
BACKGROUND

The transport of cargo by humanitarian organisations operating in northeast Nigeria (Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states) is conducted through various methods, and primarily via:

- Commercial transport
- Organisation-owned vehicles and designated drivers
- Rented vehicles with designated or rented drivers

Humanitarian agencies transporting road cargo are confronted with three primary challenges; namely ongoing conflict and related insecurities, poor road infrastructure and procedural impediments to movement.

In order to support humanitarian partners in sensitizing transporters on best practices which help facilitating access related to cargo movement, some of which are specific to the Nigeria context, this document serves to disseminate a collection of indications agreed by the Humanitarian Coordinator/Humanitarian Country Team and the Nigerian Armed Forces (NAF). They may be used to enhance existing and future contractual agreements or serve as a basis for training on principled and effective delivery of aid. The Logistics Cluster disseminates these indications in line with agreements between the Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator and the NAF which wishes to see one humanitarian focal point for cargo movement notifications; to ensure clarity/transparency for all actors; and to support to the administration of the system on the humanitarian side.

Humanitarian Principles¹

1. The delivery of humanitarian aid and assistance is guided by the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.
2. Conflict parties should provide conditions conducive to the provision of humanitarian assistance and make every effort to allow for unhindered access to affected populations wherever they are, or choose to be.
3. Humanitarian assets and supplies should be able to move freely to identify and assist the most vulnerable through the most effective means and routes.
4. Humanitarian assets and supplies should be protected and respected at all times.

Safe Driving – Recommended Best Practises

1. All transporters of humanitarian cargo should obtain a valid and approved Humanitarian Movement Notification Form (HMNF), as well as a stamped waybill by the humanitarian organisation. HMNF forms are required by the Nigerian Armed Forces (NAF) for all humanitarian cargo movements within northeast Nigeria and bound for all locations outside the state capitals of Borno (Maiduguri), Yobe (Damaturu) and Adamawa (Yola).
2. All drivers should legally be able to drive and hold a valid driver's license. Additionally, documents such as insurance, registration, road worthiness and proof of ownership should be present with each travelling vehicle.

¹ HCT Endorsed Humanitarian Access Strategy for Northeast Nigeria, Annex 1, Humanitarian Principles

3. Drivers should ensure to have all necessary equipment/tools to handle an unexpected emergency or mechanical breakdown, including a fire extinguisher.
4. A maximum of two passengers should be allowed on board of each truck/vehicle, and all passengers should be seated in the front.
5. Depending on the length of transport, vehicles should have an alternate driver. The driver's alternate should legally be able to drive and have experience with long-haul transport.
6. Drivers should not pick up hitch hikers or other persons not originally indicated in the notification process to NAF.
7. Transporters using two or more vehicles/trucks should remain together for the duration of the convoy/travel.
8. Vehicles should be strictly prohibited from transporting soldiers or non-state armed actors under any circumstances.
9. Any form of incident on the road – mechanical, vehicle collision, security related – should be communicated back to the humanitarian organisation responsible for contracting the service.

Suggested Engagement with State Authorities/Military

1. Depending on the final destination, drivers will pass a high number of checkpoints, manned primarily by NAF, but also Immigration and Customs officials.
2. When approaching a checkpoint, the driver should slow down and be prepared to show required documentation, including an HMNF and stamped waybill. Drivers should lock doors on approaching the checkpoint, open the window half way, and turn down radios. Drivers should remain courteous, professional and be prepared to answer basic questions such as name, destination and organisation. The driver should also be willing and able to allow for a visual inspection of the cargo upon request.
3. Ensure that vendors and other third-party contractors have loaded the vehicle only with items designated on the HCNF.
4. Should a driver be unnecessarily delayed or denied passage at these checkpoints or anywhere else in-transit, they are encouraged to report the incident to the humanitarian organisation. If the driver is unable to report the incident in real-time, the incident should be reported retroactively.
5. An access incident is any delay or denial of humanitarian cargo to its final destination. This is including but not limited to:
 - Delay and/or rejection of Humanitarian Cargo Notification Forms (HCNF)
 - Extended delay at checkpoints or while in-transit (i.e. availability of escorts)
 - Security incidents that directly impede the movement of cargo
 - Traffic accidents caused by road conditions and/or human error
6. A partner organisation may seek advice, support and/or intervention by the Logistics Sector during an access incident related to humanitarian cargo movement. Likewise, a partner organisation may manage an access incident on its own, and report retroactively to the Logistics Sector for tracking.
7. Transporters or drivers should not consent to bribes or any other means of extortion by state or military authorities. Should such an incident arise, the transporter should report it immediately to the humanitarian organisation.

Ethics

1. Humanitarian organisations should uphold a zero tolerance policy for fraud and corruption.
2. Any vendor and/or other third party entering into any contractual arrangement with a humanitarian organisation should be required to carry out their activities in accordance with the above-stated general principles and the provisions of their agreement, as well as to immediately report any allegations of fraud and corruption in connection with the organisation's activities that come to their attention.