



TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL LOGISTICS PREPAREDNESS WORKING GROUP

Background:

In view of its geologically vulnerable position in the eastern Himalayas, and because of climate change, Bhutan is prone to natural disasters with earthquakes being the biggest threat to reverse Bhutan's progress to date. Earthquake remains a major threat and the 2015 earthquake in Nepal has focused the attention of the Royal Government of Bhutan for an urgent need for preparedness for disaster. Considering that Bhutan is a landlocked country in the Himalayas, Logistics and Supply Chain always remain a challenge, while studies have indicated that Logistics and Supply Chain constitutes more than 70% of the response cost, strengthening the Logistics and Supply Chain capacity of the government always remain a paramount importance in the Disaster Risk Management Agenda of the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB).

Based on previous logistics capacity assessments and contingency planning, emergency logistics capacity has been considered as a major gap for RGoB disaster response in Bhutan. To address the various logistics challenges in the country, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (MoAF) has been identified as the lead agency of the Logistics Desk with the support of the Department of Disaster Management (DDM) and WFP through the Field-based Preparedness Project (FBPP) supported by The Logistics Cluster. One of the key priorities for 2021 is to establish a **National Logistics Preparedness Working Group** (referred here onwards as **The Working Group**) to map out the relevant stakeholders and their respective capacity and operational requirements, as well as reviewing logistics capacity gaps in alignment with the institutional capacity strengthening approach and The Royal Government of Bhutan's Disaster Risk Management Strategy to ensure long term sustainability of in-country humanitarian supply chain and logistics preparedness at both national and sub-national levels within Bhutan.

About the Working Group

The Working Group will be led by **MoAF**, supported by **DDM**, and co-facilitated by **WFP**. The Working Group lead will also track and report on the progress of the Working group action plan implementation. The Working Group Lead will support the RGoB through strategic advisory and advocacy to enable capacity transformation in Logistics preparedness for Bhutan.

The Working Group will be comprised of the following members that have been considered to have specific roles in logistics preparedness and are committed to participate in a collective effort towards enhancing in-country emergency logistics capacity by delivering the tasks laid out below to achieve the purpose of the Working Group:

- a) Current member agencies of the Logistics Desk
- b) Other relevant agencies within the government sector
- c) Private sectors
- d) State-owned enterprises
- e) Development partners (UN agencies, NGOs)
- f) Bhutan Red Cross Societies and other Civil Society Organisations
- g) Academia

Capacity Outcome Statement of the Logistics Working Group:

Enhanced capacity of relevant stakeholders to deliver an effective and efficient disaster response as a result of strengthened logistics preparedness, coordination, and information systems to mitigate the impact of a disaster.

Objectives of the Working Group

The Working Group aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Sustained national humanitarian logistics preparedness capacity among local disaster response actors through institutional capacity strengthening
2. Effective advocacy of communications, policy, and resources allocation to strengthen in-country logistics preparedness capacity to contribute towards heightened disaster readiness in Bhutan
3. A jointly endorsed National Humanitarian Supply Chain and Logistics Action Plan under NDMA's oversight and coordination during the implementation phase
4. An established stakeholder advisory and advocacy role that advises RGoB on strategic decisions related to logistics preparedness and response based on national priorities and in conjunction with the Global Humanitarian Cluster System

Roles and responsibilities of The Working Group

The Working Group members will collectively carry the following roles and responsibilities:

1. Organize regular coordination meetings for the Working Group to define agendas and key deliverables, prioritization of tasks, responsibilities/accountability and resource requirement definition, timeline and progress reporting related to Humanitarian Supply Chain Logistics preparedness capacity strengthening in the context of Bhutan.

Logistics Preparedness Coordination

1. Conduct a joint mapping of stakeholders and capacity needs, as well as identify humanitarian logistics capacity gaps, potential solutions, and responsibility assignments to address those issues.
2. Formulate and establish a nationally led Humanitarian Supply Chain & Logistics Action Plan endorsed by NDMA that includes key activities to enhance logistics preparedness capacity involving all members with clear deliverables and deadlines.
3. Exchange views on the latest developments and initiatives in logistics preparedness globally and establish focus group discussions on their benefits and develop actions to implement them to strengthen the disaster readiness for Bhutan
4. Support in consultative processes and definition of government policies in disaster management that relates to logistics preparedness and response
5. Foster collaboration and facilitate the formation of specific sub-Working Group to strengthen the current Logistics Desk function by facilitating exchanges of views, expectations, information, and experience-sharing among the Working Group members in the technical area of humanitarian Supply Chain and Logistics.
6. Jointly develop Standard Operating Procedures / operating guidelines for various stakeholders and delineate roles and responsibilities for a better disaster response coordination and to expedite delivery of relief commodities
7. Conduct pre-positioning capacity needs assessment and analysis through definition of a standardised core relief items and consolidation of prepositioning requirements for a major disaster scenario and establish actions to meet those requirements
8. Conduct and/or participate in joint assessments to validate existing logistics infrastructure within Bhutan and identify / validate requirements to refurbish or augment logistics capacity to meet the preparedness requirements
9. Establish a draft concept of operation based on a major disaster scenario

Information Management:

1. Assess and explore into working on an information sharing platform
2. Collaborate and establish information sharing practices on the various technical topics in Humanitarian Supply Chain and Logistics among Working Group members
3. Explore feasibility and conduct business requirements analysis of the various disaster-management related information systems to establish an information sharing platform that ensures a systematic data and information gathering in terms of logistics capacity information, inventory level and preparedness status for a more effective and timely information management practices to support disaster management activities in Bhutan
4. Conduct joint-research to establish and validate necessary evidence to identify tangible challenges faced by first-line responders and to identify and prioritise feasible solutions to address those challenges

Logistics Response Coordination and Capacity Creation:

1. Conduct operational feasibility and capacity assessment at strategic supply chain nodes both domestically and (as required, internationally), and identify operational steps required to ensure future swift response operation involving those pre-identified nodes.

2. Establish a coordination mechanism with other humanitarian sectors / desks under the existing national disaster management structure to establish a clear baseline of logistics service requirements and to assess additional capacity creation required during emergencies to handle the incoming surge of relief commodities.
3. Agree and define the critical logistics service capacity required both at national and sub-national levels to identify response capability need for multiple emergency scenarios

Capacity Building (People Skills)

1. Conduct a comprehensive capacity building needs assessment across all disaster management entities both at national and sub-national to validate capacity building requirements and to establish a consolidated and standardised curriculum / training program in the area of humanitarian Supply Chain and Logistics, including establishment of a pool of national trainers or training partners to roll-out the training program.

Policy and Budgetary Advocacy

1. Jointly advocate towards RGoB to ensure that adequate national budget is streamlined to support Logistics preparedness capacity enhancement activities as per the action plan in the National Disaster Management budgeting process at all levels of the government
2. Jointly analyse, identify resource mobilisation opportunities from both national and external funding sources and collaborate on proposal development and submission to enable investment for disaster preparedness.
3. Advocate on relevant logistics preparedness topics and the importance of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction across plans and programs across relevant government agencies.