Seeds & Crops Workstream, Agriculture WG

Meeting Notes: 18-09-2020

1. Sharing by Somalia FSC Ag WG and discussion
   - Somalia FSC Ag WG is being revitalized in response to ongoing crises, challenges and gaps in emergency response. Partners are responding to numerous issues and MoA felt need for coordinated responses. FSC leadership is with MoA with FAO as convener and facilitator.
   - Workstream arrangement mirrors gFSC: Crops & Seeds and Livestock
   - TOR has been written/revised and circulated to partners; first meeting has been held.
   - Partners have identified potential guidance needs and shortlisted items. Primary guidance need relates to seed security, modifying existing guidance for the Somalia context. The desire is to make this guidance highly accessible to implementing partners, taking into account previous efforts to develop guidelines on promoting seed security in Somalia (7-8 years ago) and updating based on dynamic agriculture sector and changes since.
   - Working with seed sector in Somalia: Local seed production and distribution (local vendors) is being highly promoted; no longer dependent on seed imported from Kenya; organizations are using cash-based and voucher (including use of e-vouchers and tablets) systems; SSSA is being planned for later in the year. Current programming includes FAO Cash + model (seed package [cereal, pulse, vegetables], cash for immediate food needs, training).
   - Additional gap: Materials/resources are being shared within the WG and among partners but there exists no central repository where these can be organized and accessed.
   - Next steps: Somalia FSC will share list of identified guidance needs and further clarify specific support requests based on exposure to gFSC workstream initiatives; SSSA results to be shared

2. Update on current initiatives
   - Participation in review and testing of remote SSSA tools (Ed Walters, CRS)
     - One of the rapid SSSA forms is being digitized now (for use on CommCare platform); full version may be complete and ready to share next week
     - A template for lessons learned and review by testing partners is also being developed
     - Rapid SSSA testing plans: multiple organizations in multiple countries (September 2020-Spring 2021)
     - It was noted that the rapid SSSA tools focus on downstream seed issues (farmer-level of value chain) and are geared towards rapidly leveraging contacts with beneficiaries as key informants. Reduction in number of actors to be interviewed and secondary data collection.
   - Development of guidance on cash transfers for seed interventions (Kate Longley, CRS)
     - Shared initiative with Cash & Markets WG; positive results with all poll respondents either indicating a desire to learn more about cash transfers for ag outcomes (3) or already doing cash transfers for ag outcomes (5)
Still looking for a consultant to draft the guidelines

Next steps: go back to CMWG to start gathering evidence, update with recent lessons through those partners (and possibly experiences in Somalia)

Resources: Study on cash transfers for seed security in humanitarian settings and Review of practice and possibilities for market-led interventions in emergency seed security response

- Development of approach to enhance partner engagement with farmers (Aaron Larsen, SP)
  - Cecilia Benda (Concern) is developing framework/structure for this discussion; has reached out to SEADS/Racey in order to collaborate as there is significant overlap with SEADS ongoing evidence review.
  - Work will be ongoing through September with the framework and 1-2 page brief completed sometime in October.

3. Partners Meeting (November 11-12, 2020)
   - Presentation on rapid SSSA tools and testing feedback seems the best choice for workstream presentation in plenary
   - To involve presentation of initial tools and methodology as well as any feedback (including lessons learned, early results, etc.) from organizations trialling the tools this month or next.

4. Work plan draft: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Bt0Di8ccHTbT0-S4E-ErAHpHfDe7uqGp/view?ths=true
   - Make final revisions/edits/suggestions by Friday, October 2nd.
   - CRS (Kate and Ed) and Concern (Cecilia) to work on timelines for their respective initiatives

5. Setting a regular meeting day and time
   - Use this poll to select times that you prefer or that typically work most weeks so that we can set a standard expected meeting time in between plenary meetings (https://doodle.com/poll/xufbzhndfwr8sld)

6. Update from SEADS
   "I would like to bring everyone up to speed on SEADS Evidence review. The short story is that we are finding very little evidence of impact on livelihoods across technical themes. This is not unsurprising, however, it is essential that partners who KNOW their organizations have done evaluations that show a positive (or negative!) impact on livelihoods share those now." More on this to come from Racey at upcoming WG or workstream meetings. In the meantime contact her if you know of existing evidence to share.