

Background

In the years since the independence of South Sudan in 2011, the country has faced an acute humanitarian crisis affecting most areas of the country. Over the past few years, the cumulative effects of war in conjunction with an extremely poor infrastructure have caused the economy to collapse, reduced crop production and livelihoods, caused underdevelopment, displacement, and weakened communities' abilities to cope with protracted crises and sudden shocks. Following the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) in November 2018, an overall improvement of the political and economic situation has been observed, which has resulted in improved access for humanitarian actors over the past 12 months. A transitional government has been in place as of 22 February 2020. In 2020, nearly 7.5 million people are still in need of some type of humanitarian assistance or protection. Of the 78 counties in South Sudan, 45 are in severe need and 33 are in extreme need (OCHA South Sudan, 2019).

Logistics Gaps and Bottlenecks

South Sudan remains one of the most logistically challenging countries in which to operate. Existing road networks are among the most underdeveloped in the world, although the United Nations and private sector actors have made progress in improving road movement in the past year, enabled by an improved security situation. Approximately 60 per cent of the limited road network becomes inaccessible during the long rainy season, especially affecting Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile States (OCHA South Sudan, 2019). While the access situation improved in most parts of the country, insecurity and bureaucratic access impediments remain a challenge for the humanitarian community. The following logistics gaps have been identified:

- Need for consolidated logistics coordination and information sharing to reduce duplication of efforts and ensure safe and efficient logistics operations.
- Physical constraints impeding access to a number of deep field locations which are only reachable by air, especially during the rainy season.
- Lack of commercial road and river transporters outside of the capital city generating challenges for organisations to deliver life-saving humanitarian items to populations in dire need.
- Insecurity along major supply routes, making movement of humanitarian cargo challenging for organisations to undertake on their own.
- Lack of common storage space in deep field locations, which makes pre-positioning cargo by road during the dry season difficult.
- Need for increased capacity amongst local staff for a more efficient humanitarian response.

Objectives

The Logistics Cluster's core functions in South Sudan are to provide quality information management and coordination, facilitate access to common services, and build the logistics capacity of the humanitarian community. The cluster's main objectives in

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.

2020 are to continue the transport modality shifts undertaken in 2018 and 2019 which saw an increase the use of road and river transport; strengthen coordination structures in Juba, logistics hubs, and deep field locations; provide capacity building and training services to humanitarian organisations, with a special focus on national actors to enhance preparedness, and further improve the sharing of key logistics information through employing new techniques such as the integration data onto an online platform.

Planned Activities

The following range of activities and services are not intended to replace the logistics capacity 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 facilitation of access to common services, based on need. The following services will be made available to the humanitarian community on a free-to-user basis throughout 2020 and may be reviewed in the event of situational changes in-country.

1. Coordination

In an effort to address identified logistics gaps, minimise duplication of efforts, and ensure logistics efficiencies, the Logistics Cluster will undertake the following coordination activities in collaboration with partner organisations and key stakeholders across South Sudan:

- At the national level the Logistics Cluster will maintain representation at decision-making forums including the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), Needs Analysis Working Group (NAWG), Information Management Working Group (IMWG), Operational Working Group (OWG), Civil Military Advisory Group (CMAG), Access Working Group and Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) planning meetings with key stakeholders including clusters coordinators, OCHA and UNMISS.

The Logistics Cluster will also conduct bi-monthly coordination meetings in Juba, including Special Focus coordination meetings aimed at addressing specific gaps identified by the humanitarian community in-country.

- At the state level, dedicated Logistics Cluster staff will participate in state-level ICCG meetings and conduct monthly coordination meetings in major response areas such as Bentiu, Malakal, Bor, Rumbek, Wau and Yei.
- At the deep field level, the cluster will support logistics coordination in strategic locations where many humanitarian organisations are present on an ad hoc basis as logistics gaps arise and need to be addressed.

2. Information Management

To support operational decision-making and improve the efficiency of the overall logistics response, the Logistics Cluster will collect, analyse and disseminate information management products to:

- Consolidate information on the overall logistics situation including logistics gaps and bottlenecks.
- Update partners on operational updates through the publication of situation updates, meeting minutes, snapshots, and briefings.
- Map logistics infrastructure through Geographic Information Systems (GIS) services.
- Advise partners of weekly transport plans through the publication of a schedule for air, river and road movements.

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.

- All information will be promptly shared with organisations via the dedicated mailing list and/or through the Logistics Cluster website: <https://logcluster.org/ops/ssd11a>.

3. Common Logistics Services

Access permitting, the following services will be coordinated at no cost to the user, depending on the availability of funds. Should the cluster's funding fall to a level that cannot sustain the cost of operations, any options for service provision through WFP (on a cost-recovery basis) will be communicated.

- **Common Warehousing:** The Logistics Cluster manages common storage warehouses on behalf of the humanitarian community in the following locations: Bentiu, Bor, Juba, Malakal, Nimule, Rumbek, Wau, Yambio and Yei. Common storage in the Juba dispatch hub is for transit storage only ahead of air transport. The Logistics Cluster also makes Mobile Storage Units (MSUs) available to partners to use as common storage in an additional 10 deep field locations.
 - As pre-positioning operations will remain a primary focus during the dry season, the Logistics Cluster will provide MSUs for the strategic prepositioning of relief items based on the needs of requesting organisations, as part of advance preparedness measures. Priority will be given to organisations willing to manage MSUs as common storage facilities on behalf of the entire humanitarian community rather than solely for individual use, especially in ICCG-prioritised areas for interventions.
- **Common Air Transport:** The Logistics Cluster facilitates access to common air transport using dedicated air assets, made available by WFP Aviation, to locations not reachable by road or river. The Logistics Cluster is currently not funded for refugee operations and therefore does not provide air transport to locations specifically for refugee responses.
 - Priority locations/sectors are decided by the national ICCG, however ,other locations will continue to receive support.
 - Air assets will be positioned at the dispatch hubs (Bor, Juba, Rumbek) depending on operational requests, security and availability of parking. Helicopters will be positioned in Bor and Rumbek only.
 - Due to the availability of fixed wing planes to charter to airstrips that are suitable for fixed wing landings year-round, the Logistics Cluster does not provide airlifts to Bentiu, Bor, Malakal, Rumbek, or Wau. Only in the event of a need to deliver life-saving cargo and if approved by the ICCG will the Logistics Cluster send air assets to these locations.
- **Common River Transport:** Through WFP, the Logistics Cluster will facilitate access to river barge/boat movements to locations that are deemed accessible. The barges will be the primary transport modality for the delivery of cargo from Bor to Malakal and Melut. Locations along the Sobat River will be served by boats from Malakal, and Bor to Old Fangak on the El Zafar River will be served by boats from Bor. Depending on demand, the Logistics Cluster is able to coordinate boat movements from Malakal to Renk via Kodok and Melut and down the Nile River to Tonga. As additional routes become available, the Logistics Cluster will inform organisations via coordination meetings, schedules, maps, transport plans posted on the website, and announcements through the mailing list.
- **Coordination of Road Transport:** The Logistics Cluster coordinates inter-agency road convoys (for cargo only) when roads are physically accessible and security risks can be largely mitigated through the use of well-established access negotiation by WFP. The Logistics Cluster will set a departure schedule for convoys along the Western Corridor, Torit/Kapoeta, Yambio, Yei from Juba and to Pibor, and in Jonglei State from Bor if the context allows it. Any other

routes must be requested by email to southsudan.clustercargo@wfp.org. Detailed instructions, which must be strictly adhered to, will be shared with all interested participants and in order to participate, the required information must be relayed back to the Logistics Cluster by the requested date. Individual organisations are responsible for organising and paying for their own transport. Information on available commercial transporters will be shared upon request.

- **The Logistics Cluster, in collaboration with IOM, shall coordinate Beyond Response common transport services for transportation of humanitarian cargo from Bentiu, Wau and Malakal to short distances within the states.** Potential locations will be shared via the mailing list, on maps, during coordination meetings, and via direct contact with Logistics Cluster teams in Bentiu, Wau and Malakal. Requests to access the service, in the form of completed Service Request Forms (SRF), must be submitted by email to southsudan.clustercargo@wfp.org.

4. Capacity Building

In 2020, the Logistics Cluster will build on the logistics trainings delivered in 2019 and further increase its training offering to the humanitarian community. The dedicated training officer deployed in 2019 will continue to offer training throughout the country to build national logistics capacity. Trainings offered will be based on identified national capacity needs.

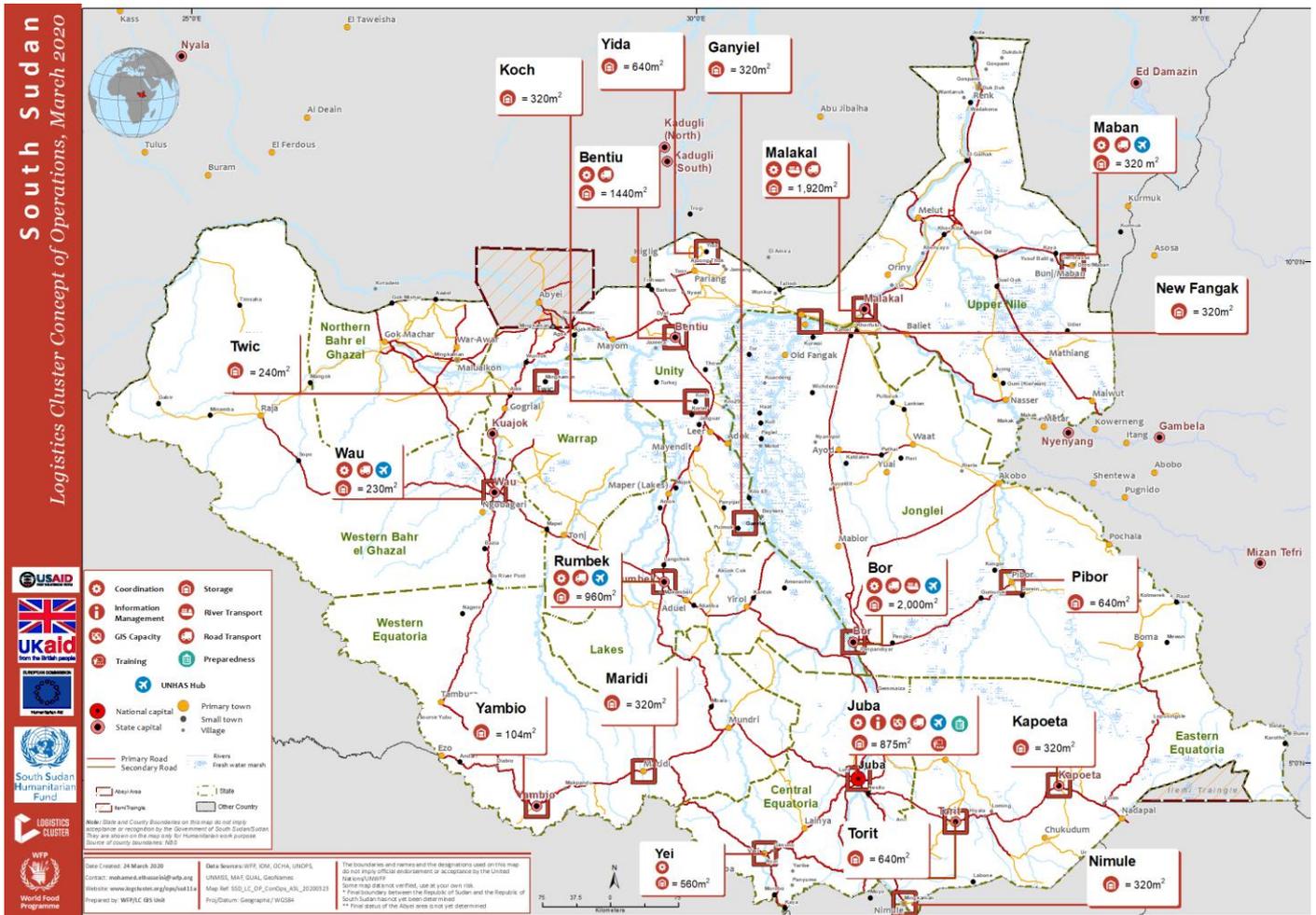
5. Preparedness

In 2020 the Logistics Cluster will support preparedness activities with the pilot implementation of the GIS-based preparedness platform. A dedicated preparedness team is in place to support the rollout along with a GIS officer. The cluster also leads the Logistics Pillar of the National Task Force for Ebola Virus Disease and COVID-19 and as part of this, will share information on preparedness measures on its website.

All Standard Operating Procedures to access the above services are listed on the Logistics Cluster [website](#), or alternatively please contact the Logistics Cluster at southsudan.clustercargo@wfp.org.

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.

Annex I ConOps Map



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.