

## Background

The humanitarian crisis in Iraq has been one of the most rapidly growing in the world, with millions of people displaced across the country. The 2014-2015 Strategic Response Plan estimated that 5.2 million people were in urgent need of humanitarian and protection assistance due to widespread violence and insecurity. By June 2015, the estimation of people in need of humanitarian support rose to over 8.2 million, further reaching 10 million in 2016.

In August 2014, the IASC activated a System-Wide Level Three Emergency (L3) status for Iraq, triggering the activation of the Cluster system.

In terms of humanitarian response, by June 2015 some 152 organisations were responding with programmes in Iraq, including international non-governmental organisations, United Nations agencies, national and local actors.

By late 2016, large scale military operations conducted in and around Mosul, Telafar, Hawija, and western Anbar, resulted in the evacuation of over one million people due to the destruction of their homes and livelihoods. The 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan estimated 8.7 million people in need, including more than 1.5 million Iraqis displaced throughout the country.

As the humanitarian crisis enters its fifth year, Iraq continues to face immense challenges, 6.5 million people (18 per cent of the total population) remain in need of humanitarian assistance.

As of November 2018, 1.86 million people remain displaced<sup>1</sup>.

Since its activation, the Logistics Cluster operation has been shaped based on the needs identified by the humanitarian community and requests for support, and activities implemented in the three main areas of:

Coordination, with regular meetings held in main operational hubs and field locations throughout the country.

Information Management (IM) to link partners and share relevant information through several communication platforms, including a dedicated website, skype group and mailing list.

Logistics Services provision through Common storage, rapid deployment of Mobile Storage Units to remote field locations, emergency transport, and customs facilitation.

Capacity building and training activities covering operational and management level staff, presented to humanitarian organisations and government agencies.

While Humanitarian partners will continue to respond to the needs of IDPs, Host Communities and Returnees throughout 2019, key logistics gaps which were initially identified have been bridged or have changed. During the first half of 2018, a general decline in demands for logistics services has also been evident, due to more predictable supply chain and pipeline, and resuming local market capacity, together with a general downsizing in humanitarian actors' presence and outreach.

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<sup>1</sup> IOM displacement tracking matrix.

With the support and participation of partners, the Logistics Cluster will deactivate and transition to a sector working group co-led by WFP and a national NGO Mercy Hands with increased involvement of the government. This is scheduled to occur by the end of the first quarter of 2019.

## Logistics Gaps and Bottlenecks

At this time, the following logistics gaps have been identified:

- Coordination and IM remains essential to share information and resources, avoid duplication, monitor market rates, and to raise issues on constraints and coordinate agreed solutions.
- Delays in the customs and clearances procedures due to bureaucratic processes or, in case of significantly differing procedures for incoming cargo and in-country commodity movements both to/from the KRI and Federal Iraq.
- Maintaining and developing links between national humanitarian partners and government counterparts is necessary to build capacity and understanding of relevant government mechanisms as the international partners gradually phase out.

## Objectives

Based on the needs expressed and identified by the humanitarian community, the Logistics Cluster aims to facilitate the transition of logistics coordination and information management to a sectoral working group. This will allow for the maintenance of the network of actors involved in humanitarian logistics, the provision of trainings for the humanitarian logistics community to strengthen local capacity and the continuation of humanitarian cargo movement to effected areas.

## Planned Activities

The following range of activities 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, based on need.

### 1. Coordination:

Through a WFP and national NGO co-led sector working group, coordination will entail the following:

- Holding regular and *ad hoc* Logistics Sectoral working group coordination meetings in Erbil and Baghdad, and in field locations if/when required.
- Liaising with authorities and relevant national and international actors on behalf of the humanitarian community to raise logistics issues of common concern, including access and clearance procedures.
- Coordination with other clusters, working groups and agencies, including participation in the inter-cluster and inter-agency meetings, on strategic planning and pipeline information to enhance preparedness and response actions.

*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.*

**2. Information Management (IM):**

Information Management will include the following:

- An Information Management staff member responsible for the collection, consolidation, analysis and dissemination of updated operational and logistics information, including Customs Snapshots, Situation Updates, Operation Overviews, Meeting Minutes, Maps and Infographics.
- A common mailing list will be maintained to disseminate relevant and up-to date logistics information to the humanitarian community.
- A dedicated Skype group to enhance communication and exchange information among humanitarian logistics staff.

**3. Logistics Services:**

- MSUs in stock will be made available on loan to organisations for emergency deployment to field locations where no other storage options exist.

**3. Emergency preparedness:**

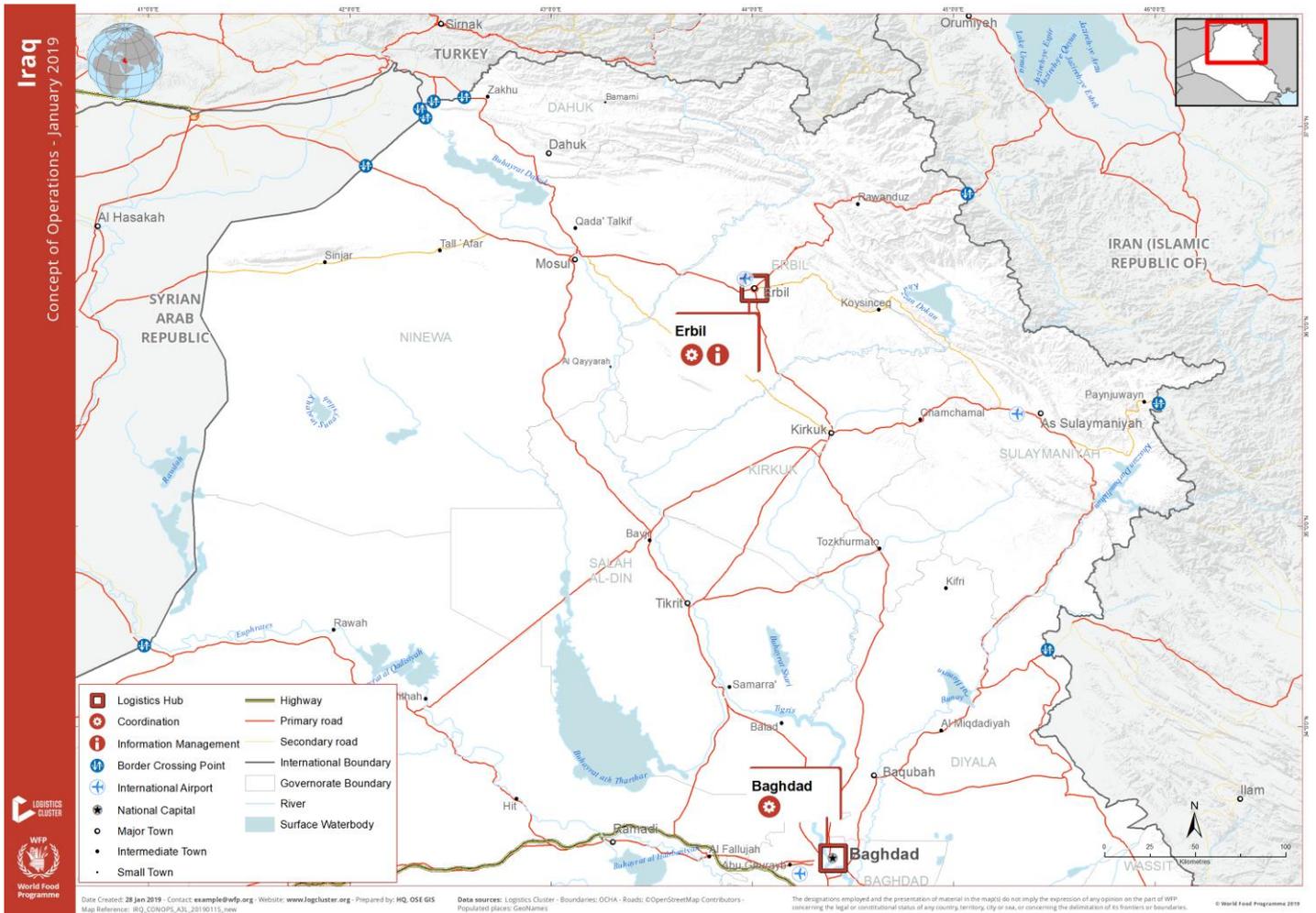
Emergency Preparedness will include the following:

- Promotion of contingency planning and emergency preparedness initiatives by drafting a joint emergency preparedness plan with the Joint Crisis Coordination Centre and the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre and pre-positioning rapid deployment storage assets (Mobile Storage Units and related equipment) in strategic locations across the whole of Iraq under government custody for humanitarian use.
- Map existing Logistics Capacities through storage and transport market assessments and development of the Iraq Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA) to be published on the Logistics Cluster website.
- Delivery of Emergency Response Simulations and trainings for the wider humanitarian community and relevant government entities across Iraq.

*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.*

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**Concept of Operations – Iraq Operation**  
**28 January 2019**



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