The range of threats to public health faced by countries worldwide is broad and highly diverse. It includes infectious disease outbreaks, chemical and radiation contamination, armed conflicts, as well as the consequences of climate change.

Logistics is a critical aspect of technical assistance during these public health and humanitarian emergencies. This is because it facilitates key processes for the distribution of aid material, the deployment of qualified personnel, and the set up of relief facilities and infrastructures.

Under the International Health Regulations (2005), WHO’s Logistics team, supports Member States in emergency field activities by

- coordinating the response supply chain and managing global strategic stockpiles;
- implementing infection control measures and transporting infectious substances;
- ensuring effective working facilities and infrastructures to support response teams;
- establishing network communication systems and base camps; and,
- procuring and training human resources for logisticians.

In 2014, 1.4 million sets of personal protective equipment (PPE) were delivered to West Africa.
WHO assists Member States in all aspects of emergency response operations

Supporting
WHO offers comprehensive preparedness guidance and logistics support to Member States in their responses to public health and humanitarian crises. Assistance is provided upon request of countries, under the International Health Regulations (2005) and WHO’s Emergency Response Framework.

Maintaining
In collaboration with local authorities, WHO maintains stockpiles of essential supplies - including IT and communication devices, lifesaving medicines, and personal protective equipment (PPE) - and ensures that they are dispatched in a timely manner to field locations across the world.

Strengthening
Together with Member States and partner organizations, WHO constantly seeks to strengthen its logistics network. The ultimate objective is to establish an international response mechanism to public health and humanitarian emergencies that is more rapid, coherent and effective.