

Concept of Operations

Background

Severe drought in east Africa in 2011 impacted populations in Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda, leading to lack of access to sufficient food, water, and shelter, with parts of Somalia moving into famine. In addition to failed rains, access constraints that are a direct result of the complicated security situation have impacted the efforts to reach affected populations and have limited the ability of the humanitarian community to quickly and effectively scale-up operations in response to the crisis.

These factors have led to a massive displacement of people who have sought relief at refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya, as well as a large number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within Somalia.

While famine no longer exists in Southern Somalia (FSNAU/FEWS NET – 03 February 2012), food insecurity persists for a large part of population (FEWSNET report, 6th April), that is relying on humanitarian aid. As the situation remains precarious, the evolution of the season will be closely monitored as a below average Gu rainy season could bring to low harvest and increase food insecurity.

Gaps and Needs

- Lack of commercially reliable and regular sea transport from the Kenyan port of Mombasa to Mogadishu, Somalia due to the risk of piracy.
- Insufficient/inaccessible storage capacity for relief items in Somalia and affected neighbouring areas of Kenya and Ethiopia.
- Coordination and information sharing between the various actors in order to mitigate any duplication of efforts and maximise the use of available logistics assets.

The Objectives and Planned Activities

The Logistics Cluster activities aim to provide the humanitarian community with the logistics capabilities and coordination mechanisms to deliver life-saving relief assistance to the populations in Somalia's drought affected regions. Based on the review of logistics gaps and bottlenecks identified, the activities of the Logistics Cluster will include:

1. Logistics Coordination and Information Management

- A Logistics Cluster coordination cell for Somalia in Nairobi, Kenya, with a dedicated Logistics Cluster Coordinator to facilitate the overall response strategy, including optimising the use of logistics assets aiming to ensure an uninterrupted supply of life saving relief items to the affected population. The Logistics Cluster will liaise closely with the other organisations and facilitate regular Logistics Cluster meetings and publish records of decisions taken on behalf of the Humanitarian Community.
- The Logistics Cluster will have dedicated information management capacity, including GIS / mapping services with the aim of coordinating logistics operations and supporting decision making to improve the efficiency of the response. Within this capacity, the Logistics Cluster will consolidate information on the overall logistics situation from the humanitarian community and local authorities, identifying logistics gaps and bottlenecks. Additionally, the Logistics Cluster will disseminate vital information through the Horn of Africa – Somalia Famine page at: <http://www.logcluster.org/ops/som11a>.

2. Logistics Cluster Services

Warehousing and Staging Grounds

- The Logistics Cluster will make available to the humanitarian community Mobile Storage Units (MSUs) to be allocated as per requirements in different areas inside Somalia or in neighbouring countries to facilitate cross-border operations. Five MSUs (10 X 32 m each) have already been pre-positioned in Mogadishu and further MSUs will be pre-positioned in other locations.
- The MSUs will be made available on a lease basis, free of charge. The organisations leasing the MSUs will be responsible for installing and managing the units themselves
- Should the situation change and need arise, the Logistics Cluster will stand ready to set up staging areas at specific locations decided with participating organisations, to act as consolidation points for humanitarian cargo. In common staging areas, services will include handling, tracking, and loading services to the users.

Sea Transport

- The Logistics Cluster will offer sea transport to the Humanitarian Community into and between ports in Somalia.
- A vessel has been contracted on a time charter basis for the transportation of life-saving relief items from Mombasa Port in Kenya to Mogadishu Port in Somalia for the humanitarian community. This will operate at no cost to the end user until 01 July 2012 and will offer one rotation a month, providing a predictable and reliable service.
- Due to the unpredictable security situation in the region, the vessel will have international naval protection to ensure safe passage to and from Mogadishu, Somalia.

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.

