LET Mission:
To provide pro bono logistics services, expertise and assets to the Logistics Cluster to support the humanitarian response for three to six weeks immediately following a large scale natural disaster.

LET Background & History

- The Logistics Emergency Team (LET) is composed of three of the largest global logistics and transportation companies: Agility, Maersk and UPS. They work together to support the Logistics Cluster, led by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). The partnership was initiated by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2005.

- The LET pairs the capacity and resources of the commercial logistics industry with the expertise and experience of the humanitarian community to provide more effective and efficient disaster relief.

- The LET is the first partnership of its kind, formalising a multi-stakeholder cooperation between the private and public sector.

- It remains one of the best WEF-initiated and operationalised public-private partnerships.

LET Highlights in 2016

Disaster Response:

- Disaster response operation in Haiti
- Bilateral support to Japan and Ecuador

Preparedness:

- Support country-specific preparedness mapping for selected disaster-prone countries.
- Support the review and collecting of information to feed into the Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA) in Guatemala (UPS)
- Support of the UNHRD Optimization Project in Accra (Agility)

Steering Committee Activities:

- June: SC meeting Washington DC (hosted by UPS/Agility)
- December: SC meeting Rome (hosted by the Global Logistics Cluster at WFP HQ)
- May: World Humanitarian Summit, Istanbul
- June and November: Global Logistics Cluster meetings, London and Brussels

LET Services

The LET has supported the humanitarian community with logistics support during 12 emergency responses and 7 preparedness projects since 2007. When large-scale, sudden onset natural disasters strike, the LET supports the Logistics Cluster by providing access to a global network of transportation and logistics expertise.

The LET companies provide pro-bono assets and services and deploy highly trained logistics experts to join the Logistics Cluster’s staff for the disaster response operations. The LET also assists in improving response preparedness by collecting information for Logistics Capacity Assessments (LCAs) and country-specific preparedness measures.

The Logistics Cluster

THE LOGISTICS CLUSTER enables global, regional and local actors to meet humanitarian needs. In 2016, the Logistics Cluster has supported 454 organisations, including national and international NGOs, UN agencies, foundations, civil society organisations and government agencies across 12 operations.

Before crises, the Logistics Cluster works with stakeholders in high risk countries and regions to strengthen local capacities. In crises, where local capacities have been exceeded, the Logistics Cluster provides coordination, information management and facilitates access to common logistics services. Globally, the Logistics Cluster is a community of organizations actively working to overcome logistics constraints, and to develop and share best practices and solutions.
LET Operations Summary 2016

World Humanitarian Summit

The Summit took place in Istanbul on 23-24 May 2016 and convened participants from around the world to support a new shared agenda for humanity and take action to prevent and reduce human suffering. The Summit provided an opportunity for to enable the delivery of the Agenda for Humanity.

The LET provided input for the WHS agenda, including advocacy for more public-private partnerships for humanitarian assistance and the ratification of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement as means to reduce disaster risk and enable greater resilience through trade enabled development.

As a first of its kind partnership, the LET was also invited to speak on a panel to share best practices centered on current partnerships that have proven effective in building strong, resilient communities and effectively responding to crises. This event leveraged the experience, perspectives and lessons learned through these partnerships to explore how the private sector has joined industry, humanitarian, and cross-sector networks to increase the resilience and reduce the vulnerability of disaster-affected and at-risk populations.

Global Logistics Cluster Meetings

LET partners attended two Logistics Cluster Global Meetings in London and Brussels. The meetings are held twice a year, and bring together Logistics Cluster partners and senior logisticsian from humanitarian organisations at the global level, involving participation of 40 organisations on average.

In 2016, the overarching theme was Preparedness, Goal One of the 2016-18 Logistics Cluster Strategy and LET companies are committed to support the Logistics Cluster’s work with the stakeholders in high risk countries and regions to strengthen local capacities. Under the LET framework, the LET companies have been working with the Logistics Cluster to provide assistance in preparedness projects including mapping of ocean freight routes, air freight hubs, support with collection of data for LCAs and bilateral engagement with Logistics Cluster partners for Pandemic Preparedness.

LET Activities 2007–2016

2010 Miami
2011 Jakarta, Amsterdam, Miami
2012 Bangkok
2014 Manila
2015 Miami

2011 Nigeria
2011 Turkey, Kuwait, Indonesia
2013 Dominican Republic, Rwanda
2015 Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Guatemala

Philippines Typhoon 2009
Philippines Tropical Cyclone 2012

Pakistan Floods 2010
Myanmar Cyclone 2008

Japan Earthquake & Tsunami 2011
Nepal Earthquake 2015

Indonesia Earthquake & Hai 2007
West Sumatra Earthquake 2009

Hai Tropical Storm 2008
Hai Earthquake 2010
Hai Hurricane 2011

Horn of Africa Famine 2011
Pandemic Preparedness Initiatives

At the 2016 World Economic Forum, UPS and the World Food Programme co-hosted a session on pandemic preparedness. The session, which included reflections on the lessons learned from the 2015 Ebola outbreak, served as an opportunity to discuss global supply chain strategy related to pandemic preparedness and response, and emphasize the importance of strategic public-private partnerships. The WFP and UPS provided thought leadership around actions that public, private and civil society organizations can take to create a safe, more resilient world.

Moreover, UPS hosted the 2nd session of the International Humanitarian City (IHC) Private Sectors Frontiers CEO Roundtable. The event involved 26 participants, including leaders from the private sector and the Dubai government. The session discussed how to engage the private sector to create a possible blueprint for pandemic response in Dubai.

In 2015, the LET initiated a project aimed at better integrating ocean freight into emergency response. In the initial phase of the project, the three LET companies mapped high risk disaster regions in relation to the UN Humanitarian Response Depots (UNHRD) locations. The countries identified for this exercise are: Haiti, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Madagascar, Indonesia and Nigeria.

The goal of this project, which is aligned with the 2016-2018 Logistics Cluster Strategy focusing on preparedness, is to enable LET to respond swiftly and make informed decisions regarding sourcing and routing of relief items in these countries. The 2016 Haiti response served as a pilot for this preparedness strategy, and the learnings from this response will contribute to further development of a model for private sector engagement in future emergencies.

Engaging in Indonesia

To strengthen preparedness in Indonesia, trained LET logistics experts have been providing consultative and technical support to WFP since 2012. This includes support in developing Logistics Capacity Assessments (LCAs) and Staging Area Projects (SAPs) in Indonesia, where LET trainees have also facilitated dialogue on port authority and customs with the local Government, and with the Indonesia ship owners association on disaster preparedness.

Maersk, UPS and Agility trainees remain in close communication with WFP Indonesia. The LET trainees comprise highly valuable resources on the ground for improving disaster preparedness and facilitating meaningful dialogue with local stakeholders.

Support of the UNHRD Optimization Project in Accra

The United Nations Humanitarian Response Depots (UNHRDs), managed by WFP, is a network of six strategically located depots that procure, manage, and transport emergency supplies on behalf of the humanitarian community. It focuses on emergency preparedness and response, and enables the strategic stockpiling of relief items and equipment for its 81 Partners including UN agencies, governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Agility provided support to the hub optimization project undertaken in the Accra hub. Expert consultants from Agility undertook a full review of the premises set-up and provided a space optimization plan with designs of comprehensive racking layouts in each of the warehouses.

Optimizing hubs helps UNHRD better meet partners growing needs more efficiently and effectively, and, thus, increases support to emergencies. Accra played a key role in supporting the humanitarian community during the Ebola crisis, serving as a regional staging area for the humanitarian community.

"In light of today's humanitarian challenges, strong public-private partnerships are highly needed. The LET is a successful model which can be replicated in many ways."

Wolfgang Lehmacher, Head of Supply Chain and Transport Industry at the World Economic Forum
Disaster Response Operation in Haiti

On 4 October, Hurricane Matthew made landfall in Haiti. It marked the first time in 52 years that a Category 4 storm made landfall in Haiti, leaving 2.1 million people and more than 140,000 without a home. Following the hurricane, the country struggled with an increased number of cholera cases and some 800,000 Haitians required immediate food assistance. Given the need for large-scale humanitarian assistance, the Global Logistics Cluster requested LET partners to support the emergency response.

The response operation faced significant logistics challenges with a key bridge washed out, numerous roads impassable and phone communications down, making it challenging for first responders and emergency relief items to reach the most severely affected parts of Haiti.

Swift mobilization of LET member companies

The LET quickly mobilized to support humanitarian operations with the transportation and storage of relief supplies to enable quicker humanitarian response. The LET partners supported the WFP-led Logistics Working Group in Haiti by providing pro bono ocean freight and ground support, airlifts, and customs clearance assistance, and by offering other assets, such as trucks and refrigerated containers. In addition, warehouse space for interagency cargo in Port au Prince proved critical for the reception of international air freight, avoiding congestions at the airport, while allowing for cargo to be swiftly processed and loaded for forward delivery. Additional assets such as forklifts were loaned and specialised operators were dedicated to ensure proper support and correct functioning of the equipment.

"For several years now, through the LET partnership, we have been working together preparing ahead of disasters, enabling us to make the most out of private sector contribution when an emergency strikes."

Baptiste Burgaud, Logistics Coordinator, Global Logistics Cluster Working Group, Haiti
Bilateral Engagements

Using the LET guidelines and practices, Agility, Maersk and UPS have provided bilateral support in Ecuador and Japan. Although these responses do not fall within the scope of the LET Partnership, the companies agreed to support WFP and the Logistics Cluster by providing pro-bono logistics services, demonstrating the value and adaptability that is key to the success of this unique partnership.

Bilateral engagement in Japan

On April 16, 2016, a series of earthquakes, including one with a magnitude of 7.0, shook Kumamoto City in Kyushu Region, Japan. These earthquakes resulted in at least 49 deaths and injuries to approximately 3,000 others. More than 44,000 people were evacuated from their homes due to the disaster. On the request of the Global Logistics Cluster, UPS and Agility stepped up and began coordinating with the World Food Programme Japan to provide customs clearance and transportation support for deployment of six Mobile Storage Units (MSUs) in support of the government of Japan. The MSU’s were used to store aid materials that were initially being stored in a local school. This allowed quicker aid material distribution, and helped keep the local kids in school after the disaster. Additionally, UPS and Agility donated and shipped 500 pallets to three different relief camp locations in Kumamoto.

Bilateral engagement in Ecuador

On April 16, 2016, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Ecuador, in the Manabi province. Over 660 people were killed and close to 27,732 were injured. On April 17, WFP asked the LET partners to assess their capabilities to support any Logistics Cluster or WFP response operations. Although the LET was not formally triggered, WFP requested LET support. In response, Maersk, UPS, Agility and Damco all evaluated local capacities for donations, and each company provided on-the-ground capacity assessments and constraints information regarding local transportation, importation requirements and other local information. UPS donated local transportation and personnel to support WFP and Agility provided personnel for WFP’s consolidation warehouse operation in Quito.

Photo by: WFP, Volunteer village, Nishi-ku, Kumamoto-shi, May 15, 2016