BACKGROUND
The humanitarian situation in South Sudan has deteriorated significantly since 15 December 2013 when violence erupted in Juba, quickly spreading to Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile states. So far, more than 1.4 million people have been forced from their homes and tens of thousands of fatalities have been reported. With active hostilities ongoing, access via surface level transport (river and road) has been significantly impeded, and in some cases completely stopped, leaving the humanitarian sector with limited options to deliver life-saving cargo to the displaced populations scattered across the country. In addition to insecurity, the rains are increasingly reducing access for road deliveries, leaving the air services as the most viable option, thereby increasing the complexity of operations and significantly increasing costs. Air operations involve a combination of airlifts with fixed wing aircraft and helicopters to locations that cannot be readily accessed by aircraft or road.

LOGISTICS GAPS AND BOTTLENECKS
The Logistics Cluster aims to facilitate, coordinate, and ensure delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance to affected populations in South Sudan. However, the Logistics Cluster is facing a number of challenges, translating into severe gaps that continue to impede the ability of the humanitarian community to deliver an adequate response. The major challenges are as follows:

- **Advanced Pipeline Planning:** The ability to match logistical assets to existing needs by the humanitarian community is further constrained by a lack of forward planning of pipeline information made available to the Logistics Cluster by all organisations, limiting the ability to match assets with demands and advocate for funding. This also covers the advanced planning by partners to be able to take advantage of the dry season and to position cargo in the field.

- **Airstrip conditions:** Many airstrips are prone to weather constraints, however a significant amount of airstrips are only accessible by helicopter.

- **Poor Road Infrastructure:** The road network in South Sudan is primarily comprised of unpaved roads and bush tracks; even during the dry season many of these roads are only accessible by 6x6 all-terrain vehicles, while during the rainy season many roads are impassable.

- **Insecurity:** The security situation remains volatile which restricts the movement of personnel and humanitarian cargo. Several key operational areas are only accessible by air and some areas are inaccessible completely due to active hostilities.

- **Seasonal Flooding:** Annual rains between May and November affect the majority of South Sudan’s...
underdeveloped road network, isolating communities in need and hampering humanitarian operations. However, this provides an opportunity for use of river transportation modality and its feasibility is currently being tested. A key challenge remains the lack of riverine units in the UN protection forces currently in country.

- **Vast Distances:** With a population of approximately 12 million (more than 80% living in the rural areas) spread across a vast area of 650,000 km², movement of humanitarian cargo from the major logistics hubs to the areas of operation is challenging, costly, and time consuming given the condition of the existing infrastructure, and insecurity among other factors.

- **Fuel Shortages:** In key response areas the provision of commercial fuel services have decreased due to conflict. Deteriorating road infrastructure (especially failing bridges) can add delays in fuel provision.

**LOGISTICS CLUSTER 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 supplement the response of the humanitarian community through the provision of common services, based on needs. The following services will be made available to the humanitarian community:

1. **Logistics Coordination:**

The following coordination services will be provided to avoid duplication:

- Fortnightly National Cluster coordination meetings in Juba; and sub-cluster meetings held in Bor, Bentiu, Rumbek and Malakal;
- Coordination in key operational locations, such as Rumbek, Bor, Bentiu, Malakal and other locations deemed necessary;
- Coordination with other clusters during the weekly Inter Cluster Working Group Meetings.

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 will include the following:

- Rapid dissemination of logistics information related to customs and tax exemption, as well as guidance to partners;
- Consolidate information on the overall logistics situation from the humanitarian community and identifying

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logistics gaps and bottlenecks;

- Provision of logistics infrastructure Geographic Information Systems/mapping tools and products;
- Provide updated information on operational data, such as road closures and entry points, through the publication of situation updates, meeting minutes, snapshots, flash news and briefings and share with partners via a purpose built mailing list and website (http://logcluster.org/ops/ssd11a).

3. **Training and Development:**
To foster more productivity and efficiency amongst staff undertaking logistics related activities, the Logistics Cluster will implement practical tailored logistics related trainings that aim to directly contribute to its objective which is to facilitate, coordinate, and ensure the delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance to affected populations in South Sudan. The objective is to support internal training; however the idea is not to remove individual organisation’s responsibility for ensuring that staff is trained in basic principles.

4. **Logistic 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 enable partners through the provision of common services. **Access permitting, the following services may be provided at no cost to the user, depending on the availability of funds and the emergency response situation (see detail in Standard Operating Procedures).**

I. **Common Warehousing:** Currently, the Logistics Cluster has common storage (active) warehouses in the following locations: Agok, Juba, Rumbek, Malakal, Bentiu, Minkgaman, and Wau. Common storage will be for short term use (up to 30 days) on a free-to-user basis and will then shift to cost recovery. In addition, the Logistics Cluster will continue to support organisations in locating and training technicians who are able to erect mobile storage units.

Guidance on how to request for storage can be found in the **SRF Standard Operating Procedure and Annex 1: Requesting for Storage Work Flow Chart.**

II. **Common Road Transportation:** The Logistics Cluster, through and in collaboration with IOM and WFP, offers transport capacity through in house trucking fleets and commercial transport suppliers. This service is subject to availability, road conditions, security, and the changing nature of the humanitarian situation. The

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Logistics Cluster can also provide options for road transport on a cost-recovery basis, if possible. Situation dependant, this service can be offered to those partners who do not have robust logistics capacities. The Logistics Cluster will collectively focus on addressing challenges in the current rainy season. The fragile road network poses further risk. In order to tackle these challenges, the Logistics Cluster will continue to assess the road conditions to identify inaccessible roads in order to map alternative access routes. All cargo movement requests are tasked and tracked by Logistics Cluster using the Service Request Form (SRF) and Relief Item Tracking Application (RITA), respectively.

### III. Common Air Transport

The Logistics Cluster offers air transport capacity through the use of dedicated air assets. These will be positioned at the appropriate locations and used to access sites that are otherwise inaccessible by any other means. Cluster Coordinators from each sector are responsible for consolidating and endorsing priority needs for their cluster, whilst providing advanced pipeline requirements to the Logistics Cluster to facilitate prior matching (advance preparedness) of the logistical assets to the existing need. In 2015 air transport will be free of charge to Unity, Upper Nile and Jonglei states, excluding the refugee operations dependant on sufficient funding being available to support these activities. Should the funding fall to a level that cannot sustain these costs, the Logistics Cluster will need to revert to cost recovery on flights.

Guidance on how to request for Air can be found in the Common Air/Road Standard Operating Procedure and Annex 2: Requesting Common Air/Road Services Work Flow Chart

### IV. Common River Transport

The Logistics Cluster will facilitate river barge/boat movements to locations that are deemed accessible either on a free of charge or cost recovery basis dependant on the market accessibility of barges.

Guidance on how to request for Common River Transport Services can be found in the Common Barge/River Services Standard Operating Procedure and Annex 3: Common Barge/River Services Services Work Flow Chart

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V. **Civil/Military Coordination:** The Logistics Cluster can provide assistance and advice should organisations decide to undertake a convoy movement and can also support the coordination of such a convoy. Convoy movements will be coordinated with UNMISS and only as a last resort should the use of Armed Escorts be requested in specific areas. Transportation costs will be borne by the participating Requesting Organizations.

Guidance on how to participate in a Convoy can be found in the Convoy Coordination and Movement Standard Operating Procedure and Annex 4: Requesting Convoy Services Work Flow Chart

VI. **Warehouse Storage:** The Logistics Cluster can provide mobile storage units (MSUs) for the strategic prepositioning of relief items based on the needs of partners, as part of the advance preparedness measures. Pre-positioning will remain a focus during the dry season and partners can request MSUs to assist in pre-positioning operations from the Logistics Cluster.

VII. **Cross border operations:** The Logistics Cluster can provide guidance and support for cross border movements of NFIs from Sudan and Ethiopia. On request, partners can discuss the options available to them with the Logistics Cluster who can provide guidance in the facilitation of cross border cargo movements.

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.