Background

During 2018, humanitarian partners estimate that 8.7 million people across Iraq will require some form of humanitarian assistance. Nearly 80 percent of the population requiring assistance are concentrated in Ninewa, Kirkuk and Anbar governorates. Ninewa remains the epicentre of the crisis: of the 46 percent of the Iraqis who need assistance, four million people live in Ninewa (Source: OCHA, HRP 2018)

The Iraqi military launched a large operation in October 2016, supported by international forces, to retake control of Mosul, Iraq’s second largest city located in the Ninewa Governorate, which had been under the control of Islamic State (IS) militants since June 2014. One million people were evacuated and severe damage was reported, particularly in and around the Old City on the western bank. Operations to retake other areas that remained under IS control, including Telafar, Hawija, Shirqat, and Western Anbar, were also conducted during 2017 with tens of thousands of additional displacements recorded mostly across Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, and Anbar governorates.

Overall, more than 1.8 million Iraqis are currently displaced throughout the country and humanitarian access remains an ongoing challenge due to the volatile environment and an unpredictable security situation. There continues to be shifts and changing restrictions with regards to customs clearance and internal access approvals, particularly regarding movements between the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) and Federal Iraq. Additional logistics issues remain around disputed territories. These constraints and the nature of the operational context will persist and require a flexible and mobile humanitarian response.

The Logistics Cluster will facilitate access to common storage for the humanitarian community, including for contingency stocks and consolidation purposes. The Logistics Cluster will maintain a coordination and information management role to maximise the use of available resources in-country, provide support and advocacy for customs clearance and government liaison, and ensure a more coordinated and effective operational approach.

Logistics Gaps and Bottlenecks

The major constraints on humanitarian organisations’ ability to respond to the needs of affected populations throughout Iraq continue to be: inconsistent access due to insecurity, a rapidly changing security situation and an unstable operational context. Specifically, the following logistics gaps have been identified:

- Ongoing needs for logistics coordination and information, due to an unpredictable operational scenario with high camp populations, a largescale and uncertain returns process and secondary displacement throughout several governorates with different structures and authorities.
- Presence of various armed actors on key supply routes.
- Delays in the customs and clearances process due to bureaucratic processes or, in case of significantly altered procedures for incoming cargo and in-country commodity movements both to/from the KRI and Federal Iraq.
- Potential lack of handling and storage capacity at key entry points should there be a significant increase in the amount of supplies being brought in country, particularly at previously unused entry points.

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.
• Limited storage capacity in the most populated field locations, to include provision of prepositioning and contingency stocks to support a flexible and mobile logistics response.

Objectives

Based on the needs identified and expressed by the humanitarian community, the Logistics Cluster aims to facilitate access to sufficient and reliable logistics services and consolidated information related to logistics aspects and bottlenecks, to augment the capacity of humanitarian organisations to deliver relief items to the different affected areas, ensuring timely and uninterrupted supply of life-saving activities.

Planned Activities

The following range of activities and services are not intended to replace the logistics capacities of individual agencies or organisations, but rather to fill identified gaps in the humanitarian supply chain and enhance the response of the humanitarian community through the provision of common services, based on need.

1. Coordination:

   Coordination will entail the following:

   • Hold regular and ad hoc Logistics Cluster coordination meetings in Erbil, Dahuk and Baghdad, and in field locations if and/or when required.
   • Liaise with authorities and relevant national and international parties on behalf of the humanitarian community, to raise logistics issues of common concern, including access and clearance procedures.
   • Continue to support the established One Stop Shop (OSS) (a dedicated office focused on customs clearance facilitation) in Erbil; and, deploy a dedicated logistics officer in Baghdad to collect up-to-date information on importation and movement of humanitarian items, establish networks with relevant authorities and support the clearance processes in Federal Iraq.
   • Deploy specialised staff at major entry points (border crossings, airports and seaport) to facilitate timely delivery and avoid major bottlenecks for incoming humanitarian supplies, if/when necessary.
   • Coordinate with other clusters and agencies, including through participation in the inter-cluster and inter-agency meetings, on strategic planning and pipeline information to enhance preparedness and response actions.

2. Information Management (IM):

   Information Management will include the following:

   • A dedicated Information Management Officer responsible for the consolidation and sharing of updated operational and logistics information, including Customs Snapshots, Situation Updates, Operation Overviews, Meeting Minutes, Maps and Infographics.

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.
Information sharing platforms including a common mailing list and a dedicated Iraq Operation webpage maintained on the Logistics Cluster website to disseminate relevant and up-to-date logistics information to the humanitarian community: [http://www.logcluster.org/ops/irq14a](http://www.logcluster.org/ops/irq14a).

A dedicated Skype group to enhance communication and exchange information among humanitarian actors, as well as additional groups for Baghdad and Dahuk to address region-specific matters.

3. Logistics Services:

Access permitting, the following services will be provided at no cost to the user, dependent on the availability of funds:

**Common Storage:**

- Presently, the Logistics Cluster has the following common storage facilities in central hubs and close to displacement locations to facilitate stocks prepositioning and contingency measures:
  - **Baghdad:** 1,000 m²
  - **Dahuk:** 1,400 m²
  - **Erbil:** 2,700 m²
  - **Hamam al ‘Alil – UNHCR camp:** 2,080 m²
  - **Hamam al ‘Alil – MODM camp:** 1,040 m²
  - **Tikrit:** 3,400 m²

The Logistics Cluster will continue to monitor the usage and criticality of these hubs, adjust the capacity and scale down/up according to the needs.

- MSUs available in stock will be made available on loan to organisations requesting additional storage space for their specific programme implementation outside the existing logistics hubs, if supplies permit.


- Organisations requesting storage services must complete a Service Request Form (SRF) available at: [http://www.logcluster.org/document/service-request-form-6](http://www.logcluster.org/document/service-request-form-6) and submit it to Iraq.ClusterCargo@wfp.org.

**Road Transport:**

- Should there be a need, establish a cargo consolidation mechanism to ensure swift movement of humanitarian cargo to destination.

- Adopt all necessary preparedness actions to activate a “last resort” provision of transport services to support emergency relief operations should the situation on the ground require it.

*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.*
Air Transport:
- In case of emergency gaps of available stocks in-country, air-bridge services for priority items may be facilitated, subject to the availability of funds and on a case-by-case basis. Coordination with airport cargo services and necessary liaison between airport authorities and humanitarian actors would be ensured in close coordination with WFP management and Logistics Cluster partners and stakeholders.
- Coordinate and facilitate inter-agency humanitarian airlifts, when needed and depending on access constraints, prevailing security restrictions and required endorsements by the Humanitarian Country Team.

As “Provider of Last Resort” WFP, through the Logistics Cluster, is responsible only to provide logistics services that fill identified gaps in logistics capacity and/or demanded by organisations operating in Iraq, where access and funding permit and where these gaps limit the ability of the humanitarian community to meet the needs of the affected population.

---

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.
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.