Introduction & Background to RITA

Background

WFP and the Logistics Cluster support the broader humanitarian community during an emergency by providing logistical services, covering the storage and transportation of supplies (commonly known as "**Relief Items**") from various entry points to extended points of delivery. Managing the information necessary to perform this task effectively is complex and time-consuming. Although the basic aim across all operations is the same – the tracking of cargo - the underlying operational requirements often differ widely, which led to the development of a variety of tracking solutions – ranging from white-boards, Excel spread sheets and Access databases, or some combination of the three.

In most cases, the tools developed were specific to a particular operation. This meant users with experience in one operation had to learn a completely new set of procedures and tools when placed in a new operation. It also resulted in information gathered during an operation effectively being discarded, as it was impossible to compare data across different operations.

RITA was developed in response to these shortcomings. By using a single system across multiple operations, procedures can be standardized, training becomes more efficient, and statistics can be accurately compared between operations.

Planning a Budget

Any given Logistics Cluster operation must be budgeted for as a mandated common service activity under the respective CPB as a stand-alone activity. A Logistics Cluster as an activity is derived from the corporate activity "Service Provision and Platform Activities" contributing to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17.16, Strategic Result 8, and with the specific characteristic: Logistics Cluster Services (LCS).

SDG 17.16, Strategic Result 8 aims to enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi- stakeholder partnerships that mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources to support the achievement of the SDGs in all countries, with particular emphasis on developing countries. The target is not directly related to WFP programmatic plans, goals and objectives.

LC operation must be reflected in CPB as per below:

SDG target:	17.16 Enhance Global Partnerships
Strategic Result 8:	Enhance global partnerships
Focus area:	Crisis Response
Activity category:	Service provision and platform activities

Activity category code:	CPA
Activity name (example):	LOGISTICS CLUSTER SERVICES (LCS)
Activity name code (example):	CPAx

A blank template for a standard budget used by Cluster operations is attached as an annex to this guide.

Developing a Budget:

Project Budget Plans are prepared by the CO. The preparation of the Budget Plan requires the involvement of several CO units, including Programme, Finance and Administration, Resource Management, Procurement, Logistics and Human Resources. The BPO supports the coordination of this work, while the Regional Bureau BPO serves as a primary source of advice and support for budget preparation.

Once the ConOps has been finalised, a budget must be prepared based on the resources needed to implement the project. Budget preparation is initiated by the CO. In accordance with the WFP Integrated Road Map (IRM) framework, Logistics Cluster activity within the CPB is spread across four cost categories:

1. Service delivery (transfer) – This covers operational costs such as operations staff (Logistics Cluster Coordinator, IM Officer, Logistics Officer, Storekeeper etc.), transport, storage etc.
2. Implementation – This category covers costs directly attributable to implementing activities such as the cost of the sub-office, Fund Manager, administration, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Lessons Learned.
3. Direct Support Cost (DSC) – This cost category roll-up cuts across all activities under the CSP Budget. This category accounts for in-country costs that are managed at the country level and supports multiple activities related to transfer of assistance and implementation of programmes. These costs are relevant to WFP's presence in a country and are minimum costs associated with operating and meeting the fiduciary responsibilities of the Country Office. Examples include, and are not limited to, CO management costs, rental costs for the Country Office, assessments and evaluations not directly linked to a specific activity, and majority of security costs. The rate is flexible and calculated by the CO, however, it is important to make sure DSC is not overbudgeted; a high DSC rate will have an impact on donor reporting and fundraising.
4. Indirect Support Costs (ISC) – This includes costs that support the execution of Country Strategic Plans and associated activities but cannot be directly linked with their implementation. The rate for this is 6.5%.

The Logistics Cluster budget should include some standard costs of tools and software used to implement the Logistics Cluster operation such as:

- The Logistics Cluster website
- The Relief Item Tracking Application (RITA), used for cargo tracking

- Logistics Capacity Assessments (LCAs)
- Lessons Learned Exercise (if planned)
- GLCST finance support (if applicable)

All costs should be checked with GLC team at the time of budget preparation. Once the budget has been finalized and cleared by the Global Logistics Cluster, it is submitted to the Budget and Programming Officer (BPO) who will upload it into the Budget and Planning Tool (BPT) system for further approvals.
It is highly recommended to prepare a comprehensive budget plan version with detailed cost breakdown that will be used to fill in the CPB and will serve as a tool to monitor and control funds consumption and reporting since the standard CPB template shall not have these features or level of detail.

Revising a Budget:

A budget revision may be required when there is a change in:

- The project duration (delay of start date, extension or reduction-in time); An increase/decrease in the planned assistance activities.
- In project focus.
- The cost estimates underlying the budget plan.
- The objectives, levels of support or operating methods for projects with no commodity component.

While there are a few exceptions to this requirement, it does not necessarily mean that budget revisions will always result in an overall increase to a budget. Efforts can be made to offset such increases, though such changes should be handled in a way that adjusts for future periods rather than changing the past. A budget revision should be carried out to accurately reflect the revised project needs. Unrealistic project needs will affect the CPB structure of a country office and result in inaccurate planning.

In order to revise the Logistics Cluster budget, a CPB Budget Review should take place. To investigate the steps for launching a revision, the Cluster Coordinator or designated staff should reach out to the local BPO, and ideally consult with the GLCST finance team. The Logistics Cluster should be able to launch a CPB Revision when necessary, however necessary time must be accounted for. The budget revision approval process follows the same steps as the budget preparation, but a CPB budget review can take weeks or longer. If an anticipated budget revision is required, a local Cluster operation should begin informing the CO as early as possible.

Title
Download - Blank Budget Template
File

Scope of Service Provision

The diagram below shows the scope of service provided by the Logistics Cluster during an emergency operation:

The Logistics Cluster tracks humanitarian food and non-food cargo within an emergency

response, wherever the Logistics Common Transport or Storage Services are being used. Cargo movements within an operation that *do not* use the common service provision are outside the responsibility of the Logistics Cluster.

In other words, the transfer of goods from the customer to the initial delivery point; and the transfer of goods from the Extended Deliver Point (EDP) to the beneficiaries is the responsibility of the partner and are therefore explicitly outside the scope of the tracking system.

Goods are tracked from initial arrival at a designated entry point. The goods then travel through various Consolidation & Loading Points (CLP). Tracking ends once the goods leave the final Extended Delivery Point.

Purpose

RITA is a tool to manage the logistics of transporting (mainly non-food) cargo for the humanitarian community. The main purposes of the system are:

- **Manage incoming cargo** – both direct pick-up from customers' warehouses; and delivery by a customer to cluster-controlled warehouse.
- **Manage cargo in transit** – from determining vehicle requirements and schedules to answering customer enquiries about the status and whereabouts of their cargo.
- **Manage customs requirements**, by having a better view of what each consignment contains.
- **Manage outgoing cargo** – both releases (where the customer picks up their goods from the cluster-controlled warehouse); and deliveries (to a customer-specified address).
- **Improve customer service** - Organisations need to know where their goods are in the delivery chain, if only at a high level – In transit, Received, Dispatched, Delivered, etc.
- **Basic warehouse management** reporting and monitoring.
- **Reporting operation**-wide statistics.

This translates into a number of specific features:

- Maintain a single reference point for the goods over the lifetime of the consignment (Consignment ID).
- Track the movement of all goods with full transparency, via a DHL-style online tracking mechanism (Consignment Tracking Number). Because RITA is internet-based, customers can now independently see the progress of their goods through the use of a computer-generated tracking number to ensure confidentiality.
- Simplify the complex process of scheduling vehicles over multi-point routes – this is currently done at dispatch time. The dispatch operator can split a single consignment to different vehicles and plan a multi-stop route.

Accessing and Navigating RITA

RITA Website

To access RITA, open your web browser (Google Chrome is recommended as the default browser), and enter the appropriate URL (for the Logistics Cluster: https://rita.logcluster.org, for On-Demand Service Provision: https://rita.wfp.org).

A login screen will appear, and the operator must provide the details of their login ID (email address) and password.

By default, the language used is English. However, the operator has the option to switch to Spanish, French, Portuguese, Arabic, Russian, and Chinese language.

Logging in

Operators with WFP email addresses can type their email addresses and sign in by clicking on "**Login with WFP password**" and using their corporate password.

For other email addresses, email RITA GLOBAL atrita.global@wfp.org to request access. Once RITA Administrators assign access to the User ID (usually the email address), the operator is given a default password. Type these values into the "**Email**" and "**Password**" fields and click "**Login**".

Note: The default password must be changed after the first login.

You will now be looking at the RITA Main Menu:

RITA provides automatic account notifications that notify users of account and password expiration in advance.

Navigating RITA

The RITA Main Menu has the following key elements listed below:

RITA Logo: Clicking the RITA logo from anywhere within RITA will return the operator to the Main Menu screen.

Project: This option displays the current project and lets the operator choose if access has been granted to many

Location Group: When the operator clicks on the '**Location Group**" option, a drop-down menu with all the sites within the current project appears.

User Email: When the operator clicks on the email address, a drop-down menu appears with three options explained below:

- **Preferences**: This tab allows the operator to change their language preference. Currently, the available options for RITA users are English, French, and Spanish.
- **About:** Clicking the "About" option will display the user's ID and details about the server.
- **Logout**: Clicking the "Logout" link will exit RITA.

Dashboard

The dashboard provides the operator with a snapshot of performance to date. The graphing dashboard allows operators to select multiple variables (weight, volume, consignments), select date ranges, select locations, and transport routes, and, in some instances, overlay data. For details on the dashboard tab, please refer chapter "Reporting- Dashboard".

RITA Automatic Notifications

RITA sends automatic emails to notify partners and cargo owners about any changes to their shipments or consignments. Below are some of the conditions under which the automatic emails are sent:

RITA's user-friendly interface effortlessly enables individuals to submit service requests online in six different languages. Furthermore, it can automatically send notifications in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Chinese, ensuring effective communication with a diverse user base.

Account and password Expiration reminder:	RITA provides automated notifications one week in advance to remind users of upcoming account and password expirations.
Password Reset and Confirmation Email:	RITA automatically notifies users to reset their password with a password reset link and sends confirmation email after the password has been reset.
Service Request Form Submission:	Service requests submitted through manual or online SRF will trigger alert emails to requestors and RITA operators, notifying key personnel and documenting the workflow. If the owner of the cargo is different from the requestor of the service, RITA sends a separate email to each of them.
Online Service Request Reminder:	When a user has pending service requests submitted online and they have not been verified, RITA sends a reminder email to the customer to verify their submitted request.
Service Request Rejected:	When service requests submitted by users are rejected, the cargo owner will be notified, including notes for the rejection.
Service Request Accepted:	When service requests submitted by users are approved, the person who submitted the online service request will be notified about the acceptance of their request. They will also receive the cargo tracking ID number along with a hyperlink to the tracking page. From there, the user can track the disposition of the cargo.
Cargo Received:	When cargo from multiple consignments is received in a single location, RITA sends automatic email notifications to the cargo owners and partners (if different than the owners).
Release Order Submitted:	Release order requests submitted through manual or online form will trigger alert emails to requestors and RITA operators.

Release Order Rejection Notification:	When a release order request is rejected by the RITA operator, the person who submitted the release order request will be notified, along with rejection notes.
Cargo Dispatch:	When a single journey includes cargo from multiple consignments and is dispatched to multiple locations/recipients, RITA automatically sends email notifications to cargo owners and recipients (if different from the owner) when the cargo is dispatched on a vehicle.
Cancellation of Dispatch:	If a dispatch is cancelled, cargo owners and recipients (if different from the owner) will receive automatic notifications of the changes. RITA operators will be required to provide an explanation for the cancellation of the dispatch.