LOGISTICS CLUSTER

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WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

ABOUT US

LOGISTICS CLUSTER MANDATE

The Logistics Cluster is part of the cluster system that was established by the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Due to its expertise in the field of humanitarian logistics, the IASC has designated the World Food Programme (WFP) as the Logistics Cluster global lead agency. As such, WFP hosts the Global Logistics Cluster Support Team (GLC) in its headquarters in Rome.

CLUSTER ACTIVATION

In an emergency or crisis response, host governments and/or Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) may request support to ensure humanitarian organisations work together to identify and address common logistics needs or gaps. To respond to such requests, there are several coordination tools and mechanisms available to facilitate logistics support activities during an emergency response. A Logistics Cluster facilitated Gaps and Needs Analysis Exercise can help determine the best mechanisms and support needed through a variety of services, listed below. In any country where there is a UN presence, WFP may agree to lead or co-lead a Logistics Cluster or join as a participant. An IASC Logistics Cluster can support the humanitarian community to coordinate activities fully in accordance with the IASC guidance and represents a formal commitment by WFP to be held accountable to the stakeholders at the global and country levels.

The Global Logistics Cluster Support Team can help guide this process at the time of activation, helping with staffing, information products, coordination meetings, and setup of operations as needed. In the absence of a full IASC Cluster Activation, the Global Logistics Cluster through WFP as a lead agency can support a variety of other coordination mechanisms, such as providing technical guidance or helping establish a Logistics Working Group (LWG). In contexts where no formal cluster activation is available or advisable, the level of support available to other humanitarian coordination and response structures will depend on the assessed risk of the operation as well as capacity and resource availability.

CLUSTER CORE SERVICES AT COUNTRY LEVEL

Coordination

The primary objective of humanitarian action, and the purpose of coordination, is to meet the needs of affected people by means that are reliable, effective, inclusive, and respect humanitarian principles. The Logistics Cluster is part of the IASC cluster system that was created to ensure proper coordination and information management to deliver more efficient and predictable responses. This primarily takes place through open meetings organised by the country Logistics Cluster team that may occur on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis depending on the context and need. The Logistics Cluster is inclusive. Any organisation delivering aid according to humanitarian principles is welcome to participate in the meetings, use available common logistics services, contribute to information sharing and access digital and other tools and resources or training available through the Logistics Cluster.

Information Management

The Logistics Cluster provides information management support in sudden-onset emergencies, conflicts, and complex and protected crises. Country-based IM officers (IMOs) are responsible for collecting, analysing, and disseminating logistics information in field operations. Global Logistics Cluster IMOs serve as the communications link between field operations and the global humanitarian community. Global Logistics Cluster IMOs support operations in the provision of guidance to country-based IMOs, and deploy as surge capacity staff members at the onset of an emergency filling the position of field IM Officer when needed. All IMOs align their products to standardized terms and principles

Access to Common Logistics Services

Logistics services such as warehousing and cargo transport may be made available to humanitarian organizations by the Logistics Cluster on a free-to-user or cost-recovery basis, for a limited duration only. Other context specific services may be considered, subject to available resources. Commodity movements are prioritized in line with assistance priorities identified by the humanitarian community in country. Please reach out to the Logistics Cluster or Sector Coordinator in your country of operation by visiting the "Where we work" section of our website here: https://logcluster.org/

PARTNERSHIP AS STRATEGY

The Logistics Cluster is a community of partners. Its purpose is to support global, regional, and local actors to alleviate logistics constraints impeding the delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in need around the world.

Before crises, we strengthen humanitarian response capacity, especially in high-risk countries and regions.
In crises, where local capacities have been exceeded, we provide leadership, coordination, information management, and operational services.
After crises, we evaluate the response, identify areas for improvement, share good practices and solutions, and invest in learning and preparedness for future emergencies.

The Logistics Cluster strategy 2022-2026 is endorsed and implemented by partners, and the GLC ST. It lays out the Logistics Cluster community of partners' strategic direction and collective commitments towards a shared vision, mission, and values with an aim of supporting a more efficient and effective emergency response. The Logistics Cluster strategy defines the roles of the community of partners acting toward collective global, regional, and local actors to alleviate logistics constraints impeding the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people in need around the world.

There is no formal membership to participate in global or local Logistics Cluster activities; all organisations responding to humanitarian crises can contribute. The Logistics Cluster acts as a platform of exchange through which partners may share and address issues of common interest which have an impact on the community's capacity to deliver assistance. Governance of the implementation of the Logistics Cluster strategy is overseen by partner organisations through the Strategic Advisory Group, and through global meetings.

Stakeholder: Non-humanitarian entities that may contribute to the Logistics Cluster providing resources, furnishing services, or sharing knowledge. Examples may include the private sector, academic institutions, and military forces. Whilst they may be of a crucial help in advancing the Logistics Cluster agenda, they are not entitled to voting rights in its fora nor can benefit from its common services.

Partner: Humanitarian organisations/entities actively working to deliver assistance in accordance with the humanitarian principles, and engaged in any way, shape, or form, at global and/or regional and/or country-level in activities related to the Logistics Cluster. It may include NNGOs, INGOs, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, governmental entities dedicated to humanitarian responses, and UN agencies.

The Logistics Cluster Global Logistics Meetings (GLM) are held twice per year and bring together representatives from Logistics Cluster partners at the global level. These meetings are a forum for strategic discussion of the Logistics Cluster and provide an opportunity to confer on relevant Logistics Cluster operations, collect feedback from partner organisations on Logistics Cluster performance, and present new initiatives and projects relevant to the field of humanitarian logistics.

In addition, dedicated working groups aligned with the pillars of the Logistics Cluster Strategy 2022-2026 are employed to further the ongoing work of the GLC ST: Partnerships, Preparedness, Procurement, Service Provision, and Training. The Working Groups are each led by a member of the GLC ST, with members from active partner organisations, and guided by a Strategic Advisory Group focal point. Each Working Group is created to implement a part of the Strategic Implementation Plan of the GLC as well as to guide any changes to priorities during the implementation of the strategy.

The Logistics Cluster promotes and encourages the active participation of partners to help determine the direction of the Cluster, share relevant information with the humanitarian community, and provide leadership at the field level during preparedness activities, active emergencies, and recovery efforts.

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

The Logistics Cluster provides coordination and information management to support operational decision-making and improve the predictability, timeliness, and efficiency of the humanitarian emergency response. When necessary, the Logistics Cluster also facilitates access to common logistics services, when there is an identified gap and need by humanitarian responders during an emergency.

The below portfolio of digital services has been made available by the GLC ST, with the input of partners and stakeholders, to support a more efficient and timely humanitarian response:

LOGISTICS CLUSTER WEBSITE (LOGCLUSTER.ORG)

The latest upgrade of the Logistics Cluster website took place in June 2021. Since its inception in 2007, it has been used as the main platform for Logistics Cluster operations, National Logistics Working Groups and Field-Based Preparedness projects to share logistics information. The setup of country pages has allowed teams in the field to share globally the latest information available in the context of an emergency. Over the years, the platform has been improved to allow the inclusion of infographics, maps, dashboards, and other dynamic tools to provide information on the different activities of the Logistics Cluster. The website also works as a document repository where users can access strategic documents (Gaps & Needs Analysis, Concept of Operations), manuals and forms to access logistics services, reporting documents, and access to other valuable resources. More than 16,000 documents have been uploaded and shared with the humanitarian community, providing access to a wide range of humanitarian logistics knowledge and experience - tagged, labelled and ready for consumption.

RELIEF ITEM TRACKING APPLICATION (RITA)

Relief Item Tracking Application (RITA) is an online consignment and supply chain tracking system that is developed and maintained by the Logistics Cluster. RITA is the official system used by Logistics Cluster globally to receive, monitor and track partner cargo across Logistics Cluster maintained supply chains. The use of RITA enables the Logistics Cluster to view and report on the status of cargos, including status of service requests, locations of transport/storage, duration of consignment on hand, history of activities, physical condition of items, and planned receptions/dispatches, all viewable by line-item level, consignment level, partner level or across the entire response. All persons/organisations using Logistics Cluster services may track the status of their cargo and request release of items directly through RITA's online portal.

DIGITAL LOGISTICS CAPACITY ASSESSMENT (DLCA)

The Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA) tool contains baseline information about the logistics capacity of countries relevant for humanitarian emergency preparedness and response. This WFP tool is shared freely with the global humanitarian community via the dLCA online platform. LCAs cover logistics infrastructure, processes and regulations, markets, and contacts in a given country. There are currently LCAs for 120 countries. Assessments are conducted in a given country every two years, either by WFP logistics staff or staff from other humanitarian organisations or private sector partners. This information is then published on this platform, which is maintained by the Global Logistics Cluster. The LCA tool is the only place where all this humanitarian logistics-related information is consolidated in one location. The tool aims to ensure that the information required for a humanitarian logistics operation is organised and presented in a standard way across multiple countries, in the hope of providing a tool that will enhance humanitarian logistics preparedness, response and coordination.

A new LCA platform is currently in development. For information, please contact: LCA.Global@wfp.org

LOGISTICS INFORMATION EXCHANGE (LOGIE)

LogIE is a tool that changes the way we are collecting, analysing, and sharing humanitarian logistics information. The tool has been designed for and by humanitarian logistics responders to improve coordination, information sharing and the quantity and quality of the data available in emergency response and preparedness.

The humanitarian response relies heavily upon dynamic supply chain systems. But often, the critical data needed to make conscious, timely and effective decisions is not available at the speed or reliability required by humanitarian responding agencies.

The Logistics Cluster Information Exchange platform (LogIE) seeks to change this.

LogIE allows the users to share relevant logistics information through an easy-to-use interface. The data, after being processed, is displayed in a multi-layer map, combining different layers of information. The tool facilitates the display and analysis of both the logistics and geographical information in a single map and users can customize the selection of layers according to their specific needs.

Data and information sharing is a fundamental pillar of the Logistics Cluster's 2022-2026 Strategy and is based – as the entire operational framework of the Logistics Cluster – on the participation and leadership of a broad community of humanitarian stakeholders, private sector and academia.

LogIE aims to become an information gateway for logistics preparedness and response through the provision of state-of-the-art data processing, validation, and automation technology.

The tool is driven by collaboration and localisation, integrating both existing data – and those crowdsourced directly from the field – to create an operational picture for global and local humanitarian partners. And by doing so, increase information sharing and ultimately, ensure aid gets to where it needs to go faster.

For more information, visit https://logcluster.org/logie/about or contact global.logie@wfp.org

LOGISTICS OPERATIONAL GUIDE (LOG)

The Logistics Operational Guide (LOG) is a publicly available, dynamic knowledge base hosted by the Logistics Cluster with the goal of sharing information and tools to support common logistical activities and problems encountered by humanitarian actors engaged in emergency response activities. The purpose of the LOG is to provide clear, detailed and multilingual information in plain language, with an emphasis on supporting smaller or newer humanitarian response organizations globally; the LOG is not meant to replace logistics manuals of existing humanitarian organisations.

The information contained in the LOG is based on manuals, trainings and guidance from humanitarian organisations, academia and the private sector, and its sections have been peer reviewed by sector experts. Sections of the LOG are periodically reviewed and updated, and new sections are added on a rolling basis. Logistics Cluster partners are encouraged to submit feedback, request changes or request new features through the LOG contact page.

CLUSTER HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONAL COORDINATION OF LOGISTICS AND AIR TRANSPORT (CHOCOLAT)

The CHOCOLAT tool is provided by the GLC ST and enables the collection of information about the international shipping needs of humanitarian organisations and the transport capacities available, in an effort to promote and support inter-agency cargo consolidations. The tool is available online and needs or capacities can be shared at any time via the online platform
For more information, please contact: HQ_IM_Rome@wfp.org

EMERGENCY DASHBOARD UTILITY FOR AIRFREIGHT RESOURCE & DELIVERY OPTIONS (EDUARDO)

Eduardo is a data visualization tool developed by the LET members and hosted in the Logistics Cluster website. The tool, built in Tableau software, displays data provided by Google through an API that it is refreshed daily. Through the interface, humanitarian respondents can access information on upcoming commercial passengers' flights to the main airports in countries affected by humanitarian crisis. Through a filters system, the user can select the destination and origin country to easily identify the routes available and the average flying time by route. The tool was launched in June 2022 and the upcoming upgrade under development, will add cargo flights to the tool, improving the usability and information available to humanitarian logisticians.

SATELLITE IMAGERY

Through various strategic partnerships, the GLC ST can provide detailed satellite mapping and images which can be used for the benefit of the humanitarian community to optimize and improve the assessment and coordination of humanitarian actions, in the event of a sudden onset emergency or in support of preparedness activities and planning. For additional information, contact : HQ_IM_Rome@wfp.org

LOGISTICS CLUSTER MOBILE APPLICATION (APP)

The LC Mobile Application is currently under development to enable better connectivity with mobile field staff and field-based operations.

OTHER TOOLS & SERVICES

GAPS & NEEDS ANALYSIS (GNA)

A key part of the coordination is to ensure the Logistics Cluster activities are addressing the actual gaps and needs of the response and avoiding duplication. The GLC support team has developed a methodology called the Gaps & Needs Analysis (GNA) which engages of all relevant partners and stakeholders to ensure proper information collection and analysis. The analysis then informs the Concept of Operations, which makes recommendations on the architecture, identifies common logistics gaps (if any), and provides a backbone for the Cluster strategy in country.

TRAINING

As per the IASC mandate, the Global Logistics Cluster is committed to capacity building initiatives to support coordinated and efficient emergency responses.

Training Catalogue

The Global Logistics Cluster training catalogue outlines all the face to face, virtual reality and online courses currently offered by the GLC. For additional information contact: hq.glc.training@wfp.org.

Learning Management System (Self-Guided Trainings)

WFP maintains the Global Logistics Cluster online learning portal accessible to Cluster partners, free of charge and available as an as-needed learning resource on a variety of humanitarian logistics topics. The learning portal is continuously updated. It hosts 18 self-paced e-courses and a variety of additional learning resources. All courses are available in English, with four of the core courses also available in Arabic, French, Spanish and Portuguese. For additional information consult the e-learning poster.

GLOBAL PROJECTS & PARTNERSHIPS

LOGISTICS EMERGENCY TEAM (LET)

The Logistics Emergency Teams (LET) is comprised of four of the largest global logistics and transportation companies: Agility, UPS, Maersk, and DP World, which work together to support the Logistics Cluster community of partners. The companies join forces to pro bono support the humanitarian sector during emergency response to large-scale natural disasters and deploy worldwide upon request from the Global Logistics Cluster. The LET unites the capacity and resources of the logistics industry with the expertise and experience of the humanitarian community to provide more effective and efficient disaster relief.
For more information contact HQ_IM_Rome@wfp.org

AIRBUS FOUNDATION

Through a partnership with the Airbus Foundation, the Global Logistics Cluster has the capacity to provide a range of services including training, prepositioning of cargo, provision of satellite imagery for humanitarian use, provision of environmental and innovation expertise support, and utilization of assets such as helicopters or emergency cargo transport via fixed wing aircraft. A range of services and support is available to partners before, during, and after emergencies via the partnership with Airbus Foundation based on an identified and expressed need from the GLC's community of partners. For in-kind emergency support for interagency combined cargo transport, at the onset of an emergency, the GLC ST will hold a global call to partners requesting information on cargo needs into the affected country. Based on the Service Request Forms (SRFs) and needs, the GLC ST will provide emergency airlifts to a limited number of partners to airlift priority emergency cargo as needed. SOPs are required to be followed by each partner requesting airlift support and are available from the Service Provision or Partnerships teams. For more information on the partnership and portfolio of in-kind support available, please contact HQ_IM_Rome@wfp.org

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN HUMANITARIAN LOGISTICS (WREC)

The WREC project is an information portal hosted on the Global Logistics Cluster website which provides information related to environmental sustainability as it relates to humanitarian logistics. The WREC project aims to reduce the adverse environmental consequences of humanitarian logistics through awareness, practical guidance, and provision of real-time environmental expertise by providing the information portal as a one-stop-shop for humanitarian logisticians to access tools, guidance, information related to trainings, and dedicated help desk of environmental experts for support of green logistics activities and solutions.

As part of this project, the Global Logistics Cluster actively collaborates with humanitarian partners and those leading complementary initiatives to ensure that relevant and timely green logistics information is available and contextualized for field-level practitioner's use. The WREC project team will be organizing several information sessions, workshops, and provide information on where dedicated training on green logistics solutions is available. For more information or to provide feedback on the WREC project or information portal, please contact global.WREC@wfp.org.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

While many of the Cluster's activities are focused on supporting the readiness of international organisations to support a response, the Field-Based Preparedness Project (FBPP) is supporting national governments that seek to become more self-sufficient in their preparedness, thereby reducing dependency upon international actors. In addition to being underpinned by the Paris agreement (for development), and the Grand Bargain (for humanitarian actors), the move toward national autonomy in preparedness is also based on the idea that local responders are faster on the scene, have a better cultural understanding, and have a vested interest in considering post-response consequences at the start of the action. With climate change increasing the frequency and impact of disasters, donor fatigue, and isolating events (as experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic), the role of national and local actors is increasingly vital.

The FBBP supports local actors in two ways

Through direct engagement with national actors in countries that have expressed an interest in increased self-sufficiency of humanitarian logistics preparedness. Support may consist of ad-hoc training in specific technical / operational areas incorporating institutional capacity strengthening. Under this approach, the national actors become the centre of the action rather than the 'target' of action. A comprehensive set of guidance documentation has been developed and tailored to the humanitarian supply chain context.

Development of The Preparedness Enabler's Guide (PEG), (currently under development) to support humanitarian organisations that wish to take on an FBPP-like role in the future. It combines field-level experiences from the FBPP with academic literature, leading to practical guidance on institutional capacity strengthening mindsets, principles, tools and methodologies. The PEG will support operational humanitarian organisations wishing to take on an enabling role with their national counterparts and is comprised of two main parts.

For more information on FBPP, please contact: HQ_IM_Rome@wfp.org

For more information on our tools and services, please reach out to any of the contacts above or send a message to HQ_IM_Rome@wfp.org for general inquiries.