

**Mauritania Special Operation 200406:  
Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Mauritania**

**B/R No.: 02**

**BUDGET REVISION OF SO FOR THE APPROVAL OF DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & COO**

	<u>Initials</u>	<u>In Date</u>	<u>Out Date</u>	<u>Reason For Delay</u>
<b><u>ORIGINATOR</u></b>				
Country Office	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b><u>CLEARANCE</u></b>				
Regional Director, ODD	.....	.....	.....	.....
Project Budget & Programming Officer, RMBP	.....	.....	.....	.....
Chief, RMBP	.....	.....	.....	.....
Chief, ODLT	.....	.....	.....	.....
Director, ODL	.....	.....	.....	.....
Director and Deputy CFO, RMB	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b><u>APPROVAL</u></b>				
Deputy Executive Director and COO	.....	.....	.....	.....

<b>PROJECT: Mauritania SO 200406</b>			
	Previous Budget	Revision	New Budget
<b>ODOC (US\$)</b>	4,143,400	5,247,682	9,391,082
<b>DSC (US\$)</b>	502,320	537,840	1,040,160
<b>ISC (US\$)</b>	325,201	404,987	730,188
<b>Total WFP Cost (US\$)</b>	<b>4,970,921</b>	<b>6,190,508</b>	<b>11,161,429</b>

**TYPE OF REVISION**

Additional DSC       Additional ODOC       Extension in time       Other

**NATURE OF REVISION:**

A budget revision to Special Operation 200406 "Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Mauritania" is proposed to increase the budget by **US\$6,190,508** to cater for an extension of the project from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2013 to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2013.

**BACKGROUND:**

- Mauritania, along with the other countries in the Sahel region, was seriously affected by reduced agro-pastoral production in 2011. The effects of this have been felt in 2012 with an increasing percentage of the population facing household food deficits. Approximately 1 million people, located mainly in the regions of Hodh Echargui,

Guidmagha, Gorgol and Assaba have been affected by the Sahel crisis.

2. Coupled with this has been the mass movement of refugees from Mali as a result of armed clashes. Between January and October 2012, over 109,000 Malians have fled to Mauritania. In consultation with UNHCR, the Mauritanian Government established a refugee camp approximately 50 kilometers from the border in M’Bera, near Bassikounou.
3. In April 2012 the humanitarian community operating in Mauritania requested activation of WFP/UNHAS air operations in the country to ensure rapid and secure access to beneficiaries. Given the distances between areas of operation and the fact that road travel is not safe, air transport is the best way to access beneficiaries. This Special Operation (SO) is catering for the provision of safe, reliable, and cost efficient air transport service to the humanitarian community in Mauritania in response to the humanitarian crisis.
4. Special Operation 200406 was initially established in April 2012 for the duration of five months at a total budget of **US\$1,919,976**. One budget revision was processed in May to extend the project till the end of 2012, which brought the budget to a total of **US\$4,970,921**.
5. In April 2012 WFP deployed a 19-seat B1900 aircraft and established an operational base in Nouakchott to organize flights to Nema (the closest operational airstrip to M’Bera refugee camp) and other destinations (Kiffa and Aioun) within country. Fuel supplies were only available in Nouakchott, and WFP has been facilitating mobilization of drummed fuel to Nema and a few other locations to maximize passenger payload.
6. During April and May the aircraft was operating between Nouakchott and Nema. From Nema the humanitarian actors were able to reach M’Bera by road, which is a journey of over 5 hours. With the approach of the rainy season the road became impassible. Bassikounou airstrip is close to M’Bera, but it was not used for a long time and required rehabilitation. WFP rapidly facilitated some works on the airstrip, which allowed WFP/UNHAS to land a small Short Take-Off and Landing (STOL) capacity aircraft. In June WFP/UNHAS deployed another aircraft, a STOL capacity Let 410 and established its operational base in Nema to transport humanitarian workers between Bassikounou and Nema, and to meet the connecting flights with the B1900 to Nouakchott.
7. Bassikounou airstrip needs further rehabilitation and extension works to allow operations of B1900 or larger capacity aircraft, which are normally done by a specialized road construction company. The works were planned for 2012, but due to the lengthy assessments and rainy season, they were postponed till early 2013.
8. From April to October 2012 the service transported 2,598 passengers and 11 MT of light humanitarian cargo for 40 humanitarian organisations, as well as performing 5 medical evacuations.
9. The WFP/UNHAS user group committee has agreed that the continuation of the humanitarian air services in Mauritania is crucial for the humanitarian community operating in Mauritania in 2013.

#### **JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REVISION:**

10. The drought crisis in the Sahel and the influx of refugees from Mali has resulted in an increase of humanitarian activities in Mauritania. At present there are over 40 United Nations agencies and local and international Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) assisting those in need within the country.
11. The distances and insecurity in Mauritania make air travel essential for humanitarian actors in order to access the beneficiary populations during this humanitarian crisis.
12. In addition to the isolation, long distances and insecurity, there is currently no available capacity for medical evacuations.
13. There are no safe and reliable air service providers present in the country who meet safety standards and thus are able to transport humanitarian workers to remote beneficiary sites.
14. The plan for the major rehabilitation of the Bassikounou airstrip is being prepared. The works related to compacting and leveling layers of filling materials are due to start early 2013. The initial estimate of US\$500,000 for this rehabilitation component was approved in the previous budget revision. However, the latest assessment by a road construction company estimated the total cost of US\$1.5 million, and therefore an additional US\$1 million is included in the current budget revision.

15. Upon the completion of the rehabilitation works on Bassikounou airstrip, UNHAS and other service providers will be able to operate a B1900 to Bassikounou airstrip directly from Naoukchott, and therefore the LET410 aircraft will no longer be required. The current budget revision is catering as well for extension of a Let 410 aircraft for one month, until the end of January, 2013 to sustain the access to Bassikounou, until the airstrip works are completed, and extension of B1900 aircraft for the whole year 2013.
16. WFP/UNHAS will continue to work in close coordination with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and WFP Security, and an aircraft will be on standby for medical and security evacuations, with special flights made available on short notice.
17. The objectives of the project will remain as follows:
  - To provide safe and efficient air access in Mauritania to the humanitarian agencies (United Nations and NGOs) and donor representatives;
  - To ensure the necessary air capacity for medical and security evacuations;
  - To respond in a fast, efficient, and flexible manner to the fast-changing needs of the humanitarian community.
18. WFP/UNHAS Mauritania plans to continue free regular flights (as has been agreed by the WFP/UNHAS user group committee) for the humanitarian community, with funding raised through donor contributions. Any unscheduled (special) flights will be reimbursed by the user(s) on a full cost recovery basis.
19. The operation will be monitored in line with the updated key performance indicators as following:
  - Aircraft occupancy rate (target: 60 percent);
  - Average number of passengers transported per month (target: 400);
  - Utilization of contracted hours (target: 100 percent);
  - Frequency of the Users Groups' meetings (target: every two months);
  - Number of agencies and organizations using the air service (target: 40)
  - Number of locations served (target: 6)
  - Percentage of requests medical and security evacuations addressed (target: 100 percent )
20. Assessments of the operational activities are ongoing and implemented through analysis of flight statistics and feedback from the User Group Committee meetings.

**In the light of the above, this budget revision is presented for a budget increase of US\$6,190,508 for approval by the Deputy Executive Director & COO.**

**DISTRIBUTION:**

DED and COO	Deputy COO and Director, ODE	Director, ODL
Chief, ODLT	Director, ODX	Director and Dep. CFO, RMB
Chief, RMBP, ODXP, ODXR	Regional Director	Director, ERD
Country Director	Bgt/Prgramming Officer, RMBP	RB Programme Advisor
OD Registry	Programming Assistant, RMBP	RB Programme Assistant
Liaison Officer, ODD		