Global Teleconference Minutes, 30 April 2020
COVID-19 Response

LOCATION
Teleconference

DATE
30 April 2020

CHAIR
Athalie Mayo & Bruno Vandemeulebroecke

PARTICIPANTS

ACTION POINTS
• Organisations encouraged to share inputs to Cargo Entry Point Updates with covid-19@logcluster.org.
• Organisations to share their international transport needs for all points of departure to all locations through the platform Cluster Humanitarian Operational Coordination of Logistics and Air Transport.
• Organisations to send their transport requests for WFP GHRP common service provision to global.serviceprovision@wfp.org.
• OCHA to share guidance documents on customs and procedures for MENA region.

AGENDA
1. Logistics Cluster Updates on Global Activities
2. Partners updates
3. Logistics Cluster Field Operations Updates
4. Roundtable on Immediate and Mid-term Needs from Partners
5. Q&A on WFP Global Humanitarian Response Plan Common Services

https://logcluster.org/COVID-19
1. Logistics Cluster Updates on Global Activities

- The Logistics Cluster is consolidating Cargo Entry Point Updates (CEPU) on a daily basis. An online map version of the CEPU is also available. Organisations are encouraged to provide their inputs to covid-19@logcluster.org.

- The Logistics Cluster is working with the Logistics Emergency Teams (LET) to consolidate information sharing. The LET and the Logistics Cluster are working on creating a system allowing partners to check cargo movement possibilities from any point of entry to final destination to ensure their internal planning.

- The Logistics Cluster launched a Cluster Humanitarian Operational Coordination of Logistics and Air Transport platform to map and consolidate international cargo transport needs from humanitarian actors. Filling in the form, partners are invited to share general information on their pipeline (point of location, point of destination, approximate volume and weight of shipment). This platform aims at consolidating all requests from all points of departure to all destinations for all types of humanitarian cargo. The compilation effort will help combining and optimising transport needs.

- The Logistics Cluster is publishing red alerts providing last minute information on potential flights. Partners are encouraged to share their requirements in advance to facilitate planning. The information published in the red alert is usually on a very short notice (4 to 10 days prior to the flight).

- In addition to the updates on free-to-user upstream cargo opportunities, the Logistics Cluster will seek to share information on routes that continue to be served by commercial transport. The Logistics Cluster is not in a position to endorse or comment on any companies’ suitability as a reputable suppliers/service providers.

- The results of the second COVID-19 Impact on Humanitarian Supply Chain Survey have been shared on the Logistics Cluster COVID-19 page. The report is available here.

https://logcluster.org/COVID-19
2. Partner updates

- OCHA Focal Point provided updates on the IMPACCT project:
  - IMPACCT group is working on facilitating importation and customs clearance of relief items during disease outbreaks.
  - The group is composed of the following organisations: HELP Logistics, IFRC, World Customs Organisation, International Humanitarian City, ITU, MSF-Belgium, OCHA, Save the Children, UNCTAD and WHO.
  - The World Bank will start supporting this initiative to assist addressing challenges in West Africa.
  - IMPACCT group is active in the following regions: Latin America & Caribbean, MENA, Africa and Asia.
  - The list of Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS codes) items has been shared by the World Customs Organisation and OCHA. This list has been established based on the initial list produced by WHO. A list of HS codes for other materials such as non-medical items is currently being compiled by OCHA. In most cases, items with these HS codes are treated as a priority if mentioned in the shipping documents.
  - Communicating incoming shipment to national authorities in advance is key to ensure quicker processes.
  - IMPACCT group has been in contact with WHO and the Radiation in Emergency Medical Preparedness to consider solution for import of testing kits in emergencies.
  - A webinar was organised with IATA on Lithium Battery. The link to the record will be shared at a later stage.
  - IMPACCT is working on commercial flight restrictions with IATA, ICEO and ACI. An application is being developed to compile all flight restrictions updates.
  - For customs and importation process related questions, organisations are invited to reach out to Virginie Bohl (bohl@un.org) and Éléonore de Malézieux (eleonore.demalezieuxduhamel@un.org).
  - Pending questions sent to the group will soon be addressed. In the meantime, organisation can access the latest information available [here](https://logcluster.org/COVID-19).

3. Logistics Cluster Field Operations Updates

- Updates were provided on the latest Logistics Cluster activations:
  - **The Pacific** transitioned from Preparedness to Response activities particularly due to the impact of COVID-19 on air traffic in the region. A new [Concept of Operations](https://logcluster.org/COVID-19) has been published.
  - The Logistics Cluster was reactivated in **Somalia** on 26 April. The Concept of Operations is being finalised. The reactivation is a response to the greater needs for information management, coordination and facilitation of access to common services due to COVID-19 impact on current activities and also to support the response to other shocks that affect Somalia including floods, drought, and the current locust emergency.
The Logistics Cluster was reactivated in Ethiopia on 29 April. The reactivation is linked to concerns on the COVID-19 disruptions on the supply chain.

A request for a Logistics Cluster activation was expressed for Sudan.

To adjust its strategy in-country or set up logistics coordination structure where necessary, the Logistics Cluster is seeking partners feedback through Gaps and Needs Analysis Exercise (GNE). More information on the GNE can be accessed through this video.

Dedicated support from the Global Logistics Cluster is or has been provided for GNE to the following countries: Colombia, Burkina Faso, Afghanistan and Sudan. Partners are highly encouraged to provide inputs.

A consolidated report on COVID-19 related activities in the current Logistics Cluster operations is now published weekly.

The Logistics Cluster has put in place a radar list to analyse countries that might potentially need Logistics Cluster set up. Partners are encouraged to share their inputs and in-country constraints to covid-19@logcluster.org.

4. Roundtable on Immediate and Mid-term Needs from Partners

- Solidarités International (SI) expressed concerns regarding the lack of responsiveness and transparency of the Supply Chain Inter-Agency Coordination Cell (SCICC). An official request for information and participation was sent by the Inter-Agency Procurement Group (IAPG) and the Réseau Logistique Humanitaire (RLH) on behalf of more than 30 NGOs and no answer was received. Questions were raised regarding the facilitation role that the Logistics Cluster could play to improve communication with this working group.

- Malteser International shared the link to access the WHO COVID-19 Partners Platform to consolidate PPE procurement requests.

5. Q&A on WFP Global Humanitarian Response Plan Common Services

- **Aviation**
  - **What passenger flights are currently being planned?** The passenger service for East and West Africa started on 1 May. Southern Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean will be added as soon as possible. Users should note that WFP Aviation will not serve routes where a safe and reliable commercial operator is functioning and will phase out others as commercial travel comes back online.
  - **How can we access flight schedules?** Detailed schedules will be available on the Humanitarian Booking Hub under WFP Global Passenger Service by COB Monday 4 May.
  - **Is the fare all inclusive? Will it be possible to get a refund if cancelled ahead of time?** Fare is all inclusive and refund possible as per procedures detailed in the passenger booking guidelines.
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- How can I raise passenger transport needs for a specific country/operation that is not currently planned? Send an email specifying those needs to covid19.aviationglobal@wfp.org.

- How will movements of humanitarian personnel be guaranteed? The United Nations Secretary-General has sent a letter to governments to facilitate travel of medical and humanitarian personnel and cargo. WFP Aviation is following up to establish agreements and all the necessary procedures.

- Will passengers have to wear PPE and how will social distancing measures be implemented? Plastic gloves and face masks will be mandatory and must be provided by the passengers themselves. Strict social distancing measures will be implemented both at the airport and in the aircraft, with reduced occupancy rate on board.

- What are the transit requirements through Accra and Addis Ababa? Passengers will go from the departure point to the hubs where they will get a transit visa on arrival. If they need to stay in the hub for more than 12 hours they will be taken to a designated hotel, which will follow strict COVID-19 disinfection procedures, before proceeding to their final destination.

- Who will manage the bookings of the hotels in the hubs? WFP or the passenger? These transit hotels are designated by the government and made specifically available for our transit passengers. Each transit passenger will book him/herself upon arrival at the hotel and will bear the cost of their own hotel accommodation.

- How do we proceed for booking from hubs to countries? All booking must be done through the global service.

- Can organisations which have existing net terms with WFP Aviation be invoiced for flights rather than using pre-payment? All organisations are required to register with WFP Aviation and arrange for their deposit.

- If a passenger does not get the date, will they be kept on a waiting list for this flight? Passengers will not be put on waiting lists, mainly due to the rigorous transit procedures imposed by the governments at all hubs.

- What is the cut-off for passenger booking before the flight (i.e. 24 hours)? As per the guidelines, the cut-off time for all passenger bookings is 72 Hrs, mainly imposed upon WFP Aviation by the different rigorous government controls at all destinations.

- Where can I find more information? The passenger booking guidelines will be the reference document. FAQs and updated passenger guidelines will be circulated in the coming days.

- How can I get answers to questions that were not addressed in this Q&A? All users intending to use this service are requested to read the passenger booking guidelines. If the answer is not available in this document, please send an email to covid19.aviationglobal@wfp.org and someone from WFP Aviation will reply as soon as possible.

- Cargo Transport

  - When will cargo movement start? The first flight from Liege (Belgium) to Accra (Ghana) and Ougadougou (Burkina Faso) will take place today (30 April). At present flights are dependent on commercial services, with capacity publicised through the mailing list and on the Logistics Cluster website as it becomes available. Scheduled flights will be made available as soon as possible.
o **Will Liege only serve West Africa?** No, all regions will be served from all hubs, with potential transits and handling stops where required.

o **Will there be a cargo service from Dubai?** Flights from Dubai are planned as part of the service and some requests have already been received to serve locations in the Middle East. UNHRD will also continue to operate from this location under the usual terms and conditions.

o **Is cargo from the regional staging areas to country capitals also free to user?** Cargo movement from regional staging areas to country capitals is currently being carried out by WFP Service Provision on a free-to-user basis. WFP Service Provision will inform partners in a timely manner should a specific route requested not be covered in the COVID-19 Global Service Provision plan.

o **How long will these free-to-user services last?** WFP free-to-user services have been planned to facilitate the COVID-19 response due to extreme disruption in the commercial market. Activities should not impact the existing commercial market, and as services by commercial carriers return to normal this provision of services will be phased out while ensuring adequate prior notification to partners.

o **What about cargo movement downstream from country capitals?** Cargo movement downstream of country capitals is not currently covered in the WFP Service Provision for COVID-19. In locations where there is an active Logistics Cluster in-country, the normal procedures for downstream requests will apply. In countries where the Logistics Cluster is not active, WFP country offices may provide supply chain services at country level on a full cost-recovery basis. This is at the discretion of each WFP country office and will be contingent on in-country capacity.

o **Is there a plan to share an overview of cargo moved through the hubs?** Yes, updates and dashboards will be shared on a regular basis.

o **Will a corridor from China to East Africa be considered?** Yes. The current focus is matching up requests, cargo volumes and destinations with the prioritization of goods and of countries to consolidate the available cargo into flights.

o **If a commercial option is found for a new cost-efficient corridor, can the option be shared to WFP?** WFP will look at all requests relevant for common needs in terms of feasibility and prioritize those that can be made available to the greatest number of partners to ensure an equal share of resources.

o **Is there any plan to move cargo from Dubai to Sana’a (Yemen)?** A passenger service from Addis Ababa to Sana’a is being set up with some potential cargo capacity. Other cargo flights may be planned based on demand.

o **Is cargo clearance provided by WFP on arrival?** No, the recipient agency must customs-clear its cargo. For more information please see the FAQs on the Marketplace.

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- If the cargo needs to move onwards in a country with an active Logistics Cluster, can that be done through the same booking process? No, if the Logistics Cluster is facilitating access to logistics services, partners should follow the normal SRF procedure with the Logistics Cluster for onward movement.

- What will be the criteria for prioritization? WFP Service Provision will remain transparent on prioritization between the three streams of items (COVID-19 items, General Health Items, Humanitarian Items) and how decisions are taken, on the understanding that all categories are important to the overall operation. Weekly meetings will be established to oversee the prioritization in line with available cargo and assets. It is not possible to put strict rules and regulations in place for all contingencies.

- Where can I find more information? For information on the free-to-user cargo transport and passenger flights taking place under WFP Service Provision for COVID-19, the full list of documents can be found here.

**MEDEVAC**

- A general overview? Work is ongoing to set up global coverage for UN, IO and INGO personnel and their dependents in the event the need for a COVID-19 related medevac is determined by the in-country COVID-19 Coordinator, designated by the RC/HC. A UN task force was set up to coordinate all aspects of this issue. As per the gHRP, and working closely with WHO, WFP is ensuring the provision of air ambulances, road ambulances, field hospital structures or dedicated rented hospital space in 6 strategic locations.

- Is there any update on the medical evacuation center in Addis Ababa? Two of the COVID-19 field hospitals are ready for deployment. Airlift rotations from Norway begin on 2 May, starting with Accra. WFP teams have been deployed to ensure site preparation and set up of infrastructure.

- Any indication on requirements for Latin America field hospital/MEDEVAC? WHO and WFP are exploring dedicated hospital space in Panama to be made available to cover regional needs.

- Until the setup of the field hospital, how will MEDEVAC be conducted for humanitarian staff? Until such time as the system is set up, each agency is responsible for using existing procedures and the exceptional WHO COVID-19 MEDEVAC Protocol issued on 8 April.

- Who will be eligible? The single MEDEVAC framework is intended to cover all UN, IO and INGO staff and their dependents. Extent of humanitarian partner coverage in relation to the gHRP is expected to be clarified through the IASC.

*The date of the next Global Logistics Cluster Teleconference on COVID-19 Response will be communicated in due time.*
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## COVID-19 Response

[https://logcluster.org/COVID-19](https://logcluster.org/COVID-19)

## Contacts

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