

- LOCATION:** Erbil, Iraq
- DATE:** 21 November 2018
- CHAIR:** Logistics Cluster
- PARTICIPANTS:** French Red Cross (FRC); Handicap International (HI); ICRC; Intersos; Mine Action Group (MAG); Medair; Médecins Sans Frontières Belgium (MSF-B); Médecins Sans Frontières Holland (MSF-H); Médecins Sans Frontières OCB (MSF-OCB); Médecins Sans Frontières France (MSF-F); OCHA; Save the Children; Tearfund; Terre des Hommes (TDH); Triangle Generation Humanitaire (TGH); UNFPA; UNHCR; Welthungerhilfe; WHO
- ACTION POINTS:**
- Partner organisations to prepare a brief summary of any customs issues they have experienced and the subsequent consequences concerning the current cargo that is awaiting clearance and transport; the summary should include: the type of cargo awaiting clearance, quantity (average MT), and destination.
 - Logistics Cluster to advocate for a high-level intervention to propose solutions for the easing of customs clearance procedures for humanitarian relief items.
 - Partner organisations to share the draft Logistics Cluster exit strategy with their respective HQs.
- AGENDA:**
1. Previous action points
 2. New customs procedure
 3. Exit activities
 4. Logistics Cluster updates and common services
 5. AOB

1. Previous Action Points

- The Logistics Cluster provided the following update on government processes of supplier registration in Mosul to partners attending the meeting: The Ministry of Trade (MoT) has sub-branches in each Governorate and can process the registration application with the final approval from the Ministry of Trade in Baghdad. A detailed document on the Federal Iraq (FI) supplier registration process will be sent to partners, however it is only available in Arabic. The key points of the document are as follows:
 - A lawyer is required to initiate the registration
 - Registration requires details of shareholder, security/intelligence clearance, information on capital (3 categories from 1-3; the capital for category 1 is 1 Billion IQD)
 - Contact directorate of Companies Registration – MoT
- The Logistics Cluster provided the following update on import processes through Umm Qasr port to partners attending the meeting: Customs clearance import procedures via any entry point, including Umm Qasr Port, remain the same.

2. Customs Procedures

- The Federal Iraq (FI) government-mandated customs procedures apply to all humanitarian organisations intending to move cargo from Kurdish Region of Iraq (KRI) to FI.
- As most partners imported their cargo into KRI using KRI processes for onward movement to Mosul and other FI areas, many partners have experienced delays. Organisations who have imported cargo using the KRI process must also complete the FI import processes if they intend to transport the cargo to FI areas.
- The Logistics Cluster published several SOPs regarding import procedures that can be found in our website (<https://logcluster.org/ops/irq14a>). As some partners have experienced some constraints moving their cargo in the past weeks, the following points of clarification were shared with the partners during the meeting:
 - The FI customs procedures have been in place for some time, though have not always been applied.
 - All organisations must be registered in FI in order to move cargo, even if it is procured locally. Lacking registration, an NOC access letter will not be issued.
 - Cargo planned for transport to any FI area should be imported using FI processes (even if imported into KRI first); and requires an access letter from the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre (JCMC)/National Operation Centre (NOC).
 - Cargo imported to KRI using the FI processes still requires the NOC access letter in order to be transported to FI areas.
 - Cargo imported to Baghdad for distribution/use in FI areas does not need to apply for any additional clearance. Organisations need to provide an exemption/facilitation letter before applying for a JCMC/NOC access letter.
 - Items procured locally in KRI will only need an NOC access letter to move into FI areas; organisations must provide proof of local purchase via invoices.
 - The same documents are required at central and provincial level entities, as well as checkpoints.
 - In the case of goods being transported to Syria via FI, organisations only require customs clearance from KRI and the NOC access letter. FI customs are not involved in the process. The NOC access letter should be presented to customs in Mosul Area Office which will notify the relevant checkpoints on route to border.
 - The NOC access letter will be circulated by JCMC/NOC to the regional level checkpoint so that cargo is allowed through.
- Organisations attending the meeting reported that medical cargo currently takes 6-8 weeks to complete custom procedures.
- Organisations attending the meeting were reminded to prioritise local procurement when possible.

- The Logistics Cluster, in partnership with OCHA Access Working Group (AWG), will continue to advocate for the easing of customs procedures for humanitarian cargo on behalf of partners. The Logistics Cluster and OCHA AWG will advocate for high-level intervention to propose solutions for easing customs procedures for humanitarian cargo, noting that partners are prioritising local procurement, though there are certain items that must be imported, and cargo that has already been imported and awaiting clearance in Erbil.
 - Partners were asked to prepare a brief summary of the customs issues they have experienced and the subsequent consequences concerning the current cargo that is awaiting clearance and transport; the summary should include: the type of cargo awaiting clearance, quantity (average MT), and destination.
 - The Logistics Cluster proposed the following possible solutions:
 - A blanket letter to authorise humanitarian cargo.
 - Request the government at central Baghdad level to allow humanitarian partners to obtain the NOC letter using the KRI evidence of exemption.
- Local media has reported that the customs checkpoints will be abolished. The Logistics Cluster is following this issue closely and will provide updates to partners as they occur.

3. Exit Activities

- The Logistics Cluster is in the early stages of planning an exit strategy: according to an analysis of service usage data, partner feedback, and bilateral meetings conducted with 22 partners during the past months, gaps and bottlenecks that were initially reported when the Cluster was activated have either reduced or no longer exist. The Logistics Cluster shared the draft exit strategy with partners during the meeting.
- The Logistics Cluster intends to transition to a logistics sector group involving local NGOs and UN agencies to maintain coordination mechanisms and information management, whereas customs issues will likely be handled by OCHA AWG.
- The One Stop Shop (OSS) project will fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior in KRI by April 2019.
- **Organisations attending the meeting endorsed the Logistics Cluster exit strategy draft document.**
- Partners will share the exit strategy document draft with their headquarters.
- As part of the exit strategy, the Logistics Cluster will conduct trainings (including warehouse management and potentially information management) to build capacity with national actors. The dates of these trainings have not yet been scheduled; partner organisations will receive invitations once the schedule is determined. One Logistics Response Training (LRT) already took place in Erbil from 11 to 16 November. The training involved participants and facilitators from 23 different organisations (NGO/INGO/KRI/FI/Donors/UNA).

4. Logistics Cluster Updates and Common Services

- Logistics Cluster warehouses will close by 31 December 2018, except for Dohuk, which will close 30 November 2018.
- The Logistics Cluster is going through the process of donating loaned MSUs to users in the field and will retain a small stock of MSUs available for urgent emergency field loans.

The next coordination meeting will be held in January, date and time TBD.

Contacts:

Cameron Kiss

Khalid Arabi

Andrii Shapkin

Gabriela Espana

Farhad Rasul

*Logistics Cluster Coordinator**Customs Focal point**Logistics Officer**Information Management Officer**One Stop Shop (OSS) Focal Point*cameron.kiss@wfp.orgkhalid.arabi@wfp.organdrii.shapkin@wfp.orggabriela.espana@wfp.orgfarhad.rasul@wfp.org