



Warehouse Management Training

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Contacts

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Introduction

The warehouse management training was developed in context to the Lao PDR Government's needs and capacity. Stock forms, an electronic stock record, and warehouse manuals were created by the project in collaboration with MLSW, and in accordance with their knowledge levels and approval processes.

The training was held over two days in Vientiane Capital, one theory day at the Crown Plaza hotel, and one practical day in the MLSW relief item warehouse. And delivered by Alan Johnson, RedR Australia regional coordinator/trainer; Patricia Thornhill, GLC Logistics Preparedness Expert; and supported by WFP logistics staff.

the 28 participants included 7 MLSW national staff, 19 PLSW staff - one from each Province including 2 staff from Attapeu where there is a large warehouse, and 2 Lao Red Cross national staff. MLSW invited Lao Red Cross so that they get familiar with their procedures in case they were required to assist directly. Out of 28 participants, 5 were female.

Up until the training, MLSW had no records of the stock that had been distributed from the warehouses to the beneficiaries, nor up to date records of what stock was in their warehouses. The importance of the training was reflected by the Director General of MLSW; and Country Director of WFP, who opened the training.

The purpose of the training was to train participants and implement the newly designed warehouse management system and do a clean-up and real time stock inventory of the warehouse recorded in the system.

Background

Lao PDR has had consecutive flooding events in 2018 and 2019. The first led to approximately 5,000 people permanently displaced after a dam collapsed. This year two storm events resulted in flooding across 6 provinces with over 650,000 people affected and over 100,000 temporarily displaced at the height of the event.

The Lao PDR Government was inundated with donations of relief items in 2018 and established a fixed relief item warehouse complemented by two WFP-owned Mobile Storage Units (MSU). As the 2019 event was significantly larger, Provinces needed to set up a temporary warehouse for the storage and distribution of relief items.

The Lao PDR Government had not been trained in warehouse management, therefore the storage, tracking and distribution of relief items had not been accounted for correctly. MLSW has identified a need for the Logistics Preparedness project to:

- Assist the Government in training their focal points in National and Provincial locations in warehouse management.
- Establish a Prepositioned Relief Item warehouse in Vientiane.
- Assist to set up relief item stock management tools/systems.
- Support the pre-positioning and assembly training of Mobile Storage Units across Lao PDR for emergency relief item storage.

The proposed warehouse management training supports the ability for Lao PDR to preposition, receive and distribute emergency relief items, and account for them during disasters.

Training Objectives

The following objectives were achieved during the workshop:

- To train relevant Lao PDR staff on how to set up and manage fixed and temporary warehousing of relief items.
- To provide to the Government simple sustainable tools for the stock management and tracking of relief items.

Training structure

Classroom training

During the theory part of the warehouse management training, participants were gathered in a classroom to be trained on the use of powerpoint and they completed exercises and group work including the following topics:

- Setting up and maintaining a warehouse;
- Storage and transport calculation exercises to determine the space and track/shipping containers required for different stock levels, and to introduce the new stock recording and tracking forms.

Practical warehouse training

Participants got to apply the theory at the practical warehouse training session to trial and reinforce the learning. This was done by group warehouse assessment, scenario exercises and real time stacking, stock inventory and use of stack, and stock forms and the electronic record.

Lessons and outcomes

1. Selecting an appropriate warehouse
2. Staff and equipment
3. Capacity of a warehouse
4. Essential calculations
5. Warehouse operations
6. Stock management and control
7. Issues and Scenarios based on recent floods

Lessons 1 and 2

- Most participants attended the MSU assembly training which included warehouse set up. The RedR trainer observed that the groups understood the key elements of selecting a warehouse, set up, staff and equipment which was unexpected for a group that had not undergone any warehouse training before. This suggests the knowledge from the MSU training session was retained by participants which is a positive indication for future sustainability.

Lessons 3 and 4

- The calculations seemed new to most staff but in the group work about storage and transport scenarios they were able to work together through the capacity and weight calculations and all got the correct answers. More practice will likely be required to retain the knowledge and to this end, guidelines and reference materials were provided.

Lessons 5 and 7

- The warehouse and recent flood operations scenarios were a good way to demonstrate the importance of setting up a strong warehouse flow and layout. A tour of the WFP warehouse layout and procedures provided a guidance on best practices. Participants were then asked to identify improvements required in the MLSW warehouse and they highlighted many of them.
- This exercise highlighted more particularly the difficulty in case donated items were placed directly in the main warehouse without sorting and repacking first.
- Recommendations for managing donated items for both prevention, sorting and repacking were made, and a list of preparedness activities that could minimise the burden of unwanted or mixed donations provided. This has been added to the GLC Logistics preparedness project action plan as a future priority activity.

Lesson 6

The stock management process and related forms were unfamiliar to most participants. Sessions were provided in the classroom and in the warehouse using scenarios requiring them to identify and fill out the forms. Suggestions for small changes to the forms to make it easier to capture the item descriptions and weight were raised which was positive. These changes will be collated by MLSW before the forms are finalised and carbon copy note pads of the Waybill and Goods received notes will be printed.

The flowchart about Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) instructs which form are to be used when, and it was suggested that a large copy in colour is laminated and placed in each of the warehouses. It is likely that additional training will be required to sustain the implementation of the forms for receipt and movement of relief items, particularly if there is a long gap for the provinces in capturing the receipt of relief items.

Participation in stacking, stock sorting, stock counting plus the filling out stack cards and stock cards was positive, and the purpose and added value of these documents was understood.

The warehouse operator demonstrated how to update the electronic stock record, however there were many stock cards still left to be entered by the time the training finished. The project will follow up with the storeman to ensure the warehouse record is updated and to reinforce the learning of the stock record input. A guidance document has been written to assist.

An office space is needed in the warehouse to assist with the recording and storage of stock records. WFP CO is assisting with refurbishing the warehouse to make it a humanitarian hub for relief items.



Warehouse practical training: sorting stacks and writing stack and stock cards.

Evaluation

Expectations were captured from participants in the warehouse management training outcomes and served as a baseline to evaluate if the training was meeting its own objectives. The expectations were reviewed at the end of the warehouse training on the last day to determine if the training successfully met participants needs.

Participants Expectations and findings:

1. Learn how to manage the warehouse - **met**
2. Learn how to do stock receipt, maintenance, dispatch - **met**
3. Know how to manage the warehouse system - **met**
4. The process of warehouse management for disaster response - **met**
5. Exchange lesson learned with expert and local staff of warehouse management - **met**
6. Want to learn about international standards for warehouse management – **met**
7. Train district and community level – **not met, but to be addressed in next steps.**

Next steps

- Stock recording forms to be updated by MLSW and waybill and Good Receipt Notes (GRN) to be printed by the Logistics Cluster. The stock form package will be then handed to MLSW to implement and monitor warehouse management activities.
- The Preparedness Officer to follow up with MLSW storeman to ensure stock recording is completed, process and knowledge have been captured and understood so they can be retained.
- Advocate for the appointment of a full-time logistics officer in MLSW to manage the warehouse, maintain/sustain all Logistics preparedness training, SOP's guidelines and documents, and assist roll out of logistics training at sub-national level.
- Prepare the rollout of warehouse trainings to north, central and southern Provinces in a format similar to the MSU assembly Training of Trainer to train district level staff and reinforce learning of provincial and national staff.

Appendix 1 - Participants

	Name	Organisation
1	Mr. Phutphousam Luangouthoumthong	MLSW
2	Mr. Sathaphone Ouandala	MLSW
3	Mr. Phonethavy Thammavong	MLSW
4	Ms. Vilaykhone Keobounthan	MLSW
5	Mr. Sackda Bouakhamsith	MLSW
6	Ms. Fanta Douangmany	MLSW
7	Mr. Dethmixay Vanhnachok	NSSF
8	Ms. Patee Yang	MLSW
9	Mr. Souksavanh Chanthavong	Lao Red cross
10	Ms. Salita Vongchanhdy	Lao Red cross
11	Mr. Tengxiong Suenou	DLSW of Luangprabang
12	Mr. Sithone Philachanh	DLSW of Sayyabouly
13	Mr. Bounthong Phimmachuk	DLSW of Vientiane
14	Mr. Bounthong Ouanphachanh	DLSW of Phongsaly
15	Mr. Ludthanaphasouk Khetthavong	DLSW of Bolikhamxay
16	Mr. Sithan Heungxayyanang	DLSW of Attapeu
17	Mr. Bounphanoumvanh Malathong	DLSW of Saravanh
18	Mr. Souksan	DLSW of Sekong
19	Ms. Khamsavern Keokhoun	DLSW of Savahnakhet
20	Mr. Soualor Nyiachue	DLSW of Saysomboun
21	Mr. Chounphilap	DLSW of Attapeu
22	Mr. Bounpheng Onphachanh	DLSW of Oudomxay
23	Mr. Souksavanh Luangyeekhammatha	DLSW of Houaphanh
24	Mr. Xanaphoun Khamteephong	DLSW of Khammouane
25	Mr. Saythala Borkhamban	DLSW of Xiengkhouang
26	Mr. Nyotxay Anhasa	DLSW of Champasack
27	Mr. Sounalin Chitdala	DLSW of Luangnamtha
28	Mr. Bounmee Keomanychanh	DLSW of Borkeo