

Minutes of Logistics Cluster Consultation Meeting in Eritrea



Horn of Africa
Logistics Cluster

Asmara, Eritrea, 20 April 2006

Participants: CARE, CRS, ICRC, OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (chair) and representative of Regional Cluster from Nairobi

Outcome of the meeting

- Participants agreed that having a logistics cluster activated at country level will be of benefit.
- Government being the main logistics partner for all agencies and NGOs should be part of this coordination and information meetings.
- All agreed to monthly meetings. * Note under ICRC

I. Agenda

- Introduce Logistics Cluster concept
- Provide platform for information sharing and logistics coordination
- Identify logistics needs/gaps and assets available

II. Introduction

A brief introduction to the Logistics Cluster and its background by the chair was made. The chair indicated that the Logistics Cluster is among nine that have been identified by IASC, namely: Emergency Shelter (IOM), Camp Management (UNHCR), Protection (UNHCR), Early Recovery (UNDP), Water and Sanitation (UNICEF), Nutrition (UNICEF), Health (WHO), Telecommunications (OCHA/UNICEF/WFP) and Logistics (WFP).

WFP has been appointed to take the lead in coordinating logistical issues for UN agencies, NGOs and other humanitarian organizations. In his March 06 appeal, head of OCHA Mr. Ian Egeland, has invited agencies to enhance coordination for current drought response and establish clusters, should there be a need.

The chair briefed participants on Regional Logistics Cluster, which was established in Nairobi following the consultation among the stakeholders.

The main aim of the establishment of Logistics Cluster is to improve coordination and information sharing, address identified gaps and come up with joint solutions, to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness.

II. Agencies and their opinions

During the meeting participants gave their opinion, suggestions and comments on the possibility and usefulness of establishing Logistics Cluster in Eritrea.

- **ICRC:** Emphasized that a Government counterpart should be attending this meeting. The ICRC can be neither a cluster lead nor a cluster member, as this would necessarily entail accountability to the UN System, co-ordination with the ICRC will be carried out to the extent necessary in order to achieve an efficient operational complimentary and a strengthened humanitarian response for people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence.

With regards to monthly meetings, the ICRC will contribute to meetings that enhance the humanitarian response. Its involvement and contributions will depend on situations where it can add value to logistics issues, but it is not ready to engage in a monthly meeting exercise.

- **UNHCR:** Is phasing down and thus do not see the real need of involvement, though the cluster approach seems to be a good idea.
- **CARE:** Agrees on the participation of government counterpart and reactivation of previously working groups for Logistics Cluster to be operational and effective. CARE seeks clarification on the establishment of other clusters concerning food aid. I.e. Establishing TOR's by cluster lead should be envisaged. A "mapping exercise" involving GoE might prove beneficial.
- **CRS:** Logistics Cluster will be beneficial in tackling problems and addressing gaps related to logistical support. Also highlighted that OCHA need to pursue with the Humanitarian Coordinator issues identified for action.
- **OCHA:** Pointed out that with the disintegration of ERREC, government involvement at meetings and sectoral working groups is minimal and difficult. Thus re-engagement and re-activation of Government involvement is required.
- **UNICEF:** Indicated need for logistics forum. Also highlighted importance of having clear terms of reference for the Logistics Cluster, which will have a lot of impact in responding to current problems and long term preparedness.
- **WFP:** Supported the proposal of having the GoE as major logistics partner in this meeting, as it will be beneficial to all, since Government is implementing the logistics for all UN Agencies and NGO's.

It is well noted that a joint approach to the government is an advantage for all agencies.

Participants agreed future Logistics Cluster meetings to be held monthly.

AOB

Participants further indicated that there is a need to have a Nutrition Cluster activated, as there seems to be number of agencies involved in this project and because of growing number of beneficiaries that are enrolled under supplementary feeding centres.