

LOCATION: Beirut, Lebanon

DATE: 21 March 2013

CHAIR: Logistics Cluster Coordinator

PARTICIPANTS: ADRA, Handicap International, IFRC, Oxfam, Save the Children, Secours Islamique France, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNHCR, WFP

- ACTION POINTS:**
- Remaining participants to provide the Logistics Cluster with their estimated monthly fuel requirements (for generators and light vehicles).
 - Organizations present in Damascus who are willing to undertake cost-sharing on partial/complete warehousing space, are requested to contact UNFPA at: philippe.tissier@gmail.com

Situation Update

- The Logistics Cluster is currently utilising the Lebanon corridor for transportation into Syria. Participants were informed that the security situation at the Al-Arida border area may affect cargo transport operations on the roads leading to Al-Arida and Dabboucieh border crossings. **[Update: Transport operations on this route were temporarily halted due to the volatile security situation, however the border re-opened on 26 March].**
- The Logistics Cluster stands ready to transport common humanitarian cargo via the Jordan Corridor. The border crossing for cargo vehicles on the Jordan-Syria border crossing is experiencing security issues, and presently there is no movement in or out. WFP trucks that were stranded at the border for more than two weeks were finally allowed to enter (20 March); however the crossing is not active at present.
- Participants were informed that three INGOs have been recently authorised by the Syrian Government to work in Syria: NRC, Merlin, and Mercy Corps.
- WFP is gradually utilising Tartous Port more, and the port is currently not congested. Lattakia Port is also operating as normal, with no congestion. The current warehouse in Safita will eventually be moved to Tartous Port.
- Current official and market prices for petrol and Diesel were shared with the group. A full list per location can be provided to participants upon request.
- The Logistics Cluster also informed the group of the current staffing structure:
 - One Logistics Cluster Coordinator, one Cluster Officer, one Fuel Officer, and one Cluster Assistant/Cargo Tracking Officer in Damascus
 - One Cargo Tracking Officer in Beirut
 - One Information Management Officer in Amman.

Common Services and Cargo Tracking Update

Overall

- Further convoys are being organized by the Logistics Cluster, OCHA, and Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC). For each convoy the Logistics Cluster organizes transport, loading, and dispatch of trucks for the convoys to the final distribution point. The group collectively agrees on priority locations before each convoy. Facilitation letters from SARC are required for each journey.
- Interested NGOs/UN Agencies can contact OCHA Syria (bruno1@un.org) for information on upcoming convoys.

Transport

- The Logistics Cluster continues to provide free transport of humanitarian relief items inside Syria, from anywhere to anywhere, access permitting. Although currently there is no shortage of trucks, issues are being faced when matching destinations of transport with drivers willing to go (e.g. It is difficult to get drivers willing to go to Hassakeh).
- The Cluster is also currently compiling a list of average prices for transport per location in Syria.
- Regarding recent minor losses of cargo, the Logistics Cluster informed participants that on some occasions, drivers are asked to provide 'samples' of their cargo at checkpoints. These are typically small (e.g. 3 mattresses, or 2 food rations). Later, if reflected on the waybill, the losses fall on the driver, who has to pay

for the shortfall. The Logistics Cluster therefore requests partners to establish a threshold of acceptance for losses, and if minor, to not indicate them on the waybill. Therefore, to avoid unfair burden on drivers, organizations are requested to accept the waybill (as long as losses are minor). So far, such losses have been rare.

Storage

- Currently, storage space for Logistics Cluster participants is available inside Syria in Damascus (JAD warehouse 2,500 m²), Safita (400 m²), Qamshli (300 m²), and Lattakia (1,000 m²).
- Participants were informed that the JAD warehouse in Kissweh, Damascus may become inaccessible due to the volatile security situation, and currently partners are taking their cargo from the warehouse for onward transport/distribution. As an alternative, a potential warehouse location on the Beirut-Damascus road is being assessed.
- Common storage space of 1,200 m² is also available in Irbid (Jordan). Currently, there is no common warehousing space in Lebanon.

Fuel

- An administrative mechanism is being established for fuel provision on a cost-recovery basis. This will entail distribution of petrol/Diesel for use in generators and vehicles. **The Logistics Cluster reminded participants that the fuel provision would be for generators/vehicles only, and not for trucks or programme activities.** The Logistics Cluster has received monthly fuel consumption estimates from 7 organizations and invites the remaining organizations to do the same. Diesel will be provided at 1.45 USD per litre.
- The current plan is to have petrol distribution in Damascus, and Diesel distribution in Kissweh (barrels or empty trucks).
- WFP is also requesting official approval for the import of petrol into Syria.

Cargo Tracking

- The Relief Item Tracking Application (RITA) has been implemented by the Logistics Cluster. This application enables accurate data collection/analysis of common services for Syria, and also allows users to monitor their cargo during transport/storage. Participants were provided with a live demonstration of how to monitor their cargo status using a Quick Response (QR) tracker on their smartphones, or by entering their cargo's consignment number on the RITA website at: <http://rita.logcluster.org/rita/public/login.htm>
- Participants were informed that the total volume of humanitarian cargo handled so far (June 2012 – March 2013) is more than 40,000 m³. This is equivalent to a column of over one thousand standard 20 foot containers stacked all the way up to the highest mountain peak in Syria (Mount Jabal Sheikh). Up to now, free-to-user storage, handling, and transport services have been provided to 13 organizations (ACF, DRC, FAO, IOM, IMC, Première Urgence, Secours Islamique France, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA, UNDP, UNRWA, and WHO). An info-graphic and blog story on these common services achievements (2012 – 2013) have been shared on the Cluster website at: <http://www.logcluster.org/about/blog/reaching-new-heights/>
- The Cargo Tracking Officer also gave participants a quick briefing on updated procedures for making requests for common transport and storage services. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available at: <http://www.logcluster.org/ops/syr12a/sop>
- The updated customer guidance procedures are available at: http://www.logcluster.org/ops/syr12a/rita_customer_guidance/view

Round Table

- Regarding customs imports, organizations in Lebanon were strongly advised to use the 'transit cargo' option for goods with final destination Syria, as this would lead to lower costs and less paperwork.
- UNFPA requested whether any organizations present in Damascus were willing to undertake cost-sharing on partial/complete warehousing space (depending on the location and security). UNFPA is looking for space between 500 to 800 m², but is open to different options, depending on availability. Willing participants can contact UNFPA directly (philippe.tissier@gmail.com).
- In response to a question from UNRWA on cold chain capacity in the region, participants provided the names of companies with cold chain transport options (Agility, DHL, Net Logistics).

- Regarding the Logistics Sector idea proposed by World Vision at the previous meeting (for organizations working on the refugee response), participants informed the group that this had not been organized as yet.

Information Management Update

- The Syria Logistics Cluster webpage is active and regular logistics information products are being produced and distributed at: www.logcluster.org/ops/syr12a
- The Logistics Cluster informed participants that specialized logistics maps for Lebanon could be prepared as per participants' requests.
- Recent IM products include: Syria Logistics Cluster Info-Graphic and Blog (2012 and 2013 consolidated figures), Amman Meeting Minutes (11 March), Regional Map of Logistics Cluster Storage Space (11 March), Overall Situation Report (07 March), and Damascus Meeting Minutes (26 February).
- Meetings are currently being held once every month in Amman and Damascus, and once every 2 weeks in Damascus.
- A Customs Snapshot for imports into Syria from Jordan is under preparation and will be shared shortly.

Contacts

Matteo Perrone	Cluster Coordinator	matteo.perrone@wfp.org
Hamza Mohmand	Information Management Officer	hamza.mohmand@wfp.org
Finne Lucey	Logistics Cluster Officer	finne.lucey@wfp.org
Celine Bracq	Cargo Tracking Officer	celine.bracq@wfp.org
Rajaa Baddour	Logistics Assistant	rajaa.baddour@wfp.org