

LOCATION: Erbil, Iraq
DATE: 16 January 2019
CHAIR: Logistics Cluster
PARTICIPANTS: ACTED; COOPI; Handicap International (HI); International Medical Corps (IMC); International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); International NGO Security Organisation (INSO); Medecins Sans Frontieres Belgium (MSF-OCB); Medecins Sans Frontieres France (MSF-FR); Médecins Sans Frontières-Holland (MSF-NL); Médecins Sans Frontières Switzerland (MSF-OCG); Mercy Hands; Mine Action Group (MAG); NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI); Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); OXFAM; Première Urgence Internationale (PUI); Representative of Nineveh Voluntary for IDPs (RNVDO); REACH; Save The Children; Terre des Hommes; Un Ponte Per (UPP); United Iraqi Medical Society (UIMS); UNHCR (UN Refugee Agency); UNICEF; World Food Program (WFP), World Health Organisation (WHO).

ACTION POINTS:

- Partners experiencing complications importing cargo via the Federal Iraq processes, please report the issue to the Logistics Cluster with a short summary by Wednesday, 23 January (template to be circulated with these minutes) to iraqclustercargo@wfp.org or farhad.rasul@wfp.org
- The Logistics Cluster to compile partners' import information and advocate for ease of process, in partnership with NCCI and OCHA Access Unit.
- The Logistics Cluster to review and recirculate the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for importation of cargo to Federal Iraq.
- The Logistics Cluster to share a map of the customs checkpoints.

AGENDA:

1. Previous action points
2. Customs procedure
3. Exit activities
4. Logistics Cluster updates and common services
5. AOB

1. Previous Action Points

- The Logistics Cluster facilitated emergency cargo access during the flood response for a total of 208 trucks from six organisations in 5 working days.
- Cargo information survey was shared with donors and the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) in the process of advocating for ease in federal procedure.

2. Customs procedures

- In November, the government of Federal Iraq established customs checkpoints and imposed federal import procedures to move cargo from the Kurdish Region of Iraq (KRI) to Federal Iraq (FI).
- The Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre (JCMC) cargo movement letter now requires federal exemption.

- Organisations which attended the meeting shared their experiences navigating the FI import processes, and the constraints experienced, including delays of up to three months.
- None of the organisations that attended the meeting reported successful completion of FI import processes. UN agencies and NGOs reported that the processes remain unclear. Some UN agencies reported a three-month wait to obtain a tax exemption letter.
- Partners reported confusion as to which department(s) the required documents must be submitted to.
- Some partners were allowed by customs authorities to pass the Makmour/Khazar customs checkpoint while others were denied access. Partners have reported that the process has been different for consignments of the same type of commodity from the same partner.
- One partner reported being given a code through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Ministry of Health (MOH) instead of a copy of a tax exemption letter, but that the National Operation Centre (NOC) did not accept the code.
- One partner reported asking the customs department if they could pay the tariffs for the importation of medical items to Mosul, however the Mosul customs department stated that there are no documented tariffs.
- Partners should use Faida/Flefel customs checkpoint not Makmour/Khazar. A map of the customs checkpoints will be shared with the meeting minutes.
- Although the Logistics Cluster SOP for FI import processes remains valid, it has been reported that some government departments impose different procedures.
- The Logistics Cluster has advocated for the simplification of customs procedures for humanitarian organisations.
- The organisations that attended the meeting proposed that NCCI, OCHA Access Unit, and the Logistics Cluster work together for further advocacy.
- Partners are requested to report all complications regarding customs processes to the Logistics Cluster (farhad.rasul@wfp.org) or OCHA Access Unit (thomasp@un.org).

3. Exit activities

- The Logistics Cluster is in the process of deactivation and transition to a sector group that will be co-led by WFP and Mercy Hands. Contacts are shared below.
- Today is the final Logistics Cluster meeting. Sector meetings will be planned mid-February.
- The sector group will maintain the meetings on a monthly basis in Baghdad and Erbil, continue preparing and circulating IM products such as SOPs and updates, maintain a customs focal person to work closely with the OCHA Access Unit on all customs clearance issues, and continue group communications through the existing Skype group and mailing lists.

4. Logistics Cluster updates and common services

WAREHOUSES

- Mercy Hands will continue to provide common storage services in Tikrit and Hamam Al Alil camps to assist with the transition after closure of the Logistics Cluster common storage services. This will be under a cost recovery basis to cover required costs of managing the sites.

MSU LOANS

- Logistics Cluster is going through the process of donating loaned MSUs to users in the field, and the sector will retain a small stock of MSUs available for urgent emergency field loans.

PREPAREDNESS

- The Global Logistics Cluster will send a preparedness officer to Iraq in February for three months.

5. AOB

- Market assessments and surveys: partners are requested to share any recent assessments on the Skype group or through the mailing list, as they are useful to other partners.
- INSO requested partners to report requests for informal charges at customs checkpoints. Contacts: Tuna Türkmen, +964 751 244 7987, sa.northwest@iraq.ngosafety.org , inso.iraq.north (skype). The reports will be kept anonymous.

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