Background

Following the start of the war in Ukraine on 24 February 2022 the country's security situation deteriorated rapidly, leaving an estimated 17.7 million people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. The intense military escalation has resulted in loss of life and injuries, as well as massive destruction and damage to civilian infrastructure, interrupting critical services. People living in active conflict areas have endured months of hostilities without adequate access to water, health care, education, food security, protection, and other essential services. Since the start of the war, humanitarian organisations in Ukraine have prioritised the rapid expansion of existing life-saving operations in the east and the expansion of assistance to all regions of the country. However, the war shows no signs of abating and continues to drive humanitarian needs across the country.[1] It is anticipated that the limitations of the logistics capacities will continue to constrain humanitarian operations, with supply routes unlikely to simplify while needs are increasing with the ongoing conflict and large-scale initiatives such as winterisation.

To support responding humanitarian organisations in their delivery of assistance to affected populations, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Cluster Approach was activated in Ukraine for Logistics on 3 March 2022.

Logistics Gaps and Bottlenecks

The volatile security situation remains the most significant challenge for the planning and implementation of humanitarian response activities, particularly in eastern and southern areas. Based on the findings of the Gaps and Needs Analysis (GNA), completed at the end of June 2022 and the GNA Refresher in September 2022, the Logistics Cluster and partners have identified the following logistics gaps and bottlenecks:

- The current security situation in Ukraine is creating difficulties for planning and executing aid delivery, including the forward movement and staging of humanitarian cargo. Further, as conflict continues, it is anticipated that mounting damage to road infrastructure will further constrain humanitarian operations.
- While the commercial logistics sector is well developed, due to the conflict, many private sector companies relocated to the western area of the country, leading to limited logistics services currently available in the eastern area of Ukraine. There are also limitations on labour force that would otherwise be available, particularly to support the transport of cargo to hard-to-reach areas.
- Fuel shortages are impacting the operational capacity of humanitarian organisations and pose constraints for humanitarians' access to fuel for light vehicles, as well as for their transport contractors.
- The ability to secure storage space in and around hard-to-reach areas has been constrained.
- The conflict has resulted in the closure of all airports and seaports. Shipping lines have also suspended their services from the country and diverted their vessels to other Black Sea ports until further notice. There is significant pressure on the land borders that remain open to facilitate the majority of the country's imports and exports, with long waiting times.

[1] Background as summarised in the Ukraine Flash Appeal (March-December 2022)

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Objectives

In line with the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, and in support of the expanding humanitarian response in Ukraine, the Logistics Cluster will work with responding humanitarian organisations to deliver on the following objectives, with the aim of supporting the uninterrupted delivery of humanitarian assistance inside Ukraine.

1. **Coordinated planning and advocacy**: leveraging logistics knowledge and expertise of responding humanitarian organisations to jointly evaluate the operational situation, continuously assessing gaps and bottlenecks, and adjust the response as needed; convening logistics focal points from responding humanitarian organisations to develop relevant common inputs for inter-agency and/or inter-sectoral initiatives. Provide the responding humanitarian organisations with information products that are meant to become a guidance on how to continue accessing these services.
2. **Common operational understanding**: consolidating and sharing relevant information available from responding humanitarian organisations as well as public and private sources to increase operational awareness; monitoring and reporting on activities available through the Logistics Cluster to responding humanitarian organisations.
3. **Capacity Augmentation**: Facilitating access to common temporary storage and/or transport services to overcome common logistics gaps and/or bottlenecks; making dedicated and specific technical expertise in critical areas of logistics operations available as needed.

Planned Activities

The following range of activities are not intended to replace the logistics capacities of individual agencies or organisations, but rather bridge identified gaps in the humanitarian supply chain and supplement the response of the humanitarian organisations delivering assistance through the provision of logistics coordination, information management, and the facilitation of access to common services in Ukraine.

1. Coordination and Information Management

The following coordination and information sharing activities will be undertaken by the Logistics Cluster Team from dedicated coordination cells in Kyiv, Dnipro, Odesa to strengthen the humanitarian logistics response, minimise duplication of efforts and enhance operational decision-making:

- Coordinate the logistics response across responding humanitarian organisations and with national and regional stakeholders and counterparts.
- Represent the Logistics Cluster at decision-making forums, including inter-agency coordination mechanisms, formulating recommendations to support strategic decision-making.
- Collect, consolidate, and share information to support partners' supply chain planning and operational decision-making, including – but not limited to – information on logistics support services and facilities; processes/procedural requirements for the movement of humanitarian cargo; the upstream humanitarian cargo pipeline; physical access constraints; fuel availability; and the general status of the humanitarian logistics response.

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- Maintain dedicated mailing lists and information sharing platforms made available to the humanitarian community, including the Ukraine operation webpage, the Logistics Information Exchange (LogIE) platform, the Logistics Capacity Assessments (LCA).
- Support the systematic supply planning by providing technical advice on supply chain configuration and building logistics capacity as required.
- Monitor, analyse and share information on the main border crossing points and seaports in Ukraine and from the neighbouring countries (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Moldova).
- Advocate on behalf of responding humanitarian organisations, in close cooperation with the relevant stakeholders, to simplify and streamline processes and/or procedural requirements for the movement of humanitarian cargo.

2. Common Logistics Services

The services facilitated by the Logistics Cluster are not intended to replace the logistics capacities of responding humanitarian organisations, but rather to supplement them through the access to common services when and where identified gaps in overall capacity and/or significant common bottlenecks in humanitarian cargo movement, are identified. Following the Gaps and Needs Analysis, the Logistics Cluster will focus on common services to hard-to-reach areas. Access permitting, the following services will be coordinated at no cost to the user, or on a partial/full cost-recovery basis, depending on the availability of funds:

Temporary Storage

- Forward Logistics Bases in Dnipro (4,500 m^2), Odesa (2,500 m^2), Kherson (150 m^2), Kropyvnytskyi (1,000 m^2), and Kyiv (2,000 m^2).

Road Transport

- Road transport between the common storage facilities facilitated by the Logistics Cluster (see “Temporary Storage”).
- Cargo delivery from Dnipro, Kropyvnytskyi, Kyiv, and Odesa to distribution or prepositioning locations.[2]
- Cargo consolidation and access to a dedicated fleet of trucks for humanitarian inter-agency convoys from Dnipro and Odesa to hard-to-reach areas.
- Other cargo transport services as requested by the humanitarian community and considered on a case-by-case basis.

[2] Transport in some areas of Ukraine will be subject to external factors, including compliance with agreed inter-agency deconfliction processes and other procedural requirements. The Ukraine Logistics Cluster Team and any transport service provider (WFP only, at time of publication) will ensure necessary coordination with relevant Service Users and these mechanisms to ensure humanitarian cargo delivery.

Annex I ConOps Map

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