Meeting Minutes, 15 March 2022
National Logistics Preparedness Working Group Updates

LOCATION
Training Centre at Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence under the Government of Tajikistan, Dushanbe

DATE
15 March 2022

PARTICIPANTS

ACTION POINTS
- WFP to share information about Humanitarian Supply Chain in Tajikistan through available corridors due to recent changes in the region (crises in Afghanistan and in Ukraine)
- NLPWG to discuss CNM findings and planning of further steps

AGENDA
- Review of the previous Meeting Report and updates on Logistics Preparedness
- Share information about Humanitarian Supply Chain in Tajikistan through available corridors
- Presentation on warehouse assessment conducted by CoES and WFP
- Presentation and discussions on recent updates in the rules and regulations regarding custom clearances and logistics
- Presentation on Logistics Preparedness Capacity Needs Mapping exercise findings and discussion about next steps
- Topics for next meeting
- AOB

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1. Review of the previous Meeting Report and Updates on Logistics Preparedness

- Opening remarks delivered by CoES.
- NLPWG Lead reported on activities carried out since the last meeting; the LCA presentation by WFP and the coordination efforts among working group members were highlighted.
- CoES agreed with NLPWG members on a concept note and sent an official letter to WFP to request support in Terms of Reference (ToR) and Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) development for an online logistics information sharing portal.
- The warehouse assessment mission was conducted on 1-11 March 2022 by CoES and WFP representatives with the main objective to assess capacity and needs of storage facility staff in Tajikistan. Prior to the mission, WFP Supply Chain Unit representative provided a short orientation for CoES on how to conduct assessment interviews with the warehouse managers.
- NLPWG members participated at the Capacity Needs Mapping (CNM) workshop, organised on 14 December 2021. The main purposes of the workshop were to
  - Establish baseline understanding of the country’s current Humanitarian Supply Chain & Logistics (HSC&L) capacities; and
  - Together identify and address the needs for HSC&L Preparedness to guide stakeholder priorities going forward.
- The CNM findings and plan for next steps will be discussed today.

2. Information about Humanitarian Supply Chain in Tajikistan through available corridors

- WFP representative presented the current situation of the import of food and non-food items (NFIs) in Tajikistan through available corridors.
- Following the presentation, there was a discussion on the cost of commodities’ delivery due to the changes in relation to the Ukraine crisis as some food items are imported from Ukraine.
- The information about transit flights to Kabul from Dushanbe and back has been given to the participants.

3. Presentation on warehouse assessment conducted by CoES and WFP

- In total, 4 warehouses in Dushanbe, Khorog, Khatlon and Sughd regions were visited and assessed. Two of the visited warehouses were rehabilitated and ensured within UNDP’s Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction and Response Capacities Project.
- It was recommended that the warehouse responsible staff acquire proper warehouse management training to improve their capacities.
- Existing warehouse facilities need to be rehabilitated and ensured with food items for distribution during emergencies. CoES therefore requested NLPWG members to support with rehabilitation of their warehouses and ensure with food items.
- Based on agreed REACT Work Plan, WFP planned to conduct a training on Mobile Storage Units (MSU), prefabricated office installation and warehouse management for CoES, REACT partners, and NLPWG members.
- The objectives of the above-mentioned trainings are to improve CoES, REACT and NLPWG members’ warehouse skills to better fulfil their tasks in maximising the use of storage space, ensuring optimal organisation of the workforce and maintaining the security measures necessary to preserve the goods (through familiarisation with the procedure for unloading and checking cargo upon receipt and carrying out proper warehousing).
- In addition, participants from both NLPWG and REACT members will learn how to assemble Mobile Storage Units through practical installation of one MSU needed for food storage, at the training.

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4. Presentation and discussions on recent updates in the rules and regulations regarding custom clearances and logistics

- The Custom Code endorsed by the Government in 2004 (new version) is the legal document in the context of customs issues. The last changes were done in 2018 in the Article 340, which relates to the ‘special customs payment’. The rate of the special customs payment is established by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan for the import and/or export of certain goods for commercial purposes.
- Any humanitarian and technical assistance to the Republic of Tajikistan addressed to CoES with the purposes of the DRR and civil defense are exempted from customs taxes.
- The information about customs checkpoints and border areas in Tajikistan were given as follows: 5 regional customs departments, 56 customs checkpoints. The country borders with Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and China.
- Representative from the Customs Service proposed to invite representatives of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Republic of Tajikistan to the next meetings as they will give more insights on the recent changes in trade/import/export in Tajikistan.

5. Presentation about Logistics Preparedness Capacity Needs Mapping (CNM) exercise findings and discussion on the next steps

CoES representative highlighted that through the CNM process, participants have assessed capacity and identified gaps and opportunities with structured group discussion, through all five pathways.

The main findings and recommendations are as follows:

- Regulations related to Humanitarian Supply Chain and Logistics (HSC&L) system exist in the country. However, it was found that multi-sectoral integration among all involved stakeholders and international partnership are not well developed.
- CoES is well known in the country, but the coordination mechanism and the information management system in times of peace and stability requires more involvement from all stakeholders in the country. M&E system should be further improved.
- Sustainable financing and resources to maintain HSC&L preparedness in times of stability and peace is the crucial point of the CNM finding.
- Lack of HSC&L plan, grievance management, and accountability of CoES in times of peace and stability should be improved.
- The stakeholders including the private sector are highly recommended to be involved in the design of the HSC&L preparedness action plan and contribute to the implementation of this plan.

The next step is to organise a separate meeting (tentatively in April) with the NLPWG to elaborate jointly the program and action plan of the country logistics preparedness. The action plan will be presented at the next NLPWG meeting in June 2022.

6. Desired topics for discussion/information exchange between WG members in the next meeting

- A set of standard packages for food and NFIs to be stored at a warehouse for humanitarian purpose
- Presentation and endorsement of Logistics Preparedness Action plan

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7. AOB

- CoES suggested to invite representatives of the Ministry of Justice to the next NLPWG meetings to discuss proposed changes to the existing legislation related to logistics preparedness.
- SDC representative proposed to organise a simulation exercise to validate minimum preparedness actions that could be part of Logistics Preparedness Action Plan in the future and mobilise rescue teams which have been established within SDC projects.
- Representative of UNDP assured CoES about their readiness to support with solar energy supply at CoES warehouses.
- CoES representatives requested WFP to send an official letter to MFA for the next meetings and request their approval for conducting meetings/workshops.

The regular NLPWG meetings will be conducted every three months. The frequency of the meetings will increase in case of emergencies. Relevant information will be shared via e-mail

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