Information Management

Logistics Cluster_User_Feedback_Survey_Template.docx

Introduction

Information management in Logistics is a tool to support logistics analysis and decision-making during an emergency. Information management incorporates the collection, analysis and dissemination of logistics related information which serves as the foundation of decision-making for a coordinated and effective logistics response.

Information Management Officers within a Logistics Cluster team are responsible for consolidating and disseminating up-to-date logistics specific information. They use logistics information gathered from multiple sources including Logistics Cluster participants. These include:

- Logistics situation reports;
- Customs information;
- Operational logistic information;
- Infrastructure updates;
- Maps with access information;
- Contact list;
- Standard forms;
- Policy or technical guidance;
- Datasets;
- Gap analysis

This chapter has been tailored around the general UN OCHA/IASC operational guidance to specifically address the information management in logistics humanitarian response.

See: Operational Guidance on Responsibilities of Cluster/Sector Leads & OCHA in Information Management.

Logistics Information Management in Emergencies

The below information management products are useful under emergency settings:

- Overview on what is being done, by whom and where, for collaboration with other actors engaging in similar activities and to avoid duplication;
- Briefing and orientation materials support an understanding of the broader operating environment;
- Information management products such as Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) maps demonstrating key infrastructure such as transport routes and ports as well as locations of affected populations, thereby assisting decision-making and planning for delivery of humanitarian relief;
- Compilation of key contact information, including suppliers, customs agents and other government departments as well as other humanitarian organisations;
- Provision of templates that can be customised for use by other users – minutes of meeting, terms of reference for job profiles, situation reports, assessment templates among others;
- Documented logistics capacity assessments for various countries.

In setting up information management within an operation, humanitarian organisations may consider the following:

- Allocation of a space (virtual or physical) or common platform where other organisations can access information resources;
- Publication of regular updated reports and information products representing activities of the organisation;
- Designation of an information management focal points for data collection, analysis and dissemination;
- Use of standard format and data sets for conducting assessments and analysis, related to logistics response in order to promote information sharing with the broader humanitarian community; and
- Engagement with other organisations for an understanding of their activities within the emergency response to enable sharing of logistics assets, experience and skills.

Role of Logistics Cluster and its Partners in Information Management

A. Role of Cluster Leads in Information Management at the Country Level

The information management strategy focuses on identified gaps, challenges and bottlenecks; i.e. what do the cluster partners need to know to make informed decisions, what problems they can expect, and what information can help to solve them.

The IASC defines the information management responsibilities of the cluster leads at country level as following:

- Cluster/Sector lead agencies shall allocate the necessary human and financial resources to the IM team.
- Each cluster shall appoint an IM focal point, who should have sufficient expertise and an ability to work with different partners and clusters.
- While it is important that there is one IM focal point per Cluster/Sector, humanitarian partners are encouraged to share IM resources and capacities within and across clusters at the country level where appropriate to promote harmonization and economies of scale.
- Cluster/Sector IM focal points should contribute to inter-cluster IM coordination led by OCHA, and support efforts to ensure coherence and coordination between intra and inter cluster information management initiatives.
- Cluster/Sector IM focal points are responsible for ensuring adherence to global—and taking into account national—IM norms, policies and standards. Global level clusters and OCHA can be called upon for IM expertise, operational support, general guidance, training materials and funds as appropriate.
- Cluster/Sector IM focal points will work with OCHA to establish the systems and processes needed for effective information sharing with cluster partners related to inter-cluster coordination and cross-cluster programming.
- Cluster/Sector leads are responsible for generating up-to-date cluster specific information (e.g. contact lists, meeting minutes, standard forms, policy or technical guidance, datasets, needs/gap analysis, etc.) and sharing it with OCHA in order to support inter-cluster data sharing.
- If needed, Cluster/Sector leads are responsible for establishing a data confidentiality and privacy policy within their cluster, which ensures that sensitive, personally identifiable datasets are suitably anonymized.
- Cluster/Sector leads should ensure all information is age and sex disaggregated where appropriate.

Source: Guidance on responsibilities of cluster/sector leads & OCHA in information management

B. Role of Logistics Cluster Lead in Information Management during emergencies

1) Operational Support

- Identify and deploy experienced Information Management Officers in support of Logistics Clusters in new emergencies where required.
- Based on inputs received, compile key operational documents such as Concept of Operation, Standard Operation Procedures, and relevant assessment and request forms.

2) Information Collection and Dissemination

- Coordinate information with the government ministry that coordinates emergency response.
- Produce logistics situation reports.
- Compile essential operational information on logistics infrastructure, such as ports, airports, border crossing, road and corridors.
- Update and make available key existing information following emergency assessment – e.g. road conditions and blockages to access routes on logistics planning maps and maps of affected areas.
- Make available Logistics Capacity Assessments; transporters and rates; equipment suppliers; government instructions / procedures (where still relevant).
- Share information on the locations and capacity of warehouses and hubs.
- Share details of Logistics Cluster meetings - minutes / action points / contact list of participants.
- Highlight what useful services are provided by Logistics Cluster participants – including their key local knowledge and make use of inputs provided by participating organisations.
- Provide contact details - Logistics Cluster focal points, key government, local NGO and commercial contacts.
- Ensure already-existing information is made available to the humanitarian community:

3) Information Sharing Platform:

The logistics cluster web page www.logcluster.org is an example of a common logistics information sharing platform. It hosts useful information products such as operations pages by countries, shares tools, and provides products like standardised templates.

- Give out links to the website and make sure OCHA and other web platforms post the Log Cluster link on their site for wider access.
- Post daily sitreps; weekly bulletins; 'snapshots' on key issues – e.g. government customs clearance procedures; prioritization process of humanitarian cargo; general activities of the Logistics Cluster.

C. Role of Cluster Partners at the Country Level

- Government representatives will play an important role in ensuring that information management carried out in support of the humanitarian response is based on existing, national datasets and information management systems in a sustainable manner.
- Humanitarian actors who participate in the cluster/sector are expected to be proactive partners in exchanging information relevant to situational understanding and the response.
- Cluster/sector partners are to adhere to commonly agreed definitions and indicators for "sector" needs and activities, as well as the use of common baseline or reference data, which are disaggregated by age and sex and consider diversity issues where appropriate.
- Humanitarian actors who participate in the cluster/sector as observers should be encouraged to share information with the wider humanitarian community.

Information Management Process

The entire information management process can be summarized as in the below table. This simple process outlines where information is gathered, analysed and disseminated to serve various purposes.
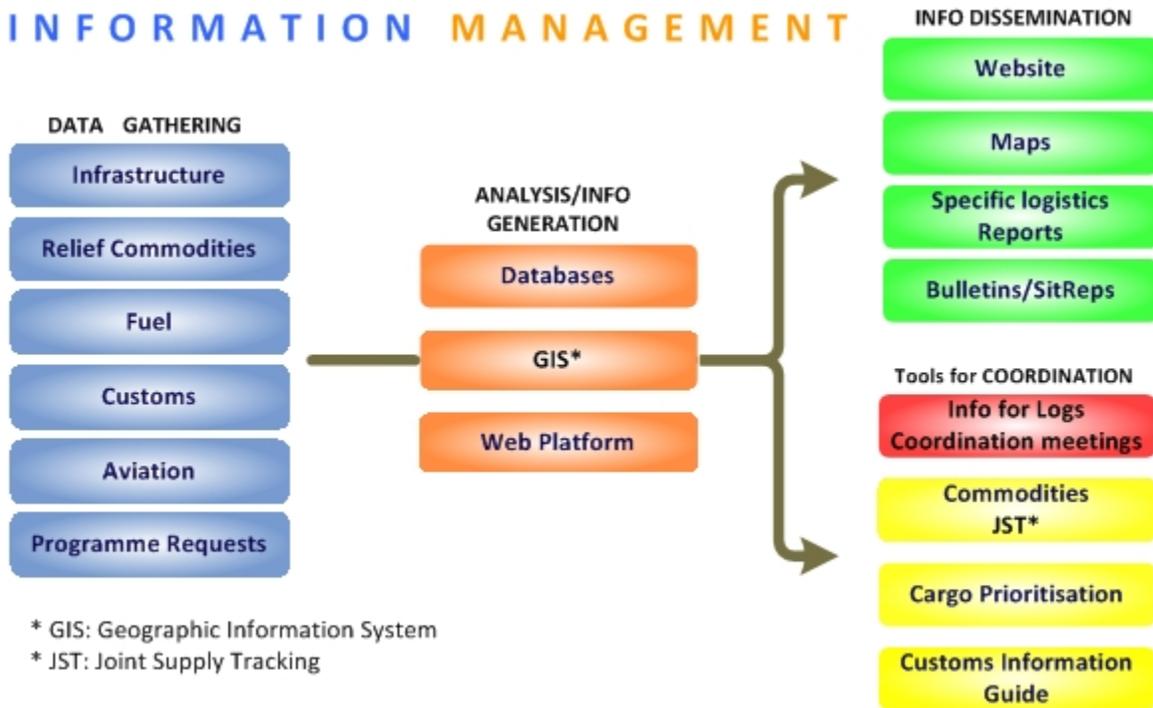
Diagram 1 - Information Management Process

An equipped information management unit of the Logistics Cluster offers different tools and services to its users such as:

- Updated information management tools;
- Information management best practice and operating procedures;
- Information management how-to, guidelines and software in order to better provide the requested services.
- Logistics Information collected, analysed and disseminated through situation reports, logistics bulletins and specific reports for the use of the entire humanitarian community.

Resources and Tools

Logistics Cluster Information Management Product List

- Information Management Product List (March 2010)
- Information Management Snapshot (March 2010)

Guides and How-to

- Files and Filing Guidelines (Sept, 2009)
- Information Management Tips (April, 2009)
- Photos and Pictures Guidelines (Sept, 2009)
- Reporting Practises (April, 2009)
- Situation Report Guidelines (Sept, 2009)
- Standard Document Guidelines (Sept, 2009)

Sample and Templates

- Bulletin template (Nov, 2009)
- Contact List template (Excel sheet or Word doc) (Nov, 2009)
- Meeting Agenda template (Nov, 2009)
- Meeting Minutes template (Nov, 2009)
- Situation Report template (Nov, 2009)
- User Feedback Survey template (Aug, 2018)

Links

- Logistics Cluster Website

File ▲   **Modified**

JPEG File 4-3-Info-Mgmt-diagram.jpg	Jul 16, 2015 by Business admin access
PDF File LOG-4-7-Briefing_IM_Snapshot_May09.pdf	Jul 16, 2015 by Business admin access
Microsoft Word 97 Document LOG-4-7-Bulletin_template_Nov09.doc	Jul 16, 2015 by Business admin access
Microsoft Excel Sheet LOG-4-7-Contact List_template_Nov09.xls	Jul 16, 2015 by Business admin access
Microsoft Word 97 Document LOG-4-7-Contacts List.doc	Jul 16, 2015 by Business admin access
PDF File LOG-4-7-GEN_Doc_Standard_Guidelines_Sept09.pdf	Jul 16, 2015 by Business admin access
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