



**IMPACCT**

IMPortation And Customs Clearance Together !

# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2021

# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025

1

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

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

2

3

**Technical and technological support: Supporting the use of technology and other systems that enhance and streamline cross-border processes for humanitarian aid**

# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025

4

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

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

5

6

**Country specific activities: Implementing tailored country-specific activities to increase the preparedness of governmental regulatory agencies and humanitarian partners**

# 1

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

The IMPACCT Working Group actively contributes to the development and review of relevant high-level policies and international legal frameworks as they relate to the importation and customs clearance of humanitarian aid.

### WCO – INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE SIMPLIFICATION AND HARMONIZATION OF CUSTOMS PROCEDURES, KNOWN AS THE REVISED KYOTO CONVENTION

#### Background

In 2018, the WCO launched a comprehensive review of the Revised Kyoto Convention. In the review process, close to 190 proposals by Members, other international organizations, private sector and academia have been under consideration, including proposals pertaining to Chapter 5 of Specific Annex J to the RKC. The comprehensive review process is progressing under a four-step framework due to be completed in the first half of 2023.

#### State of Play

In August 2020, IMPACCT revised its submission to WCO which contains five proposals: firstly, clarifying the scope of application of Annex J-5 in terms of what types of situations it applies to, when it applies and who it applies to; second, introducing a simplified definition of “relief consignments”; third, supplementing the list of legal facilities in Standard 3 by including additional legal facilities; fourth, introducing a ‘Recommended Practice’ for Member States to develop, update and disseminate lists of required disaster relief goods and equipment and their HS Codes; and fifth, updating the “Guidelines To Specific Annex J – Chapter 5 – Relief Consignments” to reflect the foregoing changes and to provide more detailed guidance on certain operational issues.

In 2021, under Step 3 of the four-step framework, our submission was approved. In 2022, the potential draft text of the specific annexes of the Revised Kyoto Convention will be shared with IMPACCT in 2022 for their consideration and comments.

## RECOMMENDATION No. 44: CROSS-BORDER FACILITATION MEASURES FOR DISASTER RELIEF

In April 2019, in line with the recommendations of the participants to the HNPW, the IMPACCT Working group initiated the drafting of a high-level policy recommendation under the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) of the UNECE.

After intensive consultations with the humanitarian community and significant contributions from the members of the IMPACCT Working Group, this document has been finalized and endorsed by the UN/CEFACT Plenary meeting in April 2021.

This recommendation on “cross-border facilitation measures for disaster relief” supports governments by providing key considerations and practices for implementing preparedness measures for the facilitation of a large influx of humanitarian relief, when facing a natural disaster.

It is available in English, French, and Russian.

## WCO GUIDELINES ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND SUPPLY CHAIN CONTINUITY

In June 2021, the WCO Council endorsed the Guidelines on disaster management and supply chain continuity. The objective of these Guidelines is to strengthen the preparedness of customs administrations to respond to, and recover from, disruptive events.

It is available in English, French, and Spanish.

## INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE (IASC) RESULTS GROUP 1 – OPERATIONAL RESPONSE

In 2019, the IASC Results Group 1 on Operational Response created a sub-working group on Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments (BAI) co-chaired by ICVA and InterAction. This group was tasked to develop normative guidance for Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams. In 2021 and in coordination with OCHA, the coordinator of IMPACCT contributed to this work and provided inputs related to importation and customs challenges. The guidelines material are available online.



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

Ensures that information about projects and initiatives are regularly shared amongst members and relevant partners to promote coordination, cross-fertilization of ideas and inputs, and to regularly capture and promote understanding of on-going challenges as well as good practices.

### GLOBAL OUTREACH

#### HUMANITARIAN NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS WEEK (HNPW 2021)

During the HNPW 2021, the IMPACCT Working Group convened five sessions.

1. Launch of the E-course on “Importation and Customs Clearance”
2. Five Things You Need to Know about High-Level Policy Recommendations on Cross-Border Movement of Aid
3. Importation of Medicines and Medical Equipment during Disease Outbreaks
4. Digitalization of Importation and Customs Clearance in Emergencies
5. Preparación de los organismos gubernamentales en las Américas y el Caribe involucrados en la regulación e importación de artículos de socorro (in Spanish only)

The records are available [here](#).

#### 13TH HEALTH AND HUMANITARIAN LOGISTICS CONFERENCE

In September 2021, IMPACCT presented the project on the “Importation of medicines and medical equipment” at the 2021 Health and Humanitarian Logistics Conference.

## **INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF CUSTOMS UNIVERSITIES (INCU) - “CUSTOMS AND ITS ROLE IN DISASTER RELIEF OPERATIONS. IMPACCT ACTIVITIES AND HOW TO LEND INPUT”**

A presentation on IMPACCT and on the policy recommendation n° 44 on “Cross-Border Facilitation Measures for Disaster Relief” was made. It was followed by a discussion with INCU members ie customs academics, practitioners, operators, lawyers and students. Recommendations on possible activities in 2022 were made and universities have shown an interest in recommending MSc research subjects.

## **CHORD - CENTER FOR HUMANITARIAN LOGISTICS AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

HELP Logistics and KLU created CHORD, a Center for Humanitarian Logistics and Regional Development. Discussions on possible collaboration with IMPACCT were initiated.

## **IMPACCT WORKING GROUP WEBSITE**

IMPACCT WG: Cross-border movement of humanitarian relief consignments (unocha.org)

## **CREATION OF A CHANNEL ON YOUTUBE**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN8kFPumeQvLhjFijczrU4A/featured>

With the support of the International Humanitarian City – Dubai, a video on “what is IMPACCT” is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN8kFPumeQvLhjFijczrU4A/featured>

## **GRV GLOBAL – PHARMA LOGISTICS AFRICA (VIRTUAL EVENT) 8-9 DEC 2021**

Pharma Logistics Africa is the leading forum covering all aspects of Supply Chain Logistics & Distribution, Healthcare Innovation, Legislation & Supply Chain Planning, Supply Chain Resilience, and Action in Disaster Relief & Emergency situations.

Of the 7 panels, Panel 5 dealt with “Health emergencies, epidemics management strategies and preparedness”. The Coordinator a.i. of IMPACCT chaired this panel and made a presentation of the project on the “Importation of medicines and Medical Equipment”. The panelists were Dr. Olukayode Fasominu, Senior Manager of UNICEF; Ebrima S. Jabbi, Health Officer of Gambia Red Cross Society; Dr. Emmanuel Agogo, Country Representative of RTSL ( Resolve to Save Lives); Hitesh Hurkchand, Senior Advisor, Global Health Strategy and Partnerships of World Food Programme and Ms. Naomi Ngaruiya, Community Epidemic Preparedness Program Coordinator of Kenya Red Cross Society.

### **SUB\_WORKING GROUP ON THE “IMPORTATION OF MEDICINES AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT”**

Created during the HNPW 2020, the sub-working group on the “Importation of Medicines and Medical Equipment” was on pause in 2020 (due to the COVID-19 outbreak) and was reactivated in early 2021. Following the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic that had a huge impact on global supply chain, and specifically on medicines and medical equipment, this has re-highlighted the need to look into the constraints to the importation of medicines and medical equipment during the response to natural disasters, complex emergencies or disease outbreaks. It remains a challenge that needs to be addressed from an inter-agency approach. Consequently, in addition to the bi-monthly meetings of this sub-working group, two global meetings were convened in 2021.



**A first virtual workshop** was held on the 13th of July 2021. After a short presentation of the vision, mission and strategy of the IMPACCT Working group and background information on the sub-working group on the importation of medicines and medical equipment, the main outcomes were:

- Finalisation of the list of 15 primary and xxx secondary constraints to import medicines and medical equipment
- Participants decided that the initial focus will be countries where a humanitarian response plan is in place.
- Design of a survey to collect information on the five most challenging constraints out of the 15 primary constraints in the countries where humanitarian partners operate.

The minutes are available on the website of IMPACCT.

**A second virtual workshop** was jointly convened by IMPACCT, the African Union Commission, the World Customs Organisation Regional office for Capacity Building for East and Southern Africa and GS1 on 7th and 9th December 2021.

Based on the result of the survey, and considering that the non-tariff barriers create additional bureaucratic and administrative impediments to the importation of medicines and medical equipment (provided at no cost to the country during disease outbreaks) and slow down the delivery of health care to people in need, participants agreed that there is a need to look at

**(a)** how non-tariff barriers can be simplified, if not eliminated, to facilitate the importation from non-for-profit organisations of MMEs and speed up the delivery to people in need of medical care

**(b)** what mechanisms should be in place to strengthen the collaboration and cooperation between/ among customs administrations, Bureau of standards authorities, ministries of health/ National drug regulatory authorities and humanitarian health partners

**(c)** how can the existing tools / legal framework created for traders/from a “commercial” perspective be adjusted to humanitarian partners needs that is mainly linked to “lifesaving” and direct support to the national health system and

**(d)** which specific instruments or guidelines should be drafted with all stakeholders to address humanitarian needs.

The minutes of the meeting and the workplan are available on the website of IMPACCT in English and French.

Created in May 2021 during the HNPW, the forum on “Preparación de los organismos gubernamentales en las Américas y el Caribe involucrados en la regulación e importación de artículos de socorro” (Preparation of government agencies in the Americas and the Caribbean involved in the regulation and import of relief items) held its second meeting on 9th September, 2021.

OCHA, ITU, UNCTAD, IFRC, IADB, Log Cluster, WCO and the Regional Logistics Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (Centro Logístico Regional de Asistencia Humanitaria, Panama) participated.

It was agreed that regular meetings of this inter-agency forum should take place, as a unique forum, to discuss topics of common interest activities and initiatives and areas of collaboration aiming at speeding up cross-border operation during emergency response.

The next meeting will be held in 2022.

## **HUMANITARIAN AND EMERGENCY LOGISTICS INNOVATION EXPO (HELIX)**

IMPACCT delivered a presentation on “Addressing the bureaucratic impediments to import emergency relief goods” for the Focus Sessions of HELIX. Since then, and in collaboration with the Humanitarian Logistics Association (HLA), discussions are ongoing with the ASEAN Disaster Emergency Logistics System (DELSA) Programme and with the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management Group on Preparedness and response.

In the framework of the COVID-19 project, WCO and the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO) convened a workshop to share experiences and best practices on how to better respond to natural disasters and disease outbreaks in the Pacific region. This four-day workshop identified challenges, potential solutions and mechanisms to facilitate the importation of emergency relief aid. ASYREC, the Automated System for Relief Emergency Consignments, developed by UNCTAD in collaboration with OCHA, can help to clear disaster relief goods faster. IFRC also highlighted the need for a stronger national legal framework, in line with the IDRL guidelines. The Tampere convention on the provision of telecommunication resources for disaster mitigation and relief operations was presented. Discussions and collaboration with OCO and all stakeholders will continue in 2022.

IMPACCT was involved in the organisation of the workshop organised by the COVID-19 project of WCO, to support the MENA region in facing disruptive events. The 3-days workshop brought together 45+ participants from WCO members and humanitarian partners. The crucial role of customs administrations during the preparedness and the response phases was highlighted. The blast that occurred on 4 Aug 2020 in the port of Beirut, Lebanon, was mentioned as a good example of cooperation between customs administration and humanitarian actors.



# 3

## Technical and technological support: Supporting the use of technology and other systems that enhance and streamline cross-border processes for humanitarian aid

Promote and advance the use of appropriate technological tools to facilitate the streamlined, consistent and digitized customs clearance of disaster and crisis relief goods and equipment.

ASYREC in Vanuatu: with the funding from Australia's Governance for Growth (GfF), an Addendum to the Single Window Project was signed to implement ASYREC in Vanuatu in 2022.



# 4

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

Increase formal training opportunities for humanitarian partners to enhance their skills and understanding of the sector, and provision of platforms for information sharing on importation and customs.

### INTRODUCTION IMPORTATION AND CUSTOMS CLEARANCE E-COURSE

The lack of knowledge and understanding of the role of customs administration and other cross-border agencies has highlighted the need to deliver basic knowledge on this topic. Hosted by the Center of Excellence of UNCTAD based in the offices of the HM Customs Gibraltar, face-to-face workshops were organised to gauge the interest of such trainings. Considering the participation of logisticians from all over the world during these face-to-face meetings, it was decided to develop an “Introduction Importation and Customs Clearance” e-course.

With the financial support of OCHA, the professional and technical expertise of HELP Logistics and the contributions of experts in importation and customs processes (such as the World Customs organisation, UNCTAD) and a selected group of humanitarian organisations (MSF-Belgium, Save the Children, International Humanitarian City – Dubai etc), the e-course was launched in November 2021.

## THE COURSE CONTENT IS:

### BEHIND THE SCENES (INTRODUCTORY VIDEO)

### MODULE 1: CUSTOMS & IMPORTATION IN THE HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT

The learning objectives are to:

1. Understand importation challenges from the humanitarian community, customs authorities, and other government agencies (OGAs) perspectives.
2. Understand the different country specific aspects pertaining to importation and customs clearance requirements.
3. Comprehend the advantages of compliance to customs rules and regulations, and the consequences of non-compliance.

### MODULE 2: COORDINATED BORDER MANAGEMENT

The learning objectives are to:

1. Understand the concept of coordinated border management (CBM).
2. Outline the formalities in the export and import countries.
3. Familiarize with the Single Window environment
4. Familiarize with the one-stop-shop concept.

### MODULE 3: THE COSTS FOR THE IMPORTATION OF HUMANITARIAN RELIEF GOODS

The learning objectives are to:

1. List the different tariff and non-tariff measures contributing to import duties and taxes.
2. Understand how tariff classifications mandate the applicable duties and taxes.
3. Apply incoterm rules to determine the party responsible for customs duties and taxes.
4. Explain how to qualify and apply to import duties tax waivers or exemptions.

### MODULE 4: DOCUMENT & INFORMATION QUALITY

The learning objectives are to:

1. Appreciate the importance of information sharing and information quality.
2. Determine the required actions by different parties to assure smooth flow and timely release of Humanitarian Relief consignments.
3. Demonstrate the importance of the five-step procedure.
4. Identify critical information fields in the relevant documents.

## MODULE 5: MODERNIZATION OF CUSTOMS SYSTEMS

The learning objectives are to:

1. Understand the benefits of modernized systems for informationsharing between customs authorities and humanitarian actors.
2. Outline ideal information flow during emergencies between customs administrations and humanitarian organizations
3. Describe Fall-back procedures and paper-based system.

Designed for individuals in UN agencies, NGOs, governmental agencies, and private sector who are involved in the importation of humanitarian goods in the countries where their organization operates, it is offered free of charge, as a contribution from IMPACCT to the humanitarian community.

The e-course is available on the platform of the Global Logistics Cluster.

In 2022, the course will be available in Spanish.

If IMPACCT gets funding for the translation (not foreseen for now) or if one organisation volunteers to do the translation, the course may be available in French in 2022 as well.

In addition to the development of the e-course, virtual trainings on importation and customs clearance were delivered in 2021 to Medair and to AirLink Flight.





# 5

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

IMPACCT shares information during disasters and publishes bulletins on Customs, Immigration and Quarantine Procedures (CIQP Bulletins). The Working Group also collaborates with humanitarian partners to collate information on bureaucratic impediments that they face to ensure that these are addressed at the right level. It also promotes knowledge management through the compilation of constraints and bottlenecks, to compile lessons learned and good practices.

### HAITI

On 14 August 2021, a 7.2 magnitude quake rocked Haiti, toppled buildings and homes and damaged infrastructure and roads. As early as 15 August, a WhatsApp group “Haiti Import and Customs” was created to facilitate the coordination and collaboration with the customs administration of Haiti and humanitarian responders. The first bulletin on Customs, Immigration and Quarantine procedures (CIQPs) was published on LinkedIn and on Virtual Osocc and distributed by email on 16th August. Three more bulletins were published as soon as new procedures / instructions from the customs administration, Civil Protection and partner government agencies were available.

### PHILIPPINES

The Super Typhoon ODETTE made landfall on 16 December 2021, pummeling six of the Philippines’ 17 regions. The bulletin n° 1 on Customs, Immigration and Quarantine procedures (CIQPs) was published on LinkedIn and on Virtual Osocc and distributed by email on 29 December. Other bulletins will be published in 2022 when new information is available.



## Country specific activities: Implementing tailored country-specific activities to increase the preparedness of governmental regulatory agencies and humanitarian partners

Strengthening national mechanisms and coordination through country-specific assistance, capacity building initiatives and research efforts. Building country-level platforms through existing national NGO/UN clusters or developing similar national 'concept of community' practices.

IN 2021, a series of on-line workshops and meetings were organised with the objective to support customs administrations and government agencies in understanding the challenges and constraints to import emergency relief goods and in drafting SOPs. The list of the countries that benefited from this support is as follows:

### **AFRICA**

- Benin (in the framework of the WCO COVID-19 project)
- Madagascar ((in the frameworks of the WCO COVID-19 project and of the PIROI – Croix-Rouge Malagasy)
- Nigeria (under the leadership of the Office of the Vice-President of the Senate of Nigeria and OCHA Nigeria)
- Mozambique

### **AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN**

- Chile (in the framework of the IADB Regional Public Good)
- Honduras (in the framework of the IADB Regional Public Good)
- Guatemala (in the framework of the WCO COVID-19 project)

## **THE WHOLE OF SYRIA RESPONSE**

During the visit of the USG/ERC in Gaziantep, humanitarian partners have expressed their concerns about the bureaucratic and administrative impediments to import emergency relief items. IMPACCT was contacted by the member of the Whole of Syria response to assist them in the mapping of current BAI and to help gain a better understanding of the laws and tax refunds from Turkey.



## CORE MEMBERS of the IMPACCT GROUP

	ORGANISATION
1	HELP Logistics
2	IFRC
3	IHC
4	ITU
5	MSF-B
6	OCHA
7	Save the Children
8	UNCTAD
9	WCO
10	World Bank



لمدينة العالمية للخدمات الإنسانية  
INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN CITY



OCHA



Save the Children



UNITED NATIONS  
UNCTAD



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION  
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DES DOUANES



THE WORLD BANK

Coordinator of IMPACCT: Ms. Virginie BOHL

In 2022, the Global Logistics Cluster will join the IMPACCT group. It has offered to support IM and partner outreach to maximize available resources.

### CONTACT

impacct.2021@gmail.com