



DISCUSSION PAPER – PRIORITISATION FOR HAITI

This discussion paper attempts to define the process for ensuring prioritised humanitarian needs are met in the Haiti response.

1. The humanitarian community's support to the Government of Haiti for the response to the recent earthquake requires strong coordination for the delivery of timely life-saving humanitarian assistance.

Currently the main constraint is the damage to infrastructure affecting cargo arriving by road, sea and air transport. At Port-au-Prince airport congestion of incoming aircraft and a build up of cargo severely limits the capacity to bring in relief goods.

The Logistics Cluster is working with the Government of Haiti and supporting nations to transport humanitarian relief to affected populations as soon as possible. **Setting priorities for the type and timing of aid delivery is one of the key roles of the Humanitarian Coordinator, together with the Humanitarian Country Team.**

2. Prioritisation by the Humanitarian Coordinator / Humanitarian Country Team would achieve the following:

- Build a **coordinated and strategic response** throughout all sectors according to **clearly defined criteria**;
- Promote **transparency** and **accountability** by the humanitarian community to affected populations;
- Replace the **'first come first served'** approach to dispatching of relief items with **clear and consistent criteria** for the delivery of aid as appropriate to the context.

The Humanitarian Country Team should aim to represent humanitarian priorities at a level of detail that can be applied to the review of cargo manifests. For example, it would be insufficient to state that water and sanitation materials are 'a priority' as this would not communicate, for example, whether one, or all, or none, of the following should take priority: water purification systems; desalination plants; bottled water; or purification tablets. The Humanitarian Country Team will decide how best to agree on priorities, in close coordination with clusters.

3. Based on the HCT priorities it is the role of the Logistics Cluster to coordinate the use of all available transport assets and services to meet the greatest needs of the population as fast as possible.

In order to do this, two civil-military liaison officers have been deployed by WFP, as the Logistics Cluster lead, to liaise with MINUSTAH and international entities in Port-au-Prince and in Miami. In addition, aviation and logistics officers are available to advise on appropriate means of transport. The goal is to channel requests from the Humanitarian Community through the Logistics Cluster to establish systems for the most efficient use of military and common logistics resources, including air, land and sea transport, to meet these priorities.

Civil-Military liaison will include the following:

- Establishment of direct lines of communication and tasking procedures for US military assets through USAID/OFDA;

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- Creation of a coordination platform between WFP, the US Air Force and MINUSTAH to facilitate the arrival of incoming humanitarian flights;
- Set up of ground logistics at Port-au-Prince airport for unloading and onward movement of humanitarian cargo.

4. Prioritisation of inbound humanitarian cargo is critical to support the establishment of a functioning slot system at Port-au-Prince airport.

The Logistics Cluster, on behalf of the humanitarian community, aims to ensure that incoming flight slots designated for humanitarian cargo at Port-au-Prince airport are granted to **aircraft carrying humanitarian life-saving or life-enabling materials**. It should therefore be **mandatory for carriers requesting a slot to submit information on the consigner, consignee and details of the cargo** (packing list). It is noted that only the airport authorities can allocate landing slots to the aircraft operator. The Logistics Cluster advises on the allocation of these slots.

Therefore **flights into Port-au-Prince should only contain cargo** that is consigned to organisations that are able (themselves or through a common service) to **evacuate the cargo from the airport (or port) upon arrival and distribute or utilise the materials immediately**. In this way it will be possible to limit the quantity of unsolicited bilateral donations i.e. materials dispatched without obvious consignees.

Humanitarian aid arriving at the airport without a consignee or addressed to an organisation unable to arrange onward transport has a significantly detrimental impact on all airport operations. **Unclaimed cargo offloaded from planes blocks valuable space that should be available for aircraft movement**. It is therefore imperative that only aircraft carrying cargo that can be immediately collected from the airport be allocated landing space.