Background

Sudan is currently facing a complex political and humanitarian situation. In 2023, about 15.8 million people across the country are estimated to need humanitarian assistance. This marks the fourth year of record numbers of people in need and about 1.5 million more people than in 2022. According to recent assessments, 11 million people will need emergency assistance for life-threatening needs related to critical physical and mental well-being. Conflict, violence and associated insecurity impede humanitarian actors' humanitarian access, and localised conflict often results in affected communities having restricted access to critical life-saving humanitarian assistance.

Recently, fighting between Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has resulted in at least 528 deaths and 4,599 injuries, and intercommunal violence has been triggered in West Darfur. Access to water is a major challenge, with over two-thirds of hospitals not functional due to direct attacks or other factors, and medical stockpiles are running critically low. More than 334,000 people have been displaced inside Sudan since 15 April, and over 100,000 people have crossed into neighbouring countries. Humanitarian partners are responding in Sudan despite constraints. WFP has resumed operations in Gedaref, Aj Jazirah, Kassala and White Nile states. UNHCR has distributed critical supplies, and the refugee hotline in Khartoum is functioning and will be strengthened. UNICEF is providing emergency health kits, essential supplies, and medicines to hospitals and primary healthcare centres. Life-saving activities are ongoing in displacement shelters in Kassala, and health services are being provided in Blue Nile. Humanitarian partners are also assisting refugees and people arriving in neighbouring countries such as CAR, Chad, and Egypt.

In April 2020, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan, based on the recommendations of the HCT, requested the activation of the Logistics Cluster in Sudan. Before the current crisis the Logistics Cluster strategy was focusing on localisation of the response through capacity strengthening in preparedness and contingency planning. Due to a significant change in the context and increasing humanitarian needs as a consequence of the current crisis, the Logistics Cluster has revised and adapted its strategy and is planning to augment its support to the humanitarian community.

Logistics Situation Analysis

The conflict has worsened the already existing supply chain accessibility issues, leading to broken supply routes and skyrocketing fuel and transport prices as well.

1. Points of entry situation:
   (i) Air space closed for civilian operations opened only for military and special permit operations
   (ii) Other airports functionality to be assessed
   (iii) Port Sudan seaport operational and functional
   (iv) Limited operational land border crossing/customs points with surrounding countries

2. Humanitarian access: (i) limited humanitarian access to most of the country due to on-going fights and insecurity/criminality targeting the population and essential commodities, (ii) road infrastructures damaged, lack of visibility on the road network capacity and operation ability, (iii) road access limited to South East of the country from Port Sudan.

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1 As of 9th of May 2023 the following entry points are reported open: Port Sudan seaports at the Red Sea, Argeen land Crossing at the border with Egypt, Galabat land Crossing at the border with Ethiopia, Renk land crossing at the border with South Sudan.
3. Storage capacity: (i) partners' capacity has suffered damages/looting (ii) access to additional and adequate storage capacity from the local market is limited when and where partners can operate (iii) limited specific temperature-controlled storage (iv) storage capacity outside the country is also limited (Chad/South Sudan/Ethiopia/Egypt) and/or unused by partners (KSA).

4. Road transport: (i) partners and local transporters have paused their road transport activities due to the ongoing humanitarian access challenges (ii) limited capacity to meet the cold-chain transport needs (iii) significant challenges to access fuel on the local market (iv) price of fuel on the local market has increased significantly.

5. Others: (i) lack of cash accessibility on the local market (ii) limited fuel provision impacts power produced from generators used for public and private services (cold-chain storage/transport).

**Logistics Gaps and Bottlenecks**

As a result of partners' and logistics sector capacity and needs assessment analysis, the following logistics gaps have been identified:

- Limited functional and operational points of entry in the country to reach the most affected areas
- Limited humanitarian access that restrains stakeholders from operating and accessing the available local logistics capacity including for transport and storage
- Limited access to financial resources and key commodities (fuel) to contract and transport the humanitarian assistance
- Lack of consolidated and up-to-date logistics-related information (including on disruption of the local market and on official communications from the authorities)
- Limited available information regarding the status of border crossing-points, customs procedures and customs officials' operational capacity

This Concept of Operations is a live document, and the activities will be adapted and revised as the situation unfolds and further assessment results become available, including the possible provision of additional logistics common services as required by the humanitarian community.
Objectives

Based on the needs identified and expressed by the humanitarian community, the Logistics Cluster aims to support the Government of Sudan and the humanitarian community response by facilitating access to critical logistics services, consolidating and sharing key information on logistics capacities and the operating environment, enhancing the capacity of the responding organisations to maintain an uninterrupted supply chain of life-saving relief items.

This Concept of Operations aims to address the identified logistics gaps and bottlenecks by:

1. Ensure coordination and information management is established and maintained in support to the humanitarian organisation effort for the population of Sudan and refugees in the neighbouring countries
2. Facilitate and coordinate access to an uninterrupted supply line of relief items for Sudan by providing cargo consolidation, storage and transport services.
3. Prepare for when in-country support will be possible again with additional services. The Logistics Cluster aims to support the effective movement of cargo into areas with access limitations; consolidate and share logistics information and promote continuity in operations; monitor changing needs for support; and identify potential gaps in operational capabilities. When possible, the Logistics Cluster plans to make equipment, services and expertise available to increase operational capacities within the humanitarian logistics community operating in Sudan.

Planned Activities

The following services will be made available to the humanitarian community and may be reviewed in the event of situational changes in country or evolve to respond to the changing needs of the situation.

1. Coordination

The Coordination capacity put into place by the Logistics Cluster is provided to support Logistics and Operations managers working to implement relief programmes: to provide a venue to identify and address common problems; to ensure effective engagement with key inter-agency and/or cross-sector forums; to promote sharing of technical expertise; and to engage in advocacy to highlight operations/implementation challenges.

Coordination platform will be enhanced and or made available in the following locations:

1. Port Sudan (Sudan)
2. Abeche (Chad)
3. Jeddah (Saudi Arabia)
4. Kenya (Nairobi)

In complement of active cluster operations in Ethiopia, South Sudan and CAR

2. Information Management

The Information Management capacity put into place through the Logistics Cluster is responsible for collecting data and information in support of humanitarian logistics operations and to ensure transparency of all Logistics Cluster activities.

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Information managed includes Customs through IMPACCT. All available records of all Cluster activities, project documents, maps, border crossing points, meetings and decisions taken will be made available on the dedicated country webpage: https://logcluster.org/ops/sdn20a

Information sharing platform will be enhanced and or made available in the following locations:

1. Port Sudan (Sudan)
2. Abeche (Chad)
3. Jeddah (Saudi Arabia)
4. Kenya – Regional Coordination (Nairobi)

3. Logistics Services

The services facilitated by the Logistics Cluster are not intended to replace the logistics capacities of individual agencies or organisations, but rather to fill identified gaps in the humanitarian supply chain and supplement the response of the humanitarian community. The Logistics Cluster aims at efficient use of assets and resources available, avoid duplication, address bottlenecks and will not replicate logistics services already commercially available.

Given the limited available resources, special focus will be on avoiding the congestion of PSU and avoiding competition for the same logistics resources. Access permitting, the following services may be coordinated at no cost to the user, or on a partial/full cost-recovery basis, depending on the availability of funds.

Cargo consolidation and temporary storage

1. In Port Sudan (Sudan), for cargo ready to be distributed/dispatched to the affected areas in country.
2. In Jeddah (Saudi Arabia), for cargo to be consolidated from the airport or the port, possibly re-conditioned for transport into Sudan when called forward.
3. In Abeche (Chad), and possibly Farchana, for cargo consolidation/prepositioning to be transported into Sudan.
4. Establish and maintain additional common storage facilities in key locations identified by organisations on the ground as operational needs create demand.

Planned storage services are expected to be provided at no cost to users, and partners are advised to limit storage durations. Cargo stored in Port Sudan should be considered as transit stock only.

In Jeddah, the Logistics cluster plans to provide end-to-end logistics services, including reception of cargo at the airport, shunting, bonded storage, incl cold chain, storage at port and arranging for the onward shipping to Port Sudan. Planned storage locations in Jeddah and Port Sudan are expected to have climate-controlled storage capable of supporting pharmaceuticals and medical devices, accepted on a case-by-case basis.

Common Transport Services

1. Sea transport from Jeddah to Port Sudan – establish and maintain cargo service via sea vessel with delivery to Port Sudan from Jeddah.
2. As required, the cluster will coordinate with UNHAS to facilitate consolidation and prioritisation of light cargo on UNHAS assets ex Jeddah.
3. The Logistics Cluster will promote, consolidate, and share information on how to access possible strategic airlifts facilitated by UNHRD or other partners.

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As alternative corridors and routes from Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya and other neighbouring countries are being assessed, additional mandated services may be facilitated.

As "Provider of Last Resort" (PoLR) WFP, through the Logistics Cluster, is responsible only to provide logistics services that 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. All customs formalities associated with the import of relief items into Sudan is the responsibility of the requesting partner.

Annex I – CONOPS Map

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