2023

Logistics Emergency Team (LET)

Annual report
As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to share the progress and achievements of this unique initiative. Since its launch in 2005, the LET has been at the forefront of providing timely and effective logistics support in response to natural disasters and humanitarian crises around the world.

The LET is a partnership between the private sector and the humanitarian community, facilitated by the World Economic Forum. Our partner companies, including UPS, DP World, Agility, and Maersk, bring their expertise and resources to support the Logistics Cluster during times of disaster, and humanitarian crises and through preparedness efforts.

Through this partnership, we have been able to respond quickly and efficiently to emergency situations, providing vital logistics support to those in need. Our team of logistics experts from participant companies works closely with the Logistics Cluster to ensure that resources are matched and utilized effectively.

The Logistics Cluster is mandated as the coordination body and focal point of the humanitarian logistics response, creating a natural partner for the LET as the representative of the needs, challenges, and bottlenecks of over 600 operational partners.

The LET is a pioneer in formalizing a multi-stakeholder partnership between the private and public sector. This unique collaboration allows us to leverage our industry’s capacity and resources, along with the expertise and experience of the humanitarian community, to deliver more effective and efficient relief to those affected by crises.
Partnership evolution

The LET partnership is now completing its 18th year, and during that time period, the humanitarian context has changed considerably. At the time of its founding, the LET was focused on providing critically needed support to the humanitarian community in the immediate aftermath of sudden onset emergencies. However, in the intervening years, the LET operating model changed, and companies began to engage with the Logistics Cluster on preparedness and local resilience projects. In 2014, the partnership evolved to enable the companies to engage in protracted and complex emergencies. These changes were appropriate because they reflected humanitarian needs and the maturity of the partnership and created a broader theatre of engagement to provide more support to the humanitarian community.

The Logistics Cluster has always been primarily mandated as a coordination platform, per the United Nations Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)’s cluster approach. This coordination requires information management to share vital operational information as quickly as possible, ensuring humanitarians can respond even faster. The World Food Programme (WFP), as the Cluster Lead Agency, also fulfills the logistics Provider of Last Resort role, which ensures that no common gap that impedes the response goes unfilled. As part of that responsibility, the Logistics Cluster and the LET joined forces to ensure the experience, knowledge, and resources of the LET can be utilized to fill those common logistics gaps in humanitarian response operations.

Operational Support

TURKIYE

- On 6 February 2023, two major earthquakes killed over 50,000 people in Türkiye and Syria, also leaving many hundreds of thousands of survivors without homes or belongings. Following a request for international assistance, the Logistics Cluster called on the LET to assist the humanitarian community with managing the flood of incoming relief supplies in both countries.

- Partners of the LET Network offered an airlift from the UN Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) in Brindisi to Adana in Türkiye. They provided local expertise to undertake a logistics market assessment in Türkiye. This market assessment information was accessed by hundreds of humanitarian logisticians and helped them to better understand the market context and, therefore, respond more quickly to the emergency.

- The LET offered the Logistics Cluster capacity and access to local logistics experts, including:
  - **Maersk**: staff to support operations, reefers, and moving of WFP mobile storage units (MSUs) from the UNHRD in Brindisi to Turkey to support a WFP donation to the government.
  - **UPS**: staff to support customs clearance, local transportation market assessment, and in-country transportation.
  - ** Agility**: funding for transportation and storage services.

- The LET-developed “Emergency Dashboard Utility for Airfreight Resource & Delivery Options,” better known as EDUARDO, was activated with Google flight data offering Logistics Cluster partner organizations air cargo routing data of all cargo capacity available for humanitarian operations. Designed to speed up humanitarian relief, EDUARDO was accessed 510 times in the first month after the Türkiye-Syria earthquake.
Operational Support

SUDAN

Due to the outbreak of conflict in Sudan in the first half of 2023, which has led and continues to lead to widespread and massive displacement of people and extremely high levels of insecurity, the humanitarian community needed support from all angles. Especially given the security access constraints due to the ongoing conflict, the need to bring supplies through non-traditional routes and across new borders became extremely urgent to reach those most in need.

At the onset of the crisis, the LET partners convened operations planning calls to contribute to the Logistics Cluster Concept of Operations planning. The LET companies provided information about border access constraints and capacities, including options for regional line haul operations, port capacities and ocean cargo routing and schedules, and border access information.

A.P. Moller – Maersk provided two reefer containers in June 2023 for Port Sudan. As of the end of 2023, these reefers are being transferred to a Logistics Cluster partner, Emergency ONLUS, to support their critically needed temperature-controlled supply chain, and enable vital medical supplies to reach people, many of whom have been unable to access healthcare, or had their healthcare interrupted, since the beginning of the conflict.
Operational Support

GAZA

- The Logistics Cluster was activated for Palestine in October 2023, and set up coordination cells in Egypt and Jordan to assist partners in sending cargo into Gaza. In Egypt, the government mandated the Egyptian Red Crescent Society (ERC) as the main interlocutor and service provider to the humanitarian community, so Logistics Cluster support was provided to and through the ERC.

- UPS provided a shipment from the Finnish Red Cross that arrived in Cairo, Egypt, carrying six Emergency Response Units (ERUs). The shipment supported ERC efforts to establish a supply chain hub in Ismailia, focused on improved tracking, inventory control, and accountability in the incoming humanitarian cargo registration process. It included forklifts, IT gear, office tents, cables, mobile office equipment, generators, and bicycles.

- Agility provided information about port access and temporary storage for inbound cargo, as well as information about transportation market capacities and fuel requirements.
In 2023, Logistics Capacity Assessments (LCAs) were updated in 24 countries (completed by WFP staff, including Logistics Cluster teams).

LCAs are a compendium of information about local supply chain and ancillary services capacities and resources in locations at risk for humanitarian crises. The tool is often consulted by humanitarian partners.

In 2022, the site was accessed an estimated 250,000 times.

In 2023, site access increased to more than one million views by Cluster partners, always peaking in the wake of an emergency event as practitioners flock to respond and need access to the crucial up-to-date information on the pages, to allow them to respond more efficiently and reach more people more quickly.
Preparedness

- The UPS Foundation has financially supported updating the LCA platform since 2021, which has helped increase its access and useability.

- In addition to providing resources to build LCA capabilities, UPS also provided a team of experts to support the update of the Pakistan LCA. A team of four UPS staff updated vital logistics information to inform future response efforts. This LCA had not been updated for nine years when the Pakistan landscape had changed drastically. The team volunteered their time to complete the report between September - December 2023.

- This support means that for the next emergency in Pakistan, humanitarian logisticians will be able to respond more quickly – with access to up-to-date and valid information, they will act more efficiently, thus reaching those in need faster.
Training:
The LET companies and the Logistics Cluster trained 16 new LET first responders in Dubai in May 2023

- Facilitators from the Logistics Cluster ran a 3 day simulation exercise for UPS and DP World employees to prepare them for potential deployment with the Logistics Cluster.

- The Logistics Cluster trainers partnered with the LET companies’ Steering Committee to deliver a training program that helped build a cadre of expert LET logisticians who will be capable of effectively collaborating should they ever be required to deploy in support of the Logistics Cluster.

- Overall, the feedback received from the LET training has been very positive. It was a testament to our commitment to excellence and dedication to continuously improving our services.

- This kind of support can be invaluable in emergency response, where local or specialist knowledge can be missing from the humanitarian response due to the surge of international responders. Having an understanding of the existing local context can save days of response time, ensuring that those in need receive aid faster.
Advocacy efforts

The LET team also spoke at various events and panels, highlighting the importance of private sector involvement in humanitarian response and the impact of the LET partnership.

- **COP28**

  As the world continues to grapple with the effects of climate change, it is becoming increasingly clear that it is not just an environmental issue, but also a humanitarian one. Increasingly frequent, violent, and extreme weather events are creating more and more human displacement, both short-term in response to the immediate event and longer-term due to slower onset changes. Humanitarian needs are ballooning in response, and the sector is under-resourced to deal with them. The challenge requires the public, private, and third sectors to respond together for maximum impact.

  An LET event was hosted at DP World House. UPS EVP, Chief Corporate Affairs & Sustainability Officer, Laura Lane, and Giuseppe Saba, CEO of International Humanitarian City, delivered powerful keynote addresses highlighting the connection between climate change and humanitarian disasters.

  As we reflect on our commitment to sustainability, we are reminded that our actions today will have a lasting impact on future generations. We are proud to be part of global logistics companies that not only deliver relief, but also deliver hope and support in a sustainable manner to mitigate future disasters from occurring.
Advocacy efforts

o LET responder from UPS, Caroline Kiunga moderated a panel on the role of the private sector in sustainable humanitarian supply chains. The panel, consisting of Ben Safari (UNHCR), Katherine Ely (Logistics Cluster), Frank Clary (Agility), and Mohammed Akoojee (DP World), all leaders in logistics and sustainability. The thought-provoking discussion focused on how businesses can play a crucial role in mitigating the effects of climate change on vulnerable communities.

From implementing sustainable supply chain practices to disasters, the panel spoke in one voice that the private sector is responsible for supporting humanitarian efforts.
The LET Steering Committee met with representatives of the Logistics Cluster at the World Food Programme Headquarters in December. One of the key outcomes of the meeting was an agreement on how to enhance the LET’s impact. As a result, the World Food Programme and Logistics Cluster partners will have the opportunity to accept LET offers of logistics resources when there are no common logistics gaps but there is a requirement for additional resources in preparedness or during sudden onset and protracted emergencies. This refinement of the LET model will expand the contributions of the LET partners and increase overall impact of the LET.
Publications


Looking Forward

2023 was a successful year for the LET, with the strategy evolving, training sessions conducted, and operational support provided in key flashpoints of humanitarian need. The team has also made significant progress in terms of preparedness and capacity building, with increased funding, resources and improved tools. The LET partners have also been continually recognized as a unique, successful, leading, enduring and exemplary multilateral public-private partnership in many different fora, events and media.
As we look towards the future, the LET remains committed to its mission of leveraging private sector resources for more effective and efficient humanitarian relief efforts.