

## **BACKGROUND**

The scale of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak in West Africa has been unprecedented with over 27,000 cases and 11,000 deaths reported by WHO, with critical social and economic impacts for the Ebola-affected countries (EACs) and the region.

Upon request of the World Health Organization (WHO), the Logistics Cluster deployed personnel to the three affected countries on 17 August 2014 to assess the immediate requirements for inter-agency logistics support. The Logistics Cluster was formally activated in Liberia on 12 September 2014. In response to the requests for essential logistics services, the Logistics Cluster has been operating in all three EACs in support of the humanitarian community, the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) and governments.

While the case numbers and the virus' geographic spread have significantly reduced, its and large scale in both urban and rural areas, in addition to its cross-border and moving nature, continue to require coordination and information management in support of the health response.

## **LOGISTICS GAPS AND BOTTLENECKS**

The following constraints are considered the most critical affecting the response to the outbreak:

- Lack of suitable logistics infrastructure in support of medical operations for EVD treatment;
- Disruption in logistics services, limited transport and storage capacity and a weak health supply chain management resulting in shortages medical supplies, with specifications for EVD usage in treatment and monitoring facilities;
- Unique challenges in health supply chain management for managing supplies for EVD in country (specifications, high volume items, personal safety sensitive nature of supplies).

## **OBJECTIVES**

To overcome the logistical challenges, the Logistics Cluster has deployed staff and assets to augment coordination and information management, to provide the necessary logistics services in support of the responding national and international health actors, and to mitigate the risk of further humanitarian crises resulting from the outbreak.

The Logistics Cluster aims to address key logistics bottlenecks hampering the delivery of medical supplies and other commodities requested by the humanitarian community. By establishing main and forward logistics bases and providing logistics support, the Logistics Cluster aims to facilitate swift movement of necessary life-saving supplies to support efforts to stop the spread of the disease to reach and maintain zero cases across the region.

## **PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

The following range of activities and services is 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 humanitarian community through the provision of common services, based on need.

### **1. Coordination**

In order to support the humanitarian community in all three EACs, the Logistics Cluster has set up the following coordination structure:

- In Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, the Logistics Cluster is fully engaged in the existing national structures for coordination at both the technical level with the different Ministries of Health (MoH) and the highest level in National Ebola Task Forces;
- Regular Coordination meetings are held in key locations and close collaboration is maintained with the health actors and national governments in the three EACs.

### **2. Information Management**

The Logistics Cluster provides the following Information Management services to the humanitarian community, with the aim of supporting operational decision-making to improve the efficiency of the logistics response:

- Consolidation of information from the humanitarian community and local authorities on the overall logistics situation, identifying logistics gaps and bottlenecks. Information products distributed to humanitarian organisations and published on the Logistics Cluster website (<http://www.logcluster.org/ops/ebola14>) including meeting minutes, customs snapshots, forms, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and guidance.
- Provision of updated operational information, such as road conditions, and operational closure of border crossing points, airports and seaports.
- GIS mapping products produced and published on the dedicated Logistics Cluster website.

### **3. Logistics Services**

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 and logistics requirements of the humanitarian community as the operation continues and seasonal conditions would pose additional constraints to access some of the rural areas.

#### **Transport and storage services**

The facilitation of transport and storage services by the Logistics Cluster will be offered to the humanitarian community for organisations to reach EVD affected communities and provide the necessary treatment, with storage areas identified to support the different locations. All requests will be monitored using RITA (Relief Items Tracking Application).

**Guinea**

- The Logistics Cluster acts as the focal point to facilitate access to storage, transport and technical logistics services, based on needs and requests from the Government of Guinea and all the members of the humanitarian community involved in the Ebola response.
- The Logistics Cluster is providing technical logistics support to the government of Guinea for the management of their supply chain of Personal Protective Equipment kits and universal protection both in the determination of the needs, storage and distribution to treatment centres and health facilities;
- Storage and transport services are available across Guinea, with the Logistics Cluster facilitating access to a fleet of WFP trucks and pick-ups, operating from the storage hubs;
- In collaboration with *Institut Bioforce*, the Logistics Cluster is facilitating trainings to increase capacity of health and humanitarian logistics staff.

**Liberia**

- The Logistics Cluster acts as focal point to facilitate access to storage and transport services, made available by WFP, in line with priorities established by the National Ebola Task Force;
- The Logistics Cluster, through WFP, supports the facilitation of transport and storage needs of Ebola Treatment Units and pre-existing health facilities.;
- The Logistics Cluster is facilitating access as required, to a central storage hub in Monrovia, jointly managed with national health authorities, and other storage locations across the country;
- Overland transport services for medical supplies and humanitarian cargo required for the Ebola response are facilitated by the Logistics Cluster, using a fleet of WFP trucks.

**Sierra Leone**

- The Logistics Cluster acts as focal point to facilitate access to storage, road and transport services, made available by WFP, in coordination with the National Ebola Response Centre ;
- The Logistics Cluster is facilitating access to a central storage hub in Port Loko and other storage locations across the country, as required;
- The Logistics Cluster is facilitating access to overland transport services for medical supplies and humanitarian cargo required for the Ebola response across Sierra Leone, using a fleet of WFP trucks.

**Loan of equipment**

- Mobile Storage Units (MSUs), provided by WFP, are loaned to the humanitarian community and used for temporary storage purposes or as part of Ebola treatment facilities and hospitals; other logistics equipment, such as tents, generators and office prefabricated units can be made available to humanitarian organisations by WFP on an ad-hoc basis, depending on availability and needs.

**Air Transport Support**

- To respond to the urgent needs of the humanitarian community within the affected areas, UNHAS is operating fixed-wing and rotary assets, available for transport of humanitarian staff and light cargo within the three EACs and the region. When the need should arise for air transport of cargo, the Logistics Cluster will liaise closely with UNHAS to facilitate the consolidation and transportation of air cargo on behalf of the humanitarian community.

**Logistics Engineering Support**

- WFP is providing engineering support in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone and the Logistics Cluster facilitates access to reinforce the capabilities of the humanitarian community to respond to the crisis, including planning and technical support for engineering services and establishing medical and/or logistics hubs where necessary.

*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.*

ANNEX 1: CONOPs MAP

