

Emergency Preparedness Workshop & Log:ie Training Rollout Session

Malawi Preparedness



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27th of May 2021 | Lilongwe, Malawi

Introduction

Malawi is a landlocked country located in south-eastern Africa. Rural populations are increasingly affected by climate change consequences, such as droughts and frequent flooding.

In 2019, the Cyclone Idai induced a heavy rainfall in the southern region, producing important damages to the country's logistics infrastructure. Therefore, the Ministry of Transport and Public Works (MoTPW) decided, with the support of the World Food Programme (WFP), to initiate the Logistics Sector.

Taking into consideration the path that has been achieved since 2019 as well as the tremendous impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak of 2020, an Emergency Preparedness Workshop took place in Lilongwe on the 27 of May 2021, in Sunbird Hotel. It was organised by WFP and the Global Logistics Cluster (GLC). The workshop was held to define the main issues that the humanitarian network has been facing during the last 15 months.

Background

Since September 2019, Malawi is part of the Global Logistics Cluster Field-Based Preparedness Project. The aim is to allow the humanitarian stakeholders to have a coordinated approach towards improving local supply chain resilience. A National Logistics Cluster Preparedness network was thus formed and is bringing humanitarian actors together before an emergency to identify potential solutions, draft a common roadmap, and set up an operational team environment.

Participants

Participants were the stakeholders of Malawi's humanitarian community: Concern Worldwide, FAO, Last Mile Health, Malawi Red Cross Society, SPRODETA, UNICEF, United purpose, Welthungerhilfe, WFP.

Session course

We started the day with a little breakfast around 9:30, just after which the chairman Patrick Mills Lamptey, Supply Chain Officer from WFP, took over the session.

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Emergency Preparedness Workshop & Log:ie Training Rollout Session

Malawi Preparedness

Then, we had a brief self-introduction for each contributor who was present there. After this, we went on the point of the day which was the preparedness situation here in Malawi.

Firstly, we discussed about general ideas and insights for improvements:

- Building resilience (fuel sufficiency, airports)
 - ➔ Reliable transports
- Encouraging the humanitarian stakeholders to be proactive, suppliers for instance
- Improving logistical access to remote places
- Technological innovations
- Efficient documentation and procedures
- Need of improving delays of deliveries in emergencies.
- Lessons from the shortage of oxygen during the beginning of COVID-19
- Transportation is the key element in preparedness.
 - ➔ Alternative transport commodities (diversifying the scope of contractors)
 - ➔ Coordination (regular meeting, updates, ...)
 - ➔ Information flow to be improved.
 - ➔ SHARING information as PARTNERS (between both humanitarian stakeholders and suppliers) and not keep it for its self-own as competitors, like it is the case sometimes.

Then we made an exercise forming two groups among the participants to the seminar. The goal was to get their thoughts about two questions linked with the humanitarian situation in Malawi.

- 1) How do we improve the information flow between Government and suppliers and suppliers and key stakeholders?
GROUP 1: Regular meetings, accessible dashboards, sharing contractors' expertise.
GROUP 2: Workshops, info sharing, improving relationships with suppliers.
- 2) Which are the most effective platforms for sharing information before, during, and after an emergency?
GROUP 1: Dashboards, mobile & online tools
GROUP 2: social media.

Further on, we presented the Log:ie Tool. Log:ie stands for Logistics Information Exchange. This tool allows to:

- ➔ Improve INFORMATION sharing on time between humanitarian stakeholders.
- ➔ Have access to a data-based platform, & national source
- ➔ Provide near real-time updates.
- ➔ Localize Humanitarian and preparedness information on an interactive map.

And we went on by exposing the LOG:IE user perspective:

- ➔ Information provision: ➔Baseline.
➔Situation.

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Emergency Preparedness Workshop & Log:ie Training Rollout Session

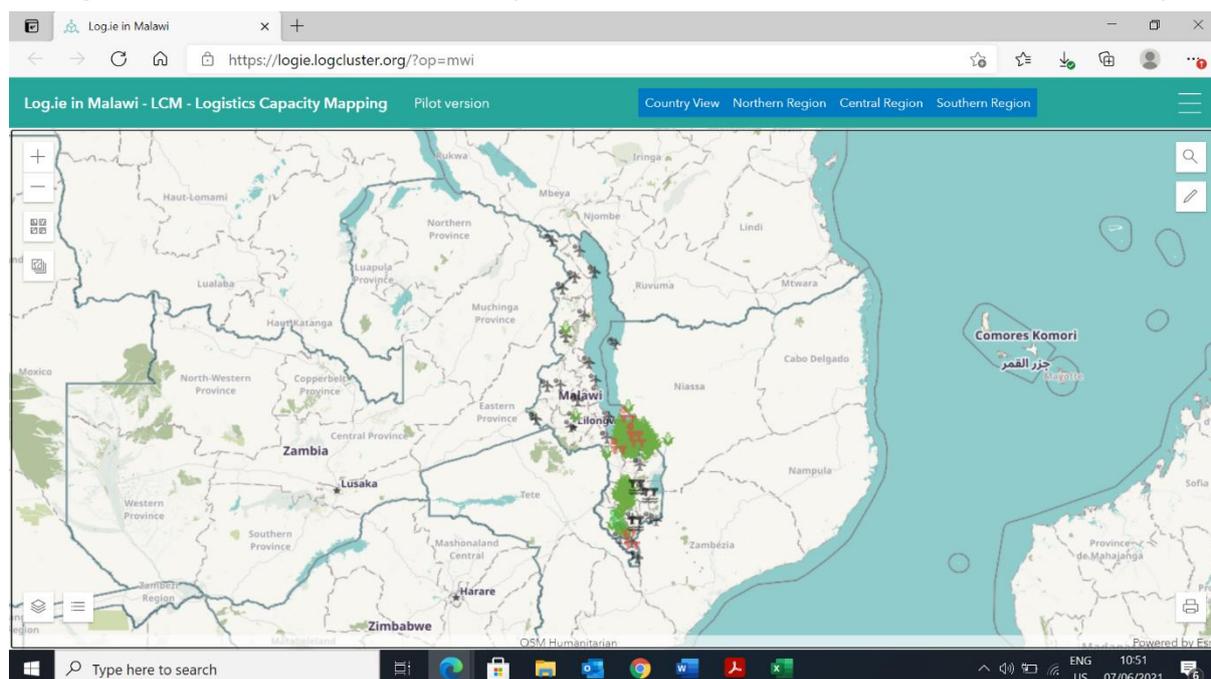
Malawi Preparedness

- ➔ Layer: ➔Infrastructure
 - ➔Facilities, routes & services
 - ➔Remote sensing
- ➔ Data sharing ➔ Letter of content ➔ MoU ➔ Head Quarters ➔ Get to know LOG:IE ➔ Country Pilot Version

We tried to keep the interaction on going during the afternoon, right after the lunch. So, we raised the propositions and the ideas of the two groups, and we wrote them down on the board. It was quite challenging as the people were a bit shy and reluctant to share their thoughts about the preparedness topic.

Picture 1: Log:ie Interface

We had the pleasure to share the digital experience of Log:ie with all the participants and we had an interesting practical training session, after the theoretical one in the morning. We faced a certain number of difficulties, and many contributors were not confident during their first steps in the use of the digital tool. We also faced connectivity issues at the hotel and that's one of the reasons why the



exercise was a bit difficult.

Then, we asked to the participant to pretend simulating emergencies on the Log:ie map. They had to warn about a false emergency going on somewhere in Malawi, giving details about it and sharing a photo on the platform. Almost everybody was then able to do it and we could see all the warnings on the big common screen in room.

After all these amazing activities, we delivered certificates to the participants and the end-day group photo was shot outside just next to Marquee 3.

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Emergency Preparedness Workshop & Log:ie Training Rollout Session

Malawi Preparedness

Finally, at around 3 p.m. we greeted and separated as we had reached the end of this wonderful workshop.



Picture 2: End-day Group Picture

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