Nebilyer Valley and Tomba - Hagen Range area west of Mt Hagen city. The impact of the lockdown on tobacco sales is not known, but it is likely that this was impacted



- as much of the product is sold in lowland locations and inter-province travel was impacted in the lockdown period.
51. **Rubber.** Most smallholder rubber is produced and processed in Western Province and rubber continued to be harvested during the SOE. However, the MV Kuku could not travel to Lake Murray and Balimo to purchase cup lump rubber from villagers and transport it to Kiunga for processing. North Fly Rubber sold processed rubber to provide storage space for cup lump that was purchased when the SOE was lifted. Thus, the SOE had a significant impact on the cash income of rubber producers in Western Province.
 52. **Vanilla.** Producers and traders in East Sepik and West Sepik provinces who normally sell vanilla in Jayapura, West Papua were unable to travel there, so their incomes were impacted. It was reported that vanilla could not be exported from Madang when the port was closed for a period in March-April and vanilla growers could not sell their produce during this period.
 53. **Honey.** There were some reports that there was less honey being sold in April because of the lockdown and SOE. Others involved with helping honey producers reported that some people still managed to sell their honey elsewhere 'by going around the lockdown restrictions'. However, the main producing period is in about November-December and the lockdown, border closures and SOE only had a limited impact on sales of honey.
 54. Mr. Hoko stated that production of honey and rubber can continue in spite of the lock-down, just that they cannot be sold for cash. The two products, however, do not lose their market value as they are not perishable like other agricultural commodities. Farmers can sell them over time, without losing any money value.
 55. Mr. Oliver stated that there have not been severe impacts on cocoa from COVID-19.
 56. However, international prices for cocoa have dropped by 20 percent, including that of coffee.
 57. Moreover, there are reports of cocoa farmers spending more time in their cocoa gardens due to the pandemic.
 58. Mr. Kanua stated that 10 to 15 percent of coffee in rural areas have not been going to factories and a coffee factory in Kainantu has shut down operations due to the business not receiving its tax rebates from IRC.

4. PNG agri-food trends

59. Dr. Schmidt provided a brief overview of the IFPRI 'PNG agri-food trade trends: reflections on COVID-19 policies and dietary change' research paper and note.
60. She highlighted the analysis from the research on the following topics: Key policy messages; Real Exchange Rate (2010 to 2020) Appreciation and Incentives for PNG's Agricultural Trade; PNG agri-food exports and imports between 2001-2005 and 2012-2016; Dietary change, and processed foods and their implications on public

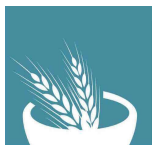


health; and Import of different types of foods have broadened, resulting in a large increase in protein and rice import.

61. She stated that there is a lack of data on agri-food trends, especially on a macro scale, and missing recent data on food consumption in PNG. Thus, the research paper looks into these areas and provides key analysis on trends in these areas by bringing together different global data sets on agriculture and food exports and imports dating back to 2001.
62. Ten to 15 percent of PNG exports are from agriculture exports. .
63. Approximately 20 percent of the labor force is engaged in smallholder cocoa production, which comprises 90 percent of total output
64. Mr Hoko noted that rice and wheat are the huge imports by PNG on food category basis. PNG imports about 200,000 metric tons, by conservative estimation, annually. It is expected that imports of rice and wheat will increase over time in PNG as its population increases towards 10 Million people.
65. Mr. Hoko added that PNG is headed for a major health issue or problems due to poor diets - not necessary economic empowerment but by poor people paying and buying foods that are sugary and high in saturated fats and salt, that are cheaper to the detriment of their health and well-being.
66. Ms Mondia mentioned that the Agriculture production chapter of the recent Papua New Guinea Demographic and Health Survey 2016-18 was shared with the NSO and DAL for final review and upon finalization, the report will be shared with the cluster.
67. Mr. Hoko noted that NSO should be decentralized, with some function of data to the regional governments or provinces, making it cheaper and effective for data collection. Collating and data management, including analysis can be centralized to somewhere like NSO Headquarters in Port Moresby.

5. Short Partner Updates

68. Mr. Marshall mentioned the following projects they are working on: Lae City Hand Up Program, the School Garden Project which is set to commence on the 16 August 2020, and Market Project (MERI Project).
69. Dr Bourke mentioned that they are planning to carry out population studies on particular demographics in PNG.
70. Ms Mondia mentioned the following activities and upcoming activities from FAO: the current COVID-19 Rapid Impact Assessment is at its final stage and Phase 2, the Medium Term Impact Assessment will be commencing soon; she added that core resources from FAO continue to support the work on FAW with NAQIA; FAW National Inception Planning meeting with stakeholders; FAO is also part of the UN Highlands Joint Program, a resilience program continued after the earthquake implemented in Southern Highlands and Hela.



71. Mr. Kanua mentioned that they are conducting remote market assessments and working with partners such as Outspan PNG Limited and NKW Fresh to assess situation at the farm level.
72. Mr. Oliver mentioned that they are working on launching three new projects: the PNG Agriculture Commercialization Project, Impact Health and the Urban Youth project.

9. AOB

73. Unfortunately, the meeting did not get to this agenda because the meeting went over time and the Chair closed the meeting.
74. Mr. Marshall mentioned that DFAT still lacking access to any systematic collection and collation of market price information and also reliable country-wide information on access to agricultural inputs (seeds, stock feed etc). Given Covid-19 and its economic impacts will be quite protracted, is there something that we can do to prioritize regular collection of data on these things? I understand COVID-19 travel restrictions raise the difficulty level, but it would be good to explore what can still be done on this front.

Action Items

1. Mr. Tenakanai from NAQIA to share FAW PowerPoint presentation with cluster
2. Cluster Coordinator to send out Six-month ASF work plan to FSC
3. Cluster Coordinator to send out ASF Phase 2 Delimiting Surveillance Report to FSC
4. Food Security Situation Report 5 and 6 to be sent out to FSC
5. Market Development Facility, Mr. Kanua to meet with FAO

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 8 September 2020 | 2 pm PNG time via Zoom

ANNEX 1 – ATTENDANCE LIST

Attendees:

1. Emily Schmidt, IFPRI
2. James Marshall, DFAT
3. Mike Bourke, ANU
4. David Tenakanai, NAQIA
5. Allan T Oliver, World Bank
6. Brown Konabe, DAL, Chair
7. Helmtrude Sikas-Iha, FAO, CO-chair



8. Melinda Benjamin – FAO
9. Ian Laki – FAO
10. Smith Sapaka – World Vision
11. Tomoko Sato – IOM
12. Simon Anakapu – PHAMA Plus
13. Mirriam Mondia - FAO
14. Mathew Kanua - MDF
15. Paula Pupune – FAO
16. Adrien Mourgues - EU
17. Heai Steven Hoko - DAL