Special-Focus Coordination Meeting Minutes, 28 January 2020
South Sudan, Juba

LOCATION: Juba, OCHA Conference Room
DATE: 28 January 2020
CHAIR: Logistics Cluster

PARTICIPANTS: African Humanitarian Corps (AHC), Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Help-Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe (Help EV), Humane-Aid for Community Organization (HACO), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Medair, Médecins Sans Frontières Spain, Relief International (RI), Rural Community Action for Peace and Development (RUCAPD), Touch Africa Development Organization (TADO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Universal Intervention and Development Organization (UNIDOR), Universal Network for Knowledge & Empowerment Agency (UNKEA)

ACTION POINTS:
- Partners to share further information on Sobat river accessibility, including locations and maximum boat capacities during the dry season, with the Logistics Cluster.
- Organisations to adjust their resupply schedules by pre-positioning their stock requirements a minimum of two months in advance.
- Partners were requested to address river transport challenges regarding SRFs, cargo reception/delivery, packaging/labelling, and communication, as outlined below in Section 5.

AGENDA:
1. 2019 & 2020 River Movement Achievements
2. River Movement Key Information
3. River Routes, Frequency & Timeline
4. River Movement – Summary of Responsibilities
5. River Movement – Challenges
6. AOB, Presentations & Discussions

1. 2019 & 2020 River Movement Achievements

- In 2019, the Logistics Cluster continued to expand the use of river transport to deliver lifesaving humanitarian cargo. Through ten barge movements and seven boat convoys, 1,357 mt of relief items were delivered to 22 locations across the country. The implementation of boat convoy river movements allowed the cluster to reach new deep field locations that were initially served by air, including locations along the Sobat river (e.g. Mandeng, Ulang, etc.) in line with the logistics and cost efficiency strategy.
- In 2020, partners have already submitted Service Request Forms (SRFs) for the fourth barge movement of the year. The second boat convoy is set to depart by the end of this week, and cargo is currently being consolidated for boat convoys three and four. For further information on the current

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2. River Movement Key Information

- The Logistics Cluster operates with a mix of barges (capacity from 600 mt to 2000 mt) and boats (capacity from 30 mt to 200 mt), allocated depending on requests and destinations.
  1. Cargo to be delivered along the river Nile will be transported with the barge ex-Bor/Malakal/Renk;
  2. Cargo to be delivered along the Sobat river will be first transported ex-Bor with the barge and then transshipped into boats in Malakal. If cargo is already prepositioned in Malakal then the Logistics Cluster will allocate boats for Sobat;
  3. Cargo to be delivered along El Zharaf river to Old Fangak will be transported ex-Bor with boat convoys.

- When needed, the Logistics Cluster will coordinate with WFP to utilise contracted river assets (boats and barges). If the Logistics Cluster does not receive enough interest for a river moment, there is the possibility to co-load cargo on WFP river assets; the exception being that dangerous goods cannot be co-loaded with food.

- The Logistics Cluster will no longer fly cargo to any locations reachable by river. In case of emergency (e.g disease outbreak), the cluster will remain flexible and may use air transport on an exceptional basis. The Logistics Cluster will determine the mode of transport in such circumstances.

- River transport is not as affected by seasonality as road transport and is available year-round. However, during the peak of dry season, water levels along the Sobat river are expected to reduce from February to May. Partners with further information on Sobat river accessibility are requested to share information with the Logistics Cluster.

- Organisations are encouraged to think ahead and preposition their cargo in these locations before the Sobat river becomes impassable, especially in Mandeng and Ulang.

- When cargo needs to be delivered to any location on the rivers, the first step for any organisation is to submit a Service Request Form and pre-position their cargo to the Bor or Malakal Logistics Cluster warehouses.

- Cargo delivery is a free-to-user service and procedures remain similar to air transport. Please consult the Service Request Form User Instructions.

3. River Routes, Frequency & Timeline

- Partners were informed that the Logistics Cluster operates on five main river routes. Details regarding the routes, possible stops en route, movement frequency, and approximate time en route after departure are available in the River Movement Strategy – January 2020.

- The Logistics Cluster emphasised that the approximate time en route after departure should be differentiated from the overall time needed for the cargo to reach its final destination. Depending on
when the cargo is delivered to Bor/Malakal warehouses, organisations may need to wait for other partners to submit requests to consolidate enough cargo for river movements. The Logistics Cluster will provide an estimated timeline for cargo delivery upon receipt of SRF.

- Partners were also informed that approximate time en route can vary depending on both the number of stops and their associated offloading time, as well as delays caused by congestion in ports.
- As the Renk-Bor route is operated on an ad hoc basis, organisations are highly encouraged to pre-position the correct amount of cargo in Renk to ensure efficiencies and prevent backloading.
- In the event organisations are interested in transporting cargo to a location on the river that is not listed in the river routes table, partners are requested to submit their SRFs for the Logistics Cluster to assess the possibility of delivering the cargo.
- Partners were advised to consult the River Transport Routes Map to view the different routes.

4. River Movement – Summary of Responsibilities

- Partners were presented with the below table to summarise the responsibilities of river transport service users and the Logistics Cluster:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation Responsibilities</th>
<th>Logistics Cluster Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Submit accurate Service Request Forms (SRFs)</td>
<td>1. Announce schedules and register SRFs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pre-position cargo in Bor/Malakal;</td>
<td>2. Provide estimated timeline for cargo delivery upon receipt of SRF;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Plan ahead – river operations have longer lead times compared to air and road;</td>
<td>3. Update organisations on schedules, dispatches, progress, and vessel arrivals;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Pre-position cargo for a minimum two-month intervention;</td>
<td>4. Loading/Offloading in Bor &amp; Malakal;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Organise and pay for cargo collection at destination (with exception of Bor and Malakal);</td>
<td>5. Cargo transhipment in Malakal for items destined to locations along the Sobat river;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Deliver cargo to the riverside in locations where the Logistics Cluster does not have presence;</td>
<td>6. Contract barge/boats;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Provide Relief and Rehabilitation (RRC) clearance;</td>
<td>7. Issue signed and stamped waybills indicating dispatch details;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Fill in the receipt details on the waybill at the destination, sign, and stamp (indicate any cargo excess or losses). Give white copy to operator;</td>
<td>8. Provide Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM) clearance;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Insure cargo to be transported by river.</td>
<td>9. Provide access clearance prior to departure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Partners were informed that it is the boat operator’s responsibility to offload the cargo from the boat at the destination. The organisation then needs to contract porters to collect the cargo at the docking site and transport it to the final destination.
- The Logistics Cluster is not responsible for any cargo loss or damages en route (e.g. fuel leak); however, organisations are requested to communicate any such issues to the cluster. The Logistics Cluster emphasised that when using Logistics Cluster river transport, organisations need to adjust
their re-supply schedules by pre-positioning their stock requirements a minimum of two months in advance.

5. River Movement – Challenges

- Partners were informed of the main challenges faced by the Logistics Cluster resulting in slowed river operations including:
  - **SRFs**: Inaccurate SRFs; no response from partners to SRF amendment requests; cargo delivered to warehouses not matching with SRFs;
  - **Cargo reception**: poor packaging of cargo; no labelling of the cargo;
  - **Cargo delivery**: partners’ lack of presence at barge/boat arrival; delays in offloading at the destination;
  - **Communication**: lack of feedback from partners.

- Partners were requested to address the above challenges to ensure efficient and timely river movements.
- Due to multiple handling, partners requesting cargo transport towards destinations along the Sobat river should consider using good quality packaging and labelling of items in order to identify the cargo owner during the cargo transhipment in Malakal.

5. AOB, Presentations & Discussions

- Relief International’s senior logistics officer presented the benefits of his experience as a river transport service user to attendees. Benefits included cost efficiency, large capacity of barge/boats, year-round accessibility, and that it encourages organisations to plan ahead and adjust their resupply strategies.
- Partners were informed that the Logistics Cluster does not provide cold chain storage in South Sudan. However, the cluster can inform organisations interested in transporting climate-sensitive cargo of departure dates for just-in-time deliveries to the riverside in Bor/Malakal to eliminate long-term storage in Logistics Cluster warehouses. SRFs are still required for these items.
- Partners expressed some difficulties in completing SRFs, especially determining weights and volumes. The Logistics Cluster invited partners to register their staff for SRF and Basic Logistics trainings. Upcoming training information will be communicated through the Logistics Cluster website.

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