

Chain of life

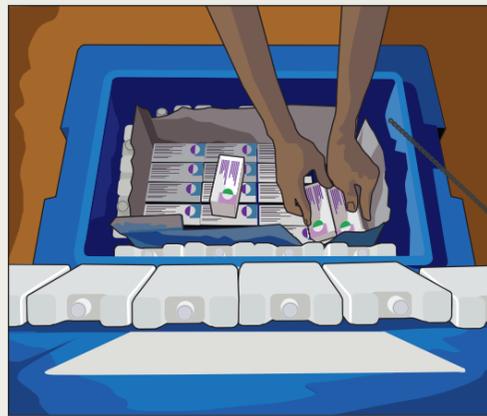
Getting the vital supplies to where they are needed

Ensuring that our teams in the field are properly equipped with medicines and equipment is a major logistical challenge. A breakdown in the delivery or supply chain can mean desperately ill patients are left without the drugs they need. As a result, we work hard to ensure materials get to our teams where – and when – they need them.

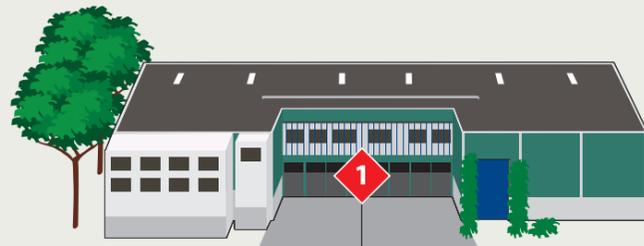
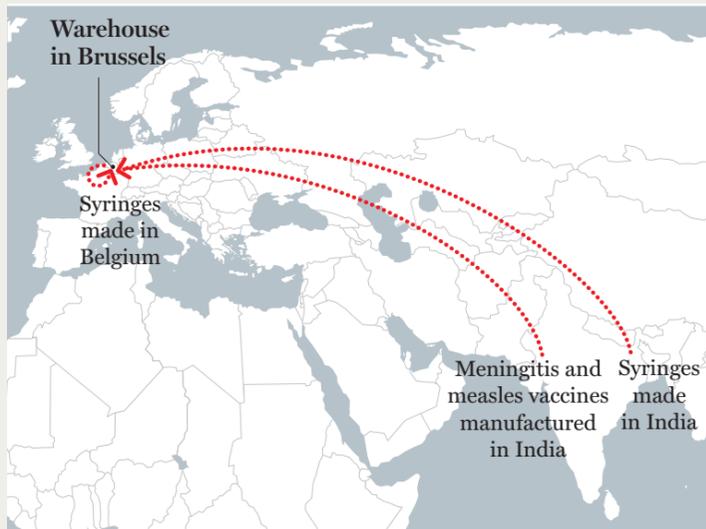
In 2010, we transported over 4,000 tonnes to our projects around the world by land, sea and air. Vaccines are a particular challenge. From the moment of manufacture to the point of injection in the field, they must be kept between 2 and 8 degrees Celsius to avoid spoilage. To ensure temperature stability, we have instituted the Cold Chain procedure.



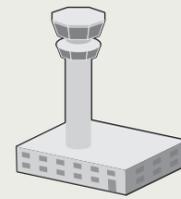
Vaccines are stored in a refrigerated area of our large stock warehouses. In Brussels, the warehouse is 7,000 square metres and contains everything from medicines and vehicles, through to surgical tents and clothing.



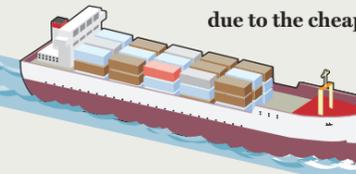
In the field projects, the team decides what they need, and the logistician creates a stock request.



The vaccines are transported by truck in an ice-lined fridge in case of a power failure.



Due to the difficulty of maintaining the cool temperature during transport, vaccines are sent to the field on cargo planes. Outside of emergencies, all other drugs and materials are shipped by cargo boat due to the cheaper shipping costs.



Vaccines are taken to the central MSF stores, which can be anything from a warehouse to a small shed. The vaccines are placed in a refrigerated area or large fridge powered by a generator.



Plane lands in country and the vaccines pass through customs.



Stocks of vaccines are transported by MSF Land Cruiser to smaller MSF projects in towns and countryside in a coolbox.



In countries such as DRC, roads are often muddy and impassable for larger vehicles. In these situations, the coolboxes are placed on the back of motorbikes and taken deep into the countryside.



Vaccines arrive at target location and patients receive their injections.



