

Highlights

- Between October and December, the Lao PDR's Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW) as the lead agency of the National Logistics Preparedness Working Group (NLPWG), with support of the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Global Logistics Cluster Field-Based Preparedness Project (FBPP), organised a series of meetings to discuss key humanitarian logistics preparedness activities, including national-level emergency logistics training and the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the importation and customs clearance of humanitarian relief items.
- Preparedness Officer conducted several consultative meetings with MoLSW and relevant national and international actors on humanitarian relief items importation and customs clearance to understand the Government's current mechanisms and practices and further engage them in preparedness efforts.
- In December, MoLSW led a planning discussion on a national-level Emergency Logistics Training (ELT) as part of the prioritised logistics preparedness activities for MoLSW staff members and relevant line ministries. The tentative date is scheduled for the second quarter of 2023.

Background

Based on risk indices and national-level logistics performance and capacity indicators, in 2018, Laos was identified as one of 24 country candidates for the Global Logistics Cluster's Field-Based Preparedness Project. The project's primary aim is to support and empower national actors to strengthen their capacity to autonomously prepare for and respond to humanitarian crises. A vital element of this is the facilitation of a coordinated approach towards improving the resilience of local humanitarian supply chains and supporting effective information exchange between the government, national actors, and the private sector to ensure all actors are well prepared for joint humanitarian logistics responses. In a large-scale disaster event, should the Government of Laos request international humanitarian assistance, the Global Logistics Cluster capacities can support national actors in facilitating a coordinated response.

From June to November 2019, a Preparedness Expert was deployed to Laos to commence the process of mapping national logistics capacities and stakeholders. She worked with national responders to augment information sharing and exchange and to assist in organising a simulation-based logistics gap analysis workshop and other capacity-strengthening initiatives based on identified partner needs. In 2019, Laos experienced its largest flood response in 50 years, with over 600,000 affected people across six Provinces, reaffirming the need for coordinated logistics preparedness actions across multiple national actors.

In September 2019, a national Preparedness Officer was deployed to continue the project's activities, including a series of trainings and training of trainers on the topics identified by partners during 2019-2020. In addition, as a result of workshops conducted between 2019-2020, a draft National Logistics Preparedness Action Plan was also put forward for further endorsement by humanitarian partners.

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, follow-up meetings and discussions continued in 2021 on the formalisation of the NLPWG membership focal points and the Logistics Preparedness Action Plan for endorsement by the NLPWG members and other relevant FBPP activities, such as planning for district-level Warehouse Trainings with MoLSW.

In 2022, MoLSW, will continue capacity-strengthening activities for emergency logistics preparedness and response as outlined in the National Logistics Preparedness Action Plan. As part of the project transition, the FBPP will advocate for and support, where and when required, the implementation of these activities.

Coordination

- In October, the Preparedness Officer had a consultative meeting with a representative of [the IMPACCT working group \(IMPortation And Customs Clearance Together!\)](#) to understand better how other countries handle the importation and customs clearance of humanitarian cargo during emergencies. The IMPACCT Working Group shared information and recommended steps and approaches to strengthen the national mechanisms, such as mapping the humanitarian aid importation processes, consulting with humanitarian partners, and organising a workshop to serve as a platform for discussion among all line ministries and humanitarian partners in-country involved in the importation of aid.
- On 6 December 2022, led by MoLSW, a meeting with the Customs Department, Ministry of Finance was held to discuss the Government's current practice of humanitarian relief items importation and customs clearance. The discussion helped engage the national authorities and relevant partners, including FBPP and WFP, in preparedness efforts and increase their awareness of the national regulatory mechanism. It was agreed that there is a need to develop and streamline standard operating procedures (SOP) on the said topic for relevant authorities and humanitarian actors in-country. The Customs Department agreed to support MoLSW together with the relevant departments to develop the SOP for effective humanitarian coordination and response.
- In December, MoLSW discussed an initial plan with FBPP and WFP for a national-level Emergency Logistics Training (ELT) to enhance understanding on humanitarian logistics operations. The training will target the emergency preparedness and response focal points from MoLSW and relevant line ministries as well as the NLPWG members and will enable them to pass on their skills and knowledge to their respective sub-national staff, as MoLSW also plans the second series of the ELT at the provincial level.

Information management

- The quarterly report and infographic for the period between July and September 2022 have been published on the [Lao PDR Preparedness webpage](#).

Contacts

<https://logcluster.org/preparedness/laopdr19>

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