Meeting Minutes, 10 March 2022
Malakal, South Sudan

LOCATION
Malakal, Humanitarian Hub Conference Room

DATE
10 March 2022

CHAIR
Logistics Cluster

PARTICIPANTS
Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Health Link South Sudan (HLSS), INTERSOS, International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), World Vision (WVI)

ACTION POINTS
- Organisations wanting to make use of Bilateral Service Provision (BSP) for river movements to contact southsudan.rivertransport@wfp.org to initiate the process.
- OCHA to address issues around porter fees.
- Logistics Cluster to follow up on river transporter taxation issues.

AGENDA
1. Logistics Cluster Funding Status Update
2. River Operations Update
3. Common Storage Update
4. Common Transport Service and Beyond Malakal response
5. Review of Previous Action Points
6. AOB/Discussion

1. Logistics Cluster Funding Status Update
• Due to a recent notification of a projected large-scale reduction in funding for 2022, the Logistics Cluster has revised its annual budget from USD 24 million to USD 17 million. Because of this heavily reduced budget, the free-to-user services facilitated by the Logistics Cluster will have to be reduced from April 2022.
• Thanks to advocacy efforts and a funding appeal sent out to all donors, a sufficient level of funding is expected to come in to secure air operations at the same level as in 2021. However, river transport remains unfunded within the current reduced budget.
• On top of the expected funding and the forecasted traditional donor funding for 2022, a further USD 5 million would be required to cover free-to-user river transport.

2. River Operations Update
• Going forward, river transport services are no longer offered on a free-to-user basis. Partners can however request for river services on a full cost recovery basis through WFP’s Bilateral Service Provision (BSP). All charges will be paid for by the organizations making use of the services.

https://logcluster.org/ops/ssd11a
A bilateral service provision is initiated with a Service Level Agreement (SLA) which needs to be signed by the agency and WFP. After this, a pro forma invoice will be issued for each request. An SLA needs to be signed before a pro forma invoice can be issued.

The Logistics Cluster will continue to offer the same support and coordination for the services. Bor and Malakal remain the hubs for river operations.

Exceptions to the charges will be considered on a case-by-case basis for NGOs and only if the Logistics Cluster budget allows.

The Logistics Cluster team will discuss whether a regular departure schedule will be issued. Partners will be kept up to date through the mailing list and the webpage. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for BSP will be shared through these channels as well.

Organisations wanting to make use of BSP to move their cargo from Malakal by river are invited to contact the team in Juba via southsudan.rivertransport@wfp.org to initiate the process.

3. Common Storage Update

- In Malakal, 14 Mobile Storage Units (MSUs) are installed by the Logistics Cluster. Three MSUs are managed by organisations for sole use, while 11 MSUs are available for common storage. Currently, about two MSUs have common storage space available.
- The Logistics Cluster also has large MSUs (10x24m, available from Juba) and smaller sized MSUs (6x8m, available in Malakal) for loan to organisations. An MSU for sole use can be requested by sending an email to southsudan.clustercargo@wfp.org explaining the need.
- The procedure for requesting storage at the common storage facility is to send an email to southsudan.clustercargo@wfp.org indicating tentative delivery date and required duration of storage.
- Some challenges faced in the use of common storage were addressed by the Logistics Cluster. These include:
  - Expired cargo kept in the common storage space; organisations are requested to review the stock report that the cluster shares on a weekly basis to prevent cargo from expiring.
  - Labels of goods not matching with documentation; partners should ensure that the same product names are used on the labels and the documentation. If not possible, they should ensure that a technical focal point is present to receive or release goods.
  - Another issue is that Service Request Forms (SRFs) submitted for storage do not match the items delivered. Organisations should adjust the SRF accordingly once the Reception Report (RR) has been shared by the Logistics Cluster to ensure that all documentation aligns.
  - Lastly, partners were reminded that packaging is the responsibility of the organisation, and all items should be packaged in a way that is suitable for handling and storing.

4. Common Transport Service and Beyond Malakal Response

- Organisations were reminded about good practices when making use of the road transport offered by the Logistics Cluster through IOM’s Common Transport Service (CTS).
Meeting Minutes, 10 March 2022
Malakal, South Sudan

- Requests should be submitted two working days before the truck is required.
- The truck is assigned for the planned movement, not the whole day. Organisations should avoid using the truck as temporary storage space or leaving the cargo loaded overnight unnecessarily.
- A copy of the waybill should be shared with the driver for every movement.
- The CTS trucks can also be used for longer distance road transport services through the so-called Beyond Malakal Response. However, currently no roads are accessible by heavier trucks. The Logistics Cluster is monitoring road accessibility and partners are invited to share any updates with the team.

5. Review of previous action points

- The issue of porters demanding high fees in various counties in Upper Nile is still present. The porter association does not have standard rates available and the charges per item differ on each occasion. It was agreed that this issue cannot be solved by talking with the leaders of the porters; however, OCHA will follow up.
- Port rehabilitation has not started yet due to the lack of funding.
- The issue of expired stock has been addressed collectively and a plan is in place for this through the Ministry of Health. Partners with expired cargo will be expected to pay handling charges.

6. AOB/Discussion

- The issue of river transport contractors facing increased taxation was raised. These costs are likely to be charged onward to the organisation. Moreover, contractors have chosen not to operate in Malakal anymore. WFP Logistics at Juba-level is looking into this issue.
- A partners asked about the possibility to replace MSU parts, rather than the complete rubhall. They can email southsudan.clustercargo@wfp.org and indicate their needs.
- The Logistics Cluster advised that it cannot accommodate temperature-sensitive storage needs.
- Partners raised the issue of loading and offloading of river transport at various destinations where no community support is available and the river location is further away from the final destination. The Logistics Cluster will look into this issue.
- A request was made to map all locations in Upper Nile where trucks are available to support the humanitarian community, for instance through other organisations.
- Women from various organisations have joined together to form the Women in Logistics Network (WiLN) to empower women in logistics in South Sudan, addressing gender imbalance to enable the logistics industry to benefit from female talent. Interested women and men are invited to contact Ms. Zura Mustafa (zura.mustafa@wfp.org) or Ms. Rose Poni (rose.poni@tearfund.org).

The next Logistics Cluster coordination meeting date is to be confirmed.

https://logcluster.org/ops/ssd11a
Meeting Minutes, 10 March 2022
Malakal, South Sudan

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