Improving Coordination of Global Health Supply during Emergencies

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Background:

• At the field level, health partners often raise logistics concerns at Health Cluster level, which can include questions related to warehousing, pre-positioning, preparedness, customs and importation, transportation, among other things.

• The Health Cluster itself is not always able to directly address such concerns, often because there is no dedicated logistics capacity nor any Operations Support and Logistics (OSL) presence at the Cluster meetings to address them.

• At the same time, many partners look to WHO as Cluster Lead Agency to proactively take the lead on health-related logistics matters, and to provide guidance.
Improving Coordination of Global Health Supply during Emergencies

**Project:**

Based on the experience from several different emergencies and following on a number of comprehensive discussions OSL HQ had with the Global Health Cluster (GHC) in Geneva with regards to how OSL expertise could add value to the Health Cluster platform at the national and/or sub national levels.

**Goal:**

The goal of this project is to leverage the unique position of WHO as CLA and global health leader to mitigate gaps in the global health commodities supply system for emergencies.

This would be achieved through the set-up of supply-specific coordination mechanisms within the Cluster system, and concrete support to the in-country WHO health partners.

- **Pilot Countries:** Nigeria, South Sudan, DRC, Yemen, Syria and Bangladesh

- **Type of Activities:** (1) WHO OSL collaboration with the Health Cluster and (2) Support to Health Partners supply importation
Primary focus areas of the project

- Improving the collaboration with relevant stakeholders in order for WHO (as CLA) to have a stronger input into Health Logistics & Supply planning during a health emergency. This will involve the OSL team lead working closely with the Logistics Cluster to define the planning for the context at the country level, including (but not limited to):
  - Customs and importation procedures
  - Information on approved suppliers in-country or regionally for drugs and medical supplies
  - Common temperature-controlled storage

- Connecting with the Health Cluster partners at country level to facilitate partner supply pipeline analysis and identification of logistics bottlenecks at the country level; engaging with partners to understand needs, identify gaps and to find solutions to problems. (OSL team represented in the Health Cluster meetings to support this project)

- Supporting Health Cluster partners on the importation of health supplies where the partner has not yet obtained permits or fully completed registration.
Primary focus areas of the project.

- WHO acting as a consignee for selected partners in certain circumstances only (under discussion with Legal at present); and/or
- Providing partners with information on the bureaucratic processes to be followed at government level on registration, permits and tax exemption
- WHO acting as a resource to health partners on SOPs on customs and importation rules as they apply to medical supplies (would need to be agreed to adequately resourced at the country office level)

Anticipated Benefits at the Field Level:

- Strengthening the role of WHO Logistics in the overall of coordination of NGO health actors and improving logistics response strategy
- Increased WHO operational effectiveness & efficiency
- Demonstrating the added value that WHO OSL can bring to emergency coordination and response mechanisms – a function of the role of WHO as lead agency in a health emergency setting
- Stronger and more responsive international health supply chain