Disaster Preparedness: A View from the Border
Geneva, 21 March 2023

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Hosted by the Global Logistics Cluster
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Network of 11 strategic partners

- World Customs Organisation
- International Humanitarian City
- UNCTAD
- IFRC
- Save the Children
- OCHA
- Help Logistics
- World Bank
- ITU
- Global Logistics Cluster
- MSF-Belgium

Created in 2017 at the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week, CICG, Geneva

Funded by DG-ECHO
Strategic objectives for 2020-2025

1. High-level policy initiatives: Contributing to the development of high-level policy recommendations and international legal frameworks

2. Global outreach and communications: Building increased awareness through outreach, coordination and networks

3. Technical and technological support: Supporting the use of technology and other systems that enhance and streamline cross-border processes for humanitarian aid
Strategic objectives for 2020-2025

4. Training and capacity building: Partnering to increase the availability and quality of training materials and opportunities for humanitarian partners

5. Support to disaster response efforts: Sharing information and making available key disaster relief importation information for response efforts

6. Country specific activities: Implementing tailored country-specific activities to increase the preparedness of governmental regulatory agencies and humanitarian partners
Impact of the lack of preparedness

Affected population: Delays in receiving needed humanitarian assistance

Humanitarian actors:
- Goods delayed or stuck at Customs entry or transit points. In particular for specialized medical or telecommunications equipment.
- Uncertain or inconsistent importation procedures.
- Lack of Customs focal points.
- Lack of understanding on the role of Customs and the importance of the controls to protect the borders of the affected country.
- May be in compliance breach or later owe money for such breaches
- Increased risk of reputational loss.

Private sector / Trade: Disruptions of the commercial supply chain
Donors:

- Ineffective use of funding when aid is dispatched however does not reach affected people
- Increased costs due to delays and accumulated storage fees
- Little visibility of whether aid is likely to reach affected people

Government and cross-border agencies

- Compelled to make reactive, changing and inconsistent decisions in times of disaster if legal provisions for response are in place.
- Disruptions of the operations / Under-staffed.
- Need to ensure controls of incoming goods are maintained and taxes are collected, whereas under-staffed.
- Further pressures due to the influx of unsolicited goods.
- Little visibility of incoming aid goods.
- Large influx of goods received in short period.
- Inconsistent applications of the procedures at customs procedures.
- Lack or insufficient capacity building for customs staff at entry points.

Impact of the lack of preparedness
STRATEGIC PLAN

A. Ratification of international conventions
B. Adoption or amendment of national legal framework
C. Strengthening collaboration and coordination at national level
D. Drafting and adoption of protocols and SOPs
E. Simulation exercises to validate SOPs
F. Training and e-learning
G. Enhancing collaboration and coordination at regional level
H. Using information technology
I. Establishing mechanism for data and information exchange

LESSONS LEARNED
Should the national legal framework be amended?
How to improve the collaboration at national level?
Should SOPs be revised?

Emergency measures are in place to respond to a disaster.
A proactive approach to emergency preparedness in case of natural disaster or public health emergency is crucial to support disaster relief efforts.

The provisions of the international conventions should be incorporated into the national legislation, regulations, and national emergency plans.

Training plans should ensure that customs officers, as well as officers from the other competent border agencies at all entry points, are qualified and able to manage a large influx of aid.

Lessons learned and recommendations from previous emergencies, training and simulation exercises should be effectively implemented.
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THANK YOU

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