



# Prepositioning of Relief Items with real time MSU and Warehouse training.

September 2021



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## Background

Through the Logistics Pillar coordination and working group meetings, it was determined that emergency relief items should be pre-positioned close to Freetown, Kenema, Bo, and Port Loko to ensure quick access to affected communities in the East, West, South, and Northern regions. The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) Director General requested the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) support to utilise the brigades situated in Bo and Kenema for prepositioning. The storage space available and condition of the stores was assessed at both locations using warehouse assessment guidelines developed by the project. A large building in Kenema is currently used as a makeshift school whilst one is being built. In the interim, it was determined to assemble a 24 x 10 m Mobile Storage Unit (MSU) close to the Forward Support Group store location for immediate relief item prepositioning.

The Port Loko Logistics Base was established by WFP in 2014 in support of the Ebola response, and comprises 37 MSUs. In April 2021, WFP handed over this valuable logistics facility to the NDMA. The majority of the MSUs are empty. A decision was taken to move an MSU from Port Loko Logistics hub to Kenema and used as a real-time capacity building activity to NDMA and RSLAF personnel led by WFP and supported by the NDMA logistician for the warehouse training component.

The Logistics Field Base Preparedness project has already conducted a real time warehouse training in NDMA's Warehouse in Macdonald and the stores in the Joint logistics Unit to support the Freetown area. Real-time warehouse training will be conducted in NDMA's Port Loko logistics hub to cover all four pre-positioning locations. The President of Sierra Leone has already approved budget for prepositioning of the 5,000 households of relief items in the four locations, awaiting finance and procurement processes.

## Purpose

1. To establish a warehouse with relief items at the Kenema Battalion in Kenema
2. To train NDMA and RSLAF personnel to dismantle and assemble an MSU and set up a warehouse.

## Methodology

The real time training was held over a number of phases and locations to achieve the outcome in a manner that facilitated training to the appropriate personnel.

- Site selection and ground preparation training in Kenema Battalion - WFP
- Dismantling of the MSU in Port Loko - WFP
- Assembly of the MSU in Kenema Brigade - WFP
- Warehouse set up and lay out principles - NDMA and WFP
- Stacking and stack/stock records - NDMA

## Training Activities

### 1. Site selection and ground preparation

**Kenema Barracks, 2 September 2021**

Patricia Thornhill, WFP

#### Participants

- Major Prince Sesay, NDMA logistician
- Nathaniel Kelly, WFP Logistics Preparedness
- 11 personnel from Kenema Brigade

Site assessment and selection within the area of the FSG stores was undertaken with training lessons in:

- measurements to fit the 24m x 10m MSU
- placement and orientation
  - not blocking access to stores, residential buildings, or throughfares
  - truck access and turn around,
- ground condition in terms of slight slope, surface levelness and type to drain water away
- security

Whilst there were more suitable cleared areas in terms of ground surface, a site with grass cover was determined to meet most of the requirements, with a need to clear the vegetation and gravel the area. This was undertaken as part of the real time training.



## 2. MSU Dismantling

**NDMA Logistics Hub, Port Loko, 9 September 2021**

Mohamed P Kamara, WFP; Patricia Thornhill, WFP

### **Participants**

- Nathaniel Kelly, WFP Logistics Preparedness
- Duraman Kargbo, NDMA Logistics Hub manager Port Loko
- 6 personnel from the RSLAF Joint Logistics Unit, Freetown
- 5 personnel from the RSLAF Brigade in Makeni



Dismantling training of trainers was conducted with the Freetown as Makeni RSLAF personnel as they are the closest Brigades to Port Loko, where 37 MSUs are still standing from the Ebola response.

A briefing was conducted on the process and the safety aspects and how the training would be conducted in steps. Safety hats were handed out. The team was advised that each frame structure was 4 m long and was able to calculate that MSU to be dropped was a 32 m x 10 m structure. The MSU to be assembled in Kenema was 24 m x 10 m so two frames and tarpaulins could be left behind.

### **Training steps and lessons.**

- Technique for removing tarpaulins: Tarps must be cleaned and dry before storing ready for re-use with mound prevention. The clips must be collected into a plastic bag ready for next use.
- Safety technique for dropping the roof frames: The safety factors and importance of facilitating team-work. Rolling of cables and taping ready for the next assembly.
- Dismantling the doors and roof frames. The importance of collecting and keeping all the common pieces together, bolts, nuts and washers reconnected and in bags for each size, frame pieces, etc, together so the MSU is entire and can be re-assembled again.

- Removal of anchors, pack up of base frames and plates.
- Training debrief and evaluation



The team was brought in at each of the steps to explain the technique and the way to coordinate a team to undertake it efficiently.

As the MSU had been in place since 2014 the tarpaulins and bolts were seized up fast and the process took considerable time. The anchor pins had been driven all the way into the ground and were very difficult to extract.

**Lessons learnt:**

- More than double the time needed to be allocated than a new MSU for these structures to dismantle effectively.
- The tarpaulin loops and tracks are degrading, making removal difficult, and may affect assembly. One of the tarpaulins had a hole in the roof area and could not be used.
- Lubricant is needed to assist unseize the nuts and bolts

### 3. MSU assembly and Warehousing layout considerations

#### RSLAF 2 Battalion, Kenema, 16-17 September

Mohamed P Kamara, WFP; Patricia Thornhill, WFP

#### Participants:

- WFP: Nathaniel Kelly, Logistics Preparedness
- NDMA: MAJ Prince Sesay, Logistician; Duraman Kargbo, Logistics Hub manager Port Loko,
- RSLAF
  - 3 personnel from the Joint Logistics Unit, Freetown
  - 3 personnel from the Makeni Brigade
  - 3 Personnel from Bo Brigade
  - 4 Personnel from Kenema Brigade



The MSU, tools, and 40 pallets were transported from Port Loko by WFP. Simultaneously, the NDMA relief items were collected from JLU and Macdonald by NDMA using a RSLAF truck. These arrived the night before and room in FSG stores utilised.

the real time assembly training was conducted as a training of trainer format with the selected personnel from the four RSLAF Brigades. A similar step and lesson plan to the dismantling training was adopted. Manuals and safety hats were provided to all participants and an orientation of the pieces along with safety briefing to commence.

#### Steps and lesson plan for assembly:

- Familiarisation with the MSU components
- Measuring out the MSU base plates and laying out base frames- how well you do this will determine how easy the frames and tarps fit together later.
- Assembling roof frames and gates on the ground.
- Lifting the frames and securing. – safety features for getting the heavy gate and the second frame up in coordination with payload insetion.
- Inserting of tarpaulins. – the need to work together and communicate
- Remeasuring and anchoring the MSU.
- Finish and debrief





### Lessons learnt.

The assembly took far longer than anticipated and work had to continue the following day after the frame was assembled as the tarpaulin loops had deteriorated and kept breaking when trying to install. Materials had to be purchased and a cobbler employed to work into the evening to repair one side of each tarp for hauling.

Tarpaulin installation also took longer the following day as the frame was not even and out of alignment in places. Measuring and re-adjustment took time.

The team identified a series of key points for future installation of older MSUs

- Take the time to measure the frame space correctly and remeasure and align before and after frame lifting.
- Ensure the base frame was level and dig the gravel /ground where required before frame connection. A sprit level may help. Keep it clipped together.
- Ensure the tarpaulin loops are fixed before the assembly day.

A quick session on warehouse session considerations was conducted in a participatory question and answer session in the FSG stores. This included where to position items based on frequent use, loading difficulty and safety, distance from walls, MSU consideration for condensation, and security, stack set up on pallets.

The relief items remained in storage until the following week. Major Prince from NDMA was to return with more relief items and lead the real time warehouse stacking and stock management training the following week. He will also be able to lead the Bo pre-positioning with the trained personnel from this activity.



#### 4. Follow up activities to support NDMA pre-positioning strategy

##### **Port Loko Logistics Hub, Proposed 19 October 2021**

Using the training and stock management systems developed and implemented with NDMA in previous activities, Major Prince with support of the project will lead the training to the NDMA Port Loko Hub manager whilst setting up the warehouse and stock management system in real-time.

Training session and lessons

- Warehouse layout planning
- Layout of pallets
- Correct stacking of relief items to lock out stacks
- Filling out stack cards
- Filling out stock cards and electronic record
- Communication with NDMA logistician/ warehouse manager
- Waybill and Goods received notes for dispatch and receipt

##### **Potential MSU assembly and warehouse set up in Bo Brigade**

(see the Bo/Kenema RSLAF Warehouse Assessment report August 2021 for more details)

#### Outcome

NDMA has the knowledge and capacity to set up emergency warehousing; and manage the storage and dispatch of relief items prepositioned for emergency distribution in the Provinces. This enables more efficient dispatch of relief items to affected communities, reducing the needs and delays with organizing transport and funding from Freetown.

This also fits with the long-term strategy of decentralization when NDMA has Provincial and District coordinators appointed who can manage dispatch and distribution direct from the Warehouse.

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