BACKGROUND

Since early 2014 and throughout 2015, the humanitarian situation in Somalia has deteriorated significantly due to increasing insecurity, limited infrastructure, and funding constraints on top of the population experiencing the effect of the El Niño cycle. Severe instability has directly affected Bakool, Galgaduud, Gedo, Hiraan, Bay, Lower and Middle Shabelle and Lower Juba, eight of the 18 regions in Somalia, with 1.1 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and 3.9 million people in food security stress (reported by OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin, 26 January 2016).

LOGISTICS GAPS AND BOTTLENECKS

The current situation has interrupted local markets and commercial activities, with road blocks preventing traders and populations from returning. This has also affected humanitarian operations where landside transportation of relief items and cargo have been significantly impeded, leaving the humanitarian community with limited options to deliver lifesaving cargo to populations displaced across the country. The main challenges for delivery of humanitarian cargo are the following:

- **Insecurity and humanitarian access:** Access, safe passage, delivery and distribution of humanitarian relief to the affected population and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) is severely limited and the movement of personnel and humanitarian cargo is restricted due to the overall volatile security situation and the presence of armed non-state actors in particular. The key road transport routes are affected which forces the humanitarian agencies to re-route the cargo to various ports and use coastal transhipments.
- Some key operational areas are only accessible by air and some areas are completely inaccessible.
- The general insecurity is disrupting commercial operations and preventing traders and transporters from fully carrying out their normal activities, resulting in limited services and high prices.
- Mainly inadequate and outdated logistics infrastructure is available in the affected regions, which restricts the ability to effectively execute operations.

LOGISTICS CLUSTER ACTIVITIES

In order to address the above bottlenecks and gaps, the Logistics Cluster partners are working closely together, by sharing information and resources in terms of logistics assets. WFP, as the lead agency of the Logistics Cluster, is facilitating this process and ensuring that partners are engaging in the following activities:

*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.*
1. **Logistics Coordination:**

The Logistics Cluster provides essential coordination to mitigate duplication of efforts by humanitarian actors and maximize the use of available logistics assets and resources. The coordination activities include:

- Monthly coordination meetings in Nairobi;
- Identification of humanitarian and commercial operators’ logistics capacity in Somalia;
- Coordination with other clusters, relevant organisations and entities, also through Inter Cluster Working Group Meetings (ICWG).

PLEASE NOTE: Humanitarian organisations participating in the Logistics Cluster operations in Somalia with the relevant logistics capacity are willing to support the cluster with logistics services for delivery of critical relief items when a need exists. The current set up allows organisations to access common logistical services on a full cost-recovery basis.

2. **Information Management:**

The Logistics Cluster provides information management support with the aim of enhancing operational decision making and, therefore, the overall logistics response efficiency. The information management activities include:

- Assessment missions to key locations in order to identify needs and support the affected population;
- Provision of information on common services (such as warehousing, transport etc.) in cases where logistics gaps/bottlenecks exist;
- Rapid dissemination of strategic logistics information and guidance to organisations;
- Consolidation of information on the overall logistics humanitarian response, including gaps and bottlenecks;
- Provision of logistics infrastructure Geographic Information Systems (GIS)/mapping tools and products; and
- Provision of updated information on operational data through the publication of route accessibility maps, supplier/transporter lists, situation updates, meeting minutes, snapshots, flash news and briefings to be shared with partners via a purpose built mailing list and a dedicated webpage ([www.logcluster.org/ops/som14a](http://www.logcluster.org/ops/som14a)).

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.