



**WFP The Republic Of South Sudan (ROSS)
SPECIAL OPERATION 200341**

Country:	The Republic of South Sudan
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in ROSS
Total cost (US\$):	US\$58,806,548
Duration:	Sixteen months (01 st September 2011 to 31 st December 2012)

Executive Summary

North and South Sudan finalized their formal separation on the 9th July 2011, following a referendum on secession as per the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed in 2005. In light of the separation of North and South Sudan, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) Steering Committee comprised of main user organisations and donors requested to split the existing UNHAS mission, which has been serving a unified Sudan, and to establish a separate mission for the Republic of South Sudan (ROSS).

A new UNHAS Special Operation (SO) will be organized and managed through the WFP ROSS Country Office. This UNHAS operations will cater for the provision of a safe, reliable and cost efficient air transport service to the humanitarian community providing assistance to, but limited to, refugees, host populations and Internally Displaced Populations (IDPs) throughout the country in 2011 and in 2012. This service has been requested by 180 humanitarian agencies and the donor community currently operating in ROSS. In South Sudan, the UNHAS fleet of 13 aircrafts (11 fixed-wing aircraft and 2 MI-8 helicopter) will be based in Juba, Wau, Rumbek and Malakal and will serve a total 58 locations.

The Special Operation is required for the duration of sixteen months, from 1st September 2011 to 31st December 2012, at a total cost of US\$58,806,548. A nominal booking fee of US\$200 (hub to hub) and US\$100 (hub to deep field) per passenger and a fee of US\$3 per kilo gram of cargo has been approved and is expected to cover up to US\$13.6 million or 23 percent of the overall project cost. The remaining 77 percent of the budget cost is expected to be raised through donor contributions.

South Sudan Humanitarian Context

1. The referendum period passed relatively peacefully in January 2011 and on 9 July 2011, the official separation of north and south Sudan resulted in the birth of the world's newest nation- the Republic of South Sudan.

2. However, South Sudan faces considerable humanitarian challenges. Despite significant progress since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, decades of civil war have left South Sudan with some of the worst human development indicators in the world and government capacity to deliver basic services and protection remains low.
3. The scope of the humanitarian operation is huge – one of the biggest in this part of Africa – and more frontline partners are needed to respond effectively. At mid-year, humanitarian agencies had launched over 30 different emergency operations in 51 of the South's 79 counties, in response to deteriorating humanitarian conditions.
4. In May, the sudden displacement of over 110,000 people from the Abyei area triggered the launch of a comprehensive emergency response operation, covering 22 villages in four states and prioritising the distribution of food rations, non-food items and emergency shelter. In response to the influx of returnees, relief organizations have provided short-term emergency assistance to returnees in transit and reinsertion packages at final destinations, in line with principles outlined in the Government's Procedures on Return and Reintegration issued in December 2010.
5. Other operations are underway on a near continual basis in response to inter-communal violence and rebel militia activity, as well as to respond to disease outbreaks and malnutrition. A number of core operational challenges and priorities persist as humanitarian partners look to the post-independence period. The scale of returns, prospects of further arrivals, insecurity and persistent funding shortfalls pose serious challenges to the response effort going forward.
6. Humanitarian actors scaled up emergency assistance in response to the influx of returnees and rise in violence, and are now working to consolidate contingency planning and ensure preparedness for the first six months of independence. The relief effort faces a series of core operational challenges, including South Sudan's vast and often impassable terrain, a lack of specialised emergency response capacity on the ground, and a recent contraction in humanitarian access.
7. According to the latest United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) statistics, more than 300,000 individuals have returned to South Sudan from the North and neighboring countries since late 2009 and the influx of returnees continues to date. Most of these returnees are leaving the north with very little material possessions and are arriving to places where they may lack access to basic services and exacerbate the fragile situation in communities that are already overstretched with regard to access to local resources.
8. Since the referendum, violence increased on several fronts in early 2011, affecting humanitarian conditions in each of the South's 10 states. South Sudan has been plagued by north-south border conflict, tribal fighting and inter-communal tension over resources that have led to large numbers of casualties in 2011. It has also impeded development and humanitarian access.
9. Internal fracture lines have also intensified, with at least seven rebel militia groups beginning or scaling up attacks against the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA)

in early 2011. Continuing clashes between the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and renegade militia groups in northern states of South Sudan, especially Unity and Upper Nile and Jonglei States have left many dead and thousands displaced.

10. Inter-communal violence has continued with conflict between the Lou Nuer and Murle communities in Jonglei, which came to a head in April with the start of retribitional attacks on a massive scale. Conflict between the Dinka and Bel communities along the Western Equatoria and Lakes states border also erupted, resulting in over two months of fighting that caused widespread destruction of villages and the displacement of more than 40,000 people. By mid-July, approximately 274,000 people had been reported newly displaced by conflict incidents since the start of the year and close to 2,500 killed according to reports by local authorities and assessment teams. A number of serious protection concerns have arisen, including extensive re-mining along transport routes in Unity, reports of physical abuse by security forces, arbitrary arrest and destruction of property, forced recruitment and increased gender-based violence.
11. Food security improved in 2011 compared to 2010, with an estimated 1.4 million people requiring food assistance at some point during the March to August lean season. However, a growing number of risk factors have emerged with the potential to reverse gains in various areas, including increased displacement and pressure for scarce resources in areas receiving high numbers of returnees. A sharp reduction in the availability of foodstuffs and basic commodities and a sharp rise in prices, particularly in northern South Sudan along the border with north Sudan, became a major concern following blockade of commercial traffic from the north since May.
12. In April, the GoSS elaborated its first South Sudan Development Plan, covering the period from July 2011 to July 2013. The plan outlines key objectives and activities across four pillars: economic growth, governance, social and human development and security. The Government of South Sudan has requested that humanitarian actors continue to provide life-saving services for the immediate future. NGOs have continued to provide the majority of education, health, nutrition, and water, sanitation and hygiene services during the first half of 2011, including in response to disease outbreaks, such as kala-azar, measles and meningitis.
13. The humanitarian operating environment has become increasingly challenging in the South, with active hostilities and military interference in aid operations compounding existing, significant logistical obstacles to operations. Humanitarian partners recorded more than 60 incidents in which state actors interfered with relief operations or restricted the movement of humanitarian personnel and supplies in 2011. However, humanitarian partners will continue to work closely with the GoSS in order to improve the operating environment in the South and with governments in both countries regarding access to the formerly-named transitional areas.
14. Within the current context of the overall situation in South Sudan, the services of provided by UNHAS are essential; the significant size of the humanitarian aid community working in South Sudan combined with, a precarious security situation which allows only extremely limited access by surface means, demands a continued and augmented humanitarian air transport capacity. Compounding the situation is

the annual rainy season, when due to limited access by surface means, air transport becomes the only viable transport option available. At this point, domestic commercial air services are not readily available to all locations required by the humanitarian aid community, even to main hubs in South Sudan.

Project Background

15. The Sudan humanitarian air service was initiated in 2004 in response to the Darfur Emergency, while in the south a parallel operation under full cost recovery has been in place for over 10 years. At the beginning of 2008 after an internal consultation with donors and the humanitarian community, the South Sudan air operation was combined with the Darfur operation. Previously the Southern Sudan fleet was operating on a full cost recovery basis and funded through the Operations Lifeline Sudan (OLS) Special Account.
16. After the separation of South Sudan based on consultations with donors and the humanitarian community based in Juba it was recommended to split the mission into two parts and to create a separate UNHAS operation in ROSS. With limited infrastructure and security, surface transport remains extremely dangerous and allows very limited access leaving air transport as the only secure transport option. Domestic commercial air transport is not available to most of the locations where the humanitarian community needs to travel and where the limited existing service is unreliable and/or where compliance with maintenance and safety regulations can not be guaranteed.
17. In addition, access by road is traditionally cut off to many locations during the wet months due to the extensive lack of adequate road infrastructure in the region. The demand for UNHAS services by humanitarian agencies to reach remote location can be achieved very often only by air as insecurity on the roads, particularly in conflict affected areas, hampered access via land routes.
18. One hundred eighty (180) user organizations from UN agencies, NGOs and diplomatic missions rely extensively on UNHAS as agencies, funds and programmers implement and monitor humanitarian activities in Sudan.
19. From January to June 2011, UNHAS Sudan's fleet based in South Sudan performed 5,340 hours transporting 37,204 passengers and 157 metric tons (MT) of light humanitarian cargo, breakdown is detailed below. During the same period, 22 medical evacuations were also undertaken. The breakdown of the operational statistics is provided below.

WFP UNHAS, South Sudan based fleet performance from January to June 2011

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Hours flown	815	844	1,016	880	936	849
Passenger	4,938	5,991	7,471	6,172	6,175	6,457
Cargo (kg)	22,613	28,069	32,916	31,976	18,755	22,712
Sortie	738	773	956	802	852	820

20. During the first Steering Committee meeting in Juba held in July 2011, donors recommended to keep the existing nominal booking fee of US\$200 (hub to hub), US\$100 (hub to deep field) per passenger and a fee of US\$3 per kg of cargo.

Project Justification

21. Insecurity, poor infrastructure, long distances and the lack of safe and reliable air transport providers necessitate UNHAS operations in the country essential to the Humanitarian Community at large.
22. Within the current context of the overall situation in South Sudan, the services of provided by UNHAS are essential; the significant size of the humanitarian aid community working in South Sudan combined with, a precarious security situation which allows only extremely limited access by surface means, demands a continued and augmented humanitarian air transport capacity. Compounding the situation is the annual rainy season, when due to limited access by surface means, air transport becomes the only viable transport option available. At this point, domestic commercial air services are not readily available to all locations required by the humanitarian aid community, even to main hubs in South Sudan.
23. The security situation in South Sudan after independence remains volatile and road transport access remains extremely dangerous. Tribal fighting and inter-communal tension over resources have led to large numbers of casualties and displacements. Militia rebel groups have proliferated and military clashes with the SPLA as well as clashes linked to communal and district boundaries have broken out along the border states, contributing to generalized instability in the northern states of the south and fears of the SPLA splintering from within. Fighting and insecurity have already impeded much-needed development as well as humanitarian access throughout the region. UNHAS will have regular flights to 58 locations of which only 9 are served by domestic commercial airlines, which do not meet United Nations safety standards.
24. Given the context of a large-scale complex emergency, environment challenges and limited road infrastructure and access in ROSS, UNHAS will remain flexible and regularly review its fleet size and configuration against the prevailing humanitarian requirements in order to meet the air transport demand.
25. Through customer surveys, feedback from the Steering Committee and User Group meetings, the humanitarian organizations using UNHAS services have expressed strong support for the continuation of the service both in Sudan and ROSS in 2011 and in 2012.

Project Objectives

26. The objectives of this Special Operation are:

- to provide a reliable, safe, efficient and cost-effective inter-agency air transport service to over 180 UN agencies, NGOs, diplomatic mission and donor organizations providing humanitarian assistance to, but not limited to, refugees, host populations and IDPs in ROSS;
- to transport light relief items and cargo such as medical supplies, high energy foods and ICT equipment; and
- to provide timely evacuations (medical and security) for the humanitarian community in South Sudan.

Project Implementation

27. On behalf of all users, WFP will manage the UNHAS in ROSS. The humanitarian agencies would benefit from WFP's expertise and experience in managing air operations. This air service is expected to support at least 180 agencies by providing access to over 58 locations.
28. In accordance with WFP's Air Transport Directive of January 2004 and in compliance with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) recommendations, WFP has set up UNHAS User Group Committees (UGC) composed of United Nations agencies, NGOs and donor representatives in Juba (Capital of ROSS). The role of the UGC is to define the requirements and priorities in terms of air transport needs, as well as to monitor the quality of services rendered and provide feedback and guidance to the WFP Chief Air Transport Officer (CATO). UGC meetings are conducted on a monthly basis (practical implementation of the mission will be discussed with clients i.e. schedules) with the Steering Committee meetings (endorsement of policy, strategy and fund raising) held quarterly or as regularly as necessary.
29. The operational fleet will consist of 13 aircraft (11 fixed-wing aircraft and 2 MI-8 helicopters) based strategically in Juba, Wau, Rumbek and Malakal to respond effectively to regular demand and emergencies/evacuations.
30. The project will implement standard WFP management structures and support systems:
 - Passenger and cargo booking will be made through UNHAS management structures, with data and voice connectivity available to relay flight manifest and schedules to all locations where WFP maintains sub-offices for distribution to users.
 - A dedicated communication system is in place to monitor the location and flight progress of all WFP operated aircraft through VHF radios and the Satellite tracking system in the interest of flight safety.
 - The Web Based Flight Management Application (EFMA) system implementation is ongoing. The system enables monitoring of usage of the air service by various agencies, load factors, flight routing and provide operational and cost data for management overview.
 - Weekly/ monthly flight schedules are maintained, with flexibility to adjust to requests for special flights.

31. The Aviation section (ODLA) based in Rome is responsible for the contracting of the aircrafts and the safety oversight of the operation.
32. The CATO will manage the operation locally under the overall supervision of the WFP Country Director and the Director of Logistic through the Chief Aviation. The CATO will provide operational reports to the CD, the Chief Aviation, and Steering Committee.
33. The ROSS Country Director will act as the Funds Manager and the Aviation Finance Officer will be the Allotment Administrator for this operation. ODLA will provide operational and administrative support and will be responsible for the oversight of the operational activities in ROSS.
34. In addition to the resources expected to be raised through donor contributions, UNHAS will continue charging the nominal booking fee on regular routes, and full cost recovery method will be applied to dedicated agency charter flights as directed by the Steering Committee.

Project Cost & Benefits

35. The total project cost for this Special Operation is US\$58,806,548 as detailed in the budget.
36. The UNHAS Steering Committee in its effort to keep this vital service running approved the nominal fee for booking at US\$200 (hub to hub), US\$100 (hub to deep field) per passenger and a fee of US\$3 per kg of cargo. This is expected to contribute up to US\$ 13.6 million or 23 percent of the overall project cost. The remaining 77 percent of the budgeted cost is expected to be raised through donor contributions.
37. The envisaged benefits of the air service in ROSS as approved by the UNHAS Sudan Steering Committee are as follows:
 - Increased safety for the humanitarian community, donors and embassy personnel in South Sudan, thanks to this service;
 - Operational efficiency, effectiveness and security in the implementation and monitoring of humanitarian operations;
 - A common service – provided to the humanitarian community – which is consistent with the call by the Secretary-General “for greater unity of purpose and coherence at country level and that each UN entity should benefit from another’s presence through establishing corresponding consultative and collaborative arrangements”;
 - Enhanced efficiency of staff/programmes in ROSS through a standardized, single contracting and safety surveillance system; and,
 - A cost-effective service that can take advantage of economies of scale through lower aircraft direct operating cost, payload consolidation and an integrated organization.
 - The fleet is an essential tool used to provide medical and security evacuation service to the humanitarian aid community in the country.

Monitoring & Evaluation

38. Based on project historical statistics, key performance indicators will be reported at the end of the project and will include the following:
- The number/quantity of passengers and light cargo (in MT) transported against the planned quantities. The current target is 6,000 passengers and 25 MT of cargo a month;
 - 100% utilization of the aircraft contracted hour;
 - Frequency of and attendance to the Steering Committee/UGC meetings;
 - The number of UN agencies and other humanitarian organizations utilizing the service vis-a-vis number of locations served. A total of 180 agencies are expected to benefit from this service with access to 58 locations;
 - 100% response to medical and security evacuations;
 - Number of safety related accidents and/or serious incidents (target:0)
39. The Chief Air Transport Officer will provide regular operational reports to ODLA and the Funds Manager as well as the User Group as required.

Risk Assessment and Contingency Planning

40. A number of risks could impact the implementation of the SO. The main risks identified are presented through the three risk areas (contextual, programmatic and institutional). The subsequent narrative explains the risks and outlines mitigation measures to be taken.
41. **Contextual Risks.** Security in the Republic of South Sudan can deteriorate, which may result in limitation of humanitarian travel. UNHAS will work in close coordination with UNDSS to ensure timely communication of security situation at destinations and will plan its operations accordingly. Operational hazards identification will be constantly implemented through established WFP Aviation structure and the relevant risk analysis and mitigation actions will be implemented as required to keep an acceptable level of risks.
42. **Programmatic Risks.** Humanitarian agencies may scale up their assistance in the new country through increase of their staff and expansion of activities to more remote areas. UNHAS will be able to meet the increase in humanitarian travel through efficient planning of flight operations using its fleet of different capacity of fixed-wing aircraft and 2 helicopters. Additional aircraft capacity can be rapidly deployed for passenger and cargo transport, if required.
43. **Institutional Risks.** The success of the SO is conditional on adequate resources being available to WFP throughout the implementation period. All fundraising strategies will include steps to be taken to address shortfalls. Jointly UNHAS and its Steering Committee/UGC's advocacy efforts will continue in order to ensure uninterrupted services for the humanitarian community.

Exit Strategy

44. Given the complex situation in ROSS, WFP cannot envisage at this point the development of an exit strategy. However, as soon as the situation allows, WFP will ensure that appropriate course of action is outlined and submitted to the UGC and the Steering Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 01st September 2011 to 31st December 2012 at a total cost to WFP of US\$58,806,548 is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Josette Sheeran
Executive Director