Background

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 the 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 conflict that erupted in April 2023, the Logistics Cluster has revised and adapted its strategy to focus on filling critical logistical gaps while maintaining coordination and Information management as the core activities.

Since the end of April 2023, continuous clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces, have led to massive displacement and cross-border population movements. Access to water is a major challenge and the health infrastructure of the country has been heavily affected with approximately 60% of the hospitals non-functional. The conflict has also disrupted local markets and restricted cash availability, negatively impacting the country's supply chain.

Humanitarian partners are responding in Sudan and neighbouring countries and on 4 May 2023, WFP activated a corporate scale-up for Sudan for a 6-month period.

Sudan is currently facing a complex political and humanitarian situation. Based on the Humanitarian Response Plan for 2023 which was revised in May, about 24.7 million people across the country are estimated to need humanitarian assistance raising by 57% the number of people in need and by 44% the number of people targeted.

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. Ad hoc permits are being issued for special cargo and passenger flights to Port Sudan.
   (ii) Other airports remain impossible to be assessed.
   (iii) Port Sudan seaport operational and functional (main entry point into the country).
   (iv) Limited operational land border crossing/customs points with surrounding countries (identification of best suitable possible solutions being assessed from South Sudan, Ethiopia, Chad and Egypt into Sudan).

2. Humanitarian access: (i) limited humanitarian access to most of the country due to ongoing fights and insecurity targeting the population and essential commodities, (ii) road infrastructures damaged, lack of visibility on the road network condition, (iii) road access limited to Southeast of the country from Port Sudan and very limited access to the west (iv) increased bureaucratic impediments to process of getting partners goods cleared. (v) Additional rainfall throughout September could further impact the road network's accessibility.

3. Storage capacity: (i) partners' capacity has suffered damages/looting (ii) access to additional and adequate storage capacity from the local market and along the border with neighbouring countries is limited and impacts where partners can operate (iii) limited specific temperature-controlled storage.

4. Road transport: (i) commercial transport capacity is available; however humanitarian access challenges hamper road transport activities and limit the ability to plan transportation (ii) limited capacity to meet the cold-chain transport

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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 the partners' and logistics sector capacity and needs assessment analysis, the following common logistics-related gaps of capacity have been identified:

- Lack of consolidated and up-to-date logistics-related information (including the status of main entry points, border-crossing points, logistics-related service providers capacity and availability on the local market and physical status of the roads).
- Limited functional and operational points of entry in the country, customs procedures and customs officials' operational capacity information to set up and maintain an uninterrupted supply chain of humanitarian assistance to reach the targeted population,
- 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.

Objectives

Based on the analysis of the (i) current local market capacity (ii) partners required logistics needs to set up and maintain an uninterrupted supply chain of humanitarian assistance (iii) Humanitarian access challenges hampering access to logistics capacity and transportation of the humanitarian assistance, the Logistics Cluster aims to support the Government of Sudan and the humanitarian community response by Supporting the implementation of the humanitarian response plan through a more coordinated and collaborative response in the field of logistics, by providing coordination and information sharing platforms to the crisis responders and to facilitating access to extra logistics capacity when common gaps have been identified to maintain an uninterrupted supply chain of life-saving relief items.

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

1. Ensure coordination and information management are established and maintained in support of the humanitarian organisations’ efforts for the population of Sudan.
2. Facilitate access to common extra logistics service capacity when identified as a common gap of capacity in the local market.
3. Ensure continuous sector and partners' capacity assessment, support with strategy implementation, monitoring and revision based on evolving situation. 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 the 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: to provide a venue to identify common problems and possible solutions; to make the best use of the available resources and avoid duplication of efforts; to ensure effective engagement with key inter-agency and/or cross-sector forums and provide support for humanitarian convoy facilitation (Access Working group and Civil-Military coordination cell among others); to promote sharing of technical expertise; to support the IMPACCT working group on border and customs clearance procedures; to set up partnership to define sector strategy and support the effective and efficient implementation of the HRP in Sudan; and to engage in advocacy to highlight operations/implementation challenges.

Coordination platforms are available in the following locations:
1. Khartoum (Sudan) – based in Narobi (Kenya)
2. N’Djamena and Abeche (Chad)
3. Port Sudan (Sudan) (humanitarian convoy coordination)
4. Kosti (Sudan) (humanitarian convoy coordination), if/ when the security situation permits.

2. Information Management

- The Information Management capacity put into place through the Logistics Cluster contributes to collecting logistics-related data and sharing information products to support crisis responders to access up-to-date, useful and relevant logistics-related information to support the set up of their supply chain strategy. Information product sharing includes logistics infrastructure capacity, conditions and status, local logistics service providers availability and capacity, and up-to-date information on logistics-related humanitarian access. The Logistics Cluster makes all relevant information available on a dedicated webpage publicly accessible and the Logistics Capacity Assessments site (logistic infrastructure and services source of information organized in a standard way across countries relevant to emergency response): https://dlca.logcluster.org/.

Information-sharing platforms are available in the following locations:
1. Sudan (Khartoum) – based in Kenya
2. Chad (N’Djamena and Abeche)
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 common gaps of capacity from the local market which hamper partners from setting and maintaining an uninterrupted supply chain of relief assistance. The Logistics Cluster aims at efficient use of resources available, avoid duplication of efforts, and address agreed significant bottlenecks but will not compete with locally available logistics service providers.

Access permitting, the following services may be facilitated at no cost to the user.

**Available temporary storage**

1. In Port Sudan, Gadaref, Wad Madani and Kosti (Sudan) access to extra storage capacity will be facilitated for cargo ready to be distributed/dispatched to the targeted areas of distribution.
2. In Port Sudan access to extra temperature-controlled storage will be facilitated for cargo ready to be distributed/dispatched to the targeted areas of distribution.
3. For cross-border operations from Chad, access to storage services will be facilitated in Abeche and Farchana.

As "Provider of Last Resort" (PoLR) WFP, through the Logistics Cluster, is responsible only for providing 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 are the responsibility of the requesting partner.

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