Logistics Cluster and Humanitarian Reform

July 2010

The Global Logistics Cluster Support Cell
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1. Humanitarian Reform in Brief

1.1. Origins

Because of the ad hoc and unpredictable nature of many international responses to emergencies, the international humanitarian community (UN agencies, international organisations and NGOs) reviewed past emergency responses and identified consistent gaps. Because of these identified weaknesses in humanitarian response, the UN Emergency Response Coordinator, through OCHA, introduced the recommendations of the Humanitarian Response Review by setting out an Agenda for reform in September 2005.

The Humanitarian Reform seeks to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian response by ensuring greater predictability, accountability and partnership.

Reference:
- The Humanitarian Reform website: http://www.humanitarianreform.org/

1.2. How does it work?

The reform was rapidly developed along three key axes, known as the three pillars of the reform:
- Development of clusters at global and country levels;
- Strengthening of the role of the Humanitarian Coordinator at field level;
- Modification of some aspects of the funding mechanisms.

These three pillars rely on the principle of strengthened partnerships between all actors as the key to improved coordination.

THREE PILLARS OF REFORM AND THE FOUNDATION

1. CLUSTER APPROACH
   Adequate capacity and predictable leadership in all sectors

2. HUMANITARIAN COORDINATORS
   Effective leadership and coordination in humanitarian emergencies

3. HUMANITARIAN FINANCING
   Adequate, timely and flexible financing

PARTNERSHIP
Strong partnerships between UN and non-UN actors
2. Cluster Approach

2.1. **What are the Clusters?**

To put it simply, a **Cluster is a group of organizations working together** on specific topics to improve humanitarian response. Clusters are the basis for strong partnerships.

In essence a cluster is a “sectoral group” (or in some cases, “working group”, “thematic group” or “task force”). Each country may decide on the appropriate terminology. However the difference, post-humanitarian reform, is that the group has an accountable lead.

2.2. **Global Clusters – What do they do?**

At the global level, the aim of the cluster approach is to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies by ensuring that there is predictable leadership and accountability in all the main sectors or areas of humanitarian response.

Global clusters have three **key areas of responsibility**:

- **Standards and policy-setting**
  - Consolidation and dissemination of standards;
  - Where necessary, development of standards and policies;
  - Identification of ‘best practices’

- **Building response capacity**
  - Training and system development at the local, national, regional and international levels
  - Establishing and maintaining surge capacity and standby rosters
  - Establishing and maintaining material stockpiles

- **Operational support**
  - Assessment of needs for human, financial and institutional capacity
  - Emergency preparedness and long term planning
  - Securing access to appropriate technical expertise
  - Advocacy and resource mobilization
  - Pooling resources and ensuring complementarily of efforts through enhanced partnerships
2.3. **Who is responsible for the Global Clusters?**

A Cluster Lead organization has been appointed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee for each Cluster at the global level.

The following table shows the list of different global clusters and their respective lead organization(s).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global Cluster/ Sector</th>
<th>Cluster/Sector Lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>FAO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM)</td>
<td>UNHCR (conflict)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IOM (natural disaster)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Recovery</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Save The Children UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelter</td>
<td>UNHCR (conflict)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>IFRC (convener natural disasters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Telecommunications</td>
<td>OCHA (process owner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WFP (security and data telecoms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>WHO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logistics</td>
<td>WFP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>UNHCR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lead organization needs to ensure **predictable leadership and accountability, partnership** with other humanitarian actors and, where necessary, the lead organization becomes ‘**provider of last resort**’.

“The ‘provider of last resort’ concept is critical to the cluster approach, and without it the element of predictability is lost. It represents the commitment of sector leads to do their utmost to ensure an adequate and appropriate response. Where there are critical gaps in humanitarian response, it is the responsibility of cluster leads to call on all relevant humanitarian partners to address these gaps. If this fails the sector
The cluster lead, as ‘provider of last resort’, is obliged to commit itself to filling the gap. In essence “the buck stops” with the cluster lead.

### 2.4. Country-level clusters

At the country level, a “cluster” is essentially a “sectoral group” and there should be no differentiation between the two in terms of their objectives and activities; i.e. the aim of filling gaps and ensuring adequate preparedness and response should be the same, the difference being that post-humanitarian reform, sectors/clusters have an accountable lead. Note however, that there should be no duplication of coordination systems.

**Reference:**

### 3. Accountability

As written above, the Humanitarian Reform and more particularly the Cluster Approach are aimed towards an “Adequate capacity and predictable leadership in all sectors”. This results in a clearer and improved accountability from the designated Cluster Lead Organizations:

**Accountability of the Clusters at country and global level**

- The Cluster Approach itself does not require that humanitarian actors be held accountable to sector leads, nor does it demand accountability of non-UN actors to UN agencies.
- Individual humanitarian organizations can only be held accountable to sector leads in cases where they have made specific commitment to this effect.
4. Logistics Cluster at the Global Level

4.1. Global Logistics Cluster Lead: WFP

The IASC designated the World Food Programme (WFP) as the lead of the Logistics Cluster at global level.

In practise, this means that in most cases WFP will also be the lead at country level. However, in exceptional circumstances, when WFP is unable to fulfil this role at field level (e.g. WFP may not have a presence in the country) another organization may be appointed as Cluster Lead at country level. The appointed organization then assumes full responsibility and is accountable to the HC for ensuring that the required services are provided and identified gaps are addressed. Regardless of whether the Logistics Cluster lead at the field level is WFP or another organisation, the field level cluster is supported by WFP through the Global Logistics Cluster Support Cell.

4.2. Global Logistics Cluster Support Cell (GLCSC)

The GLCSC consists of a dedicated, multi-skilled, diverse group of logisticians drawn from various humanitarian organizations (UN agencies, NGOs and government organisation) to implement the Global Logistics Cluster work plan. The GLCSC is situated in the Logistics Division of the World Food Programme in Rome.

In addition to back-stopping field activations, the GLCSC has a role to play in advocating and supporting preparedness and capacity building projects which have a positive impact on logisticians working in the humanitarian field.

The cluster approach provides a unique opportunity for the humanitarian logistics community to exploit shared assets, aptitudes and competencies. The mission of the GLCSC is to facilitate these joint ventures, both at global and field level, a role similar in character and purpose to that of a “fourth party logistics provider” in the commercial sector.

The GLCSC does not exist to define the global logistics strategy of other organisations, but rather exists to support logistics cluster field operations and the needs identified by the participants of the Global Logistics Cluster fora.

Reference:
- GLCSC E-Mail: global.logisticscluster@wfp.org
5. Logistics Cluster in the field

5.1. How is the decision made to activate a Logistics Cluster at the field level?

The decision to activate a Logistics Cluster at the field level lies primarily in the field. The Humanitarian Coordinator, in close consultation with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), is responsible for securing agreement on the establishment of appropriate sectors and sectoral groups, and for the designation of sector leads. This decision should be based on a thorough assessment of needs and gaps, as well as on a mapping of response capacities including those of the host government, local authorities, local civil society, international humanitarian organizations and other actors, as appropriate.

When the need for a Logistics Cluster is identified:
- the Humanitarian Coordinator or Resident Coordinator makes a request to the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) for the activation
- ERC contacts the global cluster lead for feedback
- If all in agreement the cluster is activated
- At this point the Global cluster leads have the opportunity to advise on the structure and the nature of the cluster response.
- The activities of the country level cluster are established with a range of activities appropriate to the scale/nature of need.

If the activation of a Logistics Cluster is foreseen, a Logistics Response Team (LRT) is sent to the field to assess the situation; make recommendations to the HC/RC on whether or not the activation of a Logistics Cluster is needed and/or what logistics support might be needed in country. If activated, the LRT usually initiates the Logistics Cluster operations.

The LRT can be comprised of members from different organizations, including staff from the Global Logistics Cluster Support Cell in Rome. It is important for field logisticians to participate in the meetings held by the LRT/meet with the LRT in order to share their perception of gaps and requirements.

Nota Bene: It is important to note that on some occasions the LRT assessment may conclude that there is no need for Logistics Cluster activities, in which case a recommendation is made to the RC/HC that the activation of the Logistics Cluster is not required.

Reference:
- Logistics Cluster Definitions Reporting lines and activation process (Annex B)
- Generic Terms of Reference Country Level Logistics Cluster (Annex C)

5.2. What type of activities does a Logistics Cluster carry out?

Logistics Cluster operations vary in nature and scale depending on the needs of each particular country. They may range from basic coordination and information management services (such as infrastructure assessment, port/airport coordination, transporters & rates, customs, equipment supplier information) to those involving common air, ocean and overland transport, storage, i.e. heavy logistics operations.
Where there are gaps, such as lack of transport capacity, the **first option will be for organizations to help each other**, with the logistics cluster acting as a catalyst for this type of interaction. **Where this is not possible**, the Logistics Cluster lead (usually WFP) will be required to act as provider of last resort, e.g. **provide common transport services to the humanitarian community**, such as a common trucking service or common shipping service.

One of the tools commonly used to provide an overview of a Logistics Cluster operation, highlighting the scale of the operation and the services proposed is the **Concept of Operations (ConOps)**. (For further details on the ConOps see the reference below)

**Reference:**
- Logistics Cluster Concept of Operations (ConOps) (Annex D)

### 5.3. How do you collaborate with a Logistics Cluster?

Whatever the scale of the operation Logistics Cluster activities will typically include **regularly convened Logistics Cluster meetings** involving all organizations (UN, international and national NGO’s, Red Cross and Red Crescent movements). It is **strongly recommended that field logisticians attend** these meetings and participate. Key points of discussion will be addressed in these meetings and the Logistics Cluster as a group should agree on the way forward (e.g. endorse the Concept of Operations; agree on specific action points for the group, etc). Field logisticians represent their organisations in these meetings and should ensure that their managers (Head of Mission, Emergency Coordinator) are kept informed.

### 5.4. What can you expect from a Logistics Cluster?

As already stated, Logistics Cluster operations may vary widely in scale and nature depending on the needs. Some of the possible activities of a Logistics Cluster at the field level are detailed below:

- **Coordination**
  
The key goal of a Logistics Cluster is to strengthen coordination and reinforce partnerships, finding ways of pooling logistics resources, addressing gaps, etc. in order to avoid duplication and ensure an effective and efficient logistics response. The main tool used to achieve these goals is logistics coordination meetings coupled with the information management. The meetings may vary in frequency from every one or two days at the start of an emergency to regular, ongoing weekly/biweekly/monthly meetings depending on the need.

- **Information management**:  
  One of the **key responsibilities of clusters** is to ensure all actors involved have access to appropriate information to support operational decision making. Strong emphasis is put on this activity during the early phases of an emergency.

  The basic tools put in place at the very beginning of an emergency to support the sharing and dissemination of logistics information include an electronic mailing list and a **dedicated webpage** (updated several times a day if required) on the Logistics Cluster website. **All information products produced by the Logistics Cluster are**
shared with the humanitarian community via an “operation specific” mailing list and the Logistics Cluster website.

**During an emergency**, the Logistics Cluster team will usually put together lists of transporters, suppliers, customs briefing materials, etc based on the participating organizations' inputs e.g. organizations can share their information on contractors and also have access to relevant information from other actors. **If field logisticians identify a need there is a need for some specific information to be pooled, this should be raised** during Logistics Cluster coordination meetings so action can be taken which will then benefit the entire logistics community.

The references below provide an overview of the different information products you can expect from a Logistics Cluster: situation reports, procedures, meeting minutes, etc.

**Reference:**
- Logistics Cluster website: www.logcluster.org
- Logistics Cluster Information Management Products (Annex E)

- **Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA):**
As part of **preparedness activities**, together with the preparation of contingency plans, the Global Logistics Cluster Support Cell is developing **comprehensive reports on the logistics capacities of individual countries**. The information available in LCA reports includes:
  - Humanitarian logistics background
  - Infrastructure (roads, ports, airports, warehouses, etc.)
  - Logistics Suppliers (transporters, suppliers for generic goods, service providers, etc.)
These reports provide a good briefing for new-comers and also help to facilitate inter-agency logistics coordination. LCAs can be found on the Logistics Cluster website.

**Reference:**
- LCA’s on the web: http://www.logcluster.org/tools/lca

- **Common Logistics Services:**
When there are **evident gaps in the supply chain** to reach beneficiaries, e.g. damaged roads, broken bridges etc., or **bottlenecks created by the response** (airport congestion, limited warehousing facilities), the Logistics Cluster has the mandate to address these issues and propose solutions to the group. As mentioned earlier the solution can be **primarily through pooling of resources**; organizations sharing their assets (warehouses, trucks, etc) **using the Cluster as a coordination forum**. **If no other effective option can be found**, the **Cluster lead agency** (usually WFP) must step in and do its utmost to set up these services for the entire community in accordance with its **mandate of provider of last resort**.

Typical common services could comprise:
- **Air operations through UNHAS** (the humanitarian air service of the UN managed by WFP) if air bridges or helicopters are needed.
- **Road Transport**: eg. common truck fleet when commercial capacity is unavailable/insufficient to meet the needs of all actors
- **Warehousing**: if infrastructure has been damaged, or availability outstrips demand, temporary warehousing can be set up for common use.

Of course, the services made available will depend upon the individual situation and this list is neither definitive nor exhaustive.

Based on the operational set up, **Standard Operating Procedures** (SOPs) for the use of the common services will be drafted and shared with the cluster participants for comment. A request for cargo/goods transport is made through a **Cargo Movement Request** (CMR), similar to an order form for transport, which includes details such as commodity, size, weight, consignee, destination etc.

The Logistics Cluster team will also set up a **tracking database for goods moved using the common services** to provide follow-up to the users and statistics that provide a general overview of the types of goods being moved.

**Upon endorsement of the Logistics Cluster participants, and taking into account the core policy of the organization providing the service, access to these common services may be provided free of charge to the user or on a partial/full cost recovery basis depending on the funding situation.**

**Reference:**

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- **Mapping and Geographic Information System**

The Global Logistics Cluster Support Cell maintains a **mapping capacity** for Logistics related maps. General Logistics Planning maps for many countries are available on the Logistics Cluster website. Depending on the needs during an emergency and existing capacity in country, tailor-made maps may be developed for specific use during an emergency response, either by the Cell in Rome or by deploying GIS specialists as part of the Logistics Cluster team on the ground.

**Reference:**

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- **Liaison with Civil and Military actors:**

As part of the logistics coordination mechanism the Logistics Cluster will ensure liaison with national authorities and military parties involved in the humanitarian response for logistics related issues. The Logistics Cluster team will **advocate on behalf of the logistics community, raising issues related to access, customs problems, etc.)** as well as provide **feedback to the group** on any relevant information shared by those entities (regulations, official announcements, etc).

**In the case of an existing UN-integrated mission** (peace-keeping and humanitarian objectives, such as those currently in DRC and Haiti), the **Logistics Cluster should also be the link** between those UN entities and the logistics community: military assets could be made available, security could be ensured by uniformed personnel, etc.
Funding Mechanisms and Appeals

As mentioned earlier, a component of the humanitarian reform is access to “adequate, flexible and timely funding”. Several funding mechanisms are linked with the cluster approach such as the Central Emergency Response Funds (CERF), ERF and Pooled Funds. These are emergency funds that can be released within days following an emergency, under the coordination of the Humanitarian Coordinator through the Cluster leads.

Cluster leads also play a key role in the preparation and review of common response plans/appeals such as the Flash Appeal (emergency response) or the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP), facilitating a process that ensures that all needs of the sector are covered by the projects submitted, with no gaps or duplication, and with an established priority. Hence, it is important that field logisticians participate in the Logistics Cluster meetings were the projects for inclusion in appeals are reviewed and prioritised.

The participation in and/or “use” of these services is by no means compulsory. The services are offered to assist and support the logistics capacity of your organization, not to replace it!

6. To know more about the Humanitarian Reform and the Logistics Cluster

List of websites for resources: most of these sites will point to other resources related to field activities, guidance material, training development, etc.

www.logcluster.org
www.humanitarianreform.org
http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/
7. Annexes

Annex A:

INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE (IASC)  
GUIDANCE NOTE ON USING THE CLUSTER APPROACH TO  
STRENGTHEN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE  

24 November 2006

1. Introduction

In international responses to humanitarian crises, some sectors have in the past benefited from having clearly mandated lead agencies, while others have not. This has repeatedly led to ad hoc, unpredictable humanitarian responses, with inevitable capacity and response gaps in some areas. Recognizing this, in September 2005 the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) agreed to designate global “cluster leads” – specifically for humanitarian emergencies – in nine sectors or areas of activity. The IASC Principals also agreed that the cluster approach should be applied, with some flexibility, at the country level.

In December 2005 the IASC Principals generally welcomed the “cluster approach” as a mechanism that can help to address identified gaps in response and enhance the quality of humanitarian action. It is part of a wider reform process aimed at improving the effectiveness of humanitarian response by ensuring greater predictability and accountability, while at the same time strengthening partnerships between NGOs, international organizations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and UN agencies.

In June 2006 the IASC issued a Preliminary Guidance Note on implementation of the new approach. Emphasizing that the humanitarian reform process must be an inclusive one, the Emergency Relief Coordinator and IASC Principals invited all relevant stakeholders, particularly in the field, to comment on this document. It is on the basis of the comments received that the present Guidance Note has been put together. The Guidance Note will continue to be reviewed periodically and revised as necessary, taking into account the conclusions of further “lessons learnt” exercises and evaluations of implementation of the cluster approach at both the global and country level.

1 The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has stated that its position on the cluster approach is the following: "Among the components of the Movement, the ICRC is not taking part in the cluster approach. Nevertheless, coordination between the ICRC and the UN will continue to the extent necessary to achieve efficient operational complementarity and a strengthened response for people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence."
2. **Aim and scope of the cluster approach**

At the global level, the aim of the cluster approach is to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies by ensuring that there is predictable leadership and accountability in all the main sectors or areas of humanitarian response.

Similarly, at the country level the aim is to strengthen humanitarian response by demanding high standards of predictability, accountability and partnership in all sectors or areas of activity. It is about achieving more strategic responses and better prioritization of available resources by clarifying the division of labour among organizations, better defining the roles and responsibilities of humanitarian organizations within the sectors, and providing the Humanitarian Coordinator with both a first point of call and a provider of last resort in all the key sectors or areas of activity. The success of the cluster approach will be judged in terms of the impact it has on improving the humanitarian response to those affected by crises.

The cluster approach should eventually be applied in all countries with Humanitarian Coordinators. By definition, these are countries with humanitarian crises which are beyond the scope of any one agency’s mandate and where the needs are of sufficient scale and complexity to justify a multi-sectoral response with the engagement of a wide range of humanitarian actors. The cluster approach can be used in both conflict-related humanitarian emergencies and in disaster situations. It should significantly improve the quality of international responses to major new emergencies. Also, although not limited to situations of internal displacement, it should make a significant improvement in the quality, level and predictability of the response to crises of internal displacement and represents a substantial strengthening of the ‘collaborative response’.

3. **Cluster leadership at the global level**

Sectors and categories of population where leadership and accountability amongst international humanitarian actors are already clear are not included among the nine clusters at global level. These include, for example, agriculture, led by FAO; food, led by WFP; refugees, led by UNHCR; and education, led by UNICEF. (In the case of education, there may be some further modification to this, as consultations are underway to clarify the lead at the global level.) In addition to these, as indicated in the table below, cluster leads at the global level have now been designated by the IASC for nine sectors or areas of activity which in the past either lacked predictable leadership in situations of humanitarian emergency, or where there was considered to be a need to strengthen leadership and partnership with other humanitarian actors.

The establishment of clusters at the global level in areas where there are clearly identified gaps in capacity is an important addition that will enhance technical capacity and better ensure the immediate availability of critical material and expertise.

To help build capacity at the global level in areas where this was previously lacking, a Global Cluster Appeal for US$ 39 million was launched in March 2006. A second Global Cluster Appeal will be launched in 2007, after which any costs associated with cluster leadership at the global level will be incorporated into agencies’ normal fundraising mechanisms.

Concerning the emergency shelter cluster, it should be noted that IFRC does not participate in Consolidated Appeals launched by the UN and will appeal separately.
for support in providing leadership and strengthening capacity for the provision of emergency shelter in disasters resulting from natural hazards.

4. Responsibilities of global cluster leads

Complementing arrangements already in place for some sectors or areas of activity, global cluster leads have agreed to be accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator for ensuring system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies, and for ensuring greater predictability and more effective inter-agency responses in their particular sectors or areas of activity. More specifically, they are responsible for establishing broad partnership bases (i.e. “clusters”) that engage in activities in three main areas, as follows:

Standards and policy-setting
- Consolidation and dissemination of standards; where necessary, development of standards and policies; identification of ‘best practice’

Building response capacity
- Training and system development at the local, national, regional and international levels
- Establishing and maintaining surge capacity and standby rosters
- Establishing and maintaining material stockpiles

Operational support
- Assessment of needs for human, financial and institutional capacity
- Emergency preparedness and long term planning
- Securing access to appropriate technical expertise
- Advocacy and resource mobilization
- Pooling resources and ensuring complementarity of efforts through enhanced Partnerships

5. Sector/cluster leadership at the country level

At the country level, sectors and sectoral groups have always existed and they will continue to exist. In the past, however, it was usually the case that only a limited number of sectors had clearly designated lead agencies accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator. The cluster approach aims to rectify this by ensuring that within the international humanitarian response, there is a clear system of leadership and accountability for all the key sectors or areas of humanitarian activity. The cluster approach is intended, therefore, to strengthen rather than to replace sectoral coordination under the overall leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator, with a view to improving humanitarian response in emergency situations.

Concerning terminology, some Humanitarian Country Teams prefer to speak of “clusters” and “cluster leads”, while others prefer to stick to the more traditional terminology of “sectors”, “sectoral groups” and “sector leads” (or in some cases, “working groups”, “thematic groups” or “task forces”). It should be left to Humanitarian Country Teams to decide on a case-by-case basis on appropriate terminology for the country in question, depending on the working language and agency preferences. To ensure coherence, standard terminology should be used within each country and similar standards should be applied to all the key sectors or areas of humanitarian activity. A “cluster” is essentially a “sectoral group” and there should be no
differentiation between the two in terms of their objectives and activities; the aim of filling gaps and ensuring adequate preparedness and response should be the same.

The cluster approach represents a raising of standards in humanitarian response. At the country level, it involves having clearly identified leads (within the international humanitarian community) for all the key sectors or areas of activity, with clearly defined responsibilities for these agencies in their capacities as sector leads.

The Humanitarian Coordinator, in close consultation with the Humanitarian Country Team, is responsible for securing agreement on the establishment of appropriate sectors and sectoral groups, and for the designation of sector leads. This should be based on a clear assessment of needs and gaps, as well as on a mapping of response capacities, including those of the host Government, local authorities, local civil society, international humanitarian organizations and other actors, as appropriate.

To enhance predictability, where possible sector lead arrangements at the country level should be in line with the lead agency arrangements at the global level. This principle should, however, be applied flexibly, taking into consideration the capacities and strengths of humanitarian organizations already operating in the country or region concerned. This may mean that in some cases sector lead arrangements at the country level do not replicate those at the global level. Also, in some cases, it may be appropriate for NGOs or other humanitarian partners to act as sector focal points in parts of the country where they have a comparative advantage or where the cluster lead has no presence.

There may be cases where particular sectoral groups are not needed, or where particular sectors are merged (e.g. Health & Nutrition, or Food & Agriculture). In the case of Early Recovery, the global level cluster is not encouraging Humanitarian Country Teams to establish Early Recovery sectoral groups at the country level, but rather to ensure that early recovery planning is integrated into the work of all sectoral groups. Where there are early recovery gaps not covered by other sectoral groups, ad hoc groups could be set up to address these where necessary. Likewise, in the case of Emergency Telecommunications and Logistics, it may not be necessary to establish special sectoral groups with sector leads in every country, though they may be much needed in some cases – particularly in the early stages of major new emergencies. In establishing sectoral groups at the country level, the principle should always be to prioritize the main issues and ensure that there are no major gaps in the humanitarian response.

Sectoral groups at the country level should ensure adherence to norms, policies and standards agreed at the global level and should treat the global level clusters as a resource that can be called upon for advice on global standards, policies and ‘best practice’, as well as for operational support, general guidance and training programmes. There is no direct reporting line, however, between sectoral groups at the country level and global level clusters.

Sector leads are expected to report to the Humanitarian Coordinator on issues related to the functioning of the sector as a whole, while at the same time retaining their normal reporting lines insofar as their own agencies’ activities are concerned. In some cases, particularly at the height of a humanitarian crisis, there may be a need to appoint staff to work as dedicated, full-time sector leads.
Common Humanitarian Action Plans and Consolidated Appeal documents should clearly reflect the agreed sectoral structure, indicating which agencies are the designated sector leads.

6. Contingency planning and application of the cluster approach in major new Emergencies

The cluster approach should be used in all contingency planning exercises for major new emergencies which involve multi-sectoral responses with the participation of a wide range of international humanitarian actors. Those responsible for doing the contingency planning, whether at the country, regional or headquarters level, should consult closely with national/local authorities as appropriate, building on local capacities. They should also ensure that they consult closely with relevant international actors at the country and regional level, as well as with global cluster leads and other lead agencies at the global level.

In the event of a sudden major new emergency requiring a multi-sectoral response with the participation of a wide range of international humanitarian actors, the cluster approach should be used from the start in planning and organizing the international response. The Humanitarian Coordinator (or the Resident Coordinator in countries where a Humanitarian Coordinator has not yet been appointed at the beginning of the emergency) should consult all relevant partners at the country level and make proposals regarding the designation of any new cluster/sector leads, if possible within the first 24 hours. Following consultation with the Humanitarian Coordinator, the Emergency Relief Coordinator should consult global cluster leads and other lead agencies at the global level on the designation of country-level cluster/sector leads for the emergency in question.

The Emergency Relief Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that agreement is reached on appropriate country-level cluster/sector leads, and that this decision is communicated without delay to all relevant humanitarian partners, as well as donors and other stakeholders. The Humanitarian Coordinator should in turn inform the host government and humanitarian partners at the country level of the agreed arrangements.

7. Responsibilities of sector/cluster leads at the country level

The role of sector leads at the country level is to facilitate a process aimed at ensuring well-coordinated and effective humanitarian responses in the sector or area of activity concerned. Sector leads themselves are not expected to carry out all the necessary activities within the sector or area of activity concerned. They are required, however, to commit to being the ‘provider of last resort’ where this is necessary and where access, security and availability of resources make this possible.

As spelt out in the Terms of Reference for Sector Leads at the Country Level (see Annex 1), specific responsibilities of sector leads at the country level include ensuring the following:

- Inclusion of key humanitarian partners
- Establishment and maintenance of appropriate humanitarian coordination mechanisms
- Coordination with national/local authorities, State institutions, local civil society
  and other relevant actors
• Participatory and community-based approaches
• Attention to priority cross-cutting issues (e.g. age, diversity, environment, gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights)
• Needs assessment and analysis
• Emergency preparedness
• Planning and strategy development
• Application of standards
• Monitoring and reporting
• Advocacy and resource mobilization
• Training and capacity building
• Provision of assistance or services as a last resort

Sector leads have a particular responsibility for ensuring that humanitarian actors working in their sectors remain actively engaged in addressing cross cutting concerns such as age, diversity, environment, gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights. Experience of recent crises suggests that these important dimensions to ensuring appropriate responses have too frequently been ignored.

Sector leads are responsible for ensuring the necessary shift in programming as priorities move from emergency relief to longer-term recovery and development. All sectoral groups should include early recovery strategies and procedures for phasing out or handing over activities. In addition, networks of early recovery focal points should be established at the country level to ensure joint planning and integrated response. Sector leads should ensure that sectoral groups promote strategies that support the government and other local partners from the outset of the response and enable strong linkages between humanitarian and development actions, as appropriate.

Sector/cluster lead agencies are accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator for ensuring that the tasks mentioned above are carried out effectively.²

### 8. Strengthening partnerships and complementarity amongst humanitarian actors

A central element of the humanitarian reform process is the need to strengthen strategic partnerships between NGOs, international organizations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and UN agencies. Indeed, successful application of the cluster approach will depend on all humanitarian actors working as equal partners in all aspects of the humanitarian response: from assessment, analysis and planning to implementation, resource mobilization and evaluation. As such, the establishment of a Humanitarian Country Team at the country level is an essential pre-requisite for effective application of the cluster approach.

Humanitarian partnerships may take different forms, from close coordination and joint programming to looser associations based on the need to avoid duplication and enhance complementarity. To be successful, therefore, sectoral groups must function in ways that respect the roles, responsibilities and mandates of different humanitarian organizations.

² In the case of emergency shelter, IFRC’s commitments are described in an MOU between IFRC and OCHA. IFRC has not committed to being ‘provider of last resort’ nor is it accountable to any part of the UN system.
There must be recognition of the diversity of approaches and methodologies that exist amongst the different actors. It is essential that sectoral groups find non-bureaucratic ways of involving all humanitarian actors in a collaborative and inclusive process focused on areas of common interest.

Some humanitarian actors may not be prepared or able to formally commit themselves to structures which involve reporting to sector leads. Sector leads should ensure, however, that all humanitarian actors are given the opportunity to fully and equally participate in setting the direction, strategies, and activities of the sectoral group. Sector leads are responsible for ensuring – to the extent possible – appropriate complementarity amongst different humanitarian actors operating in their sectors or areas of activity.

9. Ensuring appropriate links with Government/local authorities, State institutions, local civil society and other stakeholders

A key responsibility of sector leads at the country level is to ensure that humanitarian actors build on local capacities and that they develop and maintain appropriate links with Government and local authorities, State institutions, local civil society and other stakeholders. The nature of these links will depend on the situation in each country and on the willingness and capacity of each of these actors to lead or participate in humanitarian activities.

In some cases, Government and local authorities may be in a strong position to lead the overall humanitarian response and the role of the Humanitarian Coordinator may be to organize an international humanitarian response in support of the host Government’s efforts. This would typically be the case in disasters. In other cases, particularly in situations of ongoing conflict, the willingness or capacity of a Government or State institutions to lead or contribute to humanitarian activities may be compromised, and this will clearly influence the nature of the relationships which it establishes with international humanitarian actors.

Similarly, the nature of the relationships established between international humanitarian actors and local civil society, as well as other stakeholders, will depend on the political and security situation and on their capacities and willingness to lead or engage in humanitarian activities.

Application of the cluster approach does not imply that the agency designated as sector lead in a particular country is responsible for leading the overall humanitarian response within that sector, as this may be the responsibility of a Government department or a local authority. It does mean, however, that the agency designated as sector lead is responsible for promoting close cooperation amongst international humanitarian actors working in that sector, and for ensuring appropriate linkages with Government and local authorities, State institutions, local civil society and other stakeholders. Where appropriate, sectors leads should promote training and capacity-building initiatives, particularly in terms of strengthening the capacity of local authorities to provide leadership.

10. Accountability of sector/cluster leads to the Humanitarian Coordinator
The intention of the cluster approach is to strengthen overall levels of accountability for humanitarian response and to ensure that gaps in response do not remain unaddressed because there are no clearly assigned responsibilities. At the global level, in line with the IASC agreement on the allocation of responsibilities, cluster leads are accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator for ensuring system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies, and for ensuring greater predictability and more effective inter-agency responses in their particular sectors or areas of activity.\(^3\)

At the country level, the Humanitarian Coordinator – with the support of OCHA – retains overall responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness of the humanitarian response and is accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator. While sector/cluster lead agencies at the country level cannot be held accountable for the performance of all humanitarian partners operational in that sector, they are accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator for ensuring, to the extent possible, the establishment of adequate coordination mechanisms for the sector or area of activity concerned, adequate preparedness, as well as adequate strategic planning for an effective operational response.

In cases where stakeholders consider that a sector lead at the country level is not adequately carrying out its responsibilities, it is the responsibility of the Humanitarian Coordinator to consult the sector lead concerned and, where necessary, also the Humanitarian Country Team. If necessary, based on these consultations the Humanitarian Coordinator may propose alternative arrangements. If needed, the Humanitarian Coordinator may also ask the Emergency Relief Coordinator to consult the relevant IASC Principals at the global level before proposing alternative arrangements.

While the cluster approach encourages strong partnerships and joint planning amongst humanitarian actors, it is up to individual agencies to determine levels of participation in the work of the different sectoral groups. The cluster approach itself does not require that humanitarian actors be held accountable to sector leads. Likewise, it does not demand accountability of non-UN actors to UN agencies. Individual humanitarian organizations can only be held accountable to sector leads in cases where they have made specific commitments to this effect.

11. What is meant by ‘provider of last resort’?

The ‘provider of last resort’ concept is critical to the cluster approach, and without it the element of predictability is lost. It represents a commitment of sector leads to do their utmost to ensure an adequate and appropriate response. It is necessarily circumscribed by some basic preconditions that affect any framework for humanitarian action, namely unimpeded access, security, and availability of funding.

Where there are critical gaps in humanitarian response, it is the responsibility of sector leads to call on all relevant humanitarian partners to address these. If this fails,

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\(^3\) In the case of emergency shelter, in agreeing to convene the emergency shelter sector in disasters resulting from natural hazards the IFRC has made clear that it cannot accept accountability obligations beyond those defined in its Constitution and policies. It will, however, do its utmost to ensure an adequate and appropriate response as far as the network’s capacities, resources, as well as the access and security situation allow.
then depending on the urgency, the sector lead as ‘provider of last resort’ may need to commit itself to filling the gap. If, however, funds are not forthcoming for these activities, the Cluster Lead cannot be expected to implement these activities, but should continue to work with the Humanitarian Coordinator and donors to mobilize the necessary resources. Likewise, where the efforts of the sector lead, the Humanitarian Country Team as a whole, and the Humanitarian Coordinator as the leader of that team are unsuccessful in gaining access to a particular location, or where security constraints limit the activities of humanitarian actors, the provider of last resort will still be expected to continue advocacy efforts and to explain the constraints to stakeholders.

For cross-cutting areas such as Protection, Early Recovery and Camp Coordination, the concept of ‘provider of last resort’ will need to be applied in a differentiated manner. In all cases, however, sector leads are responsible for ensuring that wherever there are significant gaps in the humanitarian response they continue advocacy efforts and explain the constraints to stakeholders.

### 12. Rationalizing meetings

Sector leads are responsible for determining, together with those participating in the relevant sectoral groups, the frequency and types meetings needed. Sector leads should ensure that they do not make excessive demands for meetings, particularly where this concerns small organizations which have limited capacities to attend large numbers of individual sectoral meetings. Sector leads are responsible for ensuring that sectoral meetings are well managed and productive. In some cases, different sectoral groups may decide to meet collectively.

Sectoral meetings should supplement rather than replace or undermine the Humanitarian Country Team meeting (at the country level) and to its equivalent at the district or provincial level. Establishing individual sectoral meetings at the district level should be determined by need rather than by a concern for creating a uniform structure.

### 13. The role of the Humanitarian Coordinator and OCHA at the country level

The role of the Humanitarian Coordinator at the country level is described in the IASC Terms of Reference for the Humanitarian Coordinator. In line with the Terms of Reference, the Humanitarian Coordinator – with OCHA support – is responsible for establishing and maintaining comprehensive coordination mechanisms based on facilitation and consensus building. These mechanisms should be inclusive of all the actors involved at the country level in the provision of humanitarian assistance and protection. Concerning the sectors, the Humanitarian Coordinator should ensure that:

- Sector leads, together with other members of the Humanitarian Country Team, are consulted closely in developing the overall strategic direction of the humanitarian operation;
- Effective coordination and information-sharing amongst the different sectoral groups takes place, and the work of the different sectoral groups is integrated into a coherent overall response;
- Unnecessary duplication and overlap among sectors is avoided;
- Cross-cutting issues such as age, diversity, environment, gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights are effectively addressed in all sectors;
- Strategic planning is coherent throughout the country, i.e. at the national (capital) level, between capital and the regions, and among the regions;
• Sectors are provided with the necessary common services and tools for effective cross-sector collaboration, particularly in the areas of information management, inter-agency needs assessments, development of the Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP), preparation of the Consolidated Appeal, Flash Appeal and contingency planning;
• Sectoral meetings supplement rather than replace general inter-agency coordination meetings, to prevent a fragmentation of the humanitarian response;
• Sectoral meetings at the capital level and in the regions are streamlined;
• Support is provided to sectors in advocacy and resource-mobilization efforts to ensure a balanced, comprehensive and well-prioritized humanitarian response;
• Early recovery planning is integrated into all sectors or areas of activity.

Application of the cluster approach along with the other elements of the humanitarian reform process will require strong coordination among a wide range of partners. There will continue to be significant demand for common systems and services, such as information management tools, advocacy and resource mobilization. At the country level, OCHA will need to continue to provide support to the Humanitarian Coordinator in four main areas: coordination; information management; advocacy and resource mobilization; and policy development.

The Humanitarian Coordinator, in consultation with the Humanitarian Country Team, is responsible for adapting coordination structures over time to reflect the capacities of government structures and the engagement of development partners.

Annex 1

Generic Terms of Reference for Sector/Cluster Leads at the Country Level

The Cluster Approach operates at two levels. At the global level, the aim is to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies by designating global Cluster Leads and ensuring that there is predictable leadership and accountability in all the main sectors or areas of activity. At the country level, the aim is to ensure a more coherent and effective response by mobilizing groups of agencies, organizations and NGOs to respond in a strategic manner across all key sectors or areas of activity, each sector having a clearly designated lead, as agreed by the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Humanitarian Country Team. (To enhance predictability, where possible this should be in line with the lead agency arrangements at the global level.)

The Humanitarian Coordinator – with the support of OCHA – retains responsibility for ensuring the adequacy, coherence and effectiveness of the overall humanitarian response and is accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator.

Sector/cluster leads at the country level are accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator for facilitating a process at the sectoral level aimed at ensuring the following:

Inclusion of key humanitarian partners
• Ensure inclusion of key humanitarian partners for the sector, respecting their respective mandates and programme priorities

Establishment and maintenance of appropriate humanitarian coordination mechanisms

• Ensure appropriate coordination with all humanitarian partners (including national and international NGOs, the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, IOM and other international organizations), through establishment/maintenance of appropriate sectoral coordination mechanisms, including working groups at the national and, if necessary, local level;
• Secure commitments from humanitarian partners in responding to needs and filling gaps, ensuring an appropriate distribution of responsibilities within the sectoral group, with clearly defined focal points for specific issues where necessary;
• Ensure the complementarity of different humanitarian actors’ actions;
• Promote emergency response actions while at the same time considering the need for early recovery planning as well as prevention and risk reduction concerns;
• Ensure effective links with other sectoral groups;
• Ensure that sectoral coordination mechanisms are adapted over time to reflect the capacities of local actors and the engagement of development partners;
• Represent the interests of the sectoral group in discussions with the Humanitarian Coordinator and other stakeholders on prioritization, resource mobilization and advocacy;

Coordination with national/local authorities, State institutions, local civil society and other relevant actors

• Ensure that humanitarian responses build on local capacities;
• Ensure appropriate links with national and local authorities, State institutions, local civil society and other relevant actors (e.g. peacekeeping forces) and ensure appropriate coordination and information exchange with them.

Participatory and community-based approaches

• Ensure utilization of participatory and community based approaches in sectoral needs assessment, analysis, planning, monitoring and response.

Attention to priority cross-cutting issues

• Ensure integration of agreed priority cross-cutting issues in sectoral needs assessment, analysis, planning, monitoring and response (e.g. age, diversity, environment, gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights); contribute to the development of appropriate strategies to address these issues; ensure gender sensitive programming and promote gender equality; ensure that the needs, contributions and capacities of women and girls as well as men and boys are addressed;

Needs assessment and analysis

• Ensure effective and coherent sectoral needs assessment and analysis, involving all relevant partners

Emergency preparedness

• Ensure adequate contingency planning and preparedness for new emergencies;
Planning and strategy development

Ensure predictable action within the sectoral group for the following:

- Identification of gaps;
- Developing/updating agreed response strategies and action plans for the sector and ensuring that these are adequately reflected in overall country strategies, such as the Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP);
- Drawing lessons learned from past activities and revising strategies accordingly;
- Developing an exit, or transition, strategy for the sectoral group.

Application of standards

- Ensure that sectoral group participants are aware of relevant policy guidelines, technical standards and relevant commitments that the Government has undertaken under international human rights law;
- Ensure that responses are in line with existing policy guidance, technical standards, and relevant Government human rights legal obligations.

Monitoring and reporting

- Ensure adequate monitoring mechanisms are in place to review impact of the sectoral working group and progress against implementation plans;
- Ensure adequate reporting and effective information sharing (with OCHA support), with due regard for age and sex disaggregation.

Advocacy and resource mobilization

- Identify core advocacy concerns, including resource requirements, and contribute key messages to broader advocacy initiatives of the HC and other actors;
- Advocate for donors to fund humanitarian actors to carry out priority activities in the sector concerned, while at the same time encouraging sectoral group participants to mobilize resources for their activities through their usual channels.

Training and capacity building

- Promote/support training of staff and capacity building of humanitarian partners;
- Support efforts to strengthen the capacity of the national authorities and civil society.

Provision of assistance or services as a last resort

- As agreed by the IASC Principals, sector leads are responsible for acting as the provider of last resort (subject to access, security and availability of funding) to meet agreed priority needs and will be supported by the HC and the ERC in their resource mobilization efforts in this regard.
- This concept is to be applied in an appropriate and realistic manner for crosscutting issues such as protection, early recovery and camp coordination.

Humanitarian actors who participate in the development of common humanitarian action plans are expected to be proactive partners in assessing needs, developing strategies and plans for the sector, and implementing agreed priority activities.
Provisions should also be made in sectoral groups for those humanitarian actors who may wish to participate as observers, mainly for information-sharing purposes.

Annex B:

Logistics Cluster Definitions reporting Lines and Activation Process
Logistics Cluster Approach - Definitions

**Humanitarian Logistics**: is “the process of planning, implementing and controlling the efficient, cost-effective flow and storage of goods and materials, as well as related information, from the point of origin to the point of consumption for the purpose of alleviating the suffering of vulnerable people. The function encompasses a range of activities, including preparedness, planning, procurement, transport, warehousing, tracking and tracing and customs clearance.” In the context of the Logistics Cluster and its activities the definition is to be seen exclusive of procurement.

**Logistics Cluster**: Group of humanitarian organizations and other stakeholders committed to commonly address logistics needs during humanitarian crises on a broad partnership basis (global and Country-level)

**Logistics Cluster Participants**: Individual organizations engaging at any point at global and/or Country-level in activities related to the Logistics Cluster, including but not limited to participating in meetings, providing logistics services or information to the Logistics or other clusters, seconding staff to the Global Logistics Cluster Support cell and/or LRT roster.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a permanent invitee to the Logistics Cluster.

**Logistics Cluster Lead**: The IASC designated WFP to take the lead in the implementation of the Logistics Cluster approach at global- and Country-level.

“Global cluster leads have agreed to be accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator for ensuring system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies, and for ensuring greater predictability and more effective inter-agency responses in their particular sectors or area of responsibility. More specifically, they are responsible for establishing broad partnership bases (i.e. “clusters”) that engage in activities in three main areas”: Standards and policy-setting, building response capacity and operational support. At Country-level the cluster lead reports to the Humanitarian Coordinator with the support of the Global Logistics Cluster and is responsible “to facilitate a process aimed at ensuring well-coordinated and effective humanitarian responses(…) and is required to commit to being the ‘provider of last resort’ where this is necessary and where access, security and availability of resources make this possible.”

**Logistics Cluster Meeting**: Tool to facilitate communication and decision processes within the Logistics Cluster (global and Country-level).

**Global Logistics Cluster Support Cell** (Global Support Cell): Dedicated inter-agency staff in a set-up (physically co-located or in satellite locations) to implement the Global Logistics Cluster work plan.

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5 “IASC Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response” Inter-Agency Standing Committee 3 November 2006
6 “IASC Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response” Inter-Agency Standing Committee 3 November 2006
Country-level Logistics Cluster Support Cell7 (Country-level Support Cell): Dedicated inter-agency staff temporarily deployed if and when required to support the Logistics Cluster to identify and address common logistics needs.

Logistics Cluster-specific Common Services: As agreed by the IASC WG UNHAS is a tool of the Logistics Cluster. The governance and activation procedures might in time lie within the cluster activation process but this is yet to be agreed by the Humanitarian Common Services working group and decided by the IASC.

Where a Logistics Cluster is not activated, UNHAS follows its governance and activation procedures.

Where a Logistics Cluster is activated UNHAS will provide its services through the Logistics Cluster.

Other organizations or agencies may provide logistics services to the humanitarian community through the Logistics Cluster. They would then also become common logistics service providers.

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7 Emphasis required clarifying that this does not imply an additional layer of staff or bureaucracy but that the Support Cell has direct time-saving and/or cost saving outputs.
The goal of the logistics cluster is to have the humanitarian community build timely logistical response systems that are:

- collaborative and efficient,
- meet the logistical needs of all agencies involved,
- while fully serving the beneficiaries.

## Logistics Cluster Reporting Lines

### Global Level

- **IASC Principals**
  - Reports to **IASC Working Group**
  - Technically reporting to **Country-level Logistics Cluster Support Cell**

- **WFP Lead Agency**
  - Reports to **Global Logistics Cluster Support Cell**
  - Reports through the Quarterly Meeting to **WFP Lead Agency**

- **Global Logistics Cluster Support Cell**
  - Reports to **WFP Lead Agency**
  - Reports to **ERC**

### Country Level

- **ERC**
  - Reports to **Global Logistics Cluster Support Cell**
  - Reports to **WFP Lead Agency**

- **RC/HC**
  - Reports to **WFP Lead Agency**
  - Technically reporting to **Field Logistics Cluster Participants**

- **IASC/UNCT**
  - Reports to **WFP Lead Agency**
  - Reports to **IASC Working Group**

- **Heads of Clusters**
  - Reports to **WFP Lead Agency**
  - Reports through **Country-level Logistics Cluster Support Cell**
Annex C:

Country Logistics Cluster
Generic Terms of reference

Objective
The Logistics Cluster in country strives to build up inter-organisation interoperability and collaboration to enhance predictability, timeliness and efficiency of the logistics response to meet beneficiaries’ needs.

It identifies and addresses logistics gaps, bottlenecks and duplication in humanitarian operations and ensures that they are appropriately addressed.

Role of the Lead Agency and Cluster Participants
As the Lead Agency WFP is accountable for the performance of the Logistics Cluster and reports to the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC). In the exceptional circumstance that the Logistics Cluster identifies logistics capacity gaps that cannot be addressed by Cluster Participants, WFP as provider of last resort is responsible to address such gaps: Where there are critical gaps in the response plan, the Cluster Lead, will do its utmost to ensure that these are addressed, calling on relevant humanitarian partners. If this fails, then depending on the urgency and priority that the cluster gives to addressing this gap, the Cluster Lead may need to commit itself to filling the gap.

The Cluster Participants meet on a regular basis to share information and set priority activities of the cluster.

Reporting Lines
Cf separated document

Organizational Chart
Cf separated document

Activities
- The Field Country-level Cluster formalizes existing logistics coordination mechanisms among humanitarian actors, and local and national authorities.
- The Field Country-level Cluster strengthens partnerships between UN agencies, the Red Cross Movement, International Organizations, national and international NGOs, donors and national authorities.
- The Field Country-level Cluster provides a platform for exchanging information and making decisions to improve strategic coordination and prioritization.
- The Field Country-level Cluster **collects, analyzes and disseminates logistics information** within the Cluster, across other clusters and to stakeholders.
- The Field Country-level Cluster **gathers and shares logistics capacity information/assessments** amongst Cluster Participants.
- The Field Country-level Cluster **develops and maintains common logistics operational plans** together with the humanitarian actors and other clusters to ensure most efficient logistics operations.
- The Field Country-level Cluster **identifies and addresses gaps, bottlenecks or duplications** in the overall logistics operations.
- The Field Country-level Cluster provides **operational advice, best practices and troubleshooting assistance** to Cluster Participants.
- The Field Country-level Cluster **negotiates facilitation measures** (i.e. customs procedures) with local authorities and/or government counterparts on behalf of the Field Country-level Cluster if requested.
- The Field Country-level Cluster communicates/liaises for logistics needs with OCHA Civil-Military Coordinator for **MCDA/MCDU** (if any) and ensures that available military assets are included into a common pool and efficiently used for humanitarian operations.
- The Field Country-level Cluster **coordinates humanitarian air operations** (cargo prioritization and optimization of the use of pooled air assets).
- The Field Country-level Cluster **represents** the Logistics Cluster in other cluster meetings and high-level events and **provides logistics input and support**.
- The Field Country-level Cluster may request the Lead Agency to become **provider of last resort** to ensure adequate response.
- The Field Country-level Cluster may identify and **mobilize resources** (i.e. financial, HR, assets) for services provided through the Cluster coordination or other Cluster Participants.
- The Field Country-level Cluster ensures adequate logistics **preparedness** through capacity building and contingency planning.
- The Field Country-level Cluster defines its **priorities, work plan, specific terms of reference, duration and exit strategy**.
- The Field Country-level Cluster **monitors and evaluates its performance** against the work plan/identified benchmarks.
Annex D

Concept of Operations (ConOps)

When a lot of actors are responding to a new emergency there is a need for a common approach, most likely coordinated through Clusters. In order to improve coordination and to make the best use of available logistics assets on the ground, a Concept of Operations (ConOps) can help actors to agree on a specific set-up and can outline roles, responsibilities, and procedures.

A ConOps is a short paper, relevant to operations that support the greater humanitarian community, and usually includes the following sections:

- Executive summary: short outline of the scale of the emergency and scope of required logistics response including augmentation of services if required
- Planning assumptions and risk factors, if applicable
- Upstream pipeline and transport
- Corridors and entry points, including cargo consolidation or transhipment points, if required
- Downstream pipeline
- Coordination mechanisms
- Transport and warehousing assets available and tasking mechanisms
- Cargo movement request procedures
- Roles and responsibilities of actors involved

The ConOps is the basis for your Operational Plan and logistics input to other document (Special Operation, Flash Appeal, CERF Request…). It provides a brief overview of the structure and processes you will use in the operation. The ConOps can also build into more detailed documents such as Standard Operating Procedures.

The ConOps should enable new staff and organisations arriving into the theatre of operations to immediately have a clear understanding of what and how you plan to implement the relief operation.

Below are samples of ConOps graphics from previous operations in Pakistan, Myanmar and OPT:
Annex E:

Logistics Cluster Information Management Products

**Sitrep: Sitreps/and Consolidated Sitrep (as required – then weekly):**

The Logistics Cluster sitreps are the main regular written summary key logistics facts, events and issue. When an operation is organized around different areas or logistics hubs then a consolidated sitrep is produced for dissemination consolidating the info coming form different location and sources. They should be produced on a regular schedule determined by the need: normally at the beginning of an emergency on a daily basis that then can be shifted to 3 times per week, weekly followed by the compilation of a biweekly bulletin. Sitreps are circulated by the author to the humanitarian actors in the crisis and through the ad hoc created mailing list and then made available to a broader audience through the webpage.

**Meeting minutes:**

The meeting minute’s intent is to represent through bullet points the major issues touched during the logistic cluster meeting. They should be circulated to the clusters participants the same day the meeting was help. Particular attention should be given to the ACTION POINTS box where the action that need to be taken by the cluster or the partners are highlighted. Please also be sure that the Date and Location of the next cluster meeting is clearly stated in red in the minutes.

**Concept of Operation (ConOps):**

In order to improve coordination and to make the best use of available logistics assets on the ground, the Concept of Operations (ConOps) help actors to agree on a specific setup and can outline roles, responsibilities, and procedures. A ConOps is a short paper that supports the greater humanitarian community, and usually includes the following sections:

- Executive summary: short outline of the scale of an emergency and scope of
envisioned required logistics response including augmentation services
• Planning assumptions and risk factors, if applicable
• Upstream pipeline and transport
• Corridors and entry points, including cargo consolidation or transhipment points, if required
• Downstream pipeline
• Coordination mechanisms
• Transport and warehousing assets available and tasking mechanisms
• Cargo movement request procedures
• Roles and responsibilities of actors involved

The ConOps provides a brief overview of the structure and processes you will use in the operation. The ConOps should enable new staff and organisations arriving into the theatre of operations to immediately have a clear understanding of what and how you plan to implement the relief operation and it is the basis for your Special Operation* and logistics input to your Emergency Operation document(s).

* Special Operations is a Programme Category for interventions undertaken to:
1. rehabilitate and enhance transport and logistics infrastructure to permit timely and efficient delivery of food assistance, especially to meet emergency and protracted relief needs;
2. Enhance coordination within the United Nations System and with other partners through the provision of designated common services.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):
Once the ConOps has been endorsed by the cluster members, it is build into more detailed documents such as the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

This document attempts to capture on paper the Logistics Cluster plan to ‘operationalise’ the Logistics Services for the humanitarian assistance that will be put in place under a Special Operation (SO). It is envisaged that the plan will be regularly updated as the operation develops and as it becomes clearer the extent to which the Logistics Cluster is required to provide integrated common transport services to the entire humanitarian community.
Logistics Snapshots – Public – As information available:
The snapshots are one-page handouts designed to provide a quick overview of a logistically important issue or location. Essentially they are a summary or one-page version of the logistics guides. Alternatively they might be a republication of the executive summary of a thematic report.

They should be kept in sync with the relevant website pages, be distributed locally by field staff in printed version and by email, appear on the website and be mentioned in the bulletin. The snapshot should be reviewed and updated as appropriate during the life of a Logistics Cluster operation and clearly have the date prominent. For examples see [http://www.logcluster.org/gaza09a/supply-chain/hubs](http://www.logcluster.org/gaza09a/supply-chain/hubs)

Logistics General Overview for activities:
The Overviews are one-page handouts designed to provide a quick overview of an operation or activity undertaken by the cluster. Essentially they are a summary or one-page version of the logistics guides. They can also be “stories from the field” and general articles to be shared about a certain activities which took place in an operation.

Instructions:
When an Ad hoc logistics service is set up by the cluster to serve the humanitarian community, such as staging areas (as in the case of the Bangkok staging areas for the Myanmar operation) detailed snapshots on the instruction to access the services can be produced. The instruction aims to give all the necessary details (such as structure, contacts, rates etc) to the user for them to be able to access the services on the quickest and easiest way as possible.

Bulletin – Public Weekly (during operations):
The Logistics Cluster bulletin is the primary mechanism the cluster uses to:

- advise agency field logisticians, headquarters planners, donors and other humanitarian actors of
details on the logistics situation in the crisis, and any bottlenecks and issues of key concern

- Outline and analyse the overall logistics situation and any near and longer term strategic issues that should be addressed
- Communicate the main Logistics Cluster activities and priorities.

Users subscribe to the bulletin mailing list via the Logistics Cluster website. The bulletins are usually written in the field or by the Global Cell in HQ using information from Logistics Cluster field sitreps and other sources, and must be edited and approved/cleared for release as they often discuss sensitive issues. The bulletins are short and focussed, concentrating on new developments, current problems/recommendations and an analysis of key issues. Details or other thematic are published in separate Logistics Guides that are updated when required.

**Transport Schematics:**
Provides a summary overview of the status of the key humanitarian access corridors to the flood affected area, as well as additional information regarding the status of individual feeder roads and key infrastructure points within the affected area.

**Joint Supply tracking reports:**
- **General overview** of the pipeline flow
- Cargo movement **prioritization**
- Supply **tracking** of the common transport service
- **Ad hoc** reports based on users requests.

**Road condition Matrix:**
The matrix provides general overview of the affected area incorporating distance/time information on key routes to help facilitate logistical planning by agencies. Information is gathered within the logistics users' community.
End of Mission report – released after a Logistics Cluster operation closes:
At the end of the emergency phase, of each Logistics Cluster operation a report is usually written that summarises the key cluster activities, achievements and summarizes the lesson learned in the operation. All significant Logistics Cluster missions to date have been reviewed when finalized. These reviews/ End of Mission Report, involve all key stakeholders, including the Logistics Cluster, agencies, national authorities and NGOs. The final report of these reviews is a public document, available online and distributed to all stakeholders, the UN Country Team and donors and made available to the broader humanitarian community. Prior reviews are available at http://www.logcluster.org

Website – Public and Internal sections – updated daily:
The Logistics Cluster website is the primary archive and publication mechanism for all Logistics Cluster information products listed in this document as well as detailed information on logistics facilities and activities reported by Logistics Cluster staff in the field. It is managed by the Global Logistics Cluster Support Cell Information Management pillar and has a number of key features.

- All logistics information from every Logistics Cluster operation.
- All Logistics Cluster publications and reports.
- Breaking news for new information.
- Crisis specific areas with logistics information on each crisis.
- Subscription forms for the Logistics Cluster mailing list.
- Full text search of all documents and pages on the site.
- Archives of previous UNJLC and Logistics Cluster operations.
- Links to key sources of relevant logistics information.
- Information on upcoming Logistics Cluster trainings as well as secure areas for download of training materiel for participants.
- In some emergencies the site also provides a helpdesk for logistics questions which is answered by Logistics Cluster staff.
Annex F:

Civil Military Briefing

In most humanitarian emergencies (complex and natural) the UN agencies and the members of the international humanitarian community responding to the disaster encounter armed actors. Now, more than ever before, there are likely to be multiple types of forces, including foreign, international or multinational forces. When such actors are present there are significant coordination challenges in the realms of security, medical evacuation, logistics, transport, communications, information management, and others.

The challenges include such issues as ensuring that humanitarians have the access they require, but at the same time do not become a target. Other challenges include minimizing the competition for scarce resources such as ports, supply routes, airfields and other logistics infrastructure. In addition, most of these armed actors are likely to seek to establish relationships with the civilian population and in many cases attempt to provide them assistance.

In some cases, the military forces can provide useful resources and support to the affected country or region, population or humanitarian actors. In other cases, the perceived association with the armed actors can compromise the humanitarian efforts and may pose an additional security threat.

Recognizing the need for effective UN Civil Military Coordination (UN CMCoord) in these situations, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) endorsed various guidances and reference materials on the use of Military & Civil Defence Assets (MCDA):

- Use of MCDA in Natural Disasters “Oslo Guidelines”
- Use of MCDA in Complex Emergencies “MCDA Guidelines”
- Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts

The Logistics Cluster follows the principles outlined in the set of guidelines endorsed by the UN system on the use of civil & military assets which are in essence:

- Uses of military assets are means of last resort.
- Assets of parties to the conflict are not to be used
- Use of military assets will not infringe upon the actual and perceived impartiality and neutrality of WFP in its role as the Logistics Cluster Lead.
- Use of military assets should reflect only humanitarian considerations.
- Ensure that use of military assets offers clear benefits over use of other options.
- Use of MCDA should not compromise on-going activities or relationships with host countries, beneficiaries, contractors, etc.

What should we consider when we decide to cooperate with military actors:

- Is the military force capable of the task?
- Can they be committed for the duration?
• Can they deploy without weapons?
• Will their involvement affect the humanitarian community's neutrality and/or impartiality
• Can they be placed under direction of a civilian actor if need be?
• Are they the only or most appropriate option, is there comparable commercial alternative.
• What could be the impact/consequences for other humanitarian actors, the local market and the current humanitarian operation in country?