



**SPECIAL OPERATION STATE OF PALESTINE SO 200757**  
**“Logistics Cluster Support and Logistics Augmentation in Support of the Gaza Crisis”**

Country:	State of Palestine
Type of project:	<b>Special Operation 200757</b>
Title:	“Logistics Cluster Support and Logistics Augmentation in Response to the Gaza Crisis”
Total cost (US\$):	2,402,579
Duration:	3 months (6 August 2014 – 5 November 2014)

**Executive Summary:**

1. On 7 July 2014, a humanitarian emergency was declared in the Gaza Strip by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), following an escalation in hostilities involving intense Israeli aerial and navy bombardment and Palestinian rocket firing into Israel. More than 250,000 people have been displaced and are in dire need of humanitarian assistance.
2. In view of the present armed conflict situation in Gaza and the increased requirements in humanitarian assistance for the population of the Gaza Strip, it is urgently required to scale up and augment existing logistics capacity and coordination mechanisms to overcome the likely logistics bottlenecks arising from the on-going conflict.
3. Based on a request from UN agencies and NGOs on the ground, the Logistics Cluster has been activated and requested to respond to these increased requirements by strengthening the logistics set-up and staffing structure in Israel, Gaza and Egypt. This will provide the needed coordination and operational structure to ensure the efficient and timely delivery of humanitarian aid into Gaza.
4. The Logistics Cluster will provide a number of common services, including transportation and warehousing, to the humanitarian community in addition to logistics coordination and information sharing.
5. This Special Operation will have a duration of three months and a total cost of US\$ 2,402,579.

**Project Background:**

6. On 7 July 2014, a humanitarian emergency was declared in the Gaza Strip, following an escalation in hostilities involving intense Israeli aerial and navy bombardment and Palestinian rocket firing into Israel. The humanitarian impact of these hostilities in Gaza comes against a backdrop of heightened vulnerability and instability in Gaza.
7. The entire Gazan population of around 1.8 million people is affected by this crisis. Intense bombardment from air, land and sea has had a devastating impact. The number of civilians killed and injured as well as the level of destruction of civilian infrastructure is unprecedented compared with previous escalation in hostilities in Gaza (in 2009 and

2012). As of 3 August, the daily intensive bombardment of Gaza has resulted in the deaths of as estimated 1,717 Palestinians of which up to 84 percent are civilian, with more than one-third comprising of children and women.<sup>1</sup> More than 8,000 people have been injured, many seriously. Hundreds of homes and other civilian buildings, such as schools, have been destroyed or severely damaged. The conflict has forcibly displaced a quarter of the Gazan population. More than 270,000 Palestinians are hosted in UNRWA shelters alone. The number of displaced persons is expected to increase in the coming days and weeks unless a more viable and lasting ceasefire is put in place.

8. The lack of security continues to challenge humanitarian operations. The operating environment in Gaza is extremely dangerous, with significant implications on the protection of civilians, aid workers and on the assessment of needs and the delivery of assistance. Humanitarian space is needed to allow humanitarian workers to carry out life-saving activities, for example, through regular and meaningful humanitarian pauses or corridors.
9. Most of Gaza's crossings with the outside world remain effectively sealed. The Kerem Shalom crossing has been operating as normal for goods throughout the crisis. However, only certain types of relief items such as food and NFIs have been allowed to pass through. Other urgently needed items such as spare parts for WASH infrastructure and medical equipment remain restricted and require sometimes lengthy coordination processes that are not adequate to respond to emergency needs in the scale that are emerging in Gaza right now.
10. Since July 2013, the Rafah border crossing has been severely restricted by the Government of Egypt. A limited number of medical evacuations have taken place through Rafah crossing as well as evacuation of foreign nationals, dual nationals, and Egyptian nationals and their families. However, a more significant opening of the Rafah crossing is needed to allow the movement of people and humanitarian supplies.
11. Of particular concern is the damage sustained by the Gaza Power Plant (GPP), which brought the operation of the plant to a halt. Consequently, Gaza city is receiving electricity for about two hours a day, while localities in the Middle Area have no supply at all. This is expected to have a pervasive impact on the living conditions for several months, including in the functioning of water, sanitation, and health facilities, as well as food production, including the functioning of flour mills and bakeries.

### **Project Justification**

12. In view of the present armed conflict situation in Gaza and the increased requirements in humanitarian assistance for the population of the Gaza Strip, it is urgently required to scale up and augment existing logistics capacity and coordination mechanisms to overcome the likely logistics bottlenecks arising from the on-going conflict.
13. WFP will, in its capacity as lead agency of the Logistics Cluster, and based on a request from UN agencies and NGOs on the ground, respond to these increased requirements by strengthening the logistics set-up and staffing structure in Israel, Gaza, and Egypt. This

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<sup>1</sup> OCHA Situation Report 23.3 August 2014.

will provide the needed coordination and operational structure to ensure the efficient and timely delivery of humanitarian aid into Gaza.

14. In particular, the humanitarian community has requested the Logistics Cluster to help coordinate and facilitate the movement and handling of supplies into Gaza based on the priorities set by the Humanitarian Coordinator. In addition, a need was expressed to set up common warehouse space inside Gaza and to help arrange safe transport deliveries inside Gaza through an enhanced civil-military coordination mechanism.
15. Through various negotiations, it has been agreed with the Egyptian Authorities to open the Rafah (Egypt/Gaza) border crossing for humanitarian cargo. This will have to be coordinated closely with the Egyptian authorities and needed operational set-up to be in place. The Logistics Cluster has been requested to help facilitate the opening of the Rafah Crossing.

### **Project Objectives:**

16. Through this SO, the objectives of the Logistics Cluster are to:
  - Provide Logistic Coordination and Information Management to enhance predictability, timeliness and efficiency of the emergency response under the Cluster approach;
  - Consolidate cargo and provide common transport and storage services to the humanitarian community to address key logistics constraints and to allow safer and coordinated access; and
  - Provide the staffing and logistics capabilities for the humanitarian community to respond to the crisis.

### **Project Implementation**

17. This project will be implemented through the establishment of a Logistics Cluster Cell in Jerusalem and in Gaza once the situations allows it. These coordination cells will host cluster meetings and liaise with other clusters and key partners such as UNRWA, ICRC and the Red Crescent Movement.
18. An information management structure will be put in place to support the dissemination and sharing of key logistics related information with the aim of supporting operational decision making to improve the efficiency of the logistics response. The information management activities include customs related input and distribution of relevant logistics and operationally needed maps.
19. The Logistics Cluster will augment already existing common staging areas in Ashqelon and East Jerusalem, and will also set up a new staging hub in Hebron. After receiving the cargo in those hubs, the cluster will consolidate and palletize the cargo in line with the border entry crossing requirements for Gaza. The dispatch will be organized according to prioritization set by the HC/HCT.
20. The Logistics Cluster, through and in collaboration with WFP, will do the transport from its staging areas in Ashqelon, East Jerusalem, and Hebron to its common warehouses in

Gaza and possibly Rafah. In addition, the Logistics Cluster will also organize UN escorted transport as required within the Gaza strip and from Rafah in case the crossing will be opened on a more permanent basis.

21. Due to damages to infrastructure and inaccessibility to certain warehouses inside Gaza, several common warehouses will be established in Gaza and Rafah to receive and dispatch when appropriate cargo to the distribution sites.
22. A Civil-Military coordination structure will be put in place to help facilitate the interface between the humanitarian and military counterparts as a service for the Logistics Cluster. The Logistics Cluster will receive and consolidate requests for passing onto the relevant authorities as required by partners. If these requests are delayed or denied then follow up is provided by the Access Coordination Unit, who supports all clusters and agencies in this manner as the lead entity on civil-military coordination in Israel and the State of Palestine. The provision of escorts to humanitarian convoys and movement inside Gaza is being coordinated through UN Access Coordination Unit, UNDSS, and UNRWA.
23. The Logistics Cluster will establish the necessary coordination and operational set-up in Rafah to help facilitate efficient movement of humanitarian cargo through this corridor. This will require close coordination with Egyptian Authorities at the highest level, with Israeli COGAT (Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories) and the Palestinian Authority (PA).
24. The Country Director of the State of Palestine Country Office will manage the fund for this Special Operation and the CO Finance Officer will be the Allotment Manager. The Head of Logistics will be the Project Manager and will be responsible for the implementation of the activities stated in the project.

### **Project Cost and Benefits**

25. This Special Operation has a total budget of US\$2,402,579.
26. The direct benefits of this project will be the Logistics Cluster's ability to immediately provide support to the humanitarian community and thereby a more effective response to the affected population in Gaza.

### **Project Management**

27. WFP project management and oversight will be provided by a dedicated team of competent, experienced logistics staff based in the State of Palestine. WFP Head of Logistics will provide the necessary oversight and guidance for all contracting processes and ensure operational support is provided to the cluster in compliance with WFP rules and regulations. The Logistics Cluster Coordinator will manage all cluster activities including the liaison with partners and agencies utilizing the services of the Logistics Cluster.

### **Risk Management**

28. A number of contextual, operational, and programmatic risk factors could impact the successful implementation of this Special Operation. Possible mitigation measures are also included below.

**A. Closure of corridors due to insecurity or political developments**

This risk will be mitigated through:

- Maintenance of standby arrangements for alternative corridors and close coordination with UN ACU, UN HCT, and other relevant authorities to intervene or resolve issues with the appropriate authorities on behalf of the humanitarian community.

**B. Demands for common services exceeds current forecasts**

This risk will be mitigated through:

- Ability to scale up staffing through rosters and identification of surge capacity;
- Availability of adequate storage facilities; and
- Availability of prepositioned equipment to meet the needs of the humanitarian community.

**C. Politicization of UN humanitarian efforts affecting the use of UN assets and access**

This risk will be mitigated through:

- Utilization of local and regional commercial assets.

**Exit Strategy**

29. The Logistics Cluster is initially planning to provide the above mentioned services at no cost to the user for the first two months after which the services will be provided on a full cost-recovery basis. This strategy will of course be communicated well in advance to all cluster members and potentially revised based on the development of the situation on the ground.

**Monitoring & Evaluation**

30. A compliance and cost effectiveness mission will be conducted by the end of the operation.
31. Operational reports will be provided on a regular basis.

**Key performance indicators**

- Total storage space made available (m3) in staging areas in Ashqelon, East Jerusalem, and Hebron; and common warehouses at Rafah and within Gaza;
- Total volume (m3) of humanitarian cargo moved through logistics common transport services;
- Number of humanitarian organizations using common storage and transport services;
- Number of humanitarian organizations attending Logistics Cluster coordination meetings;
- Number of logistics information management products produced and shared; and

- Use of inter-agency coordination and information related services provided (websites, reports, surveys, assessments).

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

This Special Operation 200757 covering the period from 6 August 2014 to 5 November 2014 at a total cost to WFP of US\$2,402,579 is recommended for approval by the Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer with the budget provided.

### **APPROVAL**

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Amir Abdulla

Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer

