



WFP Ethiopia
SPECIAL OPERATION 200364

Country:	Ethiopia
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Ethiopia
Total cost (US\$):	US\$4,552,563
Duration:	Twelve months (01 st January 2012 to 31 st December 2012)

Executive Summary

Since its inception in 2007, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) has been facilitating the movement of staff engaged in humanitarian operations in the most remote and affected areas of the Somali Region of Ethiopia by providing a safe and efficient air service.

Until 31st December 2011 the project has been implemented through the Special Operation (SO) 107130. This new SO, 200364, is an expansion of the project 107130, which caters for the same project activities and follows the same objectives in 2012.

The WFP/UNHAS SO will continue to be managed through the WFP Ethiopia Country Office. This service has been requested by humanitarian organisations and the donor community currently operating in Ethiopia.

The 2011 famine crisis called for an increase of humanitarian activities in the region. The number of organizations operating in Ethiopia rose from 20 to 60, which consequently increased the number of WFP/UNHAS passengers. In response WFP/UNHAS expanded its fleet from two to three aircraft. In 2012 the situation is expected to stabilize, and the fleet will reduce to the regular operations of two aircraft. Two months of deployment of a third aircraft is included in the budget for contingency to strengthen the operational capacity. The aircraft fleet, based in Addis Ababa, will continue serving at least 7 locations.

The Special Operation is required for the duration of twelve months, from 1st January 2012 to 31st December 2012, at a total cost of US\$4,552,563. The project is predominantly reliant on donor contributions, yet there is nominal cost recovery through passenger booking fees.

Project Background

1. According to UNDP (2010 analysis) Ethiopia is ranked 157 out of 169 countries in relation to the Human Development Index. 78 percent of population earns less than US\$2 per day. During the last few years, the country has experienced an increase in natural disasters, believed to be caused by over-utilization of land as well as impact of

climate change. Seventy-six percent of the population has no access to safe water so the same communities are also experiencing severe water stress, affecting their health, their livestock and their crop production.

2. More importantly, the security situation in most areas of Ethiopia remains unpredictable, and in some regions, such as Jijiga, Fik and Degehabur, it is still volatile, with clashes and kidnapping threats reported. Road travel is dangerous in most of these areas.
3. Apart from insecurity, the distances in the operational area are vast and many of them impassible during the rainy season due to the lack of infrastructure, leaving air travel as the only mean of travel for humanitarian workers.
4. WFP/UNHAS SO 107130 was implemented in 2007 to facilitate the movement of staff engaged in humanitarian operations in the most remote and affected areas of the Somali Region of Ethiopia by providing a safe and efficient air service.
5. Since then, WFP/UNHAS Ethiopia has been facilitating the movement of personnel from different United Nations agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Government counterparts and diplomatic missions working in the Somali Region of Ethiopia.
6. From July 2011, the humanitarian activities increased due to outflow of large number of persons, who escaped civil unrest, violence and continued drought in south-central Somalia into the south-eastern part of Ethiopia, particularly to the Dolo Ado. Dolo camps are characterized by their extreme remoteness, difficult security situation and access and most fragile environmental conditions. During the crisis the number humanitarian organizations operating in the area and using WFP/UNHAS raised from 20 to over 60.
7. In response to the humanitarian emergency WFP/UNHAS increased a number of operational hours by both aircraft operating full capacity, as well as deployed another Short Take-Off and Landing (STOL) capacity aircraft Dash 8 for 3 months to facilitate additional flights for humanitarian workers and urgently required light cargo to Dolo Ado.
8. In 2012 the situation is expected to stabilize, and the fleet will reduce to the regular operations of two C208 aircraft. A two months deployment of an additional aircraft, Dash 8 type, is included in the budget for contingency.
9. In 2011, from 1st January-30th September, the WFP/UNHAS Ethiopia transported 4,050 passengers and 28.6 metric tons of light cargo, and also carried out 10 medical and 1 security evacuations.

Project Justification

10. The humanitarian community in Ethiopia will continue implementation of their programmes in 2012, with many of the operational activities based in the Somali Region of Ethiopia (zones of Degehabur, Fik, Gode, Korahe, Warder and Dolo).
11. The regions of humanitarian activities are very far apart, passing through insecure areas that cannot easily be reached by road. A passenger air service is required to facilitate the humanitarian access to the beneficiaries, facilitate projects implementation process as well as to allow the continued assessment of humanitarian needs.
12. In addition, the large distances in the operational area require an air service that could provide medical and security evacuations as and when required.
13. 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 WFP/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.
14. At present there are no commercial alternative for WFP/UNHAS operations in the area.
15. The continuation of the WFP/UNHAS SO in 2012 has been requested by the UNHAS Ethiopia User Group Committee (UGC). The UGC deliberated on the need for continuation of the services given the: unpredictable security situation on the ground, limiting the mobility of aid workers using surface transport; continuation of relief activities in the region; and unavailability of safe commercial flights serving the most remote destinations where the humanitarian assistance is provided.
16. In 2012 WFP/UNHAS will continue operating two aircraft, 12-seaters Caravans, C208, from Addis Ababa, serving at least 7 locations (Dire Dawa, Jijiga, Geladi, Warder, Kebri dehar, Gode and Dolo Ado), transporting 400 passengers and 4 mt cargo monthly. An additional Dash 8 aircraft will be available for deployment on ad-hoc basis as and when required.

Project Objectives

17. The objectives of this Special Operation are:
 - To provide efficient air services to more than 50 humanitarian agencies (United Nations, NGOs and donor representatives in Ethiopia);
 - To carry out medical and security evacuations;
 - To respond in a fast, efficient and flexible manner to the needs of the humanitarian community.

Project Implementation

18. Based on WFP's expertise and experience managing air operations in Ethiopia, WFP will continue managing the UNHAS in Ethiopia. This air service is supporting the humanitarian organisations operating in Ethiopia by providing access to at least 7 locations, and ad-hoc flights as necessary.
19. 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 Addis Ababa. The role of the UGC is to define the requirements and priorities of air transport needs, as well as monitor the quality of services rendered and provide feedback and guidance to the WFP Chief Air Transport Officer (CATO).
20. The operational fleet will consist of two aircraft (12-seaters Caravans, C208) will continue to be based in Addis Ababa/Dire Dawa to respond effectively to regular demand and emergencies/evacuations. An additional, STOL capacity aircraft will be available for deployment to operations as and when required (two months is included in the budget for contingency).
21. 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 the satellite tracking system in the interest of flight safety.
 - The web-based Electronic Flight Management Application (EFMA) system implementation will continue. The system enables monitoring of air service usage 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.
22. The Aviation section (ODLA) based in Rome is responsible for the contracting of the aircraft and the safety oversight of the operation.
23. ODLA's Quality Assurance assessments will be conducted and their reports will be used as a tool for evaluation and improvement of operational efficiency.
24. In order to enhance safety of air operations, as well as to participate in aviation capacity building initiatives, WFP Aviation will continue conducting aviation training for WFP and non-WFP (partners and government) staff involved in the air operations in the country.
25. The CATO will manage the operation locally under the overall supervision of the WFP Country Director and through the Chief Aviation. The CATO will provide operational reports to the CD, the Chief Aviation, and UGC.

26. The Ethiopia Country Director will act as the Funds Manager and the 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 Ethiopia.
27. In addition to the resources expected to be raised through donor contributions, WFP/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 UGC.

Project Cost & Benefits

28. The total project cost for this Special Operation is US\$4,552,563. As detailed in the budget.
29. The project is predominantly reliant on donor contributions. Passengers are charged the nominal booking fee of US\$70 one way, or US\$140 round trip from Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa to all destinations in the Somali Region of Ethiopia and vice-versa, which is set by the User Group Committee. This fee is expected to generate approximately 11% of the project funding requirements.
30. The envisaged benefits of the air service in Ethiopia are as follows:
- Increased safety for the humanitarian community, donors and embassy personnel in Ethiopia;
 - 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”;
 - The fleet is an essential tool used to provide medical and security evacuation service to the humanitarian aid community in the country.

Monitoring & Evaluation

31. Based on project historical statistics, key performance indicators will be reported at the end of the project and will include the following:
- Aircraft occupancy rate (target: 75 percent) ;
 - Average number of passengers transported per month (target: 400 passengers per month);
 - Average tonnage of food or non-food items transported against requested or planned quantities (target: 4 mt of non-food items per month);
 - Utilization of contracted hours (target: 100%);
 - Frequency of the Users Groups’ meetings (target: monthly). Minutes meeting should be available;
 - Number of agencies and organizations using the air service (target: 50)

- Number of locations served (target: 7)
 - Percentage of requests medical and security evacuations (target: 100%)
32. 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

33. 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.
34. **Contextual Risks.** Security in the Somali Region of Ethiopia 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.
35. **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. WFP/UNHAS will be able to meet the increase in humanitarian travel through efficient planning of flight operations using its fleet. Additional aircraft capacity can be rapidly deployed for passenger and cargo transport, if required.
36. **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 WFP/UNHAS and UGC's advocacy efforts will continue in order to ensure uninterrupted services for the humanitarian community.

Exit Strategy

37. Given the complex situation in the Somali Region of Ethiopia and unavailability of commercial flights to remote areas, WFP will rely on the UGC's regular feedback and will devise an exit strategy accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 01st January 2012 to 31st December 2012 at a total cost to WFP of US\$4,552,563 is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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 Josette Sheeran
 Executive Director