

Concept of Operations - YEMEN

Background

On 22 February 2010, following a ceasefire agreement between the Government and Al-Houthis tribes in the North, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) requested the activation of the Logistics Cluster in order to focus on improving the emergency preparedness and response, information sharing, strengthening coordination, and enhancing the humanitarian community's capacity to respond to the growing needs of vulnerable populations in the country.

Since April 2011, the security situation in Yemen has deteriorated substantially nationwide. Yemen has experienced widespread anti-government protests leading to a political stalemate. Parallel to the demonstrations, Yemen is facing an increasingly complex humanitarian crisis. Families displaced by the Sa'adah conflict in the North, and Abyan in the South, as well as refugees from the Horn of Africa, continue to rely on humanitarian assistance. The combined effects of the global food, fuel and financial crises have increased poverty in Yemen and have further exacerbated the vulnerability of a population which is already suffering from high rates of hunger and malnutrition.

Gaps and Needs

Given the security situation and humanitarian crisis in Yemen, the scaling up of the humanitarian interventions identified the needs to support the movement of life-saving humanitarian cargo from the capital Sana'a to the affected areas. While access to portions of Yemen remains difficult due to limited access to affected areas, pre-positioning of fuel in Haradh and Aden is needed before onward movement to affected regions; this is coupled with the government's inability to provide basic fuel services, due to rising oil prices and challenges faced in oil production.

There is also a need for coordination and information sharing between the various actors in order to mitigate any duplication of efforts and maximize the use of available logistics assets.

The Objectives and Planned Activities

The Logistics Cluster activities aim to provide the humanitarian community with the logistics capabilities and coordination mechanisms to deliver life-saving relief assistance to the populations in Yemen's affected regions. Based on the initial logistics gaps and bottlenecks identified, the activities of the Logistics Cluster include:

1. Logistics Coordination and Information Management

- A Logistics Cluster Coordination cell for Yemen has been established in Sana'a with a dedicated Logistics Cluster Coordinator to facilitate the overall response strategy, including optimizing the use of logistics assets aiming to ensure an uninterrupted supply of life saving relief items to the affected population. The Logistics Cluster liaises closely with the other organisations and facilitates regular Logistics Cluster meetings and publishes records of decisions taken on behalf of the Humanitarian Community.
- The Logistics Cluster also has an information management capacity, which includes GIS / mapping services, with the aim of coordinating logistics operations and supporting decision making to improve the efficiency of the logistics response. Within this capacity, the Logistics Cluster consolidates information on the overall logistics situation from the humanitarian community and local authorities, identifying logistics gaps and bottlenecks.
- Additionally, the Logistics Cluster disseminates vital information through the Yemen operations page at: <http://www.logcluster.org/ops/yem10a>

2. Logistics Cluster Services

- The Logistics Cluster provides fuel through implementation of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) mechanism to the humanitarian community in order to avoid fuel shortages and therefore avoid disruption of humanitarian activities in Yemen.
- The fuel distribution systems located in Sana'a, Aden and Haradh, where fuel will be stored and distributed to humanitarian organisations based on the SLA and the Pro-Forma Invoice (PFI).
- These services are not intended to replace the logistics capacities of the organisations but rather supplement them through the provision of common services. Furthermore, these services are not intended to compete with the commercial fuel market, but to fill identified gaps.
- The Logistics Cluster established three fuel storage facilities in WFP warehouse compounds: one in the capital, Sana'a, one in northern Yemen in Haradh and one in southern Yemen, in Aden

3. Airlift

- The Logistics Cluster is making available, to the Humanitarian Community, the use of airlifts from Sana'a to strategic areas within Yemen for the safe movement of staff and delivery of life-saving relief items.
- WFP / UNHAS air passenger service is available for the medical and security evacuation of the humanitarian aid workers.
- Four flights per month are scheduled from Sana'a to Sa'adah and Hodeidah.

This Concept of Operations is a living 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.