

Background

The crisis in Yemen remains extremely severe, with over 20.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. The crisis is driven by conflict and is further exacerbated by the economy's decline, natural hazards such as floods or drought, and epidemics, notably COVID-19. Though Yemen had pre-existing vulnerabilities, the conflict's increasingly protracted nature has resulted in economic collapse, increased poverty and the breakdown of national social-protection systems and community safety nets. It has exacerbated long-standing vulnerabilities and severely frayed Yemen's social fabric. In 2022, the situation is expected to deteriorate further, and the severity of needs is expected to increase.¹

The scale of the needs and the scope of the emergency response has required a large, multi-agency and multi-sector response. However, the humanitarian community continues to face a number of critical logistics challenges. Therefore, additional logistical support is required to ensure humanitarian organisations responding to the crisis can deliver efficient and effective assistance to people in need.

The Logistics Cluster will continue to provide and strengthen coordination and information management, to maximise the use of available resources in country and avoid duplication of efforts. Contingent upon availability of resources and continued common need, the Logistics Cluster will facilitate access for humanitarian organisations to common logistics services.

Logistics Gaps and Bottlenecks

The major constraints on the ability of humanitarian organisations to respond to the crisis in Yemen, primarily relate to disruptions in access to many parts of the country and are of bureaucratic nature - rather than being characterised by physical logistical gaps and constraints per se. General infrastructure is largely functional across Yemen. Overall, organisations engaged in the humanitarian response demonstrate relatively high internal logistics management capacity and have developed their own solutions for storage and transport - either through existing commercial providers or by establishing their own internal arrangements. The largest impediments to the flow of material relief supplies originate from a complex series of bureaucratic and administrative hurdles.

Specifically, partners have raised the following logistical gaps and constraints they are facing:

- Administrative impediments to road transport while transporting humanitarian aid between areas under control of different entities across Yemen, which directly impact both transport lead time and cost.
- Significant challenges with the customs clearance process, in the form of changing regulations and different requirements from various entities. These significantly impact the supply chain planning, costs, predictability of humanitarian aid - especially for organisations that rely heavily on importation.
- Overall limited international transport options into Yemen, including a lack of reliable international supply chain routes directly to the northern part of the country. Air routes are limited and can be unpredictable.

¹ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Global Humanitarian Overview 2022, <https://gho.unocha.org/yemen>

- Perceived lack of a network of humanitarian logistics practitioners, to share information, solutions, or cooperation to share resources.
- The absence of commercial sea liner services to Al Hodeidah Port, to facilitate the delivery of containerised cargo into the northern part of Yemen.
- Limited suitable in-country storage capacity in remote key locations to meet humanitarian actors' needs.
- Limited temperature-controlled storage capacity in-country.

Objectives

Based on the needs expressed and identified by the humanitarian community, and in close alignment with the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan which outlines the humanitarian response priorities for the year, the Logistics Cluster aims to 1. provide and strengthen logistics coordination among the humanitarian community, and 2. facilitate access to sufficient and reliable logistics services and operationally relevant information to ensure a timely and uninterrupted supply of life-saving relief items to affected populations.

Planned Activities

The following range of activities and services 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 through the provision of common services, based on need.

The following services will be made available to the humanitarian community until 31 December 2022. Activities may be adjusted and revised as the situation evolves, based on need.

1. Coordination

The following coordination services will be provided to minimise duplication of efforts and competition within the humanitarian community:

- Dedicated Logistics Cluster staff based in Aden, Al Hodeidah and Sana'a: a Logistics Cluster Coordinator and a Coordination Officer based in Sana'a, a Deputy Cluster Coordinator based in Al Hodeidah, and a Logistics Officer based in Aden.
- Regular monthly coordination meetings held at national level, and across key hubs when and where required.
- Coordination with other clusters, agencies, and humanitarian organisations, including regular participation in and contribution to the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), Inter-Cluster Coordination Mechanism (ICCM) and the Humanitarian Access Working Group (HAWG).

2. Information Management

The Logistics Cluster will:

- Collect, manage and disseminate logistical information to support operational decision-making and improve the efficiency of the logistics response.
- Consolidate and share updated operational information, including Operational Overviews, Meeting Minutes, UNHAS flight schedules, forms, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- Maintain information sharing platforms, including a common mailing list and a [dedicated operation webpage](#) on the Logistics Cluster website, to disseminate relevant and up-to-date logistical information to the humanitarian community.

3. Logistics Services

The services facilitated by the Logistics Cluster are not intended to replace the logistics capacities of agencies or organisations, but rather to supplement them through the access to common services.

Following stakeholder consultations during the third quarter of 2021, the Logistics Cluster is steadily phasing out its free-to-user logistics services starting January 2022. This reflects a broad agreement that the gaps these services filled, no longer exist. Some services, such as in-country transport, have already wound-down. Others such as shipping of containerised cargo to Al Hodeidah port, will continue to be coordinated by WFP Bilateral Service Provision (BSP) and managed by WFP Shipping, but will be provided on a full cost recovery basis end-to-end and no longer subsidised by the Logistics Cluster for the last leg.

The transition towards phase-out for each remaining common logistics services will be determined depending on their specific nature. The operating context will continue to be monitored and, should a commonly acknowledged need arise, free-to-user services can be reintroduced as appropriate. Close coordination and consultation with partners will take place throughout, to ensure a smooth and managed transition.

Access permitting, the following services may be coordinated free-to-user, or on a partial/full cost-recovery basis, depending on the availability of funds.

Common Storage

- To support common storage of humanitarian cargo, the Logistics Cluster will facilitate access to the following storage facilities:
 - Aden: 5,100 m² including temperature controlled and cold chain storage
 - Sana'a: 3,000 m².
- The Logistics Cluster makes available Mobile Storage Units (MSU) for temporary loan for humanitarian organisations unable to secure a rented storage facility or needing to supplement their existing storage capacity.
- As a last resort, additional common storage may be set up based on needs identified by the Logistics Cluster and/or raised by the humanitarian community.
- Common storage is intended for short-term storage of humanitarian cargo. Should partners need to store commodities for long periods of time they are encouraged to source their own warehouse capacity.
- Detailed SOPs on how to access temporary common storage services are available [here](#).

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.

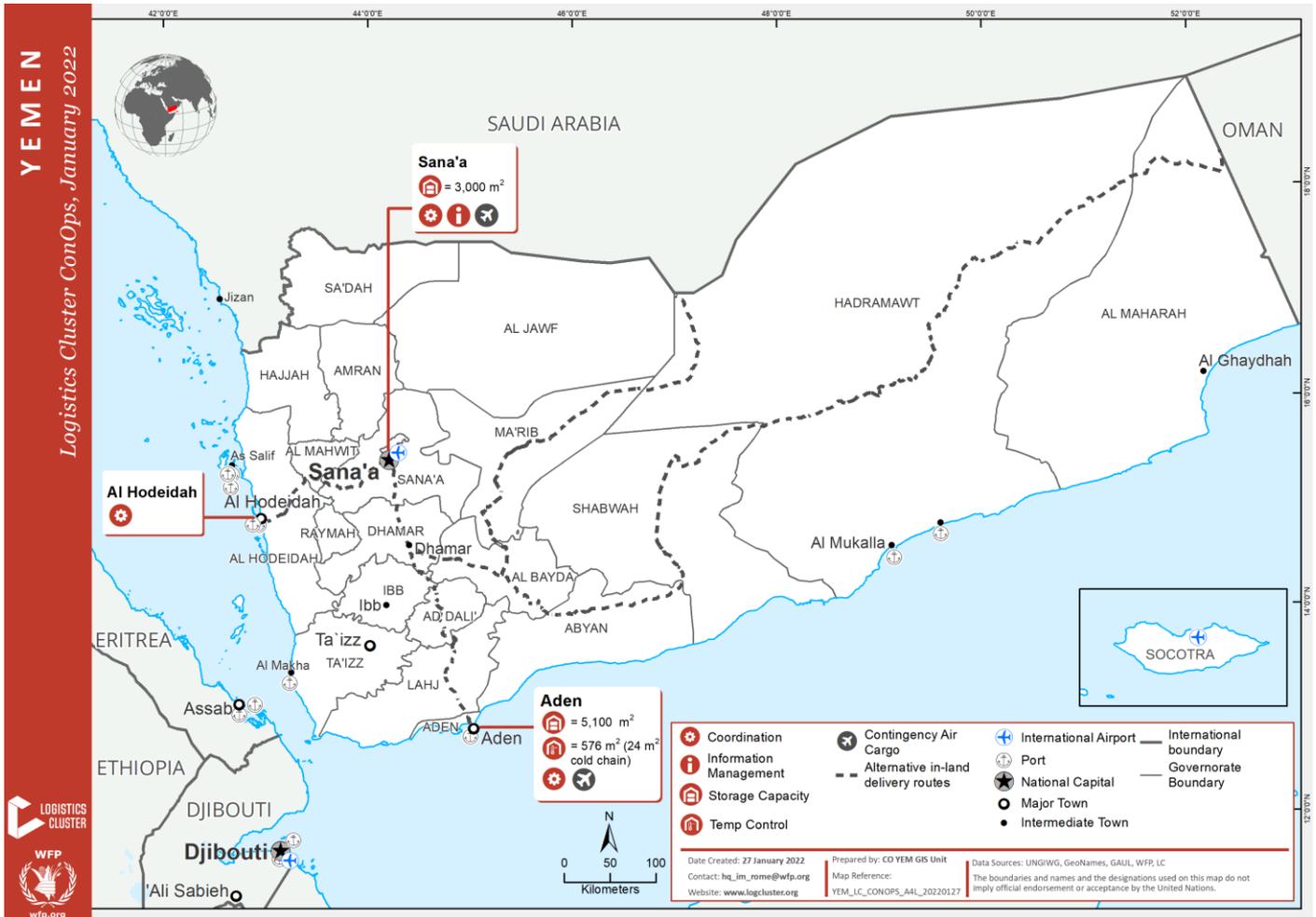
Air Cargo Transport

Ad hoc airlift service facilitation to Yemen is strictly intended for the transport of urgent life-saving items and commodities in accordance with the priorities set by the Humanitarian Country Team. This is to ensure the best use of available common resources.

- The main route for ad hoc air cargo transport is from Dubai to Sana'a and Aden. This service will only be activated in the case of a rapid onset of an emergency, backed by service requests submitted by multiple partners.
- Detailed Air Transport SOPs will be made available on the [Yemen Operation webpage](#), in the event of service activation.

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.

Annex I ConOps Map



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