
LOCATION	Tunis, and teleconference with Tripoli and Misrata
DATE	24 April 2019
CHAIR	Logistics Sector
PARTICIPANTS	ACTED, FAO, Halo, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Medical Organisation (IMC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Rescue Committee (IRC), MSF-France, MSF-Holland, Premiere Urgence Internationale, UNICEF, WFP, WHO.
ACTION POINTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Logistics Sector to draft a note on the need for eased and expedited import procedures for humanitarian cargo and share it with OCHA
AGENDA	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Logistical bottlenecks for the ongoing Tripoli response2. Import Procedures3. UNHAS4. AOB

1. Logistical bottlenecks for the ongoing Tripoli response

Situation Update

- A severe increase in fighting in and around Tripoli has been witnessed since the beginning of April.
- The ongoing clashes are affecting the availability of local labour at Tripoli port that is resulting in slower-than-normal discharge operations. One incident was also reported where containers of humanitarian cargo have been opened at Tripoli port and part of the cargo has been missing.

Storage

- Despite the ongoing fighting, organisations present at the meeting confirmed that they are all still able to reach the respective warehouses in Tripoli.
- The common warehouse in Tripoli has been operational as of 8 April. Partners are welcome to submit Service Requests Forms (SRFs) to libya.clustercargo@wfp.org.

Transport

Access to Tripoli:

- Should access to Tripoli port become more problematic, or should operations there have to decrease or temporarily cease, below are a few alternatives identified by partners:
 - Receiving cargo by sea or air in Misrata and moving it by road to Tripoli.
Despite specific incidents, the road from Tripoli to Misrata remains operational. This option, especially when receiving cargo by air at Misrata airport, has been mentioned as one of the preferable alternatives due to the fast cargo clearance procedures compared to the rest of the country;
 - Importing of cargo to Tunisia's Sfax port.

This option implies the use of the temporary storage in Zarzis free-zone and subsequently dispatch cargo to Tripoli via Ra's Ajdir border and the coastal road, or directly from Tunisia to the south of the country using the Dehiba/Nazzut border. Libyan trucks can be used from Zarzis free-zone onwards.

- Using Al Khoms port, and as a last resort Zwara port, could also be explored as alternatives, should the other options not be viable.
- Although more costly from an operation point of view, these alternatives would be viable in the event of a lack of operations or access to Tripoli port.
- Commercial transport remains operational in Tripoli. However, some organisations reported that transporters have been increasing transport rates to some hard-to-reach locations in the proximity of the capital.
- Partners have also reported that trucks carrying humanitarian cargo are sometimes being stopped and denied access around Tripoli (Az-Zawyia area) and Tarhouna.
- Scarcity of fuel has been reported in the areas west of Tripoli. Humanitarian organisations operating in Tripoli are not currently facing operational challenges due to fuel shortages but continue to monitor the situation closely.

Access to Misrata:

- The areas of Misrata, Sirte and Bani Walid were also discussed with regards to possible upcoming increase in humanitarian needs. Several INGOs are operational in the area and are monitoring the situation on the ground.
- One incident was mentioned when trucks carrying humanitarian cargo had to be rerouted outside of Misrata, although overall road movements from Tripoli to Misrata continue

Access to Benghazi:

- There is currently no road access to Benghazi from both Tripoli and Misrata and no flights are currently operating from Misrata to Benghazi. However, flights from Tunis to Benghazi as well as from Tripoli to Benghazi remain available, although the service for the latter is intermittent. Organisations are also exploring the option of reaching Benghazi from Tobruk.

Access to the south region:

- Road transport to the south, although still possible, is becoming increasingly difficult. This is affecting also the commercial sector and is resulting in shortages in fuel as well as basic commodities in Sabha and surrounding areas.

2. Import Procedures

Identified gaps

- Long-lasting lack of predictability and clarity in procedures and requirements continues to hamper humanitarian operations. Partners have reported that delays in the clearing process can be up to four months.
- The main gaps identified by partners include:
 - Timing for custom clearance continue to vary greatly between requesting organisation, as well as between shipment of the same type of cargo from the same organisation.
 - Laborious process to obtain the pre-clearance from the Department of Pharmacology, Equipment, and Medical Supplies at the Ministry of Health;

- The need to provide the Certificate of Origin (CoO) certified by the Libyan Embassy, or nearest consulate of the country of origin;
- Limitation to source medicines from the MOH's pre-approved list of companies; variable sealing period of warehouses by the Food and Drug Control Center (FDCC) during the sampling and testing process (between a couple of weeks to over a month);
- Centralisation of Ministry of Health (MOH) in Tripoli raised as a bottleneck by organisations operating outside of Tripoli, as there is a need to physically report to the MOH office in Tripoli all the steps of the clearance process;
- Additional concerns were raised with regards to the proximity of the MOH office to the line of active fighting and the need to physically deliver documentation and requests. The option to submit and receive documentation via official organisation's email would greatly facilitate the work of humanitarian organisations if feasible.

Identified solutions

- Although no specific worsening of the previous customs clearance situation was highlighted in relation with the current fighting, the increase in humanitarian assistance requires the current procedures to be eased to facilitate the import of humanitarian relief items.
- The need for high-level advocacy was raised by the Logistics Sector on 24 April at the daily Emergency Operation Group (EOG) meeting, as well as just before the beginning of the current clashes, at the Government/ISCG coordination meeting held in Tripoli on 2 April.
- High-level advocacy with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Food and Drugs Control Centre, Ministry of Health and Custom would be required to have a clear set of rules and requirements for expedited procedures that humanitarian organisations can follow.
- Participants agreed that in light of the current increase in the humanitarian response, there is a need for authorities to establish and share official and potentially eased import procedures for humanitarian cargo. The identification of a focal point dedicated to humanitarian import procedures matters among the authorities would also greatly support the efforts of the humanitarian community.
- Even though ad-hoc flexibility has been shown by governmental actors involved in the clearance and release of cargo since the beginning of clashes in April, a more streamlined and standardised approach to the current situation is required.
- Participants agreed that once the situation on the ground allows, a workshop should be organised with all authorities involved in the import process, to clarify roles and requirements.

3. UNHAS

- Mitiga airport in Tripoli resumed normal operation on 22 April. The airport has been closed during daytime since 9 April due to the ongoing clashes in Tripoli.
- Since the beginning of the clashes, UNHAS has seen a decreasing demand of air-movements. In the interest of its users, UNHAS aircraft has been moved to Malta to better respond in case of a potential evacuation of critical staff and at the same time to cut unnecessary costs.

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- As of now, UNHAS is working with all the parties to guarantee that a deconfliction plan is in place prior to take-off and is looking forward to operating regularly again to Mitiga in respect of safety and security of crew and passengers. Regular service is expected to resume by 10 May, if conditions on the ground allow.
 - Current UNHAS funding would cover operations until June 2019.
 - For the time being, INGOs staff continue to move from Tunis to both Tripoli and Misrata with commercial carriers, although air services can be intermittent.

4. AOB

- Participants were informed that the Logistics Sector has participated to the Flash Appeal, and that current funding coming from the CERF grant expires on 30 June.
- It was agreed during the meeting that the Libya Logistics Skype Group currently managed by Premiere Urgence International will be managed by International Medical Corps as of the end of April.

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