BACKGROUND

Tropical Cyclone Pam struck Vanuatu, hitting the capital of Port Vila, as an extremely destructive category 5 cyclone on the evening of 13 March. Winds are estimated to have reached 250kmph with gusts peaking at around 320kmph, causing serious damage to infrastructure and leaving debris strewn across the capital. Shefa Province has been declared a state of emergency, with other areas to be determined following aerial assessments. Tafea province was badly hit by the cyclone but the extent of the damage is unknown pending further initial assessments and feedback from local authorities. The cyclone has led to extensive disruptions of public transport and severe damage to public and private buildings. Several main communication and electricity lines were cut causing power outages for a huge number of households.

LOGISTICS GAPS AND BOTTLENECKS

Humanitarian assessments are still ongoing, the Logistics Cluster has convened a Logistics Cluster Coordination meeting and identified the following humanitarian logistics gaps.

- Coordination and information sharing
- The lack of storage capacity in Port Vila Airport combined with an increase of international air shipments may trigger congestion at this primary international entry point;
- Little to no storage capacities available in affected areas;
- Limited transport assets available to support coastal delivery between the islands, creating a risk for competition amongst actors to access these assets;
- De-congestion and coordination of vessels/air assets at Port Vila
- The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and the Vanuatu Humanitarian Team (HT) partners have limited logistics staff capacity in country;
- Road, Warehouse and Airstrip/Landing Zone infrastructure rehabilitation assessments;

OBJECTIVES

To respond to this challenging situation, the Logistics Cluster has deployed staff and required assets to the region to augment coordination and information management and provide the necessary logistics services in support of national and international humanitarian actors and to mitigate the risk of a larger humanitarian crisis.

With the activities proposed in this Concept of Operations, the Logistics Cluster aims to support the Government of Vanuatu (GoV) to address the initial logistics challenges of the response to Cyclone Pam by reinforcing the national coordination structure and address key logistics bottlenecks hampering the smooth delivery of relief items as per the priorities established by the Humanitarian Country Team. By establishing key logistics hubs and providing logistics support, the Logistics Cluster aims to facilitate swift movement of necessary life-saving supplies by alleviating the potential congestion at key logistics hubs and assisting with reception and facilitation of onward transport to ensure the unimpeded flow of humanitarian goods to the affected area.
PLANNED 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 Government of Vanuatu and the humanitarian community based on needs.

1. **Coordination:** The following coordination services will be provided to minimise duplication.
   - Support the Government of Vanuatu with the coordination of the logistics response to establish local sustainable response mechanisms.
   - Provide expert personnel to reinforce the NDMO and assist with the coordination of the response.
   - Establish a dedicated main Logistics Cluster Coordination office in Port Vila.
   - Coordinate the reception of incoming relief items at Port Vila Airport and Port.
   - A Logistics Civil-Mil Coordination Officer has been deployed to facilitate cooperation with existing military bodies in the region and international military actors.

2. **Information Management:** The Logistics Cluster will support the NDMO, the humanitarian community with information management services with the aim of supporting operational decision making to improve the efficiency of the logistics response. These services include the following:
   - Consolidation of information from the humanitarian community and local authorities on the overall logistics situation, identifying gaps and bottlenecks;
   - Regular situation reports, snapshots, flash news, Geographic Information Systems products and briefings will be submitted to the NDMO capturing the scope of the international logistics response;
   - Provision of updated operational information and operational closure of entry points, airports and seaports;
   - Work with UNOCHA to verify customs clearance information to facilitate inbound relief items and equipment movement;
   - Dissemination of information management products and operational data via a purpose built mailing list and a dedicated webpage: http://logcluster.org/ops/van15a
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. Access permitting, the following services may be provided at no cost to the user, or on a partial/full cost-recovery basis, depending on the availability of funds.

Storage services
Strategic storage support will be offered to the affected locations. Warehouse hubs, through Mobile Storage Units, will be established to support the different locations, including experienced logistics personnel to support government-led operations in Port Vila and Tafea province.

Air/Sea Transport Support
To respond to the urgent needs of transport of humanitarian cargo to affected areas the Logistics Cluster will liaise closely with military and commercial entities to facilitate the consolidation of potential air/sea cargo or joint deliveries.

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.

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.
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