Airlift Services

OVERVIEW

This document provides an overview of the airlift services to be made available through the Logistics Cluster in coordination with UNHAS, how humanitarian actors responding to the crisis in Northern Ethiopia may access these services, and the conditions under which these services are to be provided.

The objective of these services is to enable critical, essential, life-saving cargo to be transported from Addis Ababa to Tigray given the operational challenges faced by the inland transportation through the three inland humanitarian corridors into Tigray (Gondar, Kombolcha, Semera). These services are not intended to replace the logistics capacities of other organisations, nor are they meant to compete with the commercial market. Rather, they are intended to fill identified gaps and provide a last resort option in case other service providers are not available. Access permitting, the following services will be coordinated at no cost to the user, depending on the availability of funds.

In accordance with the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) prioritisation process, the airlift services facilitated by the Logistics Cluster, with WFP acting as service provider in close collaboration with UNHAS, will be used for the transport of essential, life-saving items from Addis Ababa to Tigray. The prioritisation of this cargo for airlift is led by the respective Clusters¹ as designated at the ICCG. The service may be withdrawn for any of the following reasons:

- Opening of road corridors into Tigray Region
- No longer an agreed upon/identified need
- Funding constraints

This document will be updated, and services provided may change as the situation evolves and operational requirements develop. Updated versions will be shared on the Logistics Cluster Ethiopia operations page.

KEY NOTES TO USERS

As agreed by the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), only life-saving prioritised items for airlifting services facilitated through the Logistics Cluster will be considered. Partners are requested to approach the relevant Cluster to be included in the prioritisation list for airlift before processing their request to the Logistics Cluster. Service users are requested to send their list of cargo to be airlifted to their respective Cluster Coordinators prior to submitting it to the Logistics Cluster.

- Contact details for all Cluster Coordinators can be found online on the Ethiopia Humanitarian Response dedicated webpage, under each Cluster page.

Once partners are included in the prioritisation lists for airlift of the prioritised Clusters, and the Clusters have agreed upon the cargo list and total tonnage for airlift, the partner should submit a Service Request Form (SRF) to the Logistics Cluster by addressing an email to ethiopia.logisticsclustercargo@wfp.org, keeping unhas.ethiopia@wfp.org in copy:

¹ As of 26 April 2022, the prioritized sectors are: Health, Nutrition, ES/NFI, Agriculture, WASH and Education. The prioritized sectors may change according to ICCG.

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- a Service Request Form with full details of their cargo to be airlifted, the volume (m³) and the weight (kg). For further guidance on how to fill an SRF, please refer to the Service Request Form User Instructions.
- Partners are also required to provide a detailed description of the cargo to be airlifted (including a packing list, number of units, package, weight in kilograms, volume in cubic meters). The minimum required information is the number of packages, unit weight per package, unit volume, total weight and total volume.

Once the Logistics Cluster confirms receipt of the SRF and accepts the SRF, the Logistics Cluster will inform the partner of the validity period the partner should secure for the EDRMC clearance. The partner approaches the relevant authorities to clear their cargo. For health and nutrition items, the required clearances are received from the Ministry of Health (MoH), Ethiopia Disaster Risk Management Commissions (EDRMC) and National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS). For agricultural cargo, the relevant authorities are EDRMC and the Ministry of Agriculture. For ES/NFI the relevant authorities are EDRMC, and for WASH, the relevant authorities are the Ministry of Water (MoW) and EDRMC. Partners are required to receive the necessary clearances independently from the Logistics Cluster, and are encouraged to approach the relevant Clusters for the latest information on the clearance process.

Once the EDRMC clearance is obtained, the partner should send a copy of the clearance to the Logistics Cluster by addressing an email to ethiopia.logisticscluster@wfp.org. Once all other clearances are also secured, the partner must share the documents with the Logistics Cluster as well.

For further clarifications, Service Users are encouraged to refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Airlifts, available online.

**NOTE:** The Logistics Cluster airlifts the cargo reflected on the prioritisation list shared by the corresponding Cluster, as agreed by the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG). If additional cargo is included on the SRF, the Logistics Cluster will proceed with airlifting of only what is reflected on the prioritisation list, and will standby for the airlift of any additional cargo which may figure on the SRF until it is reflected on the prioritisation list of the respective cluster. Additionally, implementation of all services is dependent on the partner confirming that the relevant clearances are received. This will affect schedules and access.

**HOW TO ACCESS AIRLIFT SERVICES THROUGH THE LOGISTICS CLUSTER**

**STEP 1.** Any eligible organisation wishing to airlift essential cargo through the Logistics Cluster should first coordinate with the prioritisation mechanism put in place in accordance with the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) with relevant Clusters in order to be included in the prioritisation lists.

**NOTE:** The prioritised Clusters share the consolidated prioritisation list with the Logistics Cluster. If the Logistics Cluster receives Service Request Forms (SRFs) for cargo to airlift not included in the prioritisation lists, the Service Request Form will not be accepted.

**STEP 2.** The partner submits a completed Logistics Cluster Service Request Form (SRF). The SRF must be sent in a Microsoft Excel file copy as well as a scanned signed and stamped version, from an approved agency contact point to ethiopia.logisticsclustercargo@wfp.org.

- A single SRF for the Airlift Service should include:
  - The affirmation section of the SRF must be completed with the name of staff, designation, and date of request
  - The amount of cargo (kg) per partner agreed under the respective prioritisation list.
  - Unless the cargo is already stored in the Logistics Cluster warehouse and cleared: Date when the cargo will be handed over for service(s) to begin (in the "Date Ready for Movement" field).

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Contact details of the receiving organisation's focal points at Addis Ababa airport and at the final destination (Mekele airport). This can be included in the Remarks section.

All dangerous goods/chemicals must obtain separate clearances and have separate requirements. Additionally, they must be declared on the SRF with the corresponding UN ID number, and the partner must submit a correctly completed IATA Dangerous Goods form filled by a certified person when submitting the SRF. All dangerous goods must be packed in line with international regulations. Partners are required to fill in the Dangerous Goods Shippers Declaration Form.

**NOTE:** The Logistics Cluster can facilitate the transportation of the cargo from the partner warehouse to the airport. If the Service User requires storage services for the cargo prior to the airlift, this should be indicated in the Service Request Form (SRF) by detailing that the origin location is the Logistics Cluster Kality Warehouse. If the Service User requires storage services of the cargo airlifted to Mekele, this should be indicated in the SRF by detailing that the final destination is the Logistics Cluster Warehouse in Mekele.

**NOTE:** The Service Users are responsible for making adequate arrangements for the insurance of their cargo/supplies.

General instructions for completing the SRF can be found in the Service Request Form User Instructions.

The Logistics Cluster will confirm receipt of the SRF within 72 hours, and will either: request additional clarification or documentation required; or will register the SRF as "New" in status and will return a Consignment Report with a 9-digit Tracking Code to the Service User. All enquiries on the status of cargo should be checked online using the Tracking Code: https://rita.logcluster.org/public/track.htm

At this point, no commitment has been made to provide the service as requested. The Logistics Cluster will review all "New" SRFs within 72 hours and will "Accept" the SRF; or will communicate the reason why the service cannot be provided at this time and give the Service User the option to "Cancel" or place the SRF "On-Hold". Further inquiries regarding the consignment information should be sent to: ethiopia.logisticsclustercargo@wfp.org.

**STEP 3.** Once the Logistics Cluster has accepted the Services Request Form (SRF), the partner will be advised to seek clearances from the relevant authorities. As the EDRMC clearance has a validity period, the Logistics Cluster will advise on the window of delivery dates in order to seek EDRMC clearance with the appropriate validity period.

- Once included in the respective clusters' prioritisation lists, the partners are required to seek the necessary clearances from relevant authorities, independently from the Logistics Cluster. So far, the clearance process for the nutrition and health items has been the following:
  - 1. The partner organisation addresses an official paper letter to the relevant Ministry, if required, requesting clearance for their cargo to airlift and include all relevant information on the cargo (including packing list and weight of cargo).
  - 2. If required, the relevant Ministry clears and produces an official, paper letter issued in one copy, which should be shared with the Ethiopia Disaster Risk Management Commission (EDRMC). The partner organisation should keep a scan of this letter for reference. The partner should pick up this letter, and share it with EDRMC.
  - 3. Ethiopia Disaster Risk Management Commission (EDRMC) clears the letter received by the relevant Ministry, if required, and issues an official, paper letter in two copies: one is shared directly by EDRMC with the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS). The partner keeps the other copy.

  **NOTE:** Once the partner has received clearance from EDRMC, a scanned EDRMC clearance version should be shared with the Logistics Cluster via ethiopia.logisticsclustercarg@wfp.org. This document is required to seek clearance for the flight and will enable the Logistics Cluster to schedule a tentative date for the airlift.

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4. Approximately three days after EDRMC has issued the clearance, NISS will stamp a coupon on the letter, and the partner organisation should pick up the documents from NISS.

**NOTE:** When approaching NISS, the partner organisation should also designate the two nominated focal persons who will be present at the airport and require access to the restricted cargo area. This will enable the focal persons to access the area where their cargo will be checked by the relevant authorities.

5. When the partner organisation’s focal persons arrive at the airport with the cargo scheduled to airlift, they must carry the copies of the relevant ministry letter, if required, the EDRMC letter as well as the packing list of the cargo for airlift. For further information on the documents to carry at the airport, please refer to Annex III: FAQs.

- **NOTE:** Please note the required clearances may be subject to change and may vary depending on the product category. Kindly approach the relevant Clusters for guidance on the latest updates regarding clearance requirements for the specific commodities. The partner is required to secure all necessary clearances independently from the Logistics Cluster.

**STEP 4.** The Logistics Cluster can transport the cargo for airlift at the airport between 24 and 48 hours prior to departure. For all airport security checks, the partner organisation must have two focal persons present on the premise and should be always carrying the original copy of the relevant Ministry, if required, EDRMC clearances and the NISS coupon received. The focal persons should be able to answer to questions from the authorities relating to the cargo for airlift. The contact details of these persons are communicated by the Service User organisation to the Logistics Cluster by including them on the Service Request Form, in the Remarks section. When arriving at the airport, the partner organisation’s focal person is required to go to the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) office at the airport to receive the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) endorsement. Once the EDRMC letter is endorsed by NISS, the NISS focal person and the partner organisation focal person proceed to the final security checks of the cargo listed below.

The cargo will then go through the following process:

- Initial check of the cargo by relevant authorities, if required, to offload from the truck.
- Ethiopian Airlines accepts the cargo and weights the cargo as well as counts the number of items.
- The focal persons of the partner organisation should fill in a customs form. Please see Annex II for reference.
- Once the above steps are completed, the cargo passes the x-ray machine.
- Once the cargo has passed the scanner, it is in the restricted area. The National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) will open each box for physical inspection. The user agency representatives (focal persons) must be present during all the process. To access the restricted area, the focal persons should carry NISS approval (please refer to the Note under Step 3.4).
- Once cargo passes the inspection process, the user agency must repack each box with the support of the Logistics Cluster staff on the ground.

  **NOTE:** The overall inspection process and the repacking fall under the responsibility of the Service User. The Logistics Cluster acts as a support in the process.

  Once this process is completed, the cargo is considered cleared and ready for airlift.

**STEP 5.** The cleared cargo is handed over to UNHAS handling agents and loaded onto the aircraft.

**STEP 6.** Once the aircraft takes off, the Logistics Cluster contacts the Service User organisation to inform of the Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA). The Service User organisation arranges for the focal person, who is the consignee, to be present on ground at the Mekele Airport for reception of the cargo. The focal person should have the following documents ready in order to collect the cargo:

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- packing list of the items on board the flight (SRF details can also work). This is required by the customs at the airport.
- ID card that confirms the recipient is a legal staff from the organisation.
- Ready truck to transport the cargo from the airport to the final destination, unless the Service User has requested transportation services from the Logistics Cluster.
- The Service User focal person will be handed a cargo manifest to sign upon reception of the cargo, to confirm the handing over of the cargo airlifted.

The above process is summarised in the flowchart in Annex 1.

LIMITATIONS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICES

- Only UN Agencies, International Humanitarian Organisations, and International or National Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) operating in Ethiopia are eligible to use these services ("Service Users").
- Only UN Agencies, International Humanitarian Organisations, and International or National Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) who have first coordinated with the relevant, prioritised Clusters and whose cargo has been prioritised for the airlift through the Logistics Cluster will have access to the airlift services. The Logistics Cluster will not accept Service Request Forms that are not reflected in the prioritisation lists received by the corresponding Clusters.
- The prioritisation mechanism has been established through the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), chaired by OCHA, and endorsed by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).
- In the prioritisation mechanism established through the ICCG, prioritised Clusters are determined. The Logistics Cluster is acting as a facilitator in the access for airlifting services to the prioritised life-saving humanitarian cargo.
- When providing services under this SOP, the Logistics Cluster acts as an agent for the service users/ requesting organisations and WFP as the service provider of last resort. WFP assumes no responsibility for storage or transportation and/ or any loss or damage to the goods carried. The service users are responsible for making adequate arrangements for the insurance of their goods.
- Service Users are invited to refer to the Frequently Asked Questions [FAQs] available online.
- The point of contact for inquiries related to airlifts in Ethiopia through the Logistics Cluster is: ethiopia.logisticsclustercargo@wfp.org

ANNEX I. STEP – BY – STEP ACCESS TO LOGISTICS CLUSTER AIRLIFT SERVICES, ADDIS-ABABA TO MEKELLE

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**Steps Service User must take**

**STEP 1:** The Service User coordinates with the relevant prioritized Clusters to be included on the priority list of cargo that will access the airlift services through the Logistics Services.

**STEP 2:** Once included on the priority list, and once the weight and volume allocated to the Service User is agreed upon by the relevant Clusters, the Service User submits a ‘Service Request Form’ (SRF) with an authorised signature to the dedicated Logistics Cluster to ethiopia.logisticsclustercargo@wfp.org.

**STEP 3:** Once the Logistics Cluster confirms receipt and accepts the SRF, the Logistics Cluster communicates a time window for the planned airlift to the Service User.

Using the timeframe provided by the Logistics Cluster, the Service User approaches the relevant authorities to seek clearance for their cargo for airlift. Service Users are encouraged to engage with their relevant sector Clusters for confirmation on the clearances required. The Service User must secure the clearances independently from the Logistics Cluster.

Once the EDRMC clearance is received, the Service User is required to share the document with the Logistics Cluster.

The Logistics Cluster coordinates with UNHAS using the SRF and clearances to schedule a tentative date for the airlift, which is then communicated to the Service User.

**STEP 4:** The Logistics Cluster or Service User transports the cargo to the airport, between 24 and 48 hours before planned departure.

The Service User focal person arrives at the airport carrying the original clearance letters and three copies of the ministry clearance if required, EDRMC, and NISS stamp well as a packing list of the cargo for airlift. The focal person goes to the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) office at the airport to receive endorsement from NISS.

Security Check of the cargo takes place. The Logistics Cluster, and the focal persons of the Service User organisation are present during the entire process.

**STEP 5:** Once cargo is cleared, it is handed over to UNHAS for loading of the cargo on the aircraft.

**STEP 6:** Reception of the cargo at the airport by a focal person of the user organisation, with the presence of the Logistics Cluster/UNHAS.

**Steps Logistics Cluster will take**

**Steps UNHAS will take**

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ANNEX II. SAMPLE CUSTOMS DOCUMENT TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARTNER FOCAL POINT AT BOLE AIRPORT