LOCATION  Damascus (In-person and online)

DATE  16 August 2022

CHAIR  Logistics Cluster Coordinator

PARTICIPANTS  COOPI, Finn Church Aid (FCA), Gruppo Di Volontariato Civile (GVC), HEKS/EPER, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA), Norwegian refugee Council (NRC), Première Urgence Internationale (PUI), Secours Islamique France (SIF), Terre des Hommes Italy (TDH-IT), Triangle Generation Humanitaire (TGH), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNOPS, United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO).

ACTION POINTS  

1. Logistics Cluster team to follow up on fuel trends and explore possible mitigation measures.
2. Logistics Cluster team to contact partners to update the list of focal points.
3. Partners to share their needs for training activities with the Logistics Cluster team.

AGENDA  

1. Logistics Cluster Updates
2. Cross-border Operations
3. Partners Logistics Gaps and Bottlenecks
4. AOB

1. Logistics Cluster Updates

Staffing  

The meeting was chaired by Ayad Nanam, the new Logistics Cluster Coordinator for Syria. He introduced Valentina Signori, the Logistics Cluster Information Management Officer that will also be based in Damascus.

Strategy and Way Forward  

- The chair reminded participants of the latest strategy developments for the Logistics Cluster, based on the evolving situation in the country, the most recent HNO, the Gaps and Needs Analysis (GNA) conducted at the end of 2021, and that are reflected in the revised Concept of Operations (ConOps) that was presented and endorsed by partners. The document is available here.
- The common storage services in Kiswa, Homs, and Aleppo have been discontinued in July; the Logistics Cluster will however continue to facilitate access to free-to-user storage services in Qamishli (1,600 m²) until the end of the year to facilitate onwards movement to further destinations. Requests can...
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be addressed at: syria.clustercargo@wfp.org. The SOPs and forms to access the service are available on the Syria Logistics Cluster page.

- To strengthen partner storage capacity, the Logistics Cluster can avail Mobile Storage Units (MSU) and other assets to humanitarian organisations along with a humanitarian justification.
- WFP offers various logistics services (e.g. storage, transport) to humanitarian partners on a cost-recovery basis; interested organisations can contact the Bilateral Service Provision unit at: co_syr_bsp_logistics@wfp.org.
- The Logistics Cluster continues to facilitate information collection and sharing to ease movement of coordinated humanitarian assistance from Aleppo to north-west Syria; since August 2021, six convoys have been organised, and another inter-agency mission is planned in September subject to approvals from involved parties.

Operational Updates
- On 30 July, the Minister of Transportation announced the completion of the rehabilitation works on the second runway of Damascus International Airport which is now operational.
- Further increase of fuel prices have been reported: the cost of a litre of subsidised fuel rose from SYP 1,100 to 2,500 – an increase of about 127 per cent. The cost of non-subsidised fuel rose from 3,500 to 4,000 Syrian pounds. This is the third time this year that authorities have increased fuel prices due to depreciation of the Syrian Pound.
- It was reported that the Jarablus crossing between Syria and Turkey has reopened.

2. Cross-border Operations

- Transshipment operations continue based on the UNSCR 2642 that was recently renewed for a six month period. The Logistics Cluster manages the hub in Reyhanli and facilitates humanitarian shipments through the Bab al-Hawa crossing point into north-west Syria.
- An overview of cross-border operations is available on the latest infographic. This dashboard has been set-up and is available online to enable partners to follow in real-time cross-border operations’ figures and trends.
- As discussed amongst partners, a dedicated working group will be established to elaborate on possible scenarios and develop an operational contingency plan in case of no UNSC extension in January 2023.
- It has also been suggested to resume collection of physical access constraints data to map out issues and up-to-date information before the potential autumn/winter weather hazards.
- Regular coordination meetings are being organized in Gaziantep to facilitate sharing of information on planned activities and operational constraints. The latest meeting minutes are available here.

3. Partners Logistics Gaps and Bottlenecks

- Several Damascus-based INGOs raised issues regarding the procurement process due mainly to instability of prices, market availability and international sanctions, and growing inflation. It was

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reminded that the Logistics Cluster mandate does not include procurement aspects and that a dedicated working group amongst NGOs could facilitate discussions on best practises, pooling of resources, and common advocacy with donors.

• Fuel continues to be an operational concern for most partners; both availability and quality are decreasing thus impacting project implementation, and staff movement and running of facilities – especially in some areas of the country where electricity supply is unreliable.

• WFP retains a small stock of fuel for humanitarian activities as a last resort; no service provision has been discussed as several aspects would need to be analysed, such as availability and access as well as agreement with government entities and international counterparts.

• The Logistics Cluster will continue following market situation and share information with partners on fuel availability and prices.

• Partners are reminded that WFP provides an online tool to access market trends and prices here.

4. AOB

• Logistics Cluster monthly coordination meetings will continue to be organised in Damascus.

• Coordination meetings will also be held in Aleppo (planned in September) and Qamishly (in October or November). Invitations will be shared with partners through the mailing list.

• Due to staff rotation, humanitarian organisations would benefit from technical trainings; the Logistics Cluster can facilitate training sessions on various logistics aspects, subject to availability of funds.

• Partners were asked to support the Logistics Cluster team in keeping their list of focal points up to date to streamline communications and information sharing.

Contacts

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