Background

On Saturday 16 April 2016, a magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck the northern coast of Ecuador. Government reports indicate hundreds of people killed, thousands injured and several thousand displaced. Current reports also suggest extensive damage to buildings and infrastructure including roads, electricity, and water supply networks. A state of emergency has been declared in the provinces of Esmeraldas, Santo Domingo, Manabí, Guayas, Los Ríos and Santa Elena.

The Government of Ecuador, through the Secretariat for Risk Management appealed to the International Community for support on 19 April 2016. International relief efforts are ongoing, including the deployment of an UNDAC Team, with whom WFP is working closely with on Logistics Coordination. Several national sectors were activated by the Government of Ecuador, comprising of relevant Government Ministries and Departments, UN Agencies, and Non-Governmental Organizations. Although the Logistics Cluster is not active, the WFP-led Logistics Sector group will support relief efforts with Logistics Coordination and Information Management, on behalf of the humanitarian community, under the guidance of the Government of Ecuador.

Logistics Gaps and Bottlenecks

Given the scale of the disaster, the Logistics Sector group urgently needs to augment logistics capacity to ensure sufficient assets and staff are in place to support the humanitarian community.

The magnitude of the disaster and the number of people affected calls for a coordinated and efficient response from the international community, proportionate to the scope of the disaster, to avoid bottlenecks and possible overlaps in efforts.

So far, the volumes of relief items brought into the country, in conjunction with damaged infrastructure and limited capacity requires setting up logistics hubs in strategic locations in Pedernales and Manta to support efficient cargo handling. UNHRD has deployed a Rapid Response Team (RRT) to set up Mobile Storage Units (MSUs) and establish hubs in strategic locations.

At the beginning of the operation, the urgency of relief items and equipment needed required coordinated strategic airlifts from the UNHRD network. In extreme cases, where urgent needs are identified, the option of similar airlifts will be explored to fill gaps and reach the affected population more effectively.
Objectives

The foremost objective of the Logistics Sector in Ecuador is to support the Government-led response by coordinating with International and National NGOs, the UN system and the Private Sector, in order to optimise logistics efforts in the delivery of the extensive humanitarian assistance.

This objective will be met through execution of the following activities in response to the earthquake:

1. **Logistics Coordination:**

In order to facilitate a unified response effort on behalf of the humanitarian community, the following coordination services will be provided, under the leadership of the Ecuadorian Government, to minimise duplication of logistics activities during the response:

   - Regular Logistics Sector field coordination meetings will be held with partners for the purpose of briefing on, updating, and revising operational plans as needed; information sharing; and analysis of existing and emerging logistics gaps and bottlenecks.

2. **Information Management:**

The Logistics Sector will undertake the following Information Management activities, in the interest of promoting and facilitating the sharing of logistics information to support operational decision-making for organisations conducting response operations:

   - Consolidating information on the overall logistics situation including logistics gaps and bottlenecks in the affected areas
   - Updating information on operational data such as road closures, key staging hubs, and important procedures through the publication of Situation Updates, Meeting Minutes, Snapshots etc.,
   - Supporting with Geographic Information Systems (GIS)/mapping tools and products
   - Publishing relevant information, such as customs and tax exemption procedures
   - All information will be promptly shared with organisations via the dedicated mailing list and/or through the Logistics Cluster website: [http://www.logcluster.org/ops/ecu16](http://www.logcluster.org/ops/ecu16)

3. **Logistics Service Facilitation:**

The support provided by Logistics Sector group is not intended to replace the logistics capacities of other agencies or organisations, but rather to supplement them through the facilitation of common services. *Access permitting and depending on the availability of funds, the following services may be provided at no cost to the user:*

*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.*
**Temporary Storage**

- ‘Centro Logístico de Asistencia Aumanitaria (CELAH)’ storage facility is the main warehouse and staging area being used by organisations in Quito. The Government of Ecuador has requested warehousing support in CELAH; the Logistics Sector in close liaison with UNHRD will provide additional capacity as required

- Two Logistics hubs are to be established in Pedernales and Manta to avoid congestion at the main entry points of affected areas and ease the flow of life-saving commodities

- Cargo stored or moved through the Logistics Sector will be tracked using the Relief Item Tracking Application (RITA)

As “Provider of Last Resort” (PoLR) WFP, through the Logistics Sector, 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.
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