1. **Country background**

The Logistics Cluster was activated following the declaration of the first case of COVID-19 in Ethiopia for a period of six months. The COVID-19 outbreak and a worldwide pandemic happened at a time in Ethiopia when seven million people remain in need of humanitarian assistance (Humanitarian Response Plan, 2020). At the time of initial Logistics Cluster activation, the government and humanitarian partners were also dealing with flood preparedness and response activities amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Its activation was extended in October 2020 for a period of 12 months following the identification of logistics gaps and needs among partners in the Tigray response. In September 2021, the conflict that originated in Tigray spilled over to the neighbouring Amhara and Afar regions and has led to an increase in the size of the conflict-affected population in Ethiopia. To reflect this development, the humanitarian community expanded its response in Northern Ethiopia. Following the extension of the Logistics Cluster activation period with the IASC scale-up and the Gaps and Needs Analysis carried out in October 2022, the Logistics Cluster is expected to remain active until December 2023.

In this context, the Logistics Cluster aims to provide coordination and information management services, facilitate access to common logistics services to ensure a timely and uninterrupted supply of life-saving relief items to affected populations, and provide capacity strengthening and technical advice for core humanitarian logistics capabilities. The common logistics services aim to fill identified gaps in logistics capacity, where access and funding permit and where these gaps limit the ability of the humanitarian community to meet the needs of the affected population, and are not intended to replace the logistics capacities of individual agencies or organizations, but rather to fill identified gaps in the humanitarian supply chain and supplement the response of the humanitarian community through the facilitation of access to common services.

2. **Cluster Approach**

The Cluster Approach operates at two levels:

(i) At the **global level**, the aim is to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies by designating global Cluster Leads and ensuring that there is predictable leadership and accountability in all the main sectors or areas of activity.
(ii) At the **country level**, the aim is to ensure a more coherent and effective response by mobilizing groups of agencies, organizations and NGOs to respond in a strategic manner across all key sectors or areas of activity, each sector having a clearly designated lead, as agreed by the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Humanitarian Country Team. (To enhance predictability, where possible this should be in line with the lead agency arrangements at the global level).

The Humanitarian Coordinator – with the support of OCHA – retains responsibility for ensuring the adequacy, coherence and effectiveness of the overall humanitarian response and is accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator. Sector/cluster leads at the country level are accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator for facilitating a process at the sectoral level aimed at ensuring the following:

(i) **Inclusion of key humanitarian partners**
   - Ensure inclusion of key humanitarian partners for the sector, respecting their respective mandates and programme priorities

(ii) **Establishment and maintenance of appropriate humanitarian coordination mechanisms**
   - Ensure appropriate coordination with all humanitarian partners (including national and international NGOs and other international organizations), through establishment/maintenance of appropriate sectoral coordination mechanisms, including working groups at the national and, if necessary, local level
   - Secure commitments from humanitarian partners in responding to needs and filling gaps, ensuring an appropriate distribution of responsibilities within the sectoral group, with clearly defined focal points for specific issues where necessary
   - Ensure the complementarity of different humanitarian actors’ actions
   - Promote emergency response actions while at the same time considering the need for early recovery planning
   - Ensure effective links with other sectoral groups
   - Ensure that sectoral coordination mechanisms are adapted over time to reflect the capacities of local actors and the engagement of development partners
   - Represent the interests of the sectoral group in discussions with the Humanitarian Coordinator and other stakeholders on prioritization, resource mobilization and advocacy

(iii) **Coordination with national/local authorities, State institutions, and other relevant actors**
   - Ensure that humanitarian responses build on local capacities

(iv) **Attention to priority cross-cutting issues**
   - Ensure integration of agreed priority cross-cutting issues in sectoral response (e.g. diversity, environment, gender, and human rights);

(v) **Emergency preparedness**
   - Ensure adequate contingency planning and preparedness for new emergencies

(vi) **Planning and strategy development**
   Ensure predictable action within the sectoral group for the following:
   - Identification of gaps
   - Developing/updating agreed response strategies and action plans for the sector and ensuring that these are adequately reflected in overall country strategies (HRP)
   - Drawing lessons learned from past activities and revising strategies accordingly
   - Developing an exit, or transition, strategy for the sectoral group
(vii) **Application of standards**
- Ensure that responses are in line with existing policy guidance, technical standards

(viii) **Monitoring and reporting**
- Ensure adequate monitoring mechanisms are in place to review impact of the sectoral working group and progress against implementation plans

(ix) **Advocacy and resource mobilization**
- Identify core advocacy concerns, including resource requirements, and contribute key messages to broader advocacy initiatives of the HC and other actors
- Advocate for donors to fund humanitarian actors to carry out priority activities in the sector concerned, while at the same time encouraging sectoral group participants to mobilize resources for their activities through their usual channels.

(x) **Training and capacity building**
- Promote/support training of staff and capacity building of humanitarian partners;
- Support efforts to strengthen the capacity of the national authorities and civil society

(xi) **Provision of assistance or services as a last resort**
- As agreed by the IASC Principals, sector leads are responsible for acting as the provider of last resort (subject to access, security and availability of funding) to meet agreed priority needs and will be supported by the HC and the ERC in their resource mobilization efforts in this regard.

3. **Role, Responsibility and Minimum requirements**

All cluster partners (including CLAs in their role as implementer alongside other agencies) have a shared mutual responsibility to meet the humanitarian needs of affected people in a timely manner.

Humanitarian actors who participate in the development of common humanitarian action plans are expected to be proactive partners in assessing needs, developing strategies and plans for the sector, and implementing agreed priority activities. Provisions should also be made in sectoral groups for those humanitarian actors who may wish to participate as observers, mainly for information-sharing purposes.

The minimum commitments for participation in clusters include:
(i) Commitment to humanitarian principles, the Principles of Partnership, cluster-specific guidance, and internationally recognized programme standards, including the Secretary-General’s Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.
(ii) Commitment to mainstream protection in programme delivery (including respect for principles of non-discrimination, do no harm, etc.).
(iii) Readiness to participate in actions that specifically improve accountability to affected people, in line with the IASC Commitments to Accountability to Affected Populations32 and the related Operational Framework.
(iv) A demonstrated understanding of the duties and responsibilities associated with membership of the cluster, as defined by IASC ToRs and guidance notes, any cluster-specific guidance, and country cluster ToRs, where available.
(v) Active participation in the cluster and a commitment to consistently engage in the cluster’s collective work.