SYRIA – MEETING MINUTES

LOCATION: Beirut, Lebanon
DATE: 16 April 2013
CHAIR: Logistics Cluster Coordinator
PARTICIPANTS: ADRA, IFRC, IMC, IOM, OCHA, Oxfam, Premiere Urgence, Save the Children, Secours Islamique France, UNRWA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA, WFP

ACTION POINTS:
- **Participants to share upcoming storage requirements with the Logistics Cluster for planning purposes**
- **Participants with information on warehousing in Tartous, and suppliers of food and hygiene items in Lebanon, to contact IFRC (thierryatwork@gmail.com)**
- **The Logistics Cluster will produce and share a catalogue of potential logistics supply routes for the regional Syria crisis**

Situation Update

- Currently, the Logistics Cluster is utilising the Lebanon corridor for transportation. No common warehouse space is currently being offered in Lebanon.
- The **Lebanon-Syria** Border Crossing 'Al-Masnaa' is operational. Crossing is fairly straightforward, however customs processing can be slow, therefore coordination with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) is strongly recommended to speed up the process. For humanitarian cargo, the authorities are more flexible. Currently, only Lebanese trucks are allowed to cross 'Al Arida' border (North Lebanon).
- The coastal area is operating normally at present. Tartous Port is gradually being used more by WFP. The port is currently under-utilised and has the capacity to be used more. Lattakia Port is also operating normally, with no congestion.
- **Jordan-Syria Update:** Intermittent movement is now taking place at the Jaber/Naseeb border crossing. UNHCR, UNICEF, and WFP have not yet used the Sweida'a option. One potential alternative is to use the sea route: Aqaba (Jordan) to Beirut/Tripoli (Lebanon) to Tartous/Lattakia (Syria), which some organisations are already using.
- Damascus Airport remains operational (although at lower capacity). The road leading to the airport is considered insecure.

Common Services and Cargo Tracking Update

Overall

- The Joint Humanitarian Convoy to Aleppo, supported by the Logistics Cluster, reached Damascus on 15 April with mostly WASH, hygiene, and medical items on behalf of IOM, UNICEF, UNRWA, UNFPA, UNHCR, and WHO. All 9 trucks (8 with NFIs, and 1 with food) have arrived at the final destination.

Transport

- The Logistics Cluster continues to provide free transport of humanitarian relief items inside Syria, from anywhere to anywhere, access permitting.
- It is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain facilitation letters from the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) for transport (**Update:** SARC is not providing letters for Homs). It has been reported that the Ministry of Social Affairs will provide facilitation letters from this point onwards.

Storage

- The Logistics Cluster's JAD warehouse in Kissweh, Damascus remains operational for the time being, although WFP staff members are no longer present at the facility. The warehouse superintendent is providing stock updates on a daily basis. The area could become inaccessible in the future due to the security situation, and participants have been advised to release their cargo from the warehouse whenever possible.
- Currently, storage space for participants is available inside Syria in Damascus (JAD warehouse 2,500 m²), Safita (400 m²), Qamshli (300 m²), and Lattakia (1,000 m²); and regionally in Irbid, Jordan (1,200 m²).
- As a contingency and operational measure, the Logistics Cluster is considering increased warehouse space in Tartous for common storage in an area considered, as per today, secure and accessible.

Furthermore, Tartous represents one of the main entry points for humanitarian cargo in case the security situation will limit access in the future, and could be good staging point. The Logistics Cluster has Mobile Storage Units (MSUs) available in Tartous for rapid deployment if need be. A potential location has been identified in Safita, where approximately 12- 15 MSUs could be set up. To be operational, the ground will need to be levelled first and the MSUs erected (approximately 2 months for the entire process to be completed).

- In response to a question raised by participants, the Logistics Cluster confirmed that the WFP warehouse in Adra is no longer accessible/operational due to the security situation.
- At present warehousing space is not an issue. Participants in need of space are requested to share their needs with the Logistics Cluster for planning purposes.

Fuel

- Currently fuel availability is not a gap (availability has remained stable since January, with a brief shortage in March). Petrol availability may become an issue in future months, and the Cluster is planning for this contingency. UNRWA is providing shared space at its fuel station to WFP for storage of fuel, currently the UNRWA fuel station is also facing accessibility issues due to insecurity.
- Administrative procedures are being established for fuel provision on a cost-recovery basis. This will entail distribution of petrol/diesel for use in generators and vehicles.

Cargo Tracking

- The Cargo Tracking Officer shared some required steps for participants, to enable accurate tracking:
  1. Accurate information on SRF form
  o Most critical fields of the SRF: full description of cargo items, volume, weight, consignor and consignee fully detailed addresses, contact details
  o Request should correspond to actual quantities to be moved. In case of change in quantities, inform the LC immediately. At collection of the cargo, if quantities are above the request, the LC will not accept the extra quantities.
  2. Users to follow up on request
  o In all communication with the LC, inform request number
  o Do not send a request more than once – in case your request is still open, inform consignment number and quantities left to be handled
  o Always copy syria.cargo@logcluster.org for all communications on deliveries
  3. Confirmation of quantities delivered from customer side
  o Send a written confirmation to confirm delivery (email or copy of signed Way Bill). The transporter should provide a waybill to be signed by final consignee, in the absence of such, inform LC immediately.
- The Cluster also shared the latest Common Transport Info-Graphic with participants, showing the volume transported by governorate in Syria, from 1 January to 1 April 2013. Over 11,000 m³ of relief items have been transported in this time period, including: Shelter, Agriculture, WASH, Protection, Food, Education, Health, and Operational Support. The info-graphic is available at: www.logcluster.org/about/blog/on-the-move

Round Table

- ADRA has received confirmation from OCHA and the Syrian Government on authorization to work in Syria, and is now awaiting final documentation to begin its activities.
- IFRC is currently looking for warehouse space in Tartous, and also needs supplier information for food and hygiene items. Any organisations with relevant information are requested to contact IFRC.
- UNRWA requested advice on importing communications equipment into Syria (all customs paperwork completed). The Logistics Cluster advised UNRWA to import directly to Tartous Port (just one customs point). UNRWA can also import the equipment into Beirut under the 'transit' option and then transport to Damascus.
- UNFPA has identified a warehouse in Tartous, with the Ministry of Health.
- UNICEF recommended that participants collaborate to produce a catalogue of potential logistics supply routes for the region.

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Information Management Update

- The Logistics Cluster shared two new Lebanon Logistics Maps (Mount Lebanon - Nabatiyeh, and South Lebanon Region) with participants, produced by the GIS Officer on request. The maps will be made available on the website this week. Participants can contact the IM Officer for similar mapping requests.
- The Logistics Cluster shared a Fuel Price Analysis Snapshot for Syria with participants, based on 2013 data so far (January to March 2013). The Snapshot is available at: http://www.logcluster.org/ops/syr12a/Tracking_Official_Market_Fuel_Prices_J-M_2013/view
- Over 300 participants are now subscribed to the Cluster mailing list, and regular logistics information products are being produced and are publicly available at: www.logcluster.org/ops/syr12a
- Logistics Cluster Coordination Meetings continue to be held once every month in Amman and Damascus, and once every 2 weeks in Damascus.

Contacts

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