

## **BACKGROUND**

The current outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in West Africa, because of its magnitude, spread to crowded urban areas as well as rural inaccessible jungle terrain, and its span across international borders presents various logistical and operational challenges for an effective humanitarian response,

With the latest projections that the number of EVD patients will increase from currently 3,052 (suspected, probable and confirmed) cases up to 20,000 the World Health Organisation (WHO) is scaling up its support for the three West African Governments of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In addition, indirect humanitarian needs have emerged as a result of the EVD outbreak, forcing the humanitarian community to scale up the response activities.

In order to ensure that supplies reach the most vulnerable people affected by the outbreak in a rapid and effective manner, direct logistical reinforcement, coordination, and support are necessary. WFP, as the Logistics Cluster lead, has been requested to provide Logistics Coordination and Support for the operation.

## **LOGISTICS GAPS AND BOTTLENECKS**

Upon request of the WHO, the Logistics Cluster deployed personnel to the three affected countries on 17 August 2014 to assess the immediate requirements for inter-agency logistics support.

Following consultations with all major health actors at both the field, regional and global level, the following constraints are considered the most critical affecting the current efforts to respond to the outbreak:

- Increasing challenges are being experienced in the chartering and positioning of aircraft for cargo and passenger movement to and from Ebola affected countries;
- Lack of appropriate logistics infrastructure in support of medical operations for EVD treatment;
- Disruption in local logistics services and government imposed limitations on movement and /or transshipment of goods across the sub-region;
- Weak health supply chain management system resulting in shortages of essential medical supplies in treatment and monitoring facilities;
- Complex international crisis involving a broad range of international institutions and governments.

## **OBJECTIVES**

In answer to this challenging situation, the Logistics Cluster has deployed staff and required assets to the region to augment coordination and information management and to provide the necessary logistics services in support of national and international health actors response as well as to mitigate the risk of a larger humanitarian crisis.

With the activities proposed in this Concept of Operations, the Logistics Cluster aims to address key logistics bottlenecks hampering the smooth delivery of health supplies and other commodities as per priorities identified in each country. By establishing key logistics hubs and providing tactical logistics support, the Logistics Cluster aims to facilitate swift movement of necessary life-saving supplies.

## **PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

The following range of activities and services is 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.

### **1. Coordination**

In order to support partners in all three affected country operations, the Logistics Cluster is setting up a regional coordination structure:

- In Dakar, Senegal, a Regional Logistics Coordination unit for Interagency Support is being established, allowing close collaboration with regional offices of humanitarian organisations at the strategic planning level as the outbreak is spreading across the region;
- In Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, the Logistics Cluster is fully engaged in the existing national structures for coordination at both the technical level with the different Ministries of Health (MoH) and the highest level in National Ebola Task Forces, including the UN Sub-Regional Ebola Outbreak Coordinating Center (SEOCC) in Conakry;
- Civil and Military coordination personnel will also be deployed to facilitate cooperation with existing military bodies based in the region, including the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) which will play a key role as co-chair of the Logistics Cluster;
- Regular Coordination meetings will be held at key locations and close collaboration will be maintained with the health actors.

### **2. Information Management**

The Logistics Cluster will provide information management services with the aim of supporting operational decision making to improve the efficiency of the logistics response. These services include the following:

- Consolidation of information from the humanitarian community and local authorities on the overall logistics situation, identifying gaps and bottlenecks;

- Provision of updated operational information, such as road conditions, and operational closure of border crossing points, airports and seaports;
- Situation Reports, snapshots, flash news and briefings, and Geographic Information Systems products;
- Dissemination of information management products and operational data via a purpose built mailing list and a dedicated webpage (<http://logcluster.org/ops/ebola14>).

### **3. Logistics Services**

The services made available by the Logistics Cluster are not intended to replace the logistics capacities of the agencies or organisations, but rather to supplement them through the provision of common services. Access permitting, the following services may be provided at no cost to the user, or on a partial/full cost-recovery basis, depending on the availability of funds.

#### **Transport and storage services**

Tactical transport support will be offered to the affected communities, and storage areas are identified to support the different locations. Mobile storage units are also repurposed for use in field hospitals. The Relief Tracking System Application (RITA) will support all services facilitated by the Logistics Cluster.

#### **Liberia**

- Upon request of the Ebola Logistics Task Force, the MoH, WHO and other health actors, the Logistics Cluster will establish and manage a central medical logistics hub to facilitate the consolidation of medical supplies. This hub would be established in Monrovia and jointly operated with the national health authorities;
- The Logistics Cluster will act as focal point for transport and engineering support requests from military actors such as UNMIL, in line with priorities established by the Ebola National Task Force;
- Tactical support for surface transport services will be offered using a small fleet of all terrain trucks if there are needs/gaps into areas difficult to access;
- The Logistics Cluster will also be providing support to the health partners in the establishment of logistics hubs and health facilities in key locations.

#### **Guinea**

- The Logistics Support cell in Guinea is providing ad hoc support such as temporary storage services in Conakry;
- In case of conformed gap, transport support can be provided on ad hoc basis from Conakry to Guekedou;
- Further logistics support, in terms of assets and staffing capacity, will be extended to the health partners in order to set up proper health facilities in areas of the Ebola response.

*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.*

### **Sierra Leone**

- Temporary storage can be made available in three main hubs of Freetown, Kenema and Kailahun;
- Based on needs, transport services can be provided from Freetown to the other strategic logistics locations in Bo, Kenema and Kailahun.

### **Air Transport Support**

- To respond to the urgent needs of humanitarian staff travelling within the affected countries, UNHAS is already active on the ground with fixed-wing and rotary capabilities. These assets are available to the humanitarian community for transport of passengers and light cargo within the affected countries. Should the need arise, the Logistics Cluster will liaise closely with UNHAS to facilitate the consolidation of potential air cargo or joint deliveries;
- Should the access for air-operators situation deteriorate further, the Logistics Cluster in partnership with key actors involved in the response would facilitate the consolidation of cargo for joint deliveries using pooled assets through an air bridge from a regional hub.

### **Logistics Engineering Support**

- The Logistics Cluster will deploy engineering and technical personnel to reinforce the capabilities of the humanitarian community to respond to the crisis. This would include planning and technical direction for engineering services and support in establishing medical and/or logistics hubs where necessary.

### **Humanitarian Transit Hubs**

- With a high risk of closure of the main entry points into the affected countries, the UN Humanitarians Response Depots (UNHRD) in Las Palmas, and Accra, have been put on high alert as logistics assets and other relief items are being called forward. The depots are augmenting their stocks and staffing capacity in preparation for an increase in demand as the scaling up of operations continues;
- The UNHRD hubs in the region also stand ready to play a role as potential staging area for air or sea operations; the situation is currently being fully explored by engaging national authorities and commercial actors.

*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 1: ConOps MAP






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Coord System: UTM  
Data Source: UNHCR, WFP, OCHA, IASC, UNICEF, OpenStreetMap, GeoNames  
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## EBOLA EMERGENCY

### Concept of Operations as of 01st September 2014

- National Capital
- Major Town
- Intermediate Town
- Small Town
- Village
- Logistics Hub
- Coordination
- Information Management
- Civ/Mil Coordination
- Road Transport
- Warehouse
- Engineering support
- UNHAS destinations (pax and light cargo)
- Port
- International Airport
- Domestic Airport
- Airstrip
- Primary Road
- Secondary Road
- Tertiary Road
- Railway
- International Boundary
- River
- Surface Waterbody

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