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<b>LOCATION</b>	Beirut, Lebanon - Online
<b>DATE</b>	17 September 2020
<b>CHAIR</b>	Logistics Sector
<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), CARE International, Concern Worldwide, Danish refugee Council (DRC), Gruppo di Volontariato Civile (GVC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), INSEAD, International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Médecins du Monde (MDM), Polish Center for International Aid (PCPM), Relief International, Terre des Hommes Italia (TDH), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), World Health Organization (WHO), World Vision.
<b>ACTION POINTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Logistics Sector to share the draft SOPs with customs administration for clearance.</li><li>• The Sector Coordinator, with OCHA, will work on a list of all organisations working in Lebanon requesting tax exemption.</li><li>• The Sector Coordinator, with OCHA, will work on facilitating the importation of medical cargo with the Ministry of Public Health.</li><li>• Partners to share with the Logistics Sector information on their suppliers and transport service providers through the email: <a href="mailto:Lebanon-logs@logscluster.org">Lebanon-logs@logscluster.org</a></li><li>• UNRWA to share their available warehousing information.</li></ul>
<b>AGENDA</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Review Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Custom Clearance</li><li>2. Questions/AOB</li></ol>

## 1. Update on Custom Procedures

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- The Logistics Sector has started drafting the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for custom clearance using input from partners and the customs administration focal point.
- According to Decree 6580, issued by the Government of Lebanon on 14 August, all imported goods related to the humanitarian response following the Beirut blast will be exempted from any tax or custom fees. However, it is yet to be confirmed in practice.
- In order to obtain the clearance provided by the special permit, organisations must undergo the following process:
  - Submit a letter to High Relief Commission (HRC) to request tax exemption according to decree 6850.

- Add their TIN number of the organisation to the letter and attach the usual importation documents: Commercial invoice, Bill of lading, Certificate of origin.
  - Once HRC provides approval, organisations must present all documents directly to customs administration.
- Previously, one partner mentioned that there is also required approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). This was according to the old procedure. The Sector Coordinator will confirm this information.
- For Health items, the Logistics Sector is working with OCHA to establish a facilitated approval process with Ministry of Public Health (MoPH). They will be presenting a letter and requesting a meeting to discuss the facilitation of all procedures and controls related to health items.
- A new additional requirement states that organisations importing medical items must also present the Delivery Order along with the usual importation documents to the HRC. The Sector Coordinator asked partners in the health sector to verify if they have experienced this. According to one partner, this new requirement was introduced two months ago; however it has not been enforced yet. Partners importing medical cargo were made aware of it, but it has not impacted their usual clearance procedure.
- The Logistics Sector will submit the customs SOPs to the customs administration focal point for review and approval before sharing with partners.
- The Sector Coordinator is working with OCHA on producing: a list of organisations involved in the Beirut Response to receive full exemption on incoming cargo, and a letter to the MoPH requesting facilitation in the process of importing medical cargo.

## 2. Questions/ AOB

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- One partner asked when the aforementioned SOPs will be valid. The Sector Coordinator clarified that the draft document will still be undergoing review by the customs administrations to ensure the validity of the process. Once it is finalized it will be shared on the [Lebanon Logistics Cluster webpage](#). However, the decree, according to which the SOPs are based, has been signed on 14 August 2020 and will be valid until 3 August 2021. The tax exemptions that have been granted according to this decree should apply for all the cargo coming in as response to the Beirut blast.
- One partner raised the question on humanitarian cargo coming in for other responses besides the Beirut blast, such as the COVID-19 response, highlighting that humanitarian organisations have not been able to get exemptions. The Sector Coordinator reminded partners that the current focus is on getting exemptions for the Beirut blast response, and once that is in place, the focus will shift to the COVID-19 response. The aim is to facilitate tax exemption for all humanitarian cargo entering Lebanon.
- One partner raised an issue they faced when importing protective equipment. The Certificate of Conformity and the FDA must be issued by the same entity. This is a problem when the manufacturer and the supplier are not the same. The certificate should be issued by the manufacturer.
- One partner highlighted that they have recently been requested by the Pharmaceutical Department in the MoPH to provide an additional document declaring the imported goods are free from ammonium

nitrate before clearance. The shipment had arrived before the Beirut blast. Otherwise, the MoPH does not provide such confirmation unless the supplier submits the results of testing from the Industrial Research Institute (IRI). Partner will discuss with Sector Coordinator bilaterally. Partners asked to be informed about this new requirement.

- UNRWA has available warehousing space. They will provide information on pricing for rent, handling materials, and daily labor to interested partners.
- Partners reminded to share their list of suppliers with the Logistics Sector to be included in the Lebanon Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA).

**The next Logistics Sector coordination meeting will take place online on Thursday 24 September at 16:00 Beirut time.**

## Contacts

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