



SERVICE PORTFOLIO

Logistics Cluster Services, Procedures and Arrangements for Humanitarian Response Operations

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The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the existing Logistics Cluster services that may be implemented during humanitarian response operations. It also covers the procedures and provisions normally applied at national level to facilitate access to such services. This document will be reviewed regularly to incorporate future developments and partner recommendations.

Background and General Information

The role of the Logistics Cluster in terms of service provision

The Logistics Cluster provides coordination and information management services to support operational decision-making and enhance the predictability, timeliness, and effectiveness of humanitarian emergency response operations. The Logistics Cluster can also facilitate access to common logistics services to ensure an uninterrupted supply chain of life saving relief items to affected populations in the event of an emergency.

Given its expertise in the field of humanitarian logistics, the World Food Programme has been selected by the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) as the lead agency of the Logistics Cluster. WFP houses the Global Logistics Cluster support team at the organization's headquarters in Rome. WFP also acts as a "provider of last resort" offering common logistics services, where critical gaps hinder humanitarian intervention.

Concept of last resort and limit of services

Where logistical gaps need to be addressed at the onset of an emergency, humanitarian organisations support each other by sharing resources, assets, and information. The Logistics Cluster serves as a coordinating platform to identify critical gaps and develop joint solutions. Partner organisations can make their assets available to the humanitarian community through the Logistics Cluster, which will pool efforts to avoid duplication.

Where humanitarian organisations are unable to fulfill the needs of the entire population, WFP acts as a provider of last resort and will provide common logistics services to meet the identified needs of the humanitarian community. In that case, the Logistics Cluster does not intend to replace the logistical capacities of the humanitarian community, nor to compete in the commercial transport or storage market. On the contrary, the WFP-led Logistics Cluster will provide alternative life-saving logistics services at field level which other service providers are unable to provide in that particular moment.

Concept of Operations (ConOps) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

The Concept of Operations (ConOps) provides a brief overview of a particular Logistics Cluster operation, the activities which it is engaged in, and the common logistics operational plan. In addition, the ConOps identifies logistical gaps and bottlenecks and provides guidance to the humanitarian community in terms of service delivery as well as the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders involved.

Once the ConOps is agreed upon by participating organisations, common Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are issued. SOPs provide detailed information on instructions and procedures to be followed for users to access common logistics services. The ConOps and its

corresponding SOPs are updated as the situation on the ground evolves, and are uploaded on the Logistics Cluster website.

Funding mechanisms and appeals

Several funding mechanisms are linked to the Cluster approach. As lead agency of the Logistics Cluster, WFP plays a key role in the preparation and review of common response plans and appeals such as the Flash Appeal (emergency response) or the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP). These appeals ensure that the needs of the Logistics Sector are covered by the projects submitted. It is important that partners attend Logistics Cluster meetings where the projects to be included in the appeals are reviewed and prioritized.

Duration

The services facilitated by the Logistics Cluster are temporary, limited to a specific period, and can be extended if the emergency persists. However, services may be withdrawn by the scheduled end date, in whole or in part, for any of the following reasons:

- Changes in the situation on the ground:
 - Gap analysis determining that services are no longer required.
 - Security reasons.
- Funding constraints.

Exit Strategy

The activities described in the ConOps will be progressively reduced until the Logistics Cluster stops operating. An exit plan will be developed in the country where the Logistics Cluster is activated, which will focus on the phasing down of operations.

Activities

Coordination of humanitarian logistics services

Logistics Cluster dedicated coordination working teams may be established in the country to facilitate the overall response strategy. Coordination activities may include the following:

- Regularly convene coordination meetings with national authorities, UN agencies, international and national NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
- Actively participate in overall humanitarian coordination, supporting the cluster approach within the humanitarian community and with donors and governments encountered.
- Engage in inter-Cluster initiatives, as well as bilateral and group meetings with key stakeholders (e.g. donors, UN agencies, NGOs, and Government representatives).
- Civil-military coordination and liaison with national authorities and military parties involved in the humanitarian response to logistical matters. In the case of a mission co-led by various United Nations agencies, the Logistics Cluster will serve as a coordinating mechanism between these United Nations entities and the humanitarian logistics community. This is especially relevant for military assets to be made available or for security measures to be taken by uniformed personnel.
- Advocate on behalf of the humanitarian logistics community on access and customs matters and provide feedback on any access and customs-related information and regulations.
- Participation in post-disaster needs assessment to help prioritize the reconstruction of logistics infrastructure in response to humanitarian community needs
- Involvement in the development of interagency emergency plans.

Information Management

Information Management (IM) is a key part of the Logistics Cluster mandate and is fundamental to coordinating the humanitarian logistics community in sudden onset emergencies. IM capacity can be provided at country level through the deployment of a dedicated IM Officer responsible for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of operational information. In general, the following services will be provided:

- Gathering and consolidating information from the humanitarian community on the global logistics situation, including gaps and bottlenecks.
- Dissemination of operational information (for example, port and airport status updates, customs procedures, situation updates, meeting minutes, maps etc.) and publication of IM products a dedicated [website](#).
- Provision of logistical information on available infrastructure and transport modalities

via the Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA) tool: <http://dlca.logcluster.org/>

Mapping and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Based on needs during an emergency and existing capabilities in the country, customized maps can be developed for specific use during an emergency response, using internal tools such as [LogIE](#). Furthermore, mapping tools and products, including specific maps of the logistics infrastructure, can be developed on request.

Importation of humanitarian consignments

The Logistics Cluster works closely with OCHA at country level to promote the implementation of customs facilitation measures, and to gather and disseminate information on importation processes for humanitarian consignments.

Provision of common logistics services

When there are logistical constraints (such as the presence of damaged roads, broken bridges, or airport congestion), which hamper humanitarian stakeholders in reaching their beneficiaries, the Logistics Cluster will address these and propose solutions.

- Solutions may focus primarily on pooling resources, such as sharing logistical assets (warehouses, trucks, etc.) and on using the Logistics Cluster as a coordination forum for information-sharing purposes.
- If no effective solution can be found, WFP, in its capacity as lead agency of the Logistics Cluster, will step in and set up the necessary logistics services for the entire humanitarian community in accordance with its mandate as the provider of last resort.
- The services provided will vary based on the context. In this regard, the following list of services is not definitive or complete.
- As a guiding principle, rescue and emergency cargo are prioritized. If several requests for transport and/or storage are received at the same time, the Logistics Cluster will ensure that prioritisation is done in accordance with the priorities set by the Humanitarian Country Team.

Common logistics services may be provided either on a free-to-user basis, or on a partial or full cost-recovery basis depending on various criteria. If full or partial cost-recovery is put in place for a service provided by WFP, a Service Level Agreement (SLA) must be signed between WFP and the partner receiving the service. The SLA stipulates specific terms and conditions for the provision of these services, and will clarify the liability of cargo during the different phases of the operation (reception, storage, transport, and delivery). This is a one-time process that covers administrative and

financial arrangements for a specific period of time.

Services subject to cost recovery mechanisms are generally proposed and implemented under the following circumstances:

- Commercial services are provided throughout the country. In such cases, the services facilitated by the Logistics Cluster are complementary to the existing ones.
- Services are no longer filling a supply chain gap. In such cases, organizations ask the Logistics Cluster to maintain such services (this may be due to various reasons, such as the need to keep the supply chain uninterrupted).
- Funding constraints impact the delivery of services that cannot be delivered free of charge to users.

Storage services

If warehousing infrastructure has been damaged, or availability outstrips demand, temporary warehousing can be set up for common use.

- Warehousing services can include cargo consolidation and in/out handling.
- The storage space provided is finite and, rather than replacing the organisations own storage capacity, is designed to supplement it until more permanent solutions are found. Organisations must plan for the removal of their cargo, as quickly as possible, in order to free up space for other organisations.
- The amount of space available and the duration for which it is available may change according to the occupancy rate.

Transport services

A common fleet of trucks, barges or ships can be set up where commercial capacity is not available or insufficient to meet the needs of humanitarian actors.

- This service is not designed to compete with the local transportation marketplace. Organizations are encouraged to identify a commercial courier prior to approaching the Logistics Cluster.
- This service is exclusively for transportation. Freight insurance and all customs clearance formalities are the responsibility of the applicant organisation. Generally, the requesting organisation is also responsible for loading the trucks at the point of origin and unloading at the destination.

On a case-by-case basis, the Logistics Cluster can also facilitate access to specialized trucks like for the transportation of temperature-controlled medical products (refrigerated trucks).

Air transport services

The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) provides passenger and light freight transportation for the entire humanitarian community to and from crisis and response areas. In the event of an emergency, the Logistics Cluster can facilitate access to light cargo transport on UNHAS airplanes and helicopters.

Furthermore, WFP aviation provides short-term aviation services. The Logistics Cluster can also make it easier for its partners to access these services, including fixed-wing air transport and helicopters for the transport of humanitarian goods to hard-to-reach locations.

Purchase and distribution of fuel

In exceptional circumstances, the Logistics Cluster may distribute fuel (for petrol and diesel) to participating humanitarian organisations operating in the country to assess needs against availability. To avoid disrupting vital humanitarian activities as a result of fuel shortages, the Logistics Cluster is facilitating access to the following services in the country:

- Fuel storage facilities.
- Fuel distribution to the humanitarian community on a regularly basis.
- Distribution from dedicated fuel stations to organisations on a cost recovery basis.

When fuel purchase and distribution are made available by WFP on a cost recovery basis, the organisations wishing to access these services must first sign an SLA with WFP at country level.

Cargo tracking

The Relief Tracking Application (RITA) is a web-based software application developed by WFP that allows service providers to systematically log the status of a shipment and allows clients to track it. This platform has been developed and is being implemented to provide the capacity to track non-food items (NFI) that fall under the responsibility of WFP in a Logistics Cluster operation.

Community of providers of common logistics services

Even though WFP has been designated as the lead agency for the Logistics Cluster, any partner organization with the appropriate capacity can provide common logistics services. The Logistics Cluster will seek to leverage the capacity of partners - both within the country and globally - to deliver services to address identified gaps.

Service providers are expected to abide to the following standards as defined by the Global Logistics Cluster Support Team. These include:

- Accessibility and accountability: a standard written agreement between WFP and the

service provider ensures equitable treatment and standard service levels for all partner service providers. All service providers must use the Relief Item Tracking Application (RITA) for consolidated reporting consistency.

- Transparency: regular reporting to logistics partners in the annual report, worldwide (Global Logistics Cluster Meetings) and nationally (Logistics Cluster and Logistics Cluster sub-office meetings).
- Performance: a range of indicators by type of service provision should be used. Regular satisfaction surveys are conducted with existing and prospective service users for services provided by WFP and other Logistics Cluster partners.
- Global eligibility: partner service providers go through a simple qualification procedure. Assessment criteria include the following:
 - Partner's willingness to accept the terms of providing services on behalf of the Logistics Cluster.
 - Technical capacity to provide this dedicated service.
- Project-by-project selection criteria: individual service delivery requests will then be assessed "project by project". The criteria which will be assessed include:
 - Partner's ability to work in the relevant country/region (registration, availability of personnel, existing assets, etc.)
 - Cost-effectiveness (whether the service is offered free to partners or on a cost-recovery basis).
 - Proposed expected start date.