Workshop Report

National Humanitarian Logistics Preparedness Workshop

15-16 November 2021 | Kampong Cham province, Cambodia
Introduction

The National Humanitarian Logistics Preparedness Workshop was conducted in Kampong Cham province on 15-16 November 2021. This national workshop was co-chaired and organised by the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) and World Food Programme (WFP) in its role as Global Logistics Cluster lead agency. The agenda was developed based on lessons learned from provincial workshops by NCDM and WFP, to ensure objectives and outputs aligned with the country’s emergency preparedness and response priorities at the national level.

This workshop aimed at increasing awareness and building a common network to facilitate information sharing and problem-solving in humanitarian logistics across Disaster Management actors at the national level. There were 49 participants from DM mandated governmental institutions such as Provincial Committee for Disaster Management (from flood affected provinces in 2021), National Police and National Search and Rescue Task Forces as well as DM mandated and logistics-related ministries including the Ministry of Commerce (MOC), Ministry of Interior (MIO), Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MPTC), Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MOWRAM), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Ministry of Environment (MOE), Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MOSVY), Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT), Ministry of Rural Development (MRD); and national institutions such as the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development Secretariat (NCDDS), and Green Trade/MOC.

During the workshop, several priority actions aimed at enhancing humanitarian logistics for disaster response at the national level were identified through a participatory approach and group discussions. In addition, national humanitarian logistics preparedness plan and network were also discussed to be developed and established.

Background

In October 2020, Cambodia experienced severe flooding as a result of multiple tropical storms in the South China Sea, affecting 800,000 persons over 19 provinces. With key infrastructure damaged and multiple donations received, the importance of the National Committee for Disaster Management’s coordinating role, to secure rescue and delivery of relief items in the government assistance efforts to the provinces affected, was demonstrated.

Together with the World Food Programme, NCDM continues working on Emergency Preparedness and Response activities at the national level and further supporting the operationalization and development of the PCDM’s Provincial Contingency Plans, which were released in 2020.

A key component of Disaster Management is the central role played by relief supply chain and logistics preparedness to overcome disaster incidents. Within this scope of work and learning from previous disaster responses globally, one can see the necessity for sustainable coordination, participation, and localisation.

In its role as Global Logistics Cluster lead agency, WFP supported NCDM to organise the National Humanitarian Logistics Preparedness Workshop. This workshop also took the opportunity to review the lessons learned and experience from the monsoon season in the flood-affected provinces in 2021, in cooperation with NCDM’s partners, the Humanitarian Response Forum (HRF), and relevant line ministries.
Objectives

The following objectives were identified for this national workshop:

- Increase understanding of humanitarian logistics preparedness
- Understand the relevance of logistics preparedness to operationalisation and development of the national contingency plans
- Brainstorm an initial Humanitarian Logistics Preparedness Action Plan and form a National Humanitarian Logistics Preparedness Network
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the current logistics systems capacities with line ministries and initiate priority action plans for 2022

Workshop structure

The workshop was structured following the format below:

**Day 1: Defining Humanitarian Logistics Preparedness**

- **Participatory:** Following opening remarks, participants were familiarised with the basics of disaster risk reduction and disaster management. They were also given an overview of national and provincial contingency plans. In addition, National Search and Rescue Task Forces and PCDMs shared their experience of the current flood and humanitarian logistics preparedness. Moreover, participants shared, enriched, and came to a consensus on key concepts underlying humanitarian supply chain & logistics preparedness and response, and how these relate to current government priorities.

- **Group discussions:** Participants were divided into groups to discuss and determine the activities (Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response) that should be prioritised and what should be done next.

**Day 2: Discussing National Humanitarian Logistics Network**

- **Discussion 1:** What should be in place by line ministries to prepare Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response? What are the obstacles that prevent line ministries from being better prepared, especially for Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response?

- **Plenary:** What role can the line ministries play to support NCDM in making their disaster preparedness and response more effective? What role can the Disaster Secretariat play at the national level in promoting the operation of the humanitarian logistics network and providing support at the sub-national level?

COVID-19 precautions were taken (masks, sanitizer, and social distancing) as recommended by the Ministry of Health.
Workshop Outcome

Day 1

Session 1: Official Opening

The workshop started with welcome and opening remarks from dignitaries. A welcome remark was given by H.E. Kav Sok An, Deputy Governor of Kampong Cham province and Chairman of Kampong Cham’s PCDM. He provided a summary of natural hazards and COVID-19 pandemic in Kampong Cham, and the response activities that have been carried out to support the affected people.

An introductory remark followed. Ms. Iv Chanmoniroth, WFP representative and EPR Officer gave an overview of the background of the project and the vision of initiating the improvement of humanitarian logistics preparedness in Cambodia that this workshop aimed at guiding.

The national workshop was officially kickstarted by the opening remark by H.E. Chan Lomphat, Vice President of NCDM. He reflected on the national response to floods in 2021 that witnessed better preparedness and response on part of NCDM and PCDMs that intervened actively with participation from relevant stakeholders such as arm forces, national police, search and rescue team, relevant ministries, and humanitarian actors. He also mentioned about the timely transportation of relief items to Banteay Meanchey province during the 2021 flood to highlight the importance of having logistics plans in place to ensure relief items are transported and delivered to target areas successfully.

The importance of logistics preparedness & emergency response to mitigate the damages caused by the disasters in Cambodia was raised in the welcome and opening remarks. Learning from Cambodia’s experience in dealing with natural disasters, and emergency preparedness and response, the dignitaries saw this national workshop as a way to enhance the knowledge of relevant stakeholders in humanitarian logistics preparedness, strengthen the national network, and guide the roadmap for developing the humanitarian logistics preparedness plan at relevant organisations.
Session 2: Disaster Risk Reduction and Preparedness: Overview of national and provincial contingency plans – role and responsibility of each line ministry

**Facilitated by Mr. So Socheath (NCDM)**

Before presenting on the national and provincial contingency plans, the facilitator defined disaster and hazard to stimulate discussion among participants reflecting on their experience that they gathered by working in disaster management. Key points from DRR and DM concept are noted below:

- Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) has a connection to hazard and exposure. The mechanism of disaster risk reduction requires protection, reduction, and response.
- Disaster Management (DM) depends on the capacity to manage, observe, and respond in a timely and effective manner.
- Capacity to identify vulnerability to risk, preparedness and response plan, and logistics preparedness management are essential contributions to disaster risk reduction and disaster management.

Afterwards, partners were provided with an overview of the National and Provincial Contingency Plan, and the connection it has to humanitarian logistics preparedness was discussed. Linking lessons learned from developing the National Contingency Plan, the facilitator explained the process that begins with updating the guidelines, building the capacity of relevant stakeholders, collecting and recording information, conducting consultation workshop, and lastly approving and disseminating. Moreover, a fully coordinated contingency plan requires a connection between national, ministerial, and subnational/provincial levels.

It has been seen that national and provincial contingency plans are available, but not widely developed for the ministry level. The discussion led by the facilitator was tailored to highlight the importance of having a ministerial contingency plan to encourage participants/representatives from relevant ministries.

Based on the discussion, the humanitarian logistics preparedness component will be included in the annex of the National Contingency Plan, and NCDM will further encourage PCDMs and relevant ministries to include a part on humanitarian logistics preparedness in Provincial and Ministerial/Sectoral Contingency Plans.
Session 3: Experience in logistic preparedness from the flood response in 2021

Facilitated by Ms. Iv Chanmoniroth (WFP)

This session was an opportunity for the national search and rescue team and PCDMs from provinces affected by flood in 2021 to share their experience from the flood response and how logistics preparedness played an important role in the response process.

- **National search and rescue task force**: Task forces in different regions have joined and supported each other to ensure that affected people are rescued and evacuated to safe sites on time. Compared to previous years, all search and rescue task forces have mentioned that they have been preparing well since earlier this year to support affected people in the event of a disaster – both dry and rainy season. While providing support to other regions, each task force also learned rescue operations from other task forces in other provinces. Besides rescue and evacuation operations, task forces also supported transporting, packaging, and distributing food items in affected areas – which is part of humanitarian logistics. Furthermore, they supported arranging for and setting up shelter in safe sites. Recently, the national search and rescue task force has been trained on search and rescue in water-related hazards (such as drowning due to flood) and collapsed building.

- **PCDMs**: Representatives of PCDMs from provinces affected by floods 2021 shared their experience from preparing and carrying out the operation to assist affected people. They explained the logistics preparedness plan to ensure relief items are distributed to affected people on time, including planning for stock prepositioning, warehouse management, transportation, and information sharing to provincial stakeholders, other PCDMs, and NCDM.

Session 4: Definition of supply chain and logistics

Facilitated by Mr. Kunakar Seng (WFP)

Following the NCDM presentation, participants were invited to share their thoughts and ideas to enrich key concepts, underlying humanitarian Supply chain & Logistics preparedness and response, and how these relate to current government priorities.
Examples of supply chain and logistics processes and videos were used to enhance the understanding of participants on supply chain and logistics.

The national workshop used a similar approach as that of the second and third provincial humanitarian logistics preparedness workshops to enhance the knowledge and awareness of participants on humanitarian logistics preparedness and the importance of each government organisation’s prioritising their emergency preparedness and response plan.

Lessons learned on good processes of humanitarian logistics:

The facilitator and participants brainstormed on good process of humanitarian logistics as below:

- Financial and human resources need to be mobilised to develop the humanitarian logistics preparedness plan.
- Need assessment needs to be conducted within the scope of the institution to identify the needs of beneficiaries and people who are at risk of being affected by a disaster.
- The organisation that implements humanitarian logistics needs to identify problems and gaps within the logistics capacity and scope to provide the right solutions for improvement.
- More importantly, there should be a focus on transportation planning and how to deliver items to the destination in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Factors that lead to a good supply chain:

Facilitators and participants brainstormed factors that lead to a good supply chain as below:

- Need identification is in place to produce or reserve the products to fulfill the demand of beneficiaries.
- Procurement processes with transparency and integrity are in place to ensure that the purchase price aligns with current market price of the products.
- The implementing organisation needs to ensure the quality and quantity of relief items and oversee the process from purchasing to distributing to align with the timeline.

In addition, a video about logistics cluster (in 2 minutes) was shown to participants. The video highlighted how the disaster management is not going as planned. For example, when a road is cut off/damaged or there is a conflict
between borders, a logistics coordination mechanism is necessary to ensure information is shared and coordination is maintained between provinces or regions. For example, one of the provinces reported on Log.IE that the road to another province is damaged. This means the communication between one to another province is very important for humanitarian logistics management.

**Session 5: Discussion – Determine what activities (Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response) should be prioritised and should be done next.**

*Facilitated by Ms. Iv Chanmoniroth (WFP) and Mr. So Socheat (NCDM)*

The discussion was carried out in 3 groups – PCDMs, Ministry and National Level, and National Police and Search and Rescue Task Forces. Each group discussed identifying activities for Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response that should be prioritised in their respective areas of work. Afterward, each group presented the results of the discussion along with questions from other participants and the facilitator to agree on the activities that were determined. The results of the discussion will be further discussed in respective organisations to consider including components of humanitarian logistics preparedness for disaster response into their existing plans.

- **PCDMs:**
  According to the result of the discussion, PCDMs’ priority activities for Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response are summarised below:

  - Specific plan: It is necessary to establish a specific and robust Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response plan for the provincial level which details plans for stock prepositioning, transportation, and supplier.
  - Resources: Implementing a Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response plan requires resources such as human resources (expertise and skills), material resources (transportation, warehouse, etc.), and financial resources.
  - Coordination mechanism and information sharing channel.
  - Identification of capacity of each provincial administration to respond.
  - Analysis of risk that could be an obstacle for the humanitarian logistics process: The analysis at each provincial level should also look at the situation of target areas to ensure an effective mechanism for transportation and other assistance.
  - Assessment: An in-depth assessment should be undertaken to identify the impact of the disaster in the affected areas. In addition, it is also necessary to conduct a market assessment (informal or formal if possible) to identify the availability and price of relief items and materials to be used at safe sites.
  - Humanitarian aid: Provincial administration should cooperate with humanitarian organisation(s) in the province to seek support as needed.

- **Ministry and national level**
  According to the result of the discussion, ministerial/national-level priority activities for Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response are summarised below:

  - Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MOWRAM): Priority activities include provision of weather forecast and water level information, water supply, and machinery support in flood and drought-affected areas.
  - Ministry of Rural Development (MRD): Priority activities include road and bridge restoration to enable transportation of relief items and provision of clean water.
  - Ministry of Health (MOH): Priority activities include health-related awareness-raising on food, clean water, and hygiene.
- Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MOSVY): Priority activities include facilitating coordination and supporting the authority at affected areas to provide temporary safe sites, food and cash assistance to affected people.
- National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD): Priority activities include resource mobilisation to support humanitarian logistics for disaster response, but to be discussed further on what level.
- Ministry of Post and Telecommunications: Priority activities include mobile phone assistance, for example, to operate the early warning and weather forecast information provision via phone call.
- Ministry of Environment: Priority activities include coordination and support to identify safe sites (pre-and during a disaster) and environmental infrastructure rehabilitation (post-disaster).

- **Search and Rescue Task Forces and National Police:**

According to the result of the discussion, Search and Rescue Task Forces and National Police’s priority activities for Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response are summarised below:

- Specific and robust plan: To operate a search and rescue operation, it is necessary to have a specific and robust plan which includes arm force/police, material, training, and transport.
- Identification of safe site and monitoring of affected areas: To respond in a timely and effective manner, it is necessary to identify the affected areas and safe sites, together with a preparedness plan for transportation of relief items and materials, construction of safe sites, evacuation, and distribution of relief items.

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**Photo 9: Group discussion**  **Photo 10: Presentation on result of the discussion and group reflection**

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**Day 2**

**National Humanitarian Logistics Plan and Network**

Discussion: What should be in place by line ministries to prepare Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response? What are the obstacles that prevent line ministries from being better prepared, especially for Humanitarian Logistics for Disaster Response? What is the role of line ministries to support NCDM for the effectiveness of disaster preparedness and response?

*Facilitated by Mr. So Socheath (NCDM)*

Participants were grouped in a mix of PCDMs, ministries, national police, and search and rescue team to discuss a set of questions to identify how line ministries and relevant organisations could prepare Humanitarian Logistics for
Disaster Response, obstacles to overcome, and how they could support NCDM for the effectiveness of disaster preparedness and response. The result of the discussion has been summarised below:

- Logistics preparedness team at each organisation should inform the decision of the leadership and management about the plan and proposed timeline to be accomplished. Organisations responsible for humanitarian logistics should study the situation in the event of a disaster and determine specific timelines to deliver relief items to affected areas.

- Information management system should be in place within the organisation and relevant line ministries, so that response to the disaster or emergency could be made in a timely and effective manner.

- Understanding geographical areas – including road for transport, warehouse, and safe areas in the affected /disaster prone areas.

- Disaster Management Mandate ministry and PCDMs should include humanitarian logistics preparedness in contingency or emergency response plans. In addition, the relevant ministries should inform each line provincial department to be prepared for disaster by having a mechanism/structure in place. Before a disaster, the line department should estimate the needs of vulnerable people with the relevant organisation, so that material and relief items are well prepared in the event of a disaster to support affected people. During the disaster, the relevant organisations should work together to identify challenges and needs for protection and gender-based violence at safe sites.

To ensure effectiveness and efficiency of preparedness and response before and during emergency, line ministries and PCDMs requested NCDM to continue building the capacity of focal points or officials responsible for humanitarian logistics for disaster response at line ministries and PCDMs, to equip them with knowledge and expertise to be able to integrate humanitarian logistics plan into existing emergency and preparedness plan. In addition, line ministries were encouraged to review a letter from NCDM to guide the establishment of the Disaster Management secretariat in line ministries and to consider how components of humanitarian logistics preparedness could be integrated to make disaster preparedness and response more effective.
Proposed Logistics Action Plan Activities

Main logistics action plans were proposed, discussed, and agreed in the national workshop as below:

- **PCDMs** were suggested to discuss with the leadership team of their respective provincial administration to consider including humanitarian logistics preparedness in their existing provincial contingency plan.
- **Representatives of Ministry and National level** were suggested to discuss within their organisations to consider including humanitarian logistics preparedness in their existing national contingency plan or emergency preparedness and response plan.
- **National Police and National Search and Rescue Task Forces** were suggested to review any aspect of work that could link humanitarian logistics preparedness to search and rescue operation. In addition, there was a suggestion to include humanitarian logistics for disaster response in any relevant training to build knowledge and capacity within search and rescue teams.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion and reflection with participants (PCDMs, Representatives of Ministry and National level, and National Police and National Search and Rescue Task Forces) during and at the end of the workshop, the conclusion reached is that the workshop has achieved the objectives. Key conclusions include:

- Participants demonstrated an increased understanding of disaster risk reduction and disaster management and the importance of disaster management plans within each Disaster Management mandated governmental organisation to prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters.
- Participants demonstrated a more comprehensive understanding of supply chain, logistics, and humanitarian logistics preparedness for disaster response.
- Participants demonstrated an increased understanding of the importance of humanitarian logistics preparedness and its connection to the operationalisation and development of provincial, sectoral/ministerial, and national contingency plans.
- Despite the obstacles raised by participants, they showed willingness to discuss the humanitarian logistics preparedness plan with their respective organisations to integrate or mainstream any component of humanitarian logistics for disaster response into their existing contingency plans or emergency preparedness and response plans (at provincial and sectoral/ministerial level).
- Participants agreed to create a communication channel via Telegram for the national humanitarian logistics preparedness network. The Telegram group will be used for sharing the updates on the ongoing discussion of humanitarian logistics for disaster response at each organisation, circulating relevant information or document related to disaster management, and providing input (from NCDM) to any questions on humanitarian logistics as part of a continuous learning platform.

Way forward

The following next steps were identified by NCDM and the project team:

- Follow up and support PCDMs for integrating humanitarian logistics preparedness in the provincial contingency plan.
- Provide capacity building support to National Search and Rescue Task Forces on humanitarian logistics preparedness through any relevant training.
- Support DM mandated ministries in integrating humanitarian logistics for disaster response in ministerial/sectoral contingency plan or emergency preparedness and response plan.
- Share information via the Telegram group and move forward with the national humanitarian logistics preparedness network.

**Challenges**

The national workshop played a key role in increasing the awareness and understanding of participants; however, more capacity building initiatives are needed to build in-depth knowledge and technical skills around humanitarian logistics preparedness. In addition, more support is needed by PCDMs and DM-mandated ministries to enable a way for integrating humanitarian logistics for disaster response in their contingency plan or emergency preparedness and response plan. Without further support, ongoing discussion, and follow-up, it may be difficult to achieve.