Ukraine – Concept of Operations

BACKGROUND

Due to ongoing instability and conflict in Ukraine since April 2014, areas primarily in the eastern part of the country have experienced a deteriorating humanitarian situation. Heavy shelling and armed conflict has led to significant displacement of people. In the planning figures for the revised Humanitarian Response Plan for 2015, 5 million people are estimated to be in need, including 1 million internally displaced people (IDPs). The population in the most affected areas, Donetsk and Luhansk, continue to experience limited or no access to humanitarian aid, including basic life-saving services, and face constant security threats.

The lack of security continues to challenge humanitarian operations. The operating environment in the districts of Donetsk and Luhansk is volatile, with significant implications on the protection of civilians, aid workers and on the assessment of needs and the delivery of assistance. Shelling affects infrastructure and hampers road access to deliver humanitarian assistance to people remaining in the conflict zone.

In late December 2014 the following Clusters were activated: Education; Emergency Shelter & NFIs; Food Security; Health & Nutrition; Livelihoods / Early Recovery; Protection; and WASH. The Ukraine Logistics Cluster was officially activated on 18 February 2015.

Logistics Gaps and Bottlenecks

The Logistics Cluster coordinates humanitarian logistics in order to facilitate the delivery of life saving humanitarian assistance to the affected populations in eastern Ukraine. The humanitarian logistics operation faces a number of challenges, translating into severe gaps that continue to impede the timely deliveries of life saving relief items.

The main logistics gaps and needs have been identified to be as follows:

- **Gap:** Limited or no access to affected populations, as damaged infrastructure, ongoing conflict and a volatile security situation restricts humanitarian staff movement and transport of cargo.

- **Need:** Advocacy in close cooperation with the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and OCHA to overcome logistics bottlenecks to improve humanitarian access.

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• **Gap**: Lack of coordinated logistics response.  
  **Need**: Provision of a logistics coordination platform and an information management (IM) system through the deployment of a Logistics Cluster Coordinator and support staff.

• **Gap**: Changing regulations and access to relevant logistics Information.  
  **Need**: There is a need for stronger coordination, compiling and information sharing between the various actors in order to raise issues of common concern hampering the response; mitigate any duplication of efforts; and maximize the use of available logistics assets.

• **Gap**: Many organisations lack the capacity or expertise to manage the required paperwork for permission and transport to cross the ‘contact line’ between government and non-government controlled areas.  
  **Need**: There is a need to provide support for paperwork processing, and provide transport services, including necessary warehousing for organisations to transport cargo across the ‘contact line’.

**Objectives**

1. The Logistics Cluster will assist with coordination and information management; focusing on identifying logistics bottlenecks and proving a forum for humanitarian actors to address these challenges.
2. The Logistics Cluster will provide limited transport and storage services to partners involved in the humanitarian response.

**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 need. Further, the Logistics Cluster aims to not replicate logistics services available commercially in Ukraine already. Logistics Cluster activities will include:

1. **Coordination**: The Logistics Cluster will facilitate regular coordination meetings with the humanitarian community to share information on the logistics situation, bottlenecks, storage facilities, infrastructure, access, gaps and records decisions taken. The following coordination services will be provided to minimize duplication:

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.
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• The Logistics Cluster Coordination Cell will be activated in Kyiv with a dedicated Logistics Cluster Coordinator who will ensure coordination of the logistics response in support of the humanitarian community.

• Logistics Coordination meetings will be regularly held in Kyiv and Donetsk cities, and can also be held in other areas of the country based on needs.

• The Logistics Cluster will, in close cooperation with OCHA, advocate on behalf of all humanitarian organisations for simplification and streamlining official requirements for humanitarian cargo transport.

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 to this operation. These services will include:

• Consolidating and sharing information from the humanitarian community and local authorities on the overall logistics situation, including logistical gaps and bottlenecks.

• Provision of updated operational information, such as road conditions, warehouses and customs procedures as well as the publication of SitReps, bulletins, snapshots, flash news and briefings.

• Development of GIS/Mapping tools and products, inclusive of specific maps related to logistics infrastructure, in response to expressed needs of partners.

• Monitoring of the situation on ground and provision of updates on Logistics Capacity Assessments. These assessments will be regularly shared with the humanitarian actors to ensure efficient delivery objectives.

• The Logistics Cluster will include a dedicated Information Management Officer.

3. Logistics 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 supplement them through the provision of common services. Transport and warehousing is limited to facilitating access to non-government controlled areas, and is not intended to support logistics operations in government controlled areas. Access permitting, the following services may be provided at no cost to the user, cost-recovery may considered in future subject to funding constraints:

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Road transport and warehousing

- Temporary storage services on both sides of the conflict line include handling and consolidation. A Logistics Cluster Warehouse staging area is provided in Dnipropetrovsk for consolidation of cargo prior to shipment across the contact line. Currently 72 hours is allowed for storage for consolidation, or awaiting permission to cross contact line. Another common warehouse is established in Donetsk in non-government controlled area for storing humanitarian cargos for up to 2 weeks. Additional common storage will be considered in Luhansk city based on needs of partners. These warehouses are all commercially operated warehouses, with the Logistics Cluster not being the sole user. Minimum of 500 m² can be made available in each location.

- Transport is provided from Dnipropetrovsk to Donetsk, or Luhansk. Pickup and delivery of cargo can be from other warehouses than the Logistics Cluster warehouses. Pickup and delivery from/to other locations will be considered on a case-by-case basis, no handling service will be provided in these cases.

- Permissions from the relevant authorities are obtained on the behalf or service users.

- Specific warehousing or transport needs will be considered on a case-by-case basis. SOPs for accessing services are available at: [http://www.logcluster.org/ops/ukr15a](http://www.logcluster.org/ops/ukr15a). Requests prioritised based on humanitarian priority needs set by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

Contingency Planning

As per the Inter-Agency contingency planning process agreements, the Logistics Cluster can provide limited storage for emergency lifesaving contingency supplies. If requested to hold these contingency stocks, the Logistics Cluster will release the contingency items only in the event of the Inter-Agency contingency plan being activated. For instance, these are not ‘preparedness’ stocks in long term storage, such as items for winter or new school years, they are non-perishable items held in the event of a rapid escalation of the emergency. The contingency stock service is not to replace organisations’ regular warehousing, nor to be considered ‘free’ warehouse space.

NOTE: All contingency stock storage requests will be strictly at the discretion of the Logistics Cluster Coordinator, and contingency warehouse space only made available subject to contingency plan funding.

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