

Highlights

- On 21-22 July and 5-6 August 2020, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW), in collaboration with the Global Logistics Cluster Field Preparedness Project and the World Food Programme (WFP), organised **Warehouse Management Trainings** for 34 MoLSW provincial staff in the Northern and Southern Provinces of Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR). The trainings were led by successful graduates of the June 2020 Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshop and will support the implementation of the newly developed MoLSW warehouse management processes and undertaking a real-time stock inventory.



Participants of the Provincial Warehouse Management Trainings inspected MoLSW warehouses and practiced stock inventory management.

Background

Based on risk indices and national-level logistics performance and capacity indicators, in 2018 Laos was identified as one of 24 country candidates for the Global Logistics Cluster's Field-Based Preparedness Project (*"the Project"*). The primary aim of the Project is to support and empower national actors to strengthen their capacity to autonomously prepare for and respond to humanitarian crises. A key element of this is the facilitation a coordinated approach towards improving local supply chain resilience and information exchange between the government, national actors and the private sector, to ensure all actors are well prepared for joint humanitarian logistics responses. In the event of a large-scale disaster event, and should the Government of Laos request international humanitarian assistance, the Global Logistics Cluster capacities can support national actors in facilitating a coordinated response.

In June 2019, a Preparedness Expert was deployed to Laos to commence the process of mapping national logistics capacities and stakeholders. She worked with national responders to augment information sharing and exchange as well as assist in the organisation of a simulation-based logistics gap analysis workshop, and other capacity strengthening initiatives based on identified partner needs. In September 2019, a national Preparedness Officer was deployed to continue to project's activities.

In 2019, Laos experienced its largest flood response in 50 years, with over 600,000 affected people across six Provinces, reaffirming the need for coordinated logistics preparedness actions across multiple national actors.

Coordination

- The Warehouse Management Trainings were held between 21-22 July and 5-6 August 2020 in Luang Prabang and Savannakhet Provinces respectively, to develop the capacity of 34 MoLSW provincial staff in implementing the newly developed MoLSW warehouse management processes and undertaking a real-time stock inventory. The two-day training course, combining theoretical and practical sessions, was led by successful graduates of the Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshop (held earlier in June 2020 in Vientiane) and represented a key milestone in institutional capacity strengthening of MoLSW as a major national disaster responder. The trainings received positive feedback from their participants, and MoLSW expressed their interest in organising warehouse management training at district level, especially in high-risk flooding area, as well as in following up on the actual implementation in MoLSW warehouses across the country. The report on these provincial-level MoLSW warehouse management trainings is available on the [Lao PDR Preparedness webpage](#).
- A Humanitarian Logistics Preparedness Action Plan Workshop is proposed to identify and prioritise activities needed to address logistics gaps. A concept note for the workshop was developed by MoLSW, with support from the Regional and Field Preparedness Officers. The one-day workshop seeks the Logistics Preparedness Working Group (LPWG) partners' endorsement of the LPWG Terms of Reference. It also aims to assign each partner's responsibilities for activities in the LPWG Action Plan. Due to the COVID-19 related priorities and restrictions, the workshop has been postponed to tentatively October 2020.
- The process to formalise the LPWG membership has slowed as many partners are still actively involved in the COVID-19 response. So far CARE, Caritas, Plan International, Save the Children, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have nominated their focal points. Other stakeholders including Asian Development Bank (ADB), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Lao Red Cross, Military, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Public Security, and World Health Organization (WHO) will nominate their respective focal points after the Logistics Preparedness Action Plan Workshop. The Preparedness Officer continues to follow up with each organisation.
- The review of the draft Unsolicited Bilateral Donations (UBD) Guideline by MoLSW has been temporarily suspended as MoLSW is fully engaged in the COVID-19 response. The UBD Guidelines will be further adapted to the country's context, and be translated into SOPs for managing UBD. The Preparedness Officer continues to follow up with MoLSW focal points.

Information management

- The quarterly update and infographic for April-June 2020 were published on the [Lao PDR Preparedness webpage](#).
- The Warehouse Management ToT Workshop report was published on the Lao PDR Preparedness webpage on 4 August 2020 [here](#), and the provincial-level warehouse management trainings report on 8 October 2020 [here](#).
- A Twitter post on the ToT workshop was circulated on the Logistics Cluster's Official Twitter account on 11 August 2020 [here](#).

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