Preparedness – Working Group Teleconference Minutes

DATE: 23 November 2016
CHAIR: Global Logistics Cluster (GLC)
PARTICIPANTS: CRS, OCHA, UNOPs, UNICEF, KLU, IMC

**ACTION POINTS:**
- GLC to share relevant documents on the IASC framework and Emergency Supply Prepositioning Strategies – attached to this email
- GLC to draft and share Communications brief for field and management level – in progress
- GLC to share notes on Preparedness activities in Bangladesh
- WG members to notify the chair directly of any candidate profiles fitting the TORs shared for a field-level Preparedness Officer – in progress

**ATTACHED DOCUMENTS**
- GLC Minimum Preparedness Actions and Advanced Preparedness Actions
- Emergency Supply Pre-Positioning Strategies – Data Analysis (OCHA)

**AGENDA:**
1. Introduction
2. Working Group TORs
3. Preparedness Strategy Update
4. Preparedness Officer TOR
5. Implementation Plan discussion
6. Communications Plan discussion
7. Partner pledges
8. AOB

**1. Introduction and Roll-Call**

- The Global Logistics Cluster (GLC) Preparedness project lead chaired the teleconference and introduced the agenda.
- A roll-call was held and 6 Working Group (WG) members were present. THW, Concern Worldwide, Institute Bioforce, and Agility (LET) notified the chair of their absence.

**2. Working Group TORs**

- WG TORs have been drafted and shared previously with participants for open-floor discussions during the Teleconference. Objectives, activities, expected outcomes and governance roles of the WG were introduced to the members by GLC.
- The floor was left open by the chair for any comments or review of the TORs. No comments were received, and the document was confirmed as endorsed by participants.
- These TORs will now be in place until such decision is taken to review and adjust them. They will be used on the Preparedness webpage to detail the WG’s scope of work and responsibilities.

**3. Preparedness Strategy Update**
The update of the Preparedness Strategy was introduced by GLC. The update was based on the outcomes from the GLM in Brussels, and the focus on first activities in Haiti. The floor was then left open for comments by WG members.

Alternative strategies to be considered in case of a lack of funding were raised for discussion. CRS noted that it would be ideal to move ahead with the current plan and budget, but asked whether a lighter approach might be considered in case funds should not be forthcoming. An alternative to Preparedness in this eventuality could be ‘Readiness’. It was agreed on the importance of having an alternative should funding levels not meet requirements.

It was raised that the strategy document might be too light – as such, GLC suggested the possibility of breaking it down into short, medium and long-term goals, given the long-term commitment required for the full implementation of the project.

UNICEF highlighted that the 6-country focus would be effective, since globally there is great demand for Preparedness work and guidance, but it is important to design and maintain the most effective structure of this project.

GLC noted that funding to launch activities in pilot countries was not as forthcoming as had been expected. In this context, it is important for partner organisations and WG members to explain the project activities at a country-office level and to see what capacity is available currently.

Current activities by WFP in Bangladesh were explained as an example of initial Preparedness implementation. A dedicated WFP preparedness officer engaged in numerous activities included in the GLC Preparedness implementation plan, to the point of drafting an inter-agency Concept of Operations. Further details on this will be shared.

KLU raised whether the main focus of the project would be government capacity, or if it would include general supply chain capacity. GLC said in response that both should be considered – the project aims to look at local, regional and international supply chain capacity. A particular focus would remain on supporting government capacity given their role in local emergency response and the large number of national government-led cluster systems seen currently.

OCHA gave a short briefing on the IASC ERP framework, and its global mapping of emergency stockpiles and prepositioning strategies. Work on Minimum and Advanced Preparedness Actions within the framework requires visibility on who has what and where. See attached documents for further information.

4. Preparedness Officer TOR

- TORs for a field-level Preparedness Officer have been drafted and shared with the WG. These explain the main duties, deliverables, recruitment requirements and reporting lines of envisaged field-level staff.

- The document was introduced by GLC, noting the particular relevance for deploying an Officer to Haiti, where an SO is already in place and where a Logistics Sector Working Group is meeting regularly. Injecting a Preparedness Officer would help keep momentum as the response cycles through to the preparedness phase.

- Participants noted that the reporting lines in the TORs were not clear – it was asked whether the Officer would report locally to the Coordinator or Working Group, or whichever agency was best-placed to lead. The GLC will clarify the reporting line, also noting that the long-term strategy would be for the Preparedness Officer to migrate to become Cluster Coordinator should an emergency occur, given their envisaged familiarity with and centrality to prior preparedness activities and partner relationships.

- UNICEF raised the TOR prescription of ‘scenario planning’ responsibilities, noting that such planning activities would require a large amount of programmatic input from many other actors. Many tools still require developing to provide guidance and support on this. There is currently no standard template/guidance on this, and this will need to be developed from scratch with the oversight of the WG.

- CRS asked what the status of the Officer would be in relation to existing NDMOs and government institutions. UNOPs gave examples here of current integration of officers into response structures and mechanisms in Haiti, with the
government NDMO and Civil Protection organisation. This will be further discussed in December between UNOPS and the GLC.

5. Implementation Plan discussion
   - Concrete field activities were discussed in Brussels and an Implementation Plan was shared with partners prior to the teleconference to aid the discussion. The document was introduced by GLC and the floor was left open to comments.
   - UNOPS suggested that developing and running a field-level full simulation exercise early in the implementation plan would be an effective, time-efficient and cost-effective method of highlighting gaps in existing in-country capacity. Based on the outcomes of the simulation, preparedness and response planning could be conducted.
   - GLC noted that the simulation is currently scheduled in the implementation plan to take place after planning exercises and other preparedness activities, to stress-test the preparedness and response plans created as part of the Preparedness project strategy. The suggestion from the UNOPS participant though could be a method of reversing the approach for quicker results.
   - GLC raised the point that recent discussions had taken place with the WFP Preparedness officer in Bangladesh, and that useful guidance could be taken from these experiences. The GLC project lead will share with the WG the notes from these conversations (attached to this email). The participant from UNOPS noted that a team from their organisation had recently returned from a similar project in Bangladesh and could also share inputs.

6. Communications Plan discussion
   - Improving visibility on the project was raised as key to supporting internal and external partner collaboration. Internally, having a communications note for partners to explain internally in their organisations would support visibility.
   - UNICEF stated that this would be very useful at both field and management levels. It was suggested to create a brief for both these levels.

7. Partner pledges
   - GLC explained that the project would be looking for ways to engage with preparedness activities at field-level, and that it would be looking to partners for inputs in pilot countries (especially in Haiti). Partners were requested to raise any proposals. UNOPS discussed potential linkages with government actors, which will be discussed further in December.
   - UNICEF noted the importance of focusing on Haiti and Bangladesh but also of not losing sight of the other 4 pilot countries. The GLC chair agreed and added that this will continue to be done as far as funding, resources and shared workloads allow.

8. A.O.B.
   - IMC requested to be included in the mailing list with a new contact email address.
   - The Preparedness Platform was briefly discussed (the platform can be found at the following link: http://unwfp.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=bc6ab99b622a4ef799b0cd0ad869b090). Partners were asked to explore the limited usability of the current version. The platform is required for project mapping and scenario response planning activities.

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