LOCATION: Suva, Fiji
DATE: 22 July 2016
CHAIR: Logistics Coordinator, Fiji Procurement Office (FPO)

PARTICIPANTS: Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Fiji Procurement Office (FPO), OXFAM, Save the Children, World Food Programme (WFP), and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

ACTION POINTS:
- Participants to identify areas from the Minimum Preparedness Actions plan that they would like to work on in subgroups;
- WFP to share template for the consolidation of MPA tasks and leads responsible for implementing them;
- Participants to present their agencies' current logistics contingency plans at the next meeting;
- WFP to share template for the consolidation of information on agencies' logistics capacity and resources, for internal circulation.

AGENDA:
1. Lessons Learnt
2. Humanitarian Cluster Approach
3. Fiji National Cluster Structure
4. Minimum Preparedness Actions
5. A.O.B.

1. LESSONS LEARNT

- Findings and recommendations drawn from the Tropical Cyclone Winston Logistics Cluster Lessons Learnt exercise, conducted via an online user survey and a workshop with national logistics stakeholders, were presented to participants.
- The Lessons Learnt document has been submitted to the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) for consideration ahead of the planned national lessons learnt workshop scheduled on 26-28 July 2016.
- Key findings reveal that the current National Logistics Cluster coordination structure, under the Ministry of Finance, and the existence and confusion over roles and responsibility of multiple national stakeholders devoted to logistical coordination and service provision, have resulted in decreased efficiency of the Logistics Cluster.
- The lack of centralised reporting systems, relief tracking and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have also been detrimental to the quality and timeliness of information flows during the early stages of the response, thus impacting decision-making.
Areas identified for improvement and recommendations include:

- Strengthen the role of the National Logistics Cluster by streamlining logistics coordination, of both Government and humanitarian community’s responses, into one structure;
- Shift the National Logistics Cluster designated ministry from the Ministry of Finance to the NDMO, which is directly involved in strategizing and implementing the emergency response, and with the technical oversight of all logistical sectors and operators;
- Expand private sector engagement in emergency response procedures and requirements;
- Enhance coordination and information flow of logistics processed and procedures at national and sub-national level;
- Ensure early dissemination of SOPs, requirements and frameworks for receiving international relief items (i.e. customs, sea freight, biosecurity, warehousing, goods handling, inventory management);
- Increase information sharing on logistics gaps and constraints; transport and storage availability, and tracking tools to enhance upstream and downstream pipeline visibility to better support decision-making and minimise duplication.

2. HUMANITARIAN CLUSTER APPROACH

- Participants were given a brief overview of the cluster approach, established by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee as part of the 2005 Humanitarian Reform Agenda. The aim of the cluster approach is to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies, and provide clear leadership and accountability in the main areas of humanitarian response.
- Clusters are groups of humanitarian organizations, both UN and non-UN, in each of the main sectors of humanitarian action. There are currently 11 clusters: Health, Nutrition, Protection, Shelter, Water/Sanitation/Hygiene, Camp Coordination and Management, Early Recovery, Education, Food Security, Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications.
- Clusters can be activated in response to both sudden emergencies as well as ongoing emergencies. Each global cluster has a lead agency mandated to support Government and humanitarian partners’ response with coordination, information management, surge capacity and the development of national capacity.
- The global cluster lead agency also acts as ‘provider of last resort’. Where there are critical gaps in humanitarian response, it is the responsibility of cluster leads to call on all relevant humanitarian partners to address these. If this fails, then depending on the urgency, the cluster lead as ‘provider of last resort’, may need to commit itself to filling the gap.
• The United Nations World Food Programme is the lead agency of the Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Clusters, and co-lead agency together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the Food Security Cluster.
• With Logistics Cluster working closely with the other Clusters and partner organizations and key stakeholders, the set up and response varies greatly based on the needs and the requirements of the partners.
• Logistics Cluster provide logistics coordination, information management and the provision of common services as a provider of last resort.

3. FIJI NATIONAL CLUSTER STRUCTURE
• Eight national clusters were adopted in Fiji in late 2012, to provide a clear point of contact, adequate and appropriate action and create partnerships between international humanitarian actors, national and local authorities, and civil society.
• Each national cluster has a designated line ministry responsible for overseeing the implementation of cluster activities. For the Fiji National Logistics Cluster, this is the Ministry of Finance which coordinates emergency response activities through the Fiji Procurement Office.
• During the TC Winston response, however, the operational and logistical oversight of all emergency response actions and procedures led by the Government, resided with the NDMO and the military-run Future Operations Cell.
• This effectively created a parallel logistical structure, which, together with the lack of coordination, hindered the integration of the humanitarian community’s logistical requests and capacities into the overall national response plan.

4. MINIMUM PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS (MPA)
• Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPA) provide a base level of multi-hazard preparedness for response in all sectors and cover arrangements for a response in the following areas: (i) Coordination & Management Arrangements; (ii) Needs Assessment and Information Management; (iii) Operational Capacity and Arrangements to Provide Services; and (iv) Capacity Mapping.
• In the four areas, concrete and practical preparedness actions have been identified that will enable the Cluster to respond effectively and efficiently to a large scale-emergency. For each action, a lead responsible for its implementation needs to be identified.
• Participants were asked to identify areas from the MPA plan that they would like to work on in subgroups. For this purpose WFP will share a template to start consolidating tasks and leads responsible for implementing them.
Participants were also asked to share their agencies’ current logistics contingency plans at the next meeting, with the purpose of identifying preparedness measures commonalities.

A proposal to map out and share internally organisations’ logistical resources, will be followed up by WFP. A template will be shared among Cluster’s participants for the collection of information into a database.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (A.O.B.)

- The next Fiji EPR Logistics meeting will be held on Friday, 19 August.

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