Minutes
Logistics Cluster Meeting

Date: Monday, 29th September
Time: 1600 - 1700
Venue: UNHCR office, Vavuniya

Key points discussed were;

The participant organisation briefly mentioned their current activities;

ZOA Still distributing relief items in the Vanni upto today, 29th.
OCHA Currently inventorying the relief material that was brought out of the Vanni
Supporting various clusters leading agencies in their role
NRC Pre-positioning stock at the I-A logistics hub
SCF Existing stock, mainly education material transferred to local authorities
Asset transfer out of Vanni ongoing
UNICEF Currently pre-positioning in I-A logsistics hub using both WFP and IOM transport
Oxfam Handed over some relief items to the GA and balance brought out of Vanni
Kili staff continue to remain there
Awaiting new GA system set up to support as required
Forut Operating from Vavuniya for the Vanni
Managed to get assets out of Vanni
Some assets moved to Tharmapuram
About 40 local staff present ready to volunteer for the GA

The participants were then briefed on the Cluster logistics concept of operations. Taking into account WFP's capacity for transport and storage, a concept for the humanitarian convoy system was presented

This was followed with plans for the first convoy scheduled to depart 2nd October.

1. UN organized convoys to un-cleared areas in Mullaithivu and Kilinochchi districts will be routed via Mankulam (A9) using the A34 road up to pre-agreed points of delivery
2. Requirement for safe passage will be coordinated with the GA system in order to confirm guarantees by LTTE
3. UNDSS are currently conducting a Security Risk Assessment (SRA) and clearance is expected on 1st October.
4. WFP will send 4 International staff as part of the convoy to ensure the accountability for delivery
5. The convoy will be composed of a total of 60 trucks comprised of 30 trucks from the UNWFP fleet augmented by additional 30 WFP hired commercial trucks provided by the district GAs. All trucks of the convoy will be under UN flag
6. The convoy will carry approximately 780-800mt of WFP food to cover 1 week ration for approximately 210,000 persons
7. The cargo and trucks of the convoy will be inspected by SLA during the loading process at the Inter-agency logistics Hub in Vavuniya (Teakwatta), therefore, allowing a quick pass through at OMANTHAI checkpoint
8. The SLA will ensure that returning empty trucks of the convoy will be allowed to cross OMANTHAI on day of arrival
9. 3-4 locations have been identified for delivery of the food; Mullivawalai, PTK, Tharmapuram and Kandavalai. Food will be delivered to locations as close to IDP populations as possible
10. The convoy will have to stay 2 nights in the Vanni to ensure satisfactory delivery of cargo and adequate turnaround. Safe havens will be established by UNDSS

11. The UN convoys will have its own schedule (and SOPs) and therefore, will be by its nature independent from other convoys currently in place by the Government
12. Notification procedures to both parties will be put in place to ensure concurrence before any convoy departures
13. Detailed operational plans are being worked out between WFP, UNDSS, GA staff and the local military liaison personnel in Vavuniya

Based on the above the following points were raised;

14. Whether WFP was catering only to IDPs or host communities as well
    - WFP clarified that the as per mandate, the food is destined for the IDPs as agreed with the GA
15. Whether WFP was only doing covering IDPs or other programmes such as school feeding etc
    - WFP explained that at this moment only GFD for IDPs
16. Whether other humanitarian organisation staff would be allowed to join future convoys
    - WFP would welcome the presence of other organisations in the convoys particularly when convoys will contain NFRI as well as food. This presence is subject to clearance by the authorities
17. Queries were raised about the entry/exit procedures and the amount of time spent at Omanthai checkpoint
    - WFP explained that as the trucks would be sealed at the I-A Logistics hub, the military had assured a quick pass through during entry. However, during exit, the convoy trucks would be given priority but will be checked and allowed to pass through on day of arrival at Omanthai
18. Oxfam asked if the cluster could facilitate loading of Oxfam assets still lying in the Vanni onto the returning empty trucks
    - WFP explained that logistically this was no issue however certain clearances would be required by both parties
    - Following the first convoy, more clarity on operational flexibility will be known
    - Oxfam would provide the details of the equipment to be moved out
19. UNICEF asked if the empty trucks could move Education supplies within the Vanni
    - WFP explained again that logistically this was no issue however certain clearances would be required by both parties
    - Following the first convoy, more clarity on operational flexibility will be known
    - UNICEF would provide the details of the equipment to be moved inside the Vanni
20. It was pointed out that the government has made the supply of food to the Vanni as a priority
21. Some organisations are facing delays in the clearance process for relief items to be transported to the Vanni. It was suggested that these issues be taken up at respective cluster meetings allowing for cluster leads to push the collective cause of their respective cluster participants
22. A reminder was given to the participants about the free common services of storage and transport being provided by WFP. Storage is available at the I-A logistics hub in Vavuniya. Transport as part of the convoy is available for movements from the Inter-agency Logistics hub into the Vanni. Organisations are required to obtain all necessary approvals and clearances prior to any movement
23. Participants were also reminded about the free transport service being provided by IOM.
24. The recent introduction of a police check point at Medawachy was seen as a logistics bottleneck for some organisations. Goods have to offloaded and reloaded onto trucks which very often cause damage to the commodities. In addition, it is prudent to limit double handling of fragile and high value items. To encounter this, organisations can avail of WFP's primary transport capacity which provides sealed transportation from Colombo (WFP hub) upto the I-A logistics hub in Vavuniya
25. Free transport is also provided by IOM
26. Organisations present in the meting were requested to present at next cluster meeting their transportation needs out of Wanni to Vavuniya allowing WFP, logistics cluster lead, estimating trucks capacity required.
27. The next cluster meeting in Vavuniya is scheduled for Monday, 6th October at 1600